

BY DIANE BAKER

DANCE

# Ballet's brave battle

There must have many times over the past three years that Taiwanese ballerina Wang Tzer-shing (王澤馨) felt like Sisyphus as she worked to pull together the three ballet galas she has organized.

All Wang has wanted to do is bring the best ballet dancers from around the world to perform in Taipei. But it has been an uphill battle trying to find sponsors and government funding. This year the job was even harder because she was doing it alone.

She has put together a terrific group of 14 dancers, who will be performing a mix of classical and modern solos and duets by masters such as George Balanchine, Kenneth MacMillan, John Neumeier and William Forsythe, as well as newer names, including Britons David Dawson and Christopher Wheeldon and German Christian Spuck.

Most of the dancers will be making their first appearances in Taipei, though there are a few familiar faces. Young Daniil Simkin wowed audiences here last year, right before he joined the American Ballet Theater as a soloist. Mikhail Kaniskin, a principal dancer with the Staatsballett Berlin, took part in the 2007

gala, while Daria Klimentova, a principal with the English National Ballet, delighted balletgoers when the company was here in 2006.

Others in the lineup are principal dancers Ashely Boudier of the New York City Ballet; Friedemann Vogel from Stuttgart; Isabelle Ciaravola and Herve Moreau of the Paris Opera Ballet; Sofiane Sylve from San Francisco; Simon Ball from Houston; Yumiko Takeshima and Raphael Coumes-Marquet from Dresden; Bridgett Zehr and Zdenek Konvalina from the National Ballet of Canada; and Elisa Carrillo Cabrera, a soloist with the Staatsballett Berlin.

Wang said getting the dancers was the easiest part of her job.

"I have a lineup of all the dancers that I want to invite and when I contacted them, they said yes right away, they don't ask how much ... and I still have people writing to me to say they are available," she said in a telephone interview last Friday.

Once she has the dancers, she has to do a balancing act to put together the program. "Usually the dancers tell me what they want to do and then I have to negotiate [if

there are duplications]. But David Dawson, I contacted him at the end of December to tell him I really wanted to see his work. He recommended two dancers who have been performing his pieces," Wang said. "It's been really cool this year, we've been very lucky. Usually it's a lot of classical, but I want the audience to see a variety."

Among the pieces that will be seen for the first time in Taipei are Dawson's *Giselle* and *Grey Area*, *Kazimir's Colours* by Mauro Bigonzetti, Wheeldon's *Prokofiev Pas de Deux*, Forsythe's *In the Middle*, *Somewhat Elevated* and Spuck's *Le Grand Pas de Deux*.

Ballet lovers should enjoy it while they can, because Wang doesn't think she'll be doing another gala next year. Or at least not here.

"I have been really frustrated this year dealing with the government ... There has been a lot of pressure. I'm doing everything myself: publicity, ticketing, giving speeches ... trying to attract those who haven't been to the ballet before," she said. "Singapore Esplande Theater asked me to put together a program [for October]. All I have to do there is gather

the best dancers I can. I wonder why I have to do this all myself [in Taiwan]."

As of press time there were only about 194 tickets left — Wang is hoping for a full house. The show may be a labor of love, but it has cost her a lot.

"Without sponsorships we can't lower prices. We have to have a full house to break even. Last year we only sold about 70 percent [over two nights], so we lost a lot of money. That's why I had to close my studio," she said.

Wang is also hoping for a full house because the dancers have donated pointe shoes, autographed pictures and other souvenirs to be sold to raise money to help victims of Typhoon Morakot. There will also be a donation box and a representative from the Taiwan Red Cross Society on hand, since the group will receive the proceeds from the sales.

As with previous galas, Wang said there are ballet fans from Japan and Singapore flying in to see the show. It would be ironic — and a great loss — if the only chance Taipei ballet lovers have in the future to see this kind of gala is to go attend Wang's productions in another country.



