



The human body in all its many forms is the focus of Body Song, the new installment of the POP Cinema program.

PHOTO COURTESY OF SPOT

From Greek statues to athletes in the Olympics, the human body is more often than not represented in a manner that is aesthetically pleasing in form and flawless in functionality. But what if it is less than perfect? What was it like before it was tamed by language and etiquette?

Body Song, the latest installment in the POP Cinema (國民戲院) program, takes these questions as the starting point in its observation of the body, which is both the eternal motif in our aesthetics-obsessed society, while also subject to censure, taboo and suppression.

In *Balkan Baroque* and *Orlan*: *Carnal Art*, the body's ugliness and imperfection is manifested through the disturbing arts of Orlan and Marina Abramovic, two heirs of the Vienna Actionism, a short movement in the 1960s best known for its bodily transgression and violence. Abramovic self-mutilates with needles and knives in *Balkan Baroque*, and in *Orlan*: *Carnal Art*, Orlan uses her body as the raw material of her art as she undergoes a series of physical alterations through plastic surgery.

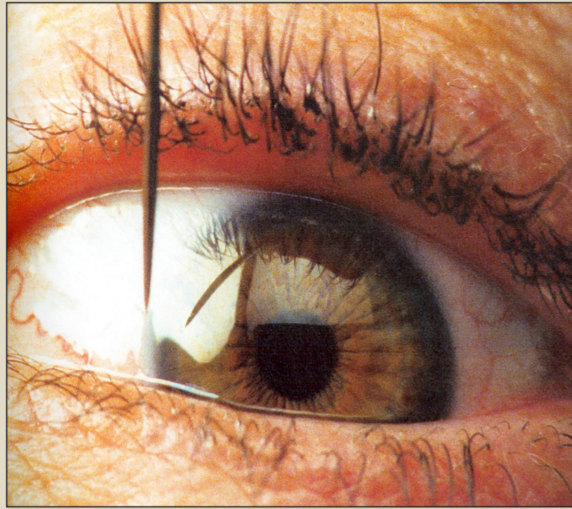
Treated as something grotesque that needs to be concealed and quarantined, the diseased body is the focal point in *Trying to Kiss the Moon*, an autobiographical film by experimental and feature filmmaker Stephen Dwoskin composed of home videos, unfinished works and edit-outs. Having been wheelchair-bound since a bout with polio rendered him paralyzed at age 7, Dwoskin takes the abnormal body as the subject of his film, with each zoom expressing an extension of his desire toward women.

"In Dwoskin's film we see a desire to watch, but this is always interrupted and suspended. This is why his works were used by Laura Mulvey for her study on the male gaze," festival curator Wang Pai-chang (王派章) said.

The compilation of video works by Donigan Cumming takes an intimate look at the body that is aged, unsightly and deteriorated, as opposed to the youthful and litesome body worshiped by the mainstream society. The often intrusive and manipulative approach Cumming adopts to documenting ailing and elderly men and women raises questions about the ethics of documentary filmmaking, yet it is exactly through the director's intimacy with the people he documents that audiences can come closer to a realm so private and real that it is rarely seen by the outside world.

## Carne Carnival

From 'Last Tango in Paris' to Tod Browning's 'Freaks,' Body Song puts together 26 films focusing on the human body in all of its imperfect glory



The body is an ambiguous subject in mainstream cinema. It's taboo and desired at the same time. To curator Wang, Bernardo Bertolucci's *Last Tango in Paris* and *Lolita* by Stanley Kubrick are not about the erotic but the corporeal, a longing for a flawless carnal form to which we, with a civilized and tamed body, can never return.

Like Werner Herzog's *Even Dwarves Started Small*, *Freaks* presents an unfamiliar world of the dwarf,

Siamese twins and other circus freaks. A popular genre director in Hollywood, Tod Browning had wanted to mark another high point in his career with this film, but the candid display of the deformed bodies in *Freaks* caused such controversy on its release that it was subsequently banned in the UK for 30 years.

