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"12 ANGRY MEN INSIDE AMY SCHUMER"

Carefully Reimagining a Cinema Classic

Is Amy Schumer hot enough to be on television? Yes, but just barely. That's the verdict reached by the jurors of "12 Angry Men Inside Amy Schumer," the groundbreaking comedic film parody from the eponymous rising star of the Comedy Central show.

Shot by series director of photography Jonathan Furmanski (@jfuranski), the 22-minute sketch, which aired in May, has been heralded as not only a send-



From left, John Hawkes, Paul Giamatti (standing), George Riddle, Kumail Nanjiani, Chris Beetem, Jeff Goldblum, Chris Gethard, Nick Di Paolo, Vincent Kartheiser, Adrian Martinez and Kevin Kane



Amy Schumer

up of the types of misogynistic vitriol famous women face, but also an excellent re-creation of its source material. Written and co-directed by Schumer, alongside series director Ryan McFaul, the sketch features brilliant performances from Paul Giamatti, Jeff Goldblum, Vincent Kartheiser, Chris Gethard, Kumail Nanjiani, and John Hawkes in Henry Fonda's role as Juror 8. Lovingly crafted, with staging, costuming and props precisely mirroring the 1957 classic directed by Sidney Lumet and photographed by Boris Kaufman, it's incredibly specific, beginning with the cross-fade from the courtroom into the jury room and playing out beat for beat to the film's dramatic climax.

With only two days to shoot the entire episode, Furmanski and his team relied on careful planning. The team used an ARRI Amira outfitted with a set of Leica Summicron lenses and two Angenieux Optimo 24-290mm zoom lenses, the same package employed for the entire season of the show. The first and second seasons of *Inside Amy Schumer* had been shot with Amira's larger sibling, the ARRI Alexa, but for season three, the production team opted to make the switch to the smaller ENG-style documentary camera.

"The Amira is essentially the smaller, lighter-weight version of the Alexa," Furmanski remarks. "It has the same technology, the same sensor, the same dynamic range, so you get the same look but in a smaller, lightweight package. Given that we were going to be doing a lot of handheld again this season,

it just seemed obvious to make the switch because we were sacrificing nothing in terms of quality, but it was a lot easier on our shoulders and backs."

Re-creating the distinctive look of *12 Angry Men* was an exciting challenge for Furmanski. "The original film is, as you say, iconic in terms of its look, and Boris Kaufman did a phenomenal job of not only creating that look but keeping it interesting as he spent 90 minutes in one room with 12 guys. There's never a dull moment, dramatically or photographically, which is really a testament to his talent and ability and creativity," the DP notes.

Series colorist Troy Thompson at Running Man Post completed color correction for the episode using a Digital Vision Nucoda color grading system. "Finishing the project digitally, as opposed to photochemically, gave us much greater control



A jury made up entirely of men debates whether Amy Schumer is hot enough to be on TV. Shown here, from left: George Riddle (head down), Paul Giamatti, John Hawkes, Vincent Kartheiser and Chris Gethard

in terms of the final image,” Furmanski relates. “That said, we did try to create as much of the look as we could in-camera, but because we were shooting 11 or 12 pages a day over two days, we didn’t have as much time to be as meticulous as we could have been or wanted to be. Knowing that we would be able to go in and work with our colorist to really fine-tune the look definitely relieved some of the burden.”

Furmanski collaborated with co-directors Schumer and McFaul to create the film parody. “The three of us spent a lot of time watching the original film, analyzing it, comparing the dramatic moments in it to the moments that we were trying to achieve in our version, figuring out which specific camera beats we wanted to mimic,” Furmanski recounts. “It was really exciting because it was such a departure from what the show normally is

in terms of the look and the process.”

The episode mirrors *12 Angry Men*’s three-act structure, employing the highly specific camera vocabulary Kaufman developed for the film. The first act is shot from above, implying omniscience. The second act is filmed at a more egalitarian eye level as the jurors make their arguments. The third act, however, is shot from below, creating a tight, claustrophobic feel that adds to the suspense leading up to the final verdict. In the end, yes, Amy is hot enough to bang.

“Everything we did in terms of the look and the dynamic refers back to the film,” Furmanski points out. “We had a bible we constantly referred to that was basically a ton of screen grabs from the original film. We always had something where we could say, ‘All right, here is where we are in our story, and here’s where they were in their story. How can we make these connect to each other in some way?’”

The first scene inside the jury room, a lengthy single-take sequence that introduces both the setting and the main characters as they settle at the table, took the longest to re-create. “That was our toughest scene,” Furmanski admits, but he adds that the bigger hurdle was creating a 22-minute version of a feature-length film. “Compressing the time and the specific dramatic moments that we were trying to address was challenging,” he says. “In between these things that refer directly back to the original film, we created our own little language to move our story along.” **dv**



From left, Chris Gethard, Nick Di Paolo, Vincent Kartheiser, Adrian Martinez and Kevin Kane



Amy receives the verdict from the judge, played by Dennis Quaid