

POP STOP



It looks like **Chan Jen-hsiung** (詹仁雄) had better learn how to swim — if, that is, he doesn't already know. The producer of CTV's *One Million Star* (超級星光大道) idol-search program was allegedly busted last week, again, for meddling in the hit "reality" show — an accusation that harks back to January when the show's host, **Momoko Tao** (陶子), accused Chan of interfering in the program. Chan, at the time, said that if the accusation proved true, he would jump in the ocean.

Chan is now in hot water because after the performance of contestant **Hsu Chia-ying** (徐佳瑩) in last week's segment, the audience couldn't help but notice the producer running over and speaking animatedly to the judges, according to a report in the *Apple Daily* (蘋果日報). Hsu later won.

But the theatrics don't end there. In one episode, contestants were required to write their own songs, which they then performed live on the show. What a novel idea: rather than singing the songs written by others, that week's "talent" was expected to create their own. And so it went that Hsu wrote the music and lyrics to *Perfume* (香水), a love ballad that had the judges giving high scores. What got tongues wagging, however, was the fact that Hsu's song bore an uncanny resemblance to *Can't Take My Eyes Off You*, the 1967 single by Frankie Valli.

Although Hsu has yet to be stripped of her award, speculation is rife that it's only a matter of time. Is it just Pop Stop or has *One Million Star* run out of ways of keeping the public interested in their half-baked talent and B-grade gossip?

Comments of a different kind are coming from the street with regards to the recent revelation that **Huang Yi-ling** (黃乙玲), who won Best Taiwanese Female Singer in the 2006 Golden Melody Awards. The gossip mongers have "revealed" that she has a 13-year-old daughter with a wealthy local businessman named **King Chen** (陳國欽), and that — scandal of scandals — they aren't married.

In an attempt to whip up media frenzy, *Liberty Times* (the *Taipei Times*' sister paper) reporters hit the streets and asked how the average person felt about Huang keeping her daughter a "secret." A woman surnamed Cheng (鄭) probably spoke for the rest of us when she said, "It's their business, not mine."

Meanwhile, Malaysian boozier and blabbermouth **Gary Tsao** (曹格) just

keeps the paparazzi guessing about his sexuality. Readers of Pop Stop will remember that Tsao likes hanging out at gay bars because that's where much of his fan base hangs out — although it looks more like a limp attempt to keep his name in the papers. Tsao's agent disclosed some rather lurid tidbits about the singer's habits behind closed doors, as reported in the *China Times* (中國時報).

The agent revealed that Tsao likes to stroll around naked when at home — even when his friends are lounging around. The agent went on to say that Tsao's hand isn't large enough to cover his "big bird brother" (大鳥哥) and also claimed that Tsao likes to grab his mate's members as a sign of camaraderie. When asked for a comment, Tsao just "laughed" and said that actually his favorite body part was his bum — a comment sure to keep gossip jorneys sniffing around for more garbage.



Top: Gary Tsao likes to keep people guessing when it comes to his sexual orientation. PHOTO: TAIPEI TIMES
Above: Barbie Hsu, right, dings onto sister Dee Hsu's hand for support at a Chanel bash. PHOTO: CATHERINE SHU, TAIPEI TIMES

Over in the world of haute couture, a bevy of celebrities and socialites attended last Friday's Chanel autumn-winter fashion show at the Taipei World Trade Center Nangang Exhibition Hall (台北世貿南港展覽館). The list included singer **Karen Mok** (莫文蔚), **Patty Hou** (侯佩岑), **Tien Hsin** (天心) and **Terri Kwan** (關穎), who was hard to miss in a gold lame jumpsuit.

Also in attendance was sister act ASOS, or **Barbie Hsu** (徐熙媛) and **Dee Hsu** (徐熙娣). Barbie was decked out in NT\$6 million worth of Chanel jewelry — and a bandaid around her left big toe. She explained that she'd injured her foot at **Vanness Wu's** (吳建豪) birthday bash and only just had six stitches removed, but refused to be defeated by her sky-high black platform heels. Barbie may not have been the only one suffering for fashion — Dee looked somewhat pained as her big sister spent the entire night clutching her hand in a death grip for support.

