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《城市漫步》珠江三角洲 英文月刊

五洲传播出版社 出版发行
CHINA INTERCONTINENTAL PRESS

主管单位：中华人民共和国国务院新闻办公室
Supervised by the State Council Information Office of the People's Republic of China
主办单位：五洲传播出版社
地址：北京西城月坛北街 26 号恒华国际商务中心南楼 11 层文化交流中心
11th Floor South Building, Henghua International Business Center, 26 Yuetan North Street, Xicheng District, Beijing
http://www.cicc.org.cn
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广告经营许可证：京海工商广字第 8069 号
法律大部：大成律师事务所 魏君贤律师
Legal advisor: Wei Junxian, Dacheng Law Firm
国际标准刊号：ISSN 1672-8041 国内统一刊号：CN 11-5233/GO
定价：25.00 元 邮发代号：46-193
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Editor's Note

APRIL 2018

In many ways, living in the Pearl River Delta can feel like you've been transported into the plot of a science fiction film, what with all the technological innovations that seem to be occurring on a weekly basis. During my time living in South China, I've witnessed the rise of unmanned aerial vehicles, driverless cars, electric buses and, perhaps most relevant to our day-to-day existence, mobile payment methods.

Alipay and WeChat Pay are increasingly essential tools for those of us living in the People's Republic of China, both locals and expats alike. My platform of choice is WeChat Pay and I use it for almost everything: paying my rent and utility bills, topping up my mobile phone credit, assorted daily purchases and settling the tab when I dine at a restaurant. It's convenient and it beats the hell out of a wallet filled with RMB1 notes and coins that inevitably build up after a few days of corner store purchases.

For this month's cover story (pages 36-45), we examine the cashless revolution currently taking place in China and take a look at the benefits and the risks that come with mobile payment methods.

In our City section, we hear from a laowai busker who has traveled the Middle Kingdom to serenade curious crowds with his catchy folk tunes. We hear about the challenges – and rewards – that come with making a living as an artist in public spaces (page 12).

Elsewhere in our April issue, we take a brief look at Shenzhen Fashion Week 2018 (page 22), chat with Beijing duo Nocturnes ahead of their performances in Guangzhou and Shenzhen (page 29) and sample the new (and unquestionably bizarre) spicy Snickers bar (page 57).

Also, with April upon us (which means rain, more rain and hot, hot heat) we've rounded up a selection of trendy raincoats for your consideration (page 26).

Until next month,



Matthew Bossons
Editor-in-Chief



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CITY

City Snapshot

Silent night in Shenzhen, p10



Paint It Black
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Busking In China
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URBAN SHEPHERD

Mutton Chopper

By Adam Robbins

THE DIRTY DETAILS

Monthly income: RMB60,000 for a family of 10

Days per week: 7 (on call)

Hours per day: "If people are buying, we work; if not, we relax."



The green face of the Starbucks mermaid smiles temptingly along a stretch of Shenzhen's northern Longhua District. But cross the street to an almost-hidden alley beside a Muslim restaurant (also in iconic green) to a path through an urban village settled on sandy foothills. Before you've finished sipping your coffee, civilization has fallen away and you're face to face with dozens, even hundreds, of majestically horned rams.

Mr. Ma, a Muslim of the Hui minority, rents this little stretch of forest with his extended family, caring for the land (erosion is a problem) and maintaining a herd of sheep for the slaughter.

"Whoever likes to eat sheep, we sell to them," he explains. They accept orders by WeChat (ID: 13538278651) and serve many regulars. "Restaurants, individuals, stores as well." Sometimes customers walk away with sheep in tow, but often the Ma family butchers the animals on site (a stray head stares up at us blankly to prove the point) and they always follow the halal practices required by Islamic law.



Though China's roughly 23 million practitioners of Islam are concentrated in the northwest, adherents can be found throughout the country. Shenzhen, new city of immigrants, is home to many families like Mr. Ma's. "We wanted to find a better life and more opportunity," he relates. And they've found it here, where each animal fetches RMB2,000 for the family.

Like the sheep, the family hails from Qinghai province. "Our ancestral home is mountainous, poor and underdeveloped," he reports matter-of-factly. "There was no door to education." His own *putonghua* was quite poor when the family moved, but 15 years in Shenzhen fixed that.

Now the whole family is here, occupying a small lot with four white tents adorned in beautiful patterns of black, red and yellow. A canopy covers the kitchen area; a few shacks provide shelter for the home and animal tending. A plump chicken wanders by, pecking the dirt, as a small boy stares quietly. Ma's wife in black lace head scarf adds dates to a cup of tea. Ma's brother eats roasted seeds, lamenting the plight of Pakistan. Here in this wooded glen, that trouble seems a world away.

This little spot of forest, Ma tells us, is owned by the neighboring factory but it's a nationally protected resource. So when redevelopment consumes the rest of the neighborhood, reshaping the old village into towering apartments, the family and the sheep will remain, balancing a new world of steel and silicon with the organics of the old.

THE BUZZ

RANDOM NUMBERS

1,280



... food delivery drivers, close to 10 percent of Shenzhen's entire fleet, were suspended for a week last month. Police also announced that those who break traffic rules three times will be dismissed from their jobs. Additionally, they'll be added to a blacklist and forbidden from food delivery work for an entire year. As public appetite for food delivery has grown in Chinese cities, so has the fleet of couriers – often riding banned e-bikes – hired to bring meals to diners' doorsteps. In the name of reducing the number of accidents resulting from harried deliverymen, Shenzhen traffic police are cracking down on those who violate road regulations.

10

... the number of foreigners allowed (at any given time) inside Beijing's Pyro Pizza and Lush last month, a limit imposed after pressure from local authorities. The news spread quickly online among expats, who greeted it with a mixture of bemusement and worry. Both restaurants are popular among foreigners, particularly international students living in Beijing's Wudaokou neighborhood.

CITY SNAPSHOT

Silent Night

Sky Gidge got into photography while working as a member of the editorial team in *That's PRD's* Shenzhen office. This month's image profiles the Ping An Finance Center at night and was captured by Mr. Gidge somewhere in Shenzhen's central Futian District, in a location – like his Tinder dates – he'd rather keep discreet. His Instagram account as a whole is well worth a casual creep, with images ranging from the experimental to the *Tron*-inspired. See more of his work on Instagram (@cupofkoala).

Tag #thatsprd on Instagram for a chance to be featured on our feed and in the magazine.



BEHIND THE CONCRETE

China's Largest Sports Stadium

In the eastern portion of Guangzhou's Tianhe District lies the neighborhood of Huangcun, home to the colossal Guangdong Olympic Stadium. The name is a tad deceiving, as the massive sporting structure has never held the esteemed Olympic Games.

Instead, it was erected in 2001 for the 9th National Games of China, held soon after Beijing won the bid to host the 2008 Summer Olympic Games, hence the 'Olympic' moniker. Two years later, the stadium was the main venue for the 2010 Asian Games.

Today, Guangdong Olympic Stadium remains the largest stadium in China in terms of seating capacity and is mainly used for football matches (soccer, for all you North Americans). The area surrounding the modern-day mega-coliseum is home to an array of China's finest sports facilities, including world-class swimming pools, an equestrian training center and tennis courts that resemble a Hakka walled village, among others.

Be that as it may, the impressive structure has hosted few important football matches in recent years, largely due to its remote location outside of Guangzhou's city center.

While many newcomers to the city are unaware of the existence of Guangdong Olympic Stadium, even longtime residents



of Guangzhou are likely ignorant to what formerly occupied the land that the stadium now stands upon: Huangcun Airport, built by occupying Japanese forces in 1940.

The now defunct and dismantled airport was completed two years after the Japanese army began their occupation of Canton, and was used as a distraction from their main air force base in Guangzhou: Tianhe Airport. (In a strange twist, the former site of Tianhe Airport is now occupied by Tianhe Stadium). Mock warplanes made from wood and iron were parked at Huangcun Airport in a bid to trick Allied bombers.

The only indication of Huangcun Airport's existence that still remains today is a blockhouse overgrown with foliage a short stroll from Guangdong Olympic Stadium.

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Zihei/zì hēi / 自黑 v. to self-deprecate, to put oneself down

A You have so many friends. Must be nice to be popular.

B I'm sure my parents pay them to hang out with me. Haha.

A So do my parents, but no one wants to take the payment. Haha.

B Is this a *zihei* competition?

We're not sure if it's life that's become harder or kids that have gotten weaker, but sarcasm alone is no longer a sufficient coping mechanism. Now we need *zihei* as well.

Literally meaning "to self blacken," *zihei* is the practice of making fun of your own weaknesses before they can be used against you. It is saying "no girl will ever like me" before someone can ask you if you have a girlfriend. It is saying "your car is worth more than my kidney" before someone can ask you how much money you make. Whenever there is a possibility that a conversation will involve one of your vulnerabilities, you must immediately bring it up and expose it in front of everyone, so that no one else can use it against you. Failing this, you risk being teased mercilessly by your group for not declaring it in advance.

Zihei has become an unspoken social rule because it is a fool-proof way to guard against humiliation. When a user on Zhihu.com (China's Quora) asked why people *zihei*, the answer with the most votes was: "because it turns weaknesses into weapons."

Zihei is also an effective way to take criticism. Even Jack Ma, the last person in the world to be called a failure, had to *zihei* to get out of a few pickles. In 2013, Alibaba said it sold two million pairs of underwear on Singles Day, which could cover an area of 3,000 kilometers. When the Internet found out that it meant each pair would have to be 1.5 meters long, Alibaba apologized, saying: "This is why Jack Ma failed math in school."

Zihei is so prevalent nowadays that it's a faux pas if you forget to do it. Next time you post a gorgeous selfie on WeChat Moments, don't forget to add the tagline "took 800 selfies to get one that doesn't suck." Next time you tell your friends about your big job promotion, don't forget to say "can't believe my dumb luck!" If Jack Ma had to do it, you should learn it too. **Mia Li**

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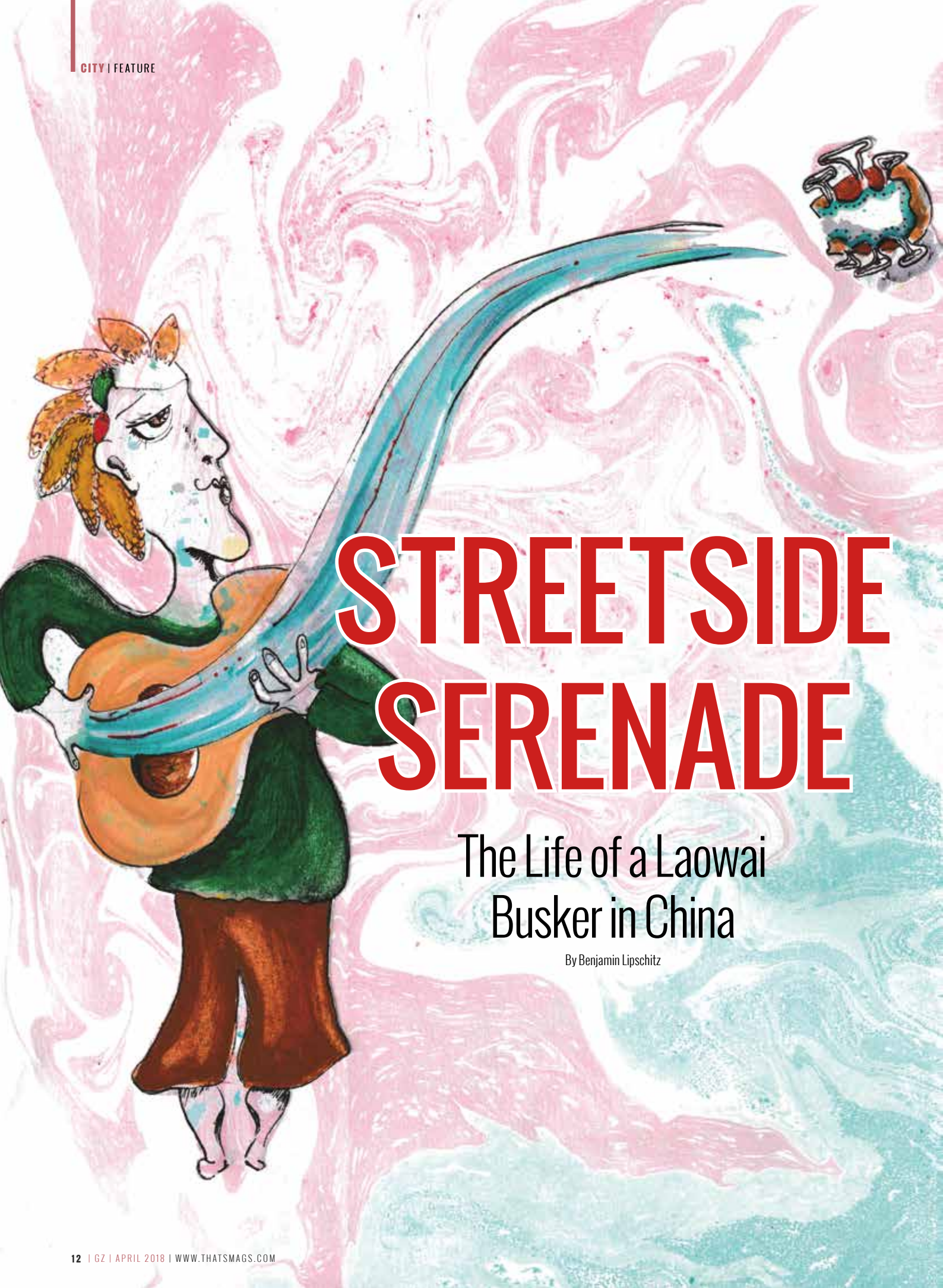
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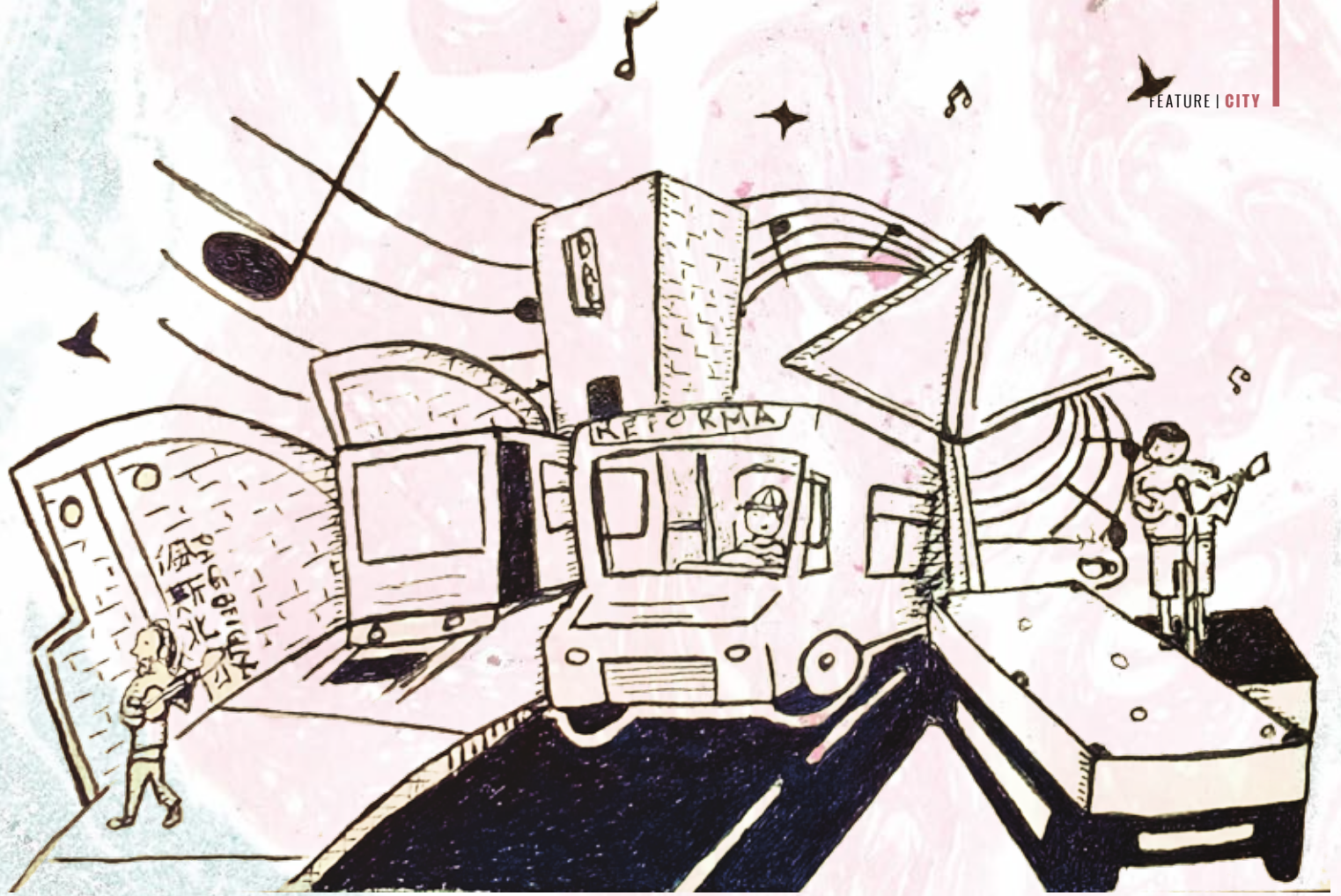
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STREETSIDE SERENADE

The Life of a Laowai
Busker in China

By Benjamin Lipschitz



“Good afternoon, everybody, and thank you for listening to my music. These songs that I have just played you have been, of course, free of charge; I simply wish to deepen the way we interact in public spaces. However, singing on the metro everyday requires one to have an income, so if anyone cares to share one or two RMB with me, it would be a great contribution to my art.”

I then pass through the metro car, accepting whatever support is offered, whether it's money, snacks or hugs. People laugh as I announce that I have a QR code for the 'especially modernized characters' that no longer carry cash.

Years ago, as a teenaged musician, I started making the rounds of Beijing's Sanlitun, Gulou and Wudaokou bars. Late nights in pubs were an exciting way to develop my art, but early mornings running for the school bus were always a rude awakening and eventually it was clear that I needed to make a change.

I had always thought of street performance as a last resort for people with few options for survival, and yet, for me it increasingly seemed like a dignified alternative to serenading the drunken patrons of late-night establishments, a work environment that not only exposed my vocal chords and harmonicas to secondhand smoke, but occasionally had me wondering what song might soothe the tensions of violent billiards-brawls. More than once, I

was threatened by audience members who were angry that I could not fulfill their song requests.

Folk music was my art, but my employers made their money selling booze, and I realized that in their minds my music was essentially the same as the peanuts they put on their clients' tables: just another amenity to keep the drink orders flowing. I wanted something different.

I started bringing my music to the sidewalks of Beijing's 798 art district, where I could play on sunny afternoons, make as much money as I had in bars and still get my full adolescent's night's sleep. Better yet, whereas in those bars the diversity of my audience was limited by the financial and cultural capital necessary to frequent those fine establishments, on the street my audience was full of people I would never have sung to before: babies, children, elders; rich people, poor people; city folk, rural migrants; people from all over the world.

I can't overemphasize how important this was to my artistic development: the form that art takes is as much determined by its audience as it is by its maker. I did not want to make music that was only for middle class people.

Still though, 798 was just 798, with its own limitations, its own four walls and particular types of people wandering around inside them. I soon discovered the true beauty of sidewalks: all cities had them! I traveled to Shandong, Shaanxi, Fujian, Hong Kong and eventually Taiwan. I got

more ambitious. I went to the United States, and eventually to Mexico, where I lived for a year and a half. Everywhere I went, I found that by seeking sustenance in the streets with my music I could learn more about a place and its culture than by visiting tourist sites.

It became a puzzle: what style of music do people here respond best to? What rhythms? How should I interact with children who are ever-so-curious at the sight of me? How should I interact with people intent on invading my personal space? How should I interact with police?

This last question, in recent years, has been most central in determining how I work. When I returned to Beijing from Mexico in 2017, after a three-year absence, I discovered that my old street corners were no longer available due to increased presence of *chengguan* in 798. Thankfully, in Mexico, I had found a vibrant informal performing arts economy, and I learned some tricks of the trade.

There, I discovered that the sidewalks were the domain of mariachi bands and other more formal acts, who not only played the traditional songs that people wanted to hear, but were also invariably much better dressed than myself. People like me, with more informal acts, whether they were folk musicians with guitars and accordions, rappers with microphones and backing tracks, or clowns with red noses and balloons, made their living performing on city busses and metro cars. In May of

“Sometimes I measure my success by the number of people that I get to put down their phones and look me in the eye.”

2016 I had my first crack at transit performance. The benefits were self-evident: on a street-corner, a busker seeks high foot-traffic. This means people have places to go, and while it is touching when someone takes a break from their journey to listen to a full song, it doesn't happen often, and much like in the bars, people who can't afford the luxury to stop and smell the roses will only ever hear fragments of my music. On the trains I have, for lack of a better word, a captive audience.

But perhaps that is the perfect term to describe people who are stuck spending more and more of their lives in transit. Oftentimes metro-riders are held captive, but it is not by me. The seemingly unstoppable momentum of urbanization and gentrification force people farther and father away – from their jobs, each other and places of social gathering. The time that people spend getting around is as central to the functioning of an urban economy as it is to urbanites' alienation from their surroundings. I see my work as an effort to take back that time for new possibilities, and to open up that space as a social space in and of itself.

While I chose this work over working in bars, it does present its own challenges: my ability to perform depends on the ever-fluctuating state of public security. For example, since returning to China there have been two occasions on which high-profile government meetings have effectively put me out of business for two weeks due to the increased security presence on the trains.

