



Berlinale
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Filmfestspiele
Berlin
Panorama

A sip for bliss, a sip for death

The Bacchus Lady

AN E J-YONG FILM

YOUN YUH-JUNG CHON MOO-SONG YOON KYE-SANG AN A-ZU CHOI HYUN-JUN

KOREAN FILM COUNCIL PRESENTS KAFA(KOREAN ACADEMY OF FILM ARTS) PRODUCTION MOONKLE PICTURES CO-PRODUCTION

WRITTEN & DIRECTED BY E J-YONG EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS YU YOUNG-SIK E J-YONG PRODUCER SUH DONG-HYUN
CINEMATOGRAPHY KIM YOUNG-RO EDITING HAHM SUNG-WON COSTUME DESIGNER HONG MYUNG-SOO VISUAL EFFECTS LEE SEUNG-CHUL(WAVELAB) PRODUCTION DESIGNER LEE SANG-WOOK MUSIC JANG YOUNG-GYU PRODUCTION DESIGNER SONG HYE-JIN
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FILM INFORMATION

English Title: **The Bacchus Lady**

Original Title: Jug-yeo-ju-neun yeo-ja

Year of Production: **2015**

Running Time: **110min**

Genre: **Drama**

Technical Information: **HD, 1.85:1, Color**

Directed by **E J-yong**

Cast **YOUN Yuh-jung, CHON Moo-song, YOON Kye-sang,**

An A-zu, CHOI Hyun-jun

Produced by **SUH Dong-hyun**

Cinematography **KIM Young-ro**

Editing **HAHM Sung-won**

Music **JANG Young-gyu**

Sound **LEE Seung-cheol(WaveLab)**

SYNOPSIS

So-young (65) makes a meager living by selling herself off to old men. She is a “Bacchus lady”, an elderly prostitute who approaches clients with a bottle of Bacchus, a popular Korean energy drink, and the phrase “would you like a drink?” When young, she used to sell herself to American soldiers. And perhaps driven by the painful memory of giving up her half-black infant son for adoption in the States, she is unable to ignore the motherless Kopino child she meets while visiting the hospital for an STI. Despite the help from her social outcast neighbors like Madame Tina (50) the transgender landlady, or Do-hoon (31) the poor young man with a prosthetic leg, she struggles to care for the child through prostitution. One day, Jae-woo(75), a former client, tells her that SONG (81), another regular, had been hospitalized after a stroke. She visits the hospital to discover a completely paralyzed SONG, who begs her to end his life, as he lives in misery and embarrassment. After deep inner conflict, she finally accepts his request. But when she confesses this to Jae-woo, he asks whether she could help end the life of another friend who was suffering from poverty and dementia. And although So-young initially refuses, she changes her mind after meeting the friend in person and seeing what his life was like. And when a lonely and emotionally spent Jae-woo finally asks her to help him with assisted suicide, So-young falls even deeper into a state of conflict and confusion.

CHRACTER & CAST

YOUN Yuh-jung/**So-young**

After working whatever it took, either the housemaid or prostitute for US army to get by, So-young is now Bacchus Lady who sells sex to the elderly at the age of 65 and lives alone without any family. She is not proud of her job but feels proud that she does live on her own without getting any help from others. When her ex-clients ask her, she finds it so hard to say no and becomes to help them to die.

YOON Kye-sang/**Do-hoon**

Do-hoon is a young tenant of the house that So-young lives. He lost one leg and makes the adult figure toys for living. He's as poor as church mouse so is often behind the rent but always cheerful. Even though he knows what So-young does, he doesn't look at her with prejudice and calls her sis even though she's as old as his mother.



CHARACTER & CAST

CHON Moo-song/**Jae-woo**

A 70-year-old man who used to be a regular customer for So-young until a few years back. He lost his son early and his wife was dead 3 years ago, tired of being lonely, he's been thinking of end his life since. But as he fears of dying alone without anyone by his side, he asks So-young to help his suicide.

AN A-zu/**Tina**

Tina is So-young's landlady who's the madam of a transgender bar. She is also a transgender who spent a lot of money for the surgery when she was young. Even though she's fifty, she looks still beautiful and always dreams for a new love. And she calls So-young sis. Her heart is warm and tender so she always gives Do-hun an exception whenever he is behind the rent.

CHOI Hyun-jun/**Min-ho**

5-year-old Kopino boy. He came to Korea with his mother to seek for his Korean doctor fatehr, with whom they lost the contact for 5 years. But as his mother is arrested, Min-ho ran away alone and ended up living with So-young whom he met on the run. Even though he can't speak a word in Korean, Min-ho gradually opens his mind with the help of So-young, Do-hoon and Tina.

DIRECTOR

E J-yong



E J-Yong graduated Korean Academy of Film Arts in 1991 and won awards at Clermont-ferrand International Short Film Festival with his short film <Homo Videocus>(1991), co-directed with [Daniel BYUN]. His feature debut<An Affair>(1998), was a unique melodrama that introduced minimalism in visual, lines, and emotions and it continued to Korean-Japanese made film <AsakoIn Ruby Shoes>(2000). A remarkable adaptation of a French classic novel as a Chosun Dynasty story <Untold Scandal>(2003), a story of high school student filled with cartoon-like imagination <Dasepo Naughty Girls>(2006), <The Actresses>(2009) and <Behind the Camera>(2012) which were both received favourable reviews for his new attempts of blurring the boundary of fiction and nonfiction. Those four films screened at Berlinale. Well-reviewed human drama <My Brilliant Life>(2014) featuring top stars GANG Dong-won and SONG Hye-kyo, the film details the struggles of a young couple whose son suffers from progeria. E J-yong is known to be one of the representative stylists in the Korean film industry, who boasts a diverse array of works in his filmography that freely cross over the boundary between controlled and beautiful visuals and chic presentation of ideas.

CINEMATOGRAPHER & PRODUCER

Cinematographer **KIM Young-ro**

Biography

Born in 1970, KIM Young-ro studied cinematography at American Film Institute.

Filmography

2011 Perfect Partner HD, 100 mins

2012 Digital Nomad (short) HD, 18 mins

2015 ESCAPE (short) HD, 20 mins

2015 The Bacchus Lady 3D/HD, 100 mins

Producer **SUH Dong-hyun**

Born in 1975.

Filmography

2009 Actresses

2015 Gok-sung

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

The average life expectancy of 100 years old: Is it a blessing or catastrophe living in this era?

Korea marks one of the highest poverty and suicide rates of the elderly among OECD countries.

This old generation who used to play the leading role in Korea's economic growth, now turned into the burden for the society to bear and the invisible situated in the blind spot of welfare. This film tells the story of the cold reality that lonely, sick and poor old people need to face in the ultra-aging society where the population of the elderly would be more than 20% of the total and tells about the death which would come to them soon. Seoul is megalopolis where the old town and new developed area co-exist. And old town is rapidly disappearing with the lightning speed of the economic growth. Setting this story in an old park in the heart of the old town which can be symbolized as the soon-to-be-disappearing old Seoul, I would like to seriously think about the death and the winter of life which all of us will meet sooner or later through a poor woman who sells her body at that park even at the age of seventy. Also I wanted to record the old Seoul which would disappear soon and the minorities who float in that area as if I put the things to remember in a time capsule. I also wanted to throw the meaningful question whether 'assisted suicide', done out of pity and empathy is immoral when the society cannot take the responsibility of individuals.