

Taiwan Step

www.facebook.com/TaiwanStep

no.
15

published in
august 2015

LEADING ROLES TAKE TURNS

Lee You Parrot Quail and Ryan (Zheng Binghong)

ASPECTS OF TAIWAN FILM FESTIVALS

OUR MOVIES AND MOVIE FESTIVALS, IN ALL THE YEARS

MOVIE NERDS WATCHING MOVIES

Goofing from Tainan to Houbi,
strolling in the Baihe market.

City of Miaoli,
abundant breakfast amassed
with diligence.

Free of charge

Table of Contents

Editor's Words

Through the efforts over the years, the variety of Taiwan film festivals are now booming, flourishingly. Whether privately or publicly organized, the festivals are all excellent in quality and abundance, transforming Taiwan into an one-of-a-kind existence in the movie world, attracting movie nerds from different places to come for pilgrimage. The current issue of "Taiwan Step" invites heavy movie nerds from all over Taiwan to share the private sceneries. You are very welcome to fumble by the drawings, to get together and feel Taiwan's unique movie charms.

Editor's Words

p02 A-list figures:

Leading roles take turns
- Lee You Parrot Quail and Ryan (Zheng Binghong)

p06 Aspects of Taiwan film festivals - Our movies and movie festivals, in all the years

p12 Theme: Movie nerds watching movies

- P12 In pursuance of blue movie dreams, running into the best time - Lan Zuwei
- P13 Movie theaters, another way of "getting to know the city" - Wang Gengyu
- P14 The corner view of an old banyan tree in Wong Kok, a moment of image memory triggered - 686
- P15 Movies not understood trigger the sentiment deeply nurtured inside - Young Xiaolang
- P16 Touching moment all around, the Chishang, Taitung starry cinema in serenity - Wu Yuxuan
- P17 Throbbing audience in Zhongshan Hall, a retrospection of scripts on Guling Street - Lin Yingzhi
- P18 Movies bring about internalization, switching and putting together gazes and understanding - Huang Yixi
- P19 Carving ordinary days to transform pettiness into touching scenes - Liang Yujie
- P20 The subtle lucky-lighting feathers, the warmest landscape in the movie - Zhong Shangren
- P21 The contrast collocation in the movie exudes an exuberant energy of life - Huang Haojie

p22 Shuttle train excursion series III Goofing from Tainan to Houbi, strolling in the Baihe market.

p26 Good morning, the beauty of morning : City of Miaoli, abundant breakfast amassed with diligence.

p29 Genuine gourmet : Cat's afternoon tea

p32 Hong Kong visitors in Taiwan Study and work in Taiwan, a Hong Kong man marries a beautiful wife. Hong Kong indoorsmen's goddess turned into a Taiwanese wife.

Messenger

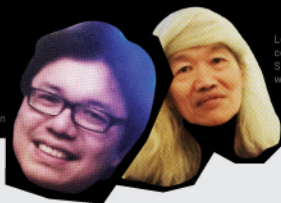
Taiwan step - 15
Published in august 2015
Printed in Taiwan
© thec all rights reserved.



The Crew of No. 15 Taiwan Step

Editor in chief/Sharky Chen
Executive editor/Winnie Hung, Luk Yingyu
Art & Design/sandynotion.com
Publication/ Taiwan and Hong Kong Economic and Cultural Cooperation Foundation
Planning/Alone Publishing
Co-work /Comma Books, Southern Home Publishing, Dot Publishing
Issue date/August 01, 2015
Welcome to check the "Taiwan Step" magazine on Facebook and Sina Weibo.

Ryan's movie blog:
"About movies, I know some" at
<http://newsblog.chinatimes.com/davidlean>



Lee You Parrot Quail are presently publishing movie
commentaries on a regular basis on the "Weekly
Screenings"
website at <http://www.funscreen.com.tw>

LEADING ROLES TAKE TURNS

- LEE YOU PARROT QUAIL AND
RYAN (ZHENG BINGHONG)

Text / Liugi Picture / Kathy

Today, as media are getting more entertainment oriented, serious commentary programs are giving way. When everybody can have Internet comments on movies, profound and charming movie commentaries become a rare thing. A good movie commentary can not only open a viewing perspective of the movie, but sometimes even display the movie critic's personal charm and talent, as with an literary work. Often seen on media are the images of movie creators and movie stars. This issue of Taiwan Step turns the camera in a different angel, projecting to another movie world behind the spotlight, and leading readers to know two movie critics of different generations, who have been passionately staring at the movie screen and transformed their passion into charming words to provoke countless movie lovers.

Lee You Parrot Quail was originally named Lee Youxin. To manifest the equality between human and animal, as well as the love for animals, he accommodated his two beloved bird companions into his name, and actually changed his name to the current one with official registration. That was a time when Taiwan just began to enact a new policy

that allows changing names, and his new name was quite a topic for gossips. This clearly shows his maverick style. On top of his head is a bunch of grey hair, loose and conspicuous. He always shows up carrying a big cloth bag filled with stuff in Taipei's movie theaters, large and small. For those having participated in the Taipei movie festivals who may not know him, must have had a few encounters with this movie critic, the one "either in a movie theater or on his way to a movie theater." His writing is just like himself, with a distinctive style not to be copied by anyone. His stripping thoughts and remarkable memory allow his commentary to being with a movie and then string up a whole bunch of memories. It can be sentimentally narrative and harshly critical on characters and things, and amazingly he can always turn his words to Ryan's playful words "Resnais, Fellini, Audrey Hepburn and homosexuality", to shape up the most distinctive imprint of his own.

Lee You Parrot Quail was raised up in a military dependents' village in the martial law era. That suppressive and enclosed environment was like the one depicted in Edward Yang's movie "Brighter Summer Day". Being situated in such an environment, watching movies became one of his very few ways to let go of his sentimental emotions. However, the movies at that time were covered with thick political publicity, which disgusted him. He laughed at himself for being indulged in visual aesthetics. That was a time Taiwan strictly regulated the length of young men's hair. The actors were all having short hair, lacking aesthetic outlook. So, he had to seek aesthetics in foreign movies. The theaters playing movies non-stop without cleaning the seats between runs were his favorites. He could stay in the theater for a whole day, watching the

same foreign movie over and over again without being tired. Instead, each repeated watch gave him a new perspective of the movie, and that experience later on built him a strong relationship with movies. He admits that he doesn't have the talent or appearance for acting, so he carries his enthusiasm for movies to writings, with words that are constantly flowing.



Zheng Binghong, nicknamed Ryan on Internet, looks a generation younger than Lee You Parrot Quail and has a totally different style from Lee, too. Growing up in southern Taiwan, Ryan is courtly like a scholar, and his writings are well organized and straightforwardly sharp, able to pinpoint hidden connotations of movies and mercilessly criticize the flaws of creation and the environment as a whole, with ruthless precision. He admits that with a law school background, he's more demanding on logic, which may be the reason why he's better in assorting complicated tangles of presentment than most filmmakers with semi-artistic temperament. As a professional movie commentator like most people think of, Ryan is well educated and with



straightforwardly rational speaking, in contrast to Lee You Parrot Quail's sentimentality.

However, it is such a sentimental Lee who enlightened Ryan to knowing movies. Ryan, a son of a poet, followed his parents and watched many artistic movies in childhood. His muddled mind was impressed by the movies, although didn't resonate with them. In high school years, when entering a rebellious stage, he came across a Lee Youxin's book about movies, and was shocked by the avant-garde awareness in the book (they both jokingly call the book "darkest kinks and deeds", unreadable). It was then he started to fumble by the book, exploring the vast movie world depicted in it. In the college years, Ryan plunged into the movie world and joined the campus movie club, where he and many like-minded buddies devoted their infinite energy to playing and watching movies. Even in the days of no Internet ticketing, he would be willing to stay outdoors for three days in the waiting line, just for buying a ticket to the once-a-year Golden Horse Film Festival.

Such an enthusiasm continued after he graduated from college and went overseas for further studies. On the foreign land, his eyes for movies were widely opened. And then, his cherish for the foreign movies brought him back to a new understanding of Taiwan movies. In UK, he watched Edward Yang's posthumous movie "One by One" that was never played in Taiwan, and it awoke his deep childhood memory of the Taiwan movies. In the days of study abroad, Ryan hit the Internet booming. He wanted to share on the Internet his life as an overseas student, but inevitably infused his passion for movies in his writings. When he was devoted more and more to the Internet, his writings started to receive attention, and media began to invite for his articles. Finally, he plunged into the movie world, and has never returned since.

