

# FEATURES

MONDAY, JULY 7, 2008

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## Band lineup, main stage

### 7/11 Friday

**4:30pm**  
► **Mojo**  
Newcomer Taiwanese indie-pop band

**5:30pm**  
► **AniDa and Gloria Tang**  
Singer-songwriter duo on acoustic guitar and keyboards, and current favorites in Hong Kong's indie-pop scene

**6:10pm**  
► **88 Balaz**  
(八十八顆芭樂籽)  
Punk-flavored Taiwanese rock led by charismatic singer Ah-chang, winner of the first Taiwan Indie Rock Award in 2001

**7:10pm**  
► **Deserts Chang**  
(張懸 — 簡單華語風)  
Indie singer-songwriter popular for her soothing voice and thoughtful lyrics; her band Mango Run won the Taiwan Indie Rock Award in 2003.

**8:05pm**  
► **Crowd Lu** (盧廣仲)  
Geek-chic folk rocker whose album *100 Ways of Life* (100種生活) recently reached No. 3 on the Mandarin pop charts

**8:30pm**  
► **Queen Sea Big Shark**  
(后海大鯊魚)  
Popular underground rock band from Beijing; combines surf and

garage rock sounds with 1980s dance beats

**9:30pm**  
► **Sodagreen** (蘇打綠)  
Popular college rock band that won the Taiwan Indie Rock Award in 2004; won the highly coveted Best Band Award on Saturday night at the Golden Melody Awards for the second time in a row

### 7/12 Saturday (Taiwan Indie Band Awards Competition)

**4pm**  
► **Pa Pun** (怕胖團)  
Pop Punk

**4:30pm**

► **The Shine & Shine & Shine & Shine** (閃閃閃閃)  
Electronica and rock

**5pm**  
► **Zheng and Ren** (鄭晴文和任詔)  
Acoustic folk duet

**5:30pm**  
► **Silent Toads** (噤吉咕咕)  
American-style rock

**6pm**  
► **Handsome Boyz** (大鬍門)  
Hip-hop

**6:30pm**  
► **Salamander** (沙羅曼蛇)  
Psycho-trance and electro-rock

**7pm**  
► **White Eyes** (白目)  
Punk

**7:30pm**  
► **KoOk**  
Grunge

**8pm**  
► **Havens** (黑凡斯)  
Jazzy rock

**8:30pm**  
► **Digihai** (低級嗨)  
Indie-electronica

**9pm**  
► **Children Sucker** (表兒)  
Hip-hop and taiko rock — winner of the 2007 Taiwan Indie Music Award

**9:30pm**  
► **Announcement of winner**

**9:40pm**

► **Encore performance by winner**

### 7/13 Sunday

**4pm**  
► **Jindowin** (勁斗雲)  
Electro-dance rock outfit of Taiwanese and American musicians based in Taipei

**5pm**  
► **Phonebooth**  
Korean band that plays melodic, distortion-drenched rock

**6pm**  
► **Djizoes**  
Pronounced as "Jesus," this Swiss band plays a combination of hard rock, metal and progressive rock

**7pm**  
► **Dum-Dum Dan**  
Japanese dance and punk rock group

**8pm**  
► **Faith Yang** (楊乃文)  
Australian-born actress and singer who rose to stardom in the Mando-pop world, but later shunned the commercial pop music scene

**9pm**  
► **Zombie Zombie** (France)  
French electronica duo made up of a drummer and Etienne Jaumet, who uses an array of digital and analog synthesizers. The pair play music inspired by cult movies and horror flicks

# Rockin' on the fringe

The annual Ho-Hai-Yan Rock Festival has become a summer mecca for high school and college kids, and its battle of the bands competition has garnered a devoted following of independent bands

BY DAVID CHEN  
STAFF REPORTER

Chen Hao (陳翹) has been living the rock 'n' roll dream. Eight years ago, he was "just a fan" when he first attended the Ho-Hai-Yan Rock Festival (海洋音樂祭) — he vividly remembers watching punk rockers 88 Balaz (八十八顆芭樂籽) win the battle of the bands competition. The group's performance was "shocking," he said. After the show, he was determined to learn the guitar.

