

# POP STOP



Jay Chou might want to lay off the cake.

**Hong Kong singers Jill Vidal (衛詩雅) and Kelvin Kwan (關楚耀)** were arrested in Tokyo on Feb. 24 over alleged possession of cannabis, according to a report in Sina.com earlier this week.

The arrest allegedly came after the pair was busted for shoplifting at a discount shop and getting into a verbal altercation with an employee. When the cops arrived they searched Kwan and reportedly discovered a joint.

The two celebs, both of whom have taken part in anti-drug campaigns, remain in custody as of press time and face a maximum five-year prison sentence and could be barred from Japan. But what shocks Pop Stop most is that it took so long for the paparazzi to break the story.

Celebs busted for drugs may be old hat in Taiwan, which has seen starlets such as **Suzanne Hsiao (蕭淑慎)** repeatedly caught using cocaine and ketamine, but the Kelvin/Jill bust got Hong Kong in a tizzy. Perhaps this will provide some relief from the ongoing **Edison Chen (陳冠希)** sex scandal that continues to make headlines. Don't count on it though.

Last Friday, a Hong Kong actress caught up in the Internet sex photo scandal finally spoke with the media about the incident in a two-part interview with Hong Kong network i-Cable, the first segment of which was a tirade against the luckless lothario **Cecilia Cheung (張柏芝)** said during the interview that since the scandal broke, she has taken to writing a



Cecilia Cheung's positions have been compromised.

diary about her youthful transgressions, which she plans to give her son when he turns 18. Let's hope it doesn't serve as a guidebook for the young man.

"I'm sure he'll be very understanding by the time he is 18 years old," she said, implying that he is not very understanding now.

A better course for Cheung, Pop Stop suggests, would be to take a page out of Canto-pop singer and actress **Niki Chow's (周麗淇)** book. Chow plans to release a work teaching people how to recycle, according to a report in the *Oriental Daily*. Perhaps Cheung could pen a book on protecting endangered species or, better yet, produce a guide on sexual mores for distribution by the Singaporean government.

Anyway, the second part of the Cheung interview has itself become grist for the rumor mill because Cheung insists that i-Cable not broadcast it.

Unsurprisingly, and in an ironic twist of history repeating itself, the contents of the second part were leaked on to the Internet. In a case, however, of history not repeating itself, it was mostly mundane chatter about how the case has affected Cheung's family.

Back home, **Jay Chou (周杰倫)** is packing on the pounds, according to a report in the *United Daily News*. The Chairman was in southern Taiwan filming a television drama when fans said they couldn't help but notice that the crooner has beefed up. Perhaps he ate too much cake for his 30th birthday celebration, which just passed.

In a gesture of love that would make any parent proud, Chou celebrated his birthday with his mother, grandmother and 800 fans. And what did Chou want for his birthday? A limited-edition Lamborghini Reventon. Price tag: NT\$44 million.

— COMPILED BY NOAH BUCHAN

March comes in like a lion, bringing with it spring, soon to be Spring Scream (春天吶喊), and the birth of all things new: leaves, flowers, baby animals — and brand new bands.

Paul Gouriet, who goes by the moniker Viba, was performing his live electronica in clubs when he decided to form a group: "Most people just thought I was a DJ," he said. "I got to know musicians like Public Radio and saw the pull of live bands."

He found bass player Justin Lewis (of Pan Africana and New Hong Kong Hair City) on Facebook, singer Claire Juan (阮筱芬) on MySpace, and drummer Kyle Bajcer through a story in the *Taipei Times*. They formed "funktronica" band Space Funk.

Juan enjoyed a brief stint of fame in 2007 with the release of a Mando-pop/trip-hop album, but it was difficult to gauge her true live potential at their show Feb. 21 at Bliss. She spent a lot of the set trying to see the sheaf of lyric sheets she had on the floor at her feet, which she sometimes crouched over, in an attempt to read in the light from camera flashes.

It's a pity because during the moments when she did know the material her voice shone. When she's able to focus on her singing range and fully engage with the audience, she seems capable of becoming a powerhouse of a performer.

Space Funk was well received by the audience, and had this reporter up and dancing — the most genuine seal of approval possible. Bajcer is at home on the drums, banging out the rhythm with a blissful smile on his face and completely in sync with Viba's keyboards and faders.

Space Funk is playing with Money Shot Horns at VU Live House (地下絲絨) tomorrow, and the combination of the Horn's polished explosion of a show with Space Funk's new sound and Claire's smoky vocals should make for a funkalicious night of dancing.

