

BY ANDREW C.C. HUANG



## From the bottom of his heart

For a few short years in the early 1990s, Richard Marx had become a cliché, relentlessly tagged to his over-aided ballads *Right Here Waiting* and *Now and Forever*. The man who sold 30 million albums after the first 10 years of his career had turned into VH1 fodder.

Then he surprised the music industry by reinventing himself as a writer and producer capable of penning songs for superstar singers as diverse as Barbra Streisand, Luther Vandross, Leann Rimes, Vince Gil, Sarah Brightman and Michael Bolton. Behind the boy-band face lies a soulful, talented songsmith with a knack for cranking out heartwarming, evergreen ballads.

"It's mostly luck that I have done well," Marx said in a phone interview last month when asked how he had achieved such success. "I do it because it's just something I love."

*Dance With My Father*, the poignant tribute to Luther Vandross' father co-written by Marx, scored the late R'n'B wunderkind's first No. 1 hit and garnered the Song of the Year award at the Grammys in 2003. In 2005, Marx penned the runaway hit *Better Life* for Keith Urban (better known as Nicole Kidman's husband), producing the biggest hit in Marx's career.

Marx is revered by his peers as much as he is adored by his fans. He was a member of Ringo Starr's All-Starr Band in 2006 and is currently touring with Vertical Horizon's lead singer Matt Scannell.

In September 2008 Marx made a foray into rock with his album *Emotional Remains*, his first new studio release in five years.

"I'm inspired all the time. When I am in the gym, when I am walking outside or when I'm doing stuff in my home," said Marx, who had written 13 No. 1 hits as of last year. "I have notes of music everywhere. Then I have to make time to piece these segments of music together in the studio."

Asked why his songs appeal to audiences across the globe, Marx offered his take on the art of balladry: "It describes emotions everyone has felt in life. Whether you have been in love or you are imagining being in love, ballads are emotional and universal."

Having grown up in Chicago and moved to Los Angeles to pursue his music career, Marx is dismissive of TV talent shows and the quick route to fame they promise. "I say just ignore all [the] hype and spend time to work on your craft. Play in a band. Or work on your songwriting."

"[*American Idol*] provides opportunities for singers who need the platform, but it can't help those who are not ready yet," said Marx. "The idol phenomenon has been around for nine years but it has produced very few real stars. In the end, you need the music to connect with the audiences."



PHOTOS COURTESY OF DA DA ARTS

### PERFORMANCE NOTES:

**WHAT:** Richard Marx 2010 World Tour  
**WHEN:** April 17 at 7:30pm  
**WHERE:** Taipei Arena (台北小巨蛋), 2, Nanjing E Rd Sec 4, Taipei City (台北市南京東路四段2號)  
**ADMISSION:** NT\$800 to NT\$4,200, available through ERA ticketing outlets or online at [www.ticket.com.tw](http://www.ticket.com.tw)  
**ON THE NET:** [www.richardmarx.com](http://www.richardmarx.com)

As to what to expect on April 17 when he plays Taipei Arena, his gig "will be a 'greatest hits' show plus a couple of new songs from my new album," said Marx. "There won't be big productions or stage effects. It will just be the music, the song and me. It will be you spending time with Richard Marx."

## EVENTS & ENTERTAINMENT

### Theater

On and In Theater (On and In表演工作室) presents **Private Fears in Public Places** (真日驚喜), a story about seven Taipei residents — four men and three women — who struggle with loneliness.

- Experimental Theater, Taipei City
- Tonight at 7:30pm, tomorrow at 2:30pm, 7:30pm and Sunday at 2:30pm
- Tickets are NT\$500, available through NTC ticketing or online at [www.artsticket.com.tw](http://www.artsticket.com.tw)

A collaboration between If Kids Theater Company (如果兒童劇團) and Taipei Chinese Orchestra (台北市立國樂團), **TCO's Magic Stone** (國樂魔法石) mixes traditional music with children's theater to tell the tale of a magical forest where a magic stone protects all living things.

