

Modern medleys



Wei Hai-ming is always up for the challenge.

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE WEI HAI-MING BEIJING OPERA FOUNDATION

It is generally regarded as a good thing when artists step out of their comfort zone, pushing themselves in new directions and expanding their expressive range. Chinese opera diva Wei Hai-ming (魏海敏) has never shirked this task, and ever since her starring role in Contemporary Legend Theater's (當代傳奇劇場) *Media* back in 1991, she has appeared in numerous unconventional works, most recently in *Orlando*, the high-profile cooperation with theater director Robert Wilson.

With *Fantasia, Nostalgia, Aria Variata* (花月憶時夢), Wei will plunge into the realm of pop music, though this is pop music in its very broadest definition, incorporating the Shanghai jazz club music of the 1920s and 1930s, and the transition from campus songs to rock music. She will be supported by a group of outstanding local musicians drawn from both Western symphonic and Chinese classical traditions. Nothing is as you'd expect it, and this, it would seem, is exactly what Wei wants.

Wei first worked together with a Western classical orchestra on a major show in 2007 when she sang Beijing opera accompanied by the National Taiwan Symphony Orchestra (國立台灣交響樂團) in *New Sounds from Beijing Opera* (京劇新韻). "I became fascinated by the idea of working together with a [Western] orchestra, as it totally changed the effect of the operatic singing. The sounds of Beijing opera can still be very contemporary and can forge links to a young audience... that's why it is necessary for a singer to explore new ways of expression. That's why I've decided to embark on this new project," Wei said.

At a press conference last Wednesday, Wei emphasized that she was an artist of the 21st century who loved many contemporary works and felt no compulsion to constrain herself to ancient traditions. "The new operas of Mei Lanfang (梅蘭芳) were the pop music of their day," she said, referring to the founder of the

PERFORMANCE NOTES:

WHAT: Wei Hai-ming, *Fantasia, Nostalgia, Aria Variata*

WHERE AND WHEN: Tomorrow at Taichung's Chungshan Hall (台中市中山堂), 98 Syuehsieh Rd, Taichung City (台中市學士路98號); May 16 at Sun Yat-sen Memorial Hall (台北國父紀念館), 505, Renai Rd Sec 4, Taipei City (台北市仁愛路四段505號2樓). A third concert will be held in Tainan on May 29. All concerts start at 7:30pm

ADMISSION: NT\$500 to NT\$2,500, available through NTCH ticketing or online at www.artsticket.com.tw

school of Beijing opera to which she primarily belongs.

Certainly Wei has brought her own very unique style to interpretations of popular Chinese pop favorites. In a rendition of *Love Is Over* (是否), a well-known romantic ballad made popular by early Taiwanese rocker Julie Su (蘇芮), Wei's fiercely precise diction and dramatic presentation, along with the unconventional support of violin, piano and harp, made something very unusual of the familiar song. It brings to mind a similar disjunction of seeing Meryl Streep singing ABBA in *Mama Mia!*

Wei has brought her musical selection right up to date with Jay Chou's (周杰倫) *Chrysanthemum Terrace* (菊花台), the theme song from *Curse of the Golden Flower* (滿城盡帶黃金甲, 2006). Wei said that it was important to touch on such modern pop favorites to appeal to younger audiences.

Wei admitted that venturing into pop music, with its singing style that differs significantly from that of Beijing opera, had been a great challenge. But Wei has never been much bothered by boundaries. Even within the world of Beijing opera, she is noted for her willingness to perform in the style of other schools, something that is quite rare for an art form that defines its artists by its particular styles.

While there is no doubt that Wei is a prodigious vocal artist, the question inevitably arises as to whether she can tackle pop musicians on their home turf. Will this be just a minor curiosity rather like opera diva Montserrat Caballe singing duets with Freddie Mercury, or something more enduring? Wei believes she is breaking new ground and suggests that she may make such ventures into pop music an annual event.



Eben Pretorius, left, and Matt Chisholm are Genetically Modified Beats. PHOTO COURTESY OF GMB

This weekend offers a chance to get away from the traffic and pollution of the city without having to lose out on the party scene. Perpetual Motion's Riverbush this year takes place from 6pm tomorrow to 8am on Sunday in Sansia Township, Taipei County, with a rocking roster of DJs.

It's worthwhile arriving at the party site early tomorrow afternoon as half of the experience includes swimming in the river and messing around on inner tubes. A water volleyball game and some rafts will be set up, but attendees are encouraged to bring their own inflatables. Come nightfall, tents can be set up for NT\$200 each.

On the bill is **Marcus Aurelius**, a veteran player who focuses on hip-hop and funk, the **Sinister Sound Syndicate**, which infuses a primarily electro set with fidget house, indie dance, nu disco and disco punk, and **Edify**, who fuses electro dance, B-more and deep bass with pop hooks.

