

AROUND TOWN

FRIDAY, MAY 29, 2009

PAGE 13

It takes more
than two to
tango

Yvonne Peng and her dance partner will be performing demonstrations of Argentine tango at tomorrow night's Milonga at Riverside Live House in Ximending.
PHOTO COURTESY OF RIVERSIDE LIVE HOUSE.

Tango Negro plays piazzola music, which is known as "tango's dark era."
PHOTO COURTESY OF RIVERSIDE LIVE HOUSE



"We have new songs. We arranged some very famous Chinese songs from the Shanghai era and we modernized them by adding electronic music," she said.

While Lin, a musician himself, has become famous for sponsoring live rock and indie music events, he was eager to jump on the tango bandwagon, Peng and Jou said.

"He said 'why don't we do something since we have so many great musicians?'" Peng said.

"I think he's quite touched by Yvonne," Jou said. "She was a jazz singer but now she's entranced by tango. He used to be a rocker but now he's interested [in tango] as well."

He's also going all out to help create the right atmosphere for a Milonga.

"Riverside Live House is in a beautiful, historic building so it will be really cool to dance there. We will have thousands of roses and [the venue will be candlelit] so it will be very romantic to dance that night," Milonga project manager Littlesocks Wu (吳思樺) said, adding that 700 people could be accommodated by opening an annex room and the second-floor balcony.

"We also have a blog [milonga.pixnet.net/blog] with all the information about the party, with tango songs and band demos," she said.

Members of the Taipei Tango Association will be giving exhibition dances at the party as well as offering basic lessons to anyone who wants to give tango a try.

"We'll teach very simple steps so they can dance that night," Yvonne said.

Those who attend the party will also be able to take one free lesson at a later date from the Taipei Tango Association.

After talking with Peng and Jou, however, it sounds like the Milonga tickets should come with a warning label that Argentine tango can be addictive — and could change your life.

But you don't have to want to dance to appreciate Argentine tango. The music is enjoyable and there are enough musicians in Taiwan who like to play tango music that they have been able to form several tango "orchestras."

Yvonne Peng (彭靖惠) sings with two of the groups. She was a jazz singer and had recorded four albums before her growing passion for tango — both the music and the dancing — took her in a different direction.

"The albums were all popular music or jazz. But now I'm really interested in tango. I went to Argentina for three months and now I'm teaching [tango] in the studio," she said.

The passion Peng feels for tango was evident as she animatedly gave a rundown of the groups that will play tomorrow night and their different styles of tango music.

The iTango Orchestra plays traditional music, meaning music from what is called the golden era of tango (1920 to 1950). It has two violinists, two bandoneon (a concertina-like instrument) players, a pianist, bass player and two singers, one of whom is Peng.

Tango Negro only plays Piazzolla music, which dates from after 1955 and is called "tango's dark era," in reference to the Argentine politics of that time.

"Piazzolla is very deep, very depressing. Usually we don't dance to it," Peng said.

She also sings with Fusion Blanca, which plays "new tango music." In addition to the piano and bandoneon, there are two guitarists and a rhythm section.



Yvonne Peng, center, also sings with Fusion Blanca.
PHOTO COURTESY OF RIVERSIDE LIVE HOUSE

I MUSIC I

Rocking and
rolling down
the river

Rafting, bungee jumping and a bevy of bands and DJs are among the attractions at Perpetual Motion's River Bash

BY ALITA RICKARDS
CONTRIBUTING REPORTER

With the calendar rather skimpy on days off, there's a lot to fit into this little holiday. It would be nice to get out of town for the weekend, catch up with friends, do some outdoor physical activity, see bands, party and listen to DJs, hit up some good restaurants for food, and given that it is Dragon Boat weekend, taking a boat ride down a river at some point would be sweet.

Is one up the creek without a paddle to have all these ambitions? Not if the plan is to attend River Bash in Pinglin.

According to Perpetual Motion organizer Chad Ordoyne, this is the "biggest little festival you have ever been to," and has "something for everyone."