- Taipei Zhongshan Hall (台北中山堂), 98 Yanping S Rd, Taipei City (台北市延平南路98號)
- Tonight and tomorrow at 7:30pm, Sunday at 2:30pm
- Tickets are NT\$300 to NT\$1,200, available through NTC ticketing or online at [www.artsticket.com.tw](http://www.artsticket.com.tw)

Part of the 2010 Traditional Performing Arts Festival (2010傳統表演藝術節), Guoguang Opera Company's (國光劇團) **Chihsing Temple** (七星廟) is a story about a young woman who outsmarts her father to marry the man she loves.

- Guoguang Theater (國光劇場), 8-1, Ln 66, Muzha Rd Sec 3, Taipei City (台北市木柵路三段66巷8-1號)
- Tomorrow at 2:30pm
- Tickets are NT\$200 and NT\$300, available through ERA ticketing or online at [www.ticket.com.tw](http://www.ticket.com.tw)

Three actors play 12 roles in Ark Theatre's (方舟劇場) latest production **People's Tales** (小人物語), which revolves around several characters including a retired teacher suffering from amnesia, a gangster boss, a robot and a dead person who comes back to life.

- Guling Street Avant-Garde Theatre (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 2:30pm and 7:30pm, Sunday at 2:30pm
- Tickets are NT\$400, available through NTC ticketing or online at [www.artsticket.com.tw](http://www.artsticket.com.tw)

To celebrate the 20th anniversary of the **Chinese News Weekly** (給我報報), a popular 1990s newspaper column that pioneered writing news satire in Taiwan, the column's creator, Neil Peng (馮光遠), is holding a series of stand-up comedy gigs that includes a promotional campaign for his popular iPod routine, which lampoons the iPhone.

- Comedy Club, B1, 24 Taishun St, Taipei City (台北市松壽街24號B1)

- Tonight and tomorrow at 8pm, Sunday at 7:30pm
- Tickets are NT\$300 (includes one drink), available at the door or through [tickets.books.com.tw](http://tickets.books.com.tw)

### Classical music

**Mercedes-Benz Classical Music Festival — Anne-Sophie Mutter Festival** (世紀古典音樂年2010系列 — 安·蘇菲·慕特音樂節) brings the award-winning German violinist Anne-Sophie Mutter to Taiwan for a series of concerts in Taipei, Taichung and Kaohsiung. She will present two separate programs: An Evening of Brahms, which will include *Sonata for Violin and Piano No. 2 in A Major, Op. 100*, *Sonata for Violin and Piano No. 1 in G Major, Op. 78* and *Sonata for Violin and Piano No. 3 in D Minor, Op. 108*, accompanied by pianist Lambert Orkis; and An Evening of Dvorak, which will include *Romance in F Minor, Op. 11* and *Violin Concerto in A Minor, Op. 53*, as well as Brahms' *Symphony No. 1 in C Minor, Op. 68*, with Michael Francis conducting. [See story on Page 14.]

- Evening of Brahms: today at 7:30pm (Taipei), tomorrow at 7:30pm (Kaohsiung); Evening of Dvorak: Sunday at 7:30pm (Taichung) and Wednesday at 7:30pm (Taipei)
- National Concert Hall, Taipei City; Kaohsiung's Chih-teh Hall (高雄市文化中心至德堂), 67 Wufu 1st Rd, Kaohsiung City (高雄市五福一路67號); Taichung's Chungshan Hall (台中市中山堂), 98 Syueshieh Rd, Taichung City (台中市學士路98號)
- Tickets are NT\$1,200 to NT\$4,800, available through ERA ticketing or online at [www.ticket.com.tw](http://www.ticket.com.tw)

**NSO Chamber Concert — Desdemona** (NSO室內樂 — 戴斯德蒙娜) presents soprano Susan Botti performing with Li I-ching (李宜錦) and Teng Hao-tun (鄧皓敦) on violin, Grace Huang (黃瑞儀) on viola, Lien Yi-shien (連亦先) on cello, Shanon Chieh (解瑞) on harp, Lin Hui-ying (林慧英) on piano and Chen Ting-chuan (陳廷鈺) on percussion. The program will include Botti's own *Prelude for Seven Instruments* and *Desdemona*, as well as Caplet's *Conte Fantastique* and Samuel Barber's *String Quartet No. 1 in B Minor, Op. 11*.

