

## Article

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### **Strange Movie Looks in the Corona Period in Korea**



#### **1. Movie Theater Attacked by COVID 19**

COVID 19 is raging all over the world. Shortly after the discovery of the corona in Wuhan, China in 2019, it was first discovered in Korea on January 20, 2020. For the next eight months, the Korean film industry has been facing a disaster-like environment. The movie theater had to keep its seats separated by the occasional quarantine and distance itself, and the number of audiences, including the film festival, dropped exponentially.

While the Cannes Film Festival, which was scheduled to be held last spring, was canceled and many of the summer festivals were silent, Korean film festivals also had to undergo changes, taking a mixed form between non-face-to-face online and offline screenings. Corona 19 has led

to a vicious cycle of a sharp drop in the number of moviegoers, a delay in the release of blockbusters, and a reduced operation of theaters. The movie theater where the confirmed person visited was temporarily closed for quarantine.

In general, it is believed that Korean commercial films are a big hit with more than 10 million viewers, a good five million, and a break-even point with three million. Unlike movie critics, audiences prefer killing-time movies to movies that are too serious. They hope that regardless of the distinction between art films and commercial films, they will fill a certain number of audiences and produce films that balance artistry and commercially.

The release of Disney, Marvel, and other box office films has been postponed, and <The Man Standing Next>, released before the 19th War of the Corona, is still No. 1 in the box office rankings. In particular, the total number of viewers in April hit a monthly low of 972,572 since 2004, when the integrated network of tickets was launched. The daily minimum number of viewers ever stood at 15,429 on April 7. In the second weekend of April (April 10-12), 98,695 people are the lowest weekend audience.

Thanks to the golden holiday, which runs from Buddha's Birthday (April 30) to Children's Day (May 5), the number of audiences in May increased to 1,526,236. When June came, the Korean Film Council was fearlessly distributing discount tickets, and the theaters were crowded with the release of <Intruder>, <Innocence>, <ME AND ME> and <#Alive>. The total number of moviegoers increased 153.2 percent on-month to 3,864,533 in June, apparently bringing the movie theater back to normal.

The distribution of movie discount tickets(June 4) is <#Alive> has attracted an audience of 1,194,944 within a week of its release. It topped 1 million viewers for the first time since <Honest Candidates>(1.54 million people, 5th place) released in February, ranking eighth in the first half of the year. The movie, which was released from March to May, was not included in the top 10 box office hits in the first half of the year due to the influence of Corona 19. In the aftermath of the re-proliferation of the Corona 19, the number of moviegoers declined again, and films that were about to be released immediately postponed their screening.

From January 1 to June 30, the 'First Half of 2020 Korean Film Industry Settlement Report' recorded the lowest number of audiences since 2005(70.3% reduction, 32,414,128 audiences) and sales(70.6% reduction, \$233,136,313.4). The screening of the feature films at home and abroad, which were scheduled to be released, was postponed, and the number of audiences at special theaters such as 3D, 4D, IMAX, and ScreenX fell 86.2% year-on-year to 600,000 and sales fell 87.3% to \$5,449,359.3.

Blockbuster Yeon Sang-ho's <Peninsula>, Yang Woo-suk's <Steel Rain2: Summit> and Hong Won-chan's <DELIVER US FROM EVIL> led the box office in July and August. On August 8, the total number of viewers in Korean films, including <DELIVER US FROM EVIL>(Production

Cost: \$12,771,935.8, break-even point 3.5 million audiences), <Steel Rain 2: Summit> (production cost: \$10,302,694.8, break-even point 3.95 million audiences), and zombie movie <Peninsula> (production cost: \$16,177,785.3, break-even point 2.5 million audiences) was 729,452, in 2019. The figure was close to 49.9 percent compared to the audience's 1,461,144 on the second Saturday of August 2019.

<Peninsula> surpassed \$500,000 in sales in 21 major cities around the world by August 19, and was screened in IMAX format at 59 theaters in North America, including 35 in the United States and 24 in Canada. It is the largest Korean film ever. Director Lee Chul-ha's <OK Madam> (production cost \$7,492,869.0, break-even point 2.5 million audiences) starring Uhm Jung-hwa fell short of the box office with a cumulative audience of 1,228,678 on September 27. Since mid-August, the re-spreading of the COVID 19 has caused the re-run of the movie to recede, and many have postponed its release.

Social distance and quarantine measures are pouring in. The distributor also changed its direction to postpone the opening of the company after reaching an agreement with the production company and outside investors. In the summer when <Peninsula> which depicts the post-apocalypse of zombies, <The Steel Rain 2-Summit>, which depicts the hostage incident in a nuclear submarine at the summit of the South, North Korea, and the U.S., and the chase revenge drama <DELIVER US FROM EVIL> were popular, Corona plunged the film industry again into chaos.

When there was no solution for COVID 19, Josh Boone's <The New Mutants> (release date: September 10), Niki Caro's <Mulan> (release date: September 17), Choi Jae-hun's chase action <The Swordsman> (September 23) and Kim Bong-han's <The Golden Holiday> (release date: September 29) were released. Production, distribution, and screening are taking a new turn in the film environment called the Corona Era. It is time for a visionary plan for a new breakthrough.

## 2. Film Festivals seeking breakthrough

### 1) The 77th Venice International Film Festival

The 77th Venice International Film Festival, which was held on September 2 amid the cancellation of a number of international film festivals, was scaled down but maintained its reputation. As you all know, a total of 72 invitational works from more than 50 countries, including 18 competing films and 19 non-competitive ones, were released. The competition for the Golden Lion Prize featured works from Europe, the United States, Mexico, Russia, Azerbaijan, Israel, Iran, India, and Japan, including four Italian films.

The Golden Lion was awarded to director Chloe Zhao's <Nomadland>, which tells the story of a modern nomad who rides his van to explore life outside of traditional society in the western United States after the collapse of Nevada's economy. Chloe Zhao's award is the second

achievement of a woman of color since India's *Mira Nair* won the Golden Lion for <*Monsoon Wedding*> in 2001.

