

RESTAURANTS

Bread & Soup (Zhongxiao Branch)

Address: 23, Ln 240, Guangfu 5 Rd, Taipei City (台北市光復南路240巷23號)
Telephone: (02) 2772-0818
Open: 7am to 11pm
Average meal: NT\$400
Details: English menu; credit cards accepted

Bread & Soup, which opened last year in Tianmu (天母) at 158, Zhongshan N Rd Sec 6, (台北中山北路六段158號), has recently opened a second branch in an equally high-profile location, targeting Taipei puppys with what is billed as some of the most authentic European bread available in the city.

Well, it should be authentic, since the bread is actually made in Belgium, though baked in Taiwan. Following in Paul's (see *Taipei Times* review of Nov. 7, 2008) footsteps, Bread & Soup imports its bread and pastry dough, which is produced in centralized kitchens and then shipped to outlets around the world, so you can be sure you're getting the real thing.

Bread & Soup really does have some excellent bread, but with regards to almost everything else, it has yet to find its feet. The sandwich menu certainly looked very appealing, and I opted for one of the most expensive items, the Italian Parma ham sandwich (NT\$240). I chose the combo option (an extra NT\$140), which included a drink and bowl of soup.

To speak kindly, the sandwich had a very subtle flavor — that of a single very thinly sliced piece of Parma ham. The salad, which sported a mere handful of butter and crinkle-leaf lettuce (at least it wasn't romaine or iceberg) and crudely chopped chunks of cheddar, didn't even make a pretense at presentation. Toothpicks with paper flags holding the sandwich together topped off what was clearly an inadequate sense of style. The same miserliness and lack of flair characterized the cheddar and mozzarella panini.

Then there was the soup. I had opted for tomato soup, which, although made with real tomatoes, was a tad sour and had the texture of a warm gazpacho. My companion had gone for what was described as Italian borscht, but turned out to be vegetable soup with a ham stock — reasonable, but not exactly borscht.

My latte was very average, and my companion's lemon juice refreshing, though when asked if it was made from freshly squeezed fruit, the waitress admitted that it was made of reconstituted ingredients.

But indeed, the bread for both the sandwich and the panini lived up to its reputation. The strawberry cheesecake (NT\$85) was also good, very European (and clearly not made locally), light and a good deal cheaper than a similar and slightly richer offering at Maison Kayser in the Breeze Center.

In addition to coffee, tea and soft drinks, Bread & Soup serves a range of Belgium beers and wines that can be ordered with its sandwiches, though wait staff were clearly unversed in the finer points of its fare.

The ground floor seating area is quite attractive, with plenty of natural light, though the basement area could have belonged to a Dante or Ikari coffeeshop. Service was friendly but lacking in experience and assurance. Overall, Bread & Soup has imported a good product, but is either unable or unwilling to provide the trappings to show off its full potential.

— IAN BARTHOLOMEW



At least the bread's good.

PHOTO: IAN BARTHOLOMEW, TAIPEI TIMES

All Japan's a stage

Tickets for the 2009 World View Series: Japan Only, which opens in October with Tadashi Suzuki's *Cyrano de Bergerac*, went on sale Wednesday. The World View Series is an annual event sponsored by the National CKS Cultural Center featuring the performance art of a single country. It has proved enormously successful in bringing high-profile artists to Taiwan, while retaining a place for non-mainstream artists as well, giving Taiwan's audiences a peak at the whole spectrum of foreign performance art.

The series opens with some heavy guns: Suzuki is one of the powerhouses of Japanese theater and the developer of the notoriously demanding Suzuki method of acting. Drawing on traditional Japanese Noh and Kabuki theater, he has sought to extend their influence into the 20th and 21st centuries. The level of recognition he has achieved for his integration of traditional and modern performance art is one that many Taiwanese artists aspire to.

