

FEATURES

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Something to **scream** about

For Jimi Moe, Spring Scream has grown into the mother of organizational feats

BY ALITA RICKARDS
CONTRIBUTING REPORTER

A decade ago, while walking back from Kenting to Liufu Ranch, where Spring Scream was being held, several Westerners in a blue truck offered me a ride.

The scruffy looking young guys in the back were so friendly, I divulged how they could sneak into the festival through a gap in the bushes to see some of the 80 or so bands that were playing.

"Where exactly was that gap?" asked one, leaning forward with a grin, which elicited greater detail. Later, two of the men turned out to be Wade Davis and Jimi Moe, the founding fathers of Spring Scream.

The duo have been organizing the festival since it's humble beginnings on a beach with a handful of bands in 1995. Now held at the sprawling Oluanpi Lighthouse National Park (鵝鑾鼻燈塔公園), it has grown to nearly 200 bands on six stages, with additional stages for the Urban Nomad Film Festival, DJs and alternative acts. Add to that stalls, food vendors, art exhibits, camping, security ... and a monster of an organizational challenge.

In the beginning, bands would drop off a demo tape and fill out a one-page form. Now with over 600 applicants, the process has become "frustrating," says a very busy Moe. During an interview in Taipei that was delayed by two hours because of his schedule, Moe fielded multiple calls, responded to e-mail messages on his iPhone, and managed to cram a falafel wrap in his mouth in about three bites — at 10pm, it was the first thing he'd eaten all day. "You know how when you take those B12 vitamins for stress your pee turns yellow because your body can't use them all? My pee doesn't turn yellow anymore," he said.

This year the organizers tried a new approach: backstage-pass style tickets with photos on them, which Moe said are a Glastonbury-inspired "souvenir of the show" (but would also deter people from sneaking in), and a Web site voting

system to pick bands. "We really want bands to promote themselves," said Moe. "If they ask people to vote for them, people are looking at their band, maybe looking at other bands."

The system is two-tiered, with voting open to anyone, but greater weight given to VIP voters — those who have bought tickets. "From an organizer's point of view, that's all I care about," said Moe. He wants attendees to be able to watch the bands they want to see. "The goal was to make getting to know the bands easy and fun."

TOUGH LOVE

The new festival Web site "has so much promise," said Moe, who is optimistic about developing it for next year's Spring Scream. He is "extremely, extremely apologetic" about delays in getting back to bands and vendors this year. "We vowed we would do a better job of communicating," he said. "The volume of what we're dealing with is our number one obstacle. We feel tragic as a personal and friendship thing and as a business thing ... there are only so many hours in a day."

He and Davis both teach as well and tackle almost every aspect of organizing the festival on their own, from listening to demos to sending out e-mails. Plans to try to "get back to what it was originally about, being able to make new friends with the stall people and bands" have been thwarted by time-consuming work with the Web site. "We feel like we're letting people down," he said, citing translation and programming issues as the causes of major delays.

The registration process was arduous for some bands: the site required not only three demo songs, but group photos of the band, a logo, a