Of course, as a visible foreigner I am subject to very different penalties from my Chinese friends in the same





line of work. The situation changes constantly: in recent years subway performers in Beijing have faced anything from a few hours' detention with a RMB50 fine to multiple-night stays in jail, though these days it tends towards the former. However, when I am caught, station attendants usually just insist that I stop playing and leave. The attendants range from apologetic to mean to nervous at the thought of speaking to a laowai. But they have never fined me and have only rarely attempted to detain me. The fact that I am a foreign passport holder surely would complicate the process of penalizing me, and extra paperwork is always a good deterrent to that kind of action.

Each city I play in has its own dynamics. In Wuhan, authorities are less draconian but much more vigilant: there, not even my Chinese peers get fined, but few workdays end for us without getting booted from the train. In Guangzhou, the attendants seem to really not know what to look for. As long as I stick to the back of the train and get real quiet when the doors open at a station, I have no trouble. However, if the music carries me away and I forget to quiet down, the attendants get much more indignant than in other cities. I'm not sure why that is, but there is a flip side: the audience thinks it's hilarious! The doors close, the attendant radios ahead to the next station, and I have a couple of minutes to apologize to the giggling audience that my performance has been cut short, and make my rounds for tips. I usually make more money when this happens.

That being said, for all of the interactions I've had with police and station guards in my line of work, the busker's most daunting adversaries in China by far are the volunteer retirees who seem to sincerely enjoy the sense of authority that comes with their position. The few times I've dared try to convince one of them to let me play, I have always regretted it. While whole subway cars have thrown in their voice to help me talk down a guard who seems to want to detain me, nobody would dare back me up against an ayi with an arm band. I won't go into details, but I too have learned my lesson.

For the most part though, I can make it through my three songs without interruption, and people are more than happy to support me. While I play, I often hear an echo of myself with a 10 second delay as people review the WeChat Moments they've just posted of me. It feels strange when people right in front of me experience my live music through their cell phone cameras. Sometimes, I measure my success by the number of people that I get to put down their phones and look me in the eye.

Other ways of measuring success, however, are unavoidable. I do need to eat. A friend, whenever he is present when I count up my day's earnings, always tries to decide what denomination of bill is best: "do you prefer one kuai bills or 50 kuai bills"? The answer may seem obvious, and though it is true that I would not be able to survive working this way if nobody ever outdid my request for "one or two RMB" and slipped me a 10, 20 or a 50, I would be equally unable to get by if everyone who can only afford to support me with one or two kuai felt ashamed and thus gave me nothing. And that is my favorite aspect of my work: it is crowd-sourced in the realest sense possible. That is, funded by actual crowds, by all kinds of people.

CHINESE ZODIAC COLOURING

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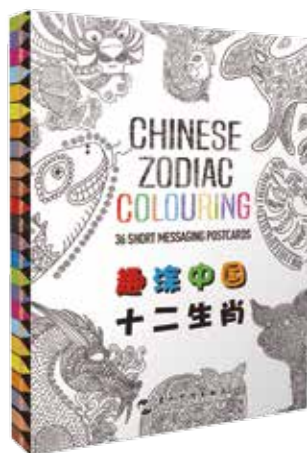
Available in a set of 36, the illustrations are designed in a way that brings out the personalities of each animal, allowing people to get a better understanding of what their signs represent.

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LIFE & STYLE

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FIONA LAU AND KAIN PICKEN

Designers and Founders of
FIXXEDD STUDIOS

Interview by Dominic Ngai

Founded in 2010 by Fiona Lau and Kain Picken, FIXXEDD STUDIOS is part of a new generation of homegrown fashion labels that is changing the world's perception on the concept of 'made in China.' We caught up with the Shenzhen-based duo just before their Shanghai Fashion Week show to find out more about their *kuaidi* parcel-inspired AW 2018 collection, and what it's like to run a fashion label as a couple.

What does the name 'FIXXEDD' mean?

KP: Our collaboration began as an art/fashion project and it wasn't until a bit later that we decided to turn it into a label. We wanted a word that we could build our own meaning into. FIXXEDD references the idea of having no fixed location or meaning, while the play on the spelling means we could change or adapt the brand to make it our own.

Has your creative process evolved since the brand's founding in 2010? Do you each play a certain role?

KP: In the beginning it was really just Fiona and I, and it was really 'DIY' and a bit free form. Now we work with a small team to make our collections and shows, so there are more time and financial constraints. But this has really helped us to articulate our design process more thoroughly, and we still maintain a fairly DIY approach.

FL: We always work together during the creative design process and the development of the collections. But in other aspects of the business, we each focus more on certain tasks. I am generally more involved with production, while Kain handles press relations and other projects.



“FIXXEDD is an extension of our lives”

How has the brand been received in China and internationally over the last eight years?

KP: Japan was always our major market for a long time, but over the last two or three years, our sales and brand presence have become much bigger in China. During the last two seasons, we have been focusing more on European sales. I think that our particular 'laidback' style can fit anywhere.

So what's a typical FIXXEDD fan like?

FL: It varies. In Japan, we have a big following of guys in their early 20s, while our Chinese customer base is less youth oriented. In Europe, they tend to be a little more mature and are often involved in creative industries.

Your design concept is about adapting to the changing conditions for contemporary living. How is this reflected in your most recent collection?

FL: For the AW18 collection, we used parcels that come through our office everyday as our inspiration. We created this adhesive transfer tape that resembles packing tape, and made it look like they're holding pieces of fabric in place. It's about taking a new look at the ma-

terials we use everyday – materials that you don't necessarily associate with fashion.

As a couple, what are the advantages and disadvantages of working with your partner? Do you find it hard to unplug?

FL: FIXXEDD is really an extension of our lives and it's nice to see how we have grown together. The advantage is that you can develop a kind of shorthand working so closely together. The disadvantage is that it can be difficult to separate work from life, which is great when things are going really smoothly, but it can be difficult when the pressure is on.

KP: Yes, for a long time this seemed almost impossible, but we really made an effort to make it happen – taking small vacations during the year where we totally disconnect from work.

What are your plans for the rest of 2018?

KP: After Shanghai Fashion Week, we'll be working on a really fun and interesting project for a new museum in Australia, so we'll also be there later in the year.

See more of Lau and Picken's designs at fixxedd.com

STYLE RADAR

TAP THAT APP

Toilet Sharing 厕所共享

That's right, the whole public toilet network of urban China is now at your finger tips with the arrival of the "Toilet Sharing (厕所共享)" app.

First thing to know: the interface language of the toilet-hunting app is Chinese. That said, using the app is pretty straightforward. When your phone's location services are turned on, it pinpoints every public toilet and restroom at hotels, department stores, KFCs, McDonald's and the like in close proximity. So even if reading Chinese characters is not your forte, you will still be able to locate the facilities at hand.

For instance, around the Taojin Metro Station in Guangzhou's Yuexiu District, a total of 10 lavatories are uncloaked in Toilet Sharing, including five in the Guangzhou Friendship Store.

It's even better if you can read Chinese, in which case the address and distance of pinpointed washrooms from your location are shown when tapped. Tap again on '查看线路' (see route) in the upper right corner, and a suggested route is displayed.

There's also an 'add toilet' function, which requires user registration. For the time being, though, this feature is clearly malfunctioning. Fingers crossed for a future update that will fix this bug.

"Toilet Sharing 厕所共享" is available on iOS and Android devices.



INSPECT-A-GADGET

IMAX on Your Face

At this point, clunky VR headsets are a dime-a-dozen in China and at first glance you could be forgiven for assuming that Cinera is just another chinsy gimmick for trend-chasing gamers. You'd be wrong, of course.

Rather, Cinera is a dual-screen, extra-wide movie-watching console from a Shenzhen startup that wants to change the way you enjoy cinema.

Founder Peter Lin calls it "IMAX on your face," and with an impressive 66-degree field of vision (compared to the paltry 54 degrees of most standard cinema screens), he's not far off.

The product, which is about the size of science textbook, comes with an extendable 'burden-free' mechanical arm to hold the entertainment portal in place. It doesn't go in for flashy gaming features, out-of-the-box convenience or extreme portability – unless you spring for the battery-pack head mount, Cinera is designed for use at home.

Instead, as a product made by and for movie-lovers, Cinera focuses its firepower on video quality and viewing experience. Its dual 2.5k screens can display standard as well as 3D content, its lightweight body effectively blocks outside light and, with a pixels-per-degree count roughly four times that of the competition, Cinera easily leads the pack.



But that image-superiority comes with a hefty price tag. This futuristic piece of video tech will currently set you back RMB5,057 on Cinera.net (though we recommend you wait till mid-April, when the product is rumored to start selling on JD.com at a significant discount).

Solitary cinephiles who are willing to fork over more than most of us spend on movie tickets in five years will not be disappointed with this product – it's strikingly vivid and incredibly immersive. But those of us who still like the social aspect of sitting around the sofa enjoying movies with friends or, God forbid, going out into the world to enjoy popular culture in a public place will probably stick to torrent sites, Netflix and good old Wanda.

RMB3,998 Cinera; available on JD.com starting mid-April

COVET



Converse x MADNESS Chuck '70

Following on the success of their last collaboration in January, Hong Kong-based streetwear label MADNESS and Converse released their second pair of sneakers on March 24. Using the classic low-cut Chuck '70 as a base, the military wear-inspired kicks feature two distinct materials – navy green suede and black canvas – for a contrast in textures. Available on MADNESS' official website or at the Converse iapm outlet for RMB839.

mdnsonline.com



DAYTRIPPER

Guangzhou Bangkok Park

It's no secret that Thailand has become an insanely hot tourism destination for Chinese travelers. Attractive prices and favorable visa policies drew nearly 10 million Chinese visitors to the Southeast Asian country last year, easily outpacing touristic arrivals from the next five countries combined.

But let's face it, not everyone has a passport and the money for the four-hour flight to Pataya. That is where Guangzhou Bangkok Park comes in.



The level of authenticity at this outlandish 4A tourism attraction, located a short moto-taxi ride from Metro Line 9's Huadu Automobile City Station, is on full display.

Visitors to this paragon of Siamese culture will be treated to such true-to-life approximations of its tropical namesake as signs proudly proclaiming the availability of Changsha stinky tofu "personally inscribed by Chairman Mao," costumed security dressed up as Qing imperial guards, gilded Polynesian *mo'ai* statues and stone sculptures depicting T-Rexes and other characteristic Thai fauna.

It's enough to make you feel like you're strolling through the streets of old Bangkok.

Despite taking an eclectic approach and certain artistic liberties in conveying its Thai theme, the one-of-a-kind park – enclosed by the larger Huadu Jewelry Town, a complex of workshops and factories producing gold and silver adornments – does contain some worthwhile gems.

Across a stone bridge and through an elephant-guarded gate lies a visually impressive cluster of Thai-style structures and Buddhist temple-like buildings sporting eye-catching golden roofs. At their center stands an imposing statue of Phra Phrom, the Thai interpretation of the four-faced Hindu god Brahma. Some structures house convenience stores, others jewelry shops.

There's only one restaurant to speak of, and while it does offer some token Thai items, it seems more concerned with catering towards Chinese appetites with dishes from Sichuan, Hunan, Guangdong and the great Northwest, all at fair prices.

Perhaps most notably, the park contains

a museum dedicated to the history of silver use throughout human civilization, displaying handmade silver artworks, ornaments and daily life items fashioned by Thai craftsmen, among a wide variety of other silvery objects. The winding gallery finally leads to – you guessed it – a large jewelry store.

Back outside, amusement facilities seem more or less ignored by visitors, young and old alike, in favor of a giant statue of a Buddha meditating on the back of a three-faced elephant, which serves as a popular backdrop for photos.

A visit to Guangzhou Bangkok Park is a bewildering experience – somewhere between farce and whimsy, not unlike our previous journey to the replicated Austrian town of Hallstatt in Huizhou. On our way out, with the smell of Changsha stinky tofu still hanging heavy on the air, our moto-taxi driver tells us that both the park and jewelry town swarm with visitors on weekends, and until the Guangzhou metro manages to extend direct to Phuket, we imagine this will continue to be the case. **TZ**

How to get there:

Take Guangzhou Metro Line 9 to Huadu Qiche Cheng Station. Taxis are rare here, so opt for a Didi ride to Huadu Zhubao Xiaozhen (Huadu Jewelry Town).

COUTURE CLASH

Inside Shenzhen Fashion Week 2018

By Bailey Hu, photos by Peter Code



This past March, models strutted, swayed, glared, pouted and, every so often, smiled during Shenzhen's annual couture extravaganza.

With over 80 shows and around 200 designers, Fashion Week 2018, as usual, went by in a whirlwind of colorful clothing and frenetic photo-snapping. In a trend-breaking (or perhaps, -making) move, organizers decided to ditch traditional catwalks this time around.

Instead, the site of the shows was Shenzhen's new(ish) Museum of Contemporary Art, with its cavernous, eerie and all-white exhibition halls.

A mere shoe's throw away from the Civic Center, the venue represents a much-anticipated addition to the city's art scene. It strikes quite the figure, too, from sleek gray-latticed exterior to shining blob of a centerpiece inside.

By hosting shows at the museum, organizers hope to bridge the tenuous boundaries between art and couture, watchers and watched.

The result? Models described sinuous routes around spaces where not long before, sculptures had stood. And rather than being relegated to the shadowy space on either side of a brightly-lit catwalk, viewers were brought closer than ever to the action.



While a strong visual statement, the spectacle also had audience members standing and leaning, sometimes perilously close to models, for the perfect shot.

Cameramen, too, were left to jostle with each other for coveted angles from the press box. Between shows, we spotted at least two napping on the carpeted floor of the enclosure, probably exhausted by their labors.

Relaxed boundaries for the runway sometimes resulted in small-scale pandemonium. After one popular show, a group of models and designers found themselves at the center of a thick ring of photojournalists and audience members.

But for all the controlled chaos, the new concept also made possible interesting experiments. One show began with a surprise: models covertly sitting in the audience abruptly stood up as one. Unmoving and stone-faced, they made an unexpected backdrop to those sweeping by in loose, asymmetrical shifts and coats.

Outside the showrooms, attendees also switched things up. We spotted styles ranging from the outrageous – a necklace stringing together fabric fried eggs or a set of white antlers – to the merely eccentric. And of course, there were selfies. Lots of selfies.

Fashion Week is, after all, the most important time of the year to see and be seen. In the spirit of the former, check out our impressions in photo form by scanning the QR code.





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HOMEGROWN BEAUTY

Six Chinese-Inspired Remedies to Improve Your Skin Condition from Within

By Alexandria Williams

Everyone has heard of K-beauty, a trend born out of Korea's ritualistic skincare and beauty regimens that have become massively popular around the world in recent years. But what about 'C-beauty'? With more than 2,500 years of traditional medicine practices, China also has a number of natural beauty secrets that are deeply rooted in TCM theories. Here are six popular tips, some of which were given a slight modern twist, that will help restore your *yin* and *yang* balance while allowing your skin to glow from within.

01 Drink Warm Water

This may sound silly to most Westerners, but almost all Chinese women and their mothers say it is the key to having ageless skin. According to TCM doctors and experts, warm beverages promote the smooth circulation of blood within the body and maintain the balance of one's internal and external body temperature. If you don't follow this key step, the others won't even matter.

Instructions:

Swap cold or room temperature drinks with warm ones (at least 37 degrees Celsius – the average core body temperature of a healthy person).



02 Rice Water Ice Cubes

It's not uncommon in China for people to use rice-soaked water as a face wash, as many believe the cloudy residue is packed with nutrients. In addition, rice water is said to have the ability to eliminate dirt and oil from the skin, and some even use it to treat or prevent acne outbreaks. A perfect skin-toning agent, rice water ice cubes can be easily made at home to give your skin a refreshing boost each morning.

Instructions:

Take one cup of dry rice and give it a quick rinse to get rid of any dirt. Put the rice into two cups of room temperature water and let it soak for 15 minutes. Then, drain the rice water into a large container. From there, you can siphon this cloudy beauty elixir into an ice cube tray in even portions and leave it in the freezer. Take out one or two rice water ice cubes in the morning and gently rub them onto your cleansed face.



03 Jade Rollers

Jade has been used for ceremonial purposes in China since the Neolithic Period. In addition to being a beautiful adornment, this precious stone may also have a number of health benefits. In *Compendium of Materia Medica*, Li Shizhen stated that wearing jade close to the body could improve one's vitality. And in recent years, the jade roller, an age-old Chinese beauty tool known for its ability to brighten the complexion and assist lymphatic drainage, has become very popular outside the country.

Instructions:

Place your jade roller in the freezer overnight. After cleaning the face with a water-based cleanser, apply a small amount of eye cream under the eyes. Then, take the smaller end of the jade roller and gently rub the eye cream by rolling from the corner of the eye towards the ears. For other areas of the face, take a small amount of aloe vera serum and lightly coat the larger end of the jade roller. Next, with medium pressure, roll across the face from the nose towards the ears, paying special attention to puffy areas.

06 Green Tea Rinse

One of the most widely consumed beverages in China, green tea is grown throughout the country's mountainous regions. Its importance to Chinese culture and history, as well as its health benefits, were documented in Tang dynasty scholar Lu Yu's book, *Tea Classic*.

With a high level of antioxidants and anti-inflammatory properties, drinking green tea has become an essential part of the diet for many. Not a fan of its grassy flavor? Try a quick and simple green tea facial rinse, which is easily achievable with loose tealeaves or teabags, and allow your skin to absorb all the benefits of the drink through your pores.

Instructions:

Steep two tea bags (or 2.5 grams of loose-leaf green tea) in six ounces of boiling water for 10-15 minutes, and let the tea sit for a bit. While the hot liquid is cooling down, enjoy a hot shower or cover your face with a hot towel, to open up your pores. Take the cooled green tea and use it to give your face a quick rinse, which is said to be able to get rid of dark eye circles.



04 Yakult and Mung Bean Facial Mask

Mung bean facial masks were a favorite of Chinese empresses for centuries thanks to their strong 'cooling properties' making them a great natural remedy against acne outbreaks and scars. Modern Chinese beauty specialists have also combined Yakult to mung bean powder to create a creamy, restorative combo-mask that can brighten skin complexion and facilitate the fading of scars.

Instructions:

Mix two tablespoons of mung bean powder with three tablespoons of Yakult. Stir until the powder takes on the texture of toothpaste. After mixing, massage the paste onto the face and leave for 10 minutes. Repeat daily.

05 Goji Berry Mask

Often added to teas and soups, goji berries have high levels of antioxidants and are said to be able to help the skin absorb nutrients. In TCM, they are also recognized for their ability to improve and protect one's eyesight. Besides eating them, you can also make masks with these beta-carotene-packed superfruits to help improve the complexion and reduce acne scars.

Instructions:

Take four to five goji berries and soak them in warm water for 15 minutes. Then, mash them and add ¼ tablespoon of honey. Spread onto skin and let the paste sit for 15 minutes, then rinse with warm water.



SAVE IT FOR A RAINY DAY

Stay Dry with These Waterproof Jackets

Compiled by Dominic Ngai

April means plenty of rainy days and fluctuating temperatures, but these jackets can help you survive the unpredictable weather ahead.



1



2



3



4



5



6

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Sino Celeb

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The Leftovers
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NOCTURNES

The Beijing Duo on Their First China Tour

By Bryan Grogan

Leslie Liu and Dave Carey of indietronica band Nocturnes made waves on the Beijing scene last year with their EP *Dust into Glory*, which they followed shortly with their debut studio album, *Lines Written in Code*. Carey's previous stint as guitarist in the short-lived Irish band The Empire Lights has given him industry insight, while Liu brings PR knowledge and business acumen from her full-time job in Ruder Finn. Nocturnes will embark on their first major tour of China this month with 11 dates up and down the country. We spoke with the duo before they set off.



How long did it take you guys to make your debut album, *Lines Written in Code*?

DC: We released our previous EP, *Dust Into Glory*, in March 2017, and we had already sketched out a few songs at that point. We finished recording by September and then it was a case of finding a designer and making some videos.

Already you have a nice niche on the indie scene; you guys don't really sound like any other Chinese band out there.

LL: Thanks! I think so too, haha. For now, we really want to play bigger festivals across China, and play in more Asian countries, and then maybe eventually outside of Asia. On a business level, we'd like to collaborate with publishing companies for our music to appear on television shows or movies, because I think our music really suits TV.

DC: We love how in China the concept of selling out doesn't exist. We've played quite a few corporate events so far and people are happy to hear that we've made money with our

music. Back home, it's like this big shameful secret.

Before Nocturnes, what kind of music were you guys making?

DC: I was in some bands before in Ireland, but only one was ever serious – The Empire Lights. It was really good for me in that it taught me exactly how *not* to run a band. The drummer in the band was also the manager and boyfriend of the lead singer, which was just a disastrous recipe, really.

LL: I joined a cover band in college. The guy who took the lead in the band decided what we covered: mostly Gun N' Roses, which I really hated... I can never hit those pitches.

How long have you guys been playing together?

DC: We've been working together for about two-and-a-half years, but it took at least the first year before we were any good!

LL: At the time I met Dave, I really liked the music he came up with, and I had the courage

to be a singer, so I decided to give it a try.

DC: I posted an ad on Douban looking for a singer to help out with my new project. A lot of people got in touch, but Leslie's voice stood out straight away. It was completely different to everyone else's.

What is the plan for the rest of 2018?

LL: We want to focus on promoting this album, finding important people online and contacting local colleges in different cities. Also, we want to collaborate with some remix producers in China, since young people are really into EDM right now. If possible, we want to have more business and branding opportunities, to take us to a new level.

