

BY DAVID CHEN

MUSIC

THE VINYL WORD

BY TOM LEEMING

WHAT: Julee Karan **WHEN:** Sunday at 7:30pm
WHERE: Taipei International Convention Center (台北國際會議中心大會堂), 1, Xinyi Rd Sec 5, Taipei City (台北市信義路五段1號)
ADMISSION: NT\$700 to NT\$2,500, available through ERA ticketing or online at www.ticket.com.tw
ON THE NET: www.myspace.com/juleekaran

Mainstream magnetism

Modern pop ballads are the new jazz standards for Julee Karan. The track listing on the Japanese singer's debut album, *Lover's Jazz* (2008), reads like a playlist from an easy-listening radio station: there are 1980s hits like The Police's *Every Breath You Take* or Culture Club's *Do You Really Want to Hurt Me* and other classics such as The Supremes' *You Can't Hurry Love* and John Lennon's *Love*.

Karan, who appears this Sunday at the Taipei International Convention Center (台北國際會議中心大會堂), has set out to put a new spin on these contemporary songs.

"I thought it could make a fresh impression if I made them in a slightly jazz arrangement," she said during a promotional visit to Taipei in August.

The 27-year-old's gentle, honey-smooth voice and mellow lounge singer's demeanor have resonated with mainstream Taiwanese audiences. Last year, *Lover's Jazz* was the top-selling album for five weeks on G-Music's jazz charts, which tracks sales at Rose Records (玫瑰唱片) and Tachung Records (大眾唱片), the nation's largest chain record stores.

The album also made a splash in Europe, reaching the Top 10 on the iTunes charts in Italy, the Netherlands and Switzerland.

Karan, whose real name is Yuko Masumoto, comes across as the girl next door. Speaking to the *Taipei Times* in fluent English with a Japanese-inflected British accent, she said she was so embarrassed about her singing



Japanese jazz singer Julee Karan sings modern pop classics this Sunday at the Taipei International Convention Center.

PHOTO COURTESY OF DADA ARTS

that she spent her teenage years practicing in secret in her room.

Even though her "audiophile dad" played jazz records and American oldies at their home in Yamaguchi Prefecture, Karan grew up preferring J-pop like most of her friends, until she went to university and began singing in music clubs. She credits her parents' musical tastes for her aptitude for jazz singing, but nowadays she draws inspiration from American R'n'B and soul singers like Jill Scott and Erykah Badu.

She chose her stage name, which is the Japanese pronunciation of Judy Garland, as a tribute to one of her favorite singers (she covers *Over the Rainbow* on *Lover's Jazz*).

Karan giggles when asked why she chose to sing the Isley Brothers' *For the Love of You* on her latest album, *She Loves Jazz*: "I like Jude Law, the actor." Her rendition of the tune, she said, is reminiscent of "the morning breeze, bright sunshine, the sea and the blue sky."

Many of the new album's songs will appeal to mainstream Taiwanese tastes. She covers Whitney Houston's *I Will Always Love You* and *She*, the song by songwriter Charles Aznavour that resurfaced as a hit when Elvis Costello covered it in 1999.

Karan takes the stage on Sunday backed by a pianist, bassist and drummer, and the audience can expect to hear selections from both albums as well as a few Japanese songs.



SL returns to deep house paradise.

PHOTO: TAIPEI TIMES

"If deep house were an animal, it would be a unicorn," says Matt Ward, promoter of tomorrow night's Return to Paradise at China White. "No that's not realistic... maybe a whale or a dolphin. No, forget it. A curvaceous woman wearing diamond-studded stilettos and nothing else."

And with that the mood is set for a trip down musical lane with Ward, SL (劉軒), and king of the late night finish, Hooker.

"Everyone who grew up listening to trance and progressive eventually gravitates towards deep house," says SL. "We all gotta grow up sometime... There isn't too much of a club scene for deep house in Taiwan, but what people should realize is that this music sounds great when it's played loud."

Although deep house is a classic genre, SL will be bringing something entirely new to the party.

"Recently I've developed a new system of deejaying, which uses a lot of live rearrangement and layering that is much more like remixing than straight-up deejaying. I'm going to give the crowd a little taste of this on Saturday. In fact XUAN is my new DJ name under this new performance system and believe me, it's worth a name change."

