

POP

STOP

COMPILED BY NOAH BUCHAN

The great and good showed off their warm and fuzzy side over the past week for Mother's Day by recounting pithy tales from their youths, throwing special dinners and bestowing cash gifts and designer bags on their moms.

Radio station HitFM got the ball rolling when it invited celebrities to show off photos of themselves with their mothers and reveal what presents they gave.

Selina Jen (任家萱) and **Ella Chen** (陳嘉桦), both members of popular girl group S.H.E, said they would pass on thick red envelopes to their mothers, while **Hebe Tian** (田馥甄), the band's third member, gave her mom a pearl necklace.

The *China Times* reported that actor **Mike He** (賀軍翔), in what could be interpreted as a somewhat Oedipal gesture, says he carries around a photo of his mother because "she is such a beauty." More to the point, he said, the photo serves as a reminder of his youthful days when he ran away from home, an event that caused his mother considerable pain.

He has since made up for this indiscretion with an apartment and parties thrown in his mother's honor.

Meanwhile, actor **Mark Chao** (趙又廷) whipped up a feast for his mother after she told him that eating out was too pricey, according to reports in *China Times* and our sister paper the *Liberty Times*.

Perhaps mom is concerned about the whopping tax bill her son will have to pay this year. The *Liberty Times* revealed that the actor owes NT\$5.2 million in taxes on income of NT\$13 million.

In other Chao news, the newbie actor will announce his co-star for the upcoming movie based on the hit cop show *Black and White* (痞子英雄) at the Cannes Film Festival. Conspicuously absent will be his television co-star and rival **Vic Chou** (周渝民), who declined to be part of the movie franchise citing other obligations.

The rivalry between the two actors began when Chao took top honors in the Best Actor category at last year's Golden Bell Awards (金鐘獎), beating out Chou, who was widely expected to win. Chou's star has gradually waned since then because of alleged bitchy behavior.

While Chao fixed dinner for his mother, singer-songwriter **Yen-j** (嚴爵) traveled to Kaohsiung to act as a proxy for his mother (who was in the US) by giving his grandmother 66

For Calvin Chen, it's the thought that counts.

camerations and taking her out for dinner.

He told the *United Daily News* that he was somewhat of a prima donna in his youth. He said that during a birthday party for his cousin, he ripped to shreds paper plates used for the cake after he felt ignored by the rest of the family — a display that earned him a severe rebuke from his grandmother. Thinking back, Yen said, "It scared me so much that I haven't dared to feel jealousy since."

Singer **Rainie Yang** (楊丞琳) still hasn't found the love of her life, but at least fans still adore her. At an autograph session and concert on Mother's Day, admirers presented her with a cake in the shape of G-cup breasts, a comical allusion to her barely B-cup buds, according to *NOWnews*. She later had a small get together with her mother and sister.

Three members of boy band Fahrenheit (飛輪海) said they feted their mothers early because they had to perform at Fulong (福隆) beach over the weekend, where 1,000 Japanese and Korean fans paid a hefty NT\$50,000 each for a four-day, three-night chance to hobnob with the ambassadors for Tourism Taiwan.

Apple Daily and *China Times* reported that **Jiro Wang** (汪東城) treated his mother to a trip to the Shanghai World Expo while **Aaron Yan** (炎亞綸) said he repaired sour relations with his mother with an NT\$30,000 handbag. Apparently the family bond was fractured after Yan's mother damaged a valuable feng shui trinket. The bag sewed things up nicely. And on the stingier end of the celebrity spectrum, band member **Calvin Chen** (辰亦儒) said he made a long distance call to his mother.



BY DIANE BAKER

DANCE

Taking the show on the road



PHOTO COURTESY OF WCDANCE

Dancer-choreographer Lin Wen-chung (林文中) and his Wcdance troupe are launching their second national tour this weekend in Taipei with *Small Dances* (情歌), Lin's second creation for his two-year old troupe.