The Silver Lion at the Venice Film Festival was awarded to <*Wife of a Spy*> directed by *Kurosawa Kiyoshi* of Japan. The opening film was <*Lacci*>(<*The Ties*>) by *Daniele Ruchetti* of Italy, which depicts the marriage life of a couple threatened by an affair. A Korean movie was only invited to <*Night in Paradise*> directed by *Park Hoon-jung*, which tells the story of a man who is the target of the gangster in the feature non-competition category and a woman standing at the end of a man's life.

## 2) Some Korean Film Festivals

Korea's representative international film festivals are the Busan International Film Festival, the Jeonju International Film Festival, and the Bucheon International Fantastic Film Festival. Since COVID 19, many theaters have shrunk sharply. On the other hand, non-face-to-face OTT(Over The Top) services have been activated, with Netflix's number of users increasing 2.5 times year-on-year to 4.667 million in June, and Watcha Play's online platform, which allows users to watch entertainment content in non-face-to-face, has seen a 14 percent increase in daily viewing time at the end of February, causing the industry to reorganize in a short period.

It was the international film festivals around the world that felt the aftermath of the huge change the fastest. Signs such as the eve of the storm were found before and after the 70th Berlin International Film Festival, which was held from February 20 to March 1 when the coronavirus spread to Europe. The COVID 19 in China, which spread so rapidly that a confirmed case occurred in December that it issued a blockade on China's Wuhan on Jan. 23, was at a serious level. The Coronavirus, which has spread throughout Europe, has either canceled all international film festivals or turned them into digital ones since March.

The 25th Busan International Film Festival (BIFF) runs from October 21 (Wednesday) to October 30(Friday). Of the 56 films selected by the Cannes Film Festival, 23 will be screened at the Busan International Film Festival. Many of them are the first films to be screened in Busan. The opening film is <*Septet: The Story of Hong Kong*>. Restoration versions of *Kawase Naomi's* <*True Mothers*>, *Wei Shu-jun's* new film <*Run*>, *Yeon Sang-ho's* <*Peninsula*> and *Wong Karwa's* <*In The Mood For Love*> can also be seen at the Busan Film Festival.

The festival, which will focus on screening the movie, will not have outdoor events such as opening and closing ceremonies, red carpets, outdoor stage greetings, and open talk. Invitations for foreign film officials and receptions and parties were all canceled. Screening of selected films will only take place at the Centum City Busan Cinema Center. Asia Contents & Film Market, Asia Project Market, and Beef Forum will all be held online.

The Jeonju International Film Festival (JIFF) has decided to screen both online and offline for the first time in Korea. Suggesting alternative and new types of film festivals, such as audience-free screening for judges & long-term screenings, industrial events, and exhibitions were conducted by checking participants' fever. No new confirmed cases were reported in Korea on April 30. JIFF is a film festival that introduces a large number of new Korean independent films and has a high willingness to screen in theaters. Only international competition, screening of Korean feature and short films competition, and awards ceremonies were held in theaters, and the consul was conducted only for judges and a limited number of officials from each film. Of the 180 selected films, 97 were screened online from May 28 to June 6. In the case of industrial events, all scheduled programs were held offline after undergoing quarantine procedures.

Security issues and know-how were important reasons for the online platform selection. 'Wavve', which was launched as "POOQ" in 2012 and has been serviced for eight years, is an *OTT* platform that can be accessed through various devices such as PCs, smartphones, smart TVs, and *OTT* set-top boxes and currently has about 9 million subscribers. Wavve is operating strong security measures based on multiple *DRMs*, and it is a platform that can track devices and logs used by leakers and take legal action in the event of a screening leak.

At the request of the distributor, there were a total of three films with watermarks in the online screening file. The size and format were all at the request and decision of the distributor. The movie set a maximum of 1,500 views per episode, and only two films (1,200 views & 800 views) were asked by distributors to adjust the number of views. According to the schedule, they requested to reschedule the online screening of the work. The fees for each film were measured differently depending on whether it was online or long-term. The online viewing method was available immediately after signing up for the Wavve site, clicking on the desired movie in the Jeonju International Film Festival menu, and paying for the individual movie.

The long and short collections cost 7,000 won and individual short pieces from abroad cost 2,000 won. Payment methods are available through credit card, mobile phone, Naver Pay, Kakao Pay, and PAYCO(Payco) and can only be viewed within 12 hours of payment. Wavve fixed-rate users also had to pay separate admission fees. As a result of online screenings, a total of 7,048 paid viewing cases, of which 4,836 Korean films accounted for about 69 percent. The festival was organized by a quarantine TF team to manage the theater and industrial event space, and the exhibition program was operated as a pre-booking system, and the site was limited to keep the movement and social distance.

The Bucheon International Fantastic Film Festival(BIFAN) was in a more stable situation, but a large number of confirmed cases were confirmed at the Bucheon Logistics Center in late May, and they prepared for theater screenings by promising quarantine four times a day. On June 10, the company declared the 'Hybrid Film Festival' to be held both online and offline through an agreement with Watcha Play. In the case of theater screenings, the two-seat distance and full-body sterilizers were installed from July 9 to 16, and thorough quarantine was carried out



thoroughly. The venue for the event was also unified into eight CGV *Sopung Hall* for quarantine management. In the case of online screenings, the OTT platform *Watcha* and the Bucheon Film Festival joined hands. The viewing process will only be available within 24 hours if you pay for it at the ticket purchase of the online theater on the BIFAN website and enter the code after receiving the code from the *MyBIFAN* page. If they could not use it in time, they could not cancel or refund it.

For seven days from after the opening day of the festival, 69 of the 194 films officially selected met with users. Online screenings were available only on PCs, only with credit cards, and up to 500 copies were available per episode, but only two movies were restricted from being published. It was a screening with a watermark inserted. The Asian Fantastic Film Production Network(NAFF), an industrial event held during the festival, introduced the platform *b.square service* used by overseas film festivals for business meetings for the first time in Korea. The meeting was pre-applied and proceeded from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Each meeting was set up for 15 minutes, once with one person.