In presenting his adaptation of Edmond Rostand's classic, *Cyrano de Bergerac*, a piece that was immortalized in the Royal Shakespeare Company's acclaimed 1983 production starring Derek Jacobi in the title role, Suzuki offers

further insight into the dangers (and pleasures) of mixing dramatic traditions. *Cyrano de Bergerac* will play at the National Theater from Oct. 9 to Oct. 11.

Another big name likely to attract sellout crowds is Ryoichi Kurokawa. For the World View Series, Kurokawa, one of the world's foremost multimedia artists, will be collaborating with local composer Wang Sue-ya (王思雅) and percussionist and Ju Percussion Group (朱宗慶打擊樂團) director Wu Shih-san (吳思珊) to produce *Celeritas* (Oct. 22 to Oct. 25).

Those with an interest in contemporary dance may want to see Hiroaki Umeda. A rising star in the Japanese dance scene, Umeda will present his mix of choreography and multimedia effects titled *While Going to a Condition and Accumulated Layout* (Oct. 9 to Oct. 11), in which "the poetic body meets the technological stage." Dance will also be showcased by Noism, a group of young dancers that are credited with pushing the remarkably flexible boundaries of modern dance (Oct. 16 to Oct. 18).

In music, the Yoshida Brothers will perform *Tsugaru Shamisen*, a production that integrates traditional *shamisen* music with rock 'n' roll



This year's World View Series features performance art from Japan.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF NTCC

rhythms (Oct. 25).

For the more traditional-minded, there will be two concerts under the umbrella of Musical Journey of Japan: one spans the history of Japanese music from the Edo period to the recent past while the other takes a geographic theme, showcasing music from various regions. (Nov. 5 and Nov. 6).

A rare opportunity to see authentic Kabuki can be found in the Kabuki Lecture Demonstration (Oct. 10 and Oct. 11), in which short performances will be followed by explanations of the traditions and skills that these selections illustrate.

Details and ticketing information can be found at www.artsticket.com.tw.

— IAN BARTHOLOMEW



South Africa, who plays tech house. "DJs are now more challenged ... it comes down to being a good entertainer."

As for tomorrow, Hive is "a very intimate venue, so I'll try to tone it down as I usually go crazy," said Naked, who played at the 48Renu festival in Pingtung County over the Spring break holiday. "I'll play some house and electro — and generally just take it from the crowd ... but expect some bangers though."

Naked plays CDs, Pimpin is on Serato, so it makes sense that Steppa, aka Kevin Wu (吳炫輝), plays drum 'n' bass and the

next big thing, dubstep, in the traditional way, on vinyl.

If you wanna be starting something for the weekend and hear some fresh tunes, ease on down the road to Hive Lounge tomorrow.

Zombie Dance Zombie is at Hive Lounge, 3, Ln 21, Zhongzheng Rd, Tainan City (台南市中正路21巷3號), tomorrow from 10pm until 3am. Admission is NT\$350 with two drinks.

Up in Taipei, Doi Moi, aka Toby Garrod, has put together a Ween night featuring only the music of arguably the most misunderstood, yet finest electro-rock band of our time. Expect enough Ween to make you cry.

"The brilliance of their early work stems from their gutsy, innovative and incredibly catchy songs, combined with their unapologetic humor (a rare commodity) and the beauty of their brotherly interactions," said Garrod of Ween. "Their later work takes those sentiments, and ... refines them into increasingly beautiful works of art ... It's the combination of their human nature, their incredible skills and a knack for knowing what the listener likes."

DJs and expat band Killing Zoe will play Ween covers after Doi Moi's stint on the ukulele. Send an e-mail to weenintaiwan@yahoo.com with song requests or to confirm attendance.

The Ween Project at Vicious Circle, 1F, 8, Alley 26, Ln 205, Zhongxiao E Rd Sec 4, Taipei City (台北市忠孝東路四段205巷26弄8號1樓). Tomorrow from 9:30pm until 2am. No

Above: Nothing says sophistication quite like *Mystique* de Michael Jackson eau de toilette.

PHOTO: STEVE PRICE, TAIPEI TIMES

Left: Kurt Buttress, aka DJ Naked.

