

POP STOP

Until recently regarded as an A-lister, poor **Eddie Peng** (彭于晏) looks as if he's being eclipsed by a younger rival in what could be interpreted as a delicious example of comeuppance, if you suspend disbelief long enough. **Lego Li** (李國毅), 23, starred alongside Peng in the series *Honey and Clover* (蜂蜜幸運草) last year and was subject to some light bullying on set, including the forced removal of his shoe, which he was then made to smell, the *United Daily News* reported last year.

The young upstart seems to have avoided post-traumatic stress disorder and went on to score the lead role in a new drama, *Start Game* (比賽開始), which as Peng has been put on ice by his agency and hasn't worked for 4 months has set tongues wagging, reports the *Liberty Times*, the *Taipei Times*' sister paper.

Peng, who turns 27 on Tuesday, is reportedly in the doghouse for being difficult. And getting caught telling fibs hasn't helped his cause. After splitting from Mando-pop diva **Jolin Tsai** (蔡依林) last year, he said the pair hadn't kept in contact. She now says they do.

A US federal jury has begun deliberations in a civil trial of South Korean pop star and actor **Rain** and his managers over the cancellation of his scheduled 2007 concert in Honolulu.

Hawaii-based Click Entertainment Inc alleges Rain and his agency breached a contract and defrauded it of US\$500,000 in rights fees, plus nearly US\$1 million in other expenses to stage the event.

The four-man, three-woman jury began deliberating on Wednesday morning to determine if and how much damages should be awarded. Rain's concert was canceled just days before the scheduled June 15, 2007, event at Aloha Stadium. It was supposed to be the first stop on the US segment of the singer's Rain's Coming world tour, which saw the icon play Taiwan in March of the same year.

Alt-rock chanteuse **Faith Yang** (楊乃文), who sang a duet with **Jarvis Cocker** at December's Urban Simple Life, revealed in the *Liberty Times* that she threw her US computer engineer boyfriend to the curb six months ago. He had moved to Taiwan, but it wasn't to his liking so he upped sticks, and that was the end of that. And now she has a new album out next month, the perfect time to divulge details of her private life.

And girls, if you're in the marriage market, a very eligible bachelor is under pressure from his parents to get hitched soon. That **David Tao** (陶喆) at 39 has not been married before shouldn't put you off. There's probably nothing wrong with him.

"My lips lack the moisture of other people," the self-declared homebody told the *Liberty Times*.

His mother says she will arrange a marriage for her son, so time is of the essence.

The singer has a new album out in May, which may go some way to explaining the energized search for a spouse.

All of which segues awkwardly to **Edison Chen** (陳冠希), whose film *The Sniper* (神鎗手) hits screens next month in Taiwan and Hong Kong. The flick was originally slated for release last year, but was shelved after photos of the star and eight female celebrities engaged in compromising poses found their way onto the Net.

In the movie, Chen is a supporting actor, but he has outshone his coworkers for all the wrong reasons. Promotional shots of *The Sniper* feature bare-chested hunks in camouflage slacks.

The press, as cynical as ever, was quick to point out that the bullet Chen received in the post on March 11 may not have been a threat after all, but, would you believe it, a PR stunt for the film.

— COMPILED BY STAFF WRITER WITH AP



Faith Yang's new album comes out next month. PHOTO: TAIPEI TIMES

Rockin' on stage can get bloody for American band **Story of the Year**, which is known for its raucous, high-energy shows.

"I've been hit in the head a few times [by guitars] and blood will just be running down your face," said lead vocalist Dan Marsala in an interview with the *Taipei Times* from his hotel in Nagoya, Japan, where the band just finished a run of shows.

But gore won't be the centerpiece of **Story of the Year's** concert tonight at *The Wall* (這牆) in Taipei. "We've been doing it for so many years that we're really good at dodging each other now," said the 28-year-old.

The band, originally from St Louis, plays modern hard rock, melding guitar-driven genres that thrived in the 1980s underground: thrash, hardcore metal, grunge and emo.

While not a household name, **Story of the Year** has enjoyed modest success and a large enough fan base to keep the group on a steady schedule of touring and recording. The band broke into the US rock scene with its debut album *Page Avenue* (2003), which went gold, and toured with groups like My Chemical Romance and Linkin Park.