"You know that familiar expression 'something for your mind, your body and your soul,'" says SL, "deep house is just that... not as hard-hitting as electro and doesn't have that hands-in-the-air happiness of disco house, but it works in subtle ways."

Return to Paradise, tomorrow from 10pm until 5am at China White, 2F, 97-101, Dunhua S Rd Sec 2, Taipei City (台北市敦化南路二段97-101號2樓). Admission is NT\$350 with a drink.

On the Net: SL's new Web site can be found at www.xuan-music.com.

It's colorful, extravagant costumes and island rhythms at the The Wall (牆), as DJ production team Islandjam is throwing its first ever Caribbean carnival tomorrow night.

The baby of O-Brothaz Sound System, a four-strong group of DJs and MCs from as many countries — Fyah B, aka Henry Wade from Belize, Oliver "Lion" Harley from Jamaica, Thierry "Tail" Cuvillier from Martinique and Katzu Saruyama from Japan — the night's music is "what you would hear at any Caribbean carnival: soca, soca and more soca," says Harley. "With some sprinkles of dancehall, some compas for the Haitians who are here and special Belizean punta... anything to make the crowd sweat, dance and sweat some more."

The organizers are holding the carnival to promote Caribbean music and culture in Taiwan and hope it will become an annual event.

"The [Caribbean music] scene is definitely growing," says Harley. "More and more DJs and bands are putting some reggae or dancehall, even some soca, into the mix of a song even though they might not know it... so it is getting out there."

With a performance by live percussion ensemble Pan Africana Cultural Troupe, known for its intense and rousing gigs, this promises to be a colorful party of calypso hedonism.

"It will be an indoor carnival that we will try to make as street as possible by putting the Caribbean vibe in the room," said Harley. "Costumes and music atmosphere will be like St Vincent or Trinidad or any other Caribbean culture."

Expect to see local reggae fans and Caribbean expats decked out in their carnival best, donning feathered masks and headaddresses and waving the flags of their home countries.

Caribbean Carnival, tomorrow from 10:30pm until 4am at The Wall, B1, 200, Roosevelt Rd Sec 4, Taipei City (台北市羅斯福路四段200號B1). Admission is NT\$450 with a drink, and NT\$350 with drink for students with ID.

On the Net: www.panafricana.blogspot.com.



Get out your feathers.

PHOTO COURTESY OF ISLANDJAM

EVENTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Theater

The three-week-long 2009 Kuandu Arts Festival (2009 關渡藝術節)

continues this weekend with six performances including Hong Kong-based dance troupe Mcmuimui Dansemble's (雙妹舞劇團) *Boot-leg Butterfly* (與山伯同床), a cross-over adaptation of *The Butterfly Lovers* (梁山伯與祝英台); American choreographer Amy Robin's *A Joy That Brings US Together*; and *The Summer of Avia* by Israeli actress, novelist and film director Gila Almagor. On the Net: kdarts.tnua.edu.tw/festival.

■ Performances are being held at the Taipei National University of the Arts Dance Theater (國立臺北藝術大學舞蹈廳), 1 Xueyuan Rd, Taipei City (台北市學園路1號), and at the National Experimental Theater, Taipei City
 ■ Tickets are available through NTCH ticketing or online at www.artsticket.com.tw

■ For complete information on performance times, venues and ticket prices, see the festival's program (Chinese only), at kdarts.tnua.edu.tw/festival/file/0910_small.pdf

A localized rendition of American dramatist Beth Henley's Pulitzer-winning play of the same title, *Crime of the Heart* is a tragic comedy in which three sisters are reunited at the military village where they grew up and are forced to confront ghosts from the past.

■ Eslite Xinyi Store (誠品信義店), 11 Songgao Rd, Taipei City (台北市松高路11號)
 ■ Tonight and tomorrow at 8pm
 ■ Tickets are NT\$400, available through NTCH ticketing or online at www.artsticket.com.tw

Legitimate Crimes (合法犯罪), the latest production by Ping-Fong Acting Troupe (屏風表演班), is a detective comedy that involves a murder in an amusement park. The stellar cast includes troupe founder Hugh Lee (李國修) and actor and comedian Gu Pao-min (顧寶明).
 ■ Metropolitan Hall (城市舞台), 25, Bade Rd Sec 3, Taipei City (台北市八德路三段25號)
 ■ Tonight at 7:30pm, tomorrow and Sunday at 2:30pm and 7:30pm
 ■ Tickets are NT\$600 to NT\$3,000, available through NTCH ticketing or online at www.artsticket.com.tw

Theatre de la Sardine (沙丁魚劇團) presents **Five Clowns and One Chair (五個小丑與一張椅子)**, which features five clowns who hate each other but must put on a show together.