Lin is trying something that few of the smaller dance companies in Taiwan do — build up a repertoire so that his productions are not just seen for a few performances in Taipei and then disappear into the ether, lost to dance fans except for a few YouTube clips. So far the plan is to present a new work each year in Taipei, and then take it on tour around the country six months to a year later.

He tried it with his inaugural piece *Small* (小) last fall and it appears to have paid off.

Most smaller companies can't afford to do this both

because of the expense involved in traveling and because the sets and props aren't usually designed to be moved from one theater to another. Lin has gotten around the problems by creating works that are portable. With *Small*, the staging centered on a Plexiglas cube. When the piece premiered at the Crown Theater, those in the front row on the floor were just about 2m away from the cube. When the company took the piece on the road last year, at Wenshan for example, the cube was centered in the middle of the stage, while the audience was much further away.

This shift didn't change the way the company performed the work, or the impact of the piece, it simply provided a different perspective from which to view it.

PERFORMANCE NOTES:

WHAT: Wcdance, Small Songs
WHEN: Tonight and tomorrow at 7:30pm, tomorrow and Sunday at 2:30pm
WHERE: Wenshan Theater (文山劇場), 32 Jingwen St, Taipei City (台北市景文街32號)
ADDITIONAL PERFORMANCES: June 2 at 7:30pm at National Taichung Library Chunghsing Concert Hall (台中市中興堂), 291-3 Cingwu Rd, Taichung City (台中市精武路291之3號) and June 12 at 2:30pm and 7:30pm at Tsouying Boy's High School dance theater (高雄左營高中舞蹈班劇場), 55 Haikung Rd, Zuoying Dist, Kaohsiung City (高雄市左營區海公路55號)
ADMISSION: NT\$500 for the Taipei shows, NT\$350 for Taichung and Kaohsiung, available through the NTCH box office or www.artsticket.com.tw

When *Small Dances* premiered in May last year at the Experimental Theater in Taipei, Lin and his crews worked for several days to reconfigure the seating space in that theater so the audience surrounded the dancers on three sides, with a white, 20cm-high platform in the center. It will be interesting to see what he does with that platform on this tour.

Small Dances, the Chinese title for which translates more aptly as "love songs," is a light romantic look at relationships, set to an intriguing mix of songs by the Mexican American singer Lhasa de Sela, the song *P.S. I Love You* from the film of the same name, *Love You to Death* from *Cape No. 7* (海角七號), a *nanguan* (南管) piece, excerpts from Handel and Mozart and *Song to the Moon* from the Czech opera *Rusalka*.

It was very different from Lin's earlier, edgier work, filled with terrific little pas de deux and group sets. My only complaint was that Lin created most of the choreography for his five dancers and we didn't see enough of him.

MUSIC

BY TAYLOR BRIERE

Back to the future

It may be dark, cramped, and populated by strange creatures, but for those looking to support Taiwan's underground music scene, Underworld (地下社會) is the place to be this weekend.

The second installment of Welcome to the Underworld, a music party thrown by promotion group and music label Back 2 The Future (B2TF, 回到未來), takes place this Sunday. Eight bands have been invited to play at the event, which will be professionally recorded.

"We want to put the focus on Taiwan's bands," says Wang Yuan Kang (王元康), aka Chosen (王秋生) from Back 2 The Future. "Actually there are a lot of good Taiwanese bands, and nobody does live recordings of them."

The first installment of Welcome to the Underworld, which took place last month, consisted of bands ranging from Taiwan's old-school indie-rock icons 1976, to up-and-coming indie-electronica act Sunset Rollercoaster (落日飛車).