Lee You Parrot Quail and Ryan formally met in the year when Ryan finished his study and returned home. It was an occasion when Ryan went for the Taipei Film Festival, where he approached the long-admired Master Lee, talking with him and taking pictures with him. Ryan had been tracing Mater Lee's movie criticism. Even when he was abroad, he would ask his family to keep the newspaper with Lee's criticism. Once starting to talk about movies, Mater Lee becomes very eloquent, and never stops. Since their encounter, they became extremely close friends. Later, when Ryan's book of movie commentaries were published, the first person he would like to recommend was this mentor, Lee You Parrot Quail. After they became friends, Ryan acted like an agent, helping Lee You parrot quail who knew nothing about computers and Internet with all kinds of jobs to be done on the Internet.



Ryan even became Lee's editor, collecting and editing Lee's unpublished writings over the years into a book. When the magazine with movie commentaries was terminated, Ryan helped Lee find a new Internet ground to publish his writings.

Ryan laughingly said that his assistance was purely because of his "rudeness", with which he always spoke bluntly without concerning too much about Lee's seniority, and restrained Lee's spontaneous overflow of emotions. Lee You Parrot Quail, who is humble and cherishing for talents, didn't mind at all. His words are full of compliment on Ryan. Such a everlasting friendship of helping each other is a good story wherever it is - a genuine sincerity and nobility. Such a state of mind can be observed in their words of movie commentaries. Both are willing to use words to encourage newcomers of the movie industry. Lee You Parrot Quail has focused more on new directors lately. He won't have any prejudice in commentary, even on students' work, to which he always gives great length of appreciation. Meanwhile, Ryan has been active in judging new talented directors for the

Golden Harvest Awards, and giving acute advices on system issues such as the awards and subsidies, in the hope of creating a sound movie environment, so that Taiwan movies can really root and grow.

They watch hundreds of movies a year. The two buddies often immerse in theaters for a whole day, and their enthusiastic passion for movies has never faded a bit over the years. Friends say that they have movies, but no life. Or, from another point of view, movies are their life. When they were taking pictures together at their first encounter, Lee You Parrot Quail had a sudden whim: since they both had watched so many movies, two faces toward the camera would be too old-fashioned, and why not shoot one's face and the other's back, for a metaphor of the leading role and supporting role of the movie, and in our real life, everyone is a leading role, and also someone else's supporting role as well. The two buddies whose life is cohesively attached with movies take turns to act the leading role of the other. And whoever is the leading role in turn looks just as splendid as the other around.

OUR MOVIES AND FILM FESTIVALS, IN ALL THE YEARS

Text & Picture / Zhang Quanchen

Undoubtedly, the year 2008 was the watershed of Taiwan movies. Before that timeline, it was a rare thing for a Taiwanese movie with ticket sales over NT\$100 million. The 2008 "Cape No. 7", directed by Wei Te-Sheng, with a record of NT\$500 million ticket revenue, along with the remarkably reputed "Orz Boyz!", infused heating enthusiasm to Taiwanese movies. Similarly, the 2010 "Monga" starring by Ethan Juan and Mark Chao seemed to smell new local stars and new sentiment about Taiwanese movies. It was not until 2011, there were three grand work of movies with ticket revenue over NT\$100 million each: "Seediq Bale", "You Are the Apple of My Eye", and "Night Market Hero". They made a Taiwan movie fever, seemingly that Taiwan movies were gearing up with ticket revenue and reputation. However, that was not the case.

Kaohsiung Film Festival Fireball Brother Primary Visual



Let's talk about Taiwanese movies first

The changing of Taiwan's movie culture and market is actually very obvious. In the early days, local directors who wanted to win awards from foreign film festivals are now making a U-turn. They are looking at the contemporary situation, and no longer shooting dull movies, but that doesn't mean they are making good movies. This local atmosphere stretched to four 2012 movies with each ticket revenue over NT\$100 million: "Din Tao", "Love", "The Fierce Wife" and "Black & White Episode 1 - The Dawn of Assault". The latter two were adapted from TV series. Although the ticket revenue as whole of the four movies were not as good as those of 2011, they seemed to prosper the local movie market. Many Taiwanese movies emerged one after another, among them were the well reputed "Touch of the Light" and "GF*BF". These two movies were played at the Taipei Film Festival for world premiere and won the Taipei Film Awards. Their super reputation made the Taipei Film Festival a very good platform to voice. And then more and more Taiwanese movies premiered on the Golden Horse Film Festival or Kaohsiung Film Festival. For example, the 2013 "Beyond Beauty - Taiwan from Above" was the opening movie for the first Taoyuan Film Festival, and "Elena" premiered as the

Lee Lih at the New Director Awards Ceremony
Taipei Film Festival



opening movie at the Kaohsiung Film Festival. They both built reputation first and then played in cinemas for blockbuster. This pattern established an intimate contact between film festivals and local movies.

However, as Ang Lee once said, Taiwanese movies are Qi deficient. The whole year of 2014 had only three movies financially broke even: "Café · Waiting · Love", "Sweet Alibis" and "Black & White: The Dawn of Justice". It was the ticket revenues from Mainland China for the later two movies to break even. In other words, the entire last year had actually

only one movie financial broke even. The audience's alienation from local movies is an undisputable fact. Of the recent local movies, only Zhu Ge Liang and Giddens Ko are the box-office cure. Movies directed by others are mostly sporadic and irrelevant. The local movie market becomes very difficult in pleasing local audience. Take for example the NT\$100 million local movie "The Wonderful Wedding" launched in the first half of 2015, so far the best selling movie, was a result of the new year running schedule plus the King Zhu's charm. It is difficult for a local movie to break NT\$10 million of ticket revenue, not to mention the NT\$100 million threshold. Since "Cape No. 7", local movies have been arranged for playing through American agents. Marketing by local teams has also gained quite a few successes, but not every movie can make it by this model. Local movies have become an option lacking of attraction with local movie goers. Of course, marketing and theaters are important factors, but after all, the movie itself is the key.

Numerous film festivals

In the beginning, the Golden Horse Film Festival was the largest international film festival. Gradually, there came the Taipei Film Festival, Kaohsiung Film Festival, and other thematic film festivals such as the Documentary Biennale and Women's Film Festival. Moreover, local film festivals were also starting to emerge in recent years, such as the Taoyuan Film Festival and Cross-Strait Film Festival.

Under the circumstances that Mainland China's movies cannot be easily played in Taiwan and production of Hong Kong movies is on the sharp decline, Chinese movies in the Taiwan market are gradually shrinking. It's not easy to watch some special movies in local cinemas. Taiwanese audience can only watch these movies in large and small film festivals. Through the movie screens, the audience can explore such movies, especially the European artistic movies or other kinds of movies that are bolder in openness and sharper with topics. These homosexual film festivals and documentary festivals more or less fill up the demand on versatility by the Taiwan society.

Taiwan has more film festivals than other countries. Now, let's take a look at all the film festivals, large and small, starting from the beginning to the end of a year!

金穗獎

Golden Harvest Awards Film Festival | 03/20 - 03/29 | www.movieseeds.com.tw

It was founded by the Government Information Office, aiming to build an environment for domestic movie contemporaries to compete and grow. There are five major awards: Best Motion Picture - Drama, Best Documentary Feature, Best Animation Feature, Best Experiment Film, and Best Student Work, in addition to short film subsidies and excellent screenplay awards. The renowned directors Ang Lee and Ming-liang Tsai were once the award winners in the festival. This is the most favorite film festival that movie classmates would like to attend.



Golden Horse Fantastic Film Festival | 04/10 - 04/19 | www.ghfff.org.tw

This is also known as the Junior Golden Horse Festival, which echoes to the year-end Golden Horse Film Festival, with a smaller scale. Its exhibited movies are mostly of fictional fantasies, and on a regular basis, the Rocky Horror Picture Show and relaxing classic movies such as "The Sound of Music" or "Moulin Rouge" will be played every year for fun and singing together.

TIDF

Taiwan International Documentary Festival | 04/11 - 08/20 | www.tidf.org.tw

Formerly the Documentary Biennale, this is Taiwan's largest documentary festival, and one of the most representative documentary festival of Asia. Starting from last year, it changed to an annual festival, with numerous prizes to offer. In addition to international competition and learning from watching the movies, it also offers programs of Asian vision competition and Taiwan competition, where excellent documentaries from different countries are selected and played in this festival. It was hosted in Taichung before, and has now moved back to Taipei. Starting from this year, it will tour around Taiwan in six major cities.

南方影展

South Taiwan Film Festival | 04/20 - 06/10 | festival.south.org.tw

The South Taiwan Film Festival starting to happen in 2001 is usually scheduled between end of April and early June. Because people perceived that southern Taiwan was not like northern Taiwan with large film festivals, so they created this film festival for the south. It has since become very popular. They also encourage Chinese movies and Taiwanese young innovative directors, in an effort to discover talents and create an environment to play their movies. To them, movies are not just exhibitive play of arts, they are a momentum to set forth social implementation. Therefore, played in this festival are many excellent documentaries and other films concerning social issues such as ecology environment. The depth of humane and cultural concerns exhibited in this festival is not commonly observed in other film festivals. Its films also cover the political, economic, immigration issues and the problems of vulnerable groups.



