

BY DAVID CHEN

MUSIC

# Pop rock passion



American musician and songwriter Lijie Yang performs this weekend in Taipei.

PHOTO COURTESY OF LUE YANG

Lijie Yang (楊麗潔) received what some would consider the stereotypical upbringing for a child of Chinese immigrants in the US — she was told to get good grades, take piano lessons, strive for a high-paying career as a lawyer or doctor. But if anything truly prepared Yang for her current path, it was the piano lessons.

"My Asian parents had me learn piano thinking it would develop one part of your brain, not really thinking that it would become a career choice," laughed the 30-year-old American pop-rock musician and songwriter, who performs tonight at Roxy Roots in Taipei. The *Taipei Times* spoke with her last week on the telephone while she was visiting relatives in Beijing en route to Taiwan for a run of four shows.

Yang says she "always felt something missing" during her college years. After graduating with a finance degree, she decided to pack her bags and move to Los Angeles to start a music career, much to the shock and disappointment of her parents.

She left Los Angeles after several years of waiting tables and performing at open mics and small clubs, but also came away with material for an impressive-sounding solo album, *Roam* (2005).

Yang's voice is strong, soulful and velvety smooth, and will draw admiration from musicians and pop-minded music fans alike. Many of her recorded songs are acoustic guitar and piano-driven ballads full of ethereal atmosphere — think Sarah McLachlan — but

she can rock out too. On *Bar Song*, which can be heard on her MySpace page, Yang croons with a cool sultriness that brings to mind Chrissie Hynde of the Pretenders.

Much of Yang's music is radio-friendly and has plenty of catchy hooks, but she says she's most attracted to artists who break away from formulaic song structures. She grew up listening to everything from Madonna and Mariah Carey to Pink Floyd and Radiohead, and cites McLachlan and Jewel as her main inspirations as a songwriter.

"When I write a song, the most important thing to me is ... to make people feel something," she said.

Yang just graduated from Boston's Berklee College of Music, where she decided to enroll after working with Erik Colvin, a graduate of the school and the producer of *Roam*. She saw her two years at Berklee as an opportunity to hone her musicianship further. "It's great to sing with passion and play with passion but at the same time, if you can play technically well, it just allows so much more artistic freedom."

It was a fellow Berklee student that brought Yang to Taipei. Guitarist Sahil Mehrotra, whose family lives in the capital, helped set up her gig dates, which also include a show on Sunday at Kafka on the Shore.

Yang says her parents have warmed up to her pursuit of music as a career. And she is more aware than ever of the challenge of making a living as a rock musician, which was one reason she majored in music business at Berklee.

## EVENTS & ENTERTAINMENT

### Theater

Part of the 2010 International Theatre Festival, **Dulcinea's Lament** by Montreal-based theater group Dulcinea Langfelder & Co is a multimedia performance that explores feminism through Dulcinea del Toboso, a character derived from Cervante's novel *Don Quixote*.

- Experimental Theater, Taipei City
- Tickets remain for tomorrow's 2:30pm performance. All other performances are sold out
- Tickets are NT\$800, available through NTCH ticketing or online at [www.artsticket.com.tw](http://www.artsticket.com.tw)

Taiyuan Puppet Theater Company's (台原偶戲團) latest production **Black Child (黑色小孩)** revives the tradition of paper puppet theater that was popular in 19th century Europe to tell the story of a child who embarks on a journey to find what's meaningful in life. The show is suitable for children aged 4 and up.

- Nadou Theater (納豆劇場), 79 Xining N Rd, Taipei City (台北市西寧北路79號).
- Tomorrow at 2pm
- Tickets are NT\$200, available through NTCH ticketing or online at [www.artsticket.com.tw](http://www.artsticket.com.tw)

In Sun Son Theatre's (身聲劇場) **The Drango Chasers (尋龍記)**, three young warriors follow a dragon into a world of myths, legends and magic. Like the company's previous productions, the piece is a captivating fusion of modern theater, dance, chant and world music.