Guangzhou: Apr 20, 8.30pm; RMB60 presale, RMB80 at the door. T:Union, 361-365 Guangzhou Dadao Zhong, Yuexiu District 越秀区广州大道中361-365号东方花苑1层 (3659 7623). **Shenzhen:** Apr 21, 8.30pm; RMB60 presale, RMB80 at the door. Brown Sugar Jar Public House, 1031 Shangbunan Lu, Futian District 深圳市福田区上步南路1031号 (189-3867 9176).

COLLAGE

SINO CELEB

Huang Xuan

For a long time, Chinese audiences have celebrated 'xiaoxianrou' (小鲜肉) or 'little fresh meat', young men with soft features, who are often criticized for being shallow – all pretty faces but no real acting skills.

Then, Huang Xuan, a man of true talent who draws from a wealth of real life experience, stepped into the fray to challenge the stereotype.

The 33-year-old Gansu-born actor moved to Guangzhou with his divorced mother at the age of 12.

The craze around Michael Jackson at that time led him to pursue formal dance training at Guangdong Dance and Drama College and later, in Beijing, where he got his first ill-fated shot at the big screen.

Huang's would-be breakout role was that of a young Tang Dynasty prince in renowned Chinese director Zhang Yimou's *Curse of the Golden Flower* (2006). Though selected in the audition, Xuan was cut from the casting list at the last moment in favor of another promising actor. Ironically, he was asked to perform as a backup dancer with his classmates on the movie's opening night.

After years of wallowing in the gloom of repeated setbacks, Huang rightfully received his place in the spotlight in 2014 for his portrayal of a blind masseur in *Blind Massage*.

Since then, he's delivered killer performances on every screenplay that he gets his hands on. He's played a faithful ancient politician, a selflessly devoted worker in China's 1960s, a military general in *The Great Wall* (2016) and a sophisticated young emperor in *Tribes and Empires*, the so-called Chinese *Games of Thrones*.

While Huang is a malleable actor who has played many roles, fans love him for the consistent trait he brings to every character: a deep-hidden sense of aggrieved suffering combined with a warrior's heart that will fight like hell to set things right.

Kind of like:
Adrien Brody
Famous for:
melancholic good looks and sad-boy charm
See him in:
Youth (2017)



AGE

TRANSCRIBED

“Most books [about China] are still written by men, and often by Caucasian men.”



Joanna Chiu, a founder of the newly launched editorial collective Nüvoices, dropped this unfortunate truth in an interview last month with SupChina. After years of being frustrated by the gender disparity in writers and journalists who are considered “China experts,” Chiu created the Greater China Female Experts Open Directory – a Google Doc listing female writers knowledgeable about China – in the hopes of seeing more women quoted in articles and featured in discussion panels. Her latest project Nüvoices (the punny name is a play on ‘new’ as well as the Chinese pinyin for ‘woman’) has a similar goal, and launched last month with a party at The Bookworm in Beijing. The collective is currently working on their debut anthology of China-focused writing by female-identifying journalists, writers, translators and artists.

nuvoices.com

HAO BU HAO



Hao

In a moment of cross-cultural female empowerment, celebrated American actress and recent Oscar winner Frances McDormand announced at the Independent Spirit Awards that she signed a contract to collaborate on a film with up-and-coming Chinese director Chloe Zhao. The Beijing-born, US-based auteur (the stepdaughter of actress Song Dandan) won the Art Cinema Award for her second feature film, *The Rider*, at Cannes Film Festival last year.



Bu Hao

Guillermo del Toro's *The Shape of Water* was riding high into Chinese theaters last month after its Oscar win for Best Picture, but made a major gaffe with its China-specific promo material. In a series of posters that counted down the number of days until the China debut, Sally Hawkins is seen holding up three fingers. It's a fairly innocuous picture, but anyone who's either seen the movie or understands American Sign Language would know that in this moment of the film, Sally Hawkins' character is saying “f**k you” to her boss.

THE PLAYLIST



From the James Blunt's legendary crooning to PAELLAS' danceable chill pop, check out the best of artists visiting the PRD this month.

- 🎧 **DVBBS, Shaun Frank, Delaney Jane – La La Land**
- 🎧 **伤心欲绝 – 一整个时代的宿醉**
- 🎧 **Next Door Band 隔壁团 – 再见18岁**
- 🎧 **Warbly Jets – 4th Coming Bomb**
- 🎧 **PAELLAS – Fade**
- 🎧 **Maximilian Hecker – Anaesthesia**
- 🎧 **Daniel Powter – Bad Day**
- 🎧 **James Blunt – OK**
- 🎧 **Vinida – Colorful World**
- 🎧 **Krewella – Alibi**

WHAT'S NEW



Domestic Screenings of *The Shape of Water* Cover Up Nudity, Internet Responds

When Oscar-winning film *The Shape of Water* debuted in domestic theaters last month, audiences who'd seen the original version noticed a few discrepancies. In an important scene between the protagonist Elisa and her aquatic love interest, Elisa's nude body is obscured by shadows, which conveniently cover her in the shape of a one-piece swimsuit. Other scenes were entirely cut from the film, while still more were zoomed in on characters' faces to edit out the nudity below, though both of these tactics have been used in the past and are far less obvious to filmgoers. After film critic Feng Xiaoqiang brought attention to the shadow swimsuit scene online, web users tickled by its lack of subtlety began skewering it on Weibo by posting screenshots of other movies – from a shirtless fight scene in *Black Panther* to *Titanic*'s iconic topless moment – with the characters covered up via Photoshop by similar black shadow swimsuits.

COMING TO A THEATER NEAR YOU



Ready Player One

Ready Player One is a Spielberg-directed adaptation of Ernest Cline's popular sci-fi novel of the same name. Set in a dystopian future, the film follows Wade Watts (Tye Sheridan), a young man who spends his free time jacked into a virtual reality system called OASIS to escape from the miseries of his daily life. When the system's creator reveals that he's hidden an Easter egg in the world that will give whoever finds it complete control of OASIS, a race to discover its whereabouts ensues. Critics have praised the film's visuals, especially its dizzying feast of references from the 1980s, the era in which the OASIS world is set.



Rampage

Rampage is based on a 1986 video game of the same name in which gamers play as one of three giant animals who must destroy cities in order to advance to the next level. For the film adaptation, Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson stars as primatologist Davis Okoye, who has a strong bond with an albino gorilla in his care named George. Okoye must save the day after George is affected by a genetic mutation that transforms him into a violent giant. The film has gained a lot of buzz thanks to its cheeky and irreverent promo material, including a trailer in which The Rock speaks directly to the audience via his iPhone.



THE LEFTOVERS

Do Claims of “Erasure” Taint a New Book’s Reputation Beyond Repair?

By Erica Martin

In early February, we interviewed journalist Roseann Lake in the hopes of profiling her before the debut of her new book, *Leftover in China*. Less than three weeks later, Lake was accused of journalistic misconduct, making headlines and raising eyebrows among academics, correspondents and China watchers.

Leftover in China explores through interviews and research the concept of *shengnü*, or leftover women, a term coined in 2007 to describe professional, educated women in their late 20s and early 30s who are not married. Lake, a journalist who lived in Beijing for five years and worked as a television reporter, became interested in the topic after speaking about it with her colleagues – independent, highly successful women who nonetheless fell into this category.

“I decided to write this book because these women really impressed me,” Lake told us. “The fact that they exist is a very good thing.”

On February 19, respected scholar and author of 2014’s groundbreaking *Leftover Women*, Leta Hong-Fincher, published a 21-tweet thread on Twitter accusing Lake and her new book of “erasure.” Despite having corresponded with Lake in the past and being generally considered the English-language expert on *shengnü*, Hong-Fincher is not mentioned or even cited in the bibliography of *Leftover in China*.

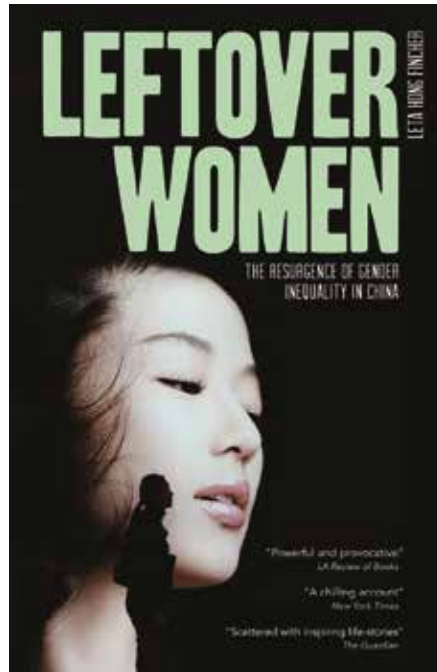
“Someone else is profiting from the ground-work I laid and doesn’t even bother to put me in an obscure footnote,” Hong-Fincher tweeted soon after. Lake responded that she chose not to read Hong-Fincher’s book because she was already working on her own manuscript and “chose to stay focused on the stories of the women whose lives [she] features in it.”

“I am not saying that Lake’s overall argument is the same as mine at all,” Hong-Fincher tells us. “But she drew extensively on my groundbreaking research without acknowledging me anywhere, even though she was the one who reached out to me in 2011 and wanted to exchange thoughts.”

Hong-Fincher has not accused Lake of plagiarism per se, but she is not exactly deterring others from jumping to that conclusion. (“Been following your plagiarism saga BTW,” user @ivanbelic tweeted at her in mid-March. Hong-Fincher retweeted him.) She is also encouraging a line-by-line reading of both books by all reviewers of *Leftover in China*.

“It takes a huge amount of work to compile a comparison chart of similar sentences from both books and I have not yet begun to do so systematically,” Hong-Fincher wrote on Twitter in February. “But reviewers of the book MUST.” (We didn’t, but we read both books closely, annotating them as we went.)

In *Leftover in China*, Lake does not plagia-



rize from Hong-Fincher, and their key points are different enough that she could have theoretically written it without drawing upon Hong-Fincher’s work.

Lake’s book, which chronicles in pert and effervescent prose the tribulations of four unmarried women in Beijing, is aimed at readers based in the Western world who may know little about China but are interested in learning more about global feminism. At one point, she translates *meishi* (没事) as “Hakuna Makata,” and she occasionally plays up her role as a “confused foreigner” stand-in for the reader; the book opens with Lake returning to work after Spring Festival wondering why the women in her office are out of sorts, before finding out that they’ve been chided by their families for still being unmarried.

Lake compares China’s current attitudes toward leftover women with American sex and dating in the 50s and 60s, theorizing that tradition will eventually modernize the way it did in the US, as men become more comfortable with the idea of a dual-earning household.

“There’s a quote in the book that I think really summarizes a lot of what’s going on with these growing pains,” Lake told us. “It’s from a demographer who specializes in studying female education rates and marriage trends around the world. He said: ‘Men [in China] are looking for women who no longer exist, and women are looking for men who have yet to exist.’ I think that nails it. It will work itself out.”

Hong-Fincher’s book is bleaker, in part because her impressive research reveals how deep-seated these issues lie within China’s tra-

dition and government. Some critics of Lake’s book have claimed that she is more optimistic because she doesn’t have the big-picture knowledge that Hong-Fincher’s book provides.

Hong-Fincher is meticulous and academic in her approach, summarizing key points at the end of each chapter and relying heavily on hard data. She provides a sobering, groundbreaking look at gender inequality in China, with a specific focus on how patriarchal social relations have caused highly-paid, successful women to lose out on China’s real estate market, and another focus on intimate partner violence. These are two topics that Lake barely touches on.

The major divergence between the two texts is that the bulk of Hong-Fincher’s book zeroes on how women suffer when they get married to avoid becoming leftover women, while Lake’s book focuses on women who are still navigating the dating world.

The books, therefore, are very different – but the claims of erasure are still valid. Though Lake could have theoretically written *Leftover in China* without using Hong-Fincher’s research at all, why would she want to?

In a follow-up interview, Lake sheds some light on this decision. Essentially, Hong-Fincher was not the first person to coin the phrase “leftover women” (though she’s done more original research about the demographic than anyone else), so Lake didn’t need to cite Hong-Fincher just for using the term. Because Lake hadn’t interviewed Hong-Fincher (who actually turned down a request back in 2011) and did not quote her texts, she did not need to include her in the bibliography. This is all valid, strictly speaking.

But as Grace Jackson pointed out in her March review of *Leftover in China* for the *LA Review of Books*, it taints Lake’s purported commitment to feminism that she wouldn’t take the time to reference the most groundbreaking expert on leftover women.

Lake’s exploration is unique and engaging enough that she could have read Hong-Fincher’s book for reference, cite her where appropriate, and then follow her own research where it took her without any fear of publishing a book that’s too similar to *Leftover Women*. But she didn’t.

If there’s any lesson, it’s to always cite your sources. But more importantly, uplift other women in your field, above and beyond what might be required by a publisher or by general journalistic or academic standards. If you don’t, you might not be a plagiarizer, but neither are you working to advance gender parity, the cause that’s at the heart of both of these books.

Leftover in China: The Women Shaping the World’s Next Superpower by Roseann Lake and *Leftover Women: The Resurgence of Gender Inequality in China* by Leta Hong-Fincher are available on Amazon.com

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DESOLATION AND HOMECOMING

Alpine Decline Returns with a New Stripped-Down Sound

By Erica Martin



BENJAMIN MORGENTHAU

Pauline and Jonathan Zeitlin are a self-described ‘guitar and drums duo’ who go by the name Alpine Decline. Having formed in LA in the early 2000s, the pair became essential contributors to Beijing’s rock scene after they left their hometown and moved to Tongzhou, in outer Beijing, in 2010.

“When we moved to Beijing, we needed to go out and put our perspective in the blender or I’m not sure we’d have been able to write compelling music anymore,” says Jonathan, who plays guitar and provides the band’s distinctive vocals. The greatest result of this period was their 19-track noise rock opus and “love/hate letter to their adopted home” of Beijing, 2016’s *Life’s a Gasp*. It is the most focused and intensely realized record tackling Alpine Decline’s long-running theme of “how urban chaos plays out in the intimate moments of real lives and relationships,” according to Jonathan. It’s also one of the best indie rock albums to come out of Beijing in the decade.

After their 2016 tour supporting *Life’s a Gasp*, Alpine Decline up and moved back to LA, which Pauline explains happened “abruptly”—it resembles what they’d done six years prior, when they dropped everything and moved to

Beijing in the first place. “We’d already felt like some changes had come over us, musically-speaking... a new era of something had already dawned on our band,” she says.

The duo are working and producing constantly, and it didn’t take long for a new, post-Beijing era album to begin taking shape, though it wasn’t nearly as specific to LA as *Life’s a Gasp* was to Beijing.

“It feels kind of like one door closed behind us and it took a long time before a new door opened up in front of us,” Jonathan says. “This album is that empty space in between two doors.”

The duo wrote the album’s music and lyrics in LA, but took the work back to Beijing last year to record it, which may have contributed to its feeling of floating in between two places. P.K.14 frontman, Beijing scene builder and longtime Alpine Decline collaborator Yang Haisong played bass and produced the album.

The resulting record, *Return to Desolation Lake*, sounds like it came from a different band than Alpine Decline, at least upon a first listen. The gritty noise rock and synths that have been such a staple for so many of their songs, and served as the sonic manifestation of Beijing’s ‘urban chaos’ on *Life’s A Gasp*, are

largely absent. Instead, the songs on *Return to Desolation Lake* feel spare and elegant, with a focus on Jonathan’s vocals. The opening track and single, ‘Blameless,’ is a crystal clear guitar-led track with haunting lyrics. Tracks like ‘Dispatch from the Guesthouse’ have almost poppy, upbeat melodies, while slower songs like ‘Lies to Protect You’ are stark and lovely.

“Songwriting and melodies have always been at the center of our music, but a lot of people just aren’t going to dig through all the snow and hear the dense soundscapes we’ve had on our previous albums,” says Pauline, referencing the layers of noise that have so defined their previous work. “We hope that the clarity on *Return to Desolation Lake* gives listeners a wider door to get to the songs,” Jonathan chimes in. “Come on in y’all!” Pauline adds with a laugh.

The album’s cover, designed by Shanghai screenprinting duo IdleBeats, has a similarly stark feel, with a washed out color scheme depicting a haggard troupe of boatmen traveling toward a distant island that appears to be on fire. Listening to the album feels very much like traveling toward that island – its hooks and melodies push you along like a current, but its dark themes lie just under the surface.

“We’ve worked with IdleBeats a few times now, and they have a way of grabbing a certain frequency out of the music and spinning it out into something kind of beautiful and threatening at the same time,” says Jonathan. “I think that’s very appropriate for our music.” IdleBeats also created a few screenprinted T-shirts of the album that Alpine Decline will be selling while on a 14-stop tour throughout April.

Despite the album’s new directions sonically, its lyrical themes of finding beauty in bleakness and moments of contentment in their longtime preoccupation of ‘urban chaos’ very much continues to be the connecting thematic factor in all Alpine Decline’s music. *Return to Desolation Lake* feels like a repackaging of these same elements in a different but equally intriguing aesthetic.

“I don’t know if it’s something particular about the current moment or not, but the experience of flickering between beauty and anxiety and hope and fear and chaos and quiet moments of blankness seems very real and relevant to me,” says Jonathan. “If it’s just us, that’s OK, but I think this kind of emotional being-in-two-places-at-once thing is something everyone can connect to right now.”

Listen to *Return to Desolation Lake* at downloads.maybemars.org



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China was the first country in the world to use paper money. Will it be the first to abandon it?

By Dominic Ngai

On almost every street corner and in the ever-expanding e-commerce marketplace, businesses in China have already fully embraced the convenience of mobile payment. But as the nation dashes full speed ahead in the direction of becoming a cashless society, have we fully considered the pros and cons of digitizing our bills and coins?



Carrying a physical wallet in a 'QR code first economy' like China is a hassle. For everyday transactions, a smartphone and an Alipay or WeChat Pay account connected to your local bank account are basically all you need. To pay, you just have to scan the merchants' QR codes with these apps, or have them scan yours. Easy, breezy.

"Maybe about seven out of 10 people scan QR codes to pay. Others use their cards," says Ji, the middle-aged *ayi* from Hunan who manages the corner store next to my apartment while I scan the QR code displayed on the counter with WeChat to pay for some fruit. "I receive cash maybe just a handful of times a week." Moments later, a robotic female voice from her Xiaomi smartphone declares, "Payment is successful, 13 yuan." Ji switches her focus back to a soap opera on her Tudou app.

According to official data, China's mobile payment transactions reached RMB81 trillion over the first 10 months of 2017, an increase of almost 30 percent compared to the total amount recorded in 2016 (RMB58.8 trillion).

Ben Cavender, principal at China Market Research (CMR), believes that in addition to the added convenience for consumers and merchants, timing has played a critical role in propelling the Middle Kingdom and its 1.4 billion citizens ahead of the rest of the world in mobile payment adoption.

"The growth of China's middle-class population coincided with the rising popularity of smartphones," he explains from his Shanghai office. "People who didn't

previously own any electronic goods suddenly have iPhones in their hands. It's their primary tool and initiation point for technology, whereas in the West, a lot of older consumers who grew up with their desktops and laptops still primarily use those for their online activities."

At present, China's two major players in the mobile payment space, Alipay and WeChat Pay, hold about 54 and 40 percent of the market share respectively, according to a 2017 iResearch report. China Channel cofounder Matthew Brennan attributes their dominance to the strengths of their parent companies, ecommerce giant Alibaba, and Tencent, the world's most valuable social network conglomerate.

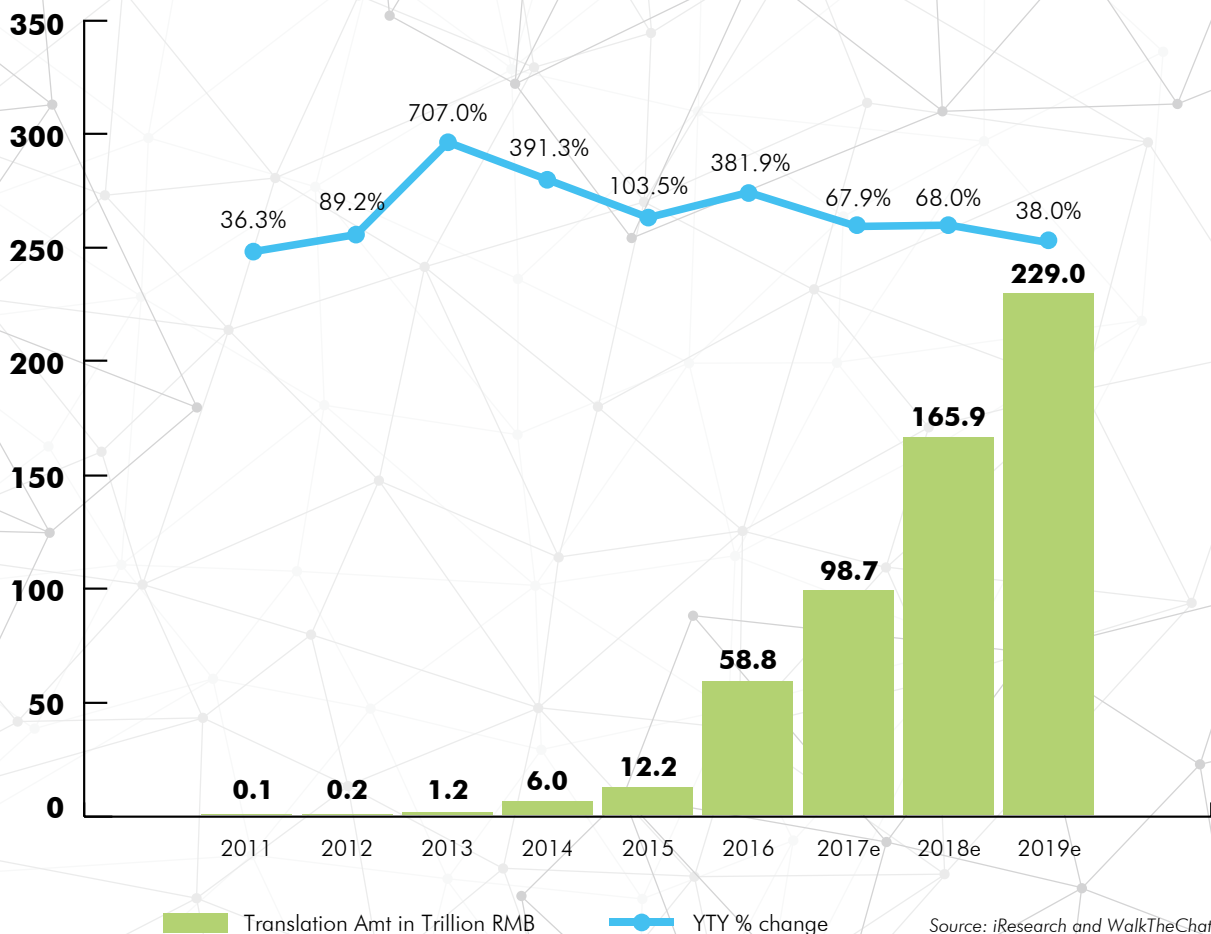
Since its introduction in 2004, Alipay has always been the preferred payment solution for any Taobao or Tmall purchases. For nearly a decade, Alipay enjoyed almost a total monopoly in China's electronic payment game until WeChat Pay came along in 2013.