In addition, the Seoul Environmental Film Festival held special TV broadcasts through its own platform from July 2 to July 15 in cooperation with digital screening, theater screening and JTBC. The Busan International Children's and Youth Film Festival, held on July 7, was held offline and screened 189 films. Indie Documentary Festival was held for two days from June 6 to 7, after delaying the period to May 28. Some of the offline screenings and short films at Lotte Cinema's Hongdae entrance and production support were released through the documentary online film platform *Diopt* ([diopt.org](http://diopt.org)). After signing up for the site, it was only available in Korea, paying 7,000 won per episode.

The Busan International Short Film Festival, which was held in April, was postponed from August 27 to 31, the Ulju World Mountain Film Festival from October 23 to 27, and the Diaspora Film Festival from September 18 to 22. The Muju Sangol Film Festival (June 4~June 7) also aired its contents on YouTube, Naver TV, and Korea Hydro & Nuclear Power's YouTube channels. The second Pyeongchang International Peace Film Festival (June 18~June 23) hosted the nation's first offline film festival, bringing together a total of 4,760 people, 2,680 theater audiences, and 2,080 outdoor audiences for the 88th screening. A total of 10,643 people, including participants in the auxiliary event, were tallied, raising the possibility of offline. Although the Mise en Scène Short Film Festival said it will be screened free of charge on Naver from June 25 to July 1, a total of 55 short films, excluding those by two artists, were released for three days on Naver SERIES ON. It made streaming or downloading impossible overseas. Offline closed with the first screening of the show (KRW 6,000 per episode, 19,854 views sold).

The International Film Festival is the most effective opportunity to provide various and high-quality video content around the world. Also, it still means a lot by introducing alienated independent films and art films in front of huge capital. Although it will be difficult for the

festival to be held in the same traditional way and scale as it used to be, it is likely to meet with the audience through a program that analyzes the reduced size but more detailed tastes.

### 3. Korean Commercial Films

Korean audiences prefer films from in order of Korea, the United States, Britain, Japan, France, China, Russia, Spain, and Taiwan, including film for film festivals. The audience's preferred screening types for Korean films are 97.6 percent for 2D, 1.0 percent for 4D, 1.0 percent for IMAX, and 0.4 percent for ScreenX. Among the 521 films released in Korea, the share of the total audience(9.3 percent), those aged 12 or older (50.2 percent), those aged 15 (39.5 percent), and those not allowed to watch the movie (1.0 percent). 31.7 percent of moviegoers live in Seoul and neighboring cities(21.8 percent) and 4.8 percent in Incheon. From December 2019 to June 2020, Korean audiences like movies in order of drama (22.3%), action (19.2%), animation (15.0%), comedy (9.8%), adventure (5.7%), crime (5.3%), romance (5.1%), and thriller (3.5%).

The system of KOBIS (Korean Box Office Information System) is managed by KOFIC (Korean Film Council). The statistics below reflect nationwide admissions from KOBIS. A carry-over film's statistics will be split between release date and screening date. As of September 27, 2020, by KOBIS, the ranking of commercial films in Korea is as follows:

Among the commercial films screened in 2020, Director *HUR Jin-ho's* historical film <*Forbidden Dream*> (Cheon-mon:Ha-neul-e Mud-neun-da, Release Date: 26. Dec(2019), which represents the love about astronomy between *King Sejong* and scientist *Jang Young-sil*, and Director *YEON Sang-ho's* <*Peninsula*> which showed the screening of a new zombie movie, are considered to have an artistic completeness and genre characteristic. Comedy <*Oh! My Gran*>(Dir: *JUNG Se-kyo*) is at Korean theaters in September in the lead. And <*Innocence*>(Dir: *PARK Sang-hyun*) is doing well in third place. Second place is <*DELIVER US FROM EVIL*> (Dir: *HONG Won-chan*), fourth place is <*OK! MADAM*>(Dir: *LEE Cheol-ha*), 5th place is <*Steel Rain2: Summit*>(Dir: *YANG Woo-suk*), and <*Peninsula*> are moving away from the audience's attention. On the other hand, <*#ALIVE*>, which was on Netflix's distribution network after the theater screening, is drawing attention from the global community.

The domestic box office results of Korean films in 2020 are as follows.(As of September 27, 2020)

#### Release Month releases's number screenings's number Yearly

Gross(Total)	Admissions(Total)	Revenue	Share		
2020-01	59	139	₩99,273,272,998	11,588,401	68.8%
2020-02	59	139	₩41,726,340,280	4,942,411	67.0%
2020-03	51	87	₩2,526,011,700	307,866	16.8%
2020-04	71	128	₩1,120,062,760	146,076	15.0%

2020-05	65	145	₩1,742,857,320	220,161	14.4%
2020-06	59	143	₩24,208,889,380	2,786,458	72.1%
2020-07	69	158	₩39,977,722,060	4,691,822	83.5%
2020-08	56	147	₩64,774,762,400	7,377,443	83.5%
2020-09	32	124	₩7,302,524,012	876,274	37.6%
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Total(Domestic)	521	1,213	₩282,654,467,910	32,937,096	66.9%
Total(Foreign)	828	2,368	₩136,030,711,261	16,263,412	33.1%
All Total	1,349	3,581	₩418,685,179,171	49,200,508	100%

The system of the Korean Box Office Information System (KOBIS) is managed by KOFIC. As of September 28, 2020, the ranking of Korean commercial films is as follows. The statistics below reflect dates from KOBIS.

