

# AROUND TOWN

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## Guts and glory

Spring Scream Tiger is the festival's 16th edition, and features some 200 music, DJ and theater acts. Organizer and co-founder Jimi Moe tells the 'Taipei Times' how the annual showcase of the country's best bands picks the lineup

BY DAVID CHEN  
STAFF REPORTER

This year Spring Scream (春天吶喊) is sweet sixteen. The indie music festival has grown up to become an annual pilgrimage for the country's college students, party-minded expats and music fans.

The event, which begins tonight and takes place at the Oluanpi Lighthouse National Park (鵝鑾鼻燈塔公園), features some of Taiwan's rising stars and best indie bands, with nearly 200 acts scheduled to perform on seven stages.

Spring Scream Tiger won't have a headline act to match last year's edition, which featured pop-diva A-mei (阿妹), whose gig organizers say attracted over 5,000 people.

But this year's lineup is one of the festival's best, says co-founder Jimi Moe, who believes many of the performers are going to be "future stars."

If past performance is anything to go by, Moe could be right. Some of Taiwan's biggest pop acts today — Mayday (五月天), Cheer Chen (陳綺貞) and Sodagreen (蘇打綠) — played at the festival before they achieved big-time success.

Spring Scream has come a long way from its DIY roots. Moe and co-founder Wade Davis, both musicians themselves, started the event in 1995 so their band could play for friends and fans at the beach. The event quickly caught on with local musicians and the expat community, and became a platform for the underground music scene.

In the early years, it used to be that any band

with a half-decent demo could land a spot at the festival. This is no longer the case as Spring Scream has grown in popularity and is now considered a rite of passage for any aspiring rock 'n' roll band in Taiwan. Nowadays, an average of 500 performers apply for the 200 stage slots available.

Performers are chosen with the help of a seven-person "panel," which includes Moe, Davis and friends and acquaintances representing "different musical tastes." The panel assigns a score to each band.

But the panel is only one part of the process. Another group plays an important role in deciding who performs at Spring Scream: the festivalgoers.

Spring Scream launched an online voting system last year, but Moe and Davis found that Internet-savvy bands could game the system by having their friends cast repeat votes. And since anyone could vote, the votes didn't necessarily reflect the opinions of the people who actually went to Spring Scream, said Moe.

This year the festival only accepted votes from "VIPs" — people who bought advance tickets through the festival's partner, Indievox ([www.indievox.com](http://www.indievox.com)), a Web site where indie bands create their own profile pages from which to sell music.

All bands applying to play this year had to set up an account on Indievox and post samples of their music. Each VIP voter was allowed to

choose and rank 20 of their favorite bands on the Spring Scream Web site, which provided direct links to the Indievox band pages.

"We're really trying to be democratic," said Moe, who says the voting system helps Spring Scream realize one of its ideals. "Since the very beginning, we've always said that the sponsors are the fans. The fans buy the tickets. And we've really tried to empower them and give them some say in the matter of what it is that we're doing."

The VIP voters will also be deciding cash prizes for the "most anticipated band." The band that receives the most votes and the highest rankings gets NT\$50,000, with additional prizes of NT\$10,000 each going to five runners-up.

This year's performers include pop-punk band Circus (Circus 樂團), hip-hop group Daximen (大顯門), as well as The Clippers (夾子電動大樂隊), a favorite from past Spring Screens. Several international acts are also scheduled, including South Korean rock and hip-hop band Nevada 51, which performed last year, UK hip-hop group Lazy Habits and French house DJ Hanna Hais.

In addition to live music, there will also be food stalls, games and a film stage run by the Urban Nomad Film Fest.

For tips and travel information for this year's Spring Scream, see Page 14.