— COMPILED BY NOAH BUCHAN WITH CATHERINE SHU



Indie rockers and Hit FM DJs Ciacia and Ma Nien-hsien plan to bring a disco and funk vibe to Eslite Bookstore's Rooftop Live! concerts, which take place from tonight until Sunday. PHOTO: COURTESY OF ESILITE BOOKSTORE

Rockin' the rooftop, indie style

Inspired by the Beatles' rooftop concert in London shortly before they disbanded, Eslite Bookstore is holding Rooftop Live! — a live music festival that takes place tonight, tomorrow and Sunday afternoon on the rooftop gardens of its flagship store in Taipei's Xinyi District.

The concerts feature a carnival of Taiwanese indie bands, with sounds ranging from the alternative folk-rock of Deserts Chang (張懸) to the post-rock drones of Sugar Plum Ferry (甜梅號). Organizers say to expect a "party" atmosphere and an amusement park theme, complete

with elaborate stage props.

The concert series, now in its second year, are intended as "a tribute to the spirit" of the famous Beatles performance in 1969, says the event's Web site.

Fortunately concert attendees won't have to crowd the street or perch on neighboring rooftops as Beatles fans did on Savile Row. Eslite's outdoor terrace and gardens on the seventh floor holds 1,500 people, with full views of Taipei 101 and surrounding urban scenery, says Cathy Yu (俞靜怡) of Eslite's public relations department.

PERFORMANCE NOTES:
WHAT: Rooftop Live! A weekend of concerts on the 7th floor outdoor terrace at Eslite Xinyi Store (誠品信義店), 11 Songgao Rd, Taipei City (台北市松高路11號)
WHEN: Tonight and tomorrow from 7:30pm to 10pm (doors open at 6pm), Sunday from 4pm to 8pm (doors open at 2:30pm)
TICKETS: NT\$850 at the door; NT\$2,400 for a book of four tickets; available through NTCH ticketing at www.artsticket.com.tw
ON THE NET: www.rooftoplive.com.tw (Chinese only)

SCHEDULE:
TONIGHT
Deserts Chang (張懸) and band, www.sonymusic.com.tw/deserts
Suming (約翰淑敏), blog.pixnet.net/johnsuming
Bearbabes (熊寶貝樂團), bearbabes.idv.tw/bears.html
TOMORROW
Ciacia (何欣桐) www.ciacia.com, Ma Nien-hsien (馬念先)
SUNDAY
Echo (回聲樂團), www.echoband.com, Sugar Plum Ferry (甜梅號), www.sugarplumferry.com, Mrs This (這位太太), mrsthis.3cc.cc

styles ranging from electronica to grunge, and Ma Nien-hsien (馬念先), frontman of the eccentric rock band Sticky Rice (糯米糍).
Sunday afternoon features Echo (回聲), a band that started as a group of classmates at National Tsing Hua University (清華大學) and enjoys a large following for its modern Brit-rock sound; Sugar Plum Ferry, a favorite in Taiwan's post-rock scene; and electronica-pop band Mrs This (這位太太). If the weather cooperates, concertgoers will be treated to pleasant views of the sunset, says Yu.
Light snacks, beverages and band merchandise will be on sale at the venue. Check the event's Web site for re-scheduling announcements in the event of inclement weather.
Tickets are available at the door or at NTCH ticketing outlets.
— DAVID CHEN

TOP FIVE MANDARIN ALBUMS

AUG. 8 TO AUG. 14

- 1 Jam Hsiao (蕭敬騰) and *Jam Hsiao* (蕭敬騰) with 16.25 percent of sales
- 2 Wilber Pan (潘瑋柏) and *Future Tense* (未來式) with 4.86%
- 3 Bibi Zhou (周筆暢) and *WOW* with 4.24%
- 4 BY2 and *Not Yet 16* (16未成年) with 4.02%
- 5 Evan Yo (蔡旻佑) and *Search Evan Yo* (搜尋蔡旻佑) with 3.07%



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

Cross talk with a twist

Performance Workshop Theater (表演工作坊) built much of its reputation on revising cross talk (相聲), a once-popular style of Chinese comedy that the troupe transformed into a contemporary art form.

