

FRIDAY, JULY 18, 2008 • TAIPEI TIMES

POP STOP



Jolin Tsai (蔡依林)

revealed her humanitarian side earlier this week when she held a press conference to help promote World Vision relief efforts for victims of the Sichuan earthquake, reported the Liberty Times (the Taipei Times' sister newspaper).

But rather than ask questions about her volunteerism, such as what exactly she'll be doing in Sichuan Province or does she plan to show this kind of compassion for victims of the cyclone in Myanmar, the journos on hand pestered the diva with questions about the size of the diamond in Delia Tseng's (曾馨瑩) new ring (which reportedly weighs in at a whopping 10 carats).

Readers of Pop Stop will recall that Tseng is marrying Terry Gou (郭台銘), the megabucks president of Hon Hai Precision Industry Co (鴻海精密), on July 26. What led to such rapid questions were earlier reports that Tseng, a dancer in Tsai's music videos and concerts, showed off the ring while the two performers were getting a manicure.

The wedding ceremony between the two lovebirds will take place at Taipei's Grand Hyatt Hotel after which the pair will fly off with an entourage to a castle in the Czech Republic. The guest list is said to include family, friends such as Tsai and celebrities such as One Million Star "talent" show celebrity Aska Yang (楊宗緯).

Speaking of Yang, he may have the voice of an angel but he's got the connections of a two-bit hoodlum. At least that's what the Apple Daily implied in a report on Monday. The gossip rag caught up with former gangster Chang Chung-hsin (張忠信) who discussed his past association with the crybaby crooner.



Maggie Cheung isn't invited.

It turns out the Yang's foray into the entertainment biz began when Chang introduced Aska to celebrity agent Hsu An-chin (許安進). However, a contract dispute last year between Hsu and Yang focused the spotlight on Chang's underworld activities, which eventually landed him in prison for violating the Organized Crime Prevention Act (組織犯罪條例).

Meanwhile, Chang says he has found religion and spends his days studying Buddhism. When Apple asked him to comment on his relationship with Yang, Chang replied, "Our karma has ended (緣起緣滅)." Yang has also remained tight-lipped about his relationship with the underworld figure.

In other gangster news, Carina Lau (劉嘉玲) set the record straight about her traumatic experiences in 1990 in an interview with Hong Kong socialite and novelist Eunice Lam (林燕妮) that was published last week in Guangzhou's Nanfang Daily (南方日報). Lau told Lam that she was kidnapped by triads 18 years ago and forced to pose naked for photographs, which were leaked and published in East Week (東周刊) magazine in 2002.

Lau revealed that while being held against her will, Hong Kong hunk and boyfriend Tony Leung Chiu Wai (梁朝偉) negotiated for her release with the gangsters. Leung, in an act of selflessness rarely seen in showbiz, put his career on hold for a year and devoted all his time to Lau's recovery, telling the New York Times, "A human being is more important than a movie." Leung's noble actions, Lau said, were the reason why she fell in love with him.

The couple will marry in Bhutan on July 21 in a wedding that, in addition to family, boasts an A-list cast of Hong Kong celebrities including Wong Kar-wai (王家衛), who will direct the ceremony.

To make it the storybook wedding it deserves to be, the couple made a blacklist, according to Apple. Terry Gou's rumored relationship with Lau ensured he wasn't invited, while interloper Maggie Cheung (張曼玉) was also kept off the guest list.

— COMPILED BY NOAH BUCHAN

Carina Lau is making a list and checking it twice. PHOTO: TAIPEI TIMES

When an interview with THC — Taipei Hip-hop Crew (H in P in Taipei) — turns into a three-hour discussion of art, philosophy and the Mayan calendar, it's clear the members of this group break the hip-hop mold: they've substituted mysticism and intellectuality for misogyny and violence, but without sacrificing the edginess or profanity.

THC plays at Roxy Vibe Live House's opening party tonight. Vibe, the notorious meat market/disco microcosm of the expat community, has been remodeled and will now be hosting live bands on weekends until 1am (or 2am for special events), before reverting back to its old ways as a disco with a DJ.

Like many expat bands here, THC met through an open-mic night. Zach Touzin, aka MC Babble On, hosted the night, and Kyle Sveinson, aka DJ Vast, provided the music. "We tried to make it no holds barred, something fresh and underground where you could say anything" said Babble On of the now-defunct night at the former Living Room, which is under new management as Center Stage.

The Crew was formed when Touzin and Sveinson met Elliot Tsai (蔡一暉), aka Tha Shaman, two years ago and gave up the open-mic night to focus on their own music. They now spend three to four days a week making music in Stoneworks Studios, which Vast built in his apartment.

It's refreshing to listen to a band whose members make all their own beats. The first sample of the Crew's new CD, Countdown to Unsound — a sparking lighter followed by a bubbling noise and a drawn-out exhalation — is homemade, said Vast, who studied sound engineering in Canada.