Isabelle Ciaravola and Herve Moreau of the Paris Opera Ballet.

PHOTO COURTESY OF MICHEL LUDVAC

## PERFORMANCE NOTES:

**WHAT:** 2009 3rd International Ballet Star Gala (2009第三屆國際芭蕾舞星在台北)

**WHERE:** National Theater (國家戲劇院), 21-1, Zhongshan S Rd, Taipei City (台北市中山南路21-1號)

**WHEN:** Tomorrow at 7pm

**ADMISSION:** NT\$1,200 to NT\$6,000, available through NTCH ticketing or online at [www.artsticket.com.tw](http://www.artsticket.com.tw)

## EVENTS & ENTERTAINMENT

### Theater

#### European House — Hamlet's Prologue Without Words

by Spain's Teatre lliure dispenses with language to tell a tale of a quasi-Shakespearean familial war in a voyeuristic manner as the audience is allowed to see what takes place in each room of the family's three-story house.

■ 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 8pm and Sunday at 2:30pm

■ Tickets are NT\$450 to NT\$1,500, available through NTCH ticketing or online at [www.artsticket.com.tw](http://www.artsticket.com.tw)

Artist Hung Hung (鴻鴻) and his Dark Eyes Performance Lab (黑眼睛跨劇團) presents **Der Hassliche (醜男子)**, an adaptation of German playwright Marius von Mayenburg's play about plastic surgery. In this dark comedy, an ugly man seeks revenge after surgery improves his looks. The cast includes pop idol Bryant Chang (張睿家) and Hsiao-ying (小嫻) of indie-rock band the Clippers (夾子).

■ Zhongshan Hall (台北市中山堂), 98 Yenping S Rd, Taipei City (台北市延平南路98號)

■ Tonight at 8pm, tomorrow at 2:30pm and 8pm and Sunday at 2:30pm

■ Tickets are NT\$400 to NT\$1,200, available through NTCH ticketing or online at [www.artsticket.com.tw](http://www.artsticket.com.tw)

A collaboration between the Taipei Chinese Orchestra (台北市立國樂團) and Cloud Gate 2, **What a Tone! (詭Tone!)** is a surprising fusion of traditional Chinese music conducted by Chien Wen-pin (簡文彬) and contemporary dance choreographed by 25-year-old Huang Yi (黃瀚).

■ Novel Hall (新舞臺), 3-1 Songshou Rd, Taipei City (台北市松壽路3-1號)

■ Tonight and tomorrow at 8pm and Sunday at 2:30pm

■ Tickets are NT\$600, available through NTCH ticketing or online at [www.artsticket.com.tw](http://www.artsticket.com.tw)

Tainaner Ensemble's (台南人劇團) **Love Life (愛情生活)** tells the story of the battle between a male dog and a female cat.

■ Crown Art Center Theater (皇冠小劇場), B1, 50, Ln 120, Dunhua N Rd, Taipei City (台北市敦化北路120巷50號B1)

■ Tonight at 7:30pm, tomorrow at 2:30pm and 7:30pm and Sunday at 2:30pm

■ Tickets are NT\$500, available through NTCH ticketing or online at [www.artsticket.com.tw](http://www.artsticket.com.tw)

### Classical music

**Wei-Wei Lan Pipa Recital (琵琶獨奏會)** is part of the Little Giant Chinese Chamber Orchestra's (小巨人絲竹樂團) series of cross-strait exchange events. This recital will feature *pipa* (琵琶) specialist Lan Weiwei (蘭維微), who is also currently teaching at Beijing's Central Conservatory of Music (中央音樂學院).

