

# STYLE

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## Screamingly stylish

**A**n uninformed shopper who stumbles across Screaming in Ximending (西門町) could be forgiven for feeling a bit confused. Racks of acid-washed jeans, vintage sweaters, and windbreakers with geometrical patterns in bright colors dominate one corner of the basement boutique. Across the room, George Cox's Seditious Anti-christ boots are arranged next to spiked leather wristbands. A line of 1950s-style tiered petticoats hang from the ceiling.

"It's hard to describe the store in terms of one single style or genre ... It's like a girl who wears a 1950s-style dress paired with a corset and fur neck wrap. She simply uses the items she can find, whether they're secondhand or designer brands, to create a feel, a style," says shop owner Li Sui-chun (李穗均), better known as Risk.

An ultimate scenester himself, Risk wears a different but always cutting-edge outfit every time I visit the boutique. One that particularly stood out involved billowy, lavender trousers with black polka-dots, a retro black T-shirt with wolves printed on the front, a zebra-print wind jacket and spiky hair dyed yellow on one side and black on the other.



For Li Sui-chun, avant-garde hipster and owner of the Screaming clothing boutique in Ximending, there is no such thing as unfashionable



Like many avant-garde hipsters in the country, Risk grew up nourishing his fashion sense on Japanese magazines such as *Street*, *Tune* and *Fruits*, which pioneered the field of street photography in Japan. Now he also follows street fashion blogs and Web sites such as [www.dropsnap.jp](http://www.dropsnap.jp) and [streetpeeper.com](http://streetpeeper.com).

Adjectives like outrageous and extreme are often used to describe the looks caught on street snaps. But for people like Risk, clothing is a form of creativity and self-expression that is independent of mainstream conventions.

"What matters is who you are and the idea and message you want to express through what you put on your body," the 28-year-old says. "[Indie-rock band] LTK Commune (濁水溪公社) wear very down-to-earth clothes. It's cool because it reflects who they are."

At Screaming, individuality is everything. The interior is decked out with items from Risk's personal collection. Butterfly specimens and fake deer heads adorn one wall. A Sid Vicious action figure stands next to Johnny Rotten's autobiography and a Billy Idol vinyl record. Plastic ET dolls and figurines add a playful mood, while vintage televisions and boomboxes bring retro chic to the mix.



### STORE NOTES:

**WHAT:** Screaming  
**WHERE:** B1-1, 109 Kunming St, Taipei City (台北市昆明街109號B1-1)  
**WHEN:** 3pm to 9pm  
**TELEPHONE:** (02) 2389-6936  
**ON THE NET:** [www.screaming.com.tw](http://www.screaming.com.tw)



The merchandise on sale is just as diverse. Audacious shoppers who are not daunted by the comeback of trends from the 1980s can go treasure-hunting in a secondhand section that sports acid-washed denim jackets (NT\$1,980 to NT\$2,280), high-waist jeans (in a similar price range), and new wave-style windbreakers in bright fluorescent colors (NT\$1,780).

For women, there are leggings and stockings in loud colors and crazy prints (NT\$780 and NT\$880), rainbow-colored berets (NT\$980), and hunting caps (NT\$1,580 to NT\$2,280) by Japan's Ei8ght. Accessories include rings in a variety of colors, badges, ties, suspenders, skull necklaces and punk-rock sunglasses.

In addition to apparel and accessories from Japan, the UK and US (including items by London-based Kokon To Zai), Screaming also carries clothing from local indie designers including Pet Shop Girls, RTTC, Deeplay, and Repsycho, Screaming's own line.



Risk says many of his customers are in their early 20s and learned about the store through friends or on the Internet. He moved his boutique from its original location in the youth fashion mecca Shinjuku Plaza (西門新宿) two years ago to its current basement site in a commercial building because, he says, "We used to spend too much time dealing with shoppers who came in and said 'Wow, this is strange. Can I take pictures?'"

"Before we might have had 100 people walking into the store a day. But only 10 would understand what we tried to explain to them. Now we only have 10 people a day, but they all understand where we come from."

Screaming is also frequented by backpackers from Hong Kong and Japan, and an online store brings in business from abroad, though not much from China, where it is restricted.

"God knows why they block my site in China. Maybe it has something to do with a prank I played years ago that involved a Falun Gong picture," Risk says.

To see street snaps of Screaming's clientele, check out the boutique's blog at [www.screaming.idv.tw/wordpress](http://www.screaming.idv.tw/wordpress).



### JAPANESE STREET FASHION BLOGS:

- ▶ [www.dropsnap.jp](http://www.dropsnap.jp)
- ▶ [stylefromtokyo.blogspot.com](http://stylefromtokyo.blogspot.com)
- ▶ [style-arena.jp/street](http://style-arena.jp/street)

### INTERNATIONAL STREET FASHION BLOGS:

- ▶ [streetpeeper.com](http://streetpeeper.com)
- ▶ [facehunter.blogspot.com](http://facehunter.blogspot.com)
- ▶ [www.pimpumpam.blogspot.com](http://www.pimpumpam.blogspot.com)