PHOTO COURTESY OF KURT BUTTRESS

cover. Tel: (02) 2777-2218.

And now, what you've all been waiting for, it's the Vinyl Word Challenge. Hidden in plain sight in this article are the titles of some of Michael Jackson's songs. How many can you spot? Send an e-mail with your answer and contact details to features@taipeitimes.com and the winner will be sent a bottle of *Mystique* de Michael Jackson eau de toilette, a much sought-after scent produced in 1989 that sports a high-quality holograph of the King pulling a serene smile.

— TOM LEEMING

EVENTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Every Wednesday night at the **Cosmopolitan Grill** there's an open mic hosted by Jake Stanley of the acoustic duo **Stoked Pokey**. All are welcome to join in, and participants 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

► 8:30pm to 11pm every Wednesday

► No entrance fee

EZ5 Live House hosts Mando-pop singers backed by a live band every night. Highlights this week include male crooners **Su Tzu** (蘇子) tonight and **Hsing Lung** (辛龍) tomorrow. Pub legend and songstress **Tiger Huang** (黃小琥) performs every Monday, while **Julia Peng** (彭佳慧), another major draw, appears every Tuesday.

► 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 fees

Franz and Friends (城市舞台藝文沙龍), an upscale restaurant and performance space in Taipei's East District, hosts music shows every night. The music tends to play it safe, ranging from wistful love songs and opera to lounge jazz. Weekly highlights include **Denise Juan** (阮丹青), a former pop singer turned piano teacher, television presenter and traveler, and her band **Sunshine Costa**. They play tonight. Performing tomorrow is **Buona Sera**, a group featuring soprano **Chang Hsiao-ni** (張曉倪).

► 25, Bade Rd Sec 3, Taipei City (台北市八德路三段25號B1). Call (02) 2579-0558 for reservations, or visit www.franzandfriends.com.tw for more information

► Minimum charge of NT\$300 on Fridays and Saturdays, on other nights there's a one-drink minimum

Tonight at **Underworld** (地下社會) indie-folk rocker **Ban Ban** (班班) appears with her new band **Boyz and Girl**. Also on the bill are indie rockers **GreenEyes** (綠色眼瞞). Tomorrow, a new group called **Until Seeing Whale's Eyes** takes to the stage. On Wednesday, it's **Half Mile Radius** and

Uncolored Unknown.

► 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

► Music shows run from 9:30pm to 11:30pm on Fridays and Saturdays and 9pm to 11pm on Wednesdays. Underworld is open daily from 9pm, closed on Mondays

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

Tomorrow, **Bliss** hosts an evening of Balkan folk and gypsy music with **Aashti Band MK** and **DJ Damier**.

Highlight

Linkin Park, Hoobastank and **The All-American Rejects** are among the bands playing at the **2009 Summer Rock Summit** (夏日搖滾高峰會) set to take place on Aug. 11 and Aug. 12 at Taipei World Trade Center's Nangang Exhibition Hall (台北世界貿易中心南港展覽館) and on Aug. 13 at Banciao Stadium (台北縣立板橋體育館) in Taipei County. Also scheduled to appear is Japanese band **Vamps**, a side project of **Oblivion Dust** guitarist KAZ and **L'Arc-en-Ciel** vocalist Hyde. Tickets are on sale now through

► 148, Xinyi Rd Sec 4, Taipei City (台北市信義路四段148號), one block east of Dunhua South Road (敦化南路). Tel: (02) 2702-1855

► Tomorrow from 10pm

► Entrance fee tonight is NT\$300, includes one drink

Exhibitions

The Smiling Kingdom — The Terracotta Warriors of Han Yang Ling (微笑彩俑—漢景帝的地下王國) is an exhibition of clay objects excavated from a mausoleum that dates back to the Western Han (西漢) Dynasty. The 200 sets of artifacts on

ERA ticketing. A *Taipei Times* interview with Linkin Park singer Chester Bennington will run in this coming Wednesday's Style section.

