

POP STOP



The hubbub over **Zhang Ziyi's** (章子怡) recent sandy sweetheating has prompted considerable moralizing in China. As Pop Stop reported a few weeks back, Zhang and her Israeli fiancé, **Aviv "Vivi" Nevo**, were caught noshing up the beaches of St Barts, a French territory in the Caribbean. A paparazzo snapped pictures of the *Memoirs of Geisha* and *2046* star in what one blogger from China described as Zhang's "unpatriotic behavior," for exposing herself in public so brazenly.

Song Zude (宋祖德) blogged that Zhang did this because she was "only interested in her career and money." Pop Stop must protest. Starlets only expose themselves when their careers are faltering, not when they are at the pinnacle of the celebrity firmament, as Zhang currently is.

Time passes, however, and it seems that nationalistic zeal has taken a backseat to criticism of Zhang's body — particularly her "tiny" bust size. Which is hardly surprising, given the tabloids' obsession with this particular part of a woman's anatomy. This week's edition of *Next Magazine* even published a detailed report on why an ageing model wants to have cosmetic surgery done on her breasts. (It's because they "droop," if you must know.)

Meanwhile, *yWeekend*, the online version of the *Beijing Youth Daily*, caught up with "Fred," the mystery man from France behind the Zhang photos, who described for readers what he saw.

"Nevo kept rolling his body back and forth. Then he caressed Zhang Ziyi's back. He caressed it again and again. His hand then slid further and further down. I could not believe what my eyes were seeing. It was getting too hot. Then they went into the ocean to swim. My guess was that they got too 'hot' and they had to cool down by jumping into the ocean."

So this is what constitutes steamy behavior: a man and a woman who plan to marry caressing each other on a beach. Fred probably would have had a heart attack if he'd snapped last year's

Andy Lau thinks Shu Qi's the bomb.

What's in the stars for Jolin this year?

photos of **Edison Chen** (陳冠希) with his coterie. And speaking of marriage, Hong Kong director and one of the "Four Heavenly Kings of Canto-pop" **Andy Lau** (劉德華) said that Taiwanese actress **Shu Qi** (舒淇) would be worth marrying because she is good to her family, according to reports in *Apple* and the *Liberty Times* (the *Taipei Times*' sister newspaper).

His comments at a press conference for the release of his new movie *Look for a Star* (游龍戲鳳) plus a wedding ring on his ring finger predictably sent the assembled gossip hounds into a frenzy. But Lau burst their bubble when he pointed out that the ring was the property of a certain French fashion house and that he and Shu were just old friends.

In other "Heavenly Kings of Cantopop" news, "God of Songs" (歌神) crooner **Jacky Cheung** (張學友) ended his one-year hiatus from the music industry with a press conference at Hong Kong Disneyland. He said he'll release a new album, film a movie and hold a concert within the year, according to a report in the *Oriental Daily News*. He also lamented the lack of solidarity in the music industry and how he was powerless to remedy the situation.

It looks as though pop singer **Wen Lan** (溫嵐) has hooked up with another woman's man — again, according to a report in *Next*. The saga began in July when Wen sent a flurry of text messages to dancer **Lin Chun-chie** (林群哲), who had been in an 11-year relationship with fellow dancer **Chen Hsien-he** (陳仙禾). Both dancers have collaborated with Wen, and Chen and the singer had been close friends for years. Fast-forward six months and Lin dumps Chen to be with Wen. Par for the course for Lin, really, because the Casanova has allegedly cheated on Chen a number of times.

And finally, no Lunar New Year would be complete without a celebrity prediction. According to a report on Yahoo, a fortune-teller says that **Jolin Tsai's** (蔡依林) career will tank this year and that she will be luckless in love because she devotes too much time to her career.

— COMPILED BY NOAH BUCHAN



88 Balaz are on hand to chase the Year Monster away with high-energy rock.



Jesse Morden-Green is a wanted man.

PHOTO: ALITA RICKARDS

Unleash the Beast

Last year the cops showed up at Freak Out Beast (吵年獸) in Shida park (師大公園) and told organizer Jerry Fang (方宜正) to turn the music down.

So this year Fang and company are moving the festival to the Red House Theater (西門紅樓) in Ximending where they can crank the volume up.

Freak Out Beast is an annual indie-music concert and design fair held by a loosely organized group of musicians and artists to give people a chance to party or just mingle during the Lunar New Year holiday, which traditionally is the most boring time of the year for anyone who wants to hear live music or hang out with people who aren't relatives. Admission is free, the vibe is laid-back and with dozens of bands and DJs scheduled to perform it offers a great opportunity to catch up on the current state of Taipei's underground music scene.

The name Freak Out Beast references the traditional practice of hanging red lanterns and setting off firecrackers to scare away the Year Monster, or Nian (年獸), who according to myth emerges from the ocean on Lunar New Year's Eve and enters villages to eat humans and their livestock.