Indie rockers Hi-Life Wedding played at Vibe on Saturday to a fun crowd that had already been warmed up by punk band Hot Pink whose lead singer Sharkie had the audience laughing to bilingual language lessons that included how to say "have intercourse with your teacher" (in a much ruder way). When she was asked, "Do you?" she replied "No, only with my students," to the delight of the crowd.

Hot Pink has been around since 2003, but Hi-Life Wedding pulled off a pretty show for its second gig ever. Guitarist and vocalist David Broman describes the group as "tight knit"; he and bassist Kate Boehms have played together for years and lead singer Steve Coetzee is an old friend. Drummer Brian Schoeck describes their music as "hard indie, garage pop, emotional grunge and jazz core" and has a propensity for removing his shirt.

Coetzee's natural exuberance seems



## New kids on the ROC

underexploited at this stage. Though at one point he picked up Broman by the feet and swung him around the dance floor in a helicopter ride that excited the crowd, the feeling remains that if the music were a bit more intense he would really bust loose. Boehms is restrained on bass, sitting on a stool for part of the set and not taking enough advantage of her showgirl looks or the musical rapport between her and guitarist Broman. As the band gets more confident on stage, hopefully more of this chained up energy will be released. Upcoming shows include Underworld on March 13 and Bliss on March 20.

A couple new acts have formed out of

jam nights around town: Stoked Pokey, a duet with Brahm Gawan and Jake Stanley, who met at the Riverside jam night; and The Blue Trucks, with James Murray, Erik Kolmarnicki of Gross Fugue and Dan Plimmer, drummer for Public Radio and Johnny Fatstacks, who wowed the crowd at Bliss's jam night last Thursday in his band's first public performance.

With a laid-back, pop/rock style of singing, teen-heartthrob good looks, and a proficiency in Mandarin that allows him to banter with the crowd, Stanley had the audience at Tone 56 eating out of his hand on Sunday.

In an unusual twist on composition, Stanley free-styles lyrics and sticks

### PERFORMANCE NOTES:

**SPACE FUNK** with **THE MONEY SHOT HORNS**, 11pm tomorrow at VU Live House (地下絲絨), B1, 77, Wuchang St Sec 2, Taipei City (台北市武昌街二段77號B1). NT\$400 cover includes one drink

**HI-LIFE WEDDING**, 9m March 13 at Underworld (地下社), B1, 45 Shida Rd, Taipei City (台北市師大路45號B1). NT\$300 cover includes one drink

**HI-LIFE WEDDING**, 10pm March 20 at Bliss, 148, Xinyi Rd Sec 4, Taipei City (台北市信義路四段148號). NT\$200 cover includes one drink

**STOKED POKEY**, 8pm April 11 at Gusto Street Hot Dog, 258-1 Rui-an St, Taipei City (台北市瑞安街258號之1). NT\$200 cover

**THE BLUE TRUCKS**, 10pm April 18 at VU Live House (地下絲絨). Cover to be announced



Claire Juan, above, and Space Funk appear tomorrow at VU Live House. Steve Coetzee, left, and Hi-Life Wedding play Underworld next Friday. PHOTOS: ALITA RICKARDS

with them if they fit. It takes away from the depth possible with prewriting, but is an uncanny talent as his on-the-spot lyrics are as good as most in contemporary pop.

The Blue Trucks have only been playing together for a few months, but they blasted out some raucous rock that had drummer Plimmer visibly excited as he played, mouth open and tongue wagging. Singer and guitarist Kolmarnicki is at ease on stage but could come into the forefront more, and Murray's Jim-Morrison-back-to-the-crowd stance, while offering a rocking version of plumber's butt that betrays the band's name, obscured his performance. Their upcoming gig is on April 18 at VU Live House with New Hong Kong Hair City and The Deadly Vibes.

— ALITA RICKARDS

### TOP FIVE MANDARIN ALBUMS FEB. 20 TO FEB. 26

- 1 Alan Luo (羅志祥) and *Trendy Man (潮男正傳)* with 19.33 percent
- 2 Wang Lee-hom (王力宏) and *Heart Beat (心·跳)* with 18.35%

- 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 8.43%
- 4 Cheer Chen (陳綺貞) and *Immortal (太陽)* with 2.81%
- 5 Wang Ruo-lin (王若琳) with *Joanna and Wang Ruo-lin (Joanna & 王若琳)* with 0.7%

### [ EVENTS & ENTERTAINMENT ]

#### Theater

Inspired by Wim Wenders' *Wings of Desire*, Compania Nacional de Danza's modern dance piece **Alas** revolves around the character Daniel, an angel who longs to become human so that he can feel, sense and love. Nacho Duato, the troupe's artistic director and an influential choreographer in Spain, plays Daniel and choreographs the piece.