► Vamps concerts start at 8pm on Aug. 11 and Aug. 12 at Taipei World Trade Center's Nangang Exhibition Hall (台北世界貿易中心南港展覽館), 1 Jingmao 2nd Rd, Nangang Dist, Taipei City (台北市南港區經貿二路1號)

► Linkin Park, Hoobastank and The All-American Rejects concert starts at 6pm on Aug. 13 at Banciao Stadium (台北縣立板橋體育館), 8 Jhongjheng Rd, Banciao City, Taipei County (台北縣板橋市中正路8號)

► Tickets for Vamps concerts are NT\$1,200, NT\$2,400 and NT\$3,600; tickets for Linkin Park concert are

display from the period illustrate the progress of the period's technological and social development and include representations of women and eunuchs, livestock and daily implements such as utensils, tiles, decorative fixtures and lamps.

► 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

► Until Sept. 27

The recently opened Digital Art Center, Taipei (台北數位藝術中心) in Shilin (士林) is currently hosting two exhibits.



Linkin Park returns to Taipei next month.

PHOTO: AP

NT\$1,600 to NT\$4,500

► Tickets available through ERA ticketing outlets, online at www.ticket.com.tw, or at 7-Eleven ibon kiosks

— RON BROWNLOW

Highlight

The third **Grass Festival** (草地音樂節) takes place in Ilan County tomorrow and Sunday at Dasi Elementary School (大溪國小) in Honeymoon Bay (蜜月灣). The festival's four stages (two in the school, two on the neighboring beach) will showcase four genres: indie-pop, rock 'n' roll, post-rock and folk. It's a great opportunity to become acquainted with some of Taiwan's best underground acts, ranging from the Taiwanese folk and punk-tinged musings of **LTK** (濁水溪公社), to the fuzzy indie rock of the **88 Guava Seeds** (88顆芭樂籽), to

the powerful effects-laden post-rock of **Aphasia** (阿飛西雅). Consider it a musical sampler plate. This year's theme is "children's songs," so the bands will weave some childhood classics into their performances. In addition, Dasi Elementary School summer camp students are putting on a shadow play, an artist's market will be set-up for vendors and two movies will be screened: *Annaliese* and *Anton* from Germany and *Tricks* from Poland. A barbecue, seafood, ice cream and beer will provide fuel for the audience while volleyball and swimming complete the beach experience. For more information, visit www.grassfest.net

► Tomorrow and Sunday from 1pm



Some of Taiwan's best indie bands play Grass Festival this weekend.

PHOTO COURTESY OF DANIA

to 9pm at Dasi Elementary School (大溪國小), 250, Binhai Rd Sec 4, Toucheng Township, Ilan County (宜蘭縣頭城鎮濱海路四段250號) (next to Dasi train station)

► Admission is NT\$600 for one day. Tickets can be purchased at 7-Eleven ibon kiosks

— TAYLOR BRIERE

Tao Ya-lun (陶亞倫) employs laser projection in **The Light of Historical Ending** (終結歷史之光) to create a visually arresting light show, while Ma Chun-fu's (馬君輔) installation **Kodomo Manufacture** (兒童製造) is a symbolic recreation of assembly lines. Ma's work means to criticize Taiwan's education system and its emphasis on uniformity over creativity.

► Digital Art Center, Taipei (台北數位藝術中心), 180 Fuhua Rd, Taipei City (台北市福華路180號). Open Tuesdays to Sundays from 10am to 6pm. Tel: (02) 7736-0708

► Until Aug. 9

Horizon of Voice (聲聲不息) is a group exhibition by Lin Jiun-ting (林俊廷), Tao Ya-lun (陶亞倫), Yao Chung-han (姚仲涵), Wang Chung-kun (王仲坤&22531), Chin Yu-fen (秦玉芬) and Yao Chien (姚謙). The six artists employ a variety of new media including installation, video and sound as a means of investigating the body, knowledge, memory and experience.