Cross-Strait Film Festival | 05/22 - 05/27 | www.facebook.com/CSFEC

This is the only film festival co-hosted by Taiwan and Mainland across the strait. Therefore, many Mainland-financed movies are played in this occasion. In particular, Mainland movies that miss the opportunity to play in local cinemas due to the quota limitation (10 movies a year maximum) can be played in this occasion for Taiwan audience to watch.



Urban Nomad Film Fest | 06/16 - 07/16 | 2015.urbannomad.tw

It is so named as Nomad to reflect the fact that its selected movies are not of usual stories. Instead, its films are mostly musical performance, artistic creation, or satirical style that extend from a variety of cultures. It is because of these elements, including the cultural youth documentaries from the Berlin Film Festival, U.S. Sundance Film Festival, and SXSW, this film fest has gradually become one of the favorites of Taiwan's cultural youth.



Taipei Film Festival | 06/26 - 07/18 | www.taipeiff.org.tw

Listed as one of the two major film festivals in Taiwan, Taipei Film Festival is held in between late June and early July. It is primarily themed with urbanity as its criteria for selecting movies. It has also become a venue for Taiwan movies to voice. Many Taiwan movies are played in this film festival, with quite good results. The festival also hosts contests for international new directors, and offers Taipei movie seminars. It is a platform to cultivate young directors and Taiwan innovative workers. This year, the new chairwoman of the Taipei Film Festival is Lee Lieh, who is the master mind behind many Taiwanese movies.



Women's Film Festival | 10/17 - 10/26 | www.wmw.com.tw

Focused on promoting talented female directors, with themes mostly on gender issues and exploration into female bodies, the festival has introduced important female directors from around the world. To encourage young innovative workers, the festival also hosts a series of movie work contests. This is a very popular film festival among female audiences and homosexual groups.



Taoyuan Film Festival | October, detailed schedule undecided | taoyuanff.tyccc.gov.tw

This year is the third year of the festival. Still a young film festival, it emphasizes on movies appreciated by both general public and social elites. Since last year was the year the City of Taoyuan was promoted to a special municipality, the festival has now even more focused on films with urban concepts. Themed with urbanity, the festival tries to manifest local characteristics, including movies featured with aviation and immigration.



Kaohsiung Film Festival | 10/23 - 11/08 | www.kff.tw

Since 2001, the gradually expanding Kaohsiung Film Festival has probably been the most important international film festival of south Taiwan. Movies competing in the festival include the local ones shot in Kaohsiung as well as international short films. Last year, the festival pioneered the first ever mobile phone movie APP of the "2014 Kaohsiung Film Cloud Theater". Among the APP movie albums, the "People Power" was the most popular one, which collected movies about people fighting against bad government or against authoritarianism, showing a genuine local rooted strength of life in the festival.



Taiwan International Queer Film Festival | 10/23 - 11/15 Taipei, Taichung, Kaohsiung | www.tiqff.com

As the most friendly city toward homosexuality, Taipei hosts the TIQFF and it is nothing surprising. The young festival, entering its 2nd year, offers Taiwan Queer short film awards to call for all kinds of Queer themed short films for the contest.



Golden Horse International Film Festival | 11/5 - 11/26 | www.goldenhorse.org.tw

This is Taiwan's biggest film festival, coupled with the Golden Horse Awards Ceremony, making it an annual major film event, across the Taiwan strait. It hosts movie exhibitions and contests, along with joint ventures and Golden Horse Academy. It has the largest number of participating movies, and is the spotlight of all local film festivals. It is reputed as the Chinese Oscar.

IN PURSUANCE OF BLUE MOVIE DREAMS, RUNNING INTO THE BEST TIME

Text / Lan Zuwei Picture / Xie Yilin

Q1 | Who's the favorite director?

Among the Chinese directors, it's gotta be Wong kar-wai. Because we have the same chemistry. I like his rhythm, his indulgence, his elaboration, and his meticulous tastes on words. I like his exquisite "micro-observation" - gazing at a grain of sand and seeing a world. I also like his unconstrained sway, in extinguished "macro-observation". His colors of illuminant shades let dreams bed down; his cicadae and raindrops tell an infinite mind. Of course, you'll never forget the way he uses music. May it be solo dance or Pas de Deux, his favorite is Waltz, the rhyming melody that flutters, the tripping dance that whirls, dancing with the shadows, what a joy of wonder.

Q2 | What's your most impressive movie watching experience?and favorite movie watching venue?

The moment of holding her hand, for the first time, watching the movie. What was the movie about?Important. Who was with you watching the movie?Even more important. On a movie date, we would do love affairs in the name of the movie; together we cried and laughed, or just didn't care what the movie was playing. Then, we chanted the movie theme song on our way walking home. My hands had her scent, my heart had her fragrance, lingering all the way.

Q3 | What are the movie scenes and spots that you would recommend?

Hou Hsiao-Hsien "The Best Time". Chang Chen on

There is a blog called the blue movie dream; there's a radio show called the blue movie theater. Days are like the blue sky, orbiting around movies.

the Kaohsiung Cijin ferry, traversing. Everyone has a lonely story to tell, but no one to talk to, and no one would listen, well then, tell the wind, and talk to the sea. The young colors of that scene, those once young and chasing dreams, they see the yesterday of their own.



MOVIE THEATERS, ANOTHER WAY OF "GETTING TO KNOW THE CITY"

Text & Picture / Wang Gengyu

Q1 | Who's the favorite director?

In time of growing older, I've had different favorite directors Bergman was my first love; Woody Allen was an unexpected encounter; Rohmer was a companion; Agnès Varda was a smile; and Hou Hsiao-Hsien gave me courage.

Q2 | What's your most impressive movie watching experience?and favorite movie watching venue?

In contrast to modern youngsters nurtured by the Golden Horse Film Festival, our days were filled with carrying the school bags lining up for buying movie tickets in winters, and the imagery of chewing bread, rushing to the movie festivals, was a ritual totem that came into shape long ago. The familiar or strange faces, a burst of exclamation or whispers, the once in a year gathering like a festival feast. Movie goes seem never growing old. Like a traveler would finally find a place where he belonged, running into "her" was a discovery that the movie theater had become another way of "getting to know the city" - stop and go, watch and walk - the movie festival apparently offered a beautiful excuse.

Q3 | What are the movie scenes and spots that you would recommend?

Spot-Taipei This is a two-story house with the American Southern colonial style, chosen by Karl L. Rankin, a former U.S. ambassador to Taipei in 1953, as his official residence. This architecture not only witnessed the Sino-American relations, but also became one of the landmarks of Taipei culture

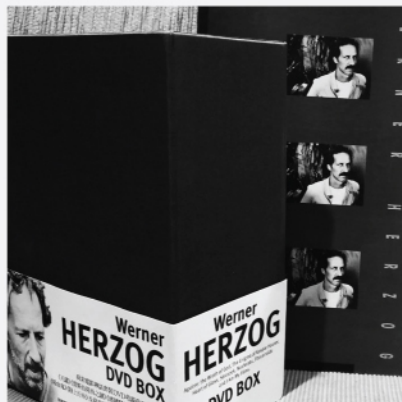
That day was also the birthday of Woody Allen. I've worked on theaters and movies; planned for the Golden Horse Movie Festival, Children Movie Festival and Biennial Documentary Festival; produced the films "Etude", "They write on the island", and "Story of time - Taiwan new movies".

development. Then, there came the Sino-American diplomatic breakup in 1979, followed by the close of the American consulate. Afterwards, the compound of the house was deserted and submerged in creeping bushes. It was not until 2002 when the Taiwan Film Culture Association, chaired by director Hou Hsiao-Hsien, took over this place and transformed it into a film oriented cultural and art space. A new venue is born. Inspired by Lin Qiang, a board member of the association, the venue was named SPOT, shining on its own.



THE CORNER VIEW OF AN OLD BANYAN TREE IN WONG KOK, A MOMENT OF IMAGE MEMORY TRIGGERED

Text & Picture / 686



Q1 | Who's the favorite director?

This is not a question about No. 1 director in my eyes, so it is easier to answer. My favorite director should be Herzog, mainly because he can shoot sentimental films and documentaries, and his exploration into human spirits and attention to the real world often come with on-of-a-kind perspectives and points of view. Herzog's films never, almost, disappointed me.

Q2 | What's your most impressive movie watching experience?and favorite movie watching venue?

