

Open to interpretation

In-Between, A Jiaocha Experience (間—交叉體驗) is sure to raise more questions than it answers.

The non-verbal performance — which runs this weekend at Taipei's Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA, Taipei) — combines aspects of a theater production with those of a museum exhibit, and encourages members of the audience to interact with the actors and play with the objects on display.

"We've created an unusual space that will take people out of their element," said Huang Pei-shan (黃珮珊), one of the show's co-creators.

Huang, who works in theater and film, conceived of the 30-minute performance and exhibition with BlueScreen, the pseudonym of a conceptual artist from France, in collaboration with The Puppet and Its Double Theater (無獨有偶工作室劇團).

Huang said they worked on the project for a year, which included designing and building the props and set.

"It's not like in theater where one person does set [design] and one person does the lighting. We did everything together," BlueScreen said.

Everything, perhaps, except the acting. That role goes to The Puppet and Its Double Theater, whose puppeteers will manipulate the many puppets placed throughout the exhibition space.

The space, which could be said to resemble the inside of an artist's home, contains eight rooms, each with its own function. One serves as a bedroom while another is a workshop. Audience members choose to interact with the actors, play with the puppets or other objects on display or simply wander through the exhibition space.

"It all depends on the viewer," Huang said.

Allowing the audience complete freedom to choose the plot and narrative of the work might be perplexing for those who demand a more coherent structure to performance art. But for Huang and BlueScreen, it is a formula that offers a different interpretation on how to use venues — whether a museum or theater — for artistic representation.

"The idea is to make a space and then to leave it open," BlueScreen said.

— NOAH BUCHAN



PERFORMANCE NOTES:

WHAT: In-Between, A Jiaocha Experience (間—交叉體驗)

WHERE: Museum of Contemporary Art, Taipei (台北當代藝術館), 39 Chang'an W Rd, Taipei City (台北市長安西路39號)

WHEN: Today, tomorrow and Sunday at 7pm, 7:30pm, 8pm and 8:30pm

ADMISSION: NT\$350 tickets, available through NTCH ticketing or online at www.artsticket.com.tw

Telephone: (02) 2552-3720

ON THE NET: www.mocatapei.org.tw

Audiences can become actors if they so choose in *In-Between, A Jiaocha Experience*.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF MOCA



We ran through all the clubs in Taipei a few weeks ago, but the capital's dance music scene goes far beyond that. Don't be surprised to find that the music at lounge bars is more up-to-date and better than at the clubs. Here are a couple of hip spots:

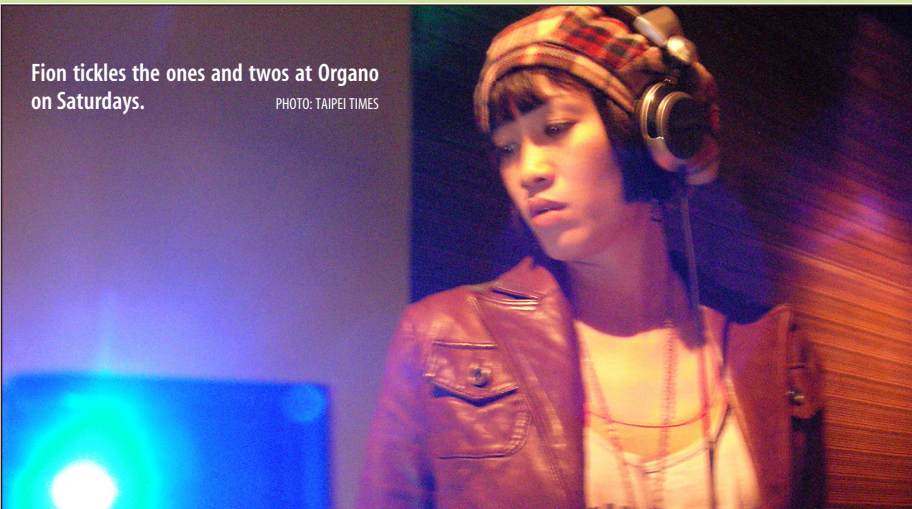
Organo

Known for its classy, homey and intimate atmosphere, Organo has catered to a group of sophisticated customers and celebrity clientele for some eight years now.