Today, he shreds mad riffs as a guitarist in two bands: 88 Balaz and Children Sucker (表兒), which won the festival's competition last year. Chen, 25, will appear on stage with both groups this weekend as Ho-Hai-Yan enters its ninth year.

As usual, Ho-Hai-Yan takes place at Fulong (福隆) beach over three days, with more than 50 bands scheduled to play, among them Taiwan's top independent bands as well as groups from France, Switzerland and Japan.

The festival's battle of the bands competition is in the spotlight this year, occupying Saturday's prime-time slot. Dubbed the Taiwan Indie Music Awards, the event features 10 finalists that passed a first round with a demo submission and then a second round of live performances. The bands get to test their mettle in front of a crowd that is expected to top 400,000 people this year, a Taipei County Government spokeswoman said.

The winner walks away with NT\$200,000, and a shot at big-time success. Past victors include folk-rock group Sodagreen (蘇打綠), which won the Golden Melody Award for best band on Saturday night, the second time in a row, and now plays for stadium-capacity crowds, and indie-rock group Tizzy Bac, which enjoys a loyal following in Taiwan's alternative scene.

But no matter who wins, all of the finalists benefit from playing on the big stage. "It's the best possible experience for a young band to have," said Chen.

This is one reason why scores of bands enter the competition, which along with the festival is co-organized by Taiwan Colors Music (TCM, 角頭音樂) and the Taipei County Government. This year 132 bands submitted demos, from which judges chose 30 to participate in semifinal live competitions.

While many bands see the competition as a chance "to get their name out there," the events are relaxed and free of pomp. At one of the semifinal events at the Yingge Ceramics Museum (鶯歌陶瓷博物館) several weeks ago, there was a spirit of camaraderie and genuine interest among the bands. Many cheering audience members were themselves from bands, who also congregated backstage to chat with fellow musicians.

At the outdoor event, there was a diversity of rock styles, ranging from quiet acoustic folk to eardrum-bursting heavy metal.

"I think [this competition] gives many different kinds of underground bands an opportunity," said Obiwan Chen (陳正航), after his folk-rock band



Clockwise from above left: Dance punk band Dum-Dum Dan is one of the featured international acts at the Ho-Hai-Yan Rock Festival at Fulong Beach on Sunday; Pop punk band Pa Pun performs at the Ho-Hai-Yan battle of the bands semifinals at the Yingge Ceramics Museum; Electro-rock and trance band Salamander performs at the Ho-Hai-Yan battle of the bands semifinals at the Yingge Ceramics Museum.

PHOTOS: DAVID CHEN, TAIPEI TIMES AND COURTESY OF TAIWAN COLORS MUSIC

Zenkun (神棍樂團) finished its set in Yingge. "I feel that [Ho-Hai-Yan] is very tolerant ... whatever you want to do, you can try it at this competition."

The bands are also getting better — many of the acts in Yingge sounded polished. Overall, the quality of Taiwan's rock scene has improved as "society has become more open over the past 10 years," said Pei Lee (李佩璇), one of the competition judges and a past organizer of Spring Scream and Formoz.

"More young people are doing what they want to be doing," which is playing rock 'n' roll, Lee said. Many of the competition finalists already have years of experience playing together, and many have already released CDs, she added.

But quantity doesn't mean quality to Chen Hao, 88 Balaz's guitarist. He fears that originality and creativity among Taiwanese indie bands is deteriorating. The groups that inspired Chen in the earlier years of the festival had a stronger "Taiwanese" flavor music; nowadays bands tend to emulate more "European or American styles," Chen said.

Change seems to be one constant for Ho-Hai-Yan. Following last year's high-profile appearance of Chinese rock legend Cui Jian (崔健), this year's headline act on Sunday is the relatively unknown Zombie Zombie, a French electronica duo that consists of Etienne Jaumet, who plays an array of synthesizers, and CosmicNeman, who plays a standard drum kit. The pair describes their music as "like in a horror movie when the car won't start, you give it one last try." Another noteworthy band is Queen Sea Big Shark (后海大鯊魚) from Beijing, which plays an interesting mix of surf rock and 1980s dance music.

