

BY TAYLOR BRIERE

MUSIC



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THE VINYL WORD

BY STEVE PRICE

## PERFORMANCE NOTES:

**WHAT:** KbN in concert at City Sounds #4, with DJ Shorty from Taimaica Sound System and VJ Dolcevita

**WHEN:** Tomorrow night from 11pm to 5am

**WHERE:** Hook, 1, Alley 7, Ln 205, Zhongxiao E Rd Sec 4, Taipei City (台北市大安區忠孝東路四段205巷7弄1號)

**ADMISSION:** NT\$350, which includes a drink

**WHAT:** KbN in concert at Freak Out Da Beast (吵年獸)

**WHEN:** Feb. 6 and Feb. 7  
**WHERE:** Red House Theater (紅樓劇場), 10 Chengdu Rd, Taipei City (台北市成都路10號)

**ADMISSION:** Free  
**ON THE NET:** freakoutbeast.blogspot.com

**WHAT:** The Message 777  
**WHEN:** Next month

**WHERE:** Asiatworld Shopping Mall's (環亞購物中心) Agnes B. store, 100, Dunhua N Rd, Taipei City (台北市敦化北路100號)

**ADMISSION:** Free

## Born free

When asked how it feels to be the sole extant founding member of one of Taiwan's most mutable bands, Cheer Hsieh (謝青翰), one half of electronica duo KbN (凱比鳥), waxed philosophical. "It's a Zen spirit," he said. "I go with the ups and downs. If a change can let things move in a specific direction, then there isn't anything wrong with it."

KbN, whose lineup at one point comprised 11 members, has been a mainstay in the independent music scene for more than a decade, and has moved through a succession of genres, from punk rock to trip-hop and now experimental electronica.

Yet the same independent DIY punk rock ethic that characterized the band's humble beginnings continues to fuel its future aspirations.

"It [Taiwan's music scene] is getting better. I mean at least we can get more information about things, and more people can accept this new stuff, [and] are willing to try new sounds," said Hsieh. "The artist is free to do more."

The group, whose current lineup consists of Hsieh and Jerry Fang (方宜正), aka Jez, has been taking full advantage of that freedom. Its songs are often built on sound textures rather than obvious melodic components. The music isn't in the notes, it's in the way the noises and rhythms rub against each other to create moods.

KbN plays tomorrow night in Taipei at Hook

as part of City Sounds #4, and appears along with 40 other local acts at next weekend's Freak Out Da Beast (吵年獸) festival, which Hsieh and Fang had a hand in organizing.

KbN made headlines two years ago as the first Taiwanese act to play at the South by Southwest festival in Austin, Texas. A couple of years before that, the band's song *Urge* (衝動) received a Golden Horse Award nomination for best original song for Hou Hsiao-hsien's (侯孝賢) film *Three Times* (最好的時光), and was on the sound track to Yao Hung-I's (姚宏易) film *Reflections* (愛麗絲的鏡子). The group has also contributed work for *The Bean* (美人胚子), directed by Wang Mei-jung (王梅蓉) and Luo Chiao-mei (駱巧梅).

The band is working on two animated shorts with college students for their graduate projects, and is teaming up with painter Chen Ching-Yuan (陳敬元), also known as WANWOR, on a remix EP scheduled for release in March and a concept album due out in the summer, both based on his paintings.

"There is already a story in a film, so we just try to add emotion to follow the story," said Fang. "But with a still image, you have to imagine the story. We're using sound to make a story to match the image."

The fruits of KbN's collaboration with Malaysian graffiti artist Bobo will go on display next month at Asiatworld Shopping Mall (環亞購物中心) in Taipei as part of The Message 777, an event that pairs independent bands with artists and is sponsored by French clothing brand Agnes B.

"I think our generation happened to have this freedom and passion to do what we want to and to see what we are really capable of, and to try to reach places our moms and dads never dreamed of," said Hsieh. "And if we're lucky, we may make a living out of it."

KbN was the first Taiwanese band to play at the South by Southwest music festival.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF KBN



What's in a name?

PHOTOS COURTESY OF VOLAR

There's something a little dishonest about Volar, the recently opened club that occupies the space Plush used to at Core Pacific City Living Mall (京華城). For one, Volar in Taipei shares the same moniker as a respected club brand that operates a branch in Hong Kong (named best club in the Special Administrative Region by *Time Out* for two years in a row) and Shanghai, but the two, says the former's director of marketing, have no connection.

Think of it as the clubbing world's equivalent of a Taiwanese company launching a tablet computer and calling it an iPad.

The Vinyl Word checked out the nightspot's weekly Wednesday bash, Rocks the Rabbit Party, which according to the bump promised "sexy rabbit girls". But no fluffy tails, and no bucktoothed females. Hopefully they didn't come down with myxomatosis before they were due to make an appearance.