Also playing is Earworm co-founder **BB**, who plays an eclectic mix of acid house, funk, indie dance and nu disco, and **V-Dub**, who mashes up of electronica, grunge-fidget and 1980s indie rock.

Dr Lipz joins forces with fellow bandmate **Subtle** to provide hip-hop, drum 'n' bass, breaks and a scratch attack.

The list is rounded out with three of my top-rated acts of the year: **Bounce Girlz**, **Eat Me! Black Hole!** and **Genetically Modified Beats**.

Bounce Girlz rock crowds with fresh and funky electro house, tribal house and dubstep. Though the group made a name for itself bringing acts like **Designer Drugs** and **Shitdisco** to Taiwan, these girls are a riot on the decks. As they say, "Prepare to bounce!"

Eccentrically coiffed duo **Eat Me! Black Hole!** has been ripping up the electro scene. At the Peaches concert on April 25 ago they had the crowd dancing in a frenzy and were equally well-received at Spring Scream.

The music Genetically Modified Beats throws down is awesome and original. They use Ableton Live and an "array of Midi devices" to "create, modify, and play with a living, moving electronic soundscape," said **Eben Pretorius**, one half of the duo. "We bring our studio, which we literally live in, to the stage," he said. "Then we use everything we can get our hands on to create a new spin on each bit of audio we present the crowd with."

Tickets are NT\$800 at the door (presenting a flyer will get you NT\$200 off). NT\$600 advance tickets are available at both Toasterias.

The venue is about 25km from Yongning MRT Station (捷運永寧站). Shuttle buses run hourly from exit No. 1 of the station, starting at noon tomorrow. A service also runs to the site directly from The Wall (這牆) in Taipei. For driving directions and bus information visit www.facebook.com/#/event.php?eid=11454967523728&ref=ts or perpetualmotiontaipei.blogspot.com.

EVENTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Theater

Co-organized by the Cultural Bureau in Shannxi Province (陝西省文化廳) and Taipei Arts Promotion Association (台北市文化藝術促進協會), **Shannxi Folk Arts Fair** (陝西民間藝術園遊會) features a series of exhibitions, performances, workshops, tea and food appreciation events aimed at introducing Taipei residents to various folk arts and culture in the Chinese province. Performances by art groups from Shannxi include shadow puppetry, mask dance, traditional opera and folk singing.

- Huashan 1914 Creative Park (華山1914), Center Four Hall (中四館) and Distillation Room (蒸餾室), 1, Bade Rd Sec 1, Taipei City (台北市八德路一段1號). On the Net: tw.myblog.yahoo.com/taipei_tapa
- Today to Sunday from 10am to 10pm
- No admission fee

EX-Theatre Asia's (EX-亞洲劇團) **A True Calling** (假戲真作) explores the blurred boundary between what is real and what is not in everyday life through a story about a guru and an actor. The production is a multi-cultural collaboration between stage director and actor Chongtham Jayanta Meetei from India, Taishin-award winning actor Derrick Wei (魏瑪展) and experimental music band Arcn Templ from Singapore. ■ Bamboo Curtain Studio (竹圍工作室), 39, Ln 88, Jhongjheng E Rd Sec 2, Tamsui, Taipei County (台北縣淡水鎮中正東路二段88巷39號)

- All shows are sold out except for Sunday's 7:30pm performance
- Tickets are NT\$450, available through NTCH ticketing or online at www.artsticket.com.tw

Eclipsed Sun Tale (蝕日譚) is Taiwan Haibizi's (台灣海筆子) latest tent theatrical production that deals with modernity, capitalism and laborers. For the past decade, Taiwan Haibizi has worked in close collaboration with Japanese director and playwright Sakurai Daizo, the foremost advocate of tent theater, a type of left-wing theater that originated in Japan in the late 1960s.

- Chin Tu Farm (勸業農園) inside the former Tucheng Ammunition Warehouse (土城彈藥庫), 42 Heping Rd, Tucheng, Taipei County (台北縣土城市和平路42號). For directions, go to blog.roodo.com/taianhaibizi/archives/12048169.html
- Tonight through Monday at 7:30pm

- Tickets are NT\$450 (NT\$300 for students) at the door

Flux Waves Dance Theater (流浪舞蹈劇場) presents **Stretch Your Wings** (展翅), a contemporary dance piece inspired by the idea of faith. The piece is a collaboration between choreographers Wu Chin-tao (伍錦濤) and Wu Peng-feng (吳朋奉) and Japanese composer Koji Sakurai.