- Bamboo Curtain Studio (竹園工作室), 39, Ln 88, Jhongheng E Rd Sec 2, Tamsui Township, Taipei County (台北縣淡水鎮中正東路二段88巷39號)
- Tonight at 7:30pm, tomorrow at 2:30pm and 7:30pm, Sunday at 2:30pm
- Tickets are NT\$400, available through NTCH ticketing or online at [www.artsticket.com.tw](http://www.artsticket.com.tw)

Dark Eyes Performance Lab's (黑眼睛跨劇團) **Jump! Big Girl. (跳舞吧! 胖女孩!)** is composed of three comic pieces by three theater directors including Hung Hung (鴻鴻). The heroines in the plays are a girl from outer space, a nicotine-addicted mother played by film actress Lu Yi-ching (陸弈靜) and a big

girl who dances to find love.

- Wenshan Theater (文山劇場), 32 Jingwen St, Taipei City (台北市景文街32號)
- Tonight at 7:30pm, tomorrow at 2:30pm and 7:30pm, Sunday at 2:30pm
- Tickets are NT\$600, available through NTCH ticketing or online at [www.artsticket.com.tw](http://www.artsticket.com.tw)

**2010 Step In — Soy House Artist Club (2010足印·豆腳團)** is Scarecrow Contemporary Dance Company's (稻草人舞團) third attempt to establish a dialogue between its performers' bodies and the interiors of old buildings and architecture.

- Soy House Artist Club (豆腳團俱樂部), 20, Ln 161, Dongmen Rd Sec 2, Tainan City (台南市東門路二段161巷20號)
- Tonight and tomorrow at 2:30pm and 7:30pm, Sunday at 2:30pm
- Tickets are NT\$150, available through NTCH ticketing or online at [www.artsticket.com.tw](http://www.artsticket.com.tw)

### Classical music

**2010 Young Stars Series — Shih-Wei Huang Piano Recital (2010兩廳院樂壇新秀系列 — 黃時為鋼琴獨奏會)** presents the highly acclaimed pianist Huang Shih-wei (黃時為), winner of the Mauro Paolo Monopoli Prize for young pianists in 2002. The program will include Beethoven's *Piano Sonata in A-Flat Major Op. 110* and Chopin's *Mazurka Op. 59, Ballade No.3 in A-Flat Major Op. 47* and *Polonaise-Fantaisie in A-Flat Major, Op. 61*.

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

**NSO German Music Series — For Joachim, Sincerely yours, Lake Thun (NSO狂瀾日耳曼 — 1887年8月杜溫湖畔給姚阿幸)** continues the National Symphony Orchestra's exploration of German music in a program that includes Brahms' *Academic Festival Overture* and *Double Concerto in A Minor, Op. 102* and Bartok's *Concerto for Orchestra*. The concert will feature cellist Amit Peled and violinist Joseph Lin (林以信). The orchestra will be conducted by Derrick Inouye.

- Today at 7:30pm
- National Concert Hall, Taipei City
- Tickets are NT\$400 to NT\$1,500, available through NTCH 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. Tonight features three established indie bands that have been nominated for this year's Golden Melody Awards (金曲獎), hip-hop groups **Daximen (大藪門)** and **Kou Chou Ching (拷秋勤)** and Aboriginal rockers **Totem (圖騰樂團)**.

On Wednesday the venue hosts two French indie bands, geek-chic electro-rockers **The Teenagers** and folk rock duo **Cocoon**.

- 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
- Admission is NT\$400 tonight, NT\$1,200 on Wednesday (NT\$800 in advance). Tickets 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 7-Eleven ibon kiosks

**The Wall (這牆)** hosts Japanese metalcore and thrash band **Metal Safari** tonight, with local metal favorites **Infernal Chaos and Forgiveness (怒)** also on the bill. Tomorrow night British art rock band **These New Puritans** makes an appearance. The four-piece has released two albums filled with post-punk/electronic collages and has earned high marks from music publications such as *Pitchfork* and *NME*. Garage-rock favorites **The White Eyes** open the show. Later tomorrow night **Bounce Girlz** presents the Damn Damn party featuring DJ Aonami of Japan. On Sunday it's baroque pop band **The Tic Tac**, young rockers **Hi Jack** and post-punk group **The Clearance Puppy (特價小狗)**. On Wednesday the venue hosts Hakka rock band **Zenkun (神棍)** and **Mafianjo (馬菲安喬)**.