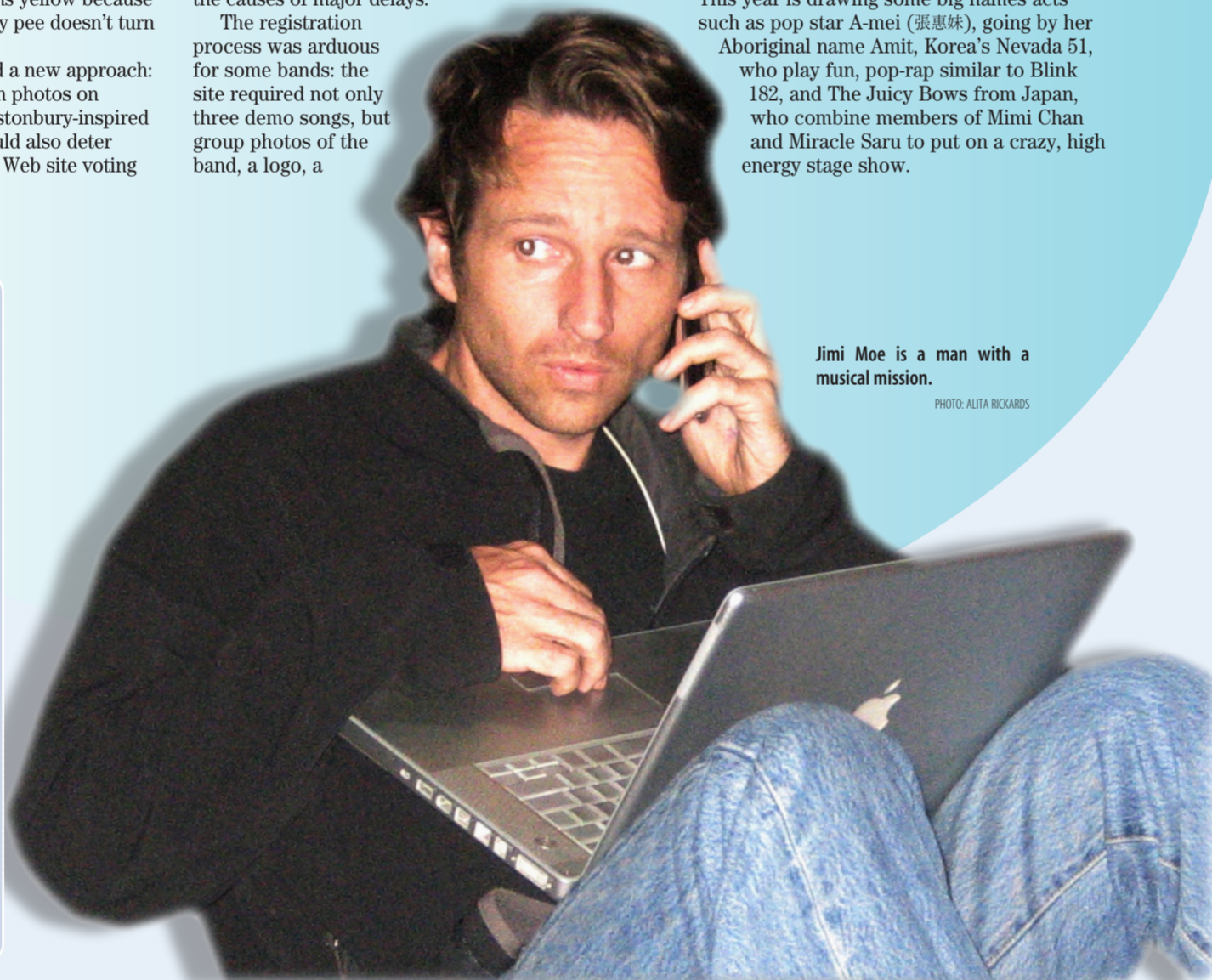
T-shirt design, bios for each member with a photo, a Myspace page, links to Web sites that carried and/or sold the band's music, and videos or footage of the band playing.

For foreign performers there was the added burden of having to gather the material necessary to apply for a visa, which included signed and scanned contracts, scanned copies of passports and Alien Resident Certificates, photos, and evidence that the band has performed outside of Taiwan, such as photos, CDs, and press releases. In some ways, the process is a trial by fire: a band that can jump through all the hoops can also likely pull off a show. "The Internet is the greatest tool," said Moe. "It's very DIY. It puts the power in the hands of the bands."

In addition to the registration process, foreign bands had to pay a NT\$500 application fee. Though the fee went directly to the visa office, not to the organizers, Moe said he's considering having an application fee of NT\$1,000 next year if it weeds out novice bands that weren't prepared to "actually play."

"I'd love to listen to every demo but when you rank them from best to worst it's really hard to listen to that bottom third. I hope they all improve to become the top third, but eliminating the lower two thirds ... means all the music is going to be really good." Though he is proud of the quality of the music that will be played, he says, "I also hate telling a band they can't play — it physically hurts — in the beginning everyone could play."