- Experimental Theater, Taipei City
- Tonight at 7:30pm, tomorrow and Sunday at 2:30pm and 7:30pm
- Tickets are NT\$600, available through NTCH ticketing or online at www.artsticket.com.tw

Organized by Representation Theatre (再現劇團), **Go to Hell** (地獄樂園) can best be described as a sort of theme park where visitors can check out live theater and music performances as well as interactive installations and sound pieces at any time of the day before the park closes. All shows and exhibitions at the park are inspired by the idea of hell. For detailed schedules of live performances, go to www.wretch.cc/blog/rpt20080229/12807541.

- Representation Theatre's Arts Factory (再現劇團藝術工場), B1, 43, Nanchang Rd Sec 1, Taipei City (台北市南昌路一段43號B1)
- Tonight from 6pm to 10pm, tomorrow and Sunday from 2pm to 10pm
- Tickets are NT\$100, available through NTCH ticketing or online at www.artsticket.com.tw

Classical music

Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France (法國印象之美—法國廣播愛樂管絃樂團) brings the highly acclaimed orchestra to Taiwan to perform under the baton of conductor Chung Myung-whun. The two concerts at the National Concert Hall (國家音樂廳) will feature different programs. Ravel's *Rapsodie Espagnole* and *La Valse* and his arrangement of Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition* will be performed today, and Ravel's *Rapsodie Espagnole, Piano Concert in G Major* — featuring Roger Muraro on piano — and *Daphnis & Chloe Suites No. 1 & No. 2* tomorrow.

- Today and tomorrow at 7:30pm
- National Concert Hall, Taipei City
- Tickets are NT\$500 to NT\$3,600, available through NTCH ticketing or online at www.artsticket.com.tw
- **Wansha Summer Concert Series**

for Emerging Talent — Li Hsun-chia Piano Recital (瀟灑夏季樂集—未來新秀李訓佳鋼琴獨奏會) will feature young pianist Li Hsun-chia (李訓佳) performing a program that includes Chopin's *Polonaise Op. 40 No. 2*, Rachmaninoff's *Etudes-Tableau Op. 39 No. 9*, Scriabin's *Etude Op. 8 No. 10, 11* and Prokofiev's *Sonata Op. 83*.

- Tomorrow at 7:30pm
- Wansha Classical Music Salon (瀟灑古典音樂沙龍), 12, Alley 16, Ln 167, Dongmen Rd Sec 2, Tainan City (台南市東門路二段167巷16弄12號)
- Tickets are NT\$250, available through NTCH ticketing or online at www.artsticket.com.tw

Love in Chopin: Eric Chen 2010 Piano Recital (愛戀蕭邦—陳冠宇 2010鋼琴獨奏會) see one of Taiwan's best-loved classical pianists performing a program of Chopin.

- Thursday at 7:30pm
- National Recital Hall, Taipei City
- Tickets are NT\$400 to NT\$1,000, available through ERA ticketing or online at www.ticket.com.tw

HIGHLIGHT

BY ALITA RICKARDS

An adult take on Disney's 1940s classic *Fantasia* will take place next Saturday in the form of a massive water park party at Formosa Fun Coast (八仙海岸) in Bali (八里) to celebrate The Loop Productions' 10th anniversary. Expect both bands and DJs, some of whom are *Playboy* bunnies, beer games, fireworks and fire spinners. Women will engage in a wet T-shirt contest and "hot chick boxing," with men showing off their physiques during an event dubbed "Macho Paradise."

The focus will be on more than 30 acts providing music, with big names including (ladies first) 2008 *Playboy* centerfold playmates the Essex Twins and DJ KayJay, who is the official *Playboy* Playmate DJ, as well as hip-hop star Fat Joe. DJ Craze, Treasure Fingers and DJ Dan will be joined by local acts including DJs Mykal, Xuan, J-Six and Reazon, along with Taiwan's DMC turntablist solo champion of 2009, DJ Kid. Resident DJs Hooker, Cookie and others join in the lineup. For the full story, including interviews with both performers and the players who make the Loop go round, read next Friday's Vinyl Word.

Contemporary

English pop rock duo **Tears for Fears**, who achieved international fame with their 1985 hit album **Songs From the Big Chair**, appear in Taipei tomorrow night. As of press time, tickets are still available for their concert at the NTU Athletic Stadium (國立台灣大學綜合體育館). Aboriginal folk chantuese **Panai** (巴奈) opens the show.

- NTU Athletic Stadium (國立台灣大學綜合體育館), 1, Roosevelt Rd Sec 4, Taipei City (台北市羅斯福路四段一號)
- Show starts at 7:30pm
- Tickets are NT\$900 to NT\$4,800, available through ERA ticketing outlets or online at www.ticket.com.tw

Legacy Taipei, located in a former warehouse at Huashan 1914 Creative Park (華山1914), hosts top Taiwanese pop performers and international acts. Tomorrow night's show with Mando-pop singer **Yoga Lin** (林育嘉) is



Play on, Playmates.

