

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 2009 • TAIPEI TIMES

STOP POP

**Yao Yao, the otaku community's new sex goddess.** PHOTO: TAIPEI TIMES

After entering self-imposed exile more than a decade ago, grassroots comedy legend **Chu Ke-liang** (豬哥亮) was located by *Apple Daily* last week in a small village in southern Taiwan. "I'm still on the lam!" the startled vet told reporters.

A stand-up comedian who rose to superstardom in the 1980s, Chu was known and loved for his vulgar sense of humor and over-the-top appearance that featured a "toilet-lid" (馬桶蓋) hairstyle, which became his trademark.

Big money came his way, way too easily. With a reported monthly income of some NT\$60 million, the comic gambled heavily, and wound up ruined.

In 1995, unable to pay off his debts to the mafia, Chu disappeared, along with his third wife and their son. Until, that is, the infinitely resourceful paparazzi caught up with the 62-year-old while he was tucking into a bowl of oden (黑輪) at a humble eatery.

The media have been busy trying to piece together Chu's missing decade.

Some sources claim the fugitive has several bolt-holes in southern Taiwan. Others speculate he would arrive home late at night and leave before daybreak to avoid detection.

As for exactly how much the former gambler owes, figures vary from US\$8.7 million to US\$14 million, though his daughter, singer **Jeannie Hsieh** (謝金燕), once said that even if there were 100 of her, they wouldn't be able to pay off the sum.

Several of Chu's old showbiz chums including **Chang Fei** (張菲), **Kao Ling-feng** (高凌風) and **Chu Yen-ping** (朱延平) urged the funnyman to return to the stage, and asked his creditors to spare the man's life so he could work to repay his dues.

Entertainer-turned-lawmaker **Yu Tian** (余天) made

a public appeal to Chu to contact him so that they could "work something out..."

Local pundits, meanwhile, are salivating at the prospect of a possible comeback.

If you're blissfully unaware of who **Yao Yao** (姚瑤) is, you're most likely not a *zhainan* (宅男), the Taiwanese version of the Japanese *otaku*, a homebound, nerdy guy whose life is all about anime films, manga or computer games and the real-life girls who endorse these products.

Yao Yao is a baby-faced 18-year-old high-school girl and the alleged owner of a pair of 33E breasts. She was recently featured in a television commercial for an online game, which apparently was plotless and centered on her undulating umlauts while she rode a mechanical horse.

According to the *Liberty Times* (the *Taipei Times*'s sister paper), Yao Yao has quickly attained sex-goddess status in Taiwan's *otaku* community and has been dubbed a "big-breasted bodacious baby face" (童顏巨乳), an epithet used in Japan for porn stars.

In a sign of her rising popularity, the newly minted diva attracted the attention of a stalker, her first, who lurked a whole day at the entrance of the school she attends. Police later arrested the admirer, 19-year-old Lee Lung-hui (李龍輝), for stealing an online game package from a convenience store after he failed to make contact with his idol.

When asked why he wanted to meet Yao Yao, Lee expressed his wish to become her bodyguard. As for the game package he pilfered, Lee said Yao Yao looked so fragile and vulnerable in the picture on the cover that he just had to take it home.

— COMPILED BY HO YI

Celluloid memories

Katherine Lee (李應平) recalled the first time she watched Hou Hsiao-hsien's (侯孝賢) *A City of Sadness* (悲情城市) in 1989. The President of the Lung Ying-tai Cultural Foundation (龍應台文化基金會), then a university student, said the film stirred up considerable controversy because its subject matter examined the events surrounding the 228 Incident. The foundation will host a screening of Hou's film followed by a discussion with the director tomorrow at Zhongshan Hall beginning at 12:30pm.

"I was a little shocked because the history [of 228] was hidden at that time," she told the *Taipei Times*. "The cinema was very crowded. Most students saw the movie." Martial Law had only been lifted two years before and many thought the depiction of the violence and repression suffered by Taiwanese at the hands of Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT) soldiers would open up old wounds. It was — and many think still is — a topic the KMT would rather people forget.