A revised version of its 2005 cross-talk hit *Total Woman*, will be performed as part of the 2008 Taipei Arts Festival. The four performances begin tonight at Taipei's Metropolitan Hall.
The work, written and directed by acclaimed Taiwanese theater maestro Stan Lai (賴聲川), is founded on the conventions of Chinese cross-talk comedy. This form uses witty dialogue and complex wordplay to comment on society and politics, and is traditionally performed by male actors.

With *Total Woman*, Lai updates the tradition by using an all-female cast who discuss weighty issues such as women's rights, work-related

anxiety and love, as well as lighter fare such as why women wear makeup. The audience can expect to laugh while the women on stage shrill and shed tears.

The revival features the original cast of female characters including veteran comedian Fang Fang (方芳), and Golden Bell Award winners Hsiao Ai (蕭艾) and Teng Cheng-hui (鄭程惠).

The work takes its title from a fictitious women's product company called *Total Woman* and opens with two women, Betty and Annie, hosting an event for the company. As with many of these kinds of galas, a variety of performances are arranged to entertain the guests.

An elderly master of cross talk is booked to perform. However, she fails to show up and instead her granddaughter Funny arrives to perform instead. What follows are six episodes that employ the



Stan Lai's *Total Woman* draws on the Chinese comedic tradition of cross talk to explore contemporary female issues. PHOTO: COURTESY OF TAIPEI ARTS FESTIVAL

various forms of cross talk including monologue, dialogue, call and response and three-person group talk.
Total Woman will be performed at the Metropolitan Hall (城市舞台), 25 Bade Rd Sec 3, Taipei City (台北市八

德路三段25號), tonight and tomorrow at 7:30pm and tomorrow and Sunday at 2:30pm. NT\$500 to NT\$1,900 tickets are available through NTCH ticketing.
— NOAH BUCHAN

[EVENTS & ENTERTAINMENT]

Classical music

Hoshina Hiroshi's World — 40th Anniversary of the Nagoya Symphonic Band (保科洋的世界 — 名古屋管樂團創團40周年紀念台灣公演) brings the highly regarded orchestra and its conductor, Japanese national treasure Hoshina Hiroshi, to perform in Taiwan once again after a 10-year break. The concert also features piano soloist Kaori. The program includes Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue*, Hiroshi's own *Rise of the Firebird* and a medley of Taiwanese songs.
► Today at 7:30pm
► Taipei City Government Family Theater (台北市政府親子劇場), 2F, Taipei City Hall, 1 Shifu Rd, Taipei City (台北市市府路1號2樓)
► Tickets are NT\$800 to NT\$1,800, available through ERA ticketing

Classical Fever: Lyrical Preludes (古典發燒夜 — 詩篇序曲) is a concert by the Kaohsiung City Symphony Orchestra (高雄市交響樂團). The program includes Liszt's *Symphonic Poem No.3 "Les Preludes"*, Hummel's *Introduction, Theme and Variations for Oboe and Orchestra*, Op.10 and Brahms' *Symphony No.1 in C Minor, Op.68*.
► Today at 7:30pm
► Kaohsiung City Concert Hall (高雄市音樂廳), 99 Hsi Rd, Kaohsiung City (高雄市河西路99號)
► Tickets are NT\$250, available through ERA ticketing