■ Tomorrow at 7:30pm

■ National Recital Hall, Taipei City

■ Tickets are NT\$300 to NT\$500, available through NTCH ticketing or online at [www.artsticket.com.tw](http://www.artsticket.com.tw)

#### Lost in Wonderland — Girls Gone Mad (兒童樂園 — 姊妹狂歡)

sees the Taipei Philharmonic Orchestra (台北市愛樂管弦樂團) continue its series of children's concerts with pianists Yang Chien-ying (楊千瑩) and Stella Cheng (鄭佳嫻). The program will include Poulenc's *Sonata for Piano for Four Hands*, Saint-Saens' *Carnival of the Animals*, and Ketelby's *In the Persian Market*.

■ Sunday at 2:30pm

■ Taipei Philharmonic Orchestra and Maestro Henry Mazer Music and Culture (台北愛樂暨梅哲音樂文化館), B1, 7, Jinan Rd Sec 1, Taipei City (台北市濟南路一段7號B1)

■ Tickets are NT\$250, available through NTCH ticketing or online at [www.artsticket.com.tw](http://www.artsticket.com.tw)

#### 2009 Ju Percussion Group Children's Concert Tour (2009朱宗慶打擊樂團兒童音樂會全國巡迴)

kicks off on Thursday at Novel Hall.

■ Thursday at 7:30pm

■ Novel Hall (新舞臺), 3-1 Songshou Rd, Taipei City (台北市松壽路3-1號)

■ Tickets are NT\$400 to NT\$1,000, available through NTCH ticketing or online at [www.artsticket.com.tw](http://www.artsticket.com.tw)

#### 2009 Marimba Competition Final Concert (2009台灣擊樂菁英馬林巴大賽決賽者暨音樂會)

organized by Lien Percussion (連雅文打擊樂團) will feature aspiring percussionists pushing their skills to the limit.

■ Sunday at 7:30pm

■ National Recital Hall, Taipei City

■ Tickets are NT\$100, available through NTCH ticketing or online at [www.artsticket.com.tw](http://www.artsticket.com.tw)

### Contemporary

**Roxy Roots** hosts a benefit to raise money for Typhoon Morakot relief this weekend. Tonight's lineup features live music from Taitung reggae rockers **Matzka** and **De Hot**, funk and nu-metal band **Coach (教練)** and Jamaican sound system **Black Reign International Sound**. Tomorrow it's rock and reggae group **Dangzai Kongzhong**, reggae roots band **High Tide** and ska-meisters **Skaraoke**. There will be raffles tonight for free airline tickets to Hong Kong and tomorrow for tickets to Hong Kong and 42-inch televisions. [See story on Page 14.]

■ 90 Songren Rd, Taipei City (台北市松仁路90號). Tel: (02) 2725-3932. On the Net: [www.roxy.com.tw](http://www.roxy.com.tw)

■ Shows start at 10pm

■ NT\$200 recommended donation per person

Pop jazz wunderkind **Joanna Wang (王若琳)** appears at an already sold-out show tonight at **The Wall (這牆)**. Tomorrow **Cthonic (閃靈)**, Taiwan's internationally renowned black metal act, celebrates the release of its new album, *Mirror of Retribution* (十殿). On Sunday it's nu-rock and nu-metal bands **Poguang Shefan (波光折返)** and **Beright**, along with post-rock-ish group **Sun of Morning (晨曦光顧)** and power-pop band **Mister Mouth (嘴哥)**. On Wednesday, indie-rockers **Love Manana (愛的未來)** take to the stage.

■ B1, 200, Roosevelt Rd Sec 4, Taipei City (台北市羅斯福路四段200號B1). Tel: (02) 2930-0162. On the Net: [www.thewall.com.tw](http://www.thewall.com.tw)

■ Shows start at 8pm

■ Tonight's show is sold out. Entrance fee is NT\$500 tomorrow and NT\$300 on Sunday and Wednesday. Advance

tickets can be purchased online on the venue's Web site

Tonight **Riverside Cafe (河岸留言)** hosts jazz guitarist **Yang Ting-yu (楊騰佑)** and **Friends**. Mando-pop singer **Shadya (藍又時)**, a regular at the venue these days, performs tomorrow. On Sunday it's rock, fusion and jazz with three different groups led by three different guitarists: **Lin Chen-yi (林振益)**, **Hsieh Hua-chou (謝華洲)** and **Chung Cheng-yang (鍾承洋)**. Monday is open-jam night.