This year is drawing some big names acts such as pop star A-mei (張惠妹), going by her Aboriginal name Amit, Korea's Nevada 51, who play fun, pop-rap similar to Blink 182, and The Juicy Bows from Japan, who combine members of Mimi Chan and Miracle Saru to put on a crazy, high energy stage show.



Jimi Moe is a man with a musical mission.

PHOTO: ALITA RICKARDS

FESTIVAL NOTES:

VENUE: Oluanpi Lighthouse National Park (鵝鑾鼻燈塔公園)

WEB SITE: www.springscream.com

WHEN: April 3, April 4 and April 5.

Performances will take place on eight stages at Oluanpi Lighthouse National Park, beginning at 2pm Friday and around noon on Saturday and Sunday. Performances finish around midnight. A complete schedule is available on Spring Scream's Web site, but is subject to change. A schedule of band times will be available at the entrance.

TICKETS: NT\$1,690 for a three-day all-event pass or as follows for single-day tickets: Friday only, NT\$890; Saturday only, NT\$1,190; Sunday only, NT\$490. Available at FamilyMart ticket kiosks until April 5. Children under 12 years of age get in free with an adult guardian who has a valid ticket. Go to www.springscream.com and click on the tab marked "tickets" for more information. All attendees must present a valid photo ID.

The magic mountain

Spare, stark and serene, U-Theatre skillfully transported 'Mountain Dawn' from outdoors to indoors

BY DIANE BAKER
STAFF REPORTER

U-Theatre (優劇場) founder and director Liu Ruo-yu (劉若瑀) and drumming director Huang Chih-chun (黃誌群) succeeded in bringing the magic of their beloved Laoquanshan (老泉山) home inside in the National Theater on Saturday night.

The Mountain Dawn was simply beautiful — deceptively so. Each element alone was spare and stark: the music, the Gurjieff movements (sacred dancing), the staging, the lighting, the costumes. But mixed gently together, layer upon layer, the result was a quietly satisfying evening.

The six chapters in the show explored a day in the life of the mountain, beginning with a vibrant burst of drumming that heralded a new day. All those drums inside a confined space can get very loud, and at one point you had to feel pity for the *di* flautist, standing on a riser behind the drummers, but he battled on, his flute soaring above the drums.

Costume designer Tim Yip (葉維添) gave the troupe a three-piece unisex costume that consisted of close-fitting sleeveless tops, a voluminous skirt that combined wide-legged trousers with front and back panels tied at the waist and a long, open-front robe. The meters of material in the skirts provided floating layers and quiet rustles for the dance segments.

Yip's muted palette — the lightest and palest of blues and greens — served to complement stage and lighting designer Lin Keh-hua's (林克華) work, which blazed with rich colors: strong mauves, deep teals, blues, greens and a beautiful pinky-orange that exactly captured the hue of so many sunsets seen in Taipei. The staging was minimal — a raised platform along the back of the stage, a large rock outcropping on the backdrop — so the lighting set the stage for each segment.

While the drumming is what U-Theatre is famous for, the group has increasingly incorporated sacred dancing into its practice over the past 10 years, culminating in the 2006 production *River Journey*. The precision of the ritual gestures and their quietness was once again used to great effect in the bamboo and night mist segments.

But it was Huang's sunset solo that stole the show. He slowly started turning, right arm outstretched from the shoulder, hand holding a stick, the first small circle gradually widening until he was traversing the stage. At the apex of each spin, his arm would come down to strike the drum he held under his left arm. He spun and spun and spun and then just stopped. The amazing thing wasn't just that he hit his mark, it was that he stood stock-still; you could barely see his breathing. And then he walked offstage.

I have only one complaint about *The Mountain Dawn*: it ended. U-Theatre left the audience wanting more; there was none of the usual edging toward the exits when the company turned to face the audience and took their first bow. People stayed in their seats, clapping hard through five curtain calls, and they would have called the troupe back to the stage again if the theater lights had not come up.