In 1985, my first year of high school, the school's student association held twice movie shows in a semester at the Zhongshan Hall, where I had my first watch of Stanley Kubrick's "The Shining". In that

686, real name Zhan Zhengde, is the owner of the Youhe bookstore and a movie critic, who would always take the frontmost seats watching movies, and has written the movie critic anthology "A Moviegoer".

movie, there were several horrible scenes so frightening that I used my school military hat to semi-cover my eyes, while the girl next to me from another school was eating her dried shredded squid, watching the movie, like no big deal, and I really didn't know whether it was the movie or the squid that fitted her tastes. As for favorite places for movie watching, I really didn't have a particular venue of my favorite. It would be just fine as long as it was a movie theater! All I would ask for was a decent video/audio effect, a larger screen and a comfortable seat! I'd be very content.

Q3 | What are the movie scenes and spots that you would recommend?

At the intersection of Mong Kok's Yau Ma Tei and Julia Avenue was an old banyan tree, where the movie *Thrown Down* directed by Johnny To was shot, with Louis Koo and Aaron Kwok playing pyramid under the tree, to fetch for Ying Caier the red balloon hanging on the tree. I think that was a very moving scene. If I'll ever have another chance to visit Hong Kong, I'll definitely go visit that place to feel it in person.



MOVIES NOT UNDERSTOOD TRIGGER THE SENTIMENT DEEPLY NURTURED INSIDE

Text & Picture / Young Xiaolang

Q1 | Who's the favorite director?

The favorite director is Tsai Ming-liang. When I was little, I watched the movie "Vive L'Amour". There was the last scene where Yang Kuei Mei cried out loud, though I didn't understand what she was crying for, I gradually started to cry with her, because I was deeply shockingly moved by the scene. Then, I knew a movie not understood could still be wonderful to watch. To me, Tsai Ming-liang's movies captured some kind of sentiment and emotion, the state of mind, to outline the segment of moment reflected in the audience's heart, which made the impact and pain extremely sharp and powerful. In elaborate analysis of the elements presented in Tsai Ming-liang's movies, it's not difficult to find that the exuberant contexts are so abundant that they can be written into a book, and using rationality to analyze the elements can be another kind of fun.

Q2 | What's your most impressive movie watching experience?and favorite movie watching venue?

When the complete version of the "Brighter Summer Day" was being played in the 2007 Golden Horse Film Festival, the fire alarm was triggered in the midst, and the evacuation lights were on, for about a few minutes long. But the staff didn't evacuate the audience, so everybody stayed put and kept watching the movie. When the movie was running to the climax of the later half, the fire alarm went off again. When the audience was finally evacuating by the instructions from the speakers, the emotion outside the movie was as boiling as inside

Young Xiaolang, a film subtitle translator and a critic columnist for Liberty Time Net, has writings of "Midnight Food Store", "Underground Society". Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/filmloop>

the movie.

In terms of hardware, I like watching movies at the Spot-Huashan, for its largest screen among the art theaters, and also for its decent audio effect if seating in the middle seats. In terms of personal sentiment, Spot-Taipei is most meaningful to me, for its past activities of hosting the "National Theater" film festival (such as the Yasujiro Ozu movie series), which guided me, then a student, into the world of author's movies. Every time when I got back there, it reminded me of the days as a student.

Q3 | What are the movie scenes and spots that you would recommend?

Of course it is the last scene of "Vive L'Amour" where Yang Kuei Mei cried out loud. The venue was the Taipei Daan Forest Park. The park is no longer the same as it used to be in the movie. It'd be fun to see the difference.



TOUCHING MOMENT ALL AROUND, THE CHISHANG, TAITUNG STARRY CINEMA IN SERENITY

Text & Picture / Wu Yuxuan

Q1 | Who's the favorite director?

Questions regarding movie ultimacy are all angry stares at my slack loyalty. No one-and-only love, bracing new love at all time. All I can say is that the farthest I went to Faroe Islands, Sweden to watch Bergman's sea, the most complete memory of every scene was Victor Erice's "The Spirit of the Beehive", the most favorites are the glances of Herzog and Michael Haneke, most repetitively watched are Wong kar-wai's movies, while it's Atom Egoyan's movies I'd like to watch on the last day of my life. They are all good, whichever!

Q2 | What's your most impressive movie watching experience?and favorite movie watching venue?

None of the movies encountered was unimpressive, nor any of the venues not a best spot. Now I'm living in Chishang, Taitung. When it gets dark, I'll project the movies onto the white wall of the house, and sit down in the starry night absolutely free of light pollution, watching the outdoor movies.

Q3 | What are the movie scenes and spots that you would recommend?

Last Christmas in Hong Kong, I toured every movie scenes of Wong kar-wai's movies. At the stone wall at the intersection of Castle Road and Conduit Road, the telephone booth where Maggie Cheung and Andy Lau met in the movie "Days of Being Wild" is gone; the place where Leung Chiu Wai dated Maggie Cheung in the movie "In the Mood for Love" is the Goldfinch Restaurant Leung Chiu Wai patronized himself in the movie "2046";

Wu Yuxuan, an instinct believer. Her writings include poetry anthology "Exchange of Lover's Ribs", and movie prose anthology "Anywhere Decadent - A Small Fan's 99 Love Letters". Blog: Your smile destroys like the sea.

Lin Ching-Hsia's Chungking Mansion in the movie "Chungking Forest", the outdoor elevator that Faye Wong and Leung Chiu Wai took day by day, Leung Chiu Wai's food stall near the Graham Street... Faye Wong's fast food store Lan Kwai Fong No. 3 is replaced by a 7-11, and the California Bar on the opposite street is gone; the one-minute clock where Maggie Cheung and Andy Lau dated is still at the entrance of the parking lot of the old BOC Tower in Central. While the bar and hotel of "Happy Together" I'm about to reach are in Argentina.



THROBBING AUDIENCE IN ZHONGSHAN HALL, A RETROSPECTION OF SCRIPTS ON GULING STREET

Text & Picture / Lin Yingzhi

Q1 | Who's the favorite director?

Polish director Krzysztof Kieslowski. When Kieslowski's movies mesmerized around the globe, my consciousness of movie contemplation started, and therefore his movies had a great impact on my perception of movies in later days. His movie "A Short Film About Killing" completely turned my views on death penalty around, and I started to get away with the concept of revenge and turned to the concept of state authority in view of death penalty. "Three Colors: Blue" forced me at age 20 to contemplate the so-called "freedom" from the fetter of life people face, not from a legal point of view. To me, Kieslowski is not only a movie author, but more a mentor in life.

Q2 | What's your most impressive movie watching experience?and favorite movie watching venue?

In the 2014 Taipei Film Festival, the digital revision of "Double Life of Veronica" was played in Zhongshan Hall, Taipei. Although that place is not a professional movie playing venue, the Taipei Film Festival has been using it to play movies in recent years, and therefore the audio effect has been very well tuned. The mysterious ambience in the plots of "Double Life of Veronica" coupled with the surround sound effect for people tracking scenario in the later part of the movie made the restored movie images and the sound effect of bright and precise environmental feel reverberate in this historical architecture, where one felt like being situated in the movie.

Lin Yingzhi, having made a living in the publishing industry for years, likes movies, and insists watching them in cinemas with large screens, whatever the movie may be. His movie writings or casual essays are all collected in the "Private Cozy Reading" blog at <http://angelosamsa.blogspot.tw>

Q3 | What are the movie scenes and spots that you would recommend?

My movie reading reception was enlightened by the movie "Brighter Summer Day" directed by Edward Yang. After having watched the movie, one of the important rituals when I came to Taipei was to visit the place that I traced from an old newspaper, where the actual event of the movie scenario took place: the backdoor of 10, Lane 5, Guling Street. I could not help but went there to see the spot of the event. But the house number in the alley of Lane 5, Guling Street, counted up to No. 8, and the No. 10 location had become part of Nanhai Road. The Chung Cheng Police Station used to be at the entrance of Lane 5 had become the Guling Street Avant-garde Theatre, which has been an important Taipei theater venue for many years.



MOVIES BRING ABOUT INTERNALIZATION, SWITCHING AND PUTTING TOGETHER GAZES AND UNDERSTANDING

Text & Picture / Huang Yixi

Q1 | Who's the favorite director?

Christopher Nolan, Atom Egoyan, and Stanley Kubrick

Christopher Nolan helped me understand how "creation" plays as a triggering maze that opens a forward path for the world hierarchy to proliferate, and how this seemingly abstract or purely intelligent game schedules sensibility to change a person, and the world, from deep inside. Atom Egoyan helped me learn that through the meta schema of layered framework, one can always switch and place together different gazes and perceptions of a same drawing scene; I am enchanted by Kubrick's movies with insight into human existence, and touched by their beauty of violence and violence of beauty.