Rank/Title/	Release Date/	Yearly Gross(Total)/	Admissions(Total)/	Number of	
Screens/Revenue Share					
1 <i>The Man Standing Next</i>	Jan 22	\$35,252,604	4,750,208	1,659	14.66%
2 <i>DELIVER US FROM EVIL</i>	Aug 05	\$32,992,064	4,354,514	1,997	13.72%
3 <i>Peninsula</i>	Jul 15	\$28,278,344	3,811,860	2,575	11.76%
4 <i>HITMAN: AGENT JUN</i>	Jan 22	\$17,628,081	2,406,232	1,122	7.33%
5 <i>ASHFALL</i>	Dec 19, 2019	\$14,468,596	1,962,167	1,241	6.01%
6 <i>#ALIVE</i>	Jun 24	\$13,652,582	1,903,703	1,882	5.67%
7 <i>Steel Rain2: Summit</i>	Jul 29	\$12,531,983	1,790,726	2,137	5.21%
8 <i>HONEST CANDIDATE</i>	Feb 12	\$10,984,837	1,536,732	1,187	4.56%
9 <i>The Closet</i>	Feb 05	\$9,382,557	1,270,835	1,197	3.9%
10 <i>OK! MADAM</i>	Aug 12	\$9,389,335	1,228,685	1,288	3.9%
11 <i>SECRET ZOO</i>	Jan 15	\$8,683,170	1,209,689	1,216	3.61%
12 <i>Forbidden Dream</i>	Dec 26, 2019	\$7,434,838	1,034,866	929	3.09%

1. *THE MAN STANDING NEXT* (2020, 113min )<Nam-san-ui Bu-jang-deul, Dir: *WOO Min-ho*>, Drama

Set in the 1970s, the political drama <*The Man Standing Next*> focuses on the political maneuvering of the Korean Central Intelligence Agency(KCIA) during the Park administration. In Korea, KCIA had the upper hand over any other government. KCIA Director *Kim Kyu-pyeong*(*Lee Byung-hun*), a close aide to President Park(*Lee Sung-min*), is the most likely second-in-command. *Park Yong-gak*(*Kwak Do-won*), a former director of the KCIA, who knows all the government's opaque operations and irregularities, fled to the U.S., where a considerable



investigation is underway. As tensions rise, breathtaking political maneuvering of all the second-in-command unfolds.

On October 26, 1979, *Kim Gyu-pyeong*, the head of the KCIA, assassinated the President of the Republic of Korea. Forty days before the incident, *Park Yong-gak* caused a stir in the U.S., accusing the world of the regime's true nature through a hearing. To prevent him, *Kim Kyu-pyeong*, the head of the KCIA, and *Kwak Sang-cheon*(*Lee Hee-jun*), the chief of the security office, stepped up, and loyal forces and opposition forces were mixed around the president. It was one of the films that paid attention to exposing the evil operation of KCIA, which was responsible for one of the pillars of Korea's modern political history.



2. *DELIVER US FROM EVIL* (2020, 108min) <Da-man Ak-e-seo Gu-ha-so-seo, Dir: *HONG Won-chan*>, Crime • Action

A shocking kidnapping took place in Thailand. *In-nam* (*Hwang Jung-min*), a former agent-turned-military soldier who has completed his final mission to kill someone, wants to spend the rest of his life in peace and seclusion. When a lover in the past reaches out to him, he finds out that the incident is closely related to him. He didn't know his daughter existed and finds out that she was kidnapped by traffickers. He immediately headed to Thailand, and with the help of his helper *Yui* (*Park Jung-min*), he begins to track down the incident. Meanwhile, *Ray*(*Lee Jung-jae*) finds out that a man killed his brother in Japan. *Ray* swears to take *In-nam's* life and avenge his brother's death, while the ruthless butcher *Ray* runs a bloody frenzy for revenge. The film tells the story of one being saved from murder by saving another, and the other being saved through murder.

The visuals that match the unique atmosphere of the action thriller, the escape-seeking structure of the two men, and the visuals created by the exotic space across the three countries of Korea, Thailand, and Japan, where the characteristics of the characters are revived, induce immersion. Creating new faces in everyday spaces can be found everywhere and contribute to implementing different actions. The *Stop Motion* shoot used in the action scenes embodies the realism and stylish visual beauty of matching numerous combinations with actors. The chase action, which takes place where the familiarity and fear of Bangkok coexist, creates a unique style. The persistent chase along the global location amid realistic action increases the tension of the play and is enough to become a film that the Cannes Film Festival has paid attention to. The stylish hard-boiled chase action film has been working together again since *Hwang Jung-min* and *Lee Jung-jae* appeared in <New World>(2013).



### 3. *PENINSULA* (2020, 115min)<Ban-do, Dir: Yeon Sang-ho> Action, Drama

<*Peninsula*> shows a zombie movie linking <*Seoul Station*> and <*Train to Busan*> and the first post-apocalypse world view set in Seoul. Human survivors experience a weak-fed diet and desperately struggle with zombies for survival and escape. In the midst of human life in a world dominated by barbarism and a city full of hungry zombies, *Min-jung*(*Lee Jung-hyun*) became a family of *Jun-yi*(*Ire*), *Eugene* (*Lee Ye-won*), an old man *Kim*(*Kwon Hae-hyo*) survived like a wild dog. In the four years since <*Train to Busan*>, the hungry zombies have become more

sensitive to light and sound and evolved. Survivors who have recognized the characteristics of zombies will engage in fierce battles, ranging from remote-controlled vehicle toys to large trucks, which will attract zombies with brilliant light and sound by detecting the characteristics of topographical features and zombies. *Jeong Seok* (*Kang Dong-won*), a former UDT member of the special forces unit, has become cynical and pessimistic after going through various situations. He returned to Korea after four years to retrieve a large bag of money left on the streets of Seoul. As a rational, cool-headed, well-trained soldier, and his mission is to infiltrate the devastated city of Seoul to reclaim a big bag of money, secure a target truck before sunrise and return safely to Hong Kong.

But *Jung-seok* and his team are being attacked by a group of ambushed militiamen and zombies known as the more dangerous wild dog hunter Unit 631 than zombies. Having built their own world on the ruins, they chase after *Jung-seok* and *Min-jung*. they show a shooting scene. The car scene, which is speeding through the crowds of zombies pouring out onto the streets, and the overflowing action scenes are overwhelming, like several short films.

*Jung-seok* finds what he has to do while meeting the family of *Min-jung*, who shows strong viability and maternal love while helping each other in the ruins, and shows his humanity at the threshold of death and has hope. Together, they make a final plan to escape the Korean Peninsula forever. *<Peninsula>* has written a new history of K-zombie films with a variety of attractions and actions, including a survival game called '*Hide and Seek*', or new designs such as zombies that stick together in a fire.



