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'Some people make money, others make history'

The founders of Manchester's Hacienda were true revolutionaries, but lacked business acumen

BY LUKE BAINBRIDGE
THE GUARDIAN, LONDON

Walking through today's regenerated and gentrified Manchester in northwest England, it's almost impossible to recall how dark and depressing the city was in the late 1970s. The home of the industrial revolution was at a low ebb and the only people who believed any kind of revolution was now possible were the romantic idealists behind Factory Records. Emboldened by the spirit of punk and an excess of civic pride, Factory's founders, in particular Tony Wilson and Robert Gretton, believed in Manchester more than they believed in themselves.

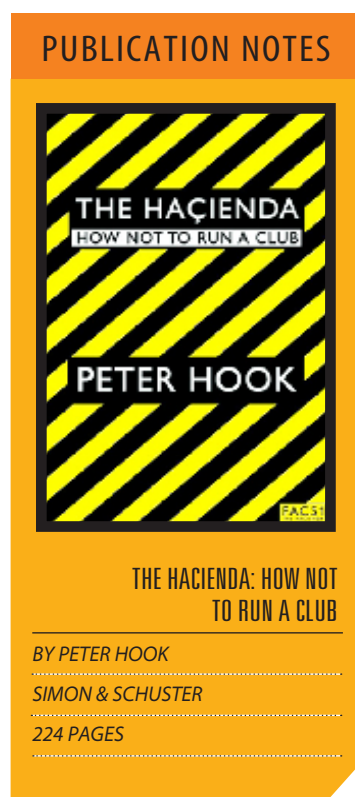
The Hacienda club, launched in 1982, was the physical realization of their vision; Wilson found the name in an essay by French theorist Ivan Chitchevlov entitled *Formulary for a New Urbanism* ("We are bored in the city, everybody is bored, there is no longer any temple to the sun ... you'll never see the Hacienda. It doesn't exist. The Hacienda must be built.")

Inspired by New York clubs like Paradise Garage and Danceteria, the Hacienda was initially funded not just by Factory but also its star band, New Order, managed by Rob Gretton. The band, including bass player Peter Hook, were co-owners and US\$160,000 of their money was diverted into the venture, even though, as Hook recalls, "we were living on US\$32 a week." Manchester in 1982, however, wasn't quite ready for a New York discotheque.

Hook was always the most visual and garrulous member of New Order and spent, or misspent, more time than most in the Hacienda. Told chronologically, with a chapter for each year, his book is a personal, chatty, insider's account of the club's history, from the early years when it opened every night, almost as a civic duty, despite the fact that it was often empty, through the euphoric years when it brought acid house to the UK, to its demise, dogged by gang violence. Factory were idealists, but as Hook's tales of ineptitude illustrate, they didn't have a clue about running a nightclub.

Many of the anecdotes are already the stuff of club folklore, but other more personal stories provide fresh insight. Paul Mason is widely credited as bringing a more professional approach when he took over as manager in 1986, but even at the club's peak in the late 1980s and early 1990s, the people making real money were the DJs, drug dealers and gangsters.

At times, Hook's account reads like Carry on Clubbing, as when the



takings are set alight by indoor fireworks on New Year's Eve and Hook finds Mason on his hands and knees desperately trying to smother the flames. At other times, it's much darker, as the club battles against the Greater Manchester police's attempts to revoke its license. Hook recalls how he spent a night on the door in 1991 and in a couple of hours witnessed "four fights, one gun pulled, two bar staff assaulted, rough justice in the corner, drug dealing and drug taking on a normal scale (well, normal for us)."

If Hook doesn't quite capture the euphoria of being on the dance floor at the Hacienda's peak, that can be excused. After all, many of those who were there have spent the last 20 years fruitlessly trying to recreate those halcyon days.

The Hacienda was, as Hook says, in many ways the perfect example of how not to run a club — if you view a nightclub as a moneymaking business. But if, like the baggy trouser philanthropist Factory, you see it as an altruistic gift to your hometown and a breeding ground for the next generation of youth culture, it was, accidentally, purposefully, shambolically, anarchically, thrillingly, scarily, inspirationally, perfect. Hook appreciated the need to give something back but, he jokes, he didn't realize that you had to give it all back. But then, as Wilson remarked: "Some people make money, others make history."