- Tomorrow at 7:30pm
- National Recital Hall, Taipei City
- Tickets are NT\$400, available through NTC ticketing or online at [www.artsticket.com.tw](http://www.artsticket.com.tw)

**Magical Journey — Peter Pan** (魔幻之旅 — 小飛俠彼得潘) is a musical performance by the Taipei Philharmonic Children Choir (台北愛樂少年及兒童合唱團) with special guest host Julie Tsai (蔡玠彤) from MoMo Kids TV (MOMO親子台).

- Tomorrow at 2:30pm and 7:30pm, Sunday at 7:30pm
- Novel Hall (新舞臺), 3-1 Songshou Rd, Taipei City (台北市松壽路3-1號)

- Tickets are NT\$400 to NT\$1,500, available through NTC ticketing or online at [www.artsticket.com.tw](http://www.artsticket.com.tw)

### Contemporary

**Legacy Taipei**, located in a former warehouse at Huashan 1914 Creative Park (華山1914), hosts top Taiwanese pop performers and international acts. Appearing tonight are **Sissey Chao** (趙一豪), who sounds like Jim Morrison singing in Mandarin, and his band **Double X**. They share the bill with wacky rockers **The Clippers** (夾子電動大樂隊) and post-punk band **Psycho**. Taitung reggae rockers **Matzka and Di Hot** make their semi-regular appearance at the venue on Wednesday.

- 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 tonight, 8:30pm on Wednesday, 8pm on Thursday
- Entrance fee is NT\$600 tonight and NT\$400 on Wednesday. Tickets are available through ERA ticketing, online at [www.ticket.com.tw](http://www.ticket.com.tw) or [www.legacy.com.tw](http://www.legacy.com.tw), or at ibon electronics kiosks at 7-Eleven stores

American post-rock band **The Album Leaf** performs tonight at **The Wall** (這牆). Tomorrow indie rockers **Love Manana** (愛的大未來) play in support of their new EP, **Alice no Lorlor**. Later on it's the Earworm 2nd Anniversary Party featuring DJs **John Selway**, **Yoshi**, **BB** and **Dabass** [see the Vinyl Word]. Sunday is for metal heads with a program titled Day of Reckoning, featuring **Misery Index** of the US, **GxSxD** of Japan and local acts **Revilement** and **Emerging From the Cocoon**. On Thursday the venue hosts young rockers on the scene **io**, a group of Chinese-Canadians that won CRT's battle of the bands last year, and **Oli Band**, a Mando-pop outfit recently featured on the TV show *Superband*.

- 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](http://www.thewall.com.tw)
- Music shows start at 8pm tonight, tomorrow and on Sunday. Tomorrow's dance party starts at 11:30pm
- Entrance fee is NT\$1,200 tonight, NT\$500 (NT\$400) tomorrow for the band and NT\$800 (NT\$650 in advance) for the dance party, and NT\$900 (NT\$700 in advance) on Sunday. Tickets can be purchased online at [www.thewall.com.tw](http://www.thewall.com.tw) or [tickets.books.com.tw](http://tickets.books.com.tw)

The **Sirius Harmonica Ensemble** (天狼星口琴樂團), a trio of harmonica virtuosos, performs tonight at **Witch House** (女巫店). Jazz fusion group **Gina's Can** (吉那罐子樂團) appears tomorrow. Indie band **Tuesday** (星期二樂團) plays on Thursday.