Competition heated up when Tencent collaborated with the CCTV Spring Festival Gala to launch WeChat Red Envelope on Chinese New Year's Eve of 2015. The infamous publicity stunt resulted in 1 billion *hongbao* transactions across the nation, making the platform a formidable opponent to Alipay.

With WeChat being China's dominant instant messaging platform, Cavender says its offerings resonate with how today's Chinese consumers use the internet and social media, hence its 'stickiness' makes it slightly easier to integrate into people's daily lives.

Brennan adds, "Both platforms, however, have successfully adapted themselves into the virtual world and into the offline economy... at the end of the day, I don't think it's about one winning or losing, as both are well-equipped to thrive in the market."

2011-2019 China Third Party Mobile Payment Transaction Volume (trillion RMB)



TEAM GREEN VS. TEAM BLUE

China's Mobile Payment Development Timeline



Oct 2004

Alipay is launched on Taobao with PayPal-like features

Mar 2008

Alipay launches mobile payment service

Oct 2008

Alipay enables users to pay utility bills

Jun 2013

Alipay launches Yu'e Bao, a money market fund which later becomes the biggest of its kind in China

Dec 2013

Alipay surpasses PayPal to become the world's largest payment company with 300 million verified users and 2.8 billion transactions per year



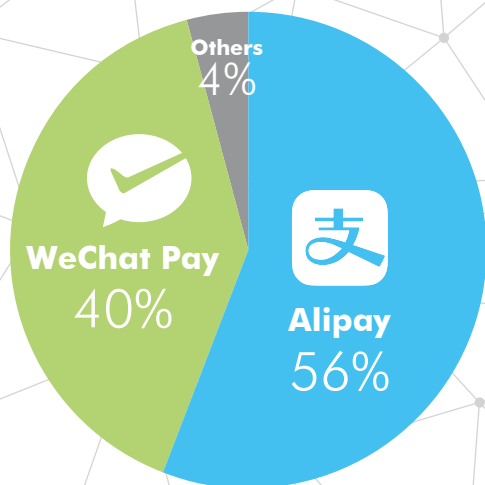
Aug 2013

WeChat launches mobile payment service

Jan 2014

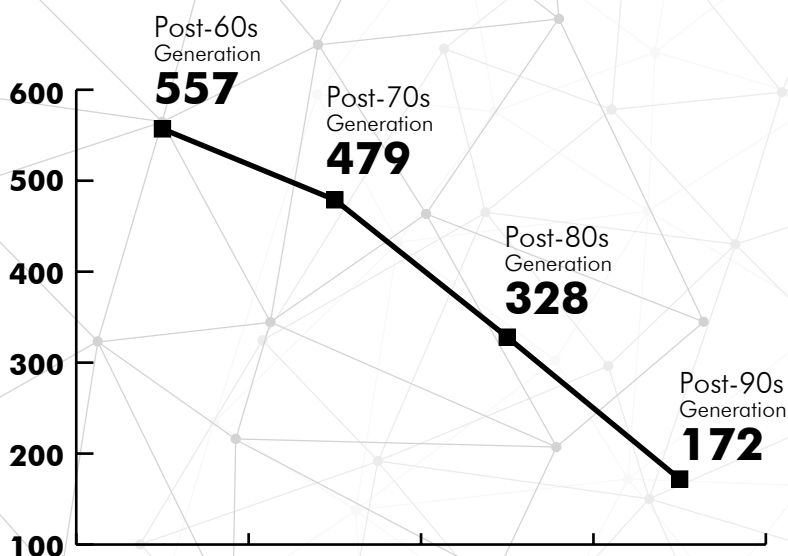
WeChat launches Red Envelope application

2017 Third Party Mobile Payment Market Share



Source: iResearch & WalkTheChat

Average Amount of Cash Carried Daily (RMB)



Source: 2017 Mobile Payment Usage in China Report

- March 2014**
WeChat launches payment application for official accounts
- Aug 2014**
WeChat launches City Services feature, enabling users to pay their utility bills within the app
- Feb 2015**
WeChat collaborates with CCTV Spring Festival Gala over Chinese New Year to promote WeChat Red Envelope, resulting in 1 billion transactions
- May 2015**
Reaches 300 million users on WeChat Pay
- Jan 2016**
WeChat Pay is available in 300,000+ offline retailers
- Jan 2017**
Launches face-to-face Red Envelope

1 billion monthly active users on WeChat (as of 2018)

- Feb 2014**
Yu'e Bao reaches 81 million verified users
- March 2014**
Alipay reaches 25 million daily transactions on mobile
- Dec 2014**
Mobile payment accounts for 49.3% of total transactions
- Jan 2015**
Zhima Credit appears in the Alipay app
- Dec 2015**
Mobile payments account for 65% of total transactions
- Sep 2016**
Alipay starts charging 0.1% fee for withdrawals
- Dec 2016**
Alipay launches AR hongbao
- Sep 2017**
Alipay debuts facial recognition payment service

520 million mobile monthly active users (as of 2017)

Source: WalkTheChat

THE LEADER

The US might be the world's largest economy, but when it comes to mobile payment, the Chinese are way ahead. China's total mobile payment transaction revenue was 50 times more than their American counterparts in 2016. Meanwhile, 52 percent of Chinese say less than 20 percent of their monthly transactions are conducted with bills and coins, according to the '2017 Mobile Payment Usage in China' study published by China Tech Insights.

Credit card companies and many Westerners' ingrained habit of using cards as their primary payment option have prevented mobile payments from taking off, according to Brennan and Cavender. In a country where Visa, Mastercard and American Express still have yet to fully penetrate through the masses, Chinese consumers were able to easily move on from cash and plug themselves directly into the ecosystem that Alipay and WeChat Pay have created.

The downside of this arrangement, Cavender points out, is that tech companies are not held to the same fiduciary standards that traditional financial institutions follow: "At the end of the day, your money is being handled by companies whose main objective is to sell you all sorts of services. There's definitely a conflict of interest [that works against consumers]."

By signing up for WeChat Pay or Alipay, users are not only giving Tencent and Alibaba instant access to their

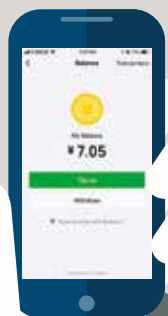
online shopping behaviors, but also their offline spending habits too, not to mention their personal identity information and how much savings they have in their bank accounts.

The government, which was originally quite hands off during the early stages of the development of mobile payment platforms, has another concern. Up until recently, Alipay and WeChat Pay transactions were set up so that they could deal directly with individual banks while bypassing the central bank's clearing system entirely.

By June 30, 2018, however, third-party online payment companies and commercial banks will have to migrate this whole process to a People's Bank of China-backed platform called Wanglian (Non-Bank Internet Payment Union), which essentially allows Chinese mon-

etary authorities to monitor all mobile transactions and data to prevent money laundering, tax evasion or other illegal activities in real time. The migration process began in October 2017, as ordered by the central bank.

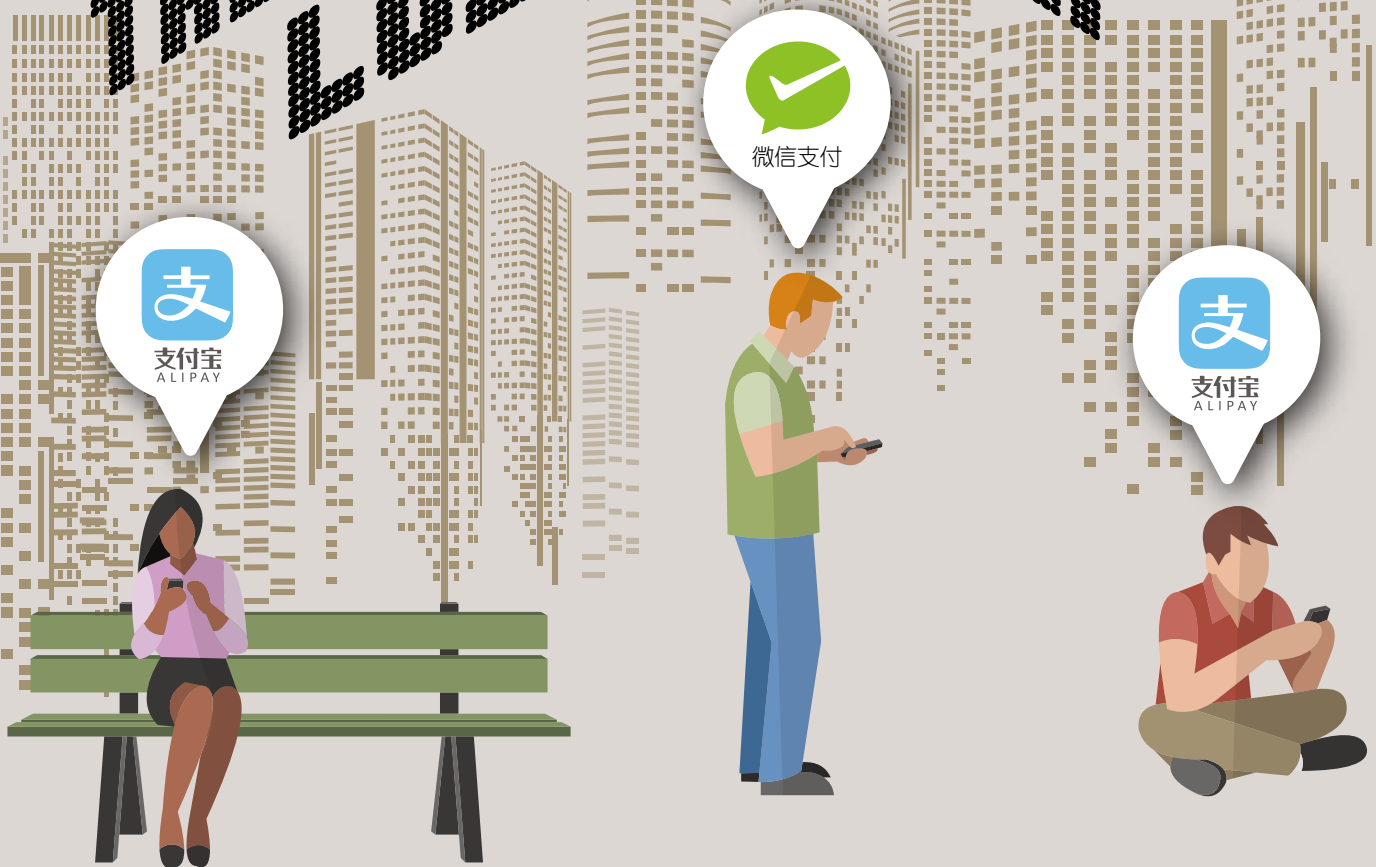
Hypothetically, if China were to become 100-percent cashless in the future, this would mean that in addition to having the transaction records between people and businesses, the government would also know the exact amount of money in circulation, and perhaps even be able to monitor the outflow of capital. Yes, Big Brother is watching.



**"AT THE END OF
THE DAY, YOUR
MONEY IS BEING
HANDLED BY
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MAIN OBJECTIVE
IS TO SELL YOU ALL
SORTS OF SERVICES.
THERE'S DEFINITELY
A CONFLICT OF
INTEREST"**

- BEN CAVENDER,
CHINA MARKET
RESEARCH

THE FEAR OF LOSING CASH



One of the loudest arguments against a digital-only economy is summed up by the headline of Peter Guy's *South China Morning Post* op-ed published last October: "A cashless society would destroy our privacy and freedom."

For the Chinese-American venture capitalist and former international banker, the way in which Mainlanders have "blindly surrendered their privacy" for the convenience of mobile payment is "gullible and naive." "Think of it this way: Cash is the original cryptocurrency," Guy says. "I don't want the government to have records of everything that I buy, or every place that I go. Cash is private, and I always want to have the option of having banknotes under my pillow."

A firm supporter of the Second Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, Guy even goes as far as equating cash to guns as the last line of defense for one's freedom and privacy. While the analogy might be a bit extreme, economists agree that a 100-percent cashless economy could have some serious underlying consequences.

Back in 2014 and 2016, central banks of several European nations and Japan had imposed negative interest rates as a desperate economic recovery

measure to increase spending and spur inflation. In a hypothetical total cashless world, having all of your savings locked in a computerized system and without the option of cash withdrawal means there's no way to avoid getting penalized for simply leaving your savings in the bank.

Moreover, natural disasters and blackouts could cause mass panic if people wouldn't be able to access their money. Last but not least, a fully digitized economy would leave those who cannot afford a smartphone or seniors who are technologically challenged worse off.

But for many countries, an entirely cashless economy is still a long ways away. In China, for instance, cash still makes up a significant chunk of the Chinese economy — 66 trillion *yuan* in 2016, according to a central bank payments report. Though the number has been decreasing in recent years, completely eliminating cash will be difficult in practice, CMR's Cavender says. "Realistically, I don't think cash will go away entirely, but it will certainly be relegated to a less important role."

That, however, might be a different story for one Scandinavian country.



Niklas Arvidsson had to think for a moment before he could recall the last time he used cash when we spoke via Skype (a Swedish invention, he points out). The economics professor at Stockholm's KTH Royal Institute of Technology has been following the diminishing usage of cash in his country for some time. In a 2017 study, Arvidsson and his team point to the exact date when Swedish merchants will stop accepting cash completely – March 24, 2023.

While China might be leaps and bounds ahead of the rest of the world in mobile payment usage, Sweden is leading the pack in terms of having the lowest value of cash in circulation in the world. As of 2016, just 1.4 percent of its gross domestic product is cash-based, which is significantly lower than the global average of 9 percent, according to a 2016 Bank of International Settlements report.

In its major cities, 'no cash' signs are becoming common decor at the entrances of shops, cafes and restaurants. Unlike many countries though, it's completely legal for Swedish merchants to refuse cash.

Weeks ago, *Bloomberg* reported that remote parts of the country are now at risk of losing access to banknotes, prompting distressed cash-handling industry lobbyists and officials from

the Swedish central bank, Riksbank, to call for new legislation to safeguard the existence of cash. Later this summer, Riksbank will also be publishing a special report outlining the systemic risks the country could potentially face if banknotes and coins were to disappear completely.

"The cost of cash transactions is always higher than electronic. Through our survey with some of the country's most cash-intensive merchants, we found that while 97 percent of them still accept cash, only 18 percent of all transactions are carried out via banknotes and coins," explains Arvidsson.

Through extrapolating other data points, the survey suggests that when the total cash transactions drop below 7 percent, then the cost of processing them will exceed its profits, rendering it an economically unviable option for businesses to receive cash. After analyzing the projections of the country's rising non-cash payments, Arvidsson's estimate is that Sweden could potentially enter into an era of total cashlessness in less than five years.

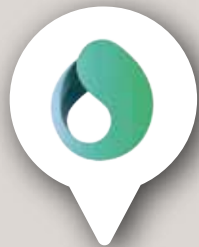
This estimate, the professor stresses, is a pure economic theory. "To become [an entirely cashless economy], a lot of political and legal factors need to come into play," he says. This would include a complete overhaul of banking laws – a

process that's likely to take much longer than five years.

But like many Western countries, the Swedes still rely heavily on plastic – 71 percent of retail transactions are paid via debit or credit card. At the moment, there's no Swedish equivalent of Alipay or WeChat Pay in place. There is Swish, a popular mobile payment app currently used by around half of the country's population, but its functions are currently limited to peer-to-peer transactions.

CMR's Cavender thinks China's willingness to embrace technological innovations could allow the country to beat Sweden in the race to become fully cashless. "QR codes are a much more powerful tool that allows people like a small *baozi* vendor to operate with very low overhead costs, whereas businesses in Sweden still have to invest in old school card payment processing systems," he comments. "From a technology standpoint, what the Chinese are doing with mobile payment solutions is definitely way more interesting."

Though when asked whether the Swedes are concerned with the security of their personal information and privacy, Arvidsson's answer gives us a lot to think about: "Swedish people believe in the legal system and the government's data protection directives. A majority of people here aren't overly concerned."



OPEN SEASIDE

On January 19, a text message from an unknown number tells me I'm eligible for a RMB50,000 loan ("low interest! quick approval process!"). Another message a few days later from an associate of 'Daimler Investments' (unrelated to the German automobile manufacturer) reads, "We help our clients make more money with money, 10,000 becomes 30,000, earning 100,000 a month isn't a dream anymore!"

And it seems like these random investment pitches are running wild. Chinese consumers have been receiving more and more loan offers via WeChat and SMS in recent years, causing the country's short-term credit rate to jump by 160 percent in the first eight months of 2017, according to the *Wall Street Journal*.

Up until recently, the Middle Kingdom lacked a functioning credit rating system. In June 2014, the Chinese government announced a Social Credit System initiative that will assign a rating to each citizen based on one's financial records and social behaviors. While basic structures of this nationwide system are expected to be in place by 2020, private companies have already been running trial programs over the past few years. According to China Tech Insight's report, improving financial credit ratings through the consumer data collected is a major initiative for mobile payment platforms over the next few years.

Seen as the first prototype of the official system to be launched in two years, Zhima Credit (or Sesame Credit) – a product of Ant Financial Services, the Alibaba affiliate that operates Alipay – appeared on the Alipay app homescreen alongside taxi booking and food delivery functions months after the government's 2014 announcement. Once registered, users are given a score from 350 to 950 based on information in five categories that the mobile payment app already has on its 520 million users: identity (occupation, education level), assets (savings, properties, cars), history (timeliness of credit card payments), network (the number and quality of

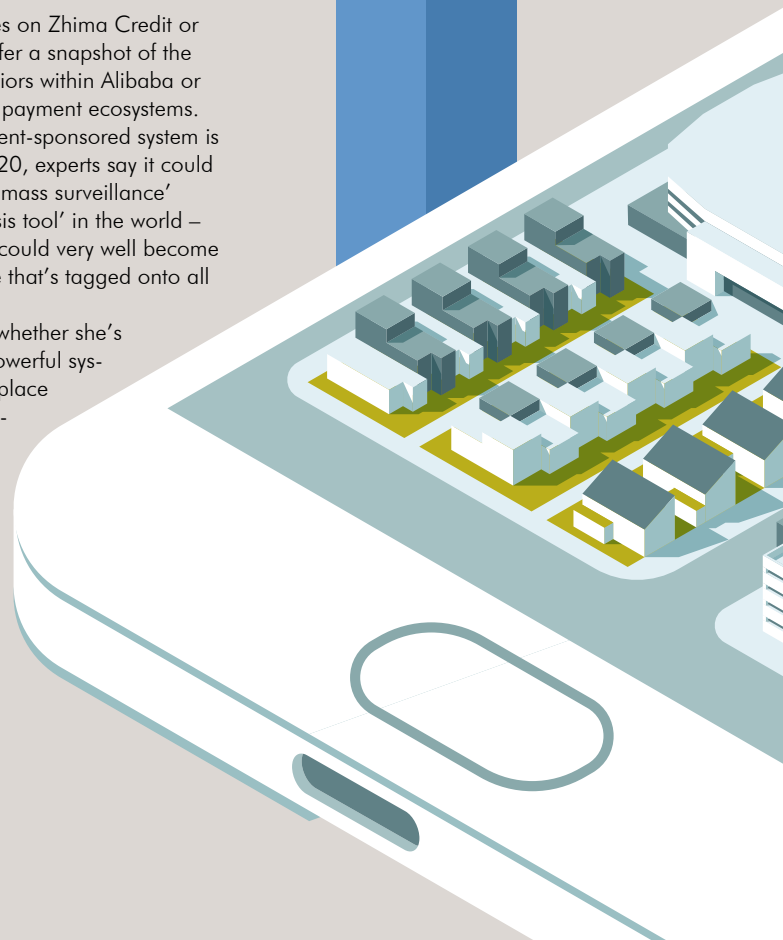
Alipay contacts) and behavior (transactions made with Alipay). Tencent Credit, a similar rating system created by the eponymous parent company of WeChat, was also rolled out in mid-2017.

