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POP

Pauline Lan, Taiwan's answer to Madonna. PHOTO: TAIPEI TIMES



Chu Ko Liang's (豬哥亮) commercial for consumer electronics retailer Tsann Kuen Enterprise Co (3C, 傑坤) has proven to be a hit. The advert, for air conditioners, makes use of Chu's talents for impersonation and double entendre.

It seems that the comedian cannot help but sail close to the wind, and **Jerry Fan** (范可欽), a friend of Chu's who helped negotiate this comeback gig, said he hoped that the National Communications Commission (國家傳播通訊委員會) would not take exception to the incorporation of a line in the commercial that is almost an exact homophone for a Chu catchphrase the funnyman had previously been warned off using on air. The sentence "leng liang ka hou" (冷涼卡好), sounds, as spoken in the ad, almost identical to the banned catch phrase "lin nia ka hou" (您娘卡好), which can be translated as anything from "how's your mother?" to "your mother's alright!" and the connotations that might arise from this statement.

Apple Daily quoted Tsann Kuen Enterprise general manager **Jerry Yen** (閻俊傑) as saying that sales of air conditioners had doubled in the week since the television advertisement went to air.



Chu Ko Liang: from fame to obscurity and back again. PHOTO: TAIPEI TIMES

The commercial has found favor on video-sharing Web sites, with viewer comments predominantly supporting Chu's return to the entertainment world. A post on YouTube by Stare7500 put it nicely: "We've had so many titty ads, finally a Taiwanese ad that is the real thing. Great." (看了那麼多乳的廣告,終於看到台灣拍一點像樣的廣告了,讚。) This refers to the flurry of debate over advertising slots by sex kittens **Yaoyao** (瑤瑤) and **Shushu** (舒舒), both of whom rely on their bongos' powers of persuasion rather than acting prowess to promote products.

Chu would do well to remember, however, that the world of celebrity endorsements is a fickle one. Take aspiring model **Liz Yang** (楊莉思) for example. The Guatemalan-Taiwanese model, who attained some prominence through a short-lived involvement with singer **David Tao** (陶喆) and as spokeswoman for Taipei's Breeze Center (微風廣場), is being threatened with a lawsuit for failing to meet her contract obligations to

the retail outlet, which *Next Magazine* partially ascribes to Yang having turned down a dinner invitation from Breeze boss **Henry Liao** (廖鎮漢). She reportedly faces the prospect of shelling out NT\$7 million for violating her contract, a sum her agent says vastly exceeds what Breeze paid her.

Yang, who was much touted for her "boldness" in photo shoots, has also suffered from a comparison with **Maria Ozawa**, the Japanese porn star who was recently in Taiwan to promote the new slasher flick *Invitation Only* (絕命派對). Yang was supposed to engage in some girl-on-girl action with Ozawa, but according to *Next* the scene was shot using a different actress because the two fostered a mutual dislike for each other. Yang is also reported to have been somewhat shocked by Ozawa's hard-core credentials, which go very much further than flashing a bit of thigh in a fashion shoot.

It's not all hard slog for those working in the entertainment industry, though. One woman who seems to be getting the breaks is 44-year-old **Pauline Lan** (藍心湄). The homely TV host likes her men young, and her relationship with 28-year-old pretty boy **Anthony Kuo** (郭彥均) might go some way to showing that not everyone in the celebrity firmament is fixated on age. And this is hardly a one-off coup, for Lan has a solid track record in the cradle-snatching department. The relationship doesn't seem to be doing Kuo's career much harm either and his modus operandi isn't unique.

Basketball star **Sam Ho** (何守正), who has signed on as a new spokesman for Taiwan Beer, could be reading from the same rule book as Kuo as he is reportedly riding the skirt tails of a successful woman to fame and fortune. His long rumored association with Mando pop diva **A-mei** (張惠妹) has never been fully acknowledged or denied by either party, but according to observers at *Next*, Ho has been holding to the straight and narrow recently. His good behavior has brought him fully into A-mei's charmed circle, and if nothing else, his career in showbiz is looking up.