Since the release of **Story of the Year's** last album early last year, *The Black Swan*, the band has toured non-stop touching down in the US, Europe, Brazil and Japan.

"It's what you've got to do to be in a rock band these days," said Marsala. "It's how people make money, now that nobody buys CDs anymore."

Nonetheless **Story of the Year** is focused on making music with a message. Songs like *Welcome to Our New War* clearly show the members' rage against the machine: *The power elites wear the thickest disguise/Setting the rules as the classes divide they keep their heartless/Eyes on the prize and leave the masses with a lifetime of poverty and crime.*

"I grew up listening to a lot of punk bands," said Marsala. "That's definitely where the inspiration for our politically driven music came from. Some of my favorite bands were Bad Religion and Propagandhi — a lot of political punk bands that I grew up listening to... I've always been into music that had some kind of message, rather than love songs."

Despite the "serious" content, the band still enjoys being a little "goofy" on stage. "You want to suit the music but you want to have fun at the same time," he said.

Marsala says he particularly likes playing clubs like *The Wall*, which holds a maximum of around 500 people.

"If you're playing a huge arena, you're not going to feel the energy of the crowd," he said. "There's just something magical about a small room full of people, just screaming and having fun."

Story of the Year's show tonight begins a big weekend for *The Wall*. Tomorrow the venue hosts *The Band Apart*, a Japanese indie-pop group with a loyal following that regularly fills 1,000-seat venues, according to *The Wall's* Miyuki Yang (楊懿琳), who is in charge of booking international acts.

The Tokyo-based band plays groove-



Above: American emo-thrash group **Story of the Year** rocks *The Wall* tonight. Left: **The Band Apart** brings its slick indie-pop to *The Wall* tomorrow. PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE WALL

oriented music full of jazzy guitar riffs, pop hooks and sweet vocal choruses. All the lyrics are sung in English by singer and guitarist Arai Takeshi.

Taiwanese audiences and indie musicians will relate to *The Band Apart's* origins — its members started out as a heavy metal cover band but moved on to writing their own songs. The Japanese indie-music blog keikaku.net notes their "eclectic" influences such as bossa nova and emo, which can be heard in their song *Shine on Me*, which also has a strong J-pop feel.

— DAVID CHEN

PERFORMANCE NOTES:

WHAT: **Story of the Year**, with Supe of Japan and Hindsight
WHEN: Tonight at 8pm
WHERE: *The Wall* (這牆), 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
ON THE NET: www.storyoftheyear.net
TICKETS: NT\$1,400 at the door

WHAT: *The Band Apart*
WHEN: Tomorrow at 8pm
WHERE: *The Wall* (這牆), 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
ON THE NET: www.myspace.com/asiangothic
TICKETS: NT\$900 in advance (available at White Wabbit Records) and NT\$1,000 at the door

TOP FIVE MANDARIN ALBUMS

MARCH 6 TO MARCH 12

- 1 Alan Luo (羅志祥) and *Trendy Man* (潮男正傳) with 22.26 percent of sales
- 2 Wang Lee-hom (王力宏) and *Heart Beat* (心·跳) with 9.25%

- 3 Fish Leong (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 7.46%

- 4 Alan Kuo (柯有倫) and *One Day* (2009柯有倫全創作) with 6.84%

- 5 Luo Wen-chung (羅文聰) with *Luo Wen-chung's FTV Bridal Duets* (羅文聰影視娘家對唱專輯) with 5.37%

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



[EVENTS & ENTERTAINMENT]

Theater

U-Theatre brings its six-part ode to its Laoquanshan (老泉山) home, **The Mountain Dawn** (入夜山嵐), to the National Theater tonight for four performances. It's a softer, gentler production that reflects the quietness of the land [see Diane Baker's preview at www.taipetimes.com/News/feat/archives/2009/03/13/2003438369]. Tonight's show is sold out but tickets remain for the other performances. ▶ Tonight and tomorrow at 7:30pm, matinees tomorrow and Sunday at 2:30pm ▶ National Theater (國家戲劇院), 21-1, Zhongshan 5 Rd, Taipei City (台北市中山南路21-1號) ▶ NT\$700 to NT\$2,500; available through NTCH ticketing or online at www.artsticket.com.tw. Wide-range of seats still available for the two matinees, limited seats for tomorrow night.

