

BY MAHSA ALIMARDANI

MUSIC

One for the road



The Okay Cars join the Deadly Vibes tomorrow at Underworld.

PHOTO COURTESY OF BRAD QUINN

Some bands are reluctant to pigeonhole their music into the constraints of specific genres, but the Okay Cars won't try to evade the question. Talk to these laid-back Canadian expats and you'll hear phrases like "experimental," "synth-pop," "shoegaze," "chill-wave," and "too lazy to get a drummer," dropped into the conversation.

The two-man band consists of vocalist and guitarist Brad Quinn and keyboardist-percussionist Lars Berry. Both moved to Taiwan to teach English five years ago. Both are also from Vancouver, but they didn't meet until a chance encounter in a Taipei club seven months ago.

"We were both looking to start up a project. It seemed like there was hardly anyone out there into the same music I am," says Quinn.

Both Quinn and Berry were disappointed by Taipei's ability to churn

PERFORMANCE NOTES

WHAT: Back in the Saddle With the Deadly Vibes and the Okay Cars

WHERE: Underworld (地下社會), B1, 45 Shida Rd, Taipei City (台北市師大路45號B1). Tel: (02) 2369-0103

WHEN: Tomorrow from 9:30pm

ADMISSION: NT\$300 at the door

ON THE NET:

www.myspace.com/theokaycars

out the "party-type foreign band" when they arrived in Taiwan. Quinn, 37, and Berry, 36, say they connected because their roots go back to the mid-90s indie scene, with bands like Tortoise and Sonic Youth.

"Foreign bands were playing for

foreigners — they were jamming bands more or less," says Berry.

The Okay Cars aim to be different. The band's sound is characterized by Quinn's haunting vocals structured along traditional pop, verse-chorus structures, paired with Berry's slippery electronics. Quinn and Berry say they closely follow the "New York scene" and site James Murphy of LCD Soundsystem fame as a major influence.

Listen to the track *Pheasants?* on their MySpace page and you'll find a layer of nostalgia for 80s pop along the lines of New Order and Soft Cell reflected in Quinn's melodic guitar and Berry's mad-scientist electronic antics.

"We have a little bit of that [80s] element. The instrument I'm using is a copy of an early 80s synthesizer in terms of the way it functions," says Berry.

"It's very chilled music," observed Annie Chi (紀亞軒) of synth-pop band

the Looking Glass while watching Okay Cars during a show at The Wall (這牆) last month that also featured her band and Yellowback.

"Other bands that play here [The Wall] are more like American high school bands. But the Okay Cars are different," said Charlotte van Innis, a regular at concerts at The Wall who was at the same show. "They're more experimental, more noise. That makes them different and quintessentially indie."

Expect the Okay Car's performance tomorrow at Underworld to be accompanied — if the club's power system behaves itself — by a full orchestra of sorts — chaoscillator, drum machine, Midi and foot-activated sampler — all manned by Berry.

"I'm more or less obsessed [with electronics]," he says. "Basically, what we lack in members we make up in gadgetry."

EVENTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Theater

Seventeen years after he directed the theatrical play *Thunder Storm* (雷雨), 81-year-old film maestro Lee Hsing (李行) returns to the stage with **Summer Snow** (夏雪). Adapted from the popular story *The Mistrial of Do-er* (賣娥冤) by Yuan Dynasty playwright Guan Hanqing (關漢卿), this top-notch production includes big-name artists such as film director Wang Tung (王童), composers Gerald Shih (史擲詠) and Chuang Nu (莊奴) and playwright Sun Yang (孫陽) on its lineup.

- National Theater, Taipei City
- Tonight at 7:30pm, tomorrow at 2:30pm and 7:30pm, Sunday at 2:30pm
- Tickets are NT\$350 to NT\$3,000, available through NTCH ticketing or online at www.artsticket.com.tw

Shenzo's Electric Stunt Orchestra is staging **A Stunt Opera**, an "aerial performance" of Vivaldi's *Four Seasons* that combines music, theater, stunts and acrobatics, as part of the Xinbei City International Arts Festival (2010新北市藝術節). For more information, go to www.xinbei-arts.com.