In Fernando Arrabal's *Long Live Death* and Carmelo Bene's *Our Lady of the Turks*, the narrative is carried forward through the language of the body rather than that of words. A leading Spanish surrealist, Arrabal abandons narrative conventions and chooses to tell the story through what the body represses and repels in his debut feature centered on the themes of youth, sex, crime and punishment.

A heavyweight in the contemporary theater in Italy, director Bene again forsakes words in *Our Lady of the Turks* to create a world where people scream, twitch and moan, where the body is a vehicle of emotions and thoughts, and absolute liberation is made possible through a body that is twisted, deformed and out of control.

Commissioned by the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia in Spain, *Military Court and Prison* (軍法局) by Taiwanese contemporary artist Chen Chieh-jen (陳界仁) is a 35mm film about the ghosts that linger in political prisons. Festival curator Wang says the film is Chen's most abstract exposition on the body, a recurrent motif in his art, where reality, memory, senses and emotions mingle.

"To me, Chen's works are something that artists in the West can never make. They (Chen's films) are directed inward, taking the spectator into a state of hypnosis in which we see what we think, not the thing we 'really' see on the screen," Wang said.

— HO YI

### PERFORMANCE NOTES:

**WHAT:** Body Song film festival

**WHEN:** Today through Sept. 26

**WHERE:** SPOT Taipei Film House (台北之家·光點電影院), 18, Zhongshan N Rd Sec 2, Taipei City (台北市中山北路二段18號)

**Tickets:** NT\$170 for members and NT\$200 for non-members; available through NTCH ticket outlets or online at [www.artstick.com.tw](http://www.artstick.com.tw)

**ON THE NET:** [www.twfilm.org/bodysong](http://www.twfilm.org/bodysong)

## EVENTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Tonight at **VU Live House** is the Dance Like Nails Electro Party with **No Tune-DJ Sessions**. Tomorrow is the Vertigo Party with the **Taimaica Soundsystem**, one of Taiwan's foremost homegrown reggae and dub outfits.

► B1, 77 Wuchang St, Taipei City (台北市武昌街二段77號B1). Call (02) 2314-1868 for more information  
► Shows begin at 10pm  
► NT\$400, includes one free drink

Appearing tonight at **Tone 56 Live Bar** is the **Rubber Band**, which plays rock, pop, and dance music. The group plays every Friday. Tomorrow it's house band **Loaded**, which plays everything from "rock classics to today's hits." This Sunday features **Soma**, a Taipei cover band that plays contemporary rock and pop from the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s.  
► 1F, 56, Minquan E Rd Sec 3, Taipei City (台北市民權東路三段56號1樓), near the corner of Fuxing North (復興北路) and Minquan East roads (民權東路). Call (02) 2517-3869 for more information  
► Music shows go from 9:30pm to 12:30pm tonight and tomorrow, and 7:30pm to 9:30pm on Sunday  
► No entrance fee

Every Wednesday night at the **Cosmopolitan Grill** there's a blues open mic held by the **Blues Society on Taiwan** and hosted by Torch Pratt. All are welcome to bring their instruments and sit in on guitar, bass, or drums.  
► 1F, 218 Changchun Rd, Taipei City (台北市長春路218號1樓). Call (02)

2508-0304 or visit [www.cosmo.com.tw](http://www.cosmo.com.tw) for more information  
► 8pm to 11pm every Wednesday  
► Free admission

### Exhibitions

**The Unconscious Voyage (無意識航行)**. The debut solo exhibition by Chen Wan-jen (陳萬仁) explores what is real and fictional about imagery through a mosaic of daily images from screens and monitors.  
► AKI Gallery (也趣), 141 Minzu W Rd, Taipei City (台北市民族西路141號). Open Tuesdays through Sundays from 12pm to 6:30pm. Call (02) 2599-1171 for more information  
► Until tomorrow

**Meissen in Taiwan (轉舞麟「千年麥森 璀璨國華」水彩畫個展)**. The series of water color paintings details contemporary artist Han Wu-lion's (韓舞麟) traveling experience to Meissen, a medieval town famed for its porcelain in Germany, in 2006.  
► German Cultural Center Taipei (台北德國文化中心), 12F, 20, Hopping W Rd Sec 1, Taipei City (台北市和平西路一段20號12樓). Open Mondays through Fridays from 1pm to 8pm. Call (02) 2365-7294 for more information  
► Until Sept. 25

