

ARTS & CULTURE

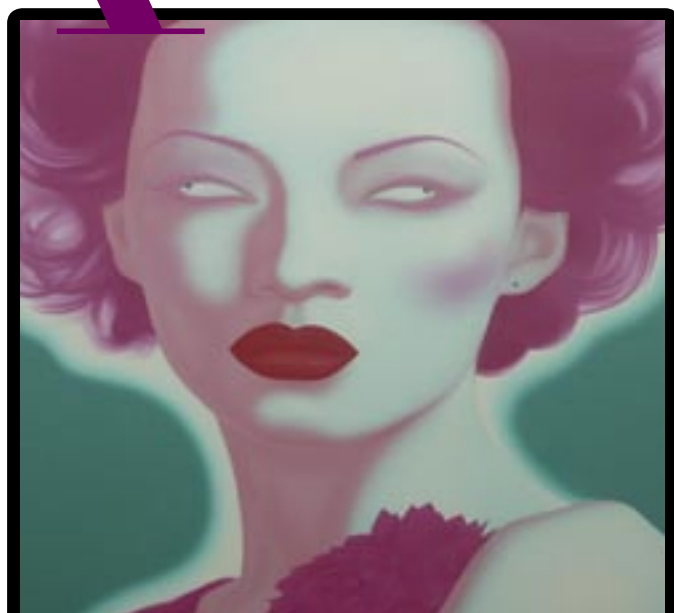


P44 ART

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Until Sep 30: Red, Smooth and Luminescent
New art plays with nostalgia for social realism. See listing, p45.

The big Games are over, and this month, the art world can now color outside the lines and veer away from putting on Olympics-related shows. **Art Beijing, Shanghai Contemporary, Shanghai Biennale and Guangzhou Triennial** (the last curated by an academically-inclined team that includes research professor Sarat Maharaj) are all getting into gear in early September. Some insiders may worry that Art Beijing, which runs from September 6-9 (see listings, this page), will suffer from the lack of international audiences.

People are still unsure if the collector **Uli Sigg**, who probably owns the largest contemporary Chinese art collection in the world, will actually be donating a big portion of his collection to build a museum in Shenzhen. If this plan is realized, there is a high possibility that the city will develop its own art zone, just as Qingdao plans to turn an old factory area in the oceanside city into an art district following the example of Beijing's 798 and Shanghai's M50 zones. If the plan doesn't work out, some are expecting the Swiss collector/former ambassador to auction off the works in his possession, just as the creator of the **Estella Collection** did.

In other news, **Super Ganbei** (the brasserie run by Ullens Center for Contemporary Art) opened on August 12, and offers an extensive menu – from Beijing *kaoya* and dim sum to sushi, with room to accommodate more than a hundred people, a DJ booth, and tableware designed by artists like **Yue Minjun** and **Yan Lei**. Super Ganbei is expected to stimulate nightlife in 798 by offering upscale dining with a touch of artsy spice. The restaurant offers dishes from RMB 30-500 (set dinner) and is hoped to generate income for the nonprofit art center. That brings to mind *The Art Newspaper's* article, "What's going on at the Ullens Center in Beijing?", which mentions the goal of Guy Ullens, the Belgian foodstuffs baron, to move up the UCCA's break-even point from 2013 to 2010, a feat that will require making **EUR 6 million** a year.

A recession of sales of Chinese contemporary art has been predicted since a downturn of auction pieces earlier this year. This is believed to be the reason why **Zhang Xiaoming**, the first specialist of contemporary Chinese art of **Sotheby's in New York**, is expected to leave the auction house. *Venus Lau*

For venue details, see directories, p45

Send events to listings@thebeijinger.com by **Sep 12**

Sep 4-Oct 18

Yang Shaobin: Blind Spot

Unlike many Chinese artists, Yang Shaobin resists the temptation of mass-producing cynical realistic images. Instead he opens a path between the figurative and the abstract, which liberates his images from any form of narrative. Long March (6438 7107)

Sep 5-25

Zhang Jian: Snowscapes and Scenery

An exhibition of the latest paintings of the Beijing-born artist, which focus on Beijing and the area surrounding it. China Blue Gallery (8774 6332/6339)