- 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 7pm tonight, 8pm tomorrow, and 8pm on Sunday and Wednesday. Tomorrow's dance party starts at 11:30pm tomorrow
- Admission is NT\$700 tonight, NT\$1,400 for tomorrow's music show (NT\$1,200 in advance), NT\$350 (NT\$250 in advance) for tomorrow's dance party, and NT\$300 on Wednesday. Tickets can be purchased online by visiting [www.thewall.com.tw](http://www.thewall.com.tw) or [tickets.books.com.tw](http://tickets.books.com.tw)

Acoustic indie rockers **Silverbus (銀巴士)** and rockers **Silent Sign** perform tonight at **Witch House (女巫店)**. Tomorrow it's Puyuma Aboriginal singer **Leo Chen (陳永龍)** and **HE (有獵人)**, a singer-songwriter duo on electric guitar and bass. The venue hosts a special show on Wednesday featuring Totem frontman and lead vocalist **Suming (姜聖明)**. On Thursday it's acoustic duo **A-san (阿三)** and **Eric**, and solo act **Cheshire Cat (柴郡貓)**.

- 7, Ln 56, Xinsheg 5 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

Tonight **Riverside Live House (西門紅樓展演館)** hosts indie bands **Chemical Monkeys (化學猴系)**, **Love Manana (愛的大未來)** and the **Fever Cats**. Tomorrow evening features singer **Kuo Shao-hsuan (郭少軒)**, known for her appearances on the *Super Idol (超級偶像)* TV reality show.

- 177 Xining 5 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 8pm tonight and 8:30pm tomorrow
- Admission is NT\$400 tonight, NT\$500 tomorrow. Tickets available online at [www.riverside.com.tw](http://www.riverside.com.tw) / livehouse or [tickets.books.com.tw](http://tickets.books.com.tw)

Indie-electronica outfit **Heartones (心電樂)** performs tonight at **Underworld (地下社會)**, opening for **Tip Toe Topic** of Belgium. Tomorrow night, noise band

**Sunset Rollercoaster (落日飛車)** and **Green!Eyes** take the stage.

- 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. Underworld is open daily from 9pm, closed on Mondays. Happy hour on Tuesdays and Thursdays before midnight
- Admission for music shows on Fridays and Saturdays is NT\$300, which includes one drink

**Sappho de Base** hosts **Flaneur Daguerre**, a jazz quartet that plays everything Bach to Bjork and Ornette Coleman to the Ramones, tonight. Tomorrow is the **Coromandel Express**, which performs a "musical masala" of jazz, classical and world music. Piano, drums and bass ensemble **Yohel Jazz Trio** appears on Tuesday. **The Open String Quartet** performs on Wednesday. Fusion group **DD Quartet** plays on 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
- Admission for music shows is NT\$150 tonight and NT\$100 tomorrow

The Wall (這牆) started programming regular live rock shows at Kaohsiung's **Pier 2 Arts Center (高雄駁二藝術特區)** last month. Appearing tonight is folk rocker **Lin Sheng-xiang (林生祥)** and his accompanist, Japanese guitarist **Ken Ohtake (大竹研)**. Comedic indie-rockers **Won Fu (旺福)** play tomorrow night.

- 1 Dayong Rd, Yancheng Dist, Kaohsiung City (高雄市鹽埕區大勇路1號). On the Net: [pier-2.khcc.gov.tw](http://pier-2.khcc.gov.tw), [www.thewall.com.tw](http://www.thewall.com.tw)
- Shows start at 7pm
- Admission is NT\$400

**The Mercury (水星酒館)** hosts punk group **Rascal Men (無賴男)** 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](http://mercurybar.blogspot.com)
- Show starts at 9pm
- Admission for music shows is NT\$200, includes one drink

## THE VINYL WORD

BY CHUNZHEN CHIN AND QUEEN BEE

To the novice listener, any mention of the reggae genre will probably evoke images of tropical sun, sand and sea, and perhaps sipping a Malibu in the shade of a palm tree. But for Thierry Cuvillier from Martinique, reggae isn't something to be objectified and neither is it merely lyrics and a beat. "If you ask me what I love about reggae it is like saying that reggae is something out there that I love at and love. Like a woman or a kind of food, or a place. But reggae is inside I. It is I and I is it. There is no separation."