Concerto of TFGWB 50th Anniversary (北一女中樂隊五十週年紀念音樂會) has the orchestra of alumni from Taiwan's most prestigious girls'

high school, the Taipei First Girls' High School, performing Sibelius' *Finlandia*, Guilmant's *Symphonic Piece* and Wagner's *Overture to Tannhauser*, among other works.
► Tuesday at 7:30pm
► Novel Hall (新舞台), 3-1 Songshou Rd, Taipei City (台北市松壽路3-1號)
► Tickets are NT\$200 to NT\$500, available through NTCH ticketing

Soloists of Taiwan — Clarinet Recital by Yeh Min-ho (獨奏家系列 — 葉明和單簧管獨奏會) sees the up-and-coming musician performing with piano and percussion accompaniment. The program includes Devienne's *Sonata No. 2 in E-flat Major for Clarinet and Piano*, Norbert Goddaer *Clarinet Unlimited for Clarinet Solo* and Debussy's *Premiere Rhapsody*.
► Sunday at 7:30pm
► National Recital Hall, Taipei City
► Tickets are NT\$600, available through NTCH ticketing

Theater

Chilean-based theater group Teatro Cinema blends the vocabulary of film with a traditional approach to the stage to mount a story of revenge called **Sin Sangre** (Without Blood) as part of the 10th Taipei Arts Festival. Based on the novel **Senza Sangue** by Italian novelist Alessandro Baricco, the play begins with the revenge killing of a man and his family. His youngest daughter survives after one of the murderers lets her go free. Decades later, she exacts her own revenge on the killers.
► Zhongshan Hall (中山堂), 98 Yenping

S Rd, Taipei City (台北市延平南路98號)
► Tonight and tomorrow at 7:30pm and Sunday at 2:30pm
► Tickets are NT\$500 to NT\$2,000, available through NTCH ticketing

King Lear by Contemporary Legend Theater (當代傳奇劇場) updates Shakespeare's classic play and gives it a Beijing opera twist. Originally staged in 2000 and revised two years ago as part of Contemporary Theater Oriental Shakespeare, Wu Hsing-kuo's (吳興國) interpretation presents all the characters in a one-man show.
► Tainan Municipal Cultural Center (台南市立文化中心), 332, Chunghua E Rd Sec 3, Tainan City (台南市中華東路三段332號)
► Tonight at 7:30pm
► Tickets are NT\$400 to NT\$1,500, available through NTCH ticketing

Happiness Part 1 & 2 (浮浪真開花 Part 1 & 2) is a light and carefree Taiwanese musical by Golden Bough Theater (金枝演社) that tells the story of a young bohemian searching for happiness and the interesting places where it is found.
► Chungshing Concert Hall, Taichung (台中中興堂), 291-3 Chingwu Rd, Taichung City (台中市精武路291-3號)
► Part 1 plays tonight at 7:30pm; Part 2 plays tomorrow at 7:30pm
► Tickets are NT\$400 to NT\$1,200, available through NTCH ticketing

New Wave Guling 2008 (2008第三屆新潮實驗室) continues its series of experimental performances held at the Guling Street Theater. **Break Slow** (誰/誰吃不是晚餐的早餐) is an environmental performance based

Highlight

Tomorrow night the **Comedy Club**, near National Taiwan Normal University in Taipei, presents *Twice as Funny*, with stand-up comedians Dan "Gonzo" Machanik and Hartley Pool. Machanik, who got his start as a stand-up comic two decades ago at comedy shows in Aspen, Colorado, and New York, describes his act as "no-holds barred expatriate humor that takes audiences on a wild ride through the glimmering underbelly of the Asian experience." Pool, who is known for his classic English humor, has performed in his native UK, Central and Eastern Europe and Singapore. Both Pool and Machanik are regular fixtures in Taiwan's expat comedy scene. They promise plenty of new material and remind audiences to expect the unexpected.
Tonight's show is in English and is not suitable for the easily offended.
► Twice as Funny, featuring Dan



Dan "Gonzo" Machanik getting ready for his stand-up comedy routine tomorrow night at the Comedy Club in Taipei in *Twice as Funny*, with UK comedian Hartley Pool. PHOTO: COURTESY OF SABRINA KUO