Sep 6-9

Art Beijing

This annual art fair brings works of art from over 100 galleries, from 20 different countries, to Beijing. The theme for this year's fair is "public art" – an interesting topic, we just hope it helps to inspire better curatorial ability in the capital. National Agricultural Exhibition Center, www.artbeijing.net

Sep 6-Oct 2

Xiang Jing: Quanluo

This sculptor makes Ron Mueck-esque fiberglass human figures. See Q&A, p47. Tang Contemporary Gallery (6436 3518/3658)

Sep 6-Oct 26

Chen Fei: Visual Desire and Violence

The color-saturated, manga-esque works of this Guangdong-born artist comment on, and amplify, social tension. Beijing Tokyo Art Projects (8457 3245)

Robert Rauschenberg:

The Lotus Series

Rauschenberg's 1985 Beijing exhibition was hugely influential on the local art scene, just as Kaii Higashiyama's '70s exhibits had a huge impact on Chinese oil landscape painting. This show features Rauschenberg's "The Lotus Series," the American artist's last works before he passed away in May this year. The lotus is an important icon in China, in both a religious and an ideological sense. By placing this "very Chinese" symbol into scenes of everyday Chinese life, Rauschenberg portrays his last Oriental cultural landscape. Rauschenberg's pop-ness is described by Chinese art critic Li Xianting as "democratized, vulgarized, popularized, always current, but at the same time also always above the trends of the time." See photo, p45. Dafeng Art Gallery (6433 7317)

Until Sep 2

Cai Guoqiang: I Want to Believe

The Quanzhou artist who curvets with gunpowder, now brings his retrospective to the capital from the Guggenheim in New York. National Art Museum of China (6401 2252/7076)

Until Sep 14

Poorism

In an era where everybody is desperate for *xiaokang* lifestyle (comfortable middle-class life), making "poorist" art puts you at risk of being another Don Quixote. Yet through this group show that embodies famous artists including Liu Xiaodong (who sold a painting for more than RMB 50 million last April), the gallery explores the internal social interactions between the two banks of income disparity in China. Boers-Li Gallery (6432 2620)

Until Sep 19

Daniel Lee: Dream

Lee's paintings of animals with human faces externalize the wildness of human unconsciousness. Pata Gallery (6433 5120)

Until Sep 21

Andy Warhol: Portraits – Sport, Stars and Society

The Olympics may be over, but you still have time to see some athletes – albeit through the perspective of Andy Warhol. See Review, p47. Faurischou Gallery Beijing (8459 9316/14)

Until Sep 23

Jonathan Borofsky

The 1942-born American artist is famous for his series The Hammering Man – gigantic kinetic public sculptures of human figures holding hammers. The monumental sculptures have been installed in various cities including Basel, Frankfurt, Seattle and Seoul. The largest sculpture is 72ft tall. This summer, as well as displaying his works in the Olympic Park, Borofsky shows some of his new creations at this exhibition. PYO Gallery (5202 3814)

Until Sep 26

Group Exhibition

United by the theme of image dynamics are the works of Matthew Barney, Thomas Rose, Joel Feldman, Allan Walker, Raz Barfield, Wang Chuan and Liu Jin. 798 Photo Gallery (6438 1784, 6437 5284)

Until Sep 28

2D/3D Negotiating Visual Languages

Paying tribute to the creative no-man's land between the physical presence of sculptures and the two-dimensional plane of paintings and drawings, 2D/3D features the work of 12 Chinese contemporary artists (including painters Hong Gei and Li Song Song and experimenter Lauren Tans) that incorporate new and old mediums to find ways to transform the space around the viewer. Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel is cited as an inspiration, but the pieces themselves will take on the shape of videos, new-media installations, and more. PKM Gallery (8456 7429)

Until Sep 29

Patty Chang: Touch Would

Chang, a finalist in the 2008 Hugo Boss Prize, presents an exhibition that revolves around the topic of translation and mistranslation, based on two cultural incidents: The meeting between cultural critic Walter Benjamin and Chinese actress Anna May Wong, and a knife throwing sequence from one of Anna May Wong's early silent films. The incidents are reinterpreted then function as a tool that explores the concepts of the public sphere and the private space. Arrow Factory

Until Sep 30

Digital Passage: Journey Beyond Reality's Threshold

The show features works from artists Yam Lau from Canada, Ma Yongfeng from China and Michael Yuen from Australia. Their respective works of new-media art push viewers towards the boundary between the virtual world and the real world. But, wait: when the world now is covered by hyper-reality, like a huge map covering a land, is it still meaningful to believe that there is a difference between dreams and reality?