Recently the place was upgraded with a DJ booth and high-end mixing equipment, as well as a stellar resident line-up of two veteran DJs on Saturdays, **Al** and **Fion**, whose expansive musical tastes range from techno, house to breakbeat and drum 'n' bass. Organo is located at 1, Ln 112, Anhe Rd Sec 1, Taipei City (台北市安和路一段112巷1號). Tel: (02) 2784-0555.

Fion tickles the ones and twos at Organo on Saturdays.

PHOTO: TAIPEI TIMES



In House

In House is a cut above most other lounge bars in Taipei with the emphasis on music and branding. Besides the five top-selling lounge music compilations under its belt, the nightclub has an awesome sound system, which is cranked up loud. With DJs **David S** and **Tommy** serving up

dance-floor oriented house music every weekend, the only problem is that there's no dance floor. In House is located at 90 Songren Rd, Taipei City (台北市松仁路90號). Tel: (02) 2345-5549.

Return to Paradise and Sinister Sound

Upcoming events this weekend include tomorrow's Return to Paradise at China

White. Headlining the bash is **Sona**, one of Taiwan's most prolific house/electronic music producers. Since the launch of his own imprint Nosa Recordings last year, Sona's work has earned him a nomination for the 2009 Asia Independent Music Award and support from acclaimed international DJs such as **John Acquaviva**, **Onionz** and **Carl Cox**. **Matt Ward** and **Mr Snibbs** will also spin.

Tomorrow from 11pm to 5am at China White, 2F, 97-101, Dunhua S Rd Sec 2, Taipei City (台北市敦化南路二段97-101號2樓). Entry is NT\$350.

The **Sinister Sound Syndicate** plays Bliss tomorrow. The duo began life with one set of decks and a mixer two years ago, and have recently added another set of decks to the mix. Opening the night will be all-girl Taiwanese punk rock band Stocking, who will be dressed up like French maids. Oh la la!

The Sinister Sound Syndicate at Bliss, 148, Xinyi Rd Sec 4, Taipei City (台北市信義路四段148號), tomorrow from 11pm to 3am. Entry is NT\$200.

— QUEEN BEE

[EVENTS & ENTERTAINMENT]

Sea Journey Jazz Combo (海洋知爵士樂團), a four-piece group with vibraphone, bass, drums and guitar, plays tonight at **Sappho de Base**. Tomorrow New Orleans funk and rock ensemble **The Kenyatta Trio** takes to the stage. **T and T Jazz Trio** performs on Tuesday, while **Mr Ed** and **Blind Lemon Lanny** play on Wednesday. On Thursday, the venue hosts **The Jason Hayashi Jazz Trio**.
► B1, 1, Ln 102, Anhe Rd Sec 1, Taipei City (台北市安和路一段102巷1號B1). Call (02) 2700-5411 (after 9pm) or visit www.sappho102.biz for more information
► Performances begin at 10:30pm on weekends, 10pm on weekdays
► No admission fee

Every Wednesday night at the **Cosmopolitan Grill** is an open mic hosted by **Jake Stanley** of the acoustic duo **Stoked Pokey**. All are welcome to participate; performers receive 20 percent off drinks.
► 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
► Every Wednesday, 8:30pm to 11pm
► No admission fee

EZ5 Live House hosts Mando-pop singers backed by a live band every night. Highlights this week include **Huang Chung-yuan** (黃中原) tomorrow, **Julia Peng** (彭佳慧), a major draw who appears every Tuesday, and **Lang Tzu-yun** (郎祖筠) and **Lin Chun-yi** (林俊逸) on Thursday.
► 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 (including two drinks) ranges from NT\$600 to NT\$850, depending on the performer. Call venue for exact price

It's a rock and punk evening tonight at **Underworld** (地下社會) with **Random** (隨性), **Inhuman Species** (非人物種) and **88 Balaz** (八十八顆芭樂籽). Tomorrow the venue hosts metal bands **Desecration** and **Crusher**. On Wednesday it's **Mary See the Future** and **Vanish**.