- East Riverside Plaza (東岸廣場), Bitan, Sindian, Taipei County (台北縣新店碧潭)
- Tomorrow and Sunday at 7:30pm
- Free admission

Choreographed by Yu Neng-sheng (余能盛), **The Door** (門) is Chamber Ballet Taipei's (台北市內芭蕾) newest production. Guest performers include Nadja Saidakova from the ballet of National Opera Berlin and Richard Szabo from the ballet of National Opera Vienna.

- Tainan Municipal Cultural Center (台南市立文化中心), 332, Jhonghua E Rd Sec 3, Tainan City (台南市中華東路三段332號)
- Tomorrow at 7:30pm, Sunday at 3pm
- Tickets are NT\$400 to NT\$1,500, available through NTCH ticketing or online at www.artsticket.com.tw

A collaboration between Tang Mei Yun Taiwanese Opera Company (唐美雲歌仔戲團) and Xiamen Gezai Opera Troupe (廈門市歌仔戲劇團), **Unfading Love** (綿蝶之戀) tells the love story of two *gezai* opera (歌仔戲) performers separated from each other for 38 years by the Taiwan Strait.

- Kaohsiung Cultural Center's Chih-teh Hall (高雄市中文化中心至德堂), 67 Wufu 1st Rd, Kaohsiung City (高雄市五福一路

67號)

- Tonight and tomorrow at 7:30pm
- Tickets are NT\$300 to NT\$2,000, available through NTCH ticketing or online at www.artsticket.com.tw

Fantasy Party Invitation (男人幫之一夜夜笙歌) by Open Theater (大開劇團), part of the ongoing 2010 Kaohsiung Theater Festival (2010正港小劇展), opens with three men excitedly waiting for a party to begin at a karaoke den. But the hot, young female escorts they've been expecting to see don't show up, and instead they find that they're trapped in the room. For more information about the festival, go to pnp.trying.com.tw/dramatic.

- Kaohsiung's Pier 2 Arts Center (高雄駁二藝術特區), 1 Dayong Rd, Yancheng Dist, Kaohsiung City (高雄市鹽埕區大勇路1號)
- Tonight at 8pm, tomorrow at 2:30 and 8pm
- Tickets are NT\$300, available through ERA ticketing or online at www.ticket.com.tw

Classical music

Evening of Chopin Songs & Chamber Music (藝術歌曲與室內樂之夜) continues the celebrations to commemorate the 200th anniversary of Chopin's birth. This concert features soprano Huang Rui-fen (黃瑞芬) accompanied by pianist Yeh Lu-na (葉綠娜) performing a program of 17 polish songs, and cellist Chen Yen-rung (陳妍蓉), pianist Lu Yi-chi (盧易之) and violinist Liang Chien-wen (梁西雯) performing Chopin's *Cello Sonata Op. 65* and *Piano Trio Op. 8*. On Sunday, a second part of the program titled **Evening of Chopin Orchestra and Piano Music** (管絃樂與鋼琴之夜) will be performed featuring the Evergreen Symphony Orchestra (長榮交響樂團) under Gernot Schmalfuss and soloists including Eric Chen (陳冠宇).

- Today and Sunday at 7:30pm
- National Concert Hall, Taipei City
- Tickets are NT\$400 to NT\$2,000, available through NTCH ticketing or online at www.artsticket.com.tw

JU Percussion Group Children's Concert (2010朱宗慶打擊樂團兒童音樂會全國巡演), subtitled "Percussion Superman" (擊樂超人), will be starting

its national tour today at Taipei's Novel Hall (新舞臺) before moving on to other venues around the country. The tour will continue through to Oct. 2. Because tonight's show will be recorded, tickets will be sold at a 40 percent discount.

- Today and tomorrow 7:30pm, tomorrow and Sunday 10:30am and 2:30pm
- 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\$1,000, available through NTCH ticketing or online at www.artsticket.com.tw

Evolution — Liu Chih-yuan Huqin Concert (進化狂想 — 劉致遠胡琴獨奏會) features a program of contemporary and classic pieces for the *huqin* (胡琴), which will be performed by Liu Chih-yuan (劉致遠) with accompaniment from pianist Chang Chiao-hui (張喬慧) and the Chai Found Music Workshop (采風樂坊).