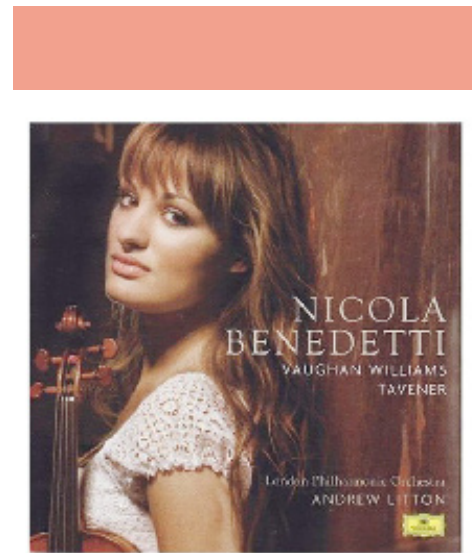
HAYDN
Die Schöpfung
Leonard Bernstein
DGM 073 4551

My English heart gave a quite unjustified leap of pride when I read that Haydn got the idea of writing *The Creation* (Die Schöpfung) after hearing Handel's *Messiah* in London's Westminster Abbey. And the English connections don't stop here. In the first published edition, the text is given in both English and German, though the English is so incompetent most conductors routinely opt for the German. And one of the sources of the text is Milton's *Paradise Lost*, though this it's wrongly implied as being the only source on the new and otherwise excellent DVD from Deutsche Grammophon.

It's of a celebrated performance conducted by Leonard Bernstein in 1986 in the rococo splendor of the Benedictine Abbey of Ottoberen in southern Germany, with Lucia Popp and Kurt Moll among others as soloists. But it's neither the famous names, nor the gorgeous setting, that makes this DVD remarkable. It's the intensity and commitment of everyone concerned. It was originally issued on video, and now appears on DVD in glorious 5.1 surround sound, thanks to a technique known as Ambient Surround Imaging.

Bernstein, by this date a deeply sun-tanned 68, gives a somber 10-minute lecture in a bonus track (repeated with Bernstein speaking German). The Chernobyl disaster had happened two months before this was recorded, he says, and Haydn's masterpiece reminds us like nothing else of the beauty and wonder of a world we're on the brink of destroying. The DVD ends with the mournful tolling of bells, presumably in memory of Chernobyl's victims, past and to come.

The Catholic hierarchy in Vienna found *The Creation* insufficiently doctrinal when it was first unveiled so it was performed in



NICOLA BENEDETTI
Vaughan Williams, Tavener
London Philharmonic Orchestra
DGM CD 476 619-8

BY BRADLEY WINTERTON
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a theater instead of a church. (Comparable objections had been made to *Messiah*, when English divines protested at singers trained in the frivolous traditions of opera singing words taken from the Bible). But what need had Haydn of doctrine? The beauty of the freshly created world, which most of the text is dedicated to describing, didn't need doctrines to underwrite it. Haydn was a very devout Catholic, but the impression given in this work is that he was so overwhelmed by his subject matter that, doctrine or no doctrine, he was simply carried away.

As much of the text is taken from the opening chapter of Genesis, where there is no named narrator, the various acts of creation are described by three angelic beings — Gabriel (a soprano), Uriel (a tenor), and Raphael (a bass). Adam and Eve appear towards the end, and many conductors simply double up their roles using two of the earlier soloists. Bernstein, however, chooses to employ two new singers.

It's actually hard to say quite why the resulting performance is so marvelous. The men are dressed in suits and ties, a token attempt to escape the formality of the more usual white tie and tails, and the result looks a bit silly. But nothing so superficial was going to hold back the upward surge of this performance. *The Creation* is not as wonderful as *Messiah*, but then nothing in its field is. It's well worth getting to know nonetheless.

I'm an enemy of modernism in all its forms because it's a kind of music that ordinary men and women will never like. I see it, therefore, as constituting a dyspeptic historical interlude rather than pointing to any likely future. Tunes are taboo, of course, plus anything people might want to sing or dance to. It can be effective as accompaniment to films



WILD GRASS
Beijing New Music Ensemble
Zhou Long, Chen Yi
Naxos CD 8.570604

or TV documentaries. But musical creativity seems to have largely moved into pop music, leaving many classical composers bleating dissonantly in the wilderness.