At the beginning of this year, thousands of Alipay users were furious after finding out their Zhima Credit scores appeared on an animated Alipay annual usage report without their prior consent, prompting the credit rating service provider to issue an official apology on its Weibo account.

Zhou Min, a 20-something grad who works in advertising, was one of the victims of the privacy invasion snafu, though her attitude is relatively more chill than some. "I'm pretty sure they probably already have my spending data because I've been using Alipay regularly for a few years," she says. "That wouldn't surprise me at all."

At this point, scores on Zhima Credit or Tencent Credit only offer a snapshot of the users' spending behaviors within Alibaba or Tencent's own mobile payment ecosystems. But once the government-sponsored system is up and running by 2020, experts say it could be the most powerful 'mass surveillance' meets 'big data analysis tool' in the world – and our smartphones could very well become the surveillance device that's tagged onto all of us.

When I ask Zhou whether she's concerned if such a powerful system were to be put in place two years later, her answer, while similar to Arvidsson's, strikes a different tone. "I'm not worried... It's not like we can opt out or anything."



While 2020 is still two years away, our addiction to the convenience of mobile payment apps most likely won't go away anytime soon. At the corner store near my apartment, Ji's not in a good mood. A young security guard is paying for a RMB10 pack of Zhong Nan Hai with a 100 kuai bill. As the ayi counts the change, she mutters some words in her local dialect, and then asks loudly in Mandarin, "People don't use these anymore," pointing to the crumpled notes on the counter, "why are you still paying with these?"

As the guard walks out, Ji gives him one last death stare as if he's violated some sort of unspoken etiquette rule for payment procedures on her turf. She returns to her smartphone, presses play, and the loud characters from her favorite soap opera carry on their conversation mid-sentence. Not wanting to interrupt her show, I silently pay for my water with WeChat. Voices of the actors dim for a moment, in exchange for the robotic WeChat Pay lady: "Payment is successful, 20 yuan." Her eyes are still glued to the screen as I walk out.



COMMUNITY

Naomi Wu: SexyCyborg

Ms. Wu on gadgets, women in tech and her newfound fame, p48



Dodgeball Club
P49



Coding the Future
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FAT BIRD THEATER

Freedom to Experiment

By Adam Robbins



“The representative play from Beijing is *Teahouse*,” Yang Qian, artistic director for Fat Bird Theater, tells us. “But in Shenzhen it’s about AI, not teahouses.”

Shenzhen’s only long-term, professional experimental theater started with that electric pulse in its veins. At least half their early shows were original works of science fiction, typically written by Yang and workshopped with director Song Jie (co-founder of the theater with Yang, Ren Zihui and Zhang Yang), along with a rotating company of actors.

“The city is so young, people aren’t interested in questions about the past. They’re interested in the future, and science fiction is very helpful for describing the mood. But later we gave up sci-fi plays – even the smallest one is so expensive!”

Funding for the arts is always tight – especially for Fat Bird, operating outside the state-supported National Theater. Yang reports that six months of savings would be eaten up in a single science fiction play, between paying actors, set design and other necessities. And even then, they “only had enough money to alienate the audience, but not enough for any big bangs.”

Now Yang, author of roughly 20 works staged and published in China and cities like Berlin, turns his attention to contemplations that are easier to stage. Half are now written for venues outside the theater and a quarter are works of physical theater. The

Shenzhen people maybe only care about earning money – people won’t get in your way as you search for your dream. Nobody cares about you. That can be good.

latest is last year’s narrated, choreographed *Fox Tales*, depicting the fruitless quest for immortality.

“It points to two contemporary challenges: one, the trap of individualism or absolute freedom – that’s not going to get you where you want to go – and two, what people thought was socialism turned out to be fake. Historically, everyone has been tricked by both of them. And Shenzhen has some of the worst of both.”

Though relatively few have seen the experimental plays of Fat Bird Theater since its 2004 inception, it’s earned a reputation for thought-provoking works ... and for its endurance, in a city without any professional, resident theater troupe. So Yang is often tapped to serve as ambassador for the city’s cultural scene, even as his plays call into question the Shenzhen project.

“What is Shenzhen culture?” Yang wonders. “A lot of Fat Bird plays confront that. A lot of Shenzhen people accept that they don’t have the answer to that question... Shenzhen people maybe only care about earning money – people won’t get in your way as you search for your dream. Nobody cares about you. That can be good.”

“It’s a very tolerant city, but it’s an indifferent city... People are immigrating to achieve life dreams, so they’re interested in stories of lives, not master narratives. They each have stories about how they’ve adapted to the city. Fat Bird offers small stories where you get to learn the stories of people and their lives.”

With 2019 marking its 15th anniversary, Fat Bird is set to offer up a retrospective of their major works – primarily in film, since it’s so much cheaper than live performances. But even that (and a new theater camp planned for Lijia, Yunnan Province) will cost the theater RMB1.5 million. “So 2018’s performance will be: begging,” Yang jokes with a wry laugh.

Getting more serious, he reflects on how difficult it is to sustain independent theater here, even with the higher wages Fat Bird pays its actors. “The [founders’] generation are all now in their 50s – when we came here, we had housing and jobs. There was less competition. Today, young people – if they want to buy a house, get married – they can’t make the same choices that the people of Fat Bird did.

“I think it is the first one, and the last one. It’s fate.”

You can find your way to Fat Bird’s experimental stories of Shenzhen lives by following their WeChat account (ID ‘胖鸟剧团’).



COMMUNITY

DEAR JAMIE

Diddlin' Ayi

Dear Jamie,

After a recent move to Foshan from Shenzhen and a modest rise in salary, I've been delighted to discover the comforts and convenience of a live-in *ayi*. Domestic helpers are an inconceivable luxury in my home country and the lady in question, a matronly Hunanese woman in her late-40s, is a phenomenal cook and compassionate caretaker to my wife's elderly mother.

The problem? Her room is right next to ours and on a twice-weekly basis I consistently lay down to the belabored sounds of vigorous self-stimulation together with what can only be highly audible video accompaniment. Don't get me wrong, she does a bang-up job and the last thing I want to do is deny her some off-the-clock R&R but, needless to say, I find this bedtime ritual highly distracting.

How do I bring this up? I'm sure she'd be mortified if she knew I could hear her – my wife often travels and my mother-in-law sleeps soundly at the far end of the hall, so really it's just me that's affected. Nonetheless, there are certain things that cannot be unheard and her evening exertions are starting to seriously color our rapport.

-Distracted in Foshan

Dear Distracted,

Easy: tell her that on a nightly basis you can hear her 'exercise' routine, as well as the *Sweatin' to the Oldies* video she may or may not be watching. Be sure to stress that you understand how important it is to remain 'physically fit,' but remind her that your drifting off to sleep peacefully takes precedent over her evening 'workouts.'

-Jamie

Tossing-and-turning while passions are burning? Email Jamieinchina@outlook.com.

AROUND TOWN

TAKE FIVE

Naomi Wu, aka SexyCyborg

In case you hadn't heard, Naomi Wu is kind of internet-famous. *Forbes* and *Newsweek* have-profiled this eye-catching Shenzhen hacker, who uses 3D printers, LED tiles and more to construct flickering bikini tops and sky-high platform heels with secret compartments. We chatted with Ms. Wu about gadgets, women in tech and her newfound fame.

Many of your projects have been closely intertwined with fashion. Why the focus on wearables?

I describe myself as a 'Maker'... The idea behind the Maker movement is aside from being a fun hobby you are cultivating attributes – creativity and problem-solving skills.

I can go to any public place in Shenzhen – Huaqiangbei, Seaworld, etc. – wearing my Blinkini, Infinity Skirt or Wearable 3D Printer and instantly get a polite circle of people with a nice three meters of space waiting for the 'show' to begin... [It] makes for better advocacy because average people on the street really enjoy this kind of thing so much more because it's outside their usual experience.

You put a lot of emphasis on publishing videos and blueprints so that others can follow in your footsteps. Has the hard work paid off?

As a Maker, open source is a powerful tool for quickly improving your skills. How many people download and make their own version of my designs gives me amazing feedback [about] how good it is and how I could have done it better.

I made a 3D-printed choker out of a soft plastic... Since the code was open source, someone improved it within days and I was able to see how code could be added to automatically include text written on the choker. This kind of thing happens all the time.

Did a lot of effort go into shaping the public image of SexyCyborg?

Oh no, I dressed and looked like this long before I started posting tech projects online.

In nearly every country an eccentric appearance is normal for creative professionals. Clothing is one of the easiest things to start experimenting with so I guess a lot of us start there. My appearance helps in some ways, hurts



in others. People are more used to women dressing a bit more boyish in tech – sort of protective camouflage to blend in. I don't want to blend in, I want to represent.

Of course, as a woman looking the way I do people will try and test my knowledge, which is fine. I'm used to it. I have basic skills but I know what I know and I'm confident.

When did you first realize you were getting internet-famous?

Haha, I still don't know that I am. It's fun to be recognized, though. I'm just a local girl – one of 12 million, so someone stopping to say "Hey, you're Naomi Wu!" is still quite flattering.

What's the biggest strength of Shenzhen's tech scene right now?

Hardware development is very accessible, you can get off the plane with a good working idea and there are dozens of design houses and contract manufacturers that can walk you through the entire process. It's easier than ever to get high-quality hardware made here, at almost any scale.

Anyone can make a prototype good enough for a small run on Kickstarter – even on an English teacher's salary. Be prolific: design, build, test, crowdfund, manufacture. That is the power of Shenzhen, use it.

Follow Wu via Youtube (Naomi 'SexyCyborg' Wu) and Twitter (@RealSexyCyborg). This interview has been edited and condensed for clarity.

SOCIAL SKILLS

Balls of Fury

There's nothing quite like a good old fashioned game of dodgeball. Ever since the all-American sport was catapulted to global acclaim by the 2004 film by the same name, which documented the unpolished heroics of a mismatched band of good-hearted average Joes, an entire generation of would-be athletes has never looked back.

In many ways, GZ Dodge, the local face of the sport in Guangzhou, embodies much of the ethos of that widely loved comedy. The club, founded in May of 2017, has hosted pickup games each Thursday night in Taojin, where everyone is welcome to try their hand, regardless of gender or ability.

"It's really open to everybody," organizer Shane Harris tells us. "The nice thing about dodgeball is that you don't necessarily need to start out being good at it. It's something you can pick up. It's a really easy game, there's not many rules to think about."

The club, which recently kicked back into action after a brief hiatus during the Spring Festival season, embraces a DIY approach to cooperative fun and fitness.

"We play on one half of a rented indoor tennis court, facing off width-wise," Harris explains. "We're always really excited to go play. It's a great feeling because you're doing something that not many people do. It's a new activity to learn if you've never really played it before. And it's very light hearted, we don't really take it that seriously."

Teams are picked on the spot based on how many people show up, and shuffled frequently throughout the evening to keep things fresh. On crowded days, two games can be run simultaneously on either side of the court, with the net serving as a barrier. "There's plenty of room to take on newcomers."



Other than the cost of the court rental, which is split evenly between the attendees (usually RMB20-50 per person), there are no costs associated with the weekly gathering – just a wholesome group of city-dwellers getting together for some sweaty, spirited fun. And what better way to blow off steam after a long week than hurling foam projectiles at friends and acquaintances with all the force and fury you can muster?

To get in on the action, meet at Taojin Station Exit B at 7.40pm on Thursdays, or get in touch with Shane on WeChat (ID: 'Suetonius').

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CODING THE FUTURE

Preparing Kids for a Tech-y Tomorrow

By Lena Gidwani



Move over, violin and Mandarin lessons. There's a new activity in town with the power to completely shape future careers: coding.

With fundamental shifts and disruption expected for current models of business, our world as we know it (and, more specifically, our classrooms) is evolving dramatically. One of the most highly prized skill sets that anyone can have in the global economy appears to be coding. Deemed 'the new literacy' by some, it's conspicuously made its way into most well-established mainstream classrooms and is seen as a must-have skill for those as young as 5 to be able to compete in our tech-filled future.

In fact, the World Economic Forum predicts that 65 percent of young primary students will be employed in job types that don't yet exist.

So what exactly is coding? In short: writing code tells a computer what to do. From apps and websites to browsers and operating systems, just about everything is made with code. As machines cannot code, it is up to humans to create the framework of the digital world we are all increasingly reliant on.

Today's trends in educational technology

should not be new to us all. More than half a century ago, the late Seymour Papert, a South African-born American mathematician, educator and computer scientist, talked about children using computers as a tool for enriching innovation, creativity and learning.

Papert was definitely on to something, albeit early. Mitch Resnick, a professor at MIT, author of *Lifelong Kindergarten: Cultivating Creativity Through Projects, Passion, Peers and Play* and a huge Papert follower, notes that coding is akin to writing. He says that both are ways to communicate with others; coding just happens to use a newer medium to do so.

It's no wonder then that schools in the Pearl River Delta are moving quick to get in on the action. Suzanne Brown, teacher and tech enthusiast at an international school in Guangzhou, teaches coding to students 6 years old and above as part of her school's STEAM program. She says that through coding, students quickly pick up vital skills in analytical reasoning and problem-solving, fostering a learning spirit of inquisition, engagement and inquiry.

"Integrating new skills in the curriculum to support learning ensures that students are engaged. It also breaks down barriers

and fear of the unknown, often bringing out the passion students may have for these topics," says Brown. "As a school, we also try to partake in an initiative called Hour of Code, whereby students undertake basic webinars designed to demystify coding. It allows our students to develop an appreciation of basic computing processes and have fun at the same time. Education is not about teaching them for today; it's about preparing them for tomorrow."

Technologist and founder/CEO of Shopify Inc. Tobi Lütke wholeheartedly agrees, saying that "whoever figures out how to teach computer literacy first will have, by far, the most prepared work force for the future."

Intrigued? We'll leave you with some food for thought by none other than Salman Khan, founder of the Khan Academy, a non-profit educational organization with a goal of creating free online tools for students anywhere: "To prepare humanity for the next 100 years, we need more of our children to learn computer programming skills, regardless of their future profession. Along with reading and writing, the ability to program is going to define what an educated person is."



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CITY SCENES

St. Patrick's Day Celebration at the Canton Tower (Supported by **that's**)

This past St. Patrick's Day, the world's most notable landmarks were lit up in green and the Canton Tower in Guangzhou was no exception. With support from the Irish consulate and Tourism Ireland, the seventh edition of St. Patrick's Day at the Canton Tower, hosted by Canton Tower and co-hosted by *That's PRD*, celebrated Irish cultural heritage with a little help from the city's Irish diaspora. This year, the festival featured Irish bands and bagpipe players, as well as performances by Chinese Yao and Zhuang ethnic dancers. Other highlights included snacks, soft drinks, Irish whisky and a camping experience, all while the Canton Tower was illuminated in green.



Body Pump at CaptainV Room (Supported by **that's**)

On March 11, readers showed up from across the PRD to lift, lunge, squat and flex their way through the first CaptainV Room fitness event with *That's PRD*. Trainers Lawrence and BM guided the class through a demanding set of exercises that worked nearly every muscle of the body. Sponsor Maik's Gourmet provided the perfect cure for exhaustion in wholesome, delicious snacks, while SZUMMER PRIDE brought supporters of LGBTQI equality to the event in preparation for the June beach party that kicks off this year's Pride.



BOA Lounge Soft Open (Supported by **that's**)

BOA Lounge & Club added their particular shine to the Sea World nightlife scene with a soft opening party and concept introduction on March 3. Beautiful people, beautiful food and beautiful music set the standard for what guests can expect at this "perfect blend of Japanese dietary culture and French service art." Look for some amazing nights of music, seafood and the finer luxuries of life in this gorgeous new concept.



Ecuador Consulate and China Southern Airlines Celebrate Women's Day (Supported by **that's**)

To honor women on International Women's Day, the Consulate General of Ecuador in Guangzhou, along with Proecuador, the consulate's commercial office, and China Southern Airlines, launched a campaign called 'Let the Aromas of Ecuador Engage You to a Memorable Flight.' As part of the promotion, more than 5,000 roses and fresh gypsophila were arranged inside Guangzhou Baiyun International Airport. What's more, China Southern passengers were treated to coffee varieties from the Andes and Galapagos regions. The 2016 and 2017 editions of this campaign received wide recognition and acclaim, thus creating stronger commercial and cultural ties between Ecuador and China.



Shark Celebrates Three Years (Supported by **that's**)

On Saturday, March 10, Shark hosted its three-year anniversary with a party climaxing in the awarding of generous lucky draw prizes. Miss Li was duly honored with the award for Best Mask of the Night, off to enjoy a night's stay in a Club Junior Suite with Exclusive Club Level Access in the Ritz-Carlton Hotel. Even more exciting was the prize awarded to Anastasia, as the first prize winner of the lucky draw: a pair of round-trip tickets to Venice! We wish Shark many more years of serving some of the finest seafood in Shenzhen's Futian District.



She's Mercedes at GCross (Supported by **that's**)

March is a time of rebirth, with new warmth and grace as the creatures of the earth and sky emerge into a sunny spring. In this hospitable time, Peng Feng Benz held a special event at GCross on March 10 celebrating women's versatility, tenacity and charm under the theme of 'She's Mercedes.' Attitude prepared exquisite afternoon tea for all participants attending the event, held in the GCross fitness center.



PRD FOCUS



From March 6-8, students at The British School of Guangzhou performed the popular musical *Grease*. Audiences were dazzled as the students sang, danced and generated roars of laughter for what turned out to be a very successful show.



Since 2015, the Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing of Dubai (DTCM) has been devoted to creating romantic travel packages. On March 14, or the so-called 'White Valentine's Day,' DTCM debuted a series of thematic tours during a media conference at LN Hotel Five, Guangzhou. Visit dubaitourism.cn for more information.



Bupa brought world-class healthcare services to customers in Guangdong this past March. The leading international healthcare group intends to set high standards of health and care for local customers accessing its first integrated medical center in China. Bupa's wholly-owned medical center is located on the third floor of GT Land Autumn Plaza in Guangzhou's CBD.



Over 3,000 restaurants in 150 countries participated in the *Goût de/Good France* event to celebrate French gastronomy. This event, orchestrated by the French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs and Chef Alain Ducasse, is inspired by Auguste Escoffier, who launched the 'Dîners d'Épiculture' (Epicurean Dinners) initiative in 1912: the same menu, on the same day, in several world cities, for as many guests as possible.



A brand new luxury resort – LN Dongfang Hotel, Shaoguan – opened on February 7 in the town of Daqiao, a part of Ruyuan Yao Autonomous County in northern Guangdong's Shaoguan city. Owned by Guangzhou Lingnan International Hotel Management Co., it boasts natural hot springs and beautiful views of the scenic Blue Mountain.



The *Portrait of Francophone Women* is an exhibition featuring photographs of some of the most renowned female figures from the French-speaking world, including actresses, singers, sports-women and writers. Captured by Studio Harcourt, the images went on display last month at Guangzhou Museum of Contemporary Art and will end on April 8.

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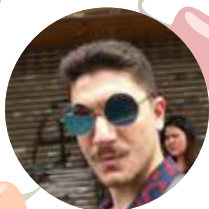


Ganèa
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SPICY SNICKERS

By Matthew Bossons

We first heard murmurings of a spicy variety of Snickers chocolate bar several months ago from colleagues in Shanghai. Last month, we came across the bizarre snack at a Guangzhou convenience store and purchased one to taste-test at *That's PRD's* Guangzhou office. Four members of our editorial team sampled the peppery Snickers and below they share their thoughts on the chocolate snack. Each staffer has provided a rating from one to five chillies, with one chili being the worst possible score.



Daniel Plafker

Guangzhou Editor

"All the chewy nougat goodness you'd expect from a corner store candy bar with the broad-spectrum spice of a dark, classy import. Satisfies our mid-afternoon sweet tooth and late-night cravings for *malatang* fire, all in a single bite."



Matthew Bossons

Editor-in-Chief

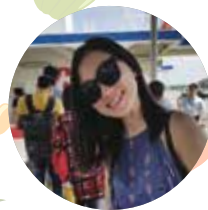
"On first bite, the chocolate stick tastes the exact same as a normal Snickers bar, but as you chew, a fiery, numbing sensation works its way to the back of your throat. It's a strange combo, but it works. Think of it as the corner store candy equivalent of McDonald's French fries dipped in soft-serve ice cream."



Tristin Zhang

Senior Staff Writer

"With just one bite of the spicy Snickers, the taste of Sichuan pepper is apparent. The quirky ingredient doesn't appall my taste buds, but rather offers an enjoyable, tangy aftertaste."



Katrina Shi

Digital Editor

"It tastes like they put fennel, star anise and pepper into a chocolate bar. Over the course of my life thus far, this is the second worst thing I have ever eaten, after five-kernel mooncake."



GRAPE VINE

THE SCANDALOUS SCOOP

We're digging:



The return of live music at **SD Livehouse**, which was shuttered late last year after a hip-hop brawl; **Bravo's** Blueberry Chocolate Milkshake Baltic Porter (page 60); the resumption of post-2am debauchery at **Party Pier**; rumors that a massive new sports bar may soon be landing in Zhujiang New Town; **Aroma Bistro** in Tianhe District turning 2 years old; the soon-to-be-open **ATOC** cocktail bar near **Skewerz**; and Snicker's new(ish) spicy chocolate bar.

We're done with:



Element Fresh's new menu (why, why, why did they get rid of their epic sandwich selection?); the unfortunate reality that virtually every popular bar in town is going to be overrun this month by Canton Fair attendees (prepare for taxi-hailing hell).