► Gallery 100, 6, Ln 30, Changan E Rd Sec 1, Taipei City (台北市長安東路一段30巷6號). Open Tuesdays to Sundays from 11am to 7pm. Tel: (02) 2536-2120

► Until Aug. 9

South Korean artist Kim Yong Sik uses painting to explore light and spirituality in his solo exhibition **Eternity and Limitation**.

► Ever Harvest Art Gallery, 2F, 107, Renai Rd Sec 4, Taipei City (台北市仁愛路四段107號2樓) Open Tuesdays to Sundays from 11am to 6:30pm. Tel: (02) 2752-2353

► Until July 19

X Beyond O: Calligraphy-Sign-Space (無中生有:書法 符號 空間) mixes calligraphy, architecture and design to bridge the gap between traditional and contemporary media. The collaborative exhibition includes works by calligrapher Grace Tung (龔鵠致), Hong Kong director Matthias Woo (胡德威) and architect Roan Ching-yueh (阮慶岳).

► Museum of Contemporary Art, Taipei (MOCA, Taipei), 39 Changan W Rd, Taipei City (台北市長安西路39號). Open Tuesdays to Sundays from 10am to 6pm. Tel: (02) 2552-3721. On the Net: www.mocataipei.org.tw

► Until Aug. 9

Red Monster (紅魔王麻辣香鍋)

Address: 117 Yanji St, Taipei City (台北市延吉街117號)
Telephone: (02) 2775-2597
Open: Daily from 11:30am to 9:30pm; closed Mondays
Average meal: NT\$200
Details: Chinese menu; 10 percent service charge for dinner; credit cards accepted

While working in Beijing two years ago, Ting Yuan-ju (丁員如) visited a Sichuan hot pot restaurant that had done something different: rather than allowing customers to pick and choose items to boil in a blood-red broth, chefs fried the customer's chosen ingredients and served the steaming concoction "dry" in a large stainless steel bowl. The unusual hot pot Ting found at Longshunyuan (龍順園) is famous in China's capital and after a meal at Red Monster (紅魔王麻辣香鍋), her Taipei rendition of the Beijing original, it's easy to understand why.

Located five minutes on foot from exit No. 2 of Zhongxiao Dunhua MRT Station (忠孝敦化捷運站), the restaurant's small interior is framed by non-descript white walls. A half-dozen square tables each seat up to four and three booths in the front are roomy enough for six. Spices from Sichuan used in Red Monster's dishes are on display in a glass case embedded in one wall.

Our party ordered the set meal (NT\$598) for three to four, which came with the dry hot pot, soup, rice and tea. We then chose how spicy we wanted the food on a scale of one to eight, from "not spicy at all" (一點都不辣), to "psycho spicy" (變態辣). We opted for six, or "big spicy" (大辣).

The bitter melon soup, which I usually avoid for its strong flavor, pleasantly surprised with its light broth that had chunks of melon and ginger as well as blanched peanuts and clams. We also ordered some appetizers, including a dish of sweet green chili peppers with black beans that stood out for its unique smoky flavor.

Unlike spicy hot pot — the ingredients of which begin to taste the same after five minutes of boiling — dry hot pot retains the individual flavors of the chicken, beef, prawns, crab, noodles, broccoli, tofu and cabbage, while delicate hints of ginger and cardamom were discernable through the spicy sauce that the mixture was fried in. Vegetarian hot pots are also available.

Ting said that the biggest difference between the Beijing and Taipei restaurants is that hers doesn't add salt to the food and she uses considerably less oil, which became apparent as we finished off the last morsels (there was only a tiny puddle of crimson oil at the bottom of the bowl).

If you go to Red Monster, its "water from heaven" (甘露水, NT\$150), a clear, sweet drink made from corn, sweet potato, lily root and sugar cane, is highly recommended. It will cool the taste buds after a spicy and delicious meal.

— NOAH BUCHAN



Red Monster serves up its hot pot "dry," spicy and wholesome.

PHOTO: NOAH BUCHAN, TAIPEI TIMES