Yuanfen New Media Art Space
(5978 9896)

Red, Smooth and Luminescent

The title consists of three adjectives used to form an expected texture for socialist realism art during the "cultural revolution." After the historical incident, the historical context changed and the signifiers become empty – convenient for contemporary artists to clash with new backgrounds and contexts. This show may not be the best among the hundreds of exhibitions in town, yet it provides a typical case study for the scene. See photo, p44. Xin Dong Cheng Space for Contemporary Art (6433 4579)

Until Oct 4

Microscopic Narration

"Social images" by Zhang Xiaotao and Li Yifan. See Feature, p46. Iberia Center for Contemporary Art (8459 9640)

Until Oct 7

Rong Rong and Inri: From Liulitun to Three Shadows

A display of the art and intimacy shared by this photographer couple. See Review, p47. Three Shadows Photography Center (6432 2663)

Zhang Dali: Wind/Horse/Flag

Aside from his ubiquitous human profile graffiti with simple, crude lines, Zhang Dali is famous for his work involving migrant workers – in his past piece *Zhong Zu* (Race) he hung 60 sculptures of migrant workers from the ceiling. Zhang intrudes upon, and exposes, the concept of reality held by the viewer. According to the press release for the exhibition, Zhang "plays more seriously." Well, we will see. See photo, right. Red Star Gallery (6437 0781)

Until Oct 12

Our Future: The Guy and Myriam Ullens Collection

The owners of UCCA show their collection of more than 60 works by Chinese contemporary artists which includes all the big names: Chen Zhen, Gu Wenda, Huang Yong Ping, Wang Du, Wang Guangyi, Zhang Xiaogang, Cao Fei, Chu Yun, Qiu Zhijie, Shen Yuan and Wu Jicong. For those who are not very familiar with the history of Chinese contemporary art, this show, curated by Jerome Sans and Guo Xiaoyan, is a brief introduction. Ullens Center for Contemporary Art (6438 6576)

Until Oct 15

Zhao Bo: Fashion Disconnect-Normal Life

Zhao loves the little tricks that can be found in the works of almost all cynical realist artists – colors that are so bright that you think they are toxic, international trade marks that try to delineate the inevitable

progress of globalization, and most importantly, Chinese icons, like red stars, that can somehow be linked to price tags in the art market. Yet Zhao's usage of various visual textures is fun. Chinese Contemporary (5978 9671)

Until Oct 30

Chen Jiagang: The Great Third Front

Using large format cameras, Chen records the existence of ghost cities – industrial zones that were abandoned after their operation in the '60s and '70s as a result of the changes being made to China's socio-political structure. Paris Beijing Photo Gallery (8459 9263)

Until Oct 31

Ancient Chinese Paintings and Calligraphy

The Forbidden City parades its treasures in the Wu Yong Dian (Hall of Martial Valor). A number of ancient calligraphy and paintings from the Jin (265-420) to the Qing (1644-1911) dynasties will be shown, among them ten of the most famous ancient Chinese paintings. *Night Revels of Han Xizai*, by Gu Hongzhong, a Southern Song (937-975) court painter who was ordered by the emperor to record the sumptuous lifestyle of the government official Han Xizai, is especially worth seeing. Controversial because the piece is still under question as to whether it is a Song dynasty (960-1279) replica or Gu's genuine work. Nonetheless, it is a work of mastery. Other gems from Chinese calligrapher Wang Xizhi (303-361) will be exhibited. At Meridian Gate Tower (Wu Man), an exhibition of Qing dynasty court costumes would be of interest to fans of historical textiles. The Palace Museum (6513 2255/8511 7099)

Movana Chen:

Two-Way Communication Beijing

The Hong Kong artist painstakingly knits shredded magazines into different structures. Seems like a gesture of anti-consumerism. Sounds very environmentally friendly. Pekin Fine Arts (5127 3220)

Picasso's Ceramics

The most down-to-earth show of the artist. During his visit to Vallauris, France (where Picasso single-handedly saved the local ceramic industry), the Spanish artist was so impressed by the art of changing clay to gold that he started making his own ceramics. Among his 2,000-odd ceramic pieces displayed at this exhibition are his 28 clay-plays, made during the period of 1947 to 1969. Although the familiar icons will still remind us of the pedestal on which he is placed, the plebeian nature of these ceramic wares allows the legendary icon to bend down and get closer to the viewers. Instituto Cervantes (5879 9666)



Until Oct 7: Zhang Dali – Wind/Horse/Flag

Migrant workers on parade. See listing, this page.