Contemporary music more or less comes under the same heading, and the CD *Wild Grass* from the Beijing New Music Ensemble (北京新樂團) doesn't contain any great surprises. It features pieces, most of them for a small group of instruments, by two composers, Zhou Long (周龍) and Chen Yi (陳怡). Both are in their mid-50s and teaching in the US.

This ensemble should be given its due, however. It's apparently the only independent group dedicated to performing this sort of music anywhere in China, and this is its first CD. Even so, though most of the items on it might go well with film of strange deep-sea life-forms emerging from the oceanic gloom, it's hard to imagine any widespread enthusiasm for this abstruse style in its own right. The most energetic item, I found, was the last of Zhou's *Taigu Rhytm* set.

Finally, DGM has issued a CD of various items by John Tavener, either written or adapted for violin. The soloist is the young Scottish violinist Nicola Benedetti. Many of Tavener's pieces offered here owe their inspiration to Indian ragas, but on the whole I prefer their Indian originals. The publishers clearly anticipate a less-than-gigantic following for this music, so placed first on the CD is Vaughan Williams' well-worn piece for violin and orchestra, *The Lark Ascending*.

It should be noted that both these CDs seek to meld Eastern traditions with Western ones. In neither case is the result overwhelmingly convincing, leaving you with the conclusion that musical traditions have their own characteristic strengths, but don't necessarily travel that well.

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A window on the KMT's perception of China-Taiwan relations

Su Chi, sometime government official, sometime academic, shows his political colors in his treatise on cross-strait ties under Lee Teng-hui and Chen Shui-bian

BY J. MICHAEL COLE
STAFF REPORTER

The problem with academics who are also politicians is that they tend to say one thing when in office, and something quite different when they're in academia.

This certainly applies to National Security Council (NSC) Secretary-General Su Chi (蘇起), who is both an academic and has a long history of involvement in government under former president Lee Teng-hui (李登輝) and in the Ma Ying-jeou (馬英九) administration, and served as a legislator for the Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT) for a good part of Chen Shui-bian's (陳水扁) presidency. Su's political animal has a weakness for hyperbole, such as when, in October 2007, he claimed that Taiwan was developing nuclear weapons, which was false.

A consequence of this is that Su the academic must be approached with caution. That being said, this does not mean *Taiwan's Relations with Mainland China* is a bad book. In fact, it's a fairly good book — at least when Su manages to restrain his political Mr Hyde.

Su's book covers the period from 1988 through 2004, which includes tentative efforts to open diplomatic talks across the Taiwan Strait all the way to the end of Chen's first term as president.

The core argument is that from

1988 until 1995, Taiwan and China acted pragmatically and launched a series of talks — initially secret — that culminated in official dialogue between the Straits Exchange Foundation and the Association for Relations Across the Taiwan Strait (ARATS).

Su covers this period in detail, all the way down to a fascinating description of the protocol adopted to ensure "equality" between the two sides when they met, from symmetrical table arrangements to who was to speak first at press conferences.

Those talks gave rise to the so-called "1992 Consensus," a term coined by Su that he says served as a viable alternative to thornier (and for Taiwan at times unacceptable) terminology such as "one China, respective interpretations." While Su admits that the term was nothing more than a euphemism, he maintains that its ambiguity allowed the two sides to shelve differences and continue the talks.

Not only does this seven-year period coincide with China's economic takeoff and opening to foreign investment, but it also marked a time when Beijing hoped that it could talk with Lee. In Su's view, if there is mutual trust between the two sides and common ground can be found on the basis of "one China," it is possible to build a stable, win-win relationship.

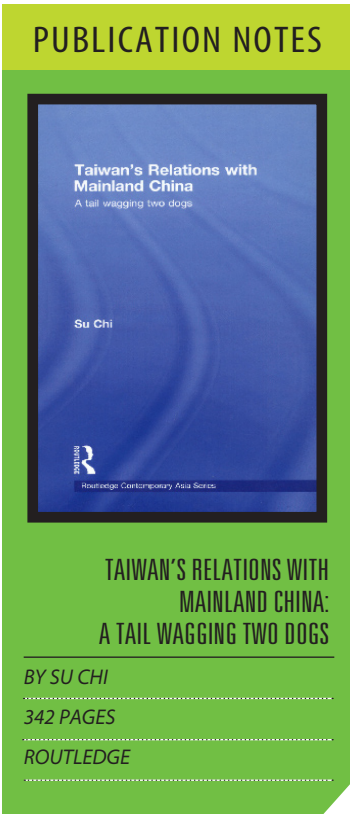
The SEF-ARATS meetings, which remained largely symbolic and did not achieve much of substance besides agenda-setting for future talks, were derailed by two developments of Lee's making: his visit to Cornell University in June 1995, and the development of the Two-States Theory in 1999 — namely that Taiwan and China are two countries that exist on each side of the Taiwan Strait. Beijing's reaction to Lee's visit to his alma mater, Su argues, was based on the perception that Washington was attempting to drive a wedge between Taipei and Beijing and prompted the latter to launch the "offense by the pen and intimidation by the sword" campaign.