Huang Yixi, author of "Deviate: WHY DO WE GO TO THE MOVIES?" Having been a movie commentator since 2001, Huang was the winner of the 2005 Berlin Film Festival Sony Forum Film Critic Award. Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/inception719>

Q2 | What's your most impressive movie watching experience?and favorite movie watching venue?

There was an occasion watching Atom Egoyan's "Speaking Parts, 1989". The beginning 10 minutes or so of the movie was pervasive ritual coldness, and pathetic. Such a poor resolution quality, such a small screen, immediately changed the atmosphere where I was situated in reality. A cinema with a very large screen is good enough to manifest that one in front of the screen image is so tiny. Privately secret and small-audience non-mainstream cinemas establish an intimacy with the audience, for that moment in life together, full of understanding one another, without the need of explanation of why.

Q3 | What are the movie scenes and spots that you would recommend?

Among the movie scenes of Taiwan and Hong Kong, the most impressive ones include the intersection of Taishun Street and Xinhai Road of Taipei in "One by One", Liaoning Street Night Market and Taipei MRT Mucha Line (today's Wenhui Line) in "Happy Together", the metropolitan landscape overlooked from the top floor of Hong Kong IFC International Conference Center in "The Dark Knight", Hong Kong Central Mid-Levels escalator passing through the neighborhood of Stanley Street in "Chungking Express".

CARVING ORDINARY DAYS TO TRANSFORM PETTINESS INTO TOUCHING SCENES

Text & Picture / Liang Yujie

Q1 | Who's the favorite director?

Hirokazu Koreeda. He enlightened me to seeing the gate of artistic movies. After watching the movie "Air Doll", I felt like knocked to wake up. I was attracted by the picturesque shots of Lee Ping-Bing's movies. His depiction of seeming pettiness in life was so moving in the dramatic magic-like scenarios that I realized stories of elaborated ordinary characters touched me the most. Later on, I became patient enough to understand the movies of Hou Hsiao-Hsien and Edward Yang, and started liking the movies directed by Jia Zhangke, Lou Ye and Naomi Kawase who are famous for their realistic genre.



Q2 | What's your most impressive movie watching experience?and favorite movie watching venue?

My sister and I went together with my father for the first time to a movie at the "Neihu Theater". The poster outside the theater was drawn by hand. The movie was an animation of Disney's "Lion King". We bought tickets and entered the theater right away. The movie was still running for the previous session. We simply sat down and watched the

Liang Yujie, stage name of UG, a graduate from National Chengchi University Communication Program, now a publication planner at Joint Entertainment International Inc., has shot a few decent films, but is famous for his MV revision imitating Girls' Generation. Youtube search for UGisHOT.

reaming part of the movie. They didn't clean the seats between running sessions, so we watched the whole movie again. That was the first time that I felt the magic of the "theater" space. I also loved the Banqiao Linyuan second-run theater. That was a treasure land of watching movies in my college years. Only a few bucks allowed me to traverse among the playing halls to watch the movies for a whole day.

Q3 | What are the movie scenes and spots that you would recommend?

I would say it was the Taitung Jiaming Lake in "Young Dudes" directed by Chen Yin-Jung. It was a summer after I graduated but had yet to decide what to do for a living. Like the muddled living conditions depicted in "Young Dudes", I was groggy with a sunburn head getting cooled off by the theater's air-conditioning. All of a sudden, in the end of the movies, the Jiaming Lake popped on the big screen like an Utopia. It was like a beacon showing a way in the misty future, waking me up with its peerless beauty. Then, I got a job at the movie company that I've been working for every since. To my great surprise, my boss' name is Jiaming. The Pingshi stone bridge appeared in the movie "You Are the Apple of My Eye" was also very impressive. Friends traveling from Hong Kong and Mainland China all asked me to take them to Pingshi, and took pictures at the spot where Chen Jiayi and Ke Jingteng played the sky lamps in the movie.

THE SUBTLE LUCKY-LIGHTING FEATHERS, THE WARMEST LANDSCAPE IN THE MOVIE .

Text & Picture / Zhong Shangen

Q1 | Who's the favorite director?

Dear Shunji Iwai: I can't forget the endless walk in "Picnic". They walked on the wall, on the social edge, with repetitive movement, sharply pointing to your thoughts of the world, and only persistent pursuance of the reasons of matters did we discover the meaning of self existence, and get strong enough to walk to the end of the world.

Watching your movies, I breathed with agony. There was a time of the Kaohsiung Film Festival, I watched "All about lily chou-chou" in midnight, where the beautiful scenery was pure, the juvenile falling was pure, the girl having her long hair cut was pure, my flowing tears were also pure. The cruelty in life got stronger in purity. Wow! The world was so cruel that one could feel the pain.



Shane, who loves watching movies and reading books, lives in Kaohsiung. He often appears in TakaoBooks, and is used to looking at the far-away Dawu Mountain from a distance here. Occasionally, there will be rainbows over the mountains after rains. That was the hometown of the adolescence age.

Q2 | What's your most impressive movie watching experience?and favorite movie watching venue?

Dogpig Art Cafe is the pioneer of Kaohsiung art and literary movement. In its unadorned space, the short film albums of Shunji Iwai were planned, and a few events of "Film Healing Club" were hosted. By the Love River, the Kaohsiung Municipal Movie Theater was transformed into a art movie theater. There were many times when I finished watching the movies, I kept walking along the river quietly, repeatedly reciting the movie dialogue, trying to digest the movie into part of me.

Q3 | What are the movie scenes and spots that you would recommend?

The first long movie "The Most Distant Course" directed by Lin Jing-jie. Tommy was collecting sound at the Taitung Changbin seaside. He said the sound of the rolling sea pebbles is the sound of Formosa. That vast sea was singing Hu Defu's "Formosa", and chanting the emotions of the travelers.

"Su mi ma sen, Love" was about a love story directed by Lin Yuhsien. A Taiwanese boy met a Japanese girl in Kaohsiung. They tripped in the old streets of Yancheng, passing through layers of sky windows on top of Dagou. Under the heat of the southern sunshine, the subtle lucky light of love is the warmest landscape in the movie.

THE CONTRAST COLLOCATION IN THE MOVIE EXUDES AN EXUBERANT ENERGY OF LIFE.

Text & Picture / Huang Haojie

Q1 | Who's the favorite director?

Emir Kusturica. His madness is beyond imagination. The Balkan wars became a mad comedy, one after another. The sad stories of Slavic Civil War was infused with mad ecstasy, just like his "Underground Society" - as always, no matter how dark it is, there had to be a mad ecstasy. From the epic fantasy of "Time of the Gypsies" to the Gypsy festival of "Crna macka, beli macor", madly rushing animals were everywhere in his movies, collocated with fanatic Gypsy music. Your epinephrine crazily went up all the way, and your tripping brain just wouldn't stop tripping. In the sad and tragic stories of his movies, we saw a people who so much loved to have fun. In the intertwined sadness and joy, it was an abundance of power of life that permeated. This is a movie, that moved you and let you felt the worth of life.



Q2 | What's your most impressive movie watching experience?and favorite movie watching venue?

It was Kinmen's Kinshen Theater in. When I was a little boy, I got a few bucks in my pocket only in the Chinese Lunar New Year, which allowed me to buy a ticket, with no seat. I had to squeeze myself with all the soldiers into the theater. And I had to stand on my toes to watch across the heads of the soldiers

The first job was shooting documentaries, and then shooting movies. Finally, I became an organizer of film festivals. Since 2007, I've been the planner of the Kaohsiung Film Festival, falling in love with the drifting life, accompanied by movies.

who were much taller than me. It was like watching an outdoor music performance as we would do today. The first movie played that year was "Plan A" starring by Jackie Chan. I was amazed by his excellent martial art skills and the post-production highlights of the shooting that was really a tough performance. The NG of fighting scenes over and over, and the actors were really hurt bad. It displayed the passionate fever and enthusiasm of the producers, actors and actress. And I became addicted to movies ever since. The Kimtung Theater, for both soldiers and civilians, was like a "Military Amusement Park". Despite it was old, I still remember how I looked forward to sitting on the wooden bench to watch the movies. I had to avoid the mice coming to grab my snack, and try in vain to stay away from the stinky soldiers. The old theater was already dismantled long ago. But, it gracefully gave me my unforgettable childhood of movie watching experience!

Q3 | What are the movie scenes and spots that you would recommend?

The movie "The Boys from Fengkuei" directed by Hou Hsiao-Hsien is my favorite. The Gushan ferry dock was the place where the leading character came from Penghu to Kaohsiung to look for a job. Although the houses of Japanese style are no longer there, taking the ferry and watching big ships entering the harbor, the sceneries are still there. Address: No.1, Binhai 2nd Road, Gushan District, Kaohsiung City.