With its chill bass lines and accents distinctly placed on the offbeat, reggae's "words and sounds evoke a power and a vibe that can transform people, can move them in ways that some people have never felt before," says Cuvillier (stage name **Taïli**), one of the coordinators of Islandjam, a promotion group under the Taipei-based O-Brothaz record label.

It's no wonder, then, that over the last year the reggae scene in Taiwan has been budding slowly but steadily, and you can get a taste of where it's at tomorrow at Reggae Beachfest 2010, co-organized by Islandjam and Dean Zavolta and Chu Chien-hui (朱劍輝) of China Blue at WaLiLei (哇哩咧), an Italian restaurant with indoor and outdoor seating areas on Cianshui Bay (淡水灣).

At this year's festival, listen out for some acts that are becoming firmly established in Taiwan, such as **Skaraoke**, which has been leading a charge in reggae and ska and received positive reviews after performances in Japan.

Working under the O-Brothaz record label is **Sunny Smalls**, a Paiman artist from Tainan whose reggae tunes and lyrics in Hoklo (commonly known as Taiwanese), Mandarin and English have attracted audiences from Japan and Jamaica. **Ice**, from Taoyuan, is an up-and-coming reggae singer who has joined forces with O-Brothaz to produce his own tracks.

From out of the country, Islandjam has brought in **Jeck Pilpil** and **Peace Pipe** from the Philippines, whose songs epitomize the message of the reggae vibe — a social, political and spiritual awakening. **Ras Junior Alpha** from Guinea will make his first visit to Taiwan since his memorable performance at last year's Reggae Beachfest, where his rough and versatile style and upbeat stage presence established him as a crowd favorite. Popular singer **Miffer** from Tokyo's reggae scene will also be joining in the party.

The lineup also includes **Splendor**, a native of Trinidad and Tobago, **Matzka**, **Carib Rocks**, **Black Reign International**, **Selctha Zion** of France, **Open Crew** from Japan and **DJ Marcus Aurelius**.

Since last year's debut Beachfest festival, the hunt has continued for fresh reggae talent. This growing genre might not attract as much notice as rock or techno, but Cuvillier has noticed that "a lot of younger people are trying to find out more about Jamaican culture and reggae and not only going after the style but really trying to understand and look deeper into the music."

Unlike some music genres that have been diluted for the mainstream, "real" reggae, according to Islandjam coordinator Oliver Harley (stage name **Lion**) "doesn't need to adapt to its environment, it can just add to it. People here deserve to have exposure to the real culture, not some watered-down version of the truth. Reggae is never about that."

Islandjam Reggae Beachfest is tomorrow from 2pm to 4am at WaLiLei restaurant on Cianshui Bay, 12-1, Beishhizi, Sanjhiih Township, Taipei County (台北縣三芝鄉北勢子12-1號). The restaurant is about 15 minutes away by car from Danshui (Tamsui) MRT Station (淡水捷運站). Admission: NT\$700, including round-trip shuttle fare and a drink. For more information, including directions and the shuttle bus schedule, go to [reggaebeachfest.blogspot.com](http://reggaebeachfest.blogspot.com)

If you're in the mood for something more electronic, **Victor Cheng**, is back in town, but only for a couple of weeks. He will be playing at the following venues:

- Tonight from 10pm at Luxy, 5F, 201, Zhongxiao E Rd Sec 4, Taipei City (台北市忠孝東路四段201號). Admission is NT\$600. On the Net: [www.luxy-taipei.com](http://www.luxy-taipei.com)
- Tomorrow from 11pm at Jump, B1, 8, Keelung Rd Sec 1, Taipei City (台北市基隆路一段8號B1). Admission is NT\$400. On the Net: [www.club-jump.com](http://www.club-jump.com)
- June 12 from 10pm at Space, 101, Minsiang St, Kaohsiung City (高雄市民享街101號). Admission is NT\$600. On the Net: [glow01.blogspot.com](http://glow01.blogspot.com)



DJ Taro from Open Crew appears at Beachfest.