GALLERIES

798 Photo Gallery The best place in Beijing to find a wide selection of ethnographic and artistic photographic editions. Monthly rotating shows of Chinese and international photographers. Daily 10am-6pm. Dashiart art district, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District. (6438 1784, 6437 5284) www.798photogallery.cn 百年印象摄影画廊, 朝阳区酒仙桥路4号798大山子艺术区

798/Red Gate Gallery The eminent Red Gate Gallery's tiny project and exhibition space in the 798 area. Tue-Sun 11am-6pm. Dashiart art district, 2 Jiuxianqiao Lu (opposite the hall from White Space Beijing), Chaoyang District. (6438 1005) www.redgategallery.com 798/红门画廊, 朝阳区酒仙桥路2号(空白空间对面)

798 Space The namesake of the 798 area and a factory space that once produced weapons, now you can catch an occasional exhibit in between high couture product launches that draw crowds at night. Daily 10am-7pm. Dashiart art district, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District. (6438 4862, 6437 6248) www.798space.com 798 时态空间, 朝阳区酒仙桥路4号798大山子艺术区

Ahead Gallery 10am - 6pm. 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District. (6438 4911) 朝阳区酒仙桥路4号

Amelie Gallery and Creative Studio Mon-Fri 9am-5pm. Rm 505 Bldg 5H, Huamao Zhongxin, 89 Jianguo Lu, Chaoyang District. (6530 7048, jessica@longyibang.com) 龙艺榜, 朝阳区建国路89号华贸中心5号楼H座505室

Apothiki Art Center Tue-Sun 11am-6pm. 319-1 East End Art (Zone A), Caocangdi Village (Take the Airport Service road one exit past Wuhan Lu, take the first right and turn north on the road opposite the Chang Jian Driving School), Chaoyang District. (6431 4502) www.apothiki.com 朝阳区草场地村319-1 艺术东区A区内(机场辅路由南往北五环外第一个路口路东, 长建驾校对面路口)

Arario Beijing Korean-owned gallery exhibiting its vast collection of international powerhouses such as Jorg Immendorf alongside local artists. Tue-Sun 10am-6pm. Inside Chaoyang Liquor Factory, Beihuqu, AnwaiBeiYuan, Chaoyang District. (5202 3800) www.arariobeijing.com 朝阳区安外北苑北湖渠朝阳酒艺园

Art Channel Tue-Sun 11am-6pm. East End Art (Zone B), 249-3 Caocangdi Village, Chaoyang District. (6433 5080, 135 2171 4691) 艺术通道, 朝阳区草场地村艺术东区B区249-3

Artists Village Gallery In the dusty eastern village of Songzhuang live many bohemian painters and a few big names too – find their art and lots of *chuan'r*. Daily 8am-midnight. 1 Renzhuangcun Bei, Songzhuang, Tongzhou District. (6959 8343, sally-liu@263.net) www.artistsvillagegallery.com 画家村画廊, 通州区宋庄镇北村1号

& Art Lab Tue-Sun 10am-6pm. Dashiart art district, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District. (6433 3438, andartlab@gmail.com)

com) 案艺艺术实验室, 朝阳区酒仙桥路4号798大山子艺术区D-10

Art Plus Beijing Tue-Sun 11am-7pm. Bldg D, D-Park, Dashiart art district, 2 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District. (8459 9614) 朝阳区酒仙桥路2号大山子艺术区北京时尚设计广场D座

Art Scene Beijing Tue-Sun 10am-6pm. Dashiart art district, 2 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District. (6431 6962, info@artscenechina.com) www.artscenebeijing.com 朝阳区酒仙桥路2号798大山子艺术区

Aspace Tue-Sun 10am-7pm. Pingod 3B—503, Chaoyang District. (59712048) www.aspace.net.cn 全艺艺术中心, 朝阳区苹果社区3B—503