GOOFING FROM TAINAN TO HOUBI, STROLLING IN THE BAIHE MARKET.

Text & Picture / Yang Qinwen

There are quite a few shuttle trains setting off from the Tainan station, about 3 to 4 shifts every hour. The trains are not always on time, but the wait is just 10 minutes or so. And it's not bad to use the wait time to view the station from inside. The sunshine pokes the eyes all seasons. The postures of travelers entering the station are either with a hat or with a hand raised as high as the eyebrow. The impression on the station often remains nothing but a piece of shining blank. After entering the station with a ticket, or an Easy Card or iPass with enough balance, instead of rushing to the air-conditioned wait zone, it's nice to lean on a column that separates the entrance hall from the wait chamber, and look toward the front door of the station in backlight. This is the time for colors to show off. The wall high up all the way to the second floor has a few elongated arched wooden windows, whose blue and green paints tell the stories - the common language of aged Taiwan wooden architectures.

The old town of Tainan is really something. Stores new and old are all perfectly mixed together. Walking through a lane, followed by another alley, you don't have to be a house buyer, just enjoying the variety of tiles and iron windows on the houses is enough to feel great contentment. No matter how reluctant, I had to force myself to withdraw from the city and jump to the shuttle train again heading north. The landscape suddenly opens up, displaying the paddy fields, ranches, vegetable gardens, and fruit trees, moving backward parallel with the skylight. This tells where the abundance of Tainan comes from. The railroad slants through the plains, with the ocean in the west, and mountains in the east. The geographic contour is profiled in mind, but eyes in the train cannot see that far - no sea in sight, no mountains penetrated by eyesight. After the train passes the Southern Taiwan Science Park, it is all paddy fields. The speed of the shuttle trains doesn't blur the scenery. Don't be stunned by the vast green. The vegetation of pitaya and melons can be clearly distinguished.

Have a local as tour companion

In this half-day round trip from morning to noon, I had Wang Jiaman who lived in Houbi, the last train stop, keeping me accompanied, and guiding me with true local narration. Barlin is a tiny train stop with no people in sight, although it is the nearest to the Tainan University of the Arts. Passengers boarding and alighting are mostly the university's teachers and students, who either are skillful in taking a transfer bus (timing is the key), or fetching the motorcycle parked near the station and riding it to the campus at the hillside. The Shanhua Station connects the Danei District and Yujing District in the east, and further away is the mountainous Nanhua District, not far away from Namasha, a place flourishingly growing peaches and plums. The Shanhua area is geographically positioned as an distribution center where the sunset market sells all kinds of agricultural products supplied from the neighborhood. If you would like to try the local milk and milk hot pot to supplement protein, be sure to get off at the Linfengyi and Liuying stations and take pictures with the very few wooden stations remaining on the island.

Then, the train arrives at Hsingying, a major station at Jiaman, a local of Hsingying, with a life full of the unexpected, lives with her other half and a dog, and makes a living on a Houbi station bike rental that rents bikes to travelers who'd like to take a leisure biking tour. The bike store is named "Slow Rental". Getting out of the Houbi station, on the left-hand side were a few elderly people sitting under a tree, drinking tea and chatting, making a standard Taiwanese rural scenery. There was no double that it was a grandpas' gathering. Where are the grandmas? Grandmas took the space without such a



swagger. They would drag a chair and sit down by the doors of their houses, and chat with the neighbors when they showed up. Passing through the big tree, the chatting grandpas and the grocery store, there came the bike rental shop. The trees across the road were growing green round fruits. Jiaman told me they were sapindus, which people would use by rubbing it to produce foams for washing before synthesized chemical detergents were introduced. This natural detergent is sourced from nature and returned to nature.

There is an advantage to set out from Houbi. In less than half an hour, riding a bike can get to Chinliao and Baihe beyond a train's reach. People not interested in this biking route may take a bus to get there. In early summer on the road to Baihe are booming lotuses in the fields. You'll be attempted to speed up to get there to feast the fresh lotus seeds. Chinliao in the other direction grows paddies, where the fields become green lakes in summer, and rolls yellow waves in autumn. Though there are very few cars on the road, don't be too greedy for sightseeing, or you'll get distracted and fall off the bike. It kills the beauty.

Vegetables in the market reveal the ambient texture

Jiaman said the Baihe market was geographically similar to Shanhua as a hillside distribution center, with bizarre food materials supplied from Dongshan. You'll never miss a tourist season for shopping in the market, because you'll find good stuff in all seasons. Buying broccoli and cabbage from a Hakka grandma, I was ready to fry the vegetable and cook a soup with a handful of coriander. A vegetable stall had a signboard saying foxtail. I got no idea of what it was till I checked with the owner who told me it could be made to a soup stew that was good for children's bones for growth. I guessed it could have

something to do with getting rid of parasites inside children's body. A stall was selling a variety of funguses and mushrooms, whose muddy outlook revealed they were wild and picked from the mountains. Another stall was selling vegetable seedlings as well. The locals must have small land plots or yards to grow the vegetable for self-consumption.



It happened to be the season of lotus seeds, but not all the stalls were selling them. It was said that the area of lotus fields had substantially diminished. The plant has a short growing season, and heavy manual labor is required to retrieve the seeds. The cost-performance is clearly calculated. So, most of the farmers have turned to the tourist business for better profits. I talked to an older woman of a bigger-size vegetable stall. She elaborately explained to me the cost of 1 kilo raw lotus without peeling, plus the labor of peeling, and this year the price would be over 300 bucks (NT) a kilo. She would never feast herself with the lotus seeds because they were expensive, and would rather give them away as a gift. Besides, lotus seeds peeled and ready to eat might have been frozen, and that could spoil the

taste. The older woman showed me a bag of fresh lotus seeds and asked me whether to peel the seeds by myself for a better price. She showed me how to use a sharp chisel to cut a round hole on the top of the seed and squeeze the bitter core out of the top hole. She dexterously made it, but I didn't buy it. Jiaman asked me to eat that peeled seed raw. It was crispy and sweet, and it could be a luxurious idea to use the seeds to dress salad.

I had to buy some lotus seeds to satisfy my desire. Not far away was a woman sitting on the ground, peeling the seeds. I approached her, trying to buy some. She said she could only peel the seeds but not to sell them, because the seeds would be delivered to a vegetable stall for sale. Well, they respected the division of work, and everybody made a small profit. What on earth is a professional seed peeling? The gear includes a bamboo basket, a wooden pillow and a child-size slipper (in bright green color, often used to hit cockroach). In the middle of the wooden pillow was a shallow groove, where the peeled seeds were placed and rolled forward by a pressure from her small shoe. In the blink of an eye, the lotus skin was peeled and the seeds popped out. Well, isn't it a fashion to talk about cultural innovation, added values and DIY? The bamboo basket + wooden pillow + small slipper, plus a kilo of lotus seeds with shells can be a completely different story in a high-end supermarket in town. If I said this to her, she would call me a stupid weirdo.



◆ Tainan stops travel card ◆

* From Tainan northbound, the shuttle train stops at Tainan, Dachiao, Yunkang, Chinshi, Nanke, Shanhua, Barlin, Lungtien, Lingengying, Liuying, Shinying, and Houbi. The fair varies between stops. A ride from Tainan all the way to Houbi costs 67 bucks, for about 50 minutes.

The traditional market closes on the 2nd and 16th days of the lunar year, with very few booths still doing business. As early as 6 or 7 o'clock, the market is already very busy, and the booths will be gradually closing as the noon time approaches.

* Slow Rental at 73, Houbi District, Tainan City, telephone: 0935-033-043.

CITY OF MIAOLI, ABUNDANT BREAKFAST AMASSED WITH DILIGENCE.

Text & Picture / Guo Mingchu

Speaking of travel, few would think of the City of Miaoli. People would go to Dahu for picking strawberries, to Shanhi for wooden sculpture, and to Houlong for windmills, all for the interesting countryside activities. But few people after having had the countryside experience would like to do it again. Before being married to Miaoli, I had no idea about this place. It was like a dark, unknown continent. Despite having seen the wooden sculpture and windmills, nothing compares with the sentimental touch I had from a tour of the magnificent Miaoli Country government building, after I became a wife of Miaoli.

