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An Affair With Peanuts

(Tang Kong Kcupzilsokui Young)

S. Korea, 1979

5th Hong Kong Int'l Fest

Director:
Lee Won-Se

Screenplay:
Kim Ji-Hyun

Based on:
a story by Song Young

Photography (colour):
Chung Kwang-Seok

Editor:
Hyun Dong-Choon

Art Director:
Jo Kyung-Hwan

Music Supervisor:
Chung Min-Seop

Sound:
MPPC of Korea, Chung
Min-Seop

Cast:
Kim Do-II
Shin Sung-II

Julie (Choo-Ree)
Lim Ye-Jin

Dr. Yang
Kim Han

Mrs. Yang
Nuy Woon-Kye
and with:
Oh Hyun-Kyung

Produced by Han Kap-
Chin for Han Jin Enter-
prises Company.

100 minutes.
Korean dialogue/
English subtitles.

Source: Han Jin Enter-
prises Co. Ltd., 62-15,
3-Ka, Pil-Dong, Chung-
Ku, Seoul, South
Korea.

The Film

Kim Do-II, a bachelor in a low-salaried job, runs across an out-of-work fashion model called Julie (Choo-Ree) while looking for an apartment to rent. He jokingly proposes that she should stay with him as his housekeeper, an arrangement that she accepts on the condition that they should have no sexual relationship. Everything goes well, and they are taken for a happily married couple by those around them — notably, by their landlords, Dr. and Mrs Yang, whose own marriage is rapidly disintegrating. As the weeks pass, Kim comes to realise that he loves Julie. When she gets a modelling assignment, he follows her to the location and there learns that she already has a fiancé...

The Korean Film Industry

With the beginning of the 1960s, film production increased rapidly, until the 16 feature films made in 1955 increased to 212 in 1968, keeping pace with the country's general economic expansion. At the same time, the number of foreign feature films imported (mostly from the USA) dropped from 135 in 1960 to 56 in 1968. This was the result of a government quota imposed to protect the domestic industry. The quota awarded the right to import foreign films to those producers who had made a certain number of Korean features. The operation of the quota system led to abuses and a serious decline in the quality of Korean movies. Since imported films were favoured by audiences, these were sure money-makers, and so some Korean producers simply ground out as many domestic features as they could as cheaply as possible, hoping to break even and gain access to profitable imports. The low quality of these films further discouraged audiences from attending them, and placed insuperable difficulties in the way of those Korean film artists who wished to make quality movies. Since TV broadcasting had begun in 1960, and the number of receivers increased rapidly, movie audiences fell away all the more drastically. The equipment at the film studios became obsolete or worn out, and moribund financial conditions made it impossible to replace it. Aware of this situation, the government in 1973 revised the Motion

Picture Law as a means of discouraging substandard productions by making the requirements for registration of film companies more stringent. Under this law, the Motion Picture Promotion Corporation and the Motion Picture Distributors Association were established to support the film industry. This Corporation is empowered to manage government assistance to and supervision of the film industry more effectively, and to produce films on its own or to lend money to independent producers. It also has funds for the purchase of modern equipment. The technical quality of Korean films was to a considerable extent upgraded by this financial assistance, but opinion is divided as to whether actual quality of product was improved as well.

After the change of government in Korea in 1979 and 1980, the wave of reform and revitalisation that swept over all aspects of society reached the cinema world as well. With the appearance of 6 big production companies with more than US\$10 million paid-in capital, there is a chance that Korea's film industry will recover financially and artistically.

— from an essay by Yang Jong-Hae,
published by the 1981 Berlin Film
Festival

LEE Won-Se

was born in Korea, 6 April 1940. He graduated in Drama and Motion Picture Studies from Seorabul Art College in 1961, and in Korean Literature from Kukak University in Seoul in 1964. He directed his first film in 1970, and initially won recognition as a director of documentaries; Korean critics have noted elements of documentary underpinning his fiction features. He went to Thailand in 1978 to direct the features *Teeth of the Alligator* and *The Lost People* for Chiao Films. Since his return to Seoul, his output has included *The Brave Rangers* and *Without a Mast* as well as *An Affair with Peanuts*. He has more than 30 films to his credit to date.