**Solo Exhibition by Steven Liang (舞動 — 梁志偉個展)**. The exhibition features more than 20 works by contemporary glass artist Steven Liang.  
► Tittot Glass Museum (嬌園水晶博物館), 16, Ln 515, Zhongyang N Rd,

Taipei City (台北市中央北路四段515巷16號). Open Tuesdays to Sundays from 9am to 5pm. Call 2895-8861 for more information  
► Until Oct. 12

**Frozen Rotation — Exhibition by Benjamin Ducroz and Shih Yi-shan (旋轉自凍 — 班傑明杜可洛斯與施懿珊雙個展)**. Benjamin Ducroz excels in stop-motion animation. Shih Yi-shan favors mechanical installation. What the two artists have in common is that they both deal with the mutual dependence between human beings and technology and their ironic and witty views on the vulnerability of technological media.  
► National Taiwan Museum of Fine Arts (國立台灣美術館), 2, Wuchuan W Rd Sec 1, Taichung City (台中市五權西路一段2號). Open Tuesdays through Sundays from 9am to 5pm. Call (04) 2372-3552 for more information  
► Until Nov. 16

**Footprint Into the Future (未來的軌跡 — 台灣當代藝術展)**. Curated by Julia Draganovic, artistic director of Pan Palazzo delle Arti Napoli, the exhibition returns from its tour in Italy, which ran from November of last year to this April. It introduced the work of 12 Taiwanese contemporary artists to Italian audiences.  
► Kaohsiung Museum of Fine Arts (高雄市立美術館), 20 Meishukuan Rd, Kusan Dist, Kaohsiung City (高雄區鼓山區美術館路20號). Open Tuesdays through Sundays from 9am to 5pm. Call (07) 555-0331 for more information  
► From tomorrow to Nov. 9

## Highlight

The Zen drumming group U-Theater, which celebrated its 20th anniversary this year, premieres its latest production at Taichung's Chungshan Hall this weekend, kicking off a four-city tour that will take it to Hsinchu next weekend, the National Theatre in Taipei for five performances beginning Sept. 18, and finally Tainan on Sept. 27.

**The Walk** was inspired by the group's experiences during their *yun jiao* (雲腳) traipse around Taiwan this spring, when they racked up some pretty impressive numbers: 50 days on the road, 100 townships, 1,200km, and more than a score of performances along the way. *Yun jiao* basically means to walk with a clear mind. It's a form of meditation on the move, and the round-the-island pilgrimage was the company's longest to date. *The Walk* features some carefully choreographed segments where



U-Theater dancers take drumming to new heights in *The Walk*. PHOTO COURTESY OF U-THEATER

the performers move up, down and across the stage, beating small drums carried in their left arms in formations as complex as a US university's marching band's half-time performance. Company founder and director Liu Ruo-yu (劉若瑜) said the troupe's members were overwhelmed by the kindness of people they met on their journey, and the offers of food, drink and lodging they

received, and this is reflected in their new production.

— DIANE BAKER

► U-Theater, The Walk  
► Tomorrow at 7:30pm and Sunday at 2:30pm, Taichung Chungshan Hall (台中市中山堂), 98 Hsuehshi Rd, Taichung City (台中市學士路98號)  
► From NT\$400 to NT\$2,500  
► [www.artstick.com.tw](http://www.artstick.com.tw) or call 02-3393-9888



Tomorrow sees one of the biggest breaks acts in the world, the UK's Plump DJs, returning to Taiwan to help begin celebrations for Luxy's fifth anniversary. It is just over five years since nu skool breakfast legend **Danny McMillan** played at 2nd Floor in one of Taiwan's first major international breaks nights.