Two decades later, the scars have yet to heal, and controversy still surrounds this formative and traumatic event in Taiwan's post-World War II history. President Ma Ying-jeou (馬英九) has worked toward reconciliation between his party and 228 victims since serving as Taipei mayor. Shortly after he took office in May, however, the KMT-controlled legislature halted construction of the planned 228 National Memorial Hall and slashed the budget for the 228 Memorial Foundation. Last week KMT Legislator Wu Yu-sheng (吳育昇) proposed canceling Peace Memorial Day (held on Feb. 28) as a public holiday.

Lee said the foundation is showing *A City of Sadness* in the hope that younger viewers will discuss its subject matter as she and her university friends did 20 years ago. In 1947, a KMT soldier allegedly beat an elderly black-market vendor after she refused to hand over the cigarettes she was selling. The event led to an uprising against the KMT and subsequently the White Terror, a KMT purge that saw tens of thousands of Taiwanese rounded up, imprisoned, tortured and executed.

Hou's complex tale centers on four brothers and how their lives are irrevocably changed with the arrival of Chiang Kai-shek's (蔣介石) regime. A Shanghai mafia boss has the oldest brother murdered, while another brother is framed as a Japanese collaborator and sent to a KMT prison, where he goes insane. The second brother had disappeared during

LECTURE NOTES:

WHAT: Thinker's Salon: Lighting the Darkness — Taiwan's Political Awakening (在昏暗中，當突然亮了一台灣的政治覺醒)

WHERE: Zhongshan Hall (台北市中山堂), 98 Yenping 5 Rd., Taipei City (台北市延平南路98號)

WHEN: Tomorrow. The movie runs from 12:30pm to 3:30pm. The lecture and discussion run from 3:30pm to 5:30pm

TICKETS: Free, but those attending must register in advance by calling (02) 3322-4907, or logging on to www.civictaipei.org

DETAILS: *A City of Sadness* is in Hoklo (commonly known as Taiwanese), Mandarin, Japanese, Cantonese and Shanghaiese with Chinese subtitles; the post-movie lecture and discussion will be held in Mandarin

the war. The youngest of the four brothers is a deaf-mute who operates a small photo shop and is involved with a resistance movement against the KMT.

The film won the Golden Lion award at the 1989 Venice Film Festival.

Lee said it is important that a new generation of Taiwanese watch and discuss the film and understand the history surrounding the events it depicts. She added that even those who have seen the film often fail to understand its greater historical backdrop.

"[My colleague] has seen the movie but didn't realize it was talking about 228," she said.

She said many potential viewers are turned off by the movie's length and complex narrative.

"Young people don't want to go and watch such a long movie and they often don't want to think about the issues it raises," she said.

The lecture to follow the screening is titled *Lighting the Darkness — Taiwan's Political Awakening* and is the first in a series of discussions that examine Taiwan's political, economic and social history through the eyes of its artists. Popular actress Brigitte Lin (林青霞) will speak on March 21 followed by novelist and children's writer Huang Chun-ming (黃春明) on April 1. Lung Ying-tai (龍應台), the foundation's president, is scheduled to moderate all three events.

— NOAH BUCHAN



Sun Son was formed out of the merger of Sun Son Theater and a percussion ensemble.

PHOTO COURTESY OF SUN SON

Worlds away

After its well-received first season held in November, Sun Son's (身聲劇團) world music concert series returns, beginning tomorrow night.

Running until May 9, the two-month long gala presents a lineup of tribal sounds, traditional and fusion music from India, Latin America, eastern and southern Europe and the Middle East.

The music series is part of a grander project that artistic director Leoson Ng (吳忠良) has been working on for several years.

Having amassed an admirable collection of traditional musical instruments from around the world during its travels, the group, which formed out of the merger of Sun Son Theater (身聲演劇團) and a percussion ensemble, has long wished to draw attention to world music.

The plan to build a gallery to house the collection began to take shape early last year. A couple of typhoons, three floods and five months later, Sun Son celebrated the inauguration of its music gallery.

Musicians and performers from Sun Son open the current series with a performance that features dance, body movements, masks, the sounds of Turkish drums, gongs from Southeast Asia and traditional string instruments from Easter Island and Albania.

