

Spring Scream's top acts

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Collider

Although Collider has a vocalist (Leon LaPointe), the music is instrumental as he uses his voice as a sound machine. Post-rock with a haunting, soulful quality, the band's profoundly moving and cyclical melodies take listeners on a dark and beautiful journey.

www.myspace.com/colliderrockband



Point 22 (.22)

This dynamic trio is composed of veterans of the Taiwan music scene Pete Holmes, Steve Taylor, and Wade Davis, one of the founders of Spring Scream. Their songs range from alt-country to psychedelic rock, with hip-hop influenced vocal rhythms and original, wickedly funny lyrics.

www.myspace.com/point22



The Juicy Bows (東京多汁的弓子)

Composed of members of two beloved Japanese bands that appeared at previous Spring Screams, Miracle Saru and Mimi Chan, The Juicy Bows are a tripped-out, pastel and metallic wrestler-costumed ensemble guaranteed to bring a psychedelic experience to even the truly square.

www.myspace.com/thejuicybows



Monkey Pilot (猴子飛行員)

Monkey Pilot put on an engaging rock show with charismatic lead singer Tony (王湯尼) and kick-ass drummer Erin (王豎人). The band's grunge-rock sound wanders into pure metal noodling and occasionally Tony gets so hot he literally steams (as seen at The Last Hoorah show in Tucheng in November last year).

www.myspace.com/monkeypilotgo



High Tide

Winner of ICRT's 2008 Battle of the Bands, High Tide is a reggae outfit with original lyrics and a feel-good vibe that gets the crowd up and dancing. With ska and dub influences and heartfelt lyrics and harmonies, they bring sunshine to the dingiest Taipei watering holes.

www.myspace.com/hightidetw



Divebomb

Divebomb's punchy rhythm section, catchy guitar riffs, and funny, creative and audible lyrics set them apart from other punk bands. They have a garage-rock sound in some songs and an irreverent, early-1980s-Descendants feeling in others.

www.myspace.com/divebomb86



Go Chic

While Go Chic are definitely a girl-power band, the "chic" part seems equally relevant — they combine fashion, youthful attractiveness and a thumb-up-the-bum disregard for convention to put on a refreshing and amusing show.

www.myspace.com/gochictheband



Fullhouse (富而好施)

Tainan-based rockabilly/psychobilly band Fullhouse have an energetic stage show with Elvis-inspired hip-shaking sound and gravity-defying hair in equal amounts. The term "stand-up" bass gets taken literally, with the band members jumping up and riding on the instrument's curved side.

www.myspace.com/fullhouserockabilly



Skunkrice

Dark and heavy electronic Japanese band Skunkrice bring a hard rock and psychedelic-trance edge to Spring Scream before going on tour in the UK in May. With a synthesized, danceable and lean-on industrial sound, they'll bring a taste of something different to live music fans.

www.myspace.com/skunkrice



New Hong Kong Hair City

Coming out of a brief hiatus after losing their bass player, NHKHC are back with two new members and material from their upcoming third CD. Funk-rock, female vocals and Black Sabbath coming out of a saxophone are what set them apart.

myspace.com/newhongkonghaircitytw



[Rickards will be appearing at Spring Scream in Rock In Hose Burlesque Troupe, a five-person outfit that aims to satirize "anything that takes sexuality too seriously." On the Net: www.myspace.com/rockinhose.]

— ALITA RICKARDS

THE VINYL WORD

Since the inception of Spring Scream, other promoters have been riding **Jimi Moe** and **Wade Davis'** coattails and throwing their own massive parties in Kenting during the Tomb Sweeping holiday. Some events blow up and everyone has an amazing weekend, others fizzle and the investors lose their shirts. Even though this is a shorter weekend, there is still an overabundance of amusement for the masses. Partygoers should be aware that last year there was plenty of promotion for **Fat Joe** and **GZA** from the Wu-Tang Clan, but when it came time for their performance neither of them showed up. All artist and band schedules are subject to change at the last minute.