The Clippers PHOTO COURTESY OF AUDIOPHONES

## Spring Scream picks



Hanna Hais.  
PHOTO COURTESY OF SPRING SCREAM

**HANNA HAIS**  
House music fans will want to catch this French DJ, who's lauded for her good taste in beats and sultry voice. Hais, who was invited to Taiwan by the French Institute in Taipei, performs at the DJ stage tomorrow and Sunday.  
[www.myspace.com/hannahais](http://www.myspace.com/hannahais)

**LAZY HABITS**  
Hip-hop with big band soul and a British accent: Lazy Habits are from East London. You'll even hear a little mariachi in the mix. This eight-piece group, armed with two deft MCs, a scratch DJ and a jazz band, is a sure-fire party waiting to happen.  
[www.myspace.com/lazyhabits](http://www.myspace.com/lazyhabits)

**THE CLIPPERS (夾子電動大樂隊)**  
The Clippers were one of Taiwan's most memorable bands during Spring Scream's early days. Fans loved the dancing girls on stage and the group's mix of rock, dated karaoke music and social satire. The band returns to Spring Scream with a few new members, but expect the same campy humor from lead singer and actor Xiao Ying (小嫻), who recently enjoyed a little stardom in the hit movie *Cape No. 7* (海角七號).  
[obaigonn.pixnet.net/blog](http://obaigonn.pixnet.net/blog)

**CIACIA (何欣穗)**  
As one of the most talented singer-songwriters in Taiwan's indie scene, not to mention a producer with a keen ear, Ciacia is always worth a listen.  
[www.myspace.com/ciacia.her](http://www.myspace.com/ciacia.her)

**MATZKA AND DI HOT (馬斯卡和辣肉樂團)**  
This dreadlocked Paiwan (排灣) musician is guaranteed to please sun-soaked crowds with a unique blend of reggae, hard rock, soul and Aboriginal folk. Don't be surprised to find yourself humming his catchiest song, *Ma Do Va Do* (像狗一樣), long after the show.  
[www.indievox.com/matzka](http://www.indievox.com/matzka)

**DAXIMEN (大顯門)**  
This hip-hop outfit of three MCs raps in Mandarin and Hoklo (commonly known as Taiwanese) against a backdrop of funky beats and jazz riffs. Daximen's sound and rhymes lean mainstream but stay clear of Mando-pop territory.  
[www.indievox.com/mrbrownchen](http://www.indievox.com/mrbrownchen)

**CELLULOID (賽璐珞)**  
Another veteran band from Spring Scream's early days, Celluoid plays blues and garage rock. The band might lack the style and sheen of younger groups on the underground circuit today, but it always delivers for audiences that

simply want to rock out.

**ELISA LIN (林依霖)**  
Elisa Lin is one to watch. This young folk rocker looks as if she's already being groomed for Mando-pop stardom, but her original songwriting and soulful voice keep things real. She often performs with IO, a group of talented Chinese Canadian rockers that won ICRT's Battle of the Bands last year.  
[www.myspace.com/elisa010](http://www.myspace.com/elisa010)

**88 BALAZ (八十八顆芭樂籽)**  
This four-piece band's punk-inspired garage rock is a perfect match for Spring Scream's "let loose" ethos. Lead singer Ah-Chang (阿強) probably won't be stage-diving into the crowd on a bicycle like he did during his first time at the festival, but that same energy will be present.  
[balaz88.pixnet.net](http://balaz88.pixnet.net)

**ZENKWUN (神棍樂團)**  
Plenty of bands experiment with traditional

Chinese instruments, but Zenkwun uses them particularly well in its brand of pop-rock. Listeners will hear strains of *nanguan* (南北) and Hakka music in the sounds of the *erhu* (二胡) and *suona* horn (嗩吶) laced between electric guitar riffs and loud drums. And how can you not like a band whose lead singer named himself (Obiwan, 歐比王) after Obi Wan Kenobi?  
[www.indievox.com/obiwan1103](http://www.indievox.com/obiwan1103)

**MILK**  
Festivalgoers who keep track of Spring Scream history will welcome the return of Milk, one of the most beloved and storied expat bands in Taiwan. The group is back after a hiatus of several years.  
[theroamads.blogspot.com/2007/07/tribute-to-great-taiwan-band-milk.html](http://theroamads.blogspot.com/2007/07/tribute-to-great-taiwan-band-milk.html)

