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A HOT ROOF

(GYAE-GOT-UN NALUI OHU)

(SOUTH KOREAN)

A Soon Film Co-Cheil Communications production. Produced by Lee Soon-Yeoul. Co-producer, Chang Hyun-Soo.

Directed by Lee Min-Yong. Screenplay, Lee Kyoung-Sik, Cho Min-Ho, Chang Jin, Lee Min-Yong, from a book by Song Jae-Hee. Camera (color), Seo Jung-Min; editor, Park Kog-Ji; music, Lee Young-Hoon; production design, Cho Yoong-Sam; sound, Choi Jae-Ho; associate producer, Kim Eun-Joo; assistant director, Cho Min-Ho. Reviewed at Berlin Film Festival (Panorama), Feb. 23, 1996. Running time: **108 MIN.**

Chong-Hee	Ha You-Mi
Yun-Hee	Chung Sun-Kyoung
Kyong-Suk	Son Sook
Police Officer	Chung Bo-Suk
Reporter	Moon Sue-Jin
Song-Ku	Lee Jae-Rak

This lowbrow comedy might well be radical fare in Korea, where women's rights appear to be sadly wanting, but for most other territories the issues involved here are far from new. Pic could score useful bookings in Asia, but lacks the sophistication to find arthouse niches elsewhere.

On a very hot summer day, in a suburban apartment block, a brutal, macho husband almost beats his wife to death; when she runs out into the street, the husband is attacked by other women and killed.

Ten of the women retreat to the roof of the building, and the local police — led by a fascistic officer — lay siege. The story is brought to the outside world by an intrepid TV newshen, who manages to get a camera to the rooftop, and the women find they have supporters all over the country (including the cop's wife). Meanwhile, two (male) burglars in the building are trapped by the huge police presence.

Lee Min-Yong, directing his first film, includes plenty of simple slapstick (the police officer has a comic sidekick, a bucket of excrement is hurled at the authorities) but also makes a few points about the lack of women representatives in Korean government and the treatment of minorities (one of the women on the roof is a transvestite).

Production is well mounted but overlong. Performances are uniformly unsubtle. —*David Stratton*