- Today at 7:30pm
- National Recital Hall, Taipei City
- Tickets are NT\$200 to NT\$500, available through NTCH ticketing or online at www.artsticket.com.tw

Contemporary

Tonight **Legacy Taipei** hosts indie groups recognized at this year's battle of the bands competition at the Ho-Hai-Yan Gung-Liau Rock Festival (台北縣貢寮國際海洋音樂祭). Runners-up **The Silence** (沉默之音), **Solidor** (固定客) and **Beright** (傲對樂團) open for winner **Queen Suitcase** (皇后皮箱), which plays retro rock and indie pop. No shows are scheduled tomorrow as of press time. On Sunday, local indie-rock favorites **B8 Balaz** (88顆芭樂籽) throw a party to launch their new live DVD. Also appearing is indie-pop band **13** (拾叁). **Quruli**, dubbed by promoters as "Japan's Coldplay," which performs 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 Sunday, 8pm on Wednesday
- Admission is NT\$500 tonight, NT\$600 tomorrow (NT\$500 in advance), NT\$1,500 on Wednesday (NT\$1,200 in advance). Tickets can be purchased at ERA ticketing outlets, online through www.ticket.com.tw or www.legacy.com.tw or at 7-Eleven ibon kiosks

Tizzy Bac's shows tonight and tomorrow at **The Wall** are already sold out. On Sunday, post-rock group **Aphasia** (阿飛西雅) and indie-electronica band **Telephone Booth** (電話亭) open for Japanese indie rock band **Tonic**. On Tuesday the venue hosts **Fanfarlo**, a London-based indie-pop band.

- 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
- Shows start at 8pm tonight and tomorrow, 8pm on Sunday and Tuesday
- Tonight and tomorrow's shows are sold out. Admission is NT\$400 on Sunday and NT\$1,200 on Tuesday (NT\$1,000 in advance). Tickets can be purchased online through www.thewall.com.tw or tickets.books.com.tw

Tonight **Witch House** (女巫店) hosts neo-folk singer **Enno Cheng** (鄭宜農) and reggae/dub outfit **Otakus**. Tomorrow it's **Corners of Nowhere**, a project by a visiting British musician that mixes live music and singing with sampled beats and electronica. The venue opens on Wednesday for a special show by Chinese jazz ensemble **Sizhukong** (絲竹空). Aboriginal pop-rock singer **Black Aries** (黑色牡羊) appears on Thursday.

- 7, Ln 56, Xincheng 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
- 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
- Admission for music shows is NT\$300

Tonight **Riverside Cafe** (河岸留言) hosts **The Sound of Jazz Quartet**, which includes as a member the young and talented drummer Doris Lin (林文豐). Tomorrow it's pop singer **Olivia Yan** (龔韋伶) and her band **Invisible Garden** (隱韋伶與桃花源樂團), and indie rockers **Chemical Monkeys** (化學猴子). Performing on Sunday are two aspiring Mando-pop artists, singer **Frida Li** (利得曼) and keyboardist **Hsiao Lu** (小路). 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
- Shows start at 9:30pm tonight and 9pm all other nights. For a list of standard songs and ground rules for the open jam, visit the venue's Web site
- Admission is NT\$400 tomorrow, NT\$350 on Sunday, NT\$150 on Monday

Pop-rock band **Mojo** takes the stage tonight at **Riverside Live House** (西門紅樓展演館). Tomorrow the venue hosts pop singer **Z-Chen** (張智成). No shows are scheduled for Sunday as of press time. On Thursday it's garage rockers **Mary See The Future** and **Picks** (痞客四).

- 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
- Shows start at 8:30pm
- Admission is NT\$500 tonight and tomorrow and NT\$400 on Thursday. Tickets can purchased online through www.riverside.com.tw/livehouse or tickets.books.com.tw

Tonight **Underworld** (地下社會) hosts Hoklo-singing indie rockers **Windmill** (風車坊) and indie-pop band **The Shine & Shine & Shine & Shine**. Tomorrow expat retro rockers **The Deadly Vibes** share the bill with another expat band, the **Okay Cars** [see story above]. On Wednesday it's **XOXOXO** (咪咪咪) and **Alphy**.