"Gonzo" Machanik and Hartley Pool at the Comedy Club, B1, 24 Taishun St, Taipei City (台北市泰順街24號B1). Visit english.comedy.com.tw for more information. For reservations, call (02) 2369-3730 or send an e-mail to social@comedyclub.tw
► Tomorrow night at 10pm; doors open at 9:30pm
► NT\$300 entrance includes one drink; NT\$80 beer specials throughout the evening

on improvisation that replaces words with a variety of sounds. **No Way to Know** (林綠立不知道) combines performance and video art with sound experiments and art installation.
► Guling Street Theater (姑寮街小劇場), 3F, 2, Ln 5, Guling St, Taipei City (台北市姑寮街5巷2號3樓)
► Break Slow: Tonight, tomorrow and Sunday at 8pm and tonight at 11:55pm; No Way to Know: Tomorrow at 10pm
► Tickets are NT\$250, 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.
► Kaohsiung Cultural Center's Chhith

Hall (高雄市立文化中心至德堂), 67 Wufu 1st Rd, Kaohsiung City, (高雄市五福一路67號)
► Tomorrow at 7:30pm and Sunday at 2:30pm
► Tickets are NT\$300 to NT\$2,500, available through NTCH ticketing

Contemporary

Dafu Jazz Trio appears tonight at **Sappho de Base**, Taipei's favorite late-night venue for impromptu jazz sessions. Appearing tomorrow night is the **Paper Scissors Stone Band**. On Tuesday night, the **Grace Jazz Trio** plays a set, with an open jam afterward. Wednesday features acoustic music from **The Accidentals**, and on Thursday it's **DJ Zulu**, spinning what he calls "timeless and positive black sounds."
► B1, Ln 102, Anhe Rd Sec 1, Taipei City (台北市安和路一段102巷1號B1). Call (02) 2700-5411 (after 9pm) or visit www.sappho102.biz for more information
► Performances begin at 10:30pm
► No entrance fee

Appearing tonight at **The Wall** (牆) is Hong Kong singer and actor **Josie Ho** (何超儀), who's in town to promote her album *Elastic Rock*. Tomorrow night it's first annual "Olympick" Games with **Natural Q** (自然捲), an ensemble whose sound includes vocals, acoustic guitar, violin and hand drums, and another acoustic duo, **Lao Die** (老麥).
► B1, 200, Roosevelt Rd Sec 4, Taipei City (台北市羅斯福路四段200號B1). Call (02) 2930-0162 or log on at www.thewall.com.tw for more information

► 8pm tonight, tomorrow, and Sunday
► NT\$450 tonight and tomorrow
Pop-rock band **Music Plant** (留聲機工廠) and **Essential Trip** hit the stage tonight at **Underworld** (地下社會). Tomorrow night, it's emo act **Hindsight** (光景消逝), pop-punk outfit **Fire Ex** (滅火器), and grunge band **Kook**. [In last Friday's edition, the incorrect concert schedule was published. The Taipei Times regrets the error.]
► 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 tonight and tomorrow is NT\$300 and includes one drink; NT\$100 on Wednesdays
Tonight **Witch House** (女巫店) presents folk band **Smoke Ring** (煙圈). Puyuma singer **Leo Chen** (陳永龍) and Amis singer **Hsiao Mei** (小美) return to the venue tomorrow night for an intimate set of traditional and original tunes. Post-rock band **Orange Grass** (橙草) takes to the stage on Thursday.
► 7, Ln 56, Xinsheng S Rd Sec 3, Taipei City (台北市新生南路三段56巷7號). For more information, call (02) 2362-5494 or visit www.witchhouse.org
► Performances start at 9:30pm. Restaurant/bar with queer/feminist bookstore and large collection of board games open 11am to midnight Sundays through Wednesdays; 11am to 1am Thursdays through Saturdays
► NT\$300 entrance includes one drink