► 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

► Tonight and tomorrow 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** is New Orleans funk and rock ensemble **The Kenyatta Trio**. Tomorrow house DJs spin blues and jazz for "chill night," while on Sunday there's an open jam and barbecue.

► 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. Call (02) 2517-3869
► The music starts at 9:30pm tonight and tomorrow. Sunday's open jam starts at 4pm.
► No admission fee

Exhibition

Life, Illusion of Bodies (空身幻影) is a solo exhibition by Taiwanese artist Lee Kuang-yu (李光裕). Lee's abstract sculptures investigate themes such as the shifting line between the real and

unreal, movement and stillness and the visible and the invisible.

► Taipei National University of Arts — Guandu Museum of Arts (台北藝術大學關渡美術館), 1 Xueyuan Rd, Beitou Dist, Taipei City (台北市北投區學園路1號). Open Tuesdays to Sundays from 10am to 5pm. Tel: (02) 2896-1000 X2432. On the Net: kdmofa.tnua.edu.tw
► Until June 14

Chang Dai-chien: Memorial Painting and Calligraphy Exhibition (張大千110—書畫紀念特展) displays 96 works by one of the 20th century's most revered painters working in Chinese art. From his early output, which was firmly rooted in tradition, to the later paintings, which were influenced by modernism, this exhibit provides insight into the painter's evolution as an artist and the different schools of thought that influenced him.

► National Museum of History (國立歷史博物館), 49 Nanhai Rd, Taipei City (台北市南海路49號). Open Tuesdays to Sundays from 10am to 6pm. Tel: (02) 2361-0270. On the Net: www.nmh.gov.tw
► Until June 14

Toward the Twilight (行走在消逝之中) is a dual exhibition by photographer Chen Po-i (陳伯義) and painter Hsu Pei-cheng (許靜誠). Chen's photos capture the destruction of Taiwan's temples that were raised to make way for industrial development. Hsu's expressionist canvases contemplate ordinary scenes of backyards, parks and playgrounds on a background that depicts twilight in various shades of radiant colors.
► Project Fulfill Art Space (就在藝術空間), 2, Alley 45, Ln 147, Xinyi Rd Sec 3, Taipei City (台北市信義路三段147巷45弄2號).

To arrange a viewing call (02) 2325-0023. On the Net: www.pfarts.com
► Until April 26

Cuba: The Island Garden is an exhibit by US photographer Keith Brown that sympathetically documents the people and architecture of the last bastion of communism in Latin America.
► Pethany Larsen Gallery (Pethany Larsen藝坊), 30, Ln 45 Liaoning St, Taipei City (台北市遼寧街45巷30號). Open Tuesdays tho Sundays from 11am to 8pm. Tel: (02) 8772-5005. On the Net: www.pethanylarsen.com
► Until May 17

Kamatani Tetsutaro employs mixed media materials, such as Barbie dolls and plastic toy soldiers, as well as acrylic on canvas to explore the constantly the nature of reality in his solo exhibition **Ultra Superficial**.
► Gallery J Chen, 3F, 40, Ln 161, Dunhua S Rd Sec 1, Taipei City (台北市敦化南路一段161巷40號3F). Open Tuesdays tho Sundays from 12pm to 9pm. Tel: (02) 2781-0959. On the Net: www.galleryjchen.com
► Until April 30