- 7, Ln 56, Xinxing 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](http://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

**Riverside Cafe** (河岸留言) tonight hosts **The Sound of Jazz Quartet**, which includes as a member the young and talented drummer Doris Lin (林文豐). Indie-rockers **La Petite Nurse** (小護士樂團) perform tomorrow along with **Olivia Yan** (羅麗伶) and her band **Taohuayuan** (桃花源樂團). On Sunday it's **Hankong** (空弦), a jazz outfit with a *guzheng* (古箏) player that specializes in bossa nova and funk, and fusion and acid jazz group **Hands Up Band** (分享器). 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](http://www.riverside.com.tw)
- Shows start at 10pm tonight, 9pm all other nights. For a list of standard songs and ground rules for the open jam, visit the venue's Web site
- Entrance fee is NT\$400 tonight and tomorrow, NT\$350 on Sunday, NT\$150 on Monday

Puyuma Aboriginal singer **Leo Chen** (陳永龍) shares the bill tonight with **The Clippers** (夾子電動大樂隊) at **Riverside Live House** (西門紅樓展演館). Tomorrow is a capella night, featuring Japanese group **Chicken Garlic Steak**, **O-Kai Singers** (歐開合唱團) and **Focal Plus**. Performing on Thursday are **Indie Famous** and grunge-rockers **Monkey Pilot** (猴子飛行員).

- 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](http://www.riverside.com.tw)
- Shows start at 8:30pm tonight, tomorrow and on Thursday
- Entrance fee is NT\$400 tonight, NT\$500 tomorrow and NT\$400 on Thursday. Tickets can be purchased online at [www.riverside.com.tw/livehouse](http://www.riverside.com.tw/livehouse) or [tickets.books.com.tw](http://tickets.books.com.tw)

Alt-rock band the **Silent Toads** (噤舌蟾蜍) plays tonight at **Underworld** (地下社會) with **Mr Dirty**. Tomorrow it's expat rockers **Half Mile Radius** and electronica rock group **The Looking Glass**. On Sunday, seven bands will be at the venue to perform for a live recording project featuring regular Underworld performers, including **1976**, **Macbeth** (馬克白) and **Down in Air** (瀟在空中). On Wednesday it's **One Question** (一個問題) and metal band **Brain Corrosion**.

- 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](http://www.upsaid.com/underworld)
- Music shows run from 9:30pm to 11:30pm on Fridays and Saturdays and 9pm to 11pm on Wednesdays. Sunday's recording session runs from 3pm to 9pm. Underworld is open daily from 9pm, closed on Mondays. Happy hour on Tuesdays and Thursdays before midnight
- Entrance is NT\$300 tonight, which includes one drink, NT\$100 on Wednesday and NT\$400 on Sunday. No admission fee on other nights and after music shows

**Ear Hines II Jazztet** appears tonight at **Sappho de Base**, a late-night lounge and jazz venue. Tomorrow it's **Jo Jo Ma Quartet**, a group led by saxophonist Joseph Marchione. On Tuesday the venue hosts pianist **Jason Hayashi** and his trio. **Edamame Jazz Trio** (毛豆三重奏) appears Wednesday. **Emo Jazz Trio** performs Thursday.

- 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](http://www.sappho102.biz)
- Music shows begin at 10pm. Closed Sundays and Mondays
- Entrance is NT\$100 tonight and tomorrow, free on other nights

Tonight **Roxy Roots** hosts an evening of jazz music with the **Lin Wei-sheng Quartet** (林煒聖四重奏). Tomorrow night **Taipei Latin Soul Band** performs for the venue's Fiesta Latino ladies night. Wednesday is the venue's open jam.

- 90 Songren Rd, Taipei City (台北市松仁路90號). Tel: (02) 2725-3932. On the Net: [www.roxy.com.tw](http://www.roxy.com.tw)
- Shows start at 10pm
- Entrance is NT\$300 on Fridays and Saturdays (NT\$200 credited toward food and drinks)

**EZ5 Live House** hosts Mando-pop singers backed by a live band every night. Highlights for the week include **Julia Peng** (彭佳慧), a major draw who appears every Tuesday, and male crooner **Shin Lung** (辛隆), 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: [www.ez5.com.tw](http://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

**Taipei Swing** holds dance socials on Friday nights at **Capone's**, with live music from blues band **BoPoMoFo** (ㄅㄛㄆㄛ). Dancers of all levels are welcome, and beginner's lessons are offered while the band takes a break. Tomorrow it's Salsa night with live music from **Latin on Fire**.