4. *HITMAN: AGENT JUN* (2020, 109min) <Hi-teu-maen, Dir: *CHOI Won-sub*>, Comedy, Action *Jun* (*Kwon Sang-woo*), a legendary assassin from the secret project Bangpaeyeon (Shieldyon), is the top agent of the Korean National Intelligence Service (Director of NIS, *Jeong Joon-ho*) who can shoot down dozens of terrorists at once. *Jun*, who wants to become a webtoon artist, dream



of since a young child, leaves the NIS under the guise of death and leads an ordinary family life to fulfill his dream. The reality is that every series of works will only receive the worst comments ever. His undisclosed webtoons are ignored by readers and even his wife. Being depressed and angry at himself, Jun suddenly paints a webtoon containing top-secret information as a secret agent in his past under the influence of alcohol. Surprisingly, the webtoon is accidentally opened to the public, word-of-mouth, and it's a big hit overnight. As a result, Jun is a double target for terrorists who hold grudges against Jun and the NIS. Finally, Jun's hit instinct solves everything, and the legendary assassin becomes a webtoon writer.

5. *ASHFALL*(2019, 128min), <Baek-du-san, Dir: *KIM Byeong-seo*>, Adventure, Drama  
South Korea's highest dormant volcano, Mt. Baekdu, exploded unexpectedly between the Chinese and North Korean borders, leaving the Korean Peninsula in turmoil. Seismologists warn that this is only a preliminary explosion. A devastating super-earth phenomenon still remains. *Yoo Kyung*(*Jeon Hye-jin*) was the presidential chief of staff of South Korea. While her team comes up with emergency measures against the impending national crisis, she meets renowned Korean-American seismologist *Bongrae*(*Ma Dong-Seok*). presents a theory that can prevent volcanic eruptions. The two decide to put the plan into practice despite the slim chance of success. *In-chang*(*Ha Jung-woo*) has only a few days left before he finishes his duty at the South Korean military bomb disposal unit. It leaves the team leader in an accident during the missile dismantling operation and convenes for his wife *Ji-young*(*BAE Suzy*) as his last mission before returning home. *In -chang's* team secretly reaches out to *Junpyeong*(*Lee Byung-hun*) a North Korean elite officer who holds the key to its mission to prevent volcanic eruptions. However, *Jun-pyeong* keeps doing the wrong thing. As destruction approaches, everyone must work together to avoid imminent devastation.



6 *#ALIVE*(2020, 97min)<#Sal-a-it-da, Dir: *CHO Il-hyeong*>, Drama

If the box office winner zombie thriller <*Train to Busan*>(2016), Netflix-released Zombie drama <*Kingdom*>(2019), and zombie action <*Peninsula*>(2020) are masterpieces, then <#*ALIVE*> is a case of faithfully creating zombie films for the top male and female youth stars. The zombie movie <#*ALIVE*> by *Matt Naylor*'s scenario is a zombie movie centered on two main characters isolated in their own apartment, and has become the most popular movie in the world on the Netflix distribution network following its release. In a city out of control by unidentified zombies, *Oh Joon-woo*(*Yoo Ah-in*) wakes up without knowing what to say and finds himself alone in a house where no one is around as a game streamer and electronics geek. Data, wi-fi, text, phone, all disconnected and isolated. Following the loss of contact with their families, they face a situation where even the least amount of food is running out. *Junwoo*, who is no longer able to hold out. At that moment, someone from the apartment across the street sends a signal. Another survivor is individualist *Kim Yu-bin*(*Park Shin-hye*) lovin hiking. She is still alive, and they find a way to survive together. When all contact with the outside world is lost, they use their own methods and team up for survival. Open the refrigerator next door to secure the food, connect the rope, and send the food to each other. Eventually, *Jun-woo* arrives at *Yubin*'s apartment and succeeds in escaping with a rescue helicopter, beating out zombies.



7. *STEEL RAIN2: SUMMIT* (2020, 131min)<Jeong-sang-hoe-dam, Dir: *YANG Woo-suk*>, Drama, Action

North Korea is tense in every way. The <*Steel Rain 2: Summit*>, which formally deals with issues with North Korea, transforms the divisional film into a commercial farce. The original webtoon <*Steel Rain*> is the name of the weapon. Thriller elements, submarine action, and black comedy elements are inherent in the film. The film begins with the introduction of the Korean



Peninsula situation and interestingly deals with the political story of North Korea's internal collapse, peace treaty, abandonment of nuclear weapons, and diplomatic ties between the U.S. and North Korea. The coach argues that the division between South and North Korea should be resolved independently between the peoples. Common sense is that relations between South Korea and North Korea are in a truce, not an end to the war. The three parties to the armistice of the Korean War are the United States, China, and North Korea, and the United States replaces South Korea. A movie is a movie. Too much contrast with reality will only diminish the cinematic interest.

A three-nation summit is being held in Wonsan, North Korea Area, between the South Korean president(*Jeong Woo-sung*), the North's supreme leader(*Yoo Yeon-seok*), and the U.S. president(*Angus McFadden*) for a peace treaty between the U.S. and North Korea. Amid the lingering differences between North Korea and the United States, the head of the North's hard-line escort bureau(*Kwak Do-won*), who opposes the abandonment of nuclear weapons and the establishment of a peace regime, staged a coup. The three kidnapped leaders are held hostage in the narrow captain's room of a North Korean nuclear submarine. Inside the cramped captain's room, there is an unexpected real summit. The South Korean president hopes that a peace treaty signed by the leaders of the U.S. and North Korea will pave the way for a peace regime on the beyond political tensions, the film adds to the imagination of Korean-style submarine battles. After consulting, the company mobilized various devices used in submarine battles such as sonobuoy(sound wave detection buoy), active sonar(sound wave radar), deceptive torpedoes, and depth bomb.