In other romantic news, *Next* has revealed its report on the divorce between actress **Annie Yi** (伊能靜) and **Harlem Yu** (庾澄慶) being finalized was based on false information, which was "leaked" to get the media off their backs. Whether it's official or not, the two seem now to be well and truly embarking on their separate romantic paths with Sina.com (新浪) running photos of Yi snapped enjoying a late night out with an unnamed man and *Next* reporting that Yu has found consolation "in the arms of a mature woman (熟女)." — COMPILED BY IAN BARTHOLOMEW



Monkey Pilot's lead singer Tony Wang, left, goes bananas on stage. PHOTOS: ALITA RICKARDS

Monkey business

When Monkey Pilot (猴子飛行員) gets on stage, it's easy to see how the group's warm, fun energy draws the audience in. It doesn't matter who plays before the band, Monkey Pilot is relaxed and exudes an easygoing vibe. The music has a Seattle-grunge feeling initially reminiscent of Soundgarden, which rocks out into heavy metal guitar noodling at times. Add to that charming lead singer Tony Wang (王彥尼) with his "Get on up!" James Brown funk voice, and you have a sound that gets the crowd up



onto the dance floor grooving and rocking.

Wang's physical presence — tall, broad, large — combined with his powerful voice and passionate performance brings the crowd to life. Erin Wang (王昱人) plays drums provides a kicking, energetic rhythm, with John Chen (陳自強) on guitar, Yao Yu (余光耀) on bass, and Zane Yang (楊聲錚) on acoustic guitar.

All five come from different musical backgrounds: hard rock; alternative and metal; funk; and blues and reggae. When they play a show, they like everyone to dance and "get crazy," said Wang. "We want to talk about life, hard life, easy life — funny things."

In Taiwan it can be difficult making money from playing in a band, but the members of Monkey Pilot dismiss the idea that one should focus on making money first and having fun later. "If for 10 years you only think about money then your mind is like dead water — you have money but don't know what is fun," said Wang.

To avoid this mental stagnancy, the band has come up with a Monkey Pilot philosophy based on early space exploration programs, when monkeys were launched into space as a prelude to manned space flight. According to the Monkey Pilot conception, monkeys don't know fear — they only know that if they go somewhere and do something they will get a banana.

The basic message the band tries to get across is that you don't have to be perfect at anything in order to do it, said Wang. "[W]ith no fear you have power, you can do it and be good at it."

The secret, said Wang, is not to think too much: "Whatever goes on, the monkey feels fine." — ALITA RICKARDS

PERFORMANCE NOTES:

WHAT: Monkey Pilot (猴子飛行員) with La Petite Nurse (小護士)
WHERE: Underworld (地下社會), B1, 45 Shida Rd, Taipei City (台北市師大路45號B1)
WHEN: Tonight at 9pm
ADMISSION: NT\$300, includes one drink

THEATER NOTES:

WHAT: A Love Story About Taipei and Shanghai (上海·台北—雙城戀曲)
WHERE: Sun Yat-sen Memorial Hall (國父紀念館), 505, Renai Rd Sec 4, Taipei City (台北市仁愛路四段505號)
WHEN: Today at 7:30pm and tomorrow at 2:30pm
ADMISSION: NT\$400 to NT\$2,000 tickets, available through NTCH ticketing

TOP FIVE MANDARIN ALBUMS APRIL 24 TO APRIL 30

- 1 Jolin Tsai (蔡依林) and *Butterfly* (蝴蝶正傳) with 24.82%
- 2 By2 and *Twins* with 8.46%
- 3 Li Li-wei (李立威) and *You* (你) with 8.4%
- 4 Compilation album *K.O. 3 Anguo* (三國鼎立SUPER大門陣) with 4.72%
- 5 Power Station (動力火車) and *Moving On* (繼續轉動) with 3.71%

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



Exhibition

Directed by Chin Shih-chieh (金士傑) in 1980, **Ho Chu's New Match** (荷珠新配) was a legendary production by Lanling Theatre Workshop (蘭陵劇坊) that mixed Beijing opera with modern theater. In celebration of the troupe's 30th anniversary, Chin returns to the director's chair to reprise the comedy about a sex worker attempting to pass as a rich man's daughter.
 ▶ National Theater, Taipei City
 ▶ Tomorrow at 7:30pm and Sunday at 2:30pm
 ▶ Tickets are NT\$600 to NT\$3,600, available through NTCH ticketing or online at www.artsticket.com.tw