- 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
- Music shows run from 9:30pm to 11:30pm on Fridays and Saturdays and 9pm to 11pm on Wednesdays. Underworld is open daily from 9pm, closed on Mondays. Happy hour on Tuesdays and Thursdays before midnight
- Entrance for music shows is NT\$300 on Fridays and Saturdays, which includes one drink, and NT\$100 on Wednesdays

Pianist **Hsu Yu-ying** (許郁瑛) and friends perform tonight at **Sappho de Base**, the late-night lounge bar and hangout for musicians from Taipei's jazz and blues scene. Performing tomorrow are Taipei-based drummer **Ed Schaefer** and his band. On Tuesday it's **Yohei Jazz Trio**. Wednesday is an evening of "underground tapping" by **Danceworks** (舞工場舞團). On Thursday trumpeter **Adam MacBlane** performs with his trio.

- 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
- All music shows begin at 10pm, except for Wednesday, when shows begin at 9:30pm
- Entrance is NT\$100 tonight and tomorrow, free on other nights

EZ5 Live House hosts Mando-pop singers backed by a live band every night. Highlights for the week ahead include Mando-pop songstress **Julia Peng** (彭佳慧) on Tuesday, renowned Aboriginal female singer **Samingad** (紀曉君) on Thursday, and male crooner **Shin Lung** (辛隆), who performs every Saturday. [See story on Page 13.]

- 211, Anhe Rd Sec 2, Taipei City (台北市安和路二段211號). Tel: (02) 2738-3995. On the Net: visit 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

Tonight **Roxy Roots** hosts **Adoga** (阿逗仔), an expat band that prides itself on performing covers of Western hard rock songs as well as Chinese and Taiwanese rock classics. Tomorrow it's disco funk and acid jazz with **Electric Message** and pop-ska group **Pops Candy** (跳跳糖).

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

The Wall (這牆) programs regular live rock shows at Kaohsiung's **Pier 2 Arts Center** (高雄駁二藝術特區). Tonight features Japanese indie rock band **Tonic**, with local bands **Silverbus** (銀巴士) and **Orange Doll** (橘娃娃). Mando-pop singer **Princess Ai** (戴愛玲) performs tomorrow.

- 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, www.thewall.com.tw
- Shows start at 7:30pm
- Admission is NT\$300 tonight and NT\$600 tomorrow

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

- 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
- Minimum charge of one drink on Fridays (dancers receive a free drink coupon). On Saturdays the minimum charge is NT\$300

Event

The **Chinese-Taipei Ice Hockey League** is offering summer ice-skating and hockey workshops at Taipei Arena Ice Land (台北小巨蛋副館冰上樂園) every Saturday and Sunday through Aug. 29 from 9am to 11am in conjunction with ASN (All Sports Network) Taiwan. Admission is free, there are no age restrictions, and necessary equipment will be provided, but reservations are necessary. To reserve a space, call Portico Media at (02) 2701-9901, leave your name and phone number, the date you wish to attend, the number of tickets needed (limit four per household) and indicate which workshop (ice-skating or hockey) you want to participate in. Tickets can be picked up on the scheduled day at the ASN Taiwan booth in the Max Sports store on the first floor of Taipei Arena (台北小巨蛋).

- Taipei Arena Ice Land (台北小巨蛋副館冰上樂園) at 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)
- 9am to 11am every Saturday and Sunday through Aug. 29
- On the Net: www.cihl.com.tw, www.taipeiarena.org.tw/web/w06/w0601.aspx



THE VINYL WORD

BY QUEEN BEE



Christian Schwanz, putting his best bare foot forward.

PHOTO COURTESY OF JEFF LIM

A couple of hipster DJs are hitting these shores this weekend: **Steve Aoki** in Taipei (tonight at Luxy) and **Christian Schwanz** (aka Cee) in Kaohsiung (tomorrow). The former is a darling of the US indie dance music scene and the latter a pioneer in Berlin and Vienna's underground club circuits who promotes "barefoot music," now lives in Malaysia and doesn't stand reporters up.