The biggest non-Spring Scream event in the dirty south is the 48 Hour ReNu Hipstival, with **Evil Nine**, **LA Riots**, **Aquasky**, **Felix Cartal**, **Atomic Hooligan**, **Rogue Element** and **Anderson Noise**, as well as local favorites **Go Chic**, **DJ Mykal** (林哲儀), **Freaky Squeaker** and the Swank DJs, **Gareth Jones** and **Matty D**. In a phone interview, Matty D said that this is



Breakbeat meets horror with British duo Evil Nine.

PHOTO COURTESY OF 48 HOUR RENU

music industry today. Opening up for Moor will be **Yahel**, an Israeli progressive trance DJ who tours the globe all year round. Two of the most creative local producers round out this underrated bill, **DJ SL** and **Blueman**. SL will be performing with **Lo Tanghsuan** (羅堂軒) who is a master of the *erhu*, sometimes known as the "Chinese violin." Blueman's time behind the ones and twos is packed with guest appearances because he will incorporate **Dizzy Butterfly**, **Maria Ozawa in Sofa Shakedown** (小澤瑪麗亞), as well as **Unfamiliar Friends Party** into his creative set.

48 Hour ReNu Hipstival (NT\$1,000 entry fee) is at Hengchun Airport (恆春機場). Spring Wave Music Festival — Rock and Roll (NT\$1,300 entry fee) is at Maobitou Park (貓鼻頭公園). Spring Wave Music Festival — Electronic (NT\$1,300 entry fee) is at Hengchun Airport.

On the Net: To view a comprehensive interactive map of Spring Scream weekend parties (Chinese only), go to www.uukt.idv.tw/spring-map.htm

— MARCUS AURELIUS

the place to be over the weekend. "The ReNu festival has seven international DJs, a huge sound system, wicked stage and amazing VJs. These guys are the hottest producers in the nu-disco and indie dance-rock scene."

The Spring Wave Music Festival 2009 goes with popular Taiwanese bands during the day at one site and electronic artists late-night at another. Headlined by

Taiwanese rock 'n' roll luminaries **Wu Bai** and **China Blue**, Spring Wave also boasts former Spring Scream mainstays **Mayday** (五月天), popular indie-folk act **Sodagreen** (蘇打綠), as well as many others.

When the sun goes down, the electronic beats get turned up at Spring Wave. **Andy Moor**, who wears number 18 in the world on his DJ uniform, is one of the most influential DJs and producers in the dance

[EVENTS & ENTERTAINMENT]

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) 2738-0304 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. Highlights this week include **Phoebe Huang** (黃嘉千) tonight, **Julia Peng** (彭佳慧), a major draw who appears every Tuesday, and **Liu Wei-zen** (劉偉仁) on Tuesday and Wednesday.

► 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

► 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 for more information

► Shows are from 9:30pm to 11:30pm and 9pm to 11pm on Wednesdays

► Entrance is NT\$300 tonight and tomorrow and includes one drink; NT\$100 on Wednesday

Tonight at **Tone 56 Live Bar** it's **Loaded**, which plays everything from "rock classics to today's hits." Tomorrow night is "lounge night" with a guest DJ. On Sunday several singers and former contestants on the television show **Super Idol** (超級偶像) are scheduled to appear.

► 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 and 7pm on Sundays
► No admission fee

Exhibition

space to gain a deeper understanding of the process of artistic creation.

► Museum of Contemporary Art, Taipei (MOCA, Taipei), 39 Chang'an W Rd, Taipei City (台北市長安西路39號). Open daily from 10am to 6pm, closed on Mondays. Tel: (02) 2552-3721. On the Net: www.mocatapei.org.tw

► Until April 26

Collision Between Taboo and Desire: Hou Chun-ming Works of Print, 1992-2008 (六爵侯氏—衝撞在慾望與禁忌之間的版畫創作1992-2008) displays 13 sets of the artist's printmaking. Bearing titles such as *Erotic Paradise* and *Paradise Lost for the Heterosexuals*, the pieces unflinchingly explore religion, sexual desire and the artist's own life experiences.

► National Taiwan Museum of Fine Arts in Taichung (國立台灣美術館), 2, Wuyuan W Rd Sec 1, Taichung City (台中市五權西路一段2號). Open Tuesdays through Sundays from 9am to 5pm. Tel: (04) 2372-3552

► Until May 24

Tu Wei-cheng (涂維政), Zhang Hong-tu (張宏圖) and Yang Mao-lin (楊茂林) use sculpture and oil painting to investigate history, both real and imaginary, in **Mythologies of Contemporary Art by Three Artists** (當代藝術神話—三人展).