This year's lineup includes three-dozen live acts ranging from garage bands Rabbit Is Rich (兔子很有錢) and White Eyes (白目) to rappers Kou Chou Ching (拷秋勤) and Shorty to moody punks 88 Balaz (八十八顆芭樂籽) and pretty-boy rockers New Yorker (紐約客). There will be a DMC turntablist competition on Feb. 1 at 2pm, as well as dozens of stalls run by artists throughout the festival selling everything from handmade plush toys and T-shirts with original designs to embroidered bags and plastic knickknacks. Many of these young designers operated booths at the recent 2008 Urban Simple Life (簡單生活節) festival, which was inspired in part by events like Freak Out Beast and Campo Life Art Carnival (CAMPO生活藝術狂歡節).

— RON BROWNLOW

FESTIVAL NOTES:

WHAT: Freak Out Beast (吵年獸)
WHERE: Red House Theater (西門紅樓), 10 Chengdu Rd, Taipei City (台北市成都路10號)
WHEN: Jan. 31 and Feb. 1, from 2pm to 10pm
TICKETS: Admission is free
ON THE NET: freakoutbeast.blogspot.com



PHOTOS: TAIPEI TIMES



TOP FIVE MANDARIN ALBUMS JAN. 9 TO JAN. 15

- 1 Alan Luo (羅志祥) and *Trendy Man* (潮男正傳) with 15.65%
- 2 Ken Chu (朱孝天) and *Getting Real* with 12.79%
- 3 Fahrenheit (飛輪海) and *Love You More and More* (越來越愛) with 9.78%
- 4 Mayday (五月天) and *Poetry of the Day After* (後青春期的詩) with 3.69%
- 5 Wang Lee-hom (王力宏) and *Heart Beat* (心·跳) with 3.11%

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

[EVENTS & ENTERTAINMENT]

Theater

The **Mhy-Huang Taiwanese Opera Troupe** (華明黃字戲劇團), **Ming Hwa Yuan Gezai Opera Company** (華明園戲劇團), **Shiu-Kim Taiwanese Opera Troupe** (秀琴歌劇團), **Ming-Ju Taiwanese Opera Troupe** (明珠女子歌劇團) and **Holo Opera Troupe** (河洛歌子戲劇團) team up to celebrate the Lunar New Year with a series of traditional *gezai* operas (歌仔戲).

► Fengshan Sun Yat-sen Memorial Hall (高雄鳳山國父紀念館), 228 Guangyuan Rd, Fengshan City, Kaohsiung County (高雄縣鳳山市光遠路228號)

► Tomorrow and Monday at 2:30pm and Tuesday through Thursday at 7:30pm

► Tickets are NT\$200 to NT\$600, available through NTCH ticketing

Tickets for Godot Theater Company's (果陀劇場) much-anticipated Chinese-language production of Shakespeare's **Othello** (針鋒對決) are running out fast. The production features accomplished Taiwanese stage actors Lee Li-chun (李立群) and Chin Shih-chieh (金士傑). [See Page 14 of the

Sept. 19, 2008, edition of the *Taipei Times* for a review of the production.]

► Tainan Municipal Cultural Center (台南市立文化中心), 332, Jhonghua E Rd Sec 3, Tainan City (台南市中華東路三段332號)

► Jan. 30 at 7:30pm

► Tickets are NT\$500 to NT\$4,000, available through NTCH ticketing

Classical music

2009 Ma Yo-yo New Year Concert (2009馬友友新年音樂會) will see the superstar cellist perform two concerts, the first in Taipei on Wednesday and the second next Friday. The program includes Bach's *Suite for Violin Cello Solo Nos. 1, 2 and 3*, Ahmed Adnan Saygun's *Partita*, Zhao Jiping's (趙季平) *Summer in the High Grassland* and O'Connor's *Appalachia Waltz*.

► Wednesday (Tainan) and Jan. 30 (Taipei) at 7:30pm

► Tainan Municipal Cultural Center Performance Hall (台南市立文化中心演藝廳), 332, Jhonghua E Rd Sec 3, Tainan City (台南市中華東路三段332號); National Concert Hall, Taipei City

► Tickets are NT\$1,200 to NT\$4,800 for the Tainan concert and NT\$1,800 to NT\$6,000 for the Taipei Concert,

available through ERA ticketing or online at www.ticket.com.tw

Bravo Super Bass (陳耀維低音提琴獨奏音樂會) sees the creation of a new musical ensemble by Chen Wei-tse (陳維哲), the principle cellist of the Taipei Symphony Orchestra. The opening concert includes Bizet's *Carmen Fantaisie*, Khachaturian's *Sabre Dance*, Bach's *Chaconne*, Strauss' *Pizzicato Polka*, Offenbach's *Can-Can*, Norris' *Cool and Cake Walk*, all arranged for cello.