OLDIE BUT GOODIE

Fenfang Tianpin



Of Guangzhou's many proud culinary traditions, few are more widely loved or approachable than the city's world-famous sweets and desserts. Just as in the West, comfort food is one category of cuisine that seems to unite generations and few memories are more lasting than the flavors of youth.

One dessert shop on Tongfu Dong Lu in Haizhu District, is an exemplar of this flavorful legacy. Saunter up to Fenfang Tianpin on any evening and you will witness Cantoners of all stripes united in their love of sugar and oil. The restaurant, established in 1982, has long since spilled out from the confines of its humble founding storefront and now occupies a half-dozen doorways up and down the block. Branches exist throughout the city but there's nothing like the original.

Within, a giddy, treat-night atmosphere prevails (this was indulgent fast-food before the first KFC opened shop on Chinese shores) and bossed-up versions of Guangzhou staples grace the vast menu.

Imagine a gloriously glutinous *tangyuan*, stuffed to the gills with richly sweet

bean paste, then basted lovingly in a caramel-y sauce and sprinkled with a combination of chopped peanuts, grated coconut and sesame seeds.

On the savory side, fried dumplings with pork and corn are a popular pick. Even *changfen*, one of Guangzhou's more inscrutable snacks, with a texture likened by one of the city's premier food critics as akin to a "flaccid dolphin penis," gets a decadent comfort-food makeover. We heartily endorse the scallion oil and shrimp version, wherein the usually still-glutinous skin achieves a crispy outer layer through pan frying, concealing the untold savory delights that lie within.

With many cold desserts also on offer, in as many combinations as the mind can conjure and often containing the shop's signature mango ice-cream, it's small wonder why Fenfang will likely remain a Mecca for the late-sleeping, sugar-hungry snack-prowlers of the city for many generations to come.

Open daily, 9am-11pm; 619 Tongfu Dong Lu, Haizhu District 海珠区同福东路619号 (8449 4843)

KITCHEN CONFIDENTIAL

The Drunk Drummer

Tony Avila was a longtime Guangzhou expat that formerly worked with The Brew, Hooley's, the Panyu Tavern and the now-defunct Tomatoes. He is currently bumming around Thailand.



On outrageous bar behavior...

"I once saw a group of 20 men with weapons arrive at a Panyu bar to fight with another group of roughly 20 men. They had returned to the bar after an earlier scuffle and the two ringleaders were in each other's faces. Out of nowhere comes the foreign manager and he begins berating them in Cantonese. To this day, I have no idea what he said to them, but he defused the situation and there was no fight."

On live music...

"One time, we purposely got a drummer completely sloshed before he had to go play a last-minute gig. I didn't see the performance, but from what I heard it was an epic night. At one point, the guy was apparently standing on his drum set."

On bar names...

"I often joke that if I owned a bar or restaurant it would be called 'No Discounts.'"

WHAT'S ON WAIMAI

Yige Sour Sichuan Fish

Spicy and sour, *suan cai yu* is a renowned Chinese dish that originates from Sichuan. Composed of sliced fish fillets, usually carp, cooked in a pickled vegetable soup, the dish has grown extremely popular with diners in South China, with eateries specializing in *suan cai yu* becoming increasingly abundant in Guangzhou.

As such, you can now have the fishy dish delivered from a Sichuan restaurant kitchen to your door! Among the acclaimed *suan cai yu* shops in Guangzhou, Yige really stands out with a staggering 48 branch restaurants in town.

A big portion of spicy fish soup, priced at about RMB45 and contained in a well-sealed plastic pot, feeds two adults. Bursting with spicy flavor,



Yige's *suan cai yu* truly packs a punch and is one of our choice Sichuan food delivery options in the city.

Needless to say, other Sichuan specialties, such as spicy and sour potato slices, spicy frogs, tofu and beef, are also on offer at Yige.

Price: RMB45 for a two-person fish feast

Good for: spicy and sour fish
Search for: 一哥酸菜鱼 *yi ge suan cai yu*

Available on: Meituan, E Le Me, Baidu Waimai

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PINTS OF THE PRD

A Look at Our Region's Diverse Craft Beers

Wuyang IPA

Dave Strand has been brewing the Wuyang IPA since he opened The Strand Beer Cafe back in 2013. The beverage serves as the bar's signature IPA and boasts a light floral nose with a piney, citrusy, hoppy flavor. This beer is well balanced and very drinkable – a perfect summer quencher.

ABV: 6.2%

Bitterness: 55IBU

Cost: RMB45 per 470-milliliter glass

Where to purchase: The Strand Beer Cafe (Guangzhou)



The Hoppy Lager

The Hoppy Lager at Rozz-Tox is a delightfully flavorful number, offering the curious tippler a crisp and elegant take on oft-maligned lager (you know, because lagers are 'boring' and 'watery'). At 32IBU, this beverage is a great introductory beer for patrons working up to Rozz-Tox's bitterer offerings.

ABV: 5.2%

Bitterness: 32IBU

Cost: RMB55 per 470-milliliter glass

Where to purchase: Rozz-Tox (Guangzhou)

Blueberry Chocolate Milkshake Baltic Porter

A smooth and strong porter, the Blueberry Chocolate Milkshake Baltic Porter at Bravo is brewed with oats and lactose sugar and conditioned atop heaps of blueberry puree, Madagascar vanilla beans and cocoa nibs. This beer is the perfect post-meal drink and we reckon it would pair decidedly well with a slice of cheese cake.

ABV: 8%

Bitterness: 30IBU

Cost: RMB55 per 473-milliliter glass

Where to purchase: Bravo Brewing (Guangzhou)



Bionic Ale

Bionic Brew's namesake ale is the Shenzhen brewery's first and favorite American pale ale. It's lighter than an IPA, with a low bitterness (28IBU), the full flavor of its Belgian malt and a mild sweetness that reminds Bionic's founder of the muscadine berries of his Alabama youth.

ABV: 5.6%

Bitterness: 28IBU

Cost: RMB40 per 473-millimeter glass

Where to purchase: Bionic Brew, Dolores Park, Chills, Monkey Bar and (soon) The Evil Duck (Shenzhen)



Sassy Lassy

Brewer Leo Luo takes inspiration from the seasons when crafting new beers, and gave this light, fragrant brew a Chinese name meaning "flowers blooming in summer." His American assistant found that a bit too poetic for the beer-drinking crowd and rechristened it with a name that's proven as popular as this moderately balanced (45IBU) IPA.

ABV: 6.5%

Bitterness: 45IBU

Cost: RMB40 per 500-milliliter glass

Where to purchase: Cheer Bar (Dongguan)

Angry Alien Double IPA

Riffing off the alien that shares initials with E.T.'s Eriq and Terry, this potent double IPA is out-of-this-world on the bitter spectrum (110IBU). But tart citrus notes around the edge and a full-frontal spice profile help make this brew really enjoyable. The eponymous alien may have been angry at all the flavorless brews he found, but in this, he found a beer to phone home about.

ABV: 8.6%

Bitterness: 110IBU

Cost: RMB50 per 473-millimeter glass

Where to purchase: E.T., The Evil Duck and (soon) NBeer (Shenzhen); Rozz-Tox and Topsy (Guangzhou); Kapok (Foshan); Alien (Hong Kong)





LE OUI

Gallic Gastro meets Ersha Elegance

By Tristin Zhang

The Place

Take a stroll along the Pearl River on Ersha Island and you will come across Le oui, a French cuisine newcomer to Guangzhou's fine-dining scene. Before going in, stop and look. The restaurant's front lawn, which sits beside the Guangdong Museum of Art, greets diners with a tableau of creative art installations.

Inside, it's classic haute cuisine. French imperial chairs, crisp white tablecloths and glittering tableware all contribute to a sense of elegance. Glass-walled and boasting a river view, this refined bistro seems to bring the



outside in, with an abundance of green leafy houseplants that add life to the dining room. There's also a bar and wine cellar that boast an impressive list of vintages.

The Food

Here at Le oui, a la carte is not an option and visitors should expect to pay dearly for the premium chic. Customers receive a neatly printed wine list and menu detailing the four set meals on offer. Prices for the multi-course arrangements range from RMB398-998, rivaling those of luxury hotel restaurants. On the day of our visit, a half-off promotion caught us by surprise. But how was the food?

From the two sets we sampled, it was clear that the ingredients Le oui chooses are faultless in both freshness and taste. This much was evident in dishes like the scallop with caviar, an efficiently refreshing appetizer presented like an exotic floral bloom, and the shrimp salad with orange, which delivers a marvelously edgy flavor, arriving frosted with a topping of tiny orange locules (the minute sacs that make up the fruit's juicy flesh). In an added treat for the eyes, the two dishes come with a side of mystique, flirting with diners through a haze of dry ice.

Another standout is the croustade with bread, a creamy soup flavored with bits of bacon, ham and nuts, and coupled with a crispy

cuttlefish biscuit.

As for mains, the *sous-vide* short ribs with foie gras sauce as well as the lamb chop with black pepper sauce, were both precisely cooked and lushly seasoned. The fried octopus with prickly ash, however, is a run-of-the-mill extra. Nonetheless, we found the colorful dessert, jujube mousse and ice cream, to make for a playfully satisfying finish.

The Vibe

Le oui strikes us as a romantic, sophisticated venue. With Xinghai Concert Hall and the city's premier art museum in its immediate vicinity, the place is a seamless addition to a neighborhood where ritz, prestige and high culture are already calling cards. And yes, the dining room is elegant and the food is top-notch, but whether it is worth your hard-earned money is a question worth considering.

Price: RMB400-1,000
Who's going: affluent 'islanders', curious concert-goers
Good for: expensive dates
Nearest metro: Wuyangcun, 30-40 minutes; so take a taxi.

Open daily, 10am-10pm; (near Guangdong Museum of Art) 38 Qingbo Lu, Ersha Island, Yuexiu District 越秀区二沙岛晴波路38号 (广东美术馆旁, 3765 9109)



GANÈA KITCHEN FAIRY TALES

Once Upon a Time in Pazhou...

By Matthew Bossons

The Place

Class. Pure, class. Located in Guangzhou's up and coming Pazhou New Village, Ganèa Kitchen Fairy Tales is the neighborhood's swankiest joint, with an elegant, dimly lit interior and impressive selection of high-grade meat and booze.

Owned and operated by a small team of food- and wine-loving Moldovan folks, Ganèa's interior design and 'feel' can best be described as very much a cross between the sophistication of fellow steak-haven Morton's and the hominess of a small family-run restaurant. Think of Ganèa as a boutique-style luxury steakhouse.

The Food

We began our culinary journey at Ganèa with the beef carpaccio (RMB128), a dish that originates from Italy and consists of thinly-sliced raw beef, greens, chunks of parmesan cheese, lemon and black pepper – ingredients that, when eaten together, result in a skirmish of textures in your ol' 'pie hole.' Ganèa's rendition is true to form and serves as a fantastic appetizer.

Ganèa's tzatziki dish (approx. RMB60, price yet to be determined) offers a taste authentic to the celebrated Greek dip, but with a unique method of presentation: ingredients are served individually in a large, shallow

bowl, and it's up to you whether to mix them together or to enjoy them separately. We chose the former route, and the refreshing and tart blend of ingredients was perfect for dipping the eatery's homemade bread.

Served with asparagus, broccoli and fries, the Australian Angus beef ribeye steak (RMB388) is a filling plate of food, no doubt. Cooked to order, these slabs of beef come accompanied by a choice of several sauces, including a zesty pepper sauce, blue cheese sauce and classic mushroom sauce. We went with the 'shroom dip and were thoroughly impressed.

For poultry lovers, we recommend the slow-cooked duck breast, which comes served with a super-sweet, slow-cooked pear. The delicate balance of savory and sweet that is achieved with this spirited dish is simply remarkable. The outside of the duck breast is cooked to a light crisp, while the meat's interior remains juicy and soft – creating a dynamic mouthfeel.

For all of the aforementioned meat dishes, Ganèa's selection of Moldovan wine is probably the best beverage option.

To finish off our meaty marathon at Ganèa Kitchen Fairy Tales, we sampled the *mille-feuille*: a flaky French pastry adorned with strawberries and cream (RMB68). Pair your dessert with a 'popcorn whiskey sour' (RMB50): a classic whiskey sour with a subtle aftertaste of unbuttered popcorn, garnished

with lightly roasted strawberry-flavored marshmallows.

The Vibe

With low lighting and soft, bluesy oldies serenading patrons from the restaurant's speaker system, the vibe is undoubtedly relaxing. As we mentioned at the beginning of this article, classy is probably the best way to describe Ganèa, and as such, it's a great spot to bring a date for an intimate evening of flirting over fine eats and wine.

Price: RMB500

Who's going: Russian expats, high society

Good for: meat, meat and more meat, romantic rendezvous

Nearest metro: Wanshengwei (Exit D), 10 minutes

Open daily, 10am-midnight; Shop J16-10, Phase 2, Poly Tianyue Garden, Chenyue Lu, Haizhu District 海珠区宸悦路保利天悦2期J16-10号 (8092 8015)





OLIVE TERRACE

Bringing Pastoral Italy to Town

By Tristin Zhang

The Place

On a Thursday afternoon, a week before Chinese New Year, the travelers that throng the square of Guangzhou East Railway Station have retreated, and the surrounding neighborhoods recede to their once-a-year repose. Two blocks west of the train station though, business operations at Olive Terrace, a homey bistro that opened late last year, aren't daunted by the CNY quietude.

Fronting Linhe Xi Lu, the restaurant greets patrons with a mustard-yellow facade, olive-green door and a wood-floored porch; the 'terrace' in its name apparently referring to an indoor seating area with a wooden awning.



Within, customers gather under dim lighting at tables adorned with floral tiles, engrossed in food and conversation. Wine bottles are ranked on a table that surrounds a brick pillar, which centers the eatery. It looks inviting.

The Food

Serving up some well-presented, primarily Italian fare crafted by a seasoned chef with a culinary career spanning 30 years, Olive Terrace boasts a decent wine list and makes for an excellent destination for those who enjoy a good vino with their fine Italian meal. Outlandishly, there's a side menu featuring several selections of *sukiyaki*, or Japanese-style hot pot.

For hors d'oeuvres, order the carpaccio with scallop, shrimp, salmon and citrus dressing (RMB108). This appetizer, made with ingredients at the peak of freshness, makes for a stimulating start to the meal. The Waldorf salad (RMB60), however, comes in a mayo dressing that's simply over the top.

The star of the show has to be the surf and turf with roast beef and Pacific prawns (RMB248), with the giant shrimp cooked to perfection. This delectable dish, with roasted carrot, onion and cherry tomatoes on the side, is tailored for two people. Another highlight on the bill of



fare is linguine with prawn, cognac, cherry tomato and parmesan (RMB68), – a bold harmony of flavors served *al dente*.

Try the baked marshmallow with chocolate fondue (RMB46) to conclude your meal with a sweet, satisfying finish.

The Vibe

With quaint, Mediterranean furnishing that conveys a certain bucolic ambience, Olive Terrace strikes us as a comfy bistro where a fine repast is guaranteed.

Price: 150-200

Who's going: local and expat couples, Japanese-Italian fusion fans

Good for: surf 'n' turf

Nearest metro: Guangzhou East Railway Station (Exit F, 10 minutes)

Open daily, 11.30am-11pm; 126 Linhe Dong Lu, Tianhe District 天河区林和东路126号 (3855 5290)



BISTRO NIMMAN TIME

Bangkok Meets Bologna

By Tristin Zhang

Immediately outside of Liede Metro Station, stands the two-story Bistro Nimman Time – a Thai-inspired new arrival to Tianhe’s crowded dining scene. On the restaurant’s frontage, copious strings of yellow lighting illuminate its wide-open doorway and a rectangular tabletop built into the wall outside allows for pre-meal chitchat. Nearby, a large plush gorilla, a relic of the Zoo Coffee branch that once stood on the site, sits meditating, perhaps, on the inconstancy of life and the fickle tides of Guangzhou’s F&B fortunes, in silent reminiscence.

Nimman boasts a fresh, airy interior. Broad floral paintings grace the walls, leafy plants line the eaves and lush, verdant tones dominate the decor while a long table centers the bistro’s first floor space. There’s also a small bar by the counter serving up Bloody Marys, margaritas and the like.

The kitchen, meanwhile, serves composite Western dishes jazzed up with Southeast Asian flavorings, which tend towards spicy and sour. Think spaghetti in laksa soup (RMB58) or *tom yum* flavor seafood risotto (RMB58), with fried shrimp, squid, mussels and clams mixed with lemongrass and roasted onions.

There’s also a Thai-style beef

and pomelo salad (RMB58), a zesty concoction of roast beef, pomelo, lettuce, beets, fried coconut slices and nut fragments, the flavor of which is elevated by a tart secret sauce. A no-nonsense selection of mains is also on offer, among which the grilled angus rib steak (RMB88) stands out. Early birds might also opt for some of Nimman’s brunch options.

On the drinks menu, in addition to the usual suspects, several tempting frappuccinos make an appearance – just in time for the coming April heat.

Price: RMB80-150

Who’s going: CBD dwellers

Good for: tangy fusion, appetizing beef and pomelo salad

Nearest metro: Liede (Exit B), 5 seconds

Open daily, 9am-11pm; Shop 122A, Bldg No. 2, Utopa, 88 Huangcheng Dadao, Tianhe District 天河区花城大道88号优托邦商场2座街铺122A



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NOKPI COLLECTION

Chrome Cups and Caffeine Kicks

By Kheng Swe Lim

The Place

As you walk through the Wuyangcun neighborhood on a warm April evening, you may crave a space to sit and contemplate your work and life, fueled by caffeine and sugar. Perhaps the space you seek is colored in calming shades of black and white, with cakes served on geometrically pleasing hexagonal platters.

Well, such a space does exist. It goes by the name of Nokpi Collection, and there you can sit and collect your thoughts while staring into the heart-shaped foam of your chrome-colored coffee cup.

The Food

Nokpi Collection, like any cafe worth its salt, serves up your typical selection of caffeinated drinks (think espressos, Americanos, mochas and flat whites), priced between RMB18-30. For those who have an early flight to catch the next day and could do without the caffeine, there is also a selection of non-caffeinated hot drinks on offer.

The mark of a good cafe is its cappuccino (RMB26), and at Nokpi Collection, the barista knows what he is doing. Often, we could not detect where the delicate foam ended and where the curative elixir of wakefulness underneath began, although the coffee itself is

less robust than the original Italian version. Meanwhile, the interestingly named Gothic latte (RMB26) consisted of black sesame and peanut, sans caffeine, and was reminiscent of a Cantonese sesame-paste dessert. Despite being an unappetizing shade of grey, it was very smooth. For both drinks, only a highly meticulous barista would be able to steam milk to produce such a consistency.

The cafe also serves a selection of flavored Swiss rolls. These were very fresh, but tasted unremarkable. The strawberry roll (RMB32) had a red velvet cake base with a giant strawberry chunk wedged within the cream; although the elements were individually tasty, the whole was less than the sum of its parts. The matcha roll (RMB32), meanwhile, was creamy, but otherwise unmemorable.

The Vibe

The food and drink are only half the reason to come to a cafe. You likely also want a clean, brightly-lit sanctuary to ruminate while working on your next Oscar-winning screenplay.

Given this, you will find the black-and-white color scheme a welcome escape from the bustle and chaos of Guangzhou's streets. Those literate in Chinese may appreciate the philosophical quotes printed on transparent plastic boards and suspended from the ceiling.



The cafe has a large, open ground floor and a smaller second floor, from where you can spy the barista fastidiously doing the washing-up below.

On the day of our visit, the cafe was playing Leonard Cohen songs as a soundtrack. It's appropriate background music for an evening spent churning out a philosophically complex short story on your laptop, before counting up your ever-increasing empty espresso cups, paying your bill and disappearing into the darkness of the Cantonese night.

Price: RMB25

Who's going: coffee lovers, tortured artists
Good for: relaxed vibes, chrome cups, caffeine kicks

Nearest metro: Wuyangcun (Exit A), 8 minutes

Open daily, 10am-10pm; Siyou 2 Road, No. 7 越秀区寺右二马路7号 (159 8908 7339)



DEUTCHSE ECKE

Curry-Smothered Brats

By Matthew Bossons

Jianshe Liu Malu has 'fallen on black F&B days,' to quasi-quote the late Chris Cornell. The once bustling restaurant and bar area has seen a steady string of closures over the past couple years, including Tekila (2016), Pandan (2016), People's Cafe (2017), Duo nightclub (2017?) and, most recently, The Brew Bistro & Bar.

But one recent opening has us optimistic JSL may still have a little fight left in 'er: Deutsche Ecke (Chinese name: 德角肠). Located across the street from the LN Garden Hotel, and a literal hop, skip and a jump away from the McDonald's on JSL, this new roadside grab n' go shop specializes in German-style sausages and potato wedges smothered in tangy, ketchup-y curry.

Food here comes in an easy-to-transport cardboard cone, with miniature German-flag-adorned toothpicks provided to help you transport the slices of curry-soaked sausage to your watering mouth.

Five currywurst sets are available, including the 90-gram Berlin juicy cheese sausage, 80-gram Frankfurt classic sausage, 110-gram German chicken sausage, 100-

gram Nuremberg famous white sausage and a low-fat offering: the 95-gram Black Forest green onion sausage.

All sausage-curry combos are sold for the extremely reasonable price of RMB15. Add RMB5 to have your sausage and curry set on a bed of seasoned potato wedges and lettuce.

Choice offerings? We recommend snacking on the Berlin cheese sausage, which comes packed with liquid-y cheese that oozes from the German hot dog and blends perfectly with the smoldering hot tomato curry that adorns the top of the handheld meal.