Young dancers and choreographers from Focus Dance Company (焦點舞團) fuse together elements from modern dance, tai chi, ballet and traditional Chinese dance in the group's latest production, **Focus** (聚焦). Works by Lin Hwai-min (林懷民) and Zhang Xiao-xiong (張曉雄) will also be performed. ▶ Taipei National University of the Arts — Dance Theater (國立台北藝術大學舞蹈廳), 1, Xueyuan Rd, Taipei City (台北市學園路1號) ▶ Today at 7:30pm, tomorrow at 2:30pm and 7:30pm ▶ Tickets are NT\$350, available through NTCH ticketing or online at www.artsticket.com.tw

The Two Gentlemen of Verona is the latest installment of Tainan 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. ▶ Tainan Human Theater Factory (台南人戲工場), 3F, Baida Education and Cultural Center (百達文教中心3樓), 85 Shengli Rd, Tainan City (台南市勝利路85號) ▶ Today at 7:30pm, tomorrow at 2:30pm and 7:30pm and Sunday at 2:30pm ▶ Tickets are NT\$450, available through NTCH ticketing or online at www.artsticket.com.tw

Classical

Katia and Marielle Labeque (拉貝克姊妹雙鋼琴音樂會) presents the Labeque sisters, who have been praised as being "the best piano duo in front of an audience today" by the *New York Times*, performing a program that includes Mozart's *Sonata in D-Major*, Schubert's *Fantaisie in F-Minor*, and Revell's *Mother Goose* and *Rhapsodie Espagnole*. ▶ Monday (Taichung) and Tuesday (Taipei) at 7:30pm ▶ Taichung Chungshan Hall (台中市中山堂), 98 Suyehsi Rd, Taichung City (台中市學士路98號); National Concert Hall, Taipei City ▶ Tickets are NT\$500 to NT\$5,000, available through ERA ticketing or online at www.ticket.com.tw

Highlight

Oasis is appearing live in concert on Friday, April 3, at the Taipei World Trade Center Nangang Exhibition Hall. The Brit-pop legends had originally been booked to play Beijing on April 3 and Shanghai on April 5 — in what would have been their first concerts in China — but the shows were axed by Chinese authorities. Oasis says the Chinese government revoked the performance licenses after discovering that bandmember Noel Gallagher had appeared at a Free Tibet Concert in 1997. A Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson claimed the concerts' organizers cancelled the shows "because of economic reasons in their business operations." Oasis is touring Asia to promote its new album, *Dig Out Your Soul*.



Liam Gallagher and co play Taipei on April 3. PHOTO: EPA

▶ Oasis at Taipei World Trade Center Nangang Exhibition Hall (台北世界貿易中心南港展覽館), 1 Jingmao 2nd Rd, Nangang Dist, Taipei City (台北市南港區經貿二路1號) ▶ April 3 at 7:30pm, doors open at 6pm ▶ Tickets are NT\$2,800 and NT\$4,000 (NT\$1,500 tickets are sold out), available through ERA ticketing outlets or online at www.ticket.com.tw/dm.asp?P1=0000009516. Call (02) 2341-9898 for more information

AMA Principal Soloists Series — Andrei Yeh (亞藝首席獨奏家系列 — 葉孟儒鋼琴獨奏會) sees Taiwan-born, Russian-trained pianist Andrei Yeh (葉孟儒) perform a series of concerts around Taiwan. The series opens tomorrow with a free performance in Taoyuan County. Yeh will perform a program that includes Debussy's *Preludes* and Rachmaninoff's *Prelude Op. 23*. ▶ Tomorrow (Taoyuan) and Wednesday (Hsinchu) at 7:30pm ▶ Performing Arts Hall of the Cultural Affairs Bureau of Taoyuan County Government (桃園縣政府文化局演藝廳), 21 Sianfu Rd, Taoyuan County (桃園市縣府路21號) and Performing Arts Center

of the Cultural Affairs Bureau of Hsinchu County (新竹縣文化中心演藝廳), 146 Sianjheng 9th Rd, Jhubei City, Hsinchu County (新竹縣竹北市縣政九路146號) ▶ Free admission for the Taoyuan concert, NT\$150 to NT\$400 for Hsinchu; available through ERA ticketing or online at www.ticket.com.tw