Aye Gallery Tue-Sun 10am-6pm. Rm 601, Yonghe Jiayuan Phase 2, Courtyard 3, Dongbinhe Lu, Andingmen, Dongcheng District. (8422 1726, deng@ayegallery.com) www.ayegallery.com 也云, 东城区安定门东滨河路3号院雍和家园二期3单元601室

BB Gallery Tue-Sun 10.30am-6pm. 249-3, East End Art Zone B, Caocangdi, Chaoyang District. (6432 2619, bbgallery@vip.163.com) 朝阳区草场地艺术东区B区249-3

Beijing 9 Art Space Daily 10am-6pm. 2,3818 Cool, Dashiart art district, 2 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District. (6736 7781, fax 6736 8490, gallery@62art.com) www.62art.com 北京9艺术空间, 朝阳区大山子798艺术区3818库2号

Beijing Art Now Gallery (BANG) Daily noon-6pm. Bldg E, Red Yard No.1, Cao Chang Di, Cui Ge Zhuang, Chaoyang District. (5127 3292) www.beijingartnow.com 现在画廊, 朝阳区崔各庄草场地红1号院E座

Beijing Center for the Arts Daily 10am-10pm. 23, Qianmen Dongdajie, Dongcheng District. (6559 8008) 天安时间当代艺术中心, 东城区前门大街23号

Beijing Central Art Gallery & Cultural Venue 1) Daily 10am-8pm. 1/F, Kempinski Hotel, 50 Liangmaqiao Lu, Chaoyang District. (6465 1396, keturah@bjcagallery.com); 2) Daily 8.30am-6pm. 2 Riverville Square, 1 District 1, Tianzhu Development Zone (take the Yang Lin exit from the Airport Expressway), Shunyi District. (6450 8483/8646, keturah@bjcagallery.com) www.bjcagallery.com 颂华画廊, 1) 朝阳区亮马桥路50号凯宾斯基饭店1层; 2) 顺义区天竺丽来花园一区1号温榆广场2号(机场高速杨林大道出口第六个出口)

Beijing Commune Tue-Sun 11am-6pm. Dashiart art district, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District. (8456 2862, lenglin@yahoo.com) www.beijingcommune.com 北京公社, 朝阳区酒仙桥路4号大山子798艺术区

Beijing Cubic Art Center Call for hours. Dashiart art district (southern section), 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District. (6437 9853) www.11-art.com 北京立方艺术中心, 朝阳区酒仙桥路4号798大山子艺术区南边

Beijing East Gallery Tue-Sun 9am-5.30pm. Deshengmen Watchtower, Beierhuan Zhonglu, Xicheng District. (8201 4962, bj.east.gallery@163.com) www.bj-eastgallery.com 北京艺森画廊, 西城区北二环中路德胜门箭楼

Directories continued on p48



Sep 6-Oct 26: Robert Rauschenberg's Lotus Series

The last series by the hugely influential artist before his death. See listing, p44.



THE GOOD PEOPLE OF SICHUAN

Li Yifan and Zhang Xiaotao move between macro and micro

by Venus Lau

“**M**icroscopic Narration” is a new exhibition featuring double solo shows by Sichuan natives Zhang Xiaotao and Li Yifan. The show commenced in August – when China handed its grand narratives up to the world – and is comprised of paintings, installations, photography and videos displaying two concerns facing Chinese people: lower-class struggle and the hyper-active pace of recent social change.

Zhang’s portion of the exhibition, “Mist,” is an assemblage that revolves around the artist’s adventures into the Chongqing Iron and Steel Company, a heavy industrial corporation that has existed in China since the Qing dynasty; “the cultural zoo” that is 798; and the Shenzhen Window of the World (an amusement park reminiscent of the World Park in Beijing, which may strike a familiar chord for those who have seen Jia Zhangke’s *The World*). The contrast between the absurd magnificence and dull desolation of these places are the sources from where the artist extracts the “dream factory-landfill” theme of his art. This theme has inspired artists as varied as filmmaker Jia Zhangke to author Can Xue, but Zhang Xiaotao’s choice of media is truly diverse: 3-D animations, paintings and installations from a microscopic perspective. Ants, lizards and other insignificant creatures, whose struggles are miniscule, become enlarged in Zhang’s art, whose pieces remind people of artist Huang Yongping’s *World Theatre*, in which animals – prey and predators – become contained together in a box. But instead of becoming a bystander to Darwinian pugilism, Zhang takes the role as a director who creates a fantasia mirroring the lives of humans.