**THE MONEY SHOT HORNS**  
The Money Shot Horns are a crowd pleaser. Their brand of funk, groovy soul and R'n'B appeals to many, thanks to charming lead singer Dooley Chandler. His magnetic stage presence and the talented musicians in the band form a lasso that pulls you onto the dance floor from the very first note.  
[www.myspace.com/themoneyshotorns](http://www.myspace.com/themoneyshotorns)

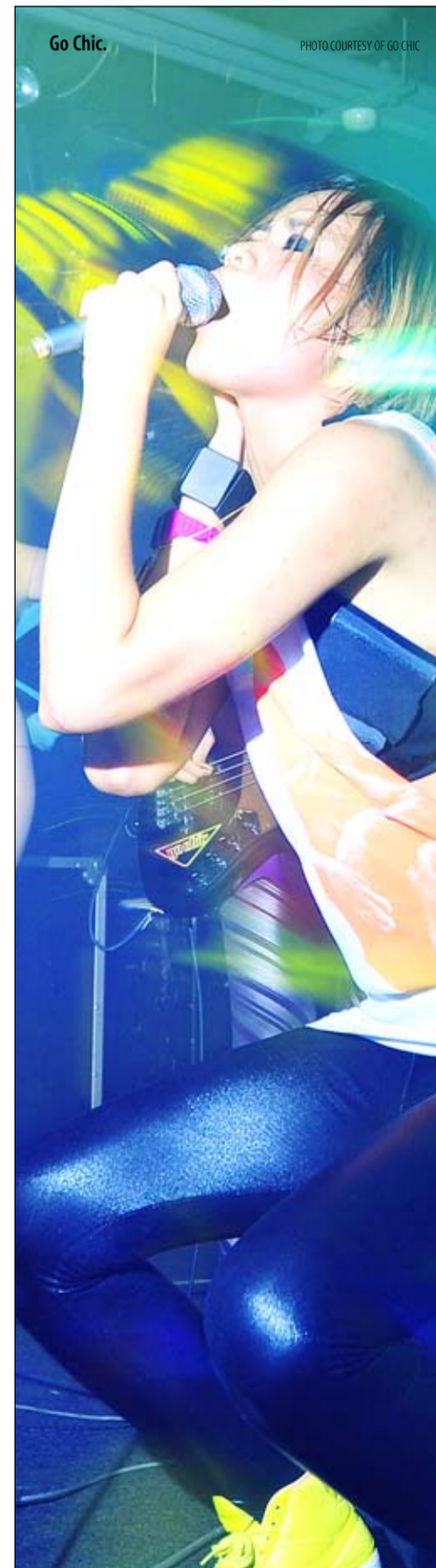
**MY SKIN AGAINST YOUR SKIN**  
My Skin Against Your Skin has given Andrea Huang (黃盈詒) room to grow from her days as the head-thrashing lead singer of Rabbit Is Rich (兔子很有錢) into a performer with a wider repertoire. She still punks out, but now also delves into smoky blues-rock vocals reminiscent of another queen of quietude, PJ Harvey.  
[www.myspace.com/myskinagainstyourskin](http://www.myspace.com/myskinagainstyourskin)

**GO CHIC**  
Go Chic takes chick power to the nth degree with irreverent but relevant lyrics written from the point of view of modern youth. Hilarious, dangerous and fun, the band takes the piss out of everyone from culture vultures to foreign men, and redefines the "Asian girl" stereotype in the process.  
[www.myspace.com/gochictheband](http://www.myspace.com/gochictheband)

**DR RENICULOUS LIPZ AND THE SCALLYUNZ**  
With catchy, fun and wacky rhythms and lyrics and rhymes that tickle the brain, Dr Renculous Lipz and the Scallyunz are a bit like Dr Seuss for grown-ups. Add a rocking live band (with bassist Molly Lin (林孟珊), who occasionally dresses as a nurse), and you have a treat for the eyes, ears and feet.  
[www.myspace.com/thescallyunz](http://www.myspace.com/thescallyunz)



Molly Lin, Dr Renculous Lipz and the Scallyunz.  
PHOTO COURTESY OF STEVE VIGAR



Go Chic. PHOTO COURTESY OF GO CHIC

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