In-Between, A Jiaocha Experience (間—交叉體驗) is a joint exhibit by French artist BlueScreen and Taiwan's The Puppet and Its Double Theater (無獨有偶劇團). The interactive installation ponders the meeting points between performance art, new media and contemporary art. [See story above.]
► Museum of Contemporary Art, Taipei (MOCA, Taipei), 39 Chang'an W Rd, Taipei City (台北市長安西路39號). Open Tuesdays tho Sundays from 10am to 6pm. 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 (六腳侯氏—衝撞在慾望與禁忌之間版畫創作 1992-2008) displays 13 sets of the artist's printmaking. Bearing titles such as *Erotic Paradise* and *Paradise Lost* for the *Heterosexuals*, the prints 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, Wucyuan W Rd Sec 1, Taichung City (台中市五權西路一段2號). Open Tuesdays tho Sundays from 9am to 5pm. Tel: (04) 2372-3552
► Until May 24

Ancient Pottery of the Paiwan Tribe in Taiwan (祖靈的居所—台灣排灣族古陶壺特展) shows how ceramics are closely associated with the legends of the Paiwan tribe's origins, and how pottery helps to perpetuate the tribe's social hierarchy.
► National Museum of Natural Science (國立自然科學博物館), 1, Guancian Rd, Taichung City (台中市館前路1號). Open Tuesdays tho Sundays from 9am to 5pm. On the Net: www.nmns.edu.tw
► Until May 17

The God of Earth in Taiwan (台灣土地公特展) explains the origins of the Earth God (土地公) and why it continues to play an important role in folk worship throughout the country.
► National Museum of Natural Science (國立自然科學博物館), 1, Guancian Rd, Taichung City (台中市館前路1號). Open Tuesdays tho Sundays from 9am to 5pm. On the Net: www.nmns.edu.tw
► Until May 31

RESTAURANTS

Hsiang The Brunch (向The Brunch)

Address: 18, Ln 236, Dunhua S Rd Sec 1, Taipei City (台北市敦化南路一段236巷18號)

Telephone: (02) 8771-8258

Open: Open Mondays to Fridays from 10am to 10:30 pm; opens at 8am on Saturdays and Sundays; kitchen closes at 9pm

Average meal: NT\$350 to NT\$600 **Details:** Credit cards accepted for orders over NT\$1,000

On appearances alone, one would never guess that Hsiang The Brunch served American diner food. Electric purple walls, lavender wallpaper with floral patterns, white marble tables — this eatery near Zhongxiao East Road looks more like a place where well-heeled female shoppers go for afternoon tea.

But while there are the requisite teas, coffee and fruit drinks, greasy spoon offerings are the stars of the menu. The main selections are a variety of egg brunch and breakfast sets, as well as a collection of pasta dishes and meat entrees.

Brunch choices range from the "healthy breakfast" (NT\$420) — egg-white omelets, fresh fruit and multi-grain bread — to the "luxury steak and eggs breakfast" (NT\$490) and the Italian brunch (NT\$540), a nine-course meal that includes rack of veal and panna cotta.

Hsiang's bacon cheeseburger (NT\$380), a house recommendation, looked so enticing when it arrived I immediately dug in, forgetting to photograph the meal. Besides the standard iceberg lettuce, tomato slices and pickle, Hsiang also loads the burger with a few unusual toppings: scrambled eggs, shitake mushrooms and a sweet and tangy mustard, mayonnaise and barbecue sauce. Sides of crisp, golden french fries and salad greens with a light vinaigrette made this plate of comfort complete.

It wasn't all perfect, though. The bacon on the burger lacked the necessary crunch and the cheese tasted like the processed and sliced variety. Be aware that the sauce is placed on the burger before it arrives, and does not come on the side.

Other house recommendations include the spinach and cheese eggs benedict (NT\$340), which comes with a side of potato wedges, and the smoked chicken and oregano omelet (NT\$320). Breakfast is served at all hours of the day except for the pancake breakfast sets (NT\$200 to NT\$280), which can be ordered until 4pm on weekends and 5pm on weekdays.

While the decor seems incongruous if not downright strange in light of the food, the dining experience is designed for relaxation and slow-paced enjoyment. A leather couch extends across one side of the room, spanning the length of three separate tables for four; on the other side are plush upholstered easy chairs.