► Taipei Fine Arts Museum (TFAM), 181, Zhongshan N Rd Sec 3, Taipei City (台北市中山北路三段181號). Open Tuesdays to Sundays from 9:30am to 5:30pm, closes at 8:30pm on

Saturdays. Tel: (02) 2595-7656. On the Net: www.tfam.museum

► Until May 3

Lee Tsai-chien's Solo Exhibition (李再鈞雕塑個展) features 18 metal objects by Taiwan's preeminent master of geometrical sculpture. Ancient Greek ideal forms and Buddhist and Taoist philosophy inspire Lee's monumental creations.

► Main Trend Gallery (大趨勢畫廊), 209-1, Chengde Rd Sec 3, Taipei City (台北市承德路三段209-1號). Open Tuesdays through Saturdays from 11am to 7pm. Tel: (02) 2587-3412. On the Net: www.maintrendgallery.com.tw

► Until April 25

The natural cycle of growth and decay informs **The Day I Saw Past and Future Sceneries Playing** (那天我看見昨天和明天風景在遊戲), a solo exhibition by Jang Tarn-guh (張堂庫). Employing a visual aesthetic that harks back to early modern traditions of landscape painting, Jung's pastoral canvases depict scenes of overgrown gardens, running brooks and mountains shrouded in mist.

► Metaphysical Art Gallery (形而上畫廊), 7F, 219, Dunhua S Rd Sec 1, Taipei City (台北市敦化南路一段219號7樓). Open Tuesdays to Sundays from 11am to 6:30pm. Tel: (02) 2711-0055. On the Net: www.artmap.com.tw

► Until April 8

The Yingge Ceramics Museum investigates the human form in

Passionate Beings: Contemporary Ceramics of Museum Collection (多情·人—當代陶藝典藏展), an exhibit of 35 sculptures from its permanent collection.

► Yingga Ceramics Museum (鶯歌陶藝博物館), 200 Wenhua Rd, Yingge Township, Taipei County (台北縣鶯歌鎮文化路200號). Open Tuesdays to Fridays from 9:30am to 5pm and Saturdays and Sundays from 9:30am to 6pm. Tel: (02) 8677-2727. On the Net: www.ceramics.tpc.gov.tw

► Until April 19

RESTAURANTS



Eat for Vietnam at Ming Jih.

PHOTO: STEVE PRICE, TAIPEI TIMES

Ming Jih Vietnam Restaurant (銘記越南美食)

Address: 536-1, Kangning St, Sijhih City, Taipei County (台北縣汐止市康寧街536-1) Telephone: (02) 2692-7015

Open: Open daily from 11am to 9pm; closed Mondays

Average meal: NT\$330

Details: Chinese, English and Vietnamese menu; credit cards accepted; reservation recommended for lunch or dinner; free WiFi

Indoctrination doesn't usually define a dining experience, but at Ming Jih (銘記越南美食) it's difficult to avoid — and hard not to swallow.

A mannequin dressed in an *ao dai*, or Vietnamese *qipao*, greets customers at the door. There's a small salon prive that doubles as a boutique stocked with Vietnamese handicrafts.

Inside the main dining room, which seats about 100, the puce and orange walls are plastered with Vietnamese calendars, posters extolling the virtues of Vietnam's tourist destinations, Vietnamese contemporary lacquer art, an advert for Vietnam Airlines, and certificates from Vietnamese cultural bodies. A festoon of Vietnamese flags runs the length of the room and a projector fills an 80-inch screen with a looped promo film about the Sea of Vietnam.

Hither Vietnamese this, whither Vietnamese that. There's no escape. Outside, a veranda, charmingly named the "passenger discharge area," faces two 3m-tall billboards, one bearing a collage of images from the Vietnam War, including armed victorious Vietcong and menacing Yanks in tanks.

Ming Jih's most convincing propaganda, however, is to be found on the menu, which features 131 options, many of which are available in three types of noodle and choices of meat or seafood. Dithering over the selection elicits the attention of the wait staff, variously dressed in black bow tie, white shirt and black waistcoat or *ao dai*.