The following year, China fired missiles off the waters of Taiwan during the presidential election.

If the Cornell visit derailed cross-strait dialogue, the Two-States Theory "bombshell" sank it, Su argues.

Allegedly commissioned by Lee, directed by the NSC and using "special secret funds," the drafters of the Two-States Theory documents worked under such secrecy, Su argues, that it was "a true mockery of the development process of a nation that claims to be democratic."

Su, who was Mainland Affairs Council (MAC) chairman at the time, laments that he was kept



in the dark, and argues that "Mr Democracy" — a nickname given to Lee — had set up "his own mini government" for the exercise, which he says either received intellectual contributions from pro-independence elements in the DPP, or at minimum "laid the policy foundations" for the Chen

administration that came into office the following year. Nevertheless, it is DPP Chairwoman Tsai Ying-wen (蔡英文), rather than Lee, who emerges as the main antagonist in Su's description of the process.

Thus ends a period in cross-strait relations that Su perceives as offering great opportunities for rapprochement.

It also opens a section of the book where Su becomes far more overtly politicized, sounding like a KMT apparatchik and using ideologically laden language. For example, while the great majority of his sources come from pan-blue (ie, pro-KMT) media, on the few occasions where he quotes from papers that are more favorable to the DPP, he invariably prefaces the passage with "pan-green" or "pro-green," as if their credibility were more questionable as a result.

Su also joins the chorus of voices claiming that Beijing was acting rationally while the Chen administration was acting irrationally, its members following their "hearts" rather than their "heads."

He portrays the DPP as intransigent, increasingly radical (on the independence issue) and opposed to cross-strait economic development, while conveniently ignoring the fact that by 2006, official two-way trade between Taiwan and China had almost tripled from the 1999 figure, as

did approved investment in China, however difficult it is to determine the exact numbers.

Su also repeats the line that the DPP hurt Taiwan's economy, while making no mention of China's efforts to throttle it, or the global financial downturn that began in 2001. He is also silent on the KMT's domination of the Legislature and the many budgets — including the MAC's — that it froze.

This said, his analysis of the Chen Cabinet's failure to reassess Taiwan's position in the wake of the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks in the US is helpful and less objectionable. Chen's national security team indeed "failed at its mission during this period" and by doing so managed to irritate Washington at a time when its focus was on Afghanistan and the Middle East.

That Taipei's "irrational" troublemaking stemmed from a fear that Taiwan's interests risked being ignored by the shift in US focus and Washington's growing reliance on Beijing, however, is unexplored by Su, who prefers to believe that Chen et al could only think of themselves. His assessment of DPP diplomats, whom he does not hold in high esteem, fails to take into consideration the fact that the DPP had never been in power, did not have the web of contacts the KMT had enjoyed abroad for half a century, and that for decades the

KMT had repressed and depleted the future leaders of the opposition in Taiwan.

In all, Su's is a very informative book, which besides presenting large amounts of hard-to-find data opens a window on the KMT's perception of the political environment. That achievement, however, is undermined by bias language — the Two States "theory" vs One China "policy" — and an often self-serving selection of sources, especially in his coverage of the March 19, 2004, election eve shooting incident.

His conclusion, meanwhile, exposes Su the politician, where he makes wild and often misinformed assertions about democracy and identity that entirely depart from the otherwise cooler voice he adopts earlier in his book. It is also no small irony that the secrecy and "mockery of democracy" he deplors in the Two States Theory drafting process has become characteristic of Ma's administration.

In his acknowledgements, Su makes a touching ode to his fortunes as a child growing up in Taiwan, and how the nation's economic development and democracy gave him opportunities that would have been unthinkable in China. Su the government official seems to have forgotten that.