01 Genuine Hakka rice noodle

"Haishan Diner" offers delicious breakfast feeding the people of Miaoli from their childhood. The signboard in front of the door says completely irrelevant food: lamb pot, sticky rice, fried rice noodle, tofu soup. Ignoring the funny irrelevance will let you spot the big boiling pot on the stove for keeping the rice noodle warm, and crystal clear. The Miaoli rice noodle is thicker than others, more crystal clear and chewy as well. Instead of sprouts,

added in the rice noodle are leek and fried ground pork. It's a must to add sauces in the rice noodle after being served on a table adorned with a flora tablecloth. On the table, not particularly attractive is a plastic can filled with leek or garlic seasoned sauce that is indispensable for Miaoli's diner food. Looking ordinary, it can be extremely spicy hot or sweet sour with fragrance when swallowed



02 Crystal dumplings remain solid all day long



Alan. The Miaoli crystal dumplings, different from the Hong Kong counterparts served in steamers, are served like a meatball soup, except that the meatballs are replaced with the crystal dumplings. Sister Alan's crystal dumplings have thick and solid skins, and the broad crystal edges cover tiny fresh meat. It is served with basil and soup stock. The moment of having a bit of the dumpling exudes fresh smell to the nose, hard to escape. With the sticky dumping attached to your teeth, you can hardly talk to share the experience that belongs to you only. Coupled



The greater Miaoli is divided into North, Center and South, all are reachable within 15 minutes or so by a motorcycle. The South Miaoli is the consumers center. Scattered on several roads radiating from the Triangle Park and adjacent temples are fashion stores, local delicacies, and emerging cultural art cafes. On one of the narrow roads, take a turn to enter an even smaller sloping road - Taiping Street. Heading down the street, there was a store "Shuishangrenjia Sister Alan Crystal Dumplings". It was so lengthily named because it was originally established beside a creek, so people called it Shuishangrenjia (store on the water). Later on, she moved the store to the current location without water, and other crystal dumpling store started to emerge in the neighborhood. To distinguish it from others, the store is thus called Shuishangrenjia Sister

with the crystal dumplings, you may also have some rice noodle or fried noodle. Sister Alan's rice noodle states similar to Haishan's, but her fried noodle is definitely one of a kind. Seasoned with the unique sweet spicy sauce, the fried noodle is way beyond its original logic of simplicity. Sister Alan's pig's blood soup is also highly recommended by the Miaoli locals. The smell of blood is removed, and the pig blood chunks are chewy and supple. Having a bowl of the soup in your stomach makes you feel like supplemented with the essence of a whole pig. If you like the relish of crystal dumplings, you may also want to try the "Two Sisters Crystal Dumplings" in the north Miaoli market. Different from Sister Alan's crystal dumplings of the south Miaoli market, the Two Sisters' crystal dumplings are lighter and thinner, with more meat like wontons. One can eat in the store or make a to-go order for home seasoning recipe.

03 Refreshing for the whole summer

After having a whole bunch of breakfast, not like the old days the Miaoli people would start to work in the fields, we still have the "Grandma Ice" store in the north Miaoli market waiting for us to refresh ourselves in the summer. The ice store always with a long waiting line is hosted by an A-Po (in Hakka meaning Grandma). She uses a kitchen knife to ax the ice chunks and chop them into small pieces, and then put hot tapioca balls and green beans on them, and then stir the freezing ice and hot toppings to mix them up, so your teeth won't feel aching, and the summer heat in your body will be totally eradicated.

In the afternoon with a full and content stomach, it may not be a good idea to visit the farm again, for Miaoli Country has as many attractions as the stars

in the sky to visit, and 15 trips may not enough to see them all. There are the Lavender Garden, Mr. Brown Coffee Avenue Cafe, Sky Castle....all have different cartoon atmospheres that thoroughly create exotic fantasies.



Miaoli breakfast

01 Haishan Diner

Address: 1 Dongsha, Yuchin Village, Miaoli City

Telephone: 037-351711, 037-353732

Business hours: 8:00am thru 8:00pm

02 Shushangrenjia Sister Alan's Crystal Dumplings

Address: 41 Lane 61, Taiping Street, Miaoli City

Telephone: 037-321677

Business hours: 7:00am thru 12:10am (may be closed any time)

03 Two Sisters Crystal Dumplings

Address: 45 Chunghua Road, Miaoli City

Telephone: 037-262280

Business hours: may be closed any time

CAT'S AFTERNOON TEA

Text & Picture / Huang Boxuan



Cat wants to take me to a special afternoon tea. Strictly speaking, Taiwan didn't have the hobby of afternoon tea. When and how did such a four-meal a day luxurious hobby being?

"A boring saying had it that this afternoon tea hobby began in 1840, when a noble lady in a hot afternoon asked her maid to prepare her a small dish of toast and some read tea. Since then, it became an English fashion for noble people to kill their afternoon time", says the cat.

"In fact, the afternoon tea was a driving force behind the human food culture. This type of informal dinning inspired people for the first time to purely pursue a whole new demand on delicacies other than feeding their stomach. Although this hobby was originated in the UK, once the population all over the world with spare money and time grows, people of different countries set out from the "food tasting" as a common origin to develop their own special afternoon tea cultures. Taiwan, for example, used to have many street vendors and bubble tea shops derived from hand-shaking drinks, as well as lots of tea houses where people met to negotiate things and entertain guests. Today, they are replaced by desserts-oriented English style afternoon tea and cafes. However, the largest afternoon tea shops are actually the universal version of the traditional styles, i.e. the franchised cafes with fair prices. Those who chase higher taste experience



are mostly becoming the third-wave exquisite coffee players, who play estate-grown coffee as complex as with red wine. Interestingly, although Taiwan was colonized by Japan, the Japanese tea ceremony in seek of tranquility and serenity has failed to prevail...." Cat continues without stop.

You are just a cat. How come you know so much? I'm kind of surprise.

As we are talking, we run into the first store, with big class windows in European style. It looks gorgeous. The waiter in uniform talks through the interphone and shouts out the numbers at the same time, with a professional smile on his face all the time. This is only 3 o'clock in the afternoon, and the waiting line has overflowed to the car lanes. What an amazing view.

The waffles the Cat ordered looks delicious. Just look at his face, and you'll see how content he is. "If people could eat at any time freshly baked ice cream waffles, deliciously stuffed French creme brulee, and precision patterned chocolate cakes, there would

be no war in the world," the Cat continues. I know he's not serious about his words. But to a cat, nothing really counts.
 "What about honey toast?"
 "What's that crooked stuff?" says the Cat with a look of disdain.
 "You said you would tell me some secrets."
 "Not now! Let's go and eat the genuine Taiwan afternoon tea."
 "Taiwan afternoon tea?"
 "Yes, of course."

In the blink of an eye, the Cat has collected a whole big bag of food. We come to the entrance of the temple and sit down. The winds gently blow. He opens the paper bags, one after one. The favorite honey potato of childhood, steaming hot sweet crackers and wheel pancakes, and, a bag of huge



grilled squid....Is it all right to mix them up and eat? The familiar smells of the food fragrance make my stomach just stuffed with desserts feel a bit hungry. What the heck! They are irresistible, and I just eat along.



Cat's recommendation of Taiwan tour afternoon tea



Melange Cafe No. 1

Address: 23 Lane 16, Section 2, Zhongshan N. Road, Zhongshan District, Taipei City 104; telephone: 02-2567-3787
 Waiting in line is common.
 Recommendation: super-size strawberry waffles.

Fifteen Steps Workshop

Address: 1F, No. 25, Alley 7, Lane 423, Jhuangjing road, Shinyi District, Taipei City; Telephone: 02-2758-8075
 Mini seats, exquisite delicacies. Home-baked coffee and French stir-fries are recommended.

Grandpa Sweet Potato Stall

On the Young Road of Tainan City
 It's a mobile stall, showing up randomly on Mondays and Fridays. Honey sweet potatoes and potato slices are recommended.

Sputnik Lab

Address: No. 72, Fubei Street, North District, Tainan City 704; Telephone: 0926-261-122
 Ippodo's freshly brewed matcha is recommended.

Anna Maria English Tea Salon

No. 1, Alley 1, Yuler Lane, Kangshan District, Kaohsiung City 820.
 The shop offers strong taste collocation.
 Reservation is required. Group customers only.
 Reservation must be made in advance at the FB fanpage.
 Grapefruit chocolate pies are recommended.

Tataocheng - Vintage flavor of wheel pancakes

No. 21, Section 1, Dihua Street, Datung District, Taipei City 103 (in front of the Yongle Market)
 Large red bean wheel pancakes and radish strips wheel pancakes are recommended.

Anonymous Clay Oven Rolls & Fried Bread Stick Store

No. 434, Kangshan Road, Kangshan District, Kaohsiung City 820
 It's a mobile stall across the road of the Kangshan Farmers' Association, and it offers sweet muffins twice a day.

Beigang Grilled Squid

No. 50 Yanping street, Anping District, Tainan City 70842
 This is a mobile stall on the Anping Old Street.
 If it doesn't show up, other stores also offer this delicious food.

Wistaria House

Address: No. 1, Lane 16, Section 3, Shinshen S. Road, Daan District, Taipei City 106; Telephone: 02-2363-7375
 Private boxes are provided. It's suitable for treating elders who are fond of tea. Its red mark memorial cakes and high mountain Jinxuan are recommended.