Of five visits, the only disappointment was Vietnamese papaya salad (NT\$100), which was overly sweet, especially when compared to its Thai cousin.

The chefs at Ming Jih handle archetypical Vietnamese fare such as spring rolls with aplomb, but there are far more interesting choices, including boiled incubated duck egg (NT\$40).

Highly recommended is the stuffed crepe with shrimp (NT\$200), a 35cm-diameter disc folded in half and filled with bean paste, prawns and bean sprouts. To form wraps at the table, the dish is served with a plate of lettuce, basil, mint and houttuynia (魚腥草) leaves, which have an unusual fishy flavor that amplifies the eggy-ness of the batter.

Skewered beef tossed with noodles (NT\$110) is a melange of contrasting textures and flavors: tomato, fried garlic, shredded pickled cabbage and carrot, spring onion, cucumber, basil, beef, bean sprouts and peanut powder.

Located in Sijhih near the Dream Community (夢想社區) artists' village, Ming Jih is a NT\$250 to NT\$300 cab ride from Taipei's East District and well worth the trip.

— STEVE PRICE



Dim! Those are sum good dumplings.

PHOTO: CATHERINE SHU, TAIPEI TIMES

Citystar 24HR HK Style Restaurant (京星港式飲茶)

Address: 2F, 166 Zhongxiao E Rd Sec 4, Taipei City (台北市忠孝東路四段166號二樓)

Telephone: (02) 2777-2625 Open: 24 hours a day

Average meal: NT\$350; minimum charge of NT\$160 per diner

Details: Chinese menu only; credit cards accepted

On the Net: www.citystar.com.tw

Forget New York, Taipei is the city that never sleeps. But it can be a challenge to find any kind of Chinese cuisine at a sit-down restaurant after 8:30pm. The dim sum at Citystar 24HR HK Style Restaurant (京星港式飲茶) on Zhongxiao East Road and its affiliates across the city, Luckstar and Naturestar, offer an alternative to night markets for people with offbeat feeding schedules.

Citystar's offerings won't exactly make your taste buds quaver in awe, but the restaurant's selection, which covers two menus, is huge, and the prices are reasonable. We ordered pork and shrimp dumplings with fish roe (魚子燒賣, NT\$85), poached whole prawns (白灼生中蝦, NT\$300), Szechuan stir-fried chicken (川椒爆雞, NT\$260), steamed shrimp wrapped in rice noodles (鮮蝦仁腸粉, NT\$110) and mantou filled with sweet sesame paste (流沙麻糬包, NT\$90).

Out of our two selections that had been made or flavored with shrimp, the pork and shrimp dumplings were, interestingly enough, the shrimpless in taste. The pork's own flavor was barely evident, which wasn't a bad thing. Meanwhile, the number of whole shrimp in the rice noodles was a pleasant surprise — each bite that we took of the tender white sheets of pasta had a plump crustacean or two waiting in it, which made the NT\$110 price seem extremely reasonable.

The poached whole prawns and Szechuan stir-fried chicken were both selected from Citystar's second menu, which lists roast meats, casseroles and other non-dim sum dishes. The Chinese name for the chicken literally translates as "Szechuan pepper exploding chicken balls," but it was a complete misnomer, as the chicken was neither shaped into balls nor exploding with peppery flavor. The meat was liberally coated in brown sauce, but despite the presence of four or five pieces of chopped chili pepper, the dish was not spicy at all. The poached whole prawns, however, were cooked just right: the heads were still filled with juicy prawn goodness, which was a delight to suck out. On the other hand, the NT\$300 price seemed excessive for the portion that we got, especially considering how inexpensive other seafood dishes on Citystar's menu are.

Our favorite dish was the delicious mantou stuffed with luxuriously gooey sesame paste. The mantou was soft and warm, a perfect contrast to the very sweet, nutty, golden sesame filling inside. I was dreaming of the mantou for hours afterwards and it would have made a wonderful end to our meal, but we also decided to order a mango pudding (香芒果布丁, NT\$85), the traditional dim sum dessert. The custard-like pudding was liberally drizzled in condensed milk, which drowned most of whatever mango flavor there was. The dessert's blandness, however, meant that it worked well as a palate cleanser after our shrimp and prawns.

— CATHERINE SHU