For the **2009 Taiwan Kun Opera Theatre All Stars** (聯合名華2009崑劇名家匯演), Shanghai Kun Opera Troupe's (上海崑劇團) Ji Zhenhua (計鎮華), Liang Guyin (梁谷音) and Zhang Mingrong (張銘榮) team up with artists from Taiwan Kunqu Opera Theatre (台灣崑劇團) for revivals of traditional favorites as well as several rarely performed pieces.
 ▶ Metropolitan Hall (城市舞台), 25, Bade Rd Sec 3, Taipei City (台北市八德路三段25號)
 ▶ Tonight and tomorrow at 7:30pm and Sunday at 2:30pm
 ▶ Tickets are NT\$300 to NT\$1,800, available through NTCH ticketing or

online at www.artsticket.com.tw

A bank robbery takes place in Taiwan Drama Performance's (台灣戲劇表演家) **Sifu** (師父). Among the hostages: an award-winning school teacher, a Henan opera star, a martial-arts master, a bakery owner and a pregnant woman. The question: who has the right to decide who should survive?
 ▶ National Tainan Living Art Center (台南生活美學館), 34, Zhonghua W Rd Sec 2, Tainan City (台南市中華西路二段34號)
 ▶ Tonight at 7:30pm, tomorrow at 2:30pm and 7:30pm
 ▶ Tickets are NT\$250 to NT\$1,200, available through ERA ticketing or online at www.ticket.com.tw

A collaboration between Taiwan's Taiyuan Puppet Theater Company (太原偶戲團) and Compagnie des Zonzons from France, **La Boite** is a work of modern puppet theater grounded in tradition, in which two puppet troupes perform a play about two puppet troupes.
 ▶ Pingtung County Art Center (屏東縣藝術館), 427, Heping Rd, Pingtung City (屏東市和平路427號); Chiayi Performing Arts Center (嘉義縣表演藝術中心演藝館), 265, Jiansuo Rd Sec 2, Minhsiung Township, Chiayi County (嘉義縣民雄鄉建國路二段265號)
 ▶ Tonight (Pingtung) and tomorrow (Chiayi) at 7:30pm

▶ Tickets are NT\$200 and NT\$350 (Pingtung), and NT\$250 to NT\$800 (Chiayi), available through NTCH ticketing or online at www.artsticket.com.tw

Tainan Ensemble's (台南人劇團) six-hour long **K24** is a humorous play within a play featuring nine actors in more than 70 roles. The "K24 Bureau of Investigation" discovers a plot to assassinate the president's daughter, who's been cast in the role of Juliet for a professional theater production.
 ▶ Chungshing Concert Hall, Taichung (台中中興堂), 291-3 Chingwu Rd, Taichung City (台中市精武路291-3號)
 ▶ Tomorrow at 2pm
 ▶ Tickets are NT\$800 to NT\$2,500, available through NTCH ticketing or online at www.artsticket.com.tw

Classical

AMA Principle Artist Series 12 — Su Shien-ta Violin Recital (亞藝首席獨奏家系列十二 — 蘇顯達小提琴獨奏會), presents a program of classical music on the theme of "the tango," featuring Tartinì-Kreisler's *Devil's Trill*, Smetana's *Aus Der Heimat*, Prokofiev's *Sonata for Violin and Piano No. 1 in F-Minor, Op. 80* and Piazzolla's *Histoire du Tango*. Su will be accompanied by Weng Chung-hua (翁重華) on piano.
 ▶ Tomorrow at 7:30
 ▶ Jhongli Arts Center (中壢藝術館), 16

Jhongmei Rd, Jhongli City (中壢市中美路16號)
 ▶ Tickets are NT\$150 to NT\$400, available through ERA ticketing or online at www.ticket.com.tw

Karoly Mocsari Piano Recital (莫薩里鋼琴獨奏會) brings the renowned interpreter of Liszt and Bartok to Taipei to perform a program that includes works by Liszt, Schumann and Haydn.
 ▶ Sunday at 3pm
 ▶ National Concert Hall, Taipei City
 ▶ Tickets are NT\$400 to NT\$1,500, available through ERA ticketing or online at www.ticket.com.tw

As part of the 2009 Taiwan International Piano Festival (2009台灣國際鋼琴藝術節), the **Peter Jablonski 2009 Piano Recital** (傑布隆斯基2009鋼琴獨奏會) has the Swedish pianist performing a program that includes Haydn's *Piano Sonata in D Major, Op. 31* and Copland's *El Salon Mexico*.
 ▶ Tuesday at 7:30pm
 ▶ National Concert Hall, Taipei City
 ▶ Tickets are NT\$400 to NT\$3,600, available through ERA ticketing or online at www.ticket.com.tw