8. *HONEST CANDIDATE* (2020, 104min) <Jeong-jik-han Hu-bo, Dir: *CHANG You-jeong*>, Comedy

The title of the political comedy, <*HONEST CANDIDATE*>, paradoxically expresses that politicians have no honest candidates. The movie is faithful to comedy writing and slowly accumulates laughter. *Joo Sang-sook*(*Ra Mi-Ran*), a third-term lawmaker who is easiest to lie, captivates the public with all kinds of good words. She is cursed to tell only the truth just before she challenges a four-term lawmaker in her constituency. *Sang-sook* visits her grandmother(*Na Moon-hee*) who lives in a remote house but finds that she can no longer tell lies with her grandmother's prayers. The past of common sense that she wanted to hide during the election campaign is revealed to the whole world unintentionally. When she loses her best weapon, *Lie*, her life shakes like a thunderbolt. She confesses her guilt and resigns from the candidacy. *Park Hee-chul*(*Kim Moo-yeol*), an aide to Rep. Joo, is a perfect combination. After she went to her cell, She published her autobiography. The sensitive theme of politics in this film is humorous and realistic. She becomes gracious to her twisted mother-in-law. The grandmother's heart for her granddaughter is conveyed.

9. *THE CLOSET* (2020, 97min) <Keul-lo-je, Dir: *KIM Kwang-bin*>, Mystery, Drama

In <*The Closet*>, *Sang-won*(*Ha Jung-woo*), who lost his wife in a sudden car accident, and his daughter *In-a*(*Hu Yul*) move to a rural village. *Sang-won* tries to restore its relationship with the

estranged daughter, but it feels like nothing of its own except for her making new friends. Then one day, Ina starts laughing, saying she has a new friend. This moment of peace doesn't last long as strange sounds leak out of their closets and Ina begins to show strange behavior. A few days after *Sang-won* begins to have an eerie nightmare, *Ina* disappears without a trace. It is none other than Ina's closet where *Kyung-hoon*(*Kim Nam-gil*), a mysterious man, came to *Sang-won* chasing *Ina*'s traces and told him he knew where his daughter was. The exorcist *Kyung-hoon* tells *Sang-won* that he has been searching for missing children for the past decade and believes the key to finding his daughter is in the closet. Desperately trying to find her daughter, *Sang-won* reaches out to open the forbidden wardrobe. The children were abused by their parents or disappeared due to assault or neglect. *Sang-won* had also tried to send *Ina* to a treatment facility. *Sang-won*, which entered the world of the dead, rescues Ina and escapes.

10. *OK! MADAM* (2020, 100min)<O-ke-i! Ma-dam, Dir: *LEE Cheol-ha*>, Comedy, Action  
It is a comedy that was pre-sold in eight countries including Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Singapore before its release. "No one can stop me from going to Hawaii." *Mi-young*(*Eom Jung-hwa*), the owner of Yeongcheon Market's Twisted Snack Restaurant, and her husband *Seok-hwan*(*Park Sung-woong*), a computer repair expert, are on a family trip to Hawaii for the first time since their marriage and are embroiled in a controversy over the hijacking of a plane. a citizen with a daughter. *Mi-young* is a cute and gracious character loved by her husband, Dialogs like a local market woman's wife's speaking, which is the result of melting and contemplating the way merchants talk and the way they look at the dough every day. North Korean agents are trying to take the passengers hostage to promote an atmosphere of fear and kidnap a plane. She turns into a special agent at an emergency, transforms herself into a flight attendant's outfit, and uses various strings, scarves, and soda cans to conduct a live-fire action. Especially when the passengers are seated, she takes action to walk in alone to save the plane.

Actors & Actresses include *Jeon Soo-kyung*(mother – in-law) of a rich family who goes on an expedition to give birth with *Park So-ri*(daughter-in-law), *Kim Byung-ok*(ugly three-times-choice lawmaker), *Kim Nam-gil* who has been slept since he got on board. 'Tikitaka Comedy' utilizes exotic spaces such as the galley, pilot cockpit, and luggage compartment, where flight attendants prepare services, stands out. When the couple heard, "they won the Disneyland ticket", the movie ended with shouting, □They hate airplanes."

11. *SECRET ZOO*(2020, 117min)<Hae-chi-ji-ahn-ah, Dir: *SON Jae-gon*>, Comedy  
*Tae-su*, a probationary lawyer for a famous law firm, dreams of becoming a permanent director there someday. He does his best every day to achieve his goals. It is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, invigorating the failed zoo *Dongsan Park*, and saving the zoo. Having become the new head of the *Dongsan Park*, he offers his employees a fake job as an animal to save the zoo without even animals, not to mention a guest. The five *Dongsan Park* members who came to work as polar bears, lions, giraffes, gorillas, and sloths. Their hairy struggles continue including silent movements, shoulder cramps, muscle clumps, and stiff and stiff back necks. Feeling thirsty, *Taesu* forgets the identity of the polar bear and drinks a sip of coke in front of the audience.

He has three months left and with the help of a zookeeper, no one thinks there is a fake animal in the zoo, so he has a whimsical idea of dressing up like an animal and doing a show for his guests. Zookeepers wear animal costumes and masks. When a video clip of a polar bear drinking a can of coke is posted on the internet, it gets word of mouth. The zoo with fake animals became a huge hit, and *Tae-soo* was able to return to the law firm as a full-time employee. Before leaving the zoo, he learns what his law firm was planning with the zoo. *Tae-su* asks to build a nature-friendly resort. The act of impersonating polar bears under animal masks is ruled by law, but the zoo staff are re-employed at the resort and the bear is sent to Canada, ending in a happy ending.



12. *FORBIDDEN DREAM* (2019, 113min)<Cheon-mun:Ha-neul-e Mud-neun-da, Dir: *HUR Jin-ho*>, Epics, Historical

This movie is a true historical drama that tells the story of *King Sejong* (*Han Seok-gyu*), the supreme ruler of the Joseon Dynasty (1392-1910), and genius scientist *Jang Young-sil* (*Choi Min-sik*), who tried to enhance national prosperity and military power through astronomy. They wanted to make Joseon's time and sky beyond the difference in status. The movie is shot while paying attention to their emotional and psychological changes. The inner emotional line of *Sejong* was a close-up, while *Jang Young-sil*, which looks at *Sejong*, was mainly used for full shots. The director makes the emotions of the characters in the movie change and the natural space of the time. The lack of historical records about *Jang Young-sil* attracted the director's attention. The director puts behind the achievements of *Sejong* and *Jang Young-Sil* together and exerts his imagination on why the relationship between the two went sour.