Many more musicians and groups follow in the coming weeks: the London Shamisen Club, which combines ballads from Turkey and the Balkans with an Asian twist; Hannava, a Middle Eastern hand drum band known for fusing different types of ancient beats with contemporary rhythms; Japanese sitar player Yo and tabla drummer Waka; and French pianist and accordionist Lionel Pinard.

Evening performances aside, activities will be held each Saturday. Sun Son's treasury of traditional musical instruments opens daily from 1pm to 9pm with free guided tours available. Visitors are encouraged to build instruments according to their own inspiration or have a go at drumming.

The scheduled lectures and courses will be conducted by Peter Kuhnsch, a university lecturer and multi-instrumentalist from Leipzig, Germany, who will introduce and demonstrate hand drums from the Middle East on March 7 and March 8. On March 14, Chou Chung-wen (周仲文), director of Human Music Gallery (人類音樂館) in Taichung City, explores the history and rhythms of tribal music.

Visit www.sunsontheatre.com for more information.

— HO YI

PERFORMANCE NOTES:

WHAT: Sun Son's world music weekend series
WHEN: Every Saturday from 7:30pm to 8:30pm until May 9
WHERE: 39, Ln 88, Jhongjheng E Rd Sec 2, Tamsui, Taipei County (台北縣淡水鎮中正東路二段88巷39號)
TICKETS: NT\$300 at the door, or call (02) 2809-5885 for bookings
ON THE NET: www.sunsontheatre.com



The Lung Ying-tai Cultural Foundation will host a screening of Hou Hsiao-hsien's *A City of Sadness* and a discussion with the director, far left, tomorrow at Zhongshan Hall in Taipei

PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE LUNG YING-TAI CULTURAL FOUNDATION

TOP FIVE MANDARIN ALBUMS

FEB. 13 TO FEB. 19

- 1 Wang Lee-hom (王力宏) and *Heart Beat* (心·跳) with 24.08%
- 2 Alan Luo (羅志祥) and *Trendy Man* (潮男正傳) with 16.01%
- 3 Fish Liang (梁靜茹) and *Fall in Love & Songs — Don't Cry for Him Anymore* (靜茹 & 情歌 — 別再為他流淚) with 7.07%
- 4 Danson Tang (唐禹哲) and *D's New Attraction* (D新引力) with 5.81%
- 5 Cheer Chen (陳綺貞) and *Immortal* (太陽) with 5.55%

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

Theater

Five troupes from Hong Kong, Macau, Taiwan and China are staging productions at different venues in Taipei as part of the **Seventh Chinese Drama Festival** (第七屆華文戲劇節) Hong Kong Cinematic Theater's (香港影話劇團) *Waiting for the Match* (獨坐婚姻介紹所) is composed of monologues by three men in a sealed room containing a video camera and a chair. In *The Pop Star* and *The Orangutan* (歡星與猩猩), by the Shanghai Dramatic Arts Center (上海話劇藝術中心), a pop singer has his brain transplanted into the body of an orangutan after a car accident. To prove his human identity, the orangutan escapes from a zoo and returns home, only to find lies and hypocrisy. And in *Oscar et la Dame Rose* (粉紅天使), a 10-year-old boy named Oscar battles cancer and rediscovers his love for his family in this production by Hong Kong Theater Space (香港劇場空間劇團).

► Tonight at 7:30pm (*Waiting for the Match*), National Experimental Theater, Taipei City

► Tonight and tomorrow at 7:30pm (*The Pop Star and the Orangutan*), Taipei Zhongshan Hall (台北市中山堂), 98 Yenping 5 Rd., Taipei City (台北市延平南路98號)

► Tonight and tomorrow at 7:30pm (*Oscar et la Dame Rose*), Crown Art Center Theater (皇冠小劇場), 50, Ln 120, Dunhua N Rd., Taipei City (台北市敦化北路120巷50號)

► Tickets are NT\$500, available through ERA ticketing or online at www.ticket.com.tw

In this adaptation of Virginia Woolf's semi-biographical novel **Orlando**,

Robert Wilson's minimalist aesthetic meets Wei Hai-ming's (魏海敏) Beijing opera refinement in a challenging work that is bound to attract international attention.