Although the straight-up 4/4 house beat has dominated the electronica scene for much of the last few years, breaks, which use a non-straight 4/4 and originally come from the looping of the breakdown of two of the same records, have reclaimed some of the more important party time. Since the Plump DJs, **Lee Rous** and **Andy Gardner**, are at the forefront of this movement, the Vinyl Word has been digging around to find out a little more on the guys and what lies in store for tomorrow night.

Named after a UK top-shelf magazine called *Plumpers* that celebrates the rounder female form, Rous and Gardner have come a long way since their early jobs working in a cardboard box factory and waiting tables in a Berni Inn, respectively. Over the last decade Plump DJs have become pioneers of the breakfast electronica scene (especially nu skool with it's stronger, darker basslines), and have secured a quarterly residency at Fabric in London and the headline slot at We Love Sundays at Space in Ibiza, a first for a breakfast act.

During the last three years, on Taiwan turf, they played at Monster Massive at the Taipei World Trade Center in 2006 and then had to cancel a trip to Luxy in October last year due a forced plane landing when a woman went into labor en route from Russia to Taiwan. Now Rous and Gardner are back with a brand new technical setup. For this tour the boys have ditched playing back-to-back in favor of playing together with four Pioneer CDJs to allow themselves more creativity and options. Word is they will be including re-edits from their recently released album *Headtrash*, which came out to some very favorable reviews on June 1.

With a nod to more radio play, Plump DJs' new sound on *Headtrash* is a little more mainstream than past endeavors. The album contains more vocals than on any previous release but still retains much of what makes them one of the most progressive and innovative duos around. Layered throughout the album are sharp drum loops, laser blasts, dark synths, big dirty bass and some serious build. *Snakes Eyes*, a grubby monster of a track, has been doing the rounds for some time now in many a DJ's bag, and vocals from **Niarra, Sharlene Hector** and **Jermaine Jackson** throughout allow more room to maneuver with melody and soul.

Although many believe breakbeat can be difficult to dance to because of its syncopated rhythm, this album dispels some of those ideas and is a positive sign of what may come tomorrow night.

For an interesting and in-depth documentary on the origins of breakbeat and how a little known b-side by The Winstons called *Amen, Brother* from 1969 caused all the fuss, check out "Worlds Most Important 6-sec Drum Loop" on YouTube.

Plump DJs spin tonight at Luxy, 5F, 201, Zhongxiao E Rd Sec 4, Taipei City (台北市忠孝東路四段201號5樓). Entrance is NT\$600 with two drinks before 11pm, or NT\$900 after with two drinks. Call (02) 2772-1000, or 0955-904-600 for reservations (English service available). Web site: [www.luxy-taipei.com](http://www.luxy-taipei.com); [www.plumpdjs.co.uk](http://www.plumpdjs.co.uk) and [www.myspace.com/plumpdjs](http://www.myspace.com/plumpdjs).

— TOM LEEMING

## RESTAURANTS

### Hapa Yakiniku Izakaya Bar

**Address:** 213, Anhe Rd Sec 2, Taipei City (台北市安和路二段213號)  
**Telephone:** (02) 2739-8668  
**Open:** Fridays and Saturdays from 6pm to 3am; Sundays through Thursdays from 6pm to 3am  
**Average meal:** NT\$900  
**Details:** Chinese menu with some English; credit cards accepted

Hapa Yakiniku Izakaya Bar is a cross between a traditional Japanese barbecue restaurant and sophisticated lounge. Hapa, a Hawaiian word that usually refers to people of mixed-race ancestry, refers to the fusion; yakiniku means grilled meat, while izakaya is the Japanese version of a tapas bar.

The interior is hip and stylish, with sleek black floors, ambient lighting, ball-chain curtains and flowers artfully arranged in display cases instead of vases. Hapa works as a nightclub because, unlike most yakiniku restaurants, the grilling is done in a kitchen. That means patrons can pop in for drinks and a meal and continue to nearby nightspots on Anhe Road with their clothes and hair mercifully free of the scent of barbecue.