Lockers outside the entrance are an extortionate NT\$50 a pop; a companion ordered a vodka and cranberry juice and received a vodka and Red Bull, and paid NT\$300 for the privilege; and the music — *Rumpshaker* by Wreckx-n-Effect and *Mama Said Knock You Out* by LL Cool J — spoke more about what type of clientele the club is aiming for than the decor, which riffed on a theme of nondescript lounge bar chic — black plastic candelabra, red neon strip lighting, and what looked like a fly loft suspended from the ceiling above the bar with black and white fabric draped around the batons.

At midnight, a quick headcount ascertained that the sparse crowd totaled about 70 persons.

Still, it's early days yet.

Rolled out in December, Volar threw its grand opening do on Saturday of last week, and the rent-a-celebrities came out in force, including funnyman and variety show host **Jacky Wu** (吳宗憲).

The music policy is hip-hop and house.

On the same floor, Asia, which also opened last month, in the space that Party Room once occupied, is a drink-all-you-can affair that focuses on hip-hop.

The two new clubs face stiff competition. Attendance at Luxy on Wednesday night in the newly refurbished Onyx Room, now named Pulse, for the club's monthly party thrown by **Noodles** and **Mykal** was about 30 percent capacity, while the Galleria was rammed. And then there's Room 18.

## Volar

**Open:** Wednesdays from 10pm to 4am, Fridays and Saturdays from 10pm to 4am  
**Address:** 12F, 138, Bade Rd Sec 4, Taipei City (台北市八德路四段138號12F). For reservations, call 0980-234-000  
**On the Net:** www.volar.tw and volar-taipei.blogspot.com  
**Admission:** Ladies free on Wednesdays, guys NT\$500, on Fridays and Saturdays entry is NT\$700

## Asia

**Open:** Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays from 10pm to 4am  
**Address:** Asia, 12F, 138, Bade Rd Sec 4, Taipei City (台北市八德路四段138號12F). For reservations, call 0911-550-078 or 0980-665-463  
**On the Net:** tw.myblog.yahoo.com/asia-club (Chinese only)  
**Admission:** Men NT\$700 and women NT\$400 on Fridays and Saturdays, and men NT\$600 and women NT\$300 on Sundays

Top party tip for this weekend is tonight's Taichung-based tech house and minimal techno label Dance Mafia's First Warm Up Party at China White in Taipei.

"Their New Year's Eve party [at Liquid Lounge] was amazing," said **Shaun Kidd**, who is spinning at tonight's gig under the name vDub. "All black suits, and the girls were all dressed up in nice gowns ... Tonight's also suit and tie, and they're doing one tomorrow in Taichung, for the same thing."

Also appearing at the party, being held to launch the label, is Taichung's **Victor Yeh**, who plays tech house "good and deep ..." said Kidd. "Not super techy and not super grime ... something I could see on fashion runways."

**Panda**, Victor Yeh, **Stanley Ko**, **Fiveon** (aka Eddie Hu) and vDub (aka Kidd), at Dance Mafia First Warm Up Party 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) from 11pm. Admission is free. On the Net: www.finique-dj.com and www.facebook.com/finiqueproduction



## EVENTS &amp; ENTERTAINMENT

## Theater

Based on American writer Frances Hodgson Burnett's children's book of the same title, **The Secret Garden** (秘密花園) by If Kids Theater Company (如果兒童劇團) tells the story of a little girl called Lily and the secret she discovers in her reclusive uncle's garden.

■ 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 at 10:30am, 2:30pm and 7:30pm, Sunday at 10:30am and 2:30pm  
■ Tickets are NT\$300 and NT\$1,000, available through NTCH ticketing or online at www.artsticket.com.tw

NG Improv Club (新激梗社劇團) presents **New Chicken Disease** (新神雞病), a comedy about the newly discovered N1G1 virus, which sparks a global panic. Sufferers, upon hearing a rooster cry, can't help but do what they are most afraid to. Audience members play along with the performing comedians to create the production.  
■ Comedy Club, B1, 24 Taishun St, Taipei City (台北市泰順街24號B1)  
■ Sunday at 2:30pm and 7:30pm  
■ Tickets are NT\$300 or NT\$270 in advance at the door or online at tickets.books.com.tw

Taiwan's favorite grassroots comedians, Peng Chia-chia (澎伯伯) and Hsu Hsiao-shun (許效舜), return with **My Dear Next Door** (隔壁鄰家), a Hoklo (commonly known as Taiwanese) musical and comedy about two farming families that are embroiled in a long-running feud.  
■ Sun Yat-sen Memorial Hall (國父紀念館), 505, Renai Rd Sec 4, Taipei City (台北市仁愛路四段505號)  
■ Tonight and tomorrow at 7:30pm, Sunday at 2:30pm  
■ Tickets are NT\$500 to NT\$3,000, available through NTCH ticketing or online at www.artsticket.com.tw