Was your interest piqued at the mention of a low-fat option? Well, we can personally attest the Black Forest green onion sausage is tasty. Although, we question how much of a difference the low-fat sausage makes when it comes coated in curry with what are essentially jumbo French fries.

Serving sizes are fair for the price, but if you arrive with an appetite expect to order two 'currywurst cones.' Still, two take-away orders here will set you back less than a Big Mac meal *waimai* and that, we presume, is

why Deutsche Ecke has earned such a following amongst the lunch crowds and nighttime wanderers of Jianshe Liu Malu.

Price: RMB20

Who's going: hungry bottleshop patrons, currywurst lovin' Taojiners

Good for: tasty eats on a student's budget, grab n' go dining

Nearest metro: Taojin (Exit A), 5 minutes

Open daily, 9am-midnight; 33 Jianshe Liu Malu, Yuexiu District 越秀区建设六马路33号





● **The Legendary Swordsman** Acrobatic Play



Based on the story of the classic novel *The Smiling, Proud Wanderer* by Louis Cha of Hong Kong (better known by his pen name Jin Yong), this acrobatic play tells the tale of a Chinese martial artist and how he achieves perfection in sword-play. Presented by the Guangzhou Acrobatic Troupe, this exciting spectacle will combine martial arts, acrobatics, drama as well as Cantonese folk music. Don't miss this sensational showcase of local talent and tradition.

Sat, Sun, Mon Apr 14, 21, 29, 30, 7:30pm; RMB80-600. Guangzhou Acrobatic Troup No. 1 Theater, 37 Shuiyin Si Heng Lu, Yuexiu District 越秀区水荫四横路37号广州杂技团第一剧院 (damai.cn)

● **Julius Caesar** Drama



"Render unto Caesar that which is Caesar's, and unto God, that which is God's." This spring, British stage heavyweights TNT Theater will render unto Guanzhou's theater fans their production of Shakespeare's classic political thriller about the legendary Roman dictator. Power, intrigue and betrayal prepare to take the stage at Xinghai Concert Hall, brought to life in the hands of these practiced thespians.

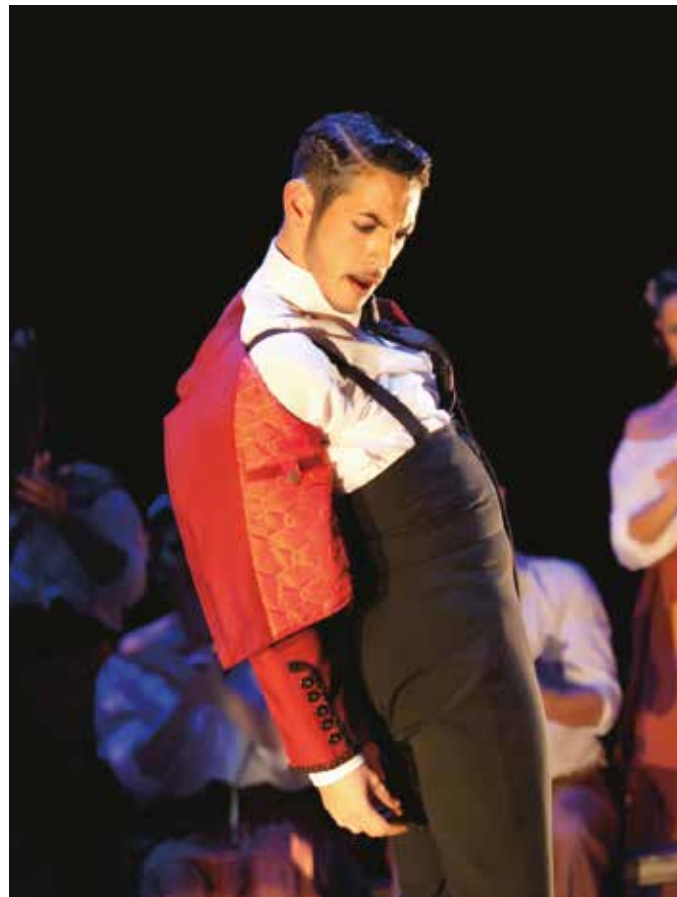
Fri-Sat May 4-5, 7:30pm; RMB100-320. Xinghai Concert Hall, 33 Qingbo Lu, Ersha Island, Yuexiu District 越秀区二沙岛晴波路33号星海音乐厅 (8735 8735, ticket-easy.cn)

● **Mi Carmen Flamenca** Flamenco



Born in a village with traditional flamenco heritage near Seville, Spain, flamenco artist Antonio Andrade grew up among aficionados of this eye-catching art form. Serving as the artistic director of Antonio Andrade Flamenco Company, the Spanish artist has created many a successful production enjoyed by audiences the world over, including this rendition of *Carmen*.

Sun Apr 29, 8pm; RMB100-800. Xinghai Concert Hall, 33 Qingbo Lu, Ersha Island, Yuexiu District 越秀区二沙岛晴波路33号星海音乐厅 (8735 8735, ticket-easy.cn)



● **Chinese-style Landscape** Exhibition



This exhibition, titled *Post-Brush Age: Chinese-style Landscape*, explores the evolution of Chinese ink painting through the work of more than two dozen artists. The rich heritage of innovation that runs through all stages of Chinese landscape painting's development is on full display, from traditional innovation, to the Western art-inspired experimentation of the modern period, to the contemporary type that expands beyond ink through the use of multimedia. In addition to the artworks, the exhibition will include a series of lectures, sharing sessions, tours and workshops.

Tue-Sun until Apr 26, 9am-5pm; free. Guangdong Museum of Art, 38 Yanyu Lu, Ersha Island, Yuexiu District 越秀区二沙岛烟雨路38号广东美术馆 (gdmoa.org, 8735 1468)

● **Pursuing – The Happy Dream Walker** Exhibition



In this universe created by artist Arx Lee, stories unfold around three characters Lee created in the past: the naive hero Bilibi, the amnesic, fragile and thoughtful 'Buda Pest' and the perseverant adventurer Bumi. Looking at his visual vocabulary, audiences might wonder whether Lee himself is a tool of his own imagination.

Tue-Sun until Apr 23, 11am-8pm; free entry. Kui Yuan Gallery, 9 Xuguyuan Lu, Yuexiu District 越秀区恤孤院路9号 逵园艺术馆 (8765 9746)

● Guangzhou Driftings Exhibition



Guangzhou Driftings is an expression of Canton through the personal visions, sensations, perceptions and thoughts of Swiss artist Catherine Gfeller and nine Chinese women from different backgrounds. The art exhibition is laid out in such a way that visitors will feel as though they are wandering through the various districts and neighborhoods of Guangzhou. *Guangzhou Driftings* utilizes a rich variety of mediums: photography, video, sound and text installations displayed across two halls of the Guangdong Museum of Art. One of these halls has been transformed into a huge video dark room in which visitors are immersed in a universe full of colors, movements, rhythms, voices and sounds. Tue-Sun until Apr 7, 9am-5pm; free. Guangdong Museum of Art, 38 Yanyu Lu, Ersha Island, Yuexiu District 越秀区二沙岛烟雨路38号广东美术馆 (gdmoa.org, 8735 1468)

● Marco Polo Opera



Taking the Guangzhou Opera House by storm, this operatic production boasts international star-power and a captivating storyline. Based on the life of Italian merchant and writer Marco Polo, the story is set in 13th-century China, when the Han Chinese Song Dynasty was at war with the invading Mongols, who would eventually rule the Middle Kingdom. Written by one of China's most prestigious contemporary poets, Wei Jin, and directed by Danish stage director Kasper Holten, this opera is a transcontinental collaboration that guarantees splendor in both storytelling and staging.

Fri-Sun May 4-6, 7.30pm; RMB180-840. Guangzhou Opera House, 1 Zhujiang Xi Lu, Tianhe District 天河区珠江西路1号广州大剧院 (gzdgy.org, 3839 2888)

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● **Magdalena Kožená**
Operatic



Czech mezzo-soprano Magdalena Kožená has dedicated her whole life to singing, starting her vocal journey as a member of a children's choir. On her first visit to Guangzhou, the wonderful Magdalena Kožená will be performing classic Baroque music, as well as a three-voice scena. She is to be accompanied by the Swiss orchestra La Cetra Barockorchester Basel playing under the baton of Italian maestro Andera Marcon. Sun Apr 8, 7.30pm; RMB80-680. Guangzhou Opera House, 1 Zhujiang Xi Lu, Tianhe District 天河区珠江西路1号广州大剧院 (3839 2888, gzdjy.org)

● **Maximilian Hecker 'Sea of Silence' Tour** Pop



German music producer and songwriter Maximilian Hecker is adored for his delicate voice and eclectic, troubadour-esque performances. From his very first album, *Infinite Love Songs*, right up to his most recent offering, *Spellbound Scenes of My Cure*, Hecker has insisted on composing, singing and playing instruments completely on his own. A musician's musician, Hecker describes his songs as melancholy pop hymns. Sun Apr 29, 8pm; RMB100-380. Guangzhou Friendship Theater, 696 Renmin Bei Lu, Yuexiu District 越秀区人民北路696号广州友谊剧院 (damai.cn)

● **Arch Enemy** Death Metal



The melodic death metal group is coming from Sweden to rock your soul this month. Formed in 1995, Arch Enemy embodies the intensity, integrity and lofty artistic ambitions of death metal with dazzling aplomb. They've spent the last 20 years cultivating a creed of technical excellence, songwriting genius and thunderous live performances. Head to Mao Livehouse this month to witness Arch Enemy in all of their gloomy glory. Thu Apr 5, 8.30-10pm; RMB550 presale, RMB680 at the door, RMB1,080 VIP. Mao Livehouse, 1/F, Zhongzhou Trading Center, Huizhan Nan Wu Lu, Haizhu District 海珠区会展南五路中州交易中心1楼 (showstart.com)



● **Daniel Powter** Pop



Daniel Powter, the Canadian who stormed the European charts in 2005 with his single 'Bad Day' (from his self-titled release) tours China to recapture the magic. His latest album, the melodic and poppy *Turn on the Lights* may have been more than five years past, but the crooner is showing his spunk with a recent single ('Delicious') that brings fans back for another taste. Sun Apr 15, 8-9.30pm; RMB480-880. Central Station, Bldg No. 2-8, Yangcheng Creative Industrial Park, 315 Huangpu Dadao Zhong, Tianhe District 天河区黄埔大道中315号羊城创意产业园2-8栋中央车站 (showstart.com)

● **Christian Blackshaw**
Classical Piano



Tutored by eminent British classical pianist Sir Clifford Curzon, Christian Blackshaw is a concert pianist of international stature. Returning to the piano after a lengthy hiatus following his wife's death, Blackshaw's musicianship didn't forsake him. His performances still express a range of musical virtues – elegant with a touch of poetic feel. At his Guangzhou concert, Blackshaw has selected some classical piano sonatas by Mozart to uplift audience members. Come and bask in the grace of Blackshaw's expressive performance. Sun-Mon & Wed Apr 29-30 & May 2, 7.30pm; RMB180-1,000. Guangzhou Opera House, 1 Zhujiang Xi Lu, Tianhe District 天河区珠江西路1号广州大剧院 (3839 2888, gzdjy.org)

● Los Crasher Hard Rock



Chinese hard rockers Los Crasher are set to perform choice numbers from their three albums this month in Guangzhou as part of their Highway Star tour. The Beijing group's latest offering, *Game Face*, has garnered considerable acclaim from hardcore fans. Check them out on April 6 at the recently reopened SD Livehouse.

Fri Apr 6, 8.30-10pm; RMB80 presale, RMB100 at the door. SD Livehouse, Building No. 7, Huacheng Wangshi Creative Area, 132 Gongye Dadao Bei, Haizhu District 海珠区工业大道北132号"花城往事"创意园7号楼SD现场 (showstart.com)

● Yuck Shoegaze



Their sound has graced audiences at major music festivals, such as South by Southwest and Primavera Sound, and been compared to bands like My Bloody Valentine and Sonic Youth. Basically, Yuck is the real deal. And now, the talented group of musicians is returning to the Middle Kingdom for the third time, because, apparently, fans in China just can't get enough of their melodic tunes. If you're unfamiliar with Yuck, be sure to check out their latest album *Stranger Things*.

Tue Apr 17, 8.30-10pm; RMB150 presale, RMB180 at the door. Mao livehouse, 1/F, Zhongzhou Trading Center, Huizhan Nan Wu Lu, Haizhu District 海珠区会展南五路中州交易中心1楼Mao Livehouse (www.showstart.com)

win!

We have a pair of tickets to this show to give away! Message our official WeChat account (**ThatsGuangzhou**) before April 15 with the subject 'Yuck' and why you should win. Please include your full name and contact number.

● Lydmor Underground



Danish for 'mother of sound,' Lydmor is arguably an ambitious title for a young musician. But Danish singer, songwriter and producer Jenny Rossander has undoubtedly earned the moniker after successful tours across Europe and Southeast Asia – a feat few of her youthful musical peers have accomplished. Back home, in Denmark, Rossander is celebrated as a promising underground artist whose lyrics deal with sex, drugs and emotion, as well as faraway destinations.

Sat Apr 21, time TBD; RMB80 presale, RMB100 at the door. 191 Space, 191 Space, 191 Guangzhou Dadao Zhong, Yuexiu District 越秀区广州大道中191号191空间 (showstart.com)

win!

We have a pair of tickets to this show to give away! Message our official WeChat account (**ThatsGuangzhou**) before April 19 with the subject 'Lydmor' and why you should win. Please include your full name and contact number.

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浙江省义乌市稠州北路475&477号
Tel: (0579)8554 7474 / 8554 7471



● Strawberry Sensation High Tea Afternoon Tea



The Taikoo Lounge at Mandarin Oriental, Guangzhou, known for its relaxing and contemporary atmosphere, is an ideal place for an elegant afternoon tea. Strawberries are in season this month, and the hotel's executive pastry chef has crafted a themed high tea with locally grown strawberries, offering many exciting and irresistible goodies made from the juicy fruit.

Daily all month, 2.30-5.30pm; RMB388 plus 15 percent. The Taikoo Lounge, Mandarin Oriental, Guangzhou, 389 Tianhe Lu, Tianhe District 天河区天河路389号广州文华东方酒店 (3808 8881)

● All-you-can-eat Dim Sum at Tea 5 Dim Sum



Inspired by the classic Hong Kong movie *In the Mood for Love*, this Treat yourself to a total of 26 varieties of dim sum at Tea 5 restaurant, the signature Cantonese dining experience at Guangzhou's premier boutique luxury hotel, LN Hotel 5. Let your taste buds be tantalized by the hotel's expert chefs, who boast decades of experience in the world of upscale cookery. Call 8931 0505 for more information.

Daily, all month, 10.30am-2.30pm; RMB98. Tea 5, LN Hotel Five, 277 Yanjiang Lu, Yuexiu District 越秀区沿江路277号岭南五号酒店 (8931 0505)

● Authentic Turkish at the Garden Hotel Turkish Food



Discover the rich array of fragrant and delectable Turkish dishes at the Garden Hotel's Turkish Food Festival, brought to life by three seasoned Turkish guest chefs. On top of vibrant food choices, diners can expect a tableside serenade of traditional Turkish kanun music. To reserve your seat, contact Harish Prasad at 188 2003 3784.

Daily, all month, 6pm-10pm; RMB288 plus 10 percent. Cascade Café, LN Garden Hotel, Guangzhou, 368 Huanshi Dong Lu, Yuexiu District 越秀区环市东路368号广州花园酒店 (188 2003 3784)

● Floral Afternoon Tea



Inspired by the classic Hong Kong movie *In the Mood for Love*, this afternoon tea offers fanciful, floral-themed delicacies perfect for admirers of Cantonese cinema. Expect a bouquet of flavors to thrill the senses, from green apple mousse balls and strawberry tarts to cheong-sam-shaped cookies and crispy fried grouper. In addition, customers can sample two special seasonal fruit drinks.

Daily ongoing, 3-5pm; RMB198 plus 15 percent for two. Canton Lounge, DoubleTree by Hilton Guangzhou, 391 Dongfeng Lu, Yuexiu District 越秀区东风路391号广州希尔顿逸林酒店 (2833 2888 ext. 6210)

● Vietnamese Delicacy Buffet



Guangzhou Marriott Hotel Tianhe presents a selection of authentic Vietnamese fare. Chefs Nguyen Binh and Vũ Thị Quyên from JW Marriott Hotel Hanoi will utilize traditional ingredients to prepare elaborate Vietnamese delicacies, including appetizers, mains and desserts. Binh is a proponent of healthy eating and is skilled in the creation of authentic – yet creative – Vietnamese cuisine, while Quyên is an expert at Vietnamese dessert dishes. Highlights include deep-fried 'Sai Gon' spring rolls and Hanoi beef pho.

Daily until Apr 6; RMB328 Sun-Thu, RMB358 Fri-Sat, plus 15 percent. Guangzhou Marriot Hotel Tianhe, 228 Tianhe Lu, Tianhe District 天河区天河路228号广州正佳广场万豪酒店 (6108 8888)



● BSG Book Week School



From April 16-20, The British School of Guangzhou is celebrating literature with its annual Book Week. There will be opportunities for parents to meet two popular children's authors from the UK and attend workshops. More information can be found on the school's website: bsg.org.cn.

Mon-Fri Apr 16-20. The British School of Guangzhou, 983-3 Tonghe Lu, Baiyun District 白云区同和路983-3号广州英国学校 (bsg.org.cn, 8709 4788)

● Catch the Flavors in Asia New Menu



Catch at Four Seasons Hotel Guangzhou is launching a new dining concept: Asian-inspired seafood dishes and tempting desserts. Crowning the Four Seasons Hotel Guangzhou, on the 100th floor of the IFC tower, Catch is a spectacular seafood restaurant with a demonstration kitchen at the heart of the action. The new concept presents top seafood ingredients in authentic as well as Asian-fusion flavours. With delicious edibles and panoramic night views of the Canton Tower and Pearl River, dinner at Catch is the ultimate dining experience.

Daily ongoing; dinner: 6-11pm (last order at 10pm), weekend lunch: 11.30am-2.30pm. Catch, 100/F, Four Seasons Hotel Guangzhou, 5 Zhujiang Xi Lu, Tianhe District 天河区珠江西路5号广州四季酒店100层 (8883 3300)

HONG KONG & MACAU CALENDAR

APR 6-8
FRI-SUN



HSBC World Rugby Sevens Series, 10am; HKD797-16,699. Hong Kong Stadium (hksevsn.com) The three-day extravaganza of international rugby revelry kicks off with a range of new activities. Beyond the dozens of teams competing in the 40,000-seat stadium, there are e-sports to play, a fanwalk of food, drinks and street performances, a junior ninja warrior obstacle course and more. UB40 performs at the kickoff concert on Thursday, April 5, at 8pm.

APR 10-12
TUE-THU



Asia-Pacific Business Forum, 9am-5pm; HKD300 The Asia-Pacific Business Forum is kicking off this month in Hong Kong at Pok Fu Lam's Cyberport. Bringing together luminaries from the fields of business, development, economics, governance and tech, the gathering will focus on how private sector-led innovation can drive sustainable development in the region. Those interested can register to attend at apbf.cyberport.hk.

APR 16
MON



WMC I-1 World Muaythai Grand Extreme, 7pm; HKD50-1,000. KITEC Star Hall (hkticketing.com) Hong Kong's trusted purveyors of "the art of eight limbs" delivers a fight night with some of the world's finest champions. Fighters from Russia, Romania, USA, Brazil, Hong Kong and beyond all pit their best against one another. Expect more than 10 heart-pounding bouts over the course of three-and-a-half hours.

APR 21
SAT



Electric Wonderland: Paul Oakenfold – Spectrum World Tour, 10pm. W Hong Kong (852-3717 2222) Witness the 'No. 1 DJ in the World' (twice so acclaimed) and three-time Grammy-nominated pillar of the EDM community. Oakenfold's legacy has endured for decades, his music-making revolutionizing dance music time and again. This is your chance to see the legend, live.

APR 24
TUE



The Script, 8pm; HKD580-1,280. KITEC Star Hall (hkticketing.com) Ireland's hit trio are back in Hong Kong after a six year absence, this time with the catchy, sardonic single 'Rain' from their latest album, *Freedom Child*. With sales topping 29 million, four platinum singles and three multi-platinum albums, The Script is officially a phenomenon. Get your tickets now before they're sold out.

HK

APR 17-18
TUE-WED



Bruno Mars 24k Magic World Tour 2018, 8pm/8.30pm; MOP688-1,988. The Venetian Macao (macauticket.com) The megastar has taken the world by storm since he first appeared on the scene in late 2009, crooning out the choruses on B.O.B.'s 'Nothing on You' and Traviie McCoy's 'Billionaire' before becoming a successful solo artist the following year with the chart-topping single 'Just the Way You Are.' Mars will be in Macau this month as part of his 24K Magic World Tour, which has been ongoing for nearly a year and earned him the title of 'Stubhub's Touring Act of 2017'.

APR 18
WED



Feast of Pak Tai, all day. Pak Tai Temple, Taipa Village Pak Tai's birthday is on the third day of the third lunar month, which falls on April 18 this year. In Chinese folk religion, Pak Tai defeated the Demon King, who was terrorizing the universe. As a reward, he was given the title 'Superior Divinity of the Deep Dark Heaven' and 'True Soldier of the North.' A feast for Pak Tai will be offered on this day and Cantonese opera will be performed in a bamboo theater outside the temple.