Shaman, who hails from Texas and also makes beats, said the CD's title is a reference to 2012, when some



Above: From left Tha Shaman, Vast and Babble On of THC.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF KLOPE PILOT

High on THC

believe the Mayan calendar will end with apocalyptic repercussions.

THC performs in three languages, English, French and Mandarin, with the English and Chinese lyrics following the same rhyme scheme in some songs, as in the title track from the new album: "Flows that hit the ground, we don't fuck around/ The THC, we gonna break it down anyhow/ Wanqji le fannaio, huijia zai dapaol Women de gongzuo jiu shi rang nimen high dao gaocao."

The last part of the verse translates as: "Forget your worries, go home and get laid" (忘記了煩惱,回家再打炮) "Our job is to make you so high that you climax" (我們的工作就是讓你們high到高潮). This is still hip-hop, after all.

Hip-hop/rock band hybrid

outfit, Dr Renculous and the Skallunz, and DJ Marcus Aurelius join THC for the opening party of Roxy Vibe Live House tonight.

"We all know Vibe now has the reputation of being an after-hours sleazy joint. We want to change that," Roxy Vibe Live House stage manager Gregory Dion Russell said in an interview on Monday. Vibe's DJ booth is a central focus of one end of the dance floor, with a fully equipped space for live bands at the other end. The laser light effects were very colorful and psychedelic last weekend and made the dance floor surreal.

Russell has a killer lineup for the opening weekend, with the



TOP FIVE MANDARIN ALBUMS JUNE 27 TO JULY 3

- 1 Jam Hsiao (蕭敬騰) and Jam Hsiao (蕭敬騰) with 15.96 percent
2 Yoga Lin (林有嘉) and Mystery Guest (神秘嘉賓) with 13.01%
3 Vanness Wu (吳建豪) and In Between 2008 — New Songs and Greatest Hits Collection (In Between 2008 新歌+精選) with 10.28%
4 Eason Chen (陳奕迅) and Don't Want to Let Go (不想放手) with 7.64%
5 Ring (丁噐) and Decisively Loved (我愛上的) with 7.02%

ALBUM CHART COMPILED FROM G-MUSIC (WWW.G-MUSIC.COM.TW), BASED ON RETAIL SALES

[EVENTS & ENTERTAINMENT]

Theater

Water, cobwebs, bubbles and dry ice are some of the methods Slava's Snow Show uses to wow audiences. There are also clowns and a snow blizzard of confetti that blankets the audience in this award-winning tragicomedy that follows the life of a clown who tries to find meaning in a hostile world.

► Taichung Chungshan Hall (台中市中山堂), 98 Hsuehshih Rd, Taichung City (台中市學士路98號)
► Today, tomorrow and Sunday at 7:30pm and tomorrow and Sunday at 2:30pm
► Tickets are NTS1,000 to NTS3,000, available through NTCH ticketing

An early Hakka and Hoklo (commonly known as Taiwanese) musical, April Rain (四月望雨) returns to the stage tomorrow. The multilingual performance — Hoklo, Hakka, Mandarin and Japanese — is based on the life of Teng Yu-sian (鄧雨賢), a Japanese-colonial era composer who has been hailed as the father of Taiwanese folk music. Teng is portrayed as an artist caught between different cultures and torn between idealism and reality.

► Tickets are NTS300 to NTS2,500, available through NTCH ticketing

Who is the fairest of them all? Song Song Children's & Puppet Theater (九歌兒童劇團) has adapted Snow White into a story of unrequited love in A Dwarf Who Loved Snow White (愛上白雪公主的小矮人), a children's performance that sees one of the seven dwarfs falling in love with the kingdom's fairest princess.

► Jhongli Arts Center (中壢藝術館), 16 Jungmei Rd, Jhongli City (中壢市中美路16號)
► Tomorrow at 2:30pm and 7:30pm
► Tickets are NTS300 to NTS800, available through NTCH ticketing

Classical music

Passion & Despair — Victor Coo & Yehsin Wu in a Concert (Passion & Despair — 維多·高與吳亞欣音樂會) features Victor Coo on cello and Wu Yehsin on piano performing a program that includes Shostakovich's Sonata for Cello and Piano in D Minor, Op.40, Rachmaninoff's Sonata for Violoncello and Piano in G Minor, Op.19 and Piazzolla's Le Grand Tango for Violoncello and Piano.

► Tickets are NTS200 and NTS300, available through ERA ticketing

2008 Chung-Lin Lee Flute Recital "French Tradition" (2008 李霖祥長笛獨奏會「左岸時光」)

has flautist Lee Chung-lin (李霖祥) performing works by Boismortier, Devienne, Borne and Jolivet accompanied by pianist Hsieh Shu-ya (謝舒雅). A second concert will be held at the Forum Auditorium (十方樂集音樂劇場) in Taipei on July 25.