The U-Theatre troupe has a day off today before heading off to Israel for a three-city tour, its second to that country. The company will be back to perform *The Mountain Dawn* on April 10 and April 11 in Kaohsiung City and then takes a month-long break for a group retreat before performing in Taichung City on May 15 and May 16.



Originally performed at U-Theatre's mountainside home, the troupe is taking *The Mountain Dawn* on tour southern and central Taiwan. PHOTO COURTESY OF U-THEATRE

PLANET POP

British reality television star **Jade Goody** died in her sleep early yesterday aged just 27, her publicist said, after a very public

battle with cervical cancer. Goody died at her home in Upshire, Essex, southeast England, at 3:14am on Britain's Mother's Day, with husband **Jack Tweed** and mother **Jackie Budden** by her side.

"I think she's going to be remembered as a young girl who has, and who will, save an awful lot of

lives," her publicist **Max Clifford** said, referring to how her battle with cancer has raised awareness of the disease.

"She was a very, very brave girl. And she faced her death in the way she faced her whole life — full on, with a lot of courage."

Goody, an ex-dental nurse from south London, first found fame on Britain's *Big Brother* reality television program in 2002.

But her career was nearly ruined when she subjected Bollywood actress **Shilpa Shetty** to racist bullying on the celebrity edition of the show in 2007, referring to her as "Shilpa Poppadam."

The two subsequently made peace, with Goody appearing on the Indian *Big Brother* — *Bigg Boss* — although she pulled out after being told she had cancer.

Shetty has said she was "sad" about Goody's illness and had hoped to visit her last week

while on a trip to Britain.

Goody's decision to live out her final weeks in the public eye prompted many commentators uncomfortable with the coverage to raise questions about the ethics of reality television.

But she won the hearts of many Britons — and was responsible for a huge jump in the number of young women taking tests for cervical cancer.

Goody married Tweed — a 21-year-old aspiring footballer's agent who was jailed last year for attacking a teenager with a golf club — on Feb. 22, nine days after he proposed in hospital following her terminal diagnosis.

Media rights for the lavish ceremony at a country house hotel north of London were reportedly sold for US\$1.4 million.

Goody plus sons Bobby, five, and Freddy, four — who she had with her ex-boyfriend, television presenter **Jeff Brazier** — were christened on March 7, another event captured by a magazine.

Goody often said she was

seeking publicity not for herself, but as a way to secure her sons' financial future when she was gone.

Her case reportedly led to a 20 percent rise in the number of young women taking smear tests which can detect cervical cancer.

US actor **Harrison Ford** is engaged to be married to longtime girlfriend **Calista Flockhart**, *People* magazine reported on Saturday.

It quoted sources close to the couple as saying Ford, 66, surprised girlfriend Flockhart, 44, with an engagement ring during the Valentine's Day weekend while they were away on a family vacation with son Liam.

The couple has been together for 7 1/2 years.

No wedding date has yet been set, the magazine said.

Agents for South Korean star singer and actor **Rain** said on Friday they are consulting their lawyers after a US court ordered them to pay more than US\$8 million for canceling a concert in Honolulu in 2007.

"This is a result we would never have expected," Jung Wook, president of JYP Entertainment, told Yonhap news agency.

"We will decide our future course of legal action in a few days after discussing it with attorneys who are on their way back (to Seoul)."

On Thursday a Honolulu federal jury found Rain and his agency had breached a contract with Click Entertainment to perform a concert almost two years ago. It ordered them to pay the Hawaiian promoter punitive damages and compensation.

Rain's concert was cancelled a few days before its scheduled date of June 15, 2007 at Aloha Stadium, the first stop on his US tour. The tickets cost a maximum of US\$300 each.

Click Entertainment said the cancellation cost it more than US\$1.5 million and its business reputation was damaged.

Rain argued that the concert stage was not properly set up for him.

— AGENCIES



Jade Goody lost her public battle with cancer on Britain's Mother's Day. PHOTO: AP