■ Guling Street Theater (牯嶺街小劇場), 2, Ln 5, Guling St, Taipei City (台北市牯

嶺街5巷2號)
 ■ Tonight at 7:30pm, tomorrow at 7:30pm, tomorrow at 2:30pm and 7:30pm, Sunday at 2:30pm and Monday to Thursday at 7:30pm
 ■ Tickets are NT\$400 and NT\$450, available through NTCH ticketing or online at www.artsticket.com.tw

In **The Lonely Panda Series — Girls Fear Nothing (隱形貓熊系列—女生無敵)** by If Kids Theater Company (如果兒童劇團), a 12-year-old girl named Ling Ling feels unnoticeable at school until one day an invisible panda shows her that every person has something others admire them for.

■ Novel Hall (新舞臺), 3-1 Songshou Rd, Taipei City (台北市松壽路3-1號)
 ■ Tonight at 7:30pm, tomorrow at 10:30pm, 2:30pm and 7:30pm and Sunday at 10:30pm and 2:30pm
 ■ Tickets are NT\$300 to NT\$1,000, available through NTCH ticketing or online at www.artsticket.com.tw

Classical music

Fou Ts'ong Haydn Piano Recital (傅聰鋼琴獨奏會) brings the renowned Shanghai-born pianist Fou Ts'ong (傅聰) to Taipei to perform a program of works by Haydn, including his piano concertos in D Major, B Minor and C Major.
 ■ Today at 7:30pm
 ■ National Concert Hall, Taipei City
 ■ Tickets are NT\$400 to NT\$2,500, available through NTCH ticketing or online at www.artsticket.com.tw

Vocal Works by Tzyysheng Lee (第三首亡國詩 — 李季聲歌集) features a program by contemporary composer Tzyysheng Lee (李季聲) that includes the world premieres of *New Works for Voice and Piano* and *The Third Poem of the Nation's Demise* for Baritone and Four Instruments, as well as *Two Poems of the Nation's Demise* for Soprano and Four Instruments from 1991, and *Five Chinese Art Songs*.
 ■ Today at 7:30pm
 ■ National Recital Hall, Taipei City
 ■ Tickets are NT\$250 to NT\$500, available through NTCH ticketing or online at www.artsticket.com.tw

From Leipzig to Vienna (從萊比錫到維也納 — 北市交響樂) sees the Taipei Symphony Orchestra (台北市立交響樂團) performing under guest conductor Gilbert Varga and features violin soloist Hagai Shaham. The program includes Mendelssohn's *Fingal's Cave Overture*, Op. 26, Bruch's *Violin Concerto No. 1 in G Minor*, Op. 26 and Brahms' *Symphony No. 4 in E Minor*, Op. 98.
 ■ Tomorrow at 7:30pm
 ■ National Concert Hall, Taipei City

■ Tickets are NT\$200 to NT\$1,000, available through NTCH ticketing or online at www.artsticket.com.tw

Contemporary

British Sea Power, a four-piece indie band from the UK that often draws comparisons with The Cure and Joy Division, appears tonight at the **The Wall (牆)**. Taking the stage tomorrow is **Ayabie**, a Japanese group whose music is described as Visual Kei, a uniquely Japanese version of glam rock in which performers often wear wild costumes and makeup. On Sunday it's **Bugs of Phonon (聾子蟲)**, post-rockish group **Sun of Morning (晨曦光顧)** and industrial hard-core band **Roughhausen**.
 ■ 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

■ Music shows start at 8pm tonight, 7pm tomorrow and 8pm Sunday
 ■ Entrance is NT\$1,500 tonight (NT\$1,300 in advance), NT\$1,500 tomorrow and NT\$300 Sunday. Tickets can be purchased online through www.thewall.com.tw or tickets.books.com.tw