■ 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). Tel: (02) 2368-7310. On the Net: [www.riverside.com.tw](http://www.riverside.com.tw)

■ Shows start at 9:30pm tonight and 9pm tomorrow and on Sunday. Open jam starts at 9pm. For a list of standard songs and ground rules, visit the venue's Web site

■ Entrance fee is NT\$400 tonight and on Sunday, NT\$450 tomorrow and NT\$150 on Monday

Tonight **Riverside Live House (西門紅樓展演廳)** presents a program titled Levites' Gospel Night, featuring evangelist **Scott Brenner** and his gospel group **Tribe of Levi**, and Mando-pop singer **Shadya (藍又時)**. Tomorrow night the venue hosts Korean hip-hop and rock group **Nevada 51**, up-and-coming pop singer **Mia Liu (劉虹鵑)** and pop-punk rockers **The Fen-Fens (紛紛樂團)**. No shows are scheduled for Sunday.

Taking to the stage on Thursday is **io**, a group of Chinese-Canadians from Vancouver, and Mando-rock band **Picks (痞克四)**, who are perhaps best-known for their song *Fly Away*, from the sound track to the hit film *Orz Boyz* (囧男孩).

■ 177 Xining S Rd, Taipei City (台北市西寧南路177號). Tel: (02) 2370-8805. On the Net: [www.riverside.com.tw](http://www.riverside.com.tw)

■ Shows start at 8:30pm tonight, 7:30pm tomorrow and 8:30pm on Thursday

■ Entrance fee is NT\$450 tonight and NT\$400 tomorrow and on Thursday. Advance tickets can purchased online at [www.riverside.com.tw/livehouse](http://www.riverside.com.tw/livehouse) or [tickets.books.com.tw](http://tickets.books.com.tw)

Tonight at **Underworld (地下社會)** **Until Seeing Whale's Eyes** opens for post-rock band **Aphasia (阿飛西雅)**. [See Highlight.] Tomorrow it's emo-punk band **Sponge Body** and garage rockers **Duct Tape (大力膠)**. On Wednesday the venue hosts **Wild Vision** and **Epitaph**.

■ B1, 45 Shida Rd, Taipei City (台北市師大路45號B1). Tel: (02) 2369-0103. On the Net: [www.upsaid.com/underworld](http://www.upsaid.com/underworld)

■ 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. Happy Hour on Tuesdays and Thursdays before midnight

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

The **Claude Diallo Jazz Trio** performs tonight at **Sappho de Base**. Diallo, a Swiss pianist based in New York City, is making his second appearance in Taiwan. **Jo Jo Ma Quartet**, a group led by saxophonist Joseph Marchione, appears tomorrow. On Tuesday it's **Ginger Men**, a quartet playing funk and Latin music. On Wednesday, Sappho hosts an open jam.

■ **T and T Jazz Trio and Friends** play on Thursday.

■ B1, 1, Ln 102, Anhe Rd Sec 1, Taipei City (台北市安和路一段102巷1號B1). Tel: (02) 2700-5411. On the Net: [www.sappho102.biz](http://www.sappho102.biz)

■ Shows start at 10:30pm on weekends, 10pm on weekdays. Sappho is closed on Sundays and Mondays

## HIGHLIGHT

BY ALITA RICKARDS

The first **Lost Lagoon** weekend getaway in Wulai was one of the highlights of last year's out of town events. Next weekend it's all happening again with eight bands and 12 DJs. The lineup has returning favorites like **High Tide**, **The Money Shot Horns** and **DJ Fratzuki**, with new acts **The Blue Trucks**, **Moss**, and **Dr Reniculous Lipz**. **God Wound** and **Future Man** will be coming in from Australia to perform at the event, and London's **Supermilkmen** will be spinning on the decks.