- ▶ National Theater, Taipei City
- ▶ Today and tomorrow at 7:30pm, Sunday at 2:30pm
- ▶ Tickets are NT\$500 to NT\$2,500, available through NTCH ticketing or online at www.artsticket.com.tw

#### The Two Gentlemen of Verona

is the latest installment of Tainaner Ensemble's (台南人劇團) Shakespeare series, which started with *Romeo and Juliet*, followed by *Hamlet* and *Macbeth*. The troupe is following the same approach that has proven successful in previous productions, updating the bard's centuries-old scripts and localizing them to appeal to contemporary Taiwanese audiences. [See story on Page 15.]

- ▶ National Experimental Theater, Taipei City
- ▶ Today at 7:30pm, tomorrow at 2:30pm and 7:30pm, and Sunday at 2:30pm
- ▶ Tickets are NT\$500, available through NTCH ticketing or online at www.ticket.com.tw

Based on Tennessee Williams' play of the same title, **The Glass Menagerie** by Godot Theater Company (果陀劇場) stars veteran actress Tan Ai-chen (譚艾珍), seasoned stage actress Yan Chia-lee (顏嘉樂) and television actor Shih I-nan (施易男).

- ▶ Guoguang Hall (國光廳) in the Chinese Petroleum Building (中油大樓), 3 Songren Rd, Taipei City (台北市松仁路3號)
- ▶ Today at 7:30pm, tomorrow and

Sunday at 2:30pm and 7:30pm

- ▶ Tickets are NT\$800 to NT\$2,000, available through NTCH ticketing or online at www.ticket.com.tw

The Comedy Club presents **Baron and Servant (佻男與僕)** featuring freestyle rapper Birdy and guitarist/funnyman Yellow Blue White (黃藍白) in a play about a young handsome master and his corruptible servant.

- ▶ Comedy Club, B1, 24 Taihsun St, Taipei City (台北市泰順街24號B1)
- ▶ Today, tomorrow and Sunday at 8pm
- ▶ Tickets are NT\$250 at the door, includes one drink

#### 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.

- ▶ Chung Hsing University Huisun Auditorium (台中中興大學惠孫堂), 250 Kuokuang Rd, Taichung City (台中市國光路250號)
- ▶ Today at 7:30pm, tomorrow and Sunday at 2:30pm and 7:30pm
- ▶ Tickets are NT\$500 to NT\$5,000, available through ERA ticketing or online at www.ticket.com.tw

#### Classical

**Curtain Up! — Highlights of the Musical (幕啓之時—歌舞劇精選)** is a family-oriented concert by the Taipei Symphonic Band (台北青年管樂團). The music includes selections from *Miss Saigon*, *Les Miserables*, *The Lion King*, *Sunset Boulevard* and Alfred Reed's *Curtain Up!*

- ▶ Tomorrow 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\$300, available through NTCH ticketing or online at www.artsticket.com.tw

**Taipei Science Fiction (科幻北市團)** has the Taipei Chinese Orchestra (臺北

市立國樂團) under conductor Li Ying (李英) and in conjunction with Music Forum (十方樂集) presenting a program of new works by local composers designed to showcase the potential of traditional Chinese orchestral music.

- ▶ Tomorrow at 7:30pm
- ▶ Zhongshan Hall (台北市中山堂), 98 Yenping S Rd, Taipei City (台北市延平南路98號)
- ▶ Tickets are NT\$200 to NT\$1,000, available through NTCH ticketing or online at www.artsticket.com.tw

#### The Adventure of the Bear Cub (小熊歷險記)

presents the National Chinese Orchestra performing music designed for children and their parents under conductor Wen Yi-jen (溫以仁) with hosts Brother Watermelon and Sister Butterfly.

