

## AROUND TOWN

13

FRIDAY, MARCH 19, 2010

Clockwise from left: The Secret Machines World, FireEx and Sodagreen.  
PHOTOS COURTESY OF MEGAPORT MUSIC FESTIVAL/THE WALL

# Port of call

More than 40 indie-rock bands gather in Kaohsiung this weekend for the Megaport Music Festival, an eight-day event that concludes Sunday

BY DAVID CHEN  
STAFF REPORTER



## FESTIVAL NOTES

**WHAT:** Megaport Music Festival 2010 (大港開唱)

**WHEN:** Starts at 6pm tonight and 4pm tomorrow and Sunday

**WHERE:** Pier 2 Art District (高雄駁二藝術特區), 1 Dayong Rd, Yanjheng Dist, Kaohsiung City (高雄市鹽埕區大勇路1號)

**ADMISSION:** NT\$500 per day or NT\$800 for a weekend pass for general access to all outdoor shows. Main Stage shows are NT\$600 tonight, NT\$800 tomorrow and NT\$600 on Sunday. Tickets are available at 7-Eleven ibon kiosks

**ON THE NET:** www.megaport.com.tw



For indie-music fans, the usual bands will be playing at this weekend's Megaport Music Festival 2010 (大港開唱), but in a not-so-usual locale.

The festival, which started last weekend and was organized by Taipei venue The Wall (這牆), takes place at Kaohsiung's Pier 2 Art District (高雄駁二藝術特區), an area of Kaohsiung Port that has been converted into a public space with three outdoor stages.

Concertgoers get to enjoy harbor-side sea breezes while watching performances by more than 40 acts, including beloved folk-rock artist Deserts Chang (張懸) and garage rockers The White Eyes (白目樂團). Megaport's main stage located in a former warehouse will host performances by American group The Secret Machines and pop sensation Sodagreen (蘇打綠).

The festival is a homecoming for musicians in groups like LTK Commune (濁水溪公社), The Peppermints (薄荷葉), Aphasia (阿飛西雅) and The Hindsight (光景消逝), bands that are based in Taipei, but all of which have members who grew up in Kaohsiung.

"Many of these bands feel a strong connection to their hometown," said The Wall's Orbis Fu (傅銘文), who is overseeing the festival. "For everyone involved, this is something that they've always wanted to do."

Fu, who grew up in southern Taiwan but now lives in Taipei, hopes Megaport will provide a boost to the indie-music scene outside of the capital. "The music coming out of Tainan, Kaohsiung and Taichung — this kind of diversity is really important for [Taiwan's overall] indie-music scene," he said. "A lot of bands from the south think: 'We're from the south, no one knows about us.' I think this is wrong."

A few hometown favorites feature prominently at Megaport. Grunge band koOk and pop-punks FireEx (滅火器) played headlining shows last weekend. Indie-rock outfit Orange Doll (橘娃娃) and ska group Shy Kick Apple (害羞踢蘋果) appear this Sunday.

Fu, who also works as FireEx's promoter and manager (the group is signed to The Wall's affiliated label, Uloud Music), said the Kaohsiung band's growing

success offers an encouraging example for local musicians.

"Bands like them will have an effect on other Kaohsiung bands, who will think 'Yes, I have a chance to make it big. We can be like them, we can be more successful, we can gain the acceptance of a larger audience,'" he said.

In addition to Megaport, The Wall has been active in the city for the past year, using the Pier 2 space to hold concerts by bands with widespread followings such as 1976 and Tizzy Bac.

Several notable international acts are also part of this weekend's lineup: The Secret Machines is a trio that combines electronica with 1970s rock guitar riffs and Led Zeppelin-esque drum beats, and Rebuilding the Rights of Statues (重塑雕像的權利) is a Beijing-based indie-electronica band that gained international attention after an appearance at the South by Southwest festival in Austin, Texas. The group also caught the ear of renowned electronic musician and

composer Brian Eno, who contributed keyboard tracks on the band's debut EP *Cut Off?*.

With three other stages, dubbed Star, Dawn and Aurora, Megaport brings to mind another festival organized by The Wall, Taipei's now defunct Formoz Rock Festival, Taiwan's equivalent of Japan's Fuji Rock.

But where Formoz drew in crowds of young revelers and die-hard rock fans, Megaport has attracted "lots of students and even families," said Spykee Fat, a DJ in the underground scene who is working for The Wall as the festival's promoter. "[The bands] really like this place because it's very close to the port and it's close to Kaohsiung City."

Located just five minutes from Kaohsiung MRT's Yanchengpu Station (鹽埕埔站, O2站), Pier 2's easy access and harbor setting adds to the festival's appeal, said Fu. "You can walk around the city ... and then go see a show. It's very relaxing."

## How do you make a vagina talk?

A group of volunteers is currently holding Taichung's second V-Day event to raise awareness about women's issues and sexuality

BY ALITA RICKARDS  
CONTRIBUTING REPORTER

Vagina. The word itself is enough to make many uncomfortable. Yet roughly half the population has one.

V-Day is a global movement to end violence against women, raising funds and awareness around the world through productions of founder and playwright Eve Ensler's award winning play *The Vagina Monologues*.

A group of volunteers is currently holding Taichung's second V-Day with a series of events that began with a screening of a documentary earlier this month, an art exhibit that runs until March 28, and live performances this weekend and next Saturday.

"I think this play is relevant because there is so much miscommunication about women, about vaginas, but also about men too," said promoter Beth Cox, who is also one of the performers. "Women's issues and men's issues are interwoven. If we were more open to talking about our feelings and how we feel about our bodies then there would be less violence,

less mental anguish and abuse. I think we would all be living in a healthier society on the whole."

The monologues Cox appears in cover a range of topics relating to vaginas, from *The Introduction*, which she says gets people comfortable with the idea of vaginas, *The Flood*, a story written from the perspective of a 72 year old woman, *Not-So-Happy-Fact*, a gruesome report from UNICEF on female genital mutilation, and *A Six-Year-Old Was Asked*. The latter "gives us the comparison of the innocence of a child and reminds us how we let taboo and social norms change and dictate our opinions and sense of self," said Cox.

Monologues alternate between English and Chinese during the performance, with some, including *My Angry Vagina*, done bilingually. Volunteer Katie Lee Ching-yeh (李青暉) acts in *Hair* (陰毛), about a male-biased counselor and personal grooming, the more light-hearted *Vagina Happy Fact* (快樂陰道小常識), done as a dialogue between two sisters, and one of the highlights of

the campaign, *A Teenage Girl's Guide to Surviving Sexual Slavery* (性奴役少女如何生存之道). Chingyeh did some research on the setting for the piece (Congo), a first-person narrative from a survivor's perspective, written by Ensler.

## PERFORMANCE NOTES

**WHAT:** 2010 Taichung V-Day: The Vagina Monologues

**WHEN:** Tomorrow, Sunday and March 27 at 2pm, 5pm and 8pm

**WHERE:** Z-Space, 2, Alley 3, Ln 71, Wucyuan W Rd Sec 1, Taichung City (台中市五權西路一段71巷3弄2號)

**ADMISSION:** NT\$350

**DETAILS:** Call 0975-339-336 to reserve tickets for pickup at Retro Cafe, 116, Wucyuan W Rd Sec 1, Taichung City (台中市五權西路一段116號), or at Match Cafe 60-3, Jhonggang Rd Sec 2, Taichung City (台中市中港路二段60-3號)



This untitled photo by Kayt Bronniman is part of the ongoing V-Day exhibit. PHOTO COURTESY OF KAYT BRONNIMAN

CONTINUED ON PAGE 14