Part 2 promises to be even more diverse, with no shortage of big names from the Taiwanese independent music scene, including dance-electro rockers Go Chic, who are fresh off a performance at Austin's internationally renowned South by Southwest festival and the release of

PERFORMANCE NOTES:

WHAT: Welcome to the Underworld Part 2 (歡迎來到地下社會第二場)
WHEN: Sunday from 3:30pm
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
ADMISSION: NT400, includes one drink
ON THE NET: www.indievox.com/back2thefuture and on Facebook as Back 2 The Future



Go Chic performs Sunday along with seven other bands for the second installment of Welcome to the Underworld. The sessions will be recorded and released as an album by promotion group and music label Back 2 The Future.

PHOTO COURTESY OF ADWARD TSAI

their debut album *I Am Confused*. The band's sound is reminiscent of Le Tigre, with vocalist Ariel Zheng (鄭思齊) gyrating all over the stage to trashy beats and screaming synthesizers.

Other notable acts include Lily et Coco (哩扣), a refreshingly melodic post-rock band, 88 Balaz (88顆芭樂籽), whose high-octane brand of indie rock is a crowd favorite, and She Bang-a (死蚊子), which plays a quirky blend of instrumental experimental rock.

They will be joined Varo, an indie-

electronica band that has garnered some international attention with airtime on BBC Radio 3, crust-punk and speed-metal band Bazoooka (鐵拳火箭) and veteran blues-rockers Celluloid (賽璐珞). Metal-heads Ashen round out the lineup with some brutal grindcore.

Back 2 The Future was formed in April of 2008 with the aim of bringing international acts to Taiwan and giving exposure to local musicians. It has put on performances by artists including Carsick Cars from Beijing, Melt Banana from

Japan and Dandi Wind from Canada. "We just want to be a cool label," says Wang. "Other labels and promoters always invite artists we don't like, so we decided to do it ourselves."

In addition to organizing live shows, the group compiles music from its favorite artists on CDs that it distributes for free. The upcoming live compilation culled from the Welcome to the Underworld recordings will be the fourth such volume that can be downloaded for free at www.indievox.com/back2thefuture.

RESTAURANT REVIEW

BY HO YI

TIDBITS

Hielo

Address: 124, Zhongxiao E Rd Sec 4, Taipei City (台北市忠孝東路四段124號)
Telephone: (02) 8772-6632
Open: Mondays to Fridays from 11:30am to 10:30pm, Saturdays and Sundays from 11am to 10:30pm
Average meal: NT\$105 to NT\$185
Details: English and Chinese menu, credit cards accepted
On the Net: www.hielo.com.tw



If you've been to Los Angeles in the past five years, you'll probably have come across Pinkberry and the frozen yogurt wars. The fro-yo phenomenon began when Pinkberry, now a frozen dessert chain, opened its first store in Los Angeles in 2005 and rapidly built up a following that nicknamed the store's brand of sweet frozen yogurt sprinkled with healthful toppings "crackberry."

Last year, a number of bright-colored frozen yogurt places started springing up in Taipei's East District (東區), Gongguan (公館) and Shida (師大) neighborhoods, prompting food bloggers to declare that the fro-yo wave has officially hit Taiwan's capital.

Among the frosty dessert shops, Hielo is a relatively latecomer that hawks a similar melange

of tart and sweet yogurt at its inviting location close to the intersection of Zhongxiao East (忠孝東) and Dunhua South (敦化南) roads.

From the outside, Hielo, which means ice in Spanish, doesn't look like a purveyor of frozen desserts. This probably explains why I passed the storefront several times before noticing it is a fro-yo store. But once you walk through the door, it all becomes clear when you see the huge pink sign on the wall that explains how things work here. First choose a cup size — four ounces, seven ounces, or 11 ounces — then select a flavor — tart plain, strawberry, and Uji matcha (which means green tea) — and cover your yogurt with toppings including fresh fruit, cereal, almond, Oreo cookies, brownies or bite-sized mochi balls.

Each topping costs NT\$15, except for imported fruits such as raspberry, blueberry and cherry that set you back NT\$40 each per serving. Waffle bowls are available for an additional NT\$20.