Well-placed seating by the window allows patrons to gaze at passers-by, but office workers on a smoke break were not as an appealing sight as the small herb garden of mint and rosemary sitting out front.

For those who need something more than glorified eggs and toast, Hsiang's offers a few main course dishes. Notable selections include the eight-ounce sirloin steak with anchovy and herb butter (NT\$750) and grilled lamb chop with curry herb butter and seasonal vegetables (NT\$650).

One eye-catching dessert on the menu is the whisky vanilla milk shake (NT\$250). If you're not in a rush, the rich fondant au chocolate cake with vanilla ice cream (NT\$200) is worth the 15-minute wait.

Hsiang The Brunch also has a branch on 8, Ln 50, Tianmu East Road (天母東路50巷8號, (02) 2872-5851) behind the Tianmu branch of the Shin Kong Mitsukoshi Department Store (新光三越).
— DAVID CHEN

Tsun Tzu Kou (村子口)

Address: 34, Alley 52, Ln 12, Bade Rd Sec 3, Taipei City (台北市八德路三段12巷52弄34號)

Telephone: (02) 2579-6455

Open: Daily from 11:30am to 2:30pm and 5pm to 9:30pm; closed on the second and fourth Sunday of every month

Average meal: NT\$250 including drinks

Details: Chinese menu; credit cards not accepted

People go to Tsun Tzu Kou (村子口) to experience either nostalgia or novelty. Tucked away in a quiet alley off Bade Road, the single-story eatery preserves the memories of the *juan cun* (眷村), or veterans' village, with its simple northern Chinese-style fare.

Flour sacks once used as material for clothing now divide the open kitchen and dining area jammed with plain round tables and stools. The walls are painted with patriotic slogans that read, "against communists and Russians; be productive to repay the country" (反共抗俄・增產報國). Yellowed grain tickets and household IDs are framed. And the national anthem and military songs are played. While more senior restaurant patrons may find it hard to resist the old habit of standing at attention and saluting upon hearing the patriotic tunes, younger diners are attracted to the novel experience at the *juan cun*-themed establishment set up by a few childhood friends who grew up together in a veterans' village.

During lunch, Tsun Tzu Kou offers dumplings and a few varieties of noodles dishes including half-beef, half-tendon noodles (半筋牛肉麵, NT\$120) and braised beef noodles (紅燒牛肉麵, NT\$90). Another signature staple is luwei (滷味), or soy sauce-marinated snack food, which comes in a few dozen choices ranging from tofu and vegetables to pig tongue and intestines.

Apart from the above-mentioned specialties, the chefs take the liberty of using whatever ingredients they have on hand to create an evening menu for the day. Judging from my several visits, the mostly frequently made dishes include fresh leek fried with preserved pork (蒜苗臘肉) and sliced dried tofu stir-fried with pork (豆干肉絲). The evening fare, though, tends to be a bit too oily.

There is always a big crowd waiting outside every time I visit, and the menu selections become limited for those who come late. Popular items include dual sauce noodles (雙醬麵, NT\$70), which harmoniously mixes the nutty flavor of sesame sauce (麻醬) with the sweet and salty tang of fried sauce (炸醬), and fried stinky tofu (炒臭豆腐), which I haven't had the chance to taste.

The betel nut-chewing proprietor known as Xiao Wang (小王) is another reason people keep coming back. Loud and hospitable, Xiao Wang likes to chat with his diners, drink Taiwan beer and Kaoliang liquor (高粱酒) with them and treat them to dishes and fruit. "You eat whatever I eat" is one of his many pet phrases.

At Tsun Tzu Kou, there is no such thing as dining etiquette. People eat, drink and talk loudly at the bustling eatery that appears frozen in time back in the 1950s.

— HO YI



Hsiang The Brunch's fondant au chocolate cake with vanilla ice cream.

PHOTO: DAVID CHEN, TAIPEI TIMES



A blast from the past.

PHOTO: HO YI, TAIPEI TIMES