In **WoMan** (這一夜—守歲) by Taiwan Drama Performance (台灣戲劇表演家), the skeletons in one family's closet come out at a Lunar New Year gathering.  
■ Taipei City Government Family Theater (台北市政府親子劇場), 2F, Taipei City Hall, 1 Shifu Rd, Taipei City (台北市市府路1號2樓)  
■ Tonight at 7:30pm  
■ Tickets are NT\$250 to NT\$1,200, available through ERA ticketing or online at www.ticket.com.tw

Godot Theatre Company's (果陀劇場) **The 39 Steps** (步步驚天) is a comedic

espionage thriller adapted in Mandarin from the novel of the same title by John Buchan. The star-studded cast includes veteran thespians Chin Shih-chieh (金士傑) and Tien Hsin (天心) and television and theater actors Pu Hsueh-liang (卜學亮) and Renzo Liu (劉亮佐). The four play a total of 48 characters in the play. This is the first major Broadway production licensed in Chinese while the original runs concurrently in New York and London.  
■ Kaohsiung Chihteh Hall (高雄至德堂), 67 Wufu 1st Rd, Kaohsiung City (高雄市五福一路67號)  
■ Tomorrow at 7:30pm and Sunday at 2:30pm  
■ Tickets are NT\$500 to NT\$2,500, available through NTCH ticketing or online at www.artsticket.com.tw

## Classical music

**Hu Ching-yun Piano Recital** (胡靜云鋼琴獨奏會) — 胡靜云2010鋼琴獨奏會 presents Hu Ching-yun (胡靜云), the winner of The 12th Arthur Rubinstein International Piano Master Competition in 2008 performing a program that includes Mozart's *Piano Sonata No. 18 in D Major*, Ravel's *Gaspard de la Nuit*, Granados' *El Amor y la Muerte*, from "Goyescas" and Rachmaninoff's *Piano Sonata No. 2 in B-flat Minor*.  
■ Sunday at 7:30pm  
■ National Concert Hall, Taipei City  
■ Tickets are NT\$350 to NT\$2,500, available through ERA ticketing or online at www.ticket.com.tw

**Kiddy Zauberflote — Opera Show** (歐普拉的《魔笛》秀 — 國家寶藏的探險) is a program of excerpts from Mozart's opera **The Magic Flute**, produced for children. It nevertheless features some of Taiwan's top operatic talent, including Chen Mei-lin (陳美玲) as Pamina, Tai Hsiao-chun (戴曉君) as Queen of Night and Liao Chong-boon as Papageno. The Taipei Symphony Orchestra (臺北市立交響樂團) will be conducted by Yang Chi-ching (楊智欽) and the performance hosted by television personality Chao Ting (趙婷).  
■ Tomorrow at 3pm and 7:30pm (tickets for the 7:30pm performance are already sold out)  
■ National Concert Hall, Taipei City  
■ Tickets are NT\$200, available through NTCH ticketing or online at www.artsticket.com.tw

## Contemporary

**Legacy Taipei**, located in a former warehouse at Huashan 1914 Creative Park (華山1914), hosts top Taiwanese

bands and international acts. Tonight Hong Kong rock musician and guitar maven **Paul Wong** (黃貫中) takes to the stage. Tomorrow it's beloved indie-pop band **1976**, which will be joined by a recent collaborator, pop singer **Valen Hsu** (許茹芸).  
■ Huashan 1914 Creative Park (華山1914), Center Five Hall (中五館), 1, Bade Rd Sec 1, Taipei City (台北市八德路一段1號)  
■ Shows start at 8pm  
■ Entrance is NT\$1,500 at the door, NT\$700 tomorrow (NT\$600 in advance). Prices include one drink. Tickets are available through ERA ticketing or online at www.ticket.com.tw or www.legacy.com.tw

French indie/pop band **Peppermoon** is touring Asia and appears tonight at the **The Wall** (這牆). Tomorrow emo group **Hindsight** (光景消逝) and **Mutaker**, which mixes electronica and black metal, take the stage. Later on it's organik 001, a techno dance party featuring DJs JJ, A-tao and DataBass. On Sunday the venue hosts Japanese post-rock group **ururur**, which has been described in its home country as "Mogwai meets Aphex Twin." Supporting acts include **XOXOXO** (咪咪咪) and **Bugs of Phonon** (響子蟲). On Wednesday it's Japanese bands **Aria Asia** and **Heaven's Hemp**, which share a billing with some of Taiwan's best girl-power bands: **Go Chic**, **The White Eyes** (白目樂隊) and **Annedora** (安妮朵拉).  
■ 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  
■ All music shows start at 8pm tonight, tomorrow (dance party tomorrow starts at 11:30) and Sunday, and 7pm on Wednesday.  
■ Entrance fee is NT\$700 tonight, NT\$400 tomorrow, NT\$600 for the dance party tomorrow (NT\$400 in advance), NT\$500 on Sunday (NT\$400 in advance), NT\$600 on Wednesday (NT\$400 in advance). Tickets can be purchased online by visiting www.thewall.com.tw or tickets.books.com.tw