Hielo has its own yogurt creations with names like mochi matcha and cookie crumble — NT\$105 for four ounces, NT\$145 for seven ounces, and NT\$185 for 11 ounces — for those who don't want to spend 10 minutes in front of the toppings counter concocting their own.

The menu also includes smoothies (NT\$125 for 14 ounces, NT\$155 for 20 ounces) that come in berry, mango, kiwi and banana and strawberry flavors as well as selection of salads (NT\$145) that should probably be avoided if the yogurt fruit salad I recently tried is any

indication. Its yogurt dressing had a refreshing zest with a dash of sea salt and black pepper, but the fruit was past its best.

Compared to other yogurt places, Hielo is considerably more spacious, with friendly service and cutesy decor painted in white, pink and baby blue hues. But when it comes to the frosty options, Hielo offers significantly fewer choices of flavors and toppings than Yogurt Art (www.yogurtart.com.tw) or YoFroyo (www.yofroyo.com). Since its opening last year, YoFroyo has quickly expanded to three locations in the city and is a lot cheaper than Hielo and Yogurt Art.

As the weather warms up, it should be interesting to see if more competitors join the Taipei frozen yogurt wars this year and how long the local fro-yo craze will last.



The frozen yogurt wars have come to Taipei. PHOTOS: HO YI, TAIPEI TIMES



Baaaaa. PHOTO COURTESY OF NZTDC

Turn Taiwanese on to the pleasures of Kiwi culinary arts, the New Zealand Trade Development Centre has organized a food and beverage fair at each of the capital's three branches of City'super supermarkets and menu promotions at hotels in Taipei and Taichung.

The City'super promotional event, which showcases New Zealand products including cherry-honey jam, honey blueberry syrup, pickled kiwifruit with tequila, Maori beers, wines, Frenched lamb rack, mussels and more, runs until May 25.

During the promotion period, customers who purchase over NT\$800 at one time in City'super or pick items from the hotels' promotional menus will receive a lucky draw coupon to win a trip to New Zealand.

Award-winning chef Jason Dell has been in town giving cooking demonstrations and constructing the hotel menus.

The Chavalier Teppanyaki and Steakhouse at the Evergreen Laurel Taichung Hotel menu includes New Zealand salmon arancini with citrus mussel dressing and tea smoked beef carpaccio as appetizers, crayfish bisque and Cloudy Bay seafood soup, risotto of green shell mussels, garnished with macadamia nut and lemon crumble, and roasted New Zealand lamb outlets with tabbouleh, kofta, herbéd goats cheese and sticky tamarind.

The set menu costs NT\$1,580 plus 10 percent service charge and is available until June 20.

The promotional menu at Papillion, San Want Hotel, starts today and runs

until June 13 and includes a set meal for NT\$1,380 plus 10 percent service charge.

Evergreen Laurel Taichung Hotel (長榮桂冠酒店台中), 6, Taichung Gang Rd Sec 2, Taichung City (台中市台中港路二段6號) Tel: (04) 2313-9988 X2875 On the Net: www.evergreen-hotels.com

San Want Hotel (神旺大飯店), 2F, 172, Zhongxiao E Rd Sec 4, Taipei City (台北市忠孝東路四段172號2樓) Tel: (02) 2772-2121 On the Net: www.sanwant.com

City'super The Mall branch (台北遠企店) B1/B2, 203, Dunhua S Rd Sec 2 Taipei City (台北市敦化南路二段203號B1/B2) Tel: 0809-088-680

City'super Fuxing branch (台北復興店) B3, 300, Zhongxiao E Rd Sec 3, Taipei City (台北市忠孝東路三段300號B3) Tel: 0809-088-680

City'super Tianmu branch (台北天母店) B1, 77, Zhongshan N Rd Sec 6, Taipei City (台北市中山北路六段77號B1) Tel: 0809-080-966 On the Net: www.citysuper.com.tw