Chioushantang

Address: B1 F, No. 2, Section 1, Wuquan W. Road, Taichung City 403 (recessed garden at National Taiwan Museum of Fine Arts); Telephone: 04-2376-3137
 This is a tea shrine of Taichung. Like the Wistaria House, it offers Kungfu tea making (small tea pot and a whole set of tea utensil).

Dodo Bubble Tea

Address: No. 8, Alley 19, Lane 216, Section 4, Zhongxiao East Road, Daan District, Taipei City 106;
 Telephone: 02-2778-9459
 A variety of Taiwanese style refreshments.

STUDY AND WORK IN TAIWAN, A HONG KONG MAN MARRIES A BEAUTIFUL WIFE.

Text & Picture / Kathy

Alex



Born and Grew up in Hong Kong, Alex came to Taiwan in 1999 for study at National Taiwan University for a bachelor and then a master's degree at Tsinghua University. After graduation, he started to work in Taipei, including jobs of financial report editor for a TV station and newspaper. In the work environment, he met the one most important person in his life. Last year, after 7 years in love, Alex and Juliet got married and built a happy home.

Like Taiwan's living environment Living here for more than 10 years

After graduating from the Department of History at National Taiwan University, Alex continued his study at Tsinghua University for his master's degree. During the study, he lived in Taiwan all the time, and was deeply touched by the cozy humanity and living tranquility. Therefore, after finishing school, he started to seek job opportunities in Taipei. Unexpectedly, he became a financial report editor for a TV station, and a few year later, changed to a job in an insurance company, and then got back to the media industry again. He has been working for a newspaper since.

Alex admits, "If I went back to Hong Kong for a job after graduation, I guess I would not come back to Taiwan again." Since I have been living in Taipei over 10 years, I really feel like a Taiwanese. When I go back to Hong Kong to visit my family, I feel exhausted watching Hong Kong people bustling all the time, with tremendous pressure from making a living," continues Alex.

However, Taiwan has been developing fast in recent years. Alex feels the ever faster pace of life here, particularly the demand on children's education that has been raised a lot. "Especially in Taipei, I've noticed that parents are very worried about their

children's education, and put lots of resources on them, like sending them to crams for various talents cultivation. It is more and more like Hong Kong," says Alex.



Taiwan girls have many virtues, sometime tenderly soft and other times very strong

Hong Kong girls are famously called "Kong Girl", giving an impression of too practical and overbearing. As a Hong Konger now marrying a Taiwanese girl, Alex says for Hong Kong girls, "There are also Taiwanese girls too practical. People should not stereotype the impression on Hong Kong girls." "Of course, Taiwanese girls are indeed more tender and soft, and not too overbearing. They love family life after being married. Some of my female friends quit their jobs after having kids, so as to totally dedicate themselves to the family and kids," continues Alex.

In recent years, more and more Hong Kong people want to immigrate to Taiwan. Alex argues that immigrants should not hold a tourist mind. Although living is cheaper here, the salary is also lower. Therefore, before immigration, think carefully and

thoroughly. Nevertheless, the living environment of Taiwan is indeed marvelous. Besides work, there are many entertainment attractions for leisure activities. On holidays, Taiwanese people may take a trip to small outlying islands, or go for mountain hiking and sightseeing, while Hong Kong people can only fly abroad for vacation.



HONG KONG INDOORSMEN'S GODDESS TURNED INTO A TAIWANESE WIFE.

Text & Picture / Kathy

Mandy

Ferment
Store



Born and Grew up in Hong Kong, Alex came to Taiwan in 1999 for study at National Taiwan University for a bachelor and then a master's degree at Tsinghua University. After graduation, he started to work in Taipei, including jobs of financial report editor for a TV station and newspaper. In the work environment, he met the one most important person in his life. Last year, after 7 years in love, Alex and Juliet got married and built a happy home.

To feel with heart Perceive different Hualien

Once a movie actress, Mandy stopped her acting career in 2008, and came to Taipei alone for a new life. She lived in Hualien for about 4 to 5 years. "What impresses me the most is that different from Taipei, Hualien is closer to nature. You go to the mountains or to the coastlines within a short driving distance. You can also enjoy the city feeling in downtown, and shopping is easy," says Mandy.

In her eyes, Hualien not only has mountains and waters, but also is a city with immigration nature. She's observed many foreigners settling down here, and therefore it is easy to find exotic cuisines in Hualien. "My husband and I love the Belarus vegetables and German pork knuckles, and the dishes can be easily found here with authentic flavors," says Mandy.

She accentuated that further down the road to the rural places, there are many aboriginal people to meet and befriend. They love to joke and are very optimistic and positive toward people and the world. Mandy admits, "When feeling low, I'll go to the aboriginal tribes and stay for a night. It's a way to recharge myself."



"Indoorsmen's goddess" X "Selfishness route"

"Take a trip to Taroko first! That's a place absorbing the essence of heaven and earth. It used to be aboriginal people's hunting ground. The magnificent mountains and splendid waters are absolutely the choice for great natural power," continues Mandy. After the Taroko tour, goof around in the city, eat green onion pancakes, and buy the Hualien local specialties such as peeling peppers and mochi as souvenirs. Of course, you can also enjoy an afternoon tea at Kogosei, and shop for gifts.

For evening retreats, Mandy suggests a visit to Fenglin and dine at the "Moon House", a hidden little restaurant of their favorite. Then, get back to the city for a night market tour, and taste the "Yilan fried crabs". In the midnight, go to a Taiwanese style KTV near the train station, or play video games. They are all fun stuff.

How to look at the new identity of "Taiwanese daughter-in-law"

Speaking of her husband, yes indeed, Mandy got married with her husband, a Taiwanese boy nicknamed "Pinke", early this year. When talking about their love stories and married life, she smiles and says, "Our love stories are nothing special! We are husband and wife content with ordinary days of living. We do go out for cuisines and movies, or rent movies and watch them at home to spend a night."

After being a wife, Mandy feels like taking more responsibilities in both the married life and career, which need them to work on hand-in-hand, and therefore the things used to be taken care of by herself are now requiring more consideration in duet.



Create a brand with husband To increase cultural exchange between Taiwan and Hong Kong

They are husband and wife, and business partners as well. Mandy and Pinke work together to create the brand "Ferment Store", a shop renovated from an old house, which was a Western style architecture in the early days of Taiwanese retrocession. Inside the store, the building bricks and wooden structures are about 80 years old, preserving the conception and design of the craftsmen who built the house. This is a unique place, one of a kind.

"The most prominent feature of the brand", says Mandy, "is to introduce to the public products that are different in Taiwan and Hong Kong, like what Pinke and I represent, in that he's responsible for introducing brand products of Taiwanese independent designers to Hong Kong consumers, while I'm responsible for introducing Hong Kong's niche brands to Taiwanese consumers, so that the cultures on the two sides can be exchanged in this physical platform."

Taiwanese youngsters exert innovative dreams

Among the successful Hong Kong entrepreneurs in Taiwan, there was the Kogosei and there is the Ferment Store. In retrospection of the entrepreneurship of the past years, Mandy admits that the business environment of recent years is better than that of economic downturns, and it is particularly conducive to innovations of youngsters. "Generally speaking, Taiwan's salaries are not higher than other countries at all, and such a situation has driven youngsters to work for themselves to make



their dreams come true. They sell their own designs and ideas to gain recognitions from the market, and in particular, the cultural innovation products are booming," she continues,

"However, Taiwanese youngsters are relatively less baptized by the Western branding concept and, as a result, they are not quite organized in setting forth new products in lack of prospective strategies toward the market, thus sometimes they end up like playing house." "However, Taiwanese youngsters possess ideas and their niche lies in diversified creativity that are fun and interesting, and are the greatest things to have!" she insists.

Moon House

Address: No. 71, Fengning First Road,
Fenglin Township, Hualien County, Hualien City
Telephone: 03-876-2206

Kogosei

Address: No. 12, Mingde Third Street, Hualien City
Telephone: 03-831-0295
Website: <http://www.kogosei.tw>

Ferment Store

Address: 2F, No. 1, Lane 47, Chifeng Street,
Datung District, Taipei City
Telephone: 02-2552-7153
Website: <https://www.facebook.com/fermentstore>

Messenger

After having visited all the Taiwanese film festivals, don't forget to take a day trip to the emerging art and cultural innovation parks, and have an exquisite tastes of Taiwan's cultural innovation. Meanwhile, do some shopping and take home some of the lively energetic cultural innovation products for an elaborate study. In the next issue of "Taiwan Step", the editors will lead you to witness the power of Taiwan's cultural innovation.