Perks include free covered camping and drinking water, a bar stocked with brand-name alcohol (something which should be a given, but isn't) and a variety of food vendors. The venue, which has multiple swimming pools and hot tubs, is near a river and surrounded by lush foliage and mountains. Shuttle buses will run

■ No entrance fee

Every Wednesday night at the **Cosmopolitan Grill** there's an open mic hosted by keyboardist **Andrew** **Pige**, with the music mainly covering blues and jazz. All are welcome to participate, and participants receive 20 percent off drinks.

■ 1F, 218 Changchun Rd, Taipei City (台北市長春路218號1樓). Tel: (02) 2508-0304. On the Net: [www.cosmo.com.tw](http://www.cosmo.com.tw)

■ 8:30pm to 11pm on Wednesday

■ No entrance fee

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

■ 211, Anhe Rd Sec 2, Taipei City (台北市安和路二段211號). Tel: (02) 2738-3995. On the Net: visit [www.ez5.com.tw](http://www.ez5.com.tw)

■ Music shows run from 9:45pm to 12:30am

■ Entrance (including two drinks) ranges from NT\$600 to NT\$850, depending on the performer

**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 (阮丹鶯)**, a former pop



The Money Shot Horns return to the Lost Lagoon.

PHOTO COURTESY OF PERPETUAL MOTION

frequently from Xindian MRT Station (新店捷運站) to the venue. [See the full story in the Around Town section of next Friday's *Taipei Times*.]

► **Lost Lagoon Weekend** at Dana Resort (大納農場), 100 Sinfu Rd, Sinsin Village, Wulai, Taipei County (台北縣烏來信賢村信福路90號)

► Aug. 28 at 7pm to Aug. 30 at 4pm

► Admission ranges from NT\$450 for a student day pass to NT\$900 for a weekend pass at the door. Presale tickets are NT\$600, available at the Sababa near Roosevelt Road (羅斯福路), both Toasteria locations and KGB

► On the Net: [www.taipeimotion.com](http://www.taipeimotion.com)

singer turned piano teacher, television presenter and traveler, and her band **Sunshine Costa**. They play tonight. Tomorrow, it's **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). Tel: (02) 2579-0558. On the Net: [www.franzandfriends.com.tw](http://www.franzandfriends.com.tw)

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

**The Other Side** is a new nightclub opened by Ling Wei (凌威), the owner of Taipei's long-standing Roxy venues. The new club is a "party-until-the-sun-comes-up" spot like one of Ling's past ventures, the now-closed **Roxy Vibe**, but The Other Side promises a classier atmosphere, with sofa seating and a modern lounge interior befitting of its locale in Taipei's East District. House DJs spin classic dance and rock from bands like Nirvana, The Ting Tings, Oasis, The Cure and Michael Jackson

■ B1, 20, Songshou Rd, Taipei City (台北市松壽路20號B1). Tel: (02) 2723-3257. On the Net: [www.roxy.com.tw](http://www.roxy.com.tw)

► Open on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Sundays from 10pm until 4am, and on Fridays and Saturdays from 10pm until 7am

► Cover charge for women is NT\$300, except Wednesdays, when they get in free. Cover charge for men is NT\$400 on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Sundays, and on Fridays and Saturdays before 1am. After 1am on weekends cover charge for men is NT\$500

## UPCOMING

BY TAYLOR BRIERE

Taiwanese post-rock act **Aphasia (阿飛西雅)** plays at **Underworld** tonight in Taipei. Bassist Yeh Wan-ching (葉宛菁), better known as KK, is the brains behind independent music label White Wabbit Records, which was responsible for bringing the likes of Broken Social Scene and Explosions in the Sky to Taiwan. Guitarist Wu Yi-jiun (吳逸駿) is the owner of NOIZ studio. Yeh and Wu combine forces with guitarist Su Chi-wen (蘇啓文) and drummer Yonker (廖洋, 廖洋) to produce some of the most highly acclaimed underground music in Taiwan. On the band's latest album, *The Crocodile Society of Aphasia*, interlocking melancholic guitar themes, anchored by steady bass lines, wind their way to swirling climaxes, the textures of which are



Aphasia is gearing up for a return to the studio.