As befits an izakaya, portions at Hapa are small and several different varieties of grilled meat and seafood are meant to be ordered and shared by a table. The observant wait staff certainly keeps your orders coming at a reasonable, but not overwhelming, pace. Food can be accompanied by a cocktail, glass of wine or sake from Hapa's well-appointed bar. We ordered a carafe of sake (白瀧上善如水吟醸, NT\$600).

Not all of the food at Hapa is grilled — we started with a sashimi combination (綜合四品, NT\$360) of the sushi bar that dominates the middle of the restaurant. The four types of fish — fluke, tuna, salmon and squid — were presented on a bed of crushed ice and accessorized with sprigs of flower buds and bright green leaves that highlighted the colors of the sashimi, which tasted fresh (Hapa keeps its meat and other ingredients in cold storage, not a freezer). Standouts included the tuna and the slices of squid, which were sweeter and firmer than any other squid sashimi that I've tasted before.

Barbecued meats can be ordered separately in small plates from the extensive menu or in combinations if you aren't up to combating the paradox of choice. The first plate of grilled meat to arrive at our table was a combination of four cuts of beef (老超領牛肉綜合四品, NT\$470), which were marinated, sprinkled with sesame seeds and grilled until medium rare. The cuts were all satisfyingly tasty and juicy, but we especially enjoyed the plump cubes of filet mignon and savory boneless ribs.

In contrast, I thought that our plate of thinly sliced, salted boneless duck (櫻桃合鴨肉椒鹽, NT\$180) was a little dry, at least when compared to the succulence of the grilled beef, but the flavor of the meat was pleasantly robust and gamy, a surprising and happy change from some of the blander (almost turkey-like) duck meat we've eaten before. We rounded off our meal with two seafood plates, the salted squid with garlic butter (軟絲蒜味, NT\$220) and salted jumbo shrimp (大華蝦, NT\$200). The pieces of squid were satisfyingly chewy and the garlic butter nicely subtle, but the dish was not especially memorable. The sweetness of the jumbo shrimp, complimented by a light dusting of salt and pepper and a spritz of lime juice, made a greater impression.

— CATHERINE SHU

### Yogurt Bar

**Address:** 135-1 Yenchi St, Taipei City (台北市延吉街135號之1)  
**Telephone:** (02) 8772-3839  
**Open:** 11:30am to 9:30pm Mondays through Saturdays; 4:30pm to 9:30pm on Sundays  
**Average meal:** NT\$75 to NT\$110  
**Details:** Self-service

It sounds like a typical Friday night in Taipei: my friends and I decide to meet at the bar after work. I arrive first, grab a medium cup and start swirling passion fruit-flavored frozen yogurt into it. Now a swirl of strawberry, and as my friend Lesley comes into the bar I call out to her, "hey look, they have kiwi today!"

I deliberate between kiwi and lychee and decide to add a dollop of both. Why not? It's Friday!

At the counter I add Captain Crunch cereal, pass on the gummy bears and top the whole thing off with fresh mango, kiwi and berries. I plop it on the scale, and a smiling girl tells me that it comes to NT\$90. Our friend Lisa arrives, choosing a small cup, and Lesley and I sit outside on white plastic chairs to wait for her. She comes out, hops onto the swing made from a surfboard, and we chat about our week between mouthfuls of the sweet, fresh, cold dessert.

Young entrepreneurs Alex Yen (顏健博), Jennifer Chou (周琬臻) and Sandy Hsieh (謝均潔) noticed the trend while attending university in California and decided to try out a yogurt bar in Taipei. "I think Taiwanese, especially the young people are willing to try new stuff," Yen says. "I have a lot of faith in our product. It's really yummy."

They are initially attracting hip young girls — who knew the resurgence of 1980s pop culture would include frozen yogurt and gummy bears? As with leggings, there have been definite improvements: more variety, better-quality materials and different sizes to choose from. Today's frozen yogurt is smooth and tart, without the syrupy, chalky texture of yesteryears'.

It's also quite low-calorie. Yen, who is the president of the National Taiwan University Foreign Student's Association, studies biochemical science and technology here, so he took a sample down to the lab. He says the original-flavor yogurt is only 46 calories per 100g. He also detected probiotic cultures in the mix they use, which aids digestion of lactose, and are well known for their health benefits.