PHOTO COURTESY OF ISLANDJAM

## HIGHLIGHT

BY NOAH BUCHAN

Wokai (我開) co-founder and CEO **Casey Wilson** will be in Taipei on June 12 to give a lecture entitled *Can My Career Be Socially Responsible?* for the Lung Yingtai Cultural Foundation (龍應台文化基金會) as part of its YouthVision Taiwan (青年論壇) series. Established in November 2008, Wokai, which means "I start" in Mandarin, raises funds to be distributed via microloans in rural China. Over the past two years, the group has raised almost US\$200,000, which was used to improve the lives of 350 people.

- Youth Forum (青年論壇), Can My Career Be Socially Responsible? The lecture and discussion take place at Yuehan Hall (月涵堂), 110 Jinhua St, Taipei City (台北市金華街110號). The lecture will be conducted in English. Admission is free, but those attending must pre-register online at [www.civictaipei.org](http://www.civictaipei.org) or by calling (02) 3322-4907
- June 12, from 2pm to 4pm.



Casey Wilson, center, co-founded Wokai, an organization that raises funds to be distributed as microloans in rural China.

PHOTO COURTESY OF LUNG YINGTAI CULTURAL FOUNDATION

## HIGHLIGHT

BY DAVID CHEN

The Kronos Quartet performs tonight in Taipei at **Zhongshan Hall** with Chinese *pipa* (琵琶) virtuoso **Wu Man (吳蠻)**. The concert, part of the Taipei Chinese Orchestra's Silk Road series, promises an evening of cutting-edge contemporary chamber and Chinese music. The quartet, which formed in 1973 and is considered one of the most influential groups in modern chamber music, has been celebrated for its unorthodox and adventurous repertoire, which ranges from Bartok and Thelonius Monk to avant-garde saxophonist John Zorn and Jimi Hendrix. Wu Man, who was born in Hangzhou, China and lives in the US, has been hailed as the West's foremost exponent of the *pipa* and is best known for her collaborations with Yo-Yo Ma (馬友友) and Philip Glass. Tonight's program includes *Ghost Opera* by composer Tan Dun (譚盾),



Renowned avant-garde group Kronos Quartet performs tonight in Taipei.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF TAIPEI CHINESE ORCHESTRA

who created the experimental multimedia work especially for Kronos Quartet and Wu.

- Kronos Quartet and Wu Man at Zhongshan Hall (台北市中山堂), 98 Yanping 5 Rd, Taipei City (台北市延平南路98號)
- Tonight at 7:30pm
- Tickets are NT\$200 to NT\$800, available through NTCH ticketing or online at [www.artsticket.com.tw](http://www.artsticket.com.tw)

## HIGHLIGHT

BY RON BROWLOW

Stand-up comedian **Hartley Pool** returns for his first show in 10 months at the **Comedy Club's** new location on Zhongxiao East Road (忠孝東路) near Taipei City Hall MRT Station (市政府捷運站). The English comedian — who's performed in the UK, Central and Eastern Europe, Singapore and Taiwan and now lives in Abu Dhabi — will headline the show, which is called "Abu Daddy" and revolves around the theme of becoming a father. Also on the bill are funny men **Tom Levene** and **S.T. Ross** and guitarist **Dawid Vorster**, who will collaborate with Pool on a couple of comic songs. **Sammi the Psychic Camel** will be a last-minute stand-in in for longtime Pool collaborator **Sammi the Psychic Cat**.

- Abu Daddy, tomorrow from 10pm at the new Comedy Club, 20, Ln 553, Zhongxiao E Rd Sec 4, Taipei City (台北市忠孝東路四段553巷20號). Tel: (02) 2369-3730
- Admission is NT\$350 at the door and includes a drink
- On the Net: [www.comedy.com.tw/english](http://www.comedy.com.tw/english), or search for "Hartley Pool presents 'Abu Daddy'" on Facebook



Hartley Pool performs at the Comedy Club's new location tomorrow night.

PHOTO COURTESY OF HARTLEY POOL