History records that in the 24th year of *King Sejong*'s reign, *Jang Yeong-sil* was reprimanded for the broken hand gama in which the king rode instead of a car, was sentenced to 80 times of

beating on the buttocks and was kicked out of the palace overnight. Since then, there has been no record of *Jang* in any history. The unusual production methods and the help of adjacent genres to express the characters' meticulous emotional lines have greatly contributed to the film's artistic perfection.

#### 4. Korean Independent Film, Non-commercial Film

Among all Korean films, independent films account for about 13.0 percent. If an independent film has 1 million viewers, you can think of it as a big hit. It is a success if it attracts about 100,000 viewers. Korean independent films have continued to show stellar growth at both qualitative and quantitative levels, with the director's rich imagination, cute stories and excellent techniques in each category. Fresh and original themes, materials and technical completeness are also gradually being developed. Diversified audiences are also increasingly interested in high-quality independent and non-commercial films, and are harmonized with production, direction, and audience. As of September 28, 2020, we will take a look at the looks and stories of impressive films divided into screening films.

Rank Title Release Date Yearly Gross(Total) Admissions Number of Screens Revenue Share

1	<i>Beauty Water</i>	Sep 09	\$674,701	88,629	276	19.94%
2	<i>Hotel Lake</i>	Apr 29	\$512,013	71,324	465	15.13%
5	<i>Lucky Chan-sil</i>	Mar 05	\$200,323	27,408	241	5.92%
9	<i>Moving On</i>	Aug 20	\$130,423	18,201	133	3.85%
11	<i>Bori</i>	May 21	\$71,251	11,579	158	2.1%
13	<i>An Old Lady</i>	Aug 20	\$58,775	8,340	105	1.73%
15	<i>Journey to Kailash</i>	Sep 03	\$47,663	7,175	47	1.4%
19	<i>Move the Grave</i>	Mar 25	\$33,841	4,885	82	1%
25	<i>House of Hummingbird</i>	Aug 29, 2019	\$18,293	2,544	14	0.54%
28	<i>Tiny Light</i>	Jan 23	\$13,031	1,955	21	0.38%
29	<i>The Hill of Wind</i>	Apr 23	\$11,594	1,906	28	0.34%
30	<i>Untold</i>	Feb 27	\$13,630	1,884	14	0.4%

Director *CHO Kyung-hun's* 85-min-long animation <*Beauty Water*> topped the independent film box office list. <*Beauty Water*> is a horror and thriller about plastic surgery and human psychology. <*Hotel Lake*>, directed by *Yoon Eun-kyung*, the No. 2 independent film in the box office. Yumi visits Hotel Lake to take care of her younger sister. A hotel owner *Gyung-sun* welcomes the two sisters like family members and this movie follows the formula of a horror movie. The most notable independent film is director *Kim Bo-ra's* <*The Hummingbird*> which features a delicate production that brings out the daily lives of middle school student *Eun-hee* with universal sympathy.



Director *Kim Cho-hee's* <*Lucky Chan-sil*> deals with what happens when film producer *Chan-sil* (*Kang Mal-geum*) is a housekeeper for actress *Sophie*, who is close to her when the film business is cut off. *Chan-sil* is always honest about her feelings. The movie, which depicts *Chan-sil's* life, is a movie that has both popularity and cinematic quality. Director *Yoon Dan-bi's* <*Moving On*> is a movie that combines pieces of universal memory about family in the past. It tells the story of the whole family that will remain in memory as the summer begins in such an old two-story western-style house, and even their aunt, who has not seen them for a while, with his brother *Dong-ju* and sister *Ok-ju*, who were staying at his grandfather's house during the vacation.

Director *Kim Jin-yu's* <*Bori*> is the only girl in the family who can hear sounds and wants to be like her family. Director *Lim Sun-ae's* <*An Old Lady*> depicts a blind spot in the human rights of the elderly, take a 69-year-old woman, for example, who was raped by a 29-year-old nursing assistant based on a true story and the age of the boundary between middle and old age.

Director *Kwon Man-ki's* <*Breathing*> depicts kidnapping is about guilt, trauma, and compassion through crime. Director *Chung Seung-oh's* <*Move the Grave*> is a film that shows the reality faced by women, including the lives of four sisters who have lived in the shadow of the patriarchal system and their mother who has been living in a tough marriage and bid farewell to the patriarchal system.

Director *Chung Hyung-min's* documentary <*Journey to Kailash*> is a road movie about the journey from Korea to Kailash, which makes you realize what life as a human being and service to the global community are. Director *Cho Min-jae's* <*Little Light*> calmly depicts what happens when the main character, who has to undergo brain surgery, takes a video of his family after being told by a doctor that he may lose his memory after the surgery. For cinematic reasons, realistic acting and realism stand out. The <*Hill of Wind*> is a story about a mother who abandoned her young daughter for fear of becoming a mother, and a daughter who meets her mother again after all those years. Director *Lee Gil-bo's* <*Untold*> is a documentary about the massacre of civilians by South Korean troops during the Vietnam War, based on the testimony of the victims of the Vietnam War. Director *Lee Gil-bo's* <*Untold*> is a documentary about the massacre of civilians by the Korean soldiers because the Vietnamese people helped the Vietnamese civil soldiers and the Korean soldiers died, during the Vietnam War, based on testimonies by victims of the Vietnam War. In 2020, let's take a look at some impressive independent films.