"Some old ladies have come," says Yeh, giggling, "and they told me when you get old you get constipated, but the yogurt really helps!" He raises his eyebrows triumphantly. "Even muscle guys come here after they work out for a huge cup."

Since I discovered the place after it opened on Aug. 11, I have been there six times. It is not in my neighborhood. I'll be riding my bike home from work, and, like any addiction, it starts serenading me. The passion fruit, with its light sweet start and tart aftertaste, is my favorite flavor so far. They change the flavors frequently by adding different concentrated fruit juices to the original mix.

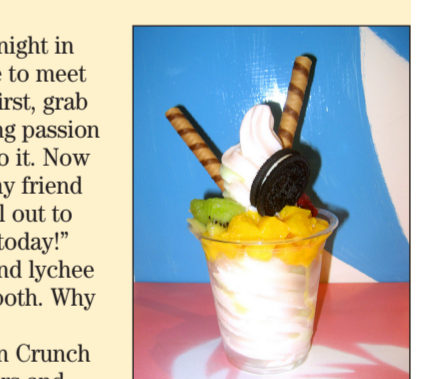
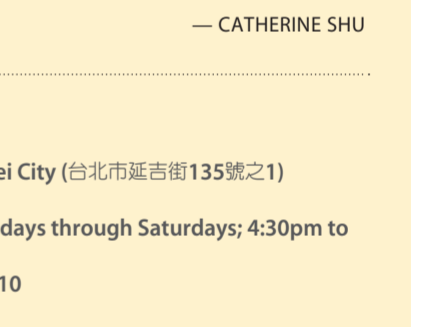
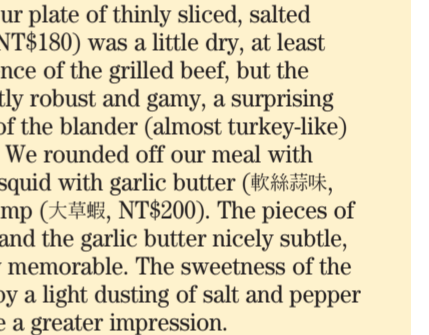
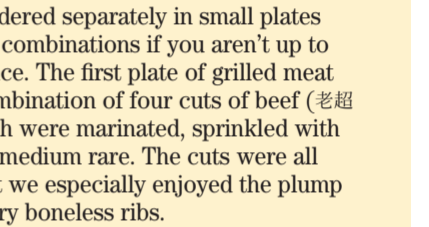
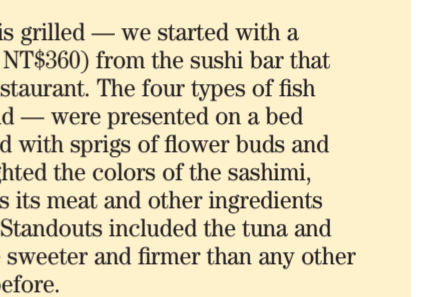
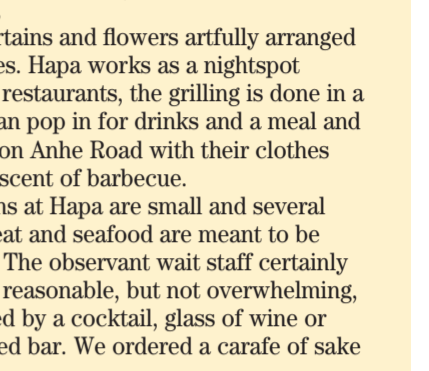
Toppings include cereal, graham crackers, chocolate covered raisins, gummy bears, Oreo cookies and chocolate chips. You can also add fresh fruit: mango, kiwi, frozen berries. And there are plans to add waffles to the menu in winter.

It's delicious, low-calorie, low fat and, best of all, there's no hangover.

— ALITA RICKARDS



Hapa puts more emphasis on presentation than quantity. PHOTO: CATHERINE SHU, TAIPEI TIMES



At Yogurt Bar, it's sweet treats without the guilt. PHOTO: ALITA RICKARDS