2009 Asia Pacific SQ Concert in Spring (2009亞太弦樂四重奏春季音樂會) brings violinists Huang Wei-ming

(黃維明) and Hsu Hsi-lung (徐錫鐘), viola player Chen Rui-hsien (陳瑞賢) and cellist Chen Yi-hsien (陳亦先) together to perform a program of music by Bartok and Kodaly.
 ▶ Tuesday at 7:30pm
 ▶ Hualien Bach Hall (花蓮巴赫廳), 221 Boai St, Hualien City (花蓮市博愛街221號)
 ▶ Tickets are NT\$500, available through ERA ticketing or online at www.artsticket.com.tw

Contemporary

Tonight, highly regarded Japanese hardcore/screamo outfit **Envy** plays **The Wall** (這牆). Tomorrow Kaohsiung punks **FireEx** (滅火器) and **Punk Hoo** (群虎) shake the stage.
 ▶ 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
 ▶ Shows start at 8pm tonight and tomorrow
 ▶ Entrance fee for music shows is NT\$1,000 in advance or NT\$1,200 at the door for tonight, NT\$400 at the door tomorrow

Performing tonight at **Witch House** (女巫店) is **Miss Stocking** (絲襪小姐). Talking to the stage tomorrow night is indie-rock band **Neon**, which boasts

a Malaysian female power singer and a coveted Israeli guitarist. The instrumentally diverse **Chun Zhi Band** (江春枝) performs on Thursday.
 ▶ 7, Ln 56, Xincheng 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
 ▶ Admission for music shows is NT\$300

Riverside Cafe (河岸留言) tonight hosts rock and jazz fusionists **Yellow Funky Stuff**. Tomorrow rock duo **Katncandix2** (棉花糖) and indie artist **Lai Ya-yeh** (賴雅妍) perform. On Sunday, another double-bill features **Engine No. 9** (九號引擎) and **Lost and Found** (失物招領).
 ▶ 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
 ▶ Shows start at 9:30pm tonight, 9pm tomorrow and Sunday
 ▶ Admission is NT\$400 tonight, NT\$450 tomorrow, NT\$400 on Sunday

A Chord (謝和弦) graces the stage



A Love Story About Taipei and Shanghai is a musical about love on both sides of the Taiwan Strait. PHOTO COURTESY OF TAIPEI PHILHARMONIC FOUNDATION FOR CULTURE AND EDUCATION

Cross-strait relations

Jan Tien-hao (冉天豪) grew up listening to music that was popular in Taiwan and China during the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s.

The 37-year-old composer said he chose songs from that era for the musical *A Love Story About Shanghai and Taipei* (上海台北雙城戀曲), beginning tonight at Sun Yat-sen Memorial Hall, as much to evoke nostalgia in the audience as it to attract a younger generation to the theater.

"Young people hate these songs when they are growing up," he said. "But I've re-arranged [the songs] in a way that I hope can appeal to them."

If the three musical numbers performed at a press conference on Wednesday afternoon, which included a heart-wrenching rendition of *Sweet Honey Honey* (甜蜜蜜), are anything to go by, they should do just that.

The musical features the Taipei Philharmonic Chamber Choir (台北愛樂室內合唱團) and Taipei Philharmonic Theater (愛樂劇工廠) performing with Qi Qi (齊奇), a well-known opera singer from Shanghai.

Taiwanese performers include Chang Shih-pei (張世鵬), Chung Hsiao-tan (鍾筱丹) and Aska Yang (楊宗緯) of *One Million Star* (超級星光大道) talent show fame.

Directed by Hsieh Shu-ching (謝淑靖), *A Love Story About Shanghai and Taipei* is a lavish production about love and loss. It tells the story of Pei-pei (裴裴), a young woman living in contemporary Taipei who travels to Shanghai for a vacation and falls in love with a man named Gao-yang (高楊).

Pei-pei carries a black and white photograph of her grandfather that was snapped before he fled to Taiwan in 1949. When she shows it to Gao-yang, he is astounded to see his grandmother in the same image.

The photo serves as a vehicle to shift the narrative focus back to when the Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT) fled to Taiwan after losing the Chinese civil war — a time when lovers and families were separated by events beyond their control. — NOAH BUCHAN