- ▶ Sunday at 2:30pm
- ▶ Novel Hall (新舞台), 3-1 Songshou Rd, Taipei City (台北市松壽路3-1號)
- ▶ Tickets are NT\$400 to NT\$1,000, available through NTCH ticketing or online at www.artsticket.com.tw

#### The Razzle-Dazzle Strings (風雲再現)

is a concert by seven members of the National Symphony Orchestra (國家交響樂團) in a program that includes Chesky's *American Bluegrass for String Orchestra*, Glazunov's *Saxophone Concerto in E-Flat Major, Op. 109*, Chung Yiu-kwong's (鍾耀光) *Peony Pavilion for String Orchestra*, and Shostakovich's *Chamber Symphony, arr. for String Quartet No. 8*.

- ▶ Thursday at 7:30pm
- ▶ National Concert Hall, Taipei City
- ▶ Tickets are NT\$400 to NT\$1,000, available through NTCH ticketing or online at www.artsticket.com.tw

#### Contemporary

The Taipei County Government's **Bitan Music Festival (碧潭音樂節)** continues every weekend until March 29 with free outdoor performances at the Bitan riverside area outside of Xindian MRT Station. Canadian/UK folk

#### Highlight

Multimedia performance art group lemieux.pilon4d art teams up with dancer and choreographer Peter Trostzmer to present **Norman**, an homage to pioneering filmmaker and animator Norman McLaren. Designed by multidisciplinary Canadian artists Michel Lemieux and Victor Pilon, the piece combines film, music and animation in a production that sees a single actor interacting with projected images. Trostzmer interviewed several of McLaren's colleagues at Canada's National Film Board, where McLaren worked for most of his life, to gain a deeper understanding of the man's creative genius.

The interviewed subjects materialize throughout the performance to guide Trostzmer in his quest. A selection of about 30 works from McLaren's corpus, some of them never before seen, underscore the testimonies and allow Trostzmer to communicate what he learned about McLaren's life.

- ▶ National Theater, Taipei City
- ▶ March 12 to March 14 at 7:30pm and March 15 at 2:30pm
- ▶ Tickets are NT\$500 to NT\$2,500, available through NTCH ticketing

and roots group **The Dana Wylie Band** splits the bill with **Yerboli Ahmethan (葉爾波利)**, a Kazakh musician originally from China's Xinjiang Autonomous Region. Ahmethan and his band, who appear tomorrow and Sunday, mix traditional Kazakh folk with modern rock. [See story on Page 15.]

- ▶ The festival takes place at the Bitan riverside area, just outside of Xindian MRT Station (新店捷運站)
- ▶ Shows go from 3pm to 5pm on Saturdays and Sundays until March 29
- ▶ The event is free. For more information and a full schedule visit www.2009bmf.com.tw



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#### Metamorphosis (變形蟲爵士樂團)

one of the first groups in Taiwan to perform and record original jazz music, plays tonight at **Riverside Cafe (河岸留聲)**. All-female alt-rock quartet **Cherry Boom (櫻桃釀)** and **Rock Bang (洛客班)** play tomorrow. On Thursday, Puyuma guitarist and singer **Hao-en (吳恩)** shares the stage with the **Nanwan Sisters (南王姐妹花)**, a trio of singers from Taitung who recently released an album produced by award-winning songwriter **Pau-dull (陳建年)**.

- ▶ 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
- ▶ Show starts at 9:30pm tonight and 9pm tomorrow and Thursday
- ▶ Entrance fee is NT\$400 tonight, tomorrow and Thursday, includes one drink

11:30pm, Sunday's show starts at 8pm

- ▶ Entrance fee is NT\$400 tonight and NT\$600 for the early show tomorrow. Tomorrow's DJ party is NT\$500 for men and NT\$350 for women. Sunday's show is NT\$400

#### Koumis plays a solo acoustic set tonight at Witch House (女巫店).

Tomorrow it's indie-folk and pop band **929**. Indie bands **The Tic Tac** and **Daxiaojie (大小姐樂團)** appear 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
- ▶ Entrance fee for music shows is NT\$300, includes one drink

#### Every Wednesday night at the Cosmopolitan Grill there's a blues open mic held by the Blues Society on Taiwan.

- ▶ 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.

- ▶ **Julia Peng (彭佳慧)** graces the stage every Tuesday and is always a major draw. Other highlights this week are **Liu Wei-zen (劉偉仁)**, on Tuesday and Wednesday, and **Hsing Lung (辛隆)** 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 ranges from NT\$600 to NT\$850, depending on the performer, and includes two drinks

#### Riverside Live House (西門紅樓樓下)

this weekend belongs to singer and actress **Kay Huang (黃韻玲)**, who appears tonight and tomorrow.