Vinyl Word: You grew up in East Germany. What was the music scene like then?

Christian Schwanz: When the Berlin Wall came down I was 14. But I still remember quite well how the music scene was organized before the world opened up for us. My elder brother always made sure I got some good stuff to check out. The scene itself was small and intimate and everybody knew everybody else. There was one East German radio station that tried to push the boundaries by playing not just the usual. The station was called DT64. I used to listen to a lot of indie music; only after the wall came down did I hear reggae for the first time. When I was 16, I started playing bass guitar and joined the school band. We really believed in our sound and out of that first band we developed the band Microfish, which actually released a 12-inch many years later with ... Sonar Kollektiv. That was when I was 20 ... Around that time I also joined the Al-Haca Soundsystem and after joining them I started producing for the sound system. Things grew and grew and grew.

VW: Are you still with Al-Haca?

CS: Actually Al-Haca turned from a sound system crew into a production unit and band and after releasing three albums with Al-Haca, the band collective ... stopped existing. But the cool thing is the sound system just got back together and I will actually re-release the first album in Japan very soon. So Al-Haca is back again as a sound system ... I now focus on my solo shows plus Barefoot Asia Sound System.

VW: Do you have other jobs besides deejaying?

CS: I am still connected with *Vice* magazine in Europe and I do creative marketing stuff with a few cool people. I also started doing the artist bookings for a chain of bars and smaller clubs in Kuala Lumpur. Guess I am a busy man.

VW: What's "barefoot music" about?

CS: Barefoot is a way of life. Barefoot is music and so much more. It's the heartbeat. Sometimes slow and deep, sometimes fast and up. We never knew how to call our music and names became so unsexy: Futurebassragga-dancehallgltch ... what? And the name "eclectic" sounds very clinical. So barefoot is bass-heavy and versatile like our music. It's a global growing fungus.

VW: Besides the music, what is essential in a barefoot party?

CS: Open-minded, fun-loving, barefoot people and some good drinks. Big bass speakers. That's it.

VW: You recently started Barefoot Asia Sound System. How's that going? Did you find it harder to promote underground music to Asian audiences?

CS: There is no general Asian audience. Every place is different. I have been to quite a few countries in the region now and they are all special, you know? But yes, feedback is great. It's fun to start new things here. You gotta love it.

From 10pm to 7am tomorrow at the Brickyard, B1, 507 Jhongshan 2nd Rd, Kaohsiung City (高雄市中二路507號B1). Admission is NT\$350 (guys) and NT\$150 (girls).

UPCOMING

BY HO YI

Stephen Kijak, *Stones in Exile*.

PHOTO COURTESY OF SPOT — TAIPEI FILM HOUSE

Pablo Picasso, the Rolling Stones and Bill Viola are among the legends featured in the latest POP Cinema program at Spot — Taipei Film House (光點—台北之家). Entitled *Impure* in reference to cinema's hybrid origins as the seventh art, the festival looks at different forms of art. Hard-core rockers won't want to miss *Stones in Exile* (2010), a film that documents the intoxicating spring of 1971 when the Rolling Stones recorded *Exile on Main Street* in southern France. Also on the lineup are *Radio On* (1980), a road movie that captures the post-punk movement in late-1970s Britain; *Bill Viola: The Eye of the Heart* (2003), which delves into the life of one of

the world's most accomplished living artists; and *The Mystery of Picasso* (1956), a film that captures the then 75-year-old master creating 20 art works right in front of the camera and was declared a national treasure by the French government in 1984.

- POP Cinema — Impure (國民戲院+藝穗形態), today to Aug. 27 at Spot — Taipei Film House; Aug. 21 to Aug. 31 at Kaohsiung Municipal Film Archive (高雄市電影圖書館); Sept. 3 to Sept. 9 at Taichung Wonderful Cinema (台中萬代福影城)
- Tickets are NT\$170 for Spot members and NT\$200 for non-members. Screenings in Taichung and Kaohsiung are free
- On the Net: www.twfilm.org/impure