NSO Forever Tales — The Mice War (NSO 永遠的童話 — 鼠標大戰) brings together the Shiny Shoes Children's Theater (鞋子兒童實驗劇團) and the NSO Soloists (NSO獨奏家群) for the Asian premiere of *The Mice War*, a children's opera by American jazz composer David Chesky, who is

currently a composer in residence at the NSO. The story is about two mice clans who go to war over a dispute concerning cheese. The orchestra will be conducted by Chang Yin-fang (張尹芳). ▶ Today and tomorrow at 7:30pm, tomorrow and Sunday at 2:30pm ▶ National Experimental Theater, Taipei City ▶ Tickets are NT\$500 (sold out)

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. Tomorrow's program features **Bollo Band**, a group formed by Indonesians living in Taiwan, led by singer Lisa, who says their music "eases homesickness" for the Indonesian community in Taiwan. On Sunday it's **Nityalila** (妮提阿利拉), an award-winning singer-songwriter and guitarist from the Philippines, and her three-piece backing band. ▶ 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 ▶ The event is free; for more information and full schedule, visit www.2009bmf.com.tw

VU Live House hosts electro and disco-punk DJs in the **Sinister Sound Syndicate** tomorrow night. ▶ B1, 77, Wuchang St Sec 2, Taipei City (台北市武昌街二段77號B1). Tel: (02) 2314-1868 ▶ Show begins at 11pm

▶ Entrance fee tonight is NT\$250, includes one drink

The Wall (這牆) hosts some big shows this weekend and next week. Tonight it's American band **Story of the Year**, which makes its angst melodic by combining grunge and hardcore metal with emo-style vocals. Japanese band **Supe** and local emo group **Hindsight** (光景消逝) open the show. Tomorrow Japan's **The Band Apart** appears to perform its clean, upbeat indie-pop songs that often approach jam-band territory. [See story on Page 13.] Happening on Sunday is **Emerging From the Cocoon**, with metal bands **Revilement**, **EFTC**, **Crusher** and **Demise** (癡). On Wednesday experimental rock band **Battles** visits from New York City. The group's music is often called "Math Rock" for its complex layers of sounds and uncommon time signatures. Indie-electronica band **Digihai** opens the show. [See story on Page 13.] Back to the Future (回到未來) brings popular Chinese indie-rockers **Carsick Cars** to *The Wall* on Thursday, along with post-punks **Snapple**, also from China. ▶ 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 and tomorrow, Sunday's show begins at 7:30pm, Wednesday's and Thursday's shows start at 8pm ▶ Entrance fee is NT\$1,400 tonight. Tickets for tomorrow's show are NT\$1,000 at the door or NT\$900 in advance (available at White Wabbit Records in *The Wall's* shopping arcade). Sunday's show is NT\$450, Wednesday's show is NT\$1,000 for advance tickets or NT\$1,200 at the

door, and Thursday's show is NT\$600 in advance or NT\$800 at the door

Peppermint (薄荷葉) plays post-rock tonight at **Witch House** (女巫店). Tomorrow folk roots outfit **The Dana Wylie Band** performs a final show in Taipei before returning to the UK. On Thursday it's **Queen Suitcase**. ▶ 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

Appearing tonight at **Riverside Cafe** (河岸留聲) is the **London Shamisen Club** (倫敦三味線俱樂部), a group consisting of a Japanese expat, Tommo, and two local alt-rock musicians, HsiaoMa and Yicheng. Twenty-year-old pop-jazz star **Joanna Wang** (王若琳), who started playing at the venue's open mic night at age 15, appears tomorrow night. On Thursday it's Malaysian singer **Lin Jian-hui** (林建輝) followed by Puyuma singer **Jia-jia** (家家). ▶ 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 tomorrow, 9pm on Thursday ▶ Entrance is NT\$400 tonight and Thursday and NT\$500 tomorrow, includes one drink