► National Theater, Taipei City
► Tonight and tomorrow at 7:30pm, Sunday at 2:30pm
► Tickets are NT\$600 to NT\$3,600, available through NTCH ticketing or online at www.artsticket.com.tw

A pioneering figure for traditional Japanese dance in Taiwan, Hsu Yeh-ching (許業景) has been studying and teaching the style for more than a decade. In her latest work, **Dance of Formosa** (舞之瀟), Hsu integrates elements from different Japanese schools of dance with her own creative artistry. Artists from several renowned Japanese schools will perform with Hsu.

► Novel Hall (新舞臺), 3-1 Songshou Rd., Taipei City (台北市松壽路3-1號)
► Tomorrow at 2pm
► Tickets are free but must be ordered in advance by calling (02) 2716-0150

Divine Performing Arts, a New York-based Chinese dance and music company that aims to breathe new life into ancient Chinese art forms, brings to Taiwan its latest touring show of lavishly presented classical dance and music.

Contemporary

The Taipei County Government's **Bitan Music Festival** (碧潭音樂節) continues each weekend until March 29 with free outdoor performances at the scenic Bitan (碧潭) riverside area by Xindian MRT Station (新店捷運站). Tomorrow features world music sensation **A Moving Sound** (聲之動樂園). On Sunday, it's Chinese music and jazz fusion group **Sizhukong** (絲竹空). For more information and full schedule, visit www.2009bmf.com.tw.

► Bitan riverside area, just outside of Xindian MRT Station
► 3pm to 5pm tomorrow and Sunday
► No admission fee

It's Reggae Fever tonight at **VU Live House**, with **Selectah Taro** of Japan, who specializes in roots, classic reggae and dub, joining Jamaican sound system **Black Reggae International Sound**.
► B1, 77, Wuchang St Sec 2, Taipei City (台北市武昌街二段77號B1).
Tel: (02) 2314-1868
► Starts at 11pm; Entrance fee is NT\$350, includes one drink

Canadian/British outfit **The Dana Wylie Band** plays folk and roots tonight at **Witch House** (女巫店). Joining it are acoustic blues duo **David Chen and Conor Pruty**. Tomorrow, **Tsai Wen-hui** (蔡文慧) and her backing band perform original songs with folk and jazz flavors.

► 7, Ln 56, Xinsheng 5 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
► Entrance fee for music shows is NT\$300, includes one drink

Tonight **The Wall** (牆牆) hosts post-rock-flavored band **Orangegrass** (橙草) and 929. Metal groups **Ashen and Forgiveness** (恩) share the evening tomorrow with punks **Kook** (庫克) and **Punkhoo** (胖虎). Emo-punk rockers **Full Count and Pa Pang** (怕胖團) round out the weekend on Sunday.
► 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 visit www.thewall.com.tw for more information
► Starts at 8pm tonight, tomorrow and Sunday

► Entrance fee is NT\$400 tonight and tomorrow, NT\$300 on Sunday

Riverside Cafe (河岸留言) is closed tonight for a private party. Tomorrow former Sticky Rice frontman **Ma Nien-hsien** (馬念先) continues to take full advantage of his renewed stardom as a member of the cast of *Cape No. 7* (海角七號). The rocker is billing his show as a "Saturday Night Party." Fingerstyle guitarist pair **Woody Woody** splits the bill with acoustic guitar trio **Tiaolang** (跳浪樂園) on Wednesday.
► B1, 2, Ln 244, Roosevelt Rd Sec 3, Taipei City (台北市羅斯福路三段244巷2號B1), next to Taipower Building (台電大樓). Call (02) 2368-7310 or visit www.riverside.com.tw for more information
► Starts at 9pm tomorrow and Wednesday
► Entrance fee is NT\$400 tomorrow and NT\$350 Wednesday, includes one drink