► Feb. 3 at 7:30pm

► National Recital Hall, Taipei City

► Tickets are NT\$300 and NT\$450, available through NTCH ticketing or online at www.artsticket.com.tw

Contemporary

The Wall (這牆) and **Riverside Cafe** (河岸咖啡) are closed from today through next week for Lunar New Year. Both venues re-open Feb. 6.

Tomorrow night at **VU Live House** Tranquility Bass Productions presents Lunar Phase, an evening of drum 'n' bass with DJs Rich, Mixer T, Coffeepot and Shaman.

Lunar New Year openings

The following nightspots and restaurants will remain open throughout the Lunar New Year holiday. Call ahead to confirm the venue's hours as some locations may close early.

Hell's Kitchen
 Address: 1, Civil Blvd Sec 5, Taipei City (台北市民生東路五段1號)
 Telephone: (02) 2748-6407
 Hours: Daily from 8pm till late

JB's
 Address: 148 Shida Rd, Taipei City (台北市師大路148號)
 Telephone: (02) 2364-8222
 Hours: Daily from 5pm to 1am or 2am

On Tap
 Address: 49, Ln 308, Guangfu 5 Rd, Taipei City (台北市光復南路308巷49號)
 Telephone: (02) 2741-5365
 Hours: Daily from 6pm till late

Barcode
 Address: 5F, 22 Songshou Rd, Taipei City (台北市松壽路22號5F)
 Telephone: (02) 2725-3520
 Hours: Daily from 9pm to 2:30am, opens at 10pm on Monday

Brass Monkey
 Address: 166 Fushing N Rd, Taipei City (台北市復興北路166號)
 Telephone: (02) 2547-5050
 Hours: Weekdays from 5pm to 1am, closes at 4am on Thursday and 2am on Jan. 30 and Jan. 31

Carnegie's
 Address: 100, Anhe Rd Sec 2, Taipei City (台北市安和路二段100號)
 Telephone: (02) 2325-4433
 Hours: Daily from 11pm to 2am

The Tavern
 Address: 5, Lane 380, Keelung Rd Sec 1, Taipei City (基隆路一段380巷5號)
 Telephone: (02) 8780-0892
 Hours: Sunday from 5pm to midnight, Monday to Feb. 1 from noon to 2am

Jake's Country Kitchen
 Address: 705, Zhongshan N Rd Sec 6, Taipei City (中山北路六段705號)
 Telephone: (02) 2871-5289
 Hours: Sunday, from 6:30am to 3pm, Monday and Tuesday from 9:30am to 9:30pm and Wednesday through Jan. 30 from 9:30am to midnight

10pm on Monday

Barbabes (熊寶貝樂團), whose sparse, atmospheric sound showcases the ethereal voice of female singer and bassist Cookie (餅乾), perform tonight at **Witch House** (女巫店). The venue is closed from Saturday to Wednesday for the Lunar New Year holiday. On Thursday, Puyuma guitarist and singer **Hao-en** (昊恩) performs a solo set.

► 7, Ln 56, Xinsheng 5 Rd Sec 3, Taipei City (台北市新生南路三段56巷5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

► Entrance fee for music shows is NT\$300, includes one drink

Jazz Your Mind performs tonight at **Sappho de Base**, while **Waka and Yo**, a Japanese duo who play

tabla and sitar, perform a set of Indian fusion music. The venue is closed on Monday and Tuesday. **The Mr Ed Trio** performs jazz on Wednesday.

► B1, 1, 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 on weekends, 10pm on weekdays; ► No admission fee

Tonight at **Underworld** (地下社會) it's the Funky Brothers (放克兄弟的大計畫) and pop-rock act **New Yorker** (紐約客). Taking to the stage tomorrow are **Penguin Bear Likes to Eat Chicken Balls** (企鵝熊愛吃雞肉球) and nu-metal band **RJ45** (石頭果醬). The venue is closed from Sunday to next Friday.

► 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

► Music shows are from 9:30pm to 11:30pm on Fridays and Saturdays and 9pm to 11pm on Wednesdays. Bar open daily from 9pm, except Mondays

► Entrance is NT\$300 tonight and tomorrow, includes one drink

PERFORMANCE NOTES:

WHAT: Final performances by Jesse Morden-Green with High Tide and Johnny Fatstacks, last show for Johnny Fatstacks
WHERE: Bliss, 148, Xinyi Rd Sec 4, Taipei City (台北市信義路四段148號)
WHEN: Tonight, from 10pm to 1am
TICKETS: Entrance to the bar is free, NT\$200 to see the music upstairs



PHOTO: TAIPEI TIMES