The festival has experienced growing pains in recent editions, but its legacy endured a tug-of-war in 2006 when the Taipei County Government chose Formosa TV (FTV, 民視) to run the event instead of the festival's founder TCM.

### FESTIVAL NOTES:

**WHAT:** Ho-Hai-Yan Rock Festival  
**WHEN:** This Friday, Saturday, and Sunday  
**WHERE:** Fulong beach, Taipei County  
**ENTRANCE:** Free Admission  
**ON THE NET:** www.hohaiyan.com

### HOW TO GET THERE:

Additional trains have been scheduled between Taipei Main Station and Fulong throughout the weekend, but as of press time the times haven't been announced. See this Friday's *Taipei Times* for further details or visit [www.railway.gov.tw/index.htm](http://www.railway.gov.tw/index.htm). There are chartered tour buses leaving from Taipei Main Station. See [www.hohaiyan.com/2008.aspx](http://www.hohaiyan.com/2008.aspx) for details (Chinese only).

TCM returned last year as the festival's organizer. The Taipei County Government is keen on keeping its finger on the nub of youth. "We're probably the only government in the world that supports a private event for non-mainstream music," said Chin Hui-chu (蔡慧珠), director of the Taipei County Government's Travel and Tourism Bureau (台北縣政府觀光旅遊局).

But 23-year-old Philip Wu (吳翰文) isn't likely to notice, as his mind will be on other things — his band Havens (黑凡斯) qualified to play in Saturday's competition.

"It's a dream to perform on the big stage, with thousands of people there," he said at the semifinals in Yingge. "We enjoy the competition ... because it's music for life — that's the rock spirit."

# PLANET POP

A blonde hair extension that British supermodel **Kate Moss** reportedly lost in Berlin has been auctioned on eBay for US\$1,264, *Bild* reported on Friday.

Moss, 34, shed the hairpiece while trying to duck paparazzi as she returned to the plush Hotel Adlon after a night out in the German capital last month, according to press reports.

The photographer who then posted it on eBay plans to donate the proceeds to a

German anti-drugs charity, *Bild* said.

All four members of supergroup ABBA appeared together on Friday at the Swedish premiere of the film *Mamma Mia!*, delighting fans with their first public showing for years. **Benny Andersson, Bjorn Ulvaeus, Anni-Frid Lyngstad** — known as Frida — and **Agnetha Faltskog** walked down the red carpet at a Stockholm movie theater to the cheers of several thousand fans.

For years Hollywood's paparazzi have hounded celebrities, but now — with help from local politicians, a lawyer in the Monica Lewinsky case, and even Malibu surfers — they are the ones feeling the heat. In Los Angeles and the nearby beachside

enclave of Malibu, city leaders want to slap restrictions on the paparazzi citing safety concerns. But the paps, along with legal experts, say they are protected by their right to free speech under the US Constitution.

Baseball star **Alex Rodriguez** of the New York Yankees and his wife, **Cynthia Rodriguez**, have broken up, according to the *New York Daily News*, amid media speculation that he has been seeing pop star **Madonna**. Cynthia Rodriguez, 34, has gone to the Paris apartment of rock star **Lenny Kravitz**, 44, the *Daily News* said, but Kravitz released a statement saying the two are just friends.

The call girl linked to the sex scandal that prompted the resignation

of then-New York governor **Eliot Spitzer** in March has dropped a multimillion-US dollar lawsuit against *Girls Gone Wild* founder **Joe Francis**. A statement from an attorney for **Ashley Alexandra Dupre** said the complaint, filed in April in federal court in Miami and alleging illegal use of Dupre's name and image, was withdrawn on Thursday.

A man tore the head from a controversial waxwork figure of Adolf Hitler on the opening day of Berlin's Madame Tussauds museum on Saturday, police said. Just minutes after the museum opened, the 41-year-old German man pushed aside two security men guarding the exhibit and decapitated the former Fuhrer. —AGENCIES

Bjorn Ulvaeus, far left, and Benny Anderson, center, of the Swedish group Abba arrive for the world premiere of the film *Mamma Mia* in London. Alex Rodriguez of the New York Yankees has split up from his wife less than three months after the birth of their second daughter.

PHOTOS: AFP