1. *JOURNEY TO KAILASH* (2020, 89min) <Ka-il-la-seu Ga-neun Gil, Dir: JUNG Hyung-min>, Documentary

An 84-year-old mother and a 49-year-old son embark on an adventure. Beginning at Lake Baikal, also known as the soul of Siberia, they trek through the Mongolian plains, the Gobi Desert, Central Asia, the Pamir Plateau, the Taklamakan Desert, the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau to their destination in Tibet, Mount Kailash. This being the mother's first journey abroad, she chose this



destination herself, as a journey for meditation and healing. (*Jinna Lee*, Ulju Mountain Film Festival 2018)

2. *LUCKY CHAN-SIL* (2020, 96min)<Chan-sil-i-neun Bok-do-man-ji, Dir: *KIM Cho-hee*>, Drama

She gave her life to film and now the only thing left is her screwed life! After a sudden death of the director she worked with for a long time, a film producer Chan-sil is now unemployed.

Jobless and moneyless, she begins to work as a cleaning lady at an actress' place. By chance, she meets a young man who teaches French to the actress. Chan-sil is strongly attracted to him while her old anxieties begin to emerge; her already-gone-youth, screwed love, and broken career etc.

3. *MOVING ON* (2020, 104min)<Nam-mae-eui Yeo-reum-bam, Dir: *YUN Dan-bi*>, Drama

At one summer night, the sister and brother find their new home. Ok-ju and Dong-ju move into their grandpa's house during their summer vacation after their father went broke. While young Dong-ju well adapts to his new home, Ok-ju rather feels awkward about this new environment. Soon after their soon-to-be-divorced aunt also moves in, and as Ok-ju spends time with her family, the house and her grandpa are starting to grow on her. However, when her grandpa gets sick, father and aunt decide to send him to the sanatorium and sell the house.

4. *BORI* (2020, 110min)<Na-neun-bo-ri, Dir: *KIM Jin-yu*>, Drama

'I want to lose my hearing. *Bori*, an 11-year-old girl who lives in a sea village, is the only family member who can hear. Being an elementary school girl, *Bori* gradually becomes more familiar with communicating with her friends at school by speaking and has a difficult time joining in a sign language conversation at home. Why was she the only person born different from her family? The more she thinks about it, the more she feels alienated.



5. *AN OLD LADY* (2020, 100min)<Yook-sip-gu-se, Dir: *LIM Sun-ae*>, Drama

Hyo-jeong, a 69-year-old woman, is raped by a male nurse aide. She informs it to Dong-in who lives with her and reports to the police but few people, including the police, are willing to believe her words. Most people question whether that handsome young man really would have done so. Only Dong-in, who loves Hyo-jeong dearly, is cooing to free her from her injustice but even

himself feels difficult to trust her wholeheartedly. Meanwhile, the male nurse aide claims that it was a consensual sexual relationship and the court rejects the arrest warrant on the nurse. Now Hyo-jeong is up to a plan by herself less.



6. *HOUSE OF HUMMINGBIRD* (2019, 139min)<Beol-sae, Dir: *KIM Bora*>, Drama  
 ‘What’s the right way to live? Some days I feel like I know, but I really don’t know for sure. I just know that when bad things happen, good things happen too.’ Korea, 1994. The South is in the grips of FIFA World Cup fever, while the North mourns its newly deceased dictator. *Eun-hee* registers all of this only in passing. Drifting through her days in Seoul, the eighth-grader feels like an outsider everywhere: at school, where her classmates bore her even more than the schoolwork, and at home, where her parents are always at each other’s throats and her brother beats her. She tries to fall in love, has to go to hospital after an inconclusive biopsy, and has a falling-out with her best friend— yet nothing moves her with the same unexpected intensity as when a new Chinese tutor enters her life. With visual precision, *Kim Bo-ra* weaves a dense narrative around a regular summer that leaves nothing unchanged.

## 5. Still, Korean Films have Hope

Those who are disappointed with the way and way Korean commercial films approach the subject can pin their hopes on long-length independent films and short films with different themes and ideas. Korean independent films have consistently won awards at international film festivals. There are many female directors emerging in Korea. Though classified as a commercial film, the works of *Hong Sang-soo* and *Kim Ki-duk*, which are at the boundary of commercial and independent films, are being produced steadily.

Director *Bong Joon-ho*, who showed a new change after *Park Chan-wook*, shows a hopeful success that excessive experimental films can be eliminated in the film with the theme-changing film <*Parasite*>. He made the Academy Awards exciting. He showed that Korean films should be aimed at the world rather than the narrow Korean film market, and he found a breakthrough by using the issue of capital imbalance as a world theme.

1) Director *Hong Sang-soo's* <*The Woman Who Ran*>, which won the best director award at the 70th Berlin International Film Festival in February this year, and it was released on September 17. It is Hong's 24th feature and the seventh collaboration with actor Kim Min-hee. Kim Min-hee won the best actress award at the Berlin Film Festival for Hong's <*On the Beach at Night Alone*>(2017). The film tells the story of Young-hee(Kim Min-hee), who meets three friends while her husband is on a business trip.

2) Japanese director *Koreeda Hirokazu's* first Korean film, <*Broke*>, will be produced in Korea. The director, who won the Jury Prize at the 66th Cannes Film Festival for <*Like Father, Like Son*>(2013), and the director who won the Palme d'Or award at the 71st Cannes Film Festival for <*Shoplifters*>(2018), and actors *Song Kang-ho*, *Kang Dong-won* and *Bae Doo-na*, who represent Korea, will appear. <*Broke*> is a family human drama with a heavy message surrounding a baby box designed to allow people who cannot raise children to leave their babies anonymously.

3) Director Ahn Jae-hoon's feature animation <*The Shaman Sorceress*> won a special jury award in the competition section of the 44th Annecy International Animation Film Festival, called "*The Cannes of the Animation*." The director has made modern novels into animated films. Based on *Kim Dong-Ri's* short novel (1936), it is a Korean-style musical film about a tragedy in which a family breaks down due to conflicts between traditional shamanism and Christianity.

Note:

1)All statistics without a separate date mark are as of September 27., 2020

2)The dollar conversion date is September 27, 2020, and US \$1 is KRW ₩1174.45

3)All Data are from Kobiz(Korean Film Zone) of KOFIC(Korean Film Council).

4)The Film Festival data were provided by the organizers.

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