Like Zhang, who attempts to illustrate the bigger social picture through microscopic examples, Li Yifan collects fragments of the daily lives of people to illustrate the underlying currents of social change. Li has described his documentary *Village Archive* as “a primary record of a village that is closest to the average of all western Chinese villages.” Through the most objective depiction of this

Unlike Li’s loyalty to artistic austerity, Zhang expresses his concern about society with more Baudelaire-esque theatricality

“sample,” Li “sort[s] out the commonness of western rural areas.”

Another of Li’s films being shown at Iberia is *Before the Flood* (*Yanmo*), a visual record of the ten months before Fengjie County in Sichuan province was flooded for the Three Gorges Dam. *Before the Flood* gained international acclaim when it obtained recognition at the Cinéma du Réel and Berlin, Yamagata and Hong Kong International Film Festivals.

Li’s work advocates loyalty to fact by denying subjectivity. He even avoids shooting special customs or events that take place in the village so as to maintain an air of monotony. The artist’s research on a “sample” village acts as an observation on a single cell in pathology, which then evolves to knowledge of the cycle of the entire body. Li’s ambition to derive a generalization from an individual is put to further practice in his photos, a byproduct of *Yanmo*, in which he strips the photos of color, only to add a homogenous yellow to the faces of his subjects, the villagers.

Through their sharing of similar Foucaultian structuralist methods, Zhang’s microscopic narratives and Li’s pathological concepts are, as curator Wu Hung remarks, “parallel to each other.” Yet, the two solos under the same roof bear contrasting styles – unlike Li’s loyalty to reality and artistic austerity, Zhang expresses his concern about society with more Baudelaire-esque theatricality, as with his staging of the death of a lizard surrounded by the splashing of ruby-red blood in a 3-D animation. Despite the disparity in style, the two artists both demonstrate their humanist concern about the lower classes through trivial happenings, as director Shinsuke Ogawa did decades ago by spending seven years documenting farmers attempting to save their land from the occupation of Narita International Airport.

Li Yifan and Zhang Xiaotao’s show, “Microscopic Narration,” runs until Oct 4 at the Iberia Center for Contemporary Art. See listing, p45.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF IBERIA CENTER FOR CONTEMPORARY ART

Andy Warhol: Sports, Stars, and Society Faurshou Beijing

As galleries competed for a share of the Olympic spotlight, Faurshou likewise bet on “Andy Warhol: Sports, Stars, and Society” being a sure thing. Featuring a collection of portraits commissioned from Warhol mostly during the late ‘70s and ‘80s, the exhibition is almost precious in the appropriateness of its aims. Indeed, what could be more seemly than pairing the Olympics with celebrity athlete portraits, and Warhol with Beijing?

Though Beijing has already hosted several Warhol exhibitions, many of the works on display in “Sports, Stars, and Society” haven’t

been shown before, and for several reasons. Fabricated largely for private collectors, these are precisely the works that Warhol was famous for not making, often leaving production to assistants on the assembly line. They can mostly be categorized by the subdivision implied in the title – Muhammad Ali and O. J. Simpson lie swathed in fuchsia and purple, while Michael Jackson smiles through a rainbow silkscreen and socialites gaze through diamond glitter; beyond these modest portraits, Warhol and Jean-Michel Basquiat doodle outside the lines on a 1984 oil-painting collaboration featuring the Olympic rings.

Ultimately, the qualities of the show that resonate most aren’t Olympic or athletic – instead, Warhol’s legacy has evidenced itself most clearly in his influence on Chinese artists. Artist Ai Weiwei wrote in his blog, “The world today and the world in Andy’s time are essentially the same,” and accordingly, contemporary Chinese artists have taken their cues from Warhol’s Factory, where his iconic silkscreens were fabricated, and his glamorous lifestyle was made notorious. *Angie Baecker*

“From Liulitun to Three Shadows” Rong Rong and Inri

An important figure in the history of Chinese contemporary photography, Rong Rong was not only the co-founder (along with photographer Liu Zheng) of *New Photography* magazine – the first publication in China focusing on conceptual photography – but also responsible for making an extensive photographic record of Beijing’s East Village, a suburban ghetto (when, in the early 1990s, anywhere beyond the Third Ring was considered rural), previously located behind the Great Wall Sheraton Hotel. The East Village used to be the residences of artists like Zhang

Huna and Ma Liuming.

