

## POP STOP



After entering self-imposed exile more than a decade ago, grassroots comedy legend **Chu Ke-liang** (猪哥亮) 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, 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

**Yao Yao**, the otaku community's new sex goddess.

PHOTO: TAIPEI TIMES

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** (瑤瑤) is, you're most likely not a *zhanian* (宅男), the Taiwanese version of the Japanese *otaku*, a homebound, nerd 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 ualma (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 pornstar 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

**K**atherine 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

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



## TOP FIVE MANDARIN ALBUMS

FEB. 13 TO FEB. 19

<b>1</b>	Wang Lee-hom (王力宏) and <i>Heart Beat</i> (心·跳) with 24.08%
<b>2</b>	Alan Luo (羅志祥) and <i>Trendy Man</i> (潮男正傳) with 16.01%

<b>3</b>	Fish Liang (梁靜茹) and <i>Fall in Love &amp; Songs — Don't Cry for Him Anymore</i> (靜茹&情歌 — 別再為他流淚) with 7.07%
<b>4</b>	Danson Tang (唐禹哲) and <i>D's New Attraction</i> (D新引力) with 5.81%
<b>5</b>	Cheer Chen (陳綺貞) and <i>Immortal</i> (太陽) with 5.55%

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



## [ EVENTS &amp; ENTERTAINMENT ]

## 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 (香港影劇劇團) *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* (歌星與猩猩), 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*), Zhongshan Hall (台北市中山堂), 98 Yenping S 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 (魏海明) 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 (許葉青) has been studying and teaching the style for more than a decade. In her latest work, **Dance of Formosa** (舞之蹈), 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.

► Taipei International Convention Center (台北國際會議中心), 1, Xinyi Rd Sec 5, Taipei City (台北市信義路五段1號)

► Tonight and Monday at 7:30pm, Saturday and Sunday at 2pm and 7:30pm

► Tickets are NT\$500 to NT\$5,000, available through ERA ticketing or online at www.ticket.com.tw

## 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** (聲之動樂團). On Sunday, it's Chinese music and jazz fusion group **Sizhukong** (絲竹空). For more information and full schedule, visit www.2009bmfc.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 Reign 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**.

Joining it are acoustic blues duo

**David Chen** and **Conor Prunty**.

Tomorrow, **Tsai Wen-hui** (蔡雯慧)

and her backing band perform original

songs with folk and jazz flavors.

► 7, Ln 56, Xinheng 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

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

Tonight **The Wall** (迷牆) hosts post-rock-flavored band **Orangegrass** (橙草) and **929**. Metal groups **Ashen** and **Forgiveness** (怨) 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) 2390-0162 or visit www.thewall.tw for more information

► Starts at 8pm tonight, tomorrow and Sunday

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

► Starts at 8pm tonight, tomorrow and Sunday

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

► Starts at 8pm tonight, tomorrow and Sunday