Solo acoustic act **Easy** takes the stage tonight at **Witch House (女巫店)**, along with Tomorrow it's indie rockers **Queen Suitcase (皇后皮箱)**. On Thursday, acoustic folk group **Xiaoyu Watermelon (小玉西瓜)** opens for **Every Planet (美味星球樂團)**.
 ■ 7, Ln 56, Xinsheng S Rd Sec 3, Taipei City (台北市新生南路三段56巷7號). Tel: (02) 2362-5494. On the Net: 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
 ■ Entrance fee for music shows is NT\$300

Ray Band (雷樂隊), a trio of veteran session musicians, plays power rock originals and covers tonight at **Riverside Cafe (河岸留聲)**. Tomorrow the venue hosts a trio of Mando-pop artists: pop pianist and vocalist **Csha (思瀟)**, R'n'B singer **Hsiao Hung-jen (蕭閔仁)** and singer **Queenie (方宥心)**. On Sunday it's **Rice Magnet and Believer**. Monday is the venue's weekly 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

Open jam starts at 9pm. For a list of standard songs and ground rules, visit the venue's Web site
 ■ Entrance is NT\$400 tonight and tomorrow, NT\$350 on Sunday and NT\$150 on Monday

Indie pop chanteuse **Waa Wei (魏如薏)**, Mando-pop singer **Chi Hsin-pe (季欣霽)** and singer/guitarist **Wing (羅文裕)** are among seven acts appearing in support of the Typhoon Morakot benefit album *Faith Map (信心地圖)* tonight at **Riverside Live House (西門紅樓展演館)**. Mando-pop singer **Shadya (藍又時)** takes the stage tomorrow. On Thursday Chinese-Canadian rock outfit **io**, winner of this year's ICRT Battle of the Bands, opens for Golden Melody Award-winning Mando-pop singer-songwriter **Debbie Hsiao (蕭賀碩)**.
 ■ 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

One-man electro-rock band **Sonic Deadhorse** appears tonight at **Underworld (地下社會)**, along with **Shishukong (屍術控)**. Tomorrow punks **BB Bomb (BB彈)** and **Hot Pink** share the bill with Japanese rockers **Thee Out Mods**. On Wednesday **O2Sunshine and Savanna Band** split the bill with rockers **Killing Zoe**.
 ■ 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

■ 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. Happy Hour on Tuesdays and Thursdays before midnight
 ■ Entrance is NT\$300 tonight and tomorrow and includes one drink, NT\$100 on Wednesday

Earl Hines II Jazztet plays tonight at **Sappho de Basse**. Tomorrow the venue's **Jazz Friends** holds an open jam session. **Louis Goldford Project** plays on Tuesday, and on Wednesday the venue hosts **KGR Jazz Trio (香塔樂團)**, which features **Nbugu Kenyatta** on drums and vocals. On Thursday **Rocky and Friends** preside over an open jam.
 ■ 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

is closed on Sundays and Mondays
 ■ Entrance is free

Every Wednesday night at the **Cosmopolitan Grill** there's an open mic hosted by keyboardist Andrew Page, with the music mainly covering blues and jazz. All we mainly 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). Tel: (02) 2508-0304. On the Net: www.cosmo.com.tw

■ 8:30pm to 11pm on Wednesday
 ■ No entrance fee

Tomorrow **89k** in Taichung hosts high-energy rockers **88 Balaz (88顆芭樂籽)** and heavy metal/grunge rockers **Doublewide**.
 ■ 21 Daguang Rd, Nantun Dist, Taichung City (台中市南屯區大觀路21號)
 ■ Shows start at 10pm
 ■ Entrance is NT\$300

Roxy Roots, a bar and restaurant dedicated to reggae and blues fans, hosts Taichung-based country and western band **Waysoon** tomorrow night.
 ■ 90 Songren Rd, Taipei City (台北市松仁路90號). Tel: (02) 2725-3932. On the Net: www.roxy.com.tw

■ Show starts at 10pm tomorrow
 ■ Entrance is free

EZ5 Live House hosts Mando-pop singers backed by a live band every night. Highlights for the coming week include beloved female crooner **Tiger Huang (黃小琥)**, who performs two sets every Monday and **Julia Peng (彭佳慧)**, a 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

■ Music shows run from 9:45pm to 12:30am
 ■ Entrance fee (includes 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 (東區), 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 and television presenter, and her band **Sunshine Costa**. They play tonight. Tomorrow it's **Buona Sera**, 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