- 312, Zhongxiao E Rd Sec 4, Taipei City (台北市忠孝東路四段312號)
- Live music from 9pm to 11:30pm on Fridays, 8pm to 11:30pm on Saturdays
- On Fridays there's a minimum charge of one drink, dancers receive a free drink coupon. On Saturdays the minimum charge is NT\$300

## THE VINYL WORD

BY TOM LEEMING

The DJ booth set-up this year at Spring Scream was pretty spectacular with a sumptuous sound. And it went off. Big time. **Edify** from Taichung proved his credentials as one of the country's best with his huge party sound. The raised booth seemed designed to be danced on, and was, meaning the DJ was surrounded by a wall of people. It looked and felt great.

**Lazy Habits** from the UK threw down a hip-hop set that everyone talked about afterwards, and **Bounce Girlz** showed off why they always pull in a crowd — it isn't for the novelty of seeing two cute girls behind the decks.

Electronically, Spring Scream was a great weekend of music that rivaled the live bands all the way. The only bother was the turntables turning up real late on Saturday, which meant **Twohands'** (aka Dan Lambert), with a sweet new hip-hop mix out right now called *I Got Them Tees*, didn't get to play. So, here's a link to the mix: [www.mediafire.com/?z1tdtkizjorm](http://www.mediafire.com/?z1tdtkizjorm)

Not so long ago **2manydjs** and **Diplo** played on the same night here at different venues. Putting Taipei even more firmly on the map tomorrow are **John Selway** and **Paul van Dyk**, who play tomorrow at The Wall (這牆) and Nangang 101 (南港101), respectively.

Techno aficionado Selway returns to Taipei to play Earworm's second-year anniversary party. The DJ, from Washington originally but now firmly ensconced in New York, has been playing for close to two decades and, if he has to be classified, is at heart a minimal techno man. (This is not quite accurate, though, as he has in the past been an innovator of many styles. With a three-hour set to sink his teeth into tomorrow, attendees will be in for a wide variety of sounds, including deep house and classic electro.)

**Yoshi** will be opening and Earworm's residents **DataBass** and **BB** will be going back-to-back after Selway's set. If you think the Nankang DJ is a bit of a Dyk, then go for something cooler, smaller and with less to live up to.

Earworm 2nd Anniversary with John Selway, tomorrow from midnight until 5am 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\$800 at the door. Tel: (02) 2930-0162. On the Net: [www.thewall.com.tw](http://www.thewall.com.tw)

**Paul van Dyk** has been a ubiquitous name in the dance music scene for many years now. He'll be ripping into Nankang 101 for Spring Love at around the same time as Selway plays The Wall. Having been dubbed best deejay in the world twice in the mid 2000s, this night will be packed and apparently only 5,000 punters will be let in. It would be easy to call Berliner Van Dyk a trance DJ, but he prefers to keep his style nameless. Attendees will be taken on a journey, though. A journey that sounds and feels something like trance but without the stigma attached to the moniker. There is one hell of a setup for him too, as Van Dyk plays with two Macbooks and two MIDI keyboards to create unique sets, which are not trance.

It is eyebrow-raising that on a night of mad tunes and kids off their rockers, one of the admission rules is "persons with mental illnesses will not be allowed." So says the gig's Facebook invitation message, sent from Luxy's page.

Paul van Dyk at Spring Love, tomorrow from 11pm until 5am at Nangang 101, 71 Xingnan St, Taipei City (台北市興南街71號). Admission is NT\$1,800 at the door. On the Net: [www.springlove.com.tw](http://www.springlove.com.tw)



Paul van Dyk returns to Taipei tomorrow.

PHOTO COURTESY OF HANS BREXENDORFF