Amis folk rock group **Passiwali** (巴西瓦里) plays at **Witch House** (女巫店) tonight. Funk and nu-metal band **Coach** (教練) appears tomorrow night.  
■ 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 and 11am to 1am Thursdays through Saturdays  
■ Entrance fee for music shows is NT\$300

Veteran jazz combo **JEG** (這個爵士樂團) plays standards, Latin, funk, rock and fusion tonight at **Riverside Cafe** (河岸留言). Beloved Aboriginal folk singer **Panai** (巴奈) performs tomorrow. On Sunday it's **Sun Bi-nuo** (孫碧嫻), an aspiring South Korean-born Mando-pop singer and former contestant on the *One Million Star* (超級星) pop-idol show. Also appearing is singer **Ai Ching** (艾青). Monday is the venue's weekly open jam.  
■ 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  
■ Shows start at 9:30pm tonight and 9pm tomorrow and Sunday. Monday's 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 tomorrow, NT\$350 on Sunday and NT\$150 on Monday

Tonight **Riverside Live House** (西門紅樓展演館) hosts **Green Field** (綠野仙蹤) and pop-rock duo **Nature Morte** (靜物樂團), with a special appearance by indie-pop musician and producer **Ciacia** (何欣騰). Taking the stage tomorrow night is Mando-pop band **F. I.R.** (飛兒樂團).  
■ 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  
■ Shows start at 8:30pm tonight and tomorrow  
■ Entrance fee is NT\$400 tonight and NT\$500 tomorrow. Tickets can be purchased online at www.riverside.com.tw/livehouse/ or tickets.books.com.tw.

Tonight **Underworld** (地下社會) hosts indie rockers **Sunset Rollercoaster** (落日飛車) and **Varo**. Low-key indie-rock duo **Zag Lope** (紫可洛) plays tomorrow night with **Drum 'n' Keyboard** (鼓打鍵盤). As of press time, no shows were scheduled for Wednesday.  
■ 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 on Fridays and Saturdays is NT\$300, which includes one drink

**Jo Jo Ma Quintet**, a group led by saxophonist Joseph Marchione, performs tonight at **Sappho de Base**. New Orleans funk and blues outfit the **Kenyatta Quintet** takes

the stage tomorrow. On Tuesday, it's the **Emo Jazz Trio** and on Wednesday the venue hosts **Flaneur Daguerre**, a jazz quartet that plays everything Bach to Bjork and Ornette Coleman to the Ramones. On Thursday **DD Quartet** plays fusion jazz.  
■ 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  
■ Music shows begin at 10:30pm on Friday and Saturday and 9:30pm on Tuesday and Thursday and 10pm on Wednesday. Closed on Sundays and Mondays  
■ Entrance is free

**EZ5 Live House** hosts Mando-pop singers backed by a live band every night. Highlights for the week ahead include beloved female singer **Tiger Huang** (黃小曉), who performs two sets every Monday, **Julia Peng** (彭佳慧), a major draw who appears every Tuesday, and male crooner **Shin Lung** (辛龍), who performs every Saturday.  
■ 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

**Roxy Roots** hosts rock band **Aurora** tonight and reggae group **The Warmups** tomorrow. Wednesday night is the venue's musical showcase, featuring a roster of bands organized by a different musician every week. This week is hosted by South African expat musician **David Vorster**. Come ready to dance on Thursday for Salsaton and Reggaeton 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  
■ Shows start at 10pm  
■ Entrance is free

**The Mercury** (水星酒館) in Kaohsiung features indie bands every week. Grunge group **The Last Chance** takes to the stage tomorrow.  
■ 46 Liwen Rd, Zuoying Dist, Kaohsiung City (高雄市左營區立文路46號). Tel: (07) 550-8617. On the Net: mercurybar.blogspot.com  
■ Shows start at 9:30pm  
■ Entrance is NT\$100

Tomorrow night Taichung's **89k** hosts the DJ squad **Colour Wolf**.  
■ 21 Dagan Rd, Nantun Dist, Taichung City (台中市南屯區大觀路21號)  
■ Shows start at 10pm  
■ Entrance is NT\$300