► Today at 7:30pm
► Forum Auditorium (十方樂集音樂劇場), 4, Ln 187, Minzu W Rd, Taipei City (台北市民族西路187巷4號)
► Tickets are NTS250, available through ERA ticketing

2008 Wansha Music Salon — Su En-chia Piano Recital (2008 渥沙音樂廳 — 蘇恩家鋼琴獨奏會) introduces 17-year-old Su En-chia (蘇恩加), who will perform a program including Bach's Toccata in F Sharp Minor, BWV 910, Beethoven's Piano Sonata No. 11 in B Flat Major, Op. 22, and Debussy's Estampes.

► Today at 7:30pm
► Forum Auditorium (十方樂集音樂劇場), 4, Ln 187, Minzu W Rd, Taipei City (台北市民族西路187巷4號)
► Tickets are NTS250, available through NTCH ticketing

Highlight

Tomorrow night, two French music groups on tour in Taiwan, orBe and VOY, perform at the Huaden Art Center (華燈藝術中心) in Tainan. orBe, a jazz duo of trombonist Olivier Baron and guitarist Olivier Roussel, plays jazz in a minimalist style, while VOY is the musical project of solo singer and pianist Veronique Truffot, who performs with two dancers. Truffot improvises when she sings — her "words" are not real, but rather ad-libbed. The meanings of her songs come from the "emotional sounds" that she sings. The two dancers, Daphne Abecassis and Pauline Meguerditchian, who also perform as the Tem Company, provide a visual presentation of Truffot's music.

In several numbers the dancers are tethered to the piano by ropes, making them appear to be physically linked to Truffot. The two groups also perform in Chiayi at the Beirong Church at 10:30pm, after the morning service.



orBe is a jazz duo that performs original compositions inspired by modern jazz and French musette.

► VOY and orBe: live jazz and dance performances tomorrow at 7pm at the Huaden Art Center (華燈藝術中心), 85 Shengli Rd, Tainan City (台南市勝利路85號), call (06) 222-2587, and tomorrow at 10:30am at Beirong Church (北榮長老教會), 266 Sirong St, Chiayi City (嘉義市西榮街266號)
► Admission is free
► On the Net: VOY, www.myspace.com/veronique-truffot/compositions and www.myspace.com/companie_tem; orBe, www.myspace.com/orbepaca

featuring Wei-jiun, a trio composed of two guitarists and violinist Huang Wei-jiun (黃偉駿), and Ya-wen and the OFF Trio (爵士情人夢 — 歌手孫雅文與OFF三重奏), a group led by female vocalist Sun Ya-wen (孫雅文) playing "jazz for lovers." See Page 13 of the June 20, 2008, edition of the Taipei Times for more details on the festival.
► 181, Zhongshan N Rd Sec 3, Taipei

City (台北市中山北路3段181號); near Yuanshan MRT Station (圓山捷運站)
► Starts at 6:30pm
► No entrance fee

Appearing tonight at Center Stage (formerly the Living Room, now under new management) is Paper Scissors Stone Band, which plays folk rock and classic rock covers "from the 50s to the present." Tomorrow it's a triple bill of rockers Auto de Fe, bluegrass band Pine Top Surgeons, and hard-core Taiwanese punk band Angry Young Man.

► 3F, 8, Nanjing E Rd Sec 5, Taipei City (台北市南京東路五段8號3樓). Call (02) 8787-4154 or visit www.myspace.com/taipeicenterstage for more information
► Shows start at 10pm
► NTS200 entrance fee

Pan Africana, a drum ensemble of African and Caribbean expats, takes to the stage tonight at Bliss. Tomorrow, it's Sinister Sound Syndicate, which plays electro-house, disco punk and minimalist techno.
► 148, Xinyi Rd Sec 4, Taipei City (台北市信義路四段148號), one block east of Dunhua South Road (敦化南路). Call Bliss at (02) 2702-1855 or log on at www.bliss-taipei.com. For more information on live performances at Bliss, visit www.myspace.com/blisslivehouse
► Tonight and tomorrow at 10pm. Bar/kitchen open from 7pm daily. Ladies night Fridays; women get one free cocktail of their choice
► Entrance to the bar is free. NTS200 cover for music shows

Appearing tonight at Underworld (地下室) is electronica rock outfit Unfamiliar Friends Party (不熟的朋友) with rock band Touting Magazine. Tomorrow it's Underflow, an industrial band led by Eric Duan of Mynamar and indie-rockers Double Wide. On Wednesday it's indie rock band Passionate Winker (激情瞳毛) and The Strike.
► B1, 45 Shida Rd, Taipei City (台北市師大路45號B1). Call (02) 2369-0103 or visit www.upsaid.com/underworld for more information
► Live shows go from 9:30pm to 11:30pm. The bar is open from 8pm daily, closed Mondays
► Entrance on Fridays and Saturdays is NTS300 and includes one drink; NTS100 on Wednesdays