APR 25
WED



Special Percussion Concert with Eriko Daimo, 8pm; MOP120. Dom Pedro V Theatre (macauticket.com) One of the world's best marimba (a xylophone-like instrument) artists, Daimo has excelled in numerous prestigious competitions. The Japanese musician has performed in more than 20 countries with some of the world's most renowned orchestras. As an educator, she has given concerts and masterclasses at music institutions such as the University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna and the Paris Conservatory.

APR 27-MAY 31



The 29th Macao Art Festival, for specific programs, please visit www.icm.gov.mo The 29th edition of Macao Arts Festival (MAF), themed 'origin', will launch this month with a wide range of topics to broaden perspectives and encourage viewers to think deeply about life. With 26 captivating programs that fall into seven categories (thematic highlights, groundbreakers, cross-disciplinary creations, family entertainment, quintessence of tradition, concerts and exhibitions), the MAF is the perfect occasion for audiences to appreciate classics refined through time.

UNTIL MAY 13
TUE-SUN



Women Artists 1st International Biennial of Macao, 10am-7pm; free. Macao Museum of Art Artwork by a total of 28 female artists from Macao and Lusophone countries and regions are exhibited at this international biennale of arts dedicated to women artists. Pieces on display will include paintings, engravings, drawings, ceramics and more.

MO

HOTEL NEWS

NEWS

AccorHotels Group Appoints New General Manager of Pullman Zhoushan Seaview

AccorHotels Group has officially appointed Benny Shen as the general manager of Pullman Zhoushan Seaview. Shen has 16 years of experience in international chained-brand hotels. He has worked at major hospitality groups such as InterContinental Hotels Group, Shangri-La Group and Marriott Group.



Consulate Organizes 'Know India Tourism Seminar' in Guangzhou

The Consulate General of India in Guangzhou organized a 'Know India Tourism Seminar' in the city on February 28 to coincide with India's participation at the Guangzhou International Travel Fair 2018. The fair also featured an 'Incredible India' pavilion, set up by India Tourism.

Four Seasons Hotel Guangzhou Named Five Star Hotel by 2018 Forbes Travel Guide

Forbes Travel Guide has unveiled its annual Star Rating List, once again naming Four Seasons Hotel Guangzhou as a recipient of the coveted Forbes Travel Guide Five Star Hotel rating. It's the fourth consecutive year the hotel has received the honor. Hotels attaining the top Five Star Award recognition are defined by Forbes as the finest establishments in the world, delivering exceptional guests experiences that exceed expectations.



The Ritz-Carlton, Guangzhou Celebrates 10 Years of Success

The Ritz-Carlton, Guangzhou celebrated its 10th anniversary on March 11 with a series of activities to commemorate this memorable and monumental occasion. In conjunction with the 10th anniversary, The Ritz-Carlton, Guangzhou further delivered on its commitment to the Community Footprints project – a 10-kilometer charity run supported by the Guangdong Harmony Foundation. Guests, partners and sports enthusiasts were invited to participate in support of Pearl River water treatment projects.



PROMOTIONS

Awaken Your Body with Fresh Tea in Early Spring

Treat yourself with the Chuan Spring Tea Detox package during the invigorating season of spring at Chuan Spa. The spa package is priced at RMB1,680 for one person and RMB3,180 for two, which includes a 90-minute body care session utilizing fresh, finely-ground West Lake Longjing tea leaves blended with Asiatic wormwood and acupressure massage, as well as a 60-minute Thalgo Hydra-Moisture facial care treatment. Book in advance and get a complimentary pass granting you access to the fitness center and indoor swimming pool on the day of your visit. For more information, call 8916 3218.

638 Xin'gang Dong Lu, Haizhu District 海珠区新港东路638号广州南丰朗豪酒店 (8916 3218)



Stay at Langham Place, Guangzhou During the Canton Fair

Langham Place, Guangzhou is located near the Guangzhou International Convention and Exhibition Center, home of the world-famous Canton Fair, offering participants exceptional convenience for travel arrangements. For the upcoming Canton Fair 2018 in April, stay at Langham Place, Guangzhou for a minimum of three nights and enjoy up to 20 percent off of the best available rate.

638 Xin'gang Dong Lu, Haizhu District 海珠区新港东路638号广州南丰朗豪酒店 (8916 3388)

TRAVEL DEALS

Spend Golden Family Time at Zhuhai Chimelong Hengqin Bay Water World

Summer is coming up fast and what better way to cool off than with a family-friendly holiday at Hengqin Bay Water World? The resort opens on April 1 with a series of all-new special activities designed for all ages. Enjoy free access to the Water World during your stay and take advantage of the opportunity for advance reservation on one of the hotel's most popular family attractions - Dolphin Encounter, where an unforgettable frolic with our adorable dolphins awaits. For more information, call 0756-299 8888 or visit www.chimelong.com.

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FEATURED LISTINGS



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FOOD & DRINK

1920 Restaurant 1) 4/F, 1 Jianshe Liu Malu, Yuexiu District; 2) Shops 67, 69, 72 & 76, The Canton Place, Qingfeng Jie, Zhujiang Xincheng, Tianhe District (8388 1142); Shop MW01-03, 05, Central Zone, Mall of the World, 89 Huacheng Dadao, Tianhe District (8709 6033)

1920 咖啡厅 1) 建设六马路一号前幢 4 楼; 2) 天河区珠江新城清风街 48 号广粤天地 67, 69, 72, 76 号铺; 3) 天河区花城大道 89 号花城汇 MMV01-03, 05 商铺

Aroma Bistro Shop 117, 1/F, Voka Street, 460 Tianhe Bei Lu, Tianhe District (185 0200 1416) 天河区天河北路 460 号沃凯街首层 117 铺



Bravo Shop 114-115, 6 Huajiu Lu, Zhujiang Xincheng, Tianhe District 天河区珠江新城华就路 6 号 114-115 铺

The Brew Sports Bar & Grill 1) Unit 9-11, Huanan Country Garden, Panyu Dadao (across the road from Chime-long Theme Park), Panyu District (3482 0401); 2) West Section, Bao Lin Yuan, Huaxun Jie, Zhujiang Xincheng, Tianhe District (3408 9549); 3) Shop 11-13, Yuhai Food Street, 1 Jianshe Liu Malu, Yuexiu District (8382 8299)

1) 番禺区番禺大道华南碧桂园碧华商业 2 街 9-11 号; 2) 天河区珠江新城华讯街保林苑西区加拿大布鲁咖啡馆, 近发展中心; 3) 越秀区建设六马路誉海商业街 11-13 号铺

The Eating Table With seats for more than 200 diners to explore gastronomy at a less frenetic pace, The Eating Table's warm, alluring design enlivens the senses. The owner, who spent years in Melbourne, has ensured that the food delivers to both local and foreign palates. Enjoy a gratifying meal, with a menu that boasts a wide range of appetizers, soups, pastas and both meaty and marine-filled mains. On the occasion of The Eating Table's 2-year anniversary this past October, Michelin-starred chef Michel Portos has crafted a series of appetizing

dishes for this winter.

Shop 401, 4/F, GTLand Winter Plaza, Zhujiang Xincheng, Tianhe District 天河区珠江新城高德置地冬广场 4 楼 401 室 (8398 0860)

Buon giorno 1) 3/F, Yi An Plaza, 33 Jianshe Liu Malu, Yuexiu District (8363 3587); 2) A7, Xinshijie Haoyuan Diyi Ju, 168 Dongcheng Nan Lu, Dongguan (0769 2339 6499)

邦双意大利餐厅 1) 越秀区建设六马路直安广场 3 楼; 2) 东莞市东城南路 168 号新世界豪园第一层 A7 号

Element Fresh 1) Shop L302, TaiKoo Hui, 383 Tianhe Lu, Tianhe District (3808 8506); 2) G/F, 42 Qingfeng Jie, Zhujiang Xincheng, Tianhe District (3828 8482)

新元素 1) 天河区天河路 383 号太古汇广场 L302 店; 2) 天河区珠江新城清风街 42 号首层

Happy Monk 1) Back of Yi'an Plaza, Jianshe Wu Malu, Yuexiu District (8376 5597); 2) No. 109, 7Xingsheng Lu, Zhujiang Xincheng, Tianhe District (3877 8679); 3) Outdoor Plaza, Happy Valley Mall, 36 Machang Lu, Tianhe District (3832 5317)

1) 越秀区建设五马路直安广场后; 2) 天河区珠江新城兴盛路 7 号 109 号铺; 3) 天河区珠江新城马场路 36 号太阳新天地户外广场

Hooley's Irish Pub and Restaurant 1) 101, 8 Xingsheng Lu, Zhujiang Xincheng, Tianhe District (3886 2675); 2) Section 2, Yijia Yuan, 7 Xingzhongdao, Zhongshan

1) 爱尔兰西餐酒吧, 天河区珠江新城兴盛路 8 号 101; 2) 中山市兴中道 7 号领嘉苑 2 卡

In · Side · Out By Threedrops 3/F, 10 Xietianli, Lingnan Tiandi, Chancheng District, Foshan (0757-8203 1400, 189 885 25470) 佛山市禅城区岭南天地协天里 10 号 3 楼

M9 Restaurant Lounge Shop 112, 9 Xingsheng Lu, Zhujiang Xincheng, Tianhe District (3802 0171)

McCawley's Bar & Grill Shop 101, 16 Huacheng Dadao, Zhujiang Xincheng, Tianhe District (3801 7000)

天河区珠江新城花城大道 16 号 101 铺

Oggi Pizzeria 1) Shop 119, 8 Xingsheng Lu, Tianhe District (3805 1282); 4) 1 Tianlun Garden, Jianshe 4 Lu, Yuexiu District (8356 1196) www.oggirestaurant.com

卡布里西餐厅 1) 天河区兴盛路 8 号 119 铺; 2) 越秀区建设四马路天伦花园首层

Paulaner Bräuhaus L307, 3/F, TaiKoo Hui, 383 Tianhe Lu, Tianhe District (2808 6333)

宝莱纳, 天河区天河路 383 号太古汇广场 L307

Rebel Rebel 42 Tiyu Dong Lu, Tianhe District (8520 1579) 天河区体育东路 42 号

Ricci Creative Eats Shop 015B, G/F, Popark Mall, No.63 Linhe Zhong Road, Tianhe Dis-

trict, Guangzhou, China (Across the street from IKEA) (3809 6330)

天河区林和中路 63 号东方宝泰购物广场首层 (宜家家居对面)



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Shop 107, 1/F, Gaozhi Dasha, 120 Huangpu Dadao Xi, Tianhe District 天河区黄埔大道西 120 号高志大厦首层 107 铺 (3788 7173, 3788 7172)

Shami House 2/F, Zhao Qing Da Sha, 304 Huanshi Zhong Lu, Yuexiu District (8355 3012 / 8355 3091)

沙米屋, 越秀区环市中路 304 号肇庆大厦 2 楼



Summer House Directly behind the Marriage House, Xietian Li, Lingnan Tiandi, Chancheng District, Foshan (133 9223 6374, www.summerhouse.com.cn) 佛山市禅城区岭南天地协天里 (嫁娶屋后面) 粤天地 112-116 号铺

Sultan Restaurant Turkish BBQ

1) 1-3/F, 367 Huanshi Dong Lu, between Baiyun Hotel and Friendship Store, Yuexiu District (8349 4170, 8349 4171); 2) Shop 102 & 114, Zhonghai Jinghui Huating, 31 Xingsheng Lu, Zhujiang Xincheng, Tianhe District (3801 5002) 1) 苏坦土耳其烧烤餐厅, 越

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The Tavern Sports Bar Traditional English style bar that fosters a cosy intimate atmosphere. Both Taverns offer an extensive menu of Western favorites and different theme nights throughout the whole week. 1) Poly 108, 6 Huajiu Lu, Zhujiang Xincheng, Tianhe District (8550 3038); 2) On the right side of the Huanan Country Garden, Yingbin Lu, Panyu District (3482 4882, www.tavernchina.com)

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HEALTH

All Smile - Dr. Lu Int'l Dental Clinic Rm 603-604, 6/F, Metro Plaza, 183 Tianhe Bei Lu (24-hour hotline: 8755 3380). Mon-Sat 9am-6pm (other times by appointment) 大都会牙科, 天河北路 183 号大都会广场六楼 603-604

Bellaire Medical Center Rm 302D, Fuli Park, 28 Machang Lu (3891 0511/ 24-hr 152 1881 8990), Bellaireclinic.com 贝利尔诊所, 天河区珠江新城马场路富力公园 28 商业区 302D

Deron Dental 3905-3909/F, Tianying Plaza East Tower, No.222 Xingming Lu, Tianhe (3886 4821, www.kaiyiyk.com) 德隆齿科诊所, 广州市天河区兴民路 222 号天盈广场东塔 39 楼 3905-3909

Dr. Sherily Xiao Master of Medicine. 20 years TCM & Acupuncture & Massage & Physiotherapy Experience. Only for appointment. Fu Lai Garden Shui Yin Zhi Jie Shui Yin Road Yue Xiu District Guang Zhou. (Tel: 137 1052 6617. E-mail: xiaoshuilan@hotmail.com. L5, Zoo station, C exit) 广州市越秀区水荫路水荫直街福莱花园

Eur Am Medical & Dental Center 1/F, North Tower, Ocean Pearl Bldg, 19 Huailu Lu, Zhujiang Xincheng (3758 5328, 24-hr urgent care: 137 1041 3347, www.eurammedicalcenter.com) 广州康辰医疗, 珠江新城华利路 19 号远洋明珠大厦北座首层

H&H Dental Center 1/F, Mingmen Building, 4 Huacheng Dadao, Zhujiang Xincheng, Tianhe District (3808 0700, 3808 0729; 24-hour hotline: 139 2516 2826; E-mail: hnh-dental@163.com) H&H 牙科中心 (嘉西医疗门诊), 天河区珠江新城花城大道 4 号名门大厦 B 座首层

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中心2202-2203

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1/F, Annex Bldg, PICC Bldg, 301 Guangzhou Dadao Zhong (4008 919 191, 24-hr urgent care: 8710 6060)
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District(3452 1826); 7) Shop 21, Agile Phase II, Fenghuang Bei Lu, Huadu District(3692 8686)
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1) 广州美国人, 二沙岛烟雨南路3号; 2) 广州萝岗区科翔路19号

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Cambridgeshire Garden, Panyu District (39191868 ext. 0)
广州市番禺区剑桥都加拿大外国语学校, 广州市番禺区剑桥都花园

Canadian International School of Guangzhou
Cambridgeshire Garden, Nancun Town, Panyu District (3925 5321) www.cisgz.com
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Canadian International Kindergarten
Agile Garden, Yinbin Lu, Panyu District (8456 6551).
加拿大国际幼儿园, 番禺区迎宾路雅居乐花园

Canton Global Academy
4 Chuangjia Road, Jinshazhou, Baiyun District, Guangzhou (180 2401 1757)
广州寰宇外籍人员子女学校, 广州市白云区金沙洲创佳路4号

Clifford School International
International Building, Clifford School, Clifford Estates, Shiguang Lu, Panyu District (8471 8273; 8471 1441; 8471 1694)
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Eclipse English Education
18D, No.368, Tianhe Bei Road, GZ (Tel:38780382, 18922769713)
爱普英语, 天河北路, 368号, 18D

Guangzhou Nanfang International School
No.1 Yu CuiYuan North, Yinglong Lu, Longdong, Tianhe District (3886 6952, 3886 3606, Fax: 3886 3680). www.gnischina.com
广州南方外籍人员子女学校, 天河区龙洞迎龙路瑜翠园北一号

ISA International School Guangzhou
Block C2-2, 128 Yuancun Siheng Lu, Tianhe District (8890 0909, info@isaschool.com)
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Chimelong Hotel
Panyu Dadao, Panyu District (8478 6838, gz.chimelong.com)
长隆酒店, 番禺区番禺大道

Chimelong Hengqin Bay Hotel
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长隆横琴湾酒店, 珠海市横琴新区

Chimelong Penguin Hotel
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Conrad Guangzhou 222 Xingmin Lu, Tianhe District (3739 2222)
广州康莱德酒店, 天河区兴民路 222 号

DoubleTree by Hilton Guangzhou 391 Dongfeng Lu, Yuexiu District (2833 7215; 2833 2888)
广州希尔顿逸林酒店, 越秀区东风路 391 号

Grand Hyatt Guangzhou 12, Zhujiang Xi Lu, Zhujiang New Town, Tianhe District (8396 1234 www.guangzhou.grand.hyatt.com)
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广州柏悦酒店, 天河区珠江新城华夏路 16 号

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The Ritz-Carlton, Guangzhou 3, Xing'an Lu, Zhujiang New Town, Tianhe District (3813 6688, www.ritzcarlton.com) 广州富力丽思卡尔顿酒店, 天河区珠江新城兴安路 3 号

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广州 W 酒店, 天河区珠江新城先烈路 26 号

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广州天河新天希尔顿酒店, 广州天河区林和西横路 215 号

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Guangzhou Women's Int'l Club (GWIC) For contact information, visit www.gwic.org

Brazil Rm 1403, 10 Huaxia Lu, R&F Center, Zhujiang New Town, Tianhe District (020-83652236; cg.cantao.tamaraty.gov.br)
巴西驻广州总领事馆, 珠江新城华夏路 10 号富力中心 1403 室

Australia 12/F, Zhujiang New City, Development Centre, 3 Linjiang Lu (Tel: 3814 0111; Fax: 3814 0112) www.guangzhou.china.embassy.gov.au
澳大利亚领事馆, 临江路 3 号珠江新城发展中心 12 楼

Belgium Room 0702, 7/F, R & F Center, Unit 2, 10 Huaxia Lu, Zhujiang Xincheng, Tianhe District (Tel: 3877 2351; Fax: 3877 2353)
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Indonesia Rm 1201-1223, 2/F, West Building, Dong Fang Hotel, 120 Lihua Lu (Tel: 8601 8772; fax 8601 8773; kjrjg@public.guangzhou.gd.cn)
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Kuwait 10A-10D, Nanyazhonghe Plaza, 57 Lingjiang Dadao, Zhujiang New Town (Tel: 3807 8070; Fax: 3807 8007).
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New Zealand Rm C1055, Office Tower, China Hotel, A Marriott Hotel, 122 Lihua Lu (Tel: 8667 0253; Fax: 8666 6420, Guangzhou@nzte.govt.nz) www.nzte.govt.nz
新西兰领事馆, 流花路 122 号中国大酒店商业大厦 1055 室

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波兰领事馆, 沙面大街 63 号

Singapore Unit 2418, CITIC Plaza, 233 Tianhe Bei Lu (Tel: 3891 2345; Fax: 3891 2933)
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Spain Rm 501/507/508 5/F, R&F Center, 10 Huaxia Lu, Pearl River New City (Tel: 3892 7185 / 3892 8909; Fax: 3892 7197). www.mae.es/consulados/canton
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Thailand Rm M07, 2/F, Garden Hotel, 368 Huanshi Dong Lu (Tel: 8385 8988; Fax: 8388 9567)
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The Russian Federation 26/A, Development Centre, 3 Linjiang Dadao, Zhujiang New Town (8518 5001 Fax: 8518 5099 (office)/ 8518 5088 (visa section))
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That's
Guangzhou


Horoscopes

Finally, a horoscope that understands your life in Guangzhou.

BY DOMINIQUE WONG



Aries
3.21-4.20

So, you had a great March. Unfortunately, illness, public embarrassments and, inexplicably, flooding will all make an appearance this month. April Fools! Buy an auspicious 'Ming Dynasty' vase from the antique market just in case, though.



Taurus
4.21-5.21

With the planet of love, Venus, in your charts until April 24, now's the perfect time to pick up some new toys from Vide Lu, or buy a new outfit. Think pink.



Gemini
5.22-6.21

Don't feign surprise at your negative Alipay balance - you know your weekly brunch dates at Ricci ain't cheap. Pick up a side gig tutoring English and you'll be back stuffing your face in no time.



Cancer
6.22-7.22

It's a month of missed connections. You'll accidentally swipe left on Tinder. You'll get off the bus as your crush gets on. And, most cutting, you'll miss the Line 3 to 5 Zhujiang New Town transfer during rush hour.



Leo
7.23-8.23

After an indulgent start to the year, it's time to get serious about work. That may mean your career, fitness workout, or, lets be real, neither. You're reading this from a bar right now, aren't you?



Virgo
8.24-9.23

Last month was weird. You know what we're talking about. Shake it off at your favorite club night - we hear Suns is back open past 2am - or Oxygen. (But if you're feeling like a breath of fresh air, that's OK, too.)



Libra
9.24-10.23

It's your half-birthday. Don't tell people this, though, you weirdo. Instead, quietly celebrate the occasion by treating yourself to a night of symphony at the opera house. You're getting fancy in your old age, Libra.



Scorpio
10.24-11.22

You may have a friend (enemy) or family member (annoying cousin) in town this month. Take them out. To the Canton Tower, that is. Or, send them Europe to Liwan ("It's just like Europe, I swear!").



Sagittarius
11.23-12.21

Remember that meltdown you had this time last year after you got stuck in traffic and missed your flight to Phuket? Yeah, maybe it's best to stay in Guangzhou for Qingming Festival.



Capricorn
12.22-1.20

Feeling sluggish? Try going meat-free this month. People say it's hard being a vegetarian in South China, but they probably don't have a woman selling sugar cane outside their office building, like you do.



Aquarius
1.21-2.19

Did spring even happen if you don't upload blossom photos to your Instagram? Beware, though: Your VPN is going to be all over the place this month. We're talking Kenya, Macedonia and Bhutan.



Pisces
2.20-3.20

It's time to change your 'arty' WeChat display pic. Try and include your face, even if it is a blurry shot of your profile. Do this and you'll be blessed for the rest of the year.

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