"I think it's cool to have choices," he said in his New Orleans drawl. "There's so much going on it's out of control: bonfire, basketball tournaments, bands 'til 2am, DJs 'til 5:30am, Sunday music from noon to five — plus some music down by the river for people who are swimming. We're gonna have river rafting, bungee — got this friend Ed Mayhew, extreme sports guy, making a 20m bungee swing, you get up on your skim board and your buddy lets go and shoots you out over the water!"

His exuberance about the festival is matched by that of Canadian partner Tristan Newman, who added, "When was the last time you went river rafting, beer in hand, on your way to a huge party?"

They are particularly excited about the venue, having visited it several times with their girlfriends to "try out" the river rafting. For NT\$200, a truck will take passengers upstream from the party, to then float down in little boats, on a 30 to 40 minute trip meandering through mountains, tea fields and jungle. Halfway down is a little beach where beer will be on offer. It is "totally beautiful" said Ordoyne, whose criteria in choosing the venue was that it be "all natural" and that the river had places to jump off the boats and swim.

The venue is L-shaped, so boats will float through two seating areas, past the bar and main stage area, then curve around along the camping area, where the ride ends and a lifeguard (one of two) will help people ashore.

The music is the main attraction for many, with 14 bands including The Money Shot Horns, High Tide, Go Chic, Skaraoke, The DoLittles and David Foster, and 14 DJs, with Marcus Aurelius, Fratzuki, Edify and Hooker to name a few. The bands will play on the main stage, while DJs will be in a huge warehouse that has three sides enclosed, with the fourth side open, looking over the river. There is "a whole wall of unused aquariums" that they are going to "fill with water and glow sticks, it'll look very cool," said Ordoyne.

After having difficulty hiring a quality lighting company — "we keep throwing these parties and the choices for lighting are terrible," said Ordoyne. "Either you go full out, huge show, really expensive, or you have to settle for these crappy little lights" — they decided Perpetual Motion should become a visuals company. Deciding to "just go out and buy them," they ordered tons of stock from China as well: "smoke machines, lasers, this water light that flashes on the wall changing colors — it's our little adventure," said Ordoyne.

"We've acquired 20 LED lights," he said, "[they're] great for the environment, use very little energy, don't need generators at all, and we got strobes, colored beams, and a DMX lighting board!"

A wide range of activities has also been scheduled. Tomorrow's basketball tournament has 16 two-person teams, playing 10-minute games of two on two. The winning team gets NT\$5,000 in cash, and it's free to enter.

At around midnight, there will be a bonfire in a fire pit in the warehouse, with a drum circle and fire spinners. "The concrete floor is finished like a skating rink if anyone wants to roller blade or bring skateboards," said Ordoyne.

There will be a free raffle for two bicycles, and also a 50-50 raffle, with half of the money split between three winners, and half given directly towards the medical bills of prematurely born baby Fionn, the son of Patrick Byrne from The Money Shot Horns.

Ordoyne also said that there is also a butterfly garden with "huge butterflies" in a landscaped netted area, where a path loops around a fountain.

Because of the variety of flora and fauna, Ordoyne said they have been "very conscious of the environment" and even have a 45m net to catch any stray cans or bottles that get accidentally dropped in the river.

"We want to keep it so clean that when we leave it's going to look like we were never there," he said.

Receptacles will be set up for trash and cigarette butts, and the bathrooms will be cleaned four times a day and restocked.

Pets are welcome, "if you clean up after them and take care of them — that is a must," he said. Fires or barbeques are banned.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 15



Perpetual Motion organizer Tristan Newman, far right, also performs in rock/funk band New Hong Kong Hair City.
PHOTO COURTESY OF NEW HONG KONG HAIR CITY

BY DIANE BAKER
STAFF REPORTER

■ PERFORMANCE NOTES:

WHAT: Milonga Tango Party (樂舞會)

WHEN: Tomorrow at 8pm

WHERE: Riverside Live House (河岸留言西門紅樓展演館), 177 Sining S Rd, Taipei City (台北市西寧南路177號)

ADMISSION: Tickets are NT\$500, which includes one drink, available at the door or by calling (02) 2370-8805