Indie-folk duo **katcandix2** (棉花糖) open for **Hsu Chia-ying** (徐佳瑩)

tonight at **Riverside Live House** (西門紅樓展演館). Hsu is a previous winner on the *One Million Star* (超級星光大道) pop-idol reality show. Her backing band is called **Show Me the Money**. Taiwan's "King of Rock" **Wu Bai** (伍佰) and his band **China Blue** appear tomorrow in support of their latest album, *Spacebomb* (太空彈). This show is already sold out, but **Wu Bai** and **China Blue** will return for another show at Riverside Live House next month.
► 177 Xining 5 Rd., Taipei City (台北市西寧南路177號). Call (02) 2370-8805 or visit www.riverside.com.tw
► Shows start at 8:30pm
► Entrance fee is NT\$500 tonight, includes one drink

Sappho de Base hosts **Jazz Your Mind** tonight and **Double J and Friends** tomorrow night. Tuesday is an open jam with the venue's "jazz friends." On Wednesday it's the **Chris Stiles Jazz Trio**, and on Thursday it's **Emo Jazz Trio**.
► 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
► Performances begin at 10:30pm on weekends, 10pm on weekdays
► No admission fee

Every Wednesday night at the **Cosmopolitan Grill** there's a blues open mic held by the Blues Society on Taiwan. All are welcome to bring their instruments and sit in on guitar, bass or drums.
► 1F, 218 Changchun Rd., Taipei City (台北市長春路218號1樓).
Call (02) 2508-0304 or visit www.cosmo.com.tw for more information
► 8pm to 11pm every Wednesday
► No admission fee

EZ5 Live House hosts Mando-pop singers backed by a live band every night. Tuesdays belong to beloved crooner **Julia Peng** (彭佳慧). Other highlights this week are **Phoebe Huang** (黃嘉千), tonight, and **Huang Zhongyuan** (黃中原), tomorrow.
► 211, Anhe Rd Sec 2, Taipei City (台北市安和路二段211號).
Call (02) 2738-3995 or visit www.ez5.com.tw for more information
► Music shows run from 9:45pm to 12:30am
► Entrance (including two drinks) ranges from NT\$600 to NT\$850, depending on the performer

Experimental noise and electronica are the sounds tonight at **Underworld** (地下社會), with Austrian DJ **assimilatah**, whose MySpace motto reads, "too harsh is never enough." Joining him are **Fish the Ironska** and **VJ AZ** (阿紫). Tomorrow post-rock combo **Tin Pan Alley** (錫盤街) plays its final show. Joining them are **Dangzai Kong-zhong** (蕩在空中) and "one man band" **Summerbed** (夏生—人大樂隊).
► 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
► Music shows run from 9:30pm to 11:30pm on Fridays and Saturdays and 9pm to 11pm on Wednesdays
► Entrance is NT\$300 tonight and tomorrow and includes one drink, Wednesday's show is NT\$100

House regulars **Loaded** play rock and pop tonight at **Tone 56 Live Bar**. All-girl pop band **Donuts** hits the stage tomorrow. There's an open acoustic jam on Sunday.
► 1F, 56, Minquan E Rd Sec 3, Taipei City (台北市民權東路三段56號1樓), near the corner of Fuxing North (復興北)

and Minquan East (民權東) roads.
► Tel: (02) 2517-3869
► The music starts at 9:30pm tonight and tomorrow. The open jam goes from 7pm to 10pm on Sunday
► No admission fee

Latin One Night plays tonight at **Bliss**. Tomorrow night it's **Space Funk**, a collective of musicians from Taiwan, North America and the UK who play R'n'B, electro-disco, hip-hop and swing with a funk edge. Thursday is open jam night, where all are welcome to perform either three songs or a set running 15 minutes long.
► 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 to www.bliss-taipei.com. For more information on live performances at Bliss, visit www.myspace.com/blisslivehouse

► Tomorrow at 10pm. Bar/kitchen open from 7pm daily. Ladies night Wednesdays, women get free sparkling wine with NT\$100 specials on mixed cocktails. Open jam starts at 9pm.
► Entrance fee for the music shows upstairs is NT\$200 tonight and tomorrow, free for the open jam on Thursday. No cover charge for the bar
► 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 to www.bliss-taipei.com. For more information on live performances at Bliss, visit www.myspace.com/blisslivehouse
► Music shows start at 10pm. Bar/kitchen open from 7pm daily. Ladies night Wednesdays, women get free sparkling wine with NT\$100 specials on mixed cocktails. Thursday's open jam starts at 9pm