PHOTO COURTESY OF WHITE WABBIT RECORDS

reminiscent of Mogwai. The band will be playing new material tonight in preparation for a return to the studio next month. Until Seeing Whale's Eyes opens for Aphasia. On the Net: [www.aphasiaband.com](http://www.aphasiaband.com).

► Aphasia, 9pm tonight at Underworld, B1, 45 Shida Rd, Taipei City (台北市師大路45號B1)

► Admission is NT\$300 and includes a drink

## THE VINYL WORD

BY QUEEN BEE AND ALITA RICKARDS

Melding elements of electronic music

with traditional Chinese/Taiwanese instrumental lines and vocals, **Code** (Wu Kai-fan, 吳錫帆)

is exploding onto the international dance music scene with his unique sound. His music has been described as "the latest techno sounds out of Asia," and his first EP, *Gate* (閘門), on Australian record label Elektrax Progressive, will be released on Sept. 10th.

**Vinyl Word: What were your earliest musical influences?**

**Code:** I spent most of my childhood in Taitung, and my great-grandfather used to teach me to play the violin when I lived there. I wasn't really interested in it at that time though, because he was very strict. But now I think the biggest influence for me definitely comes from my great-grandpa.

**VW: How did you start making music?**

**Code:** One of my uncles used to be a DJ so he influenced me and I started listening to electronic music in 1998, and then I bought my own DJ gear in 2002. A couple of years later, a friend gave me a software program called Fruity Loops and I've been hooked on making music ever since.

**VW: What kinds of music do you spin/make?**

**Code:** I play mostly progressive and tech house these days. I was into trance in the beginning but then it just got boring. The album *Asia River*, consisting of my earlier works, is more on the lounge music tip. The *Gate* EP, my most recent production, is totally dance-floor oriented. I like to use traditional Chinese instruments such as the *erhu* (二胡), *guzheng* (古筝), *guqin*, flute and *pipa* (琵琶). In the meantime, I'm also experimenting with Taiwanese Aboriginal music.

**VW: You were recently interviewed on an Aboriginal TV program. Are you Aborigine?**

**Code:** My great-grandmother was an Aborigine. I incorporate elements of traditional Amei tribe music into some of my music, so they invited me to be on the show. When they approached me, I told them I might not be qualified because I'm not 100 percent Aborigine, but they said, "it's the fact that you identify with our culture that counts!"

**VW: What was the process of making the full-length album like?**

**Code:** It was incredibly smooth. I think staying focused is very important when you're making music. I felt that there was some invisible force behind me that was continuously pushing me forward during the process, so all the melodies and ideas just came to my mind one after another. It was unbelievable! But come to think of it, perhaps the ancestors were blessing me for trying to glorify our traditional culture.

**VW: How do you feel about the scene in Taiwan right now?**

**Code:** It's still very commercial. Most parties are all about making money. The DJs/artists who create original music don't really get that much credit or opportunity.

**VW: So what are you going to do about that?**

**Code:** Well, I like trying out new things and I love music. When I hear something really inspiring, I tell myself, I want to be a person who can create music that inspires other people too. Making music has become part of my daily life and I will keep on doing it no matter what.

Code plays China White, 2F, 97-101, Dunhua S Rd Sec 2, Taipei City (台北市敦化南路二段97-101號2F), every Saturday from 10pm to midnight. His debut full-length album, *Asia River* (江水), comes out next month. On the Net: [www](http://www.myspace.com/codewu)