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE LOOP PRODUCTIONS

- ▶ **Fantasia Waterpark Festival** (The Loop Productions' 10th anniversary)
- ▶ May 15 from noon to midnight at Formosa Fun Coast (八仙海岸), 1-6, Neighborhood 1, Siagu Village, Bali, Taipei County (台北縣八里鄉下厝村1鄰下厝子1之6號). To get there take the MRT to Guandu Station (關渡捷運站), then take the Red No. 22 (紅22) bus directly to the water park
- ▶ Admission is NT\$2,000 at the door, from Luxy or online through www.ticket.com.tw. Presale tickets are no longer available
- ▶ On the Net: www.fantasia.tw

already sold out. On Thursday it's Taitung reggae rockers **Matzka and Di Hot**

- 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 tomorrow and 8:30pm on Thursday
- Tomorrow night's show is sold out, NT\$400 on Thursday. Tickets available through ERA ticketing or online at www.ticket.com.tw or www.legacy.com.tw or at ibon electronics kiosks at 7-Eleven stores

Canadian indie folk band **Ohbijou** appears tonight at **The Wall** (這牆). Alt-rockers **Wavelength** (波光折返) and nu-metal group **Respect** (尊敬樂團) take the stage tomorrow night. On Sunday indie rockers **GreenEyes** (綠色眼睛) perform to promote their new single.

- 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
- Music shows start at 8pm tonight, tomorrow and 8pm on Sunday
- Entrance fee is NT\$900 tonight, NT\$400 tomorrow and NT\$300 on Sunday. Tickets can be purchased online at www.thewall.com.tw or tickets.books.com.tw

Fingerstyle guitarist pair **Woody Woody** performs tonight at **Witch House** (女巫屋). Tomorrow it's Hualien acoustic folk duo **Tom and Huck** (湯姆與哈克). On Thursday female pop singer **Chiang Tao** (姜道) and acoustic rocker **Jih ching-chiang** (日京江) each perform a set.

- 7, Ln 56, Xinsheng 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
- Entrance fee for music shows is NT\$300

Tonight **Riverside Cafe** (河岸留聲) owner and guitarist **Geddy Lin** (林正如) and a cast of veteran musicians perform for the venue's "evening of jazz." Comedic indie rockers **Won Fu** (旺福) play tomorrow night. On Sunday it's pop-rock groups **Joker** and **No Key Band**. 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
- Entrance fee is NT\$400 tonight and NT\$450 tomorrow, NT\$350 on Sunday and NT\$150 on Monday

Folk rocker **Elisa Lin** (林依霖) shares a bill with indie rockers **Red Flower** (紅花樂團) and neo-grunge band **Ground Zero** (放射空間) tonight at **Riverside Live House** (西門紅樓展演廳). Tomorrow the venue hosts Mando-pop singers **Jiwasi Dulan** (吳亦帆) and **Hsu Che-wei** (徐哲緯). On Thursday it's folk rockers **Miss Dessy** and indie-electronica band **Telephone Booth** (電話亭).

- 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 8pm tonight, 8:30pm tomorrow and Thursday
- Entrance fee is NT\$400 tonight, NT\$500 tomorrow and NT\$400 on Thursday. Tickets can be purchased online through www.riverside.com.tw/livehouse or tickets.books.com.tw

Metal bands **Ashen** and **Brain Corrosion** play tonight at **Underworld** (地下紅會). Tomorrow there's a triple bill featuring post-rock-ish group **Sun of Morning** (晨曠光臨), post-punk and baroque pop band **The Tic Tac** and **Posh Inverse** (優雅逆轉). On Wednesday it's blues and rock from expat **Joe Markus** and punk band **My War**.

- 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; NT\$100 on Wednesday

Tonight at **Sappho de Base**, a late night lounge and jazz venue, it's **Olivier Baron**, a French expat trombonist who will be leading a quartet. Tomorrow the venue hosts **Aashti Ensemble** (汎絲路樂團), a group of Macedonian and Taiwanese performing Balkan folk and gypsy

music. **Majam Jazz Quartet** (麻將爵士樂團) plays jazz, fusion, funk and blues on Tuesday. On Wednesday pianist **Jason Hayashi** and his trio take to the stage. On Thursday **Rocky and Friends** preside over an open jam.

- 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
- Music shows begin at 10:30pm tonight and tomorrow, 10pm on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday. Closed on Sundays and Mondays
- Entrance is free

Tonight at **Roxy Roots** Canadian folk singer and former Taiwan resident **Scott Cook** appears with Taichung blues-rock band **Three Day Bender**. Tomorrow expat party favorites **The Money Shot Horns** take to the stage. On Wednesday renowned Japanese free-jazz drummer **Sabu Toyozumi** leads an 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
- Shows start at 10pm
- Entrance is NT\$300 on Fridays and Saturdays (NT\$200 credited toward food and drink)

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