Rong and his wife, Inri, began collaborating in 2000, a year after they first met. The title of their current show, “From Six Mile Village (Liulitun) to Three Shadows,” is symbolic of the transition from the former residence of the artist couple from 1995 to 2003 (Six Mile Village) to Three Shadows (the name of their photo gallery in Caochangdi).

This show offers a series of works displaying the demolition of Liulitun up to the completion of Three Shadows, and in the process also chronicles Rong’s and Inri’s relationship in the larger context of Beijing’s changing cityscape. The melancholic black-and-white photos offer varying shades of boldness, and their frequent use of circles within their compositions bring to mind the paintings of Francis Bacon, whose works also reconstructed the relationship between non-figurative, non-abstract images and space through the use of circular shapes. This rather private album of the couple’s offers an intimacy which intrudes into the viewers’ eyes. *Venus Lau*

**Xiang Jing**
On human bodies and souls

by Venus Lau

When Xiang Jing was born in Beijing in 1968, who would have thought that out of the years wrapped in homogeneous blues, grays and greens, an artist bold enough to create sculptures of bald, naked women would emerge? Xiang’s startled-eyed and palely waxen figurines (now collected by overseas galleries such as the Saatchi in London) have made an international statement about the human body, feminism, and their relation to art.

the Beijinger: Your current exhibition, “*Quan Luo*” (“Naked”), seems to be themed on the body, which is also the main focus of your artistic practice. What attracts you to the human body, and specifically to the female form?

Xiang Jing: Body is a substantial existence. My artistic practice brings people up against this reality. “Woman” is an eternal motif of art, but I have my own reasons of making art related to women, as it is part of my own identity. By making woman a subject of my art, I am achieving self-enlightenment. I am not a feminist – I just want to find proof of existence from a personal angle.

tbj: In both the East and the West, there is a long history of debasing the human body – in capitalism, it is a machine; in rationalism, it is a nest of instability and illusion; and in the realm of ethics, it is a stimulus for sin. Are the images of human bodies in your work a rebellion to this tradition?

XJ: Souls are free. They can fly liberally. Yet we can only exist in a material way. Nowadays, we are living in an extremely materialistic world, where discussing the idea of the soul, ideals, spiritual things or originality are murmurs of empty words. It is hard to respond to these metaphysical matters. That’s why, in 2003, I started making my sculptures of human bodies. I wanted to get rid of concepts that led to overinterpretation.

tbj: While most contemporary artists choose to move in Beijing, you decided to leave the Chinese art hub by moving to Shanghai. Why?

XJ: In the art world, Shanghai is quieter. I was born and grew up in Beijing, I have a lot of friends and am always happy there. But sometimes it is a bit too *renao* (lively) for an artist. If you are an artist, you have to engage in your works, and that is when you have to stand the loneliness of being alone.

Beijing New Art Projects Tue-Sun 10.30am-7pm. Dashanzi art district, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District. (8456 6660) www.gaobrothers.com 北京新锐艺术计划, 朝阳区酒仙桥路4号798大山子艺术区

Beijing Tokyo Art Projects Tue-Sun 10am-6.30pm. Dashanzi art district, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District. (8457 3245) www.tokyo-gallery.com 北京东京艺术工程, 朝阳区酒仙桥路4号798大山子艺术区

Boers-Li Gallery Tue-Sun 11am-6pm. Compound 8A, Airport Service Road, Caochangdi, Chaoyang District. (6432 2620, info@universalstudios.org.cn) www.universalstudios.org.cn 朝阳区机场辅路草场地甲8号院

The Bronze Age Gallery Tue-Sun 1.30-6.30pm. 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Dashanzi art district, Chaoyang District. (8165 3686) 青铜时代画廊, 朝阳区酒仙桥路4号798艺术区

C5 Art Tue-Sun 10am-7pm. Courtyard 5, Sanlitun Xiwujie, Chaoyang District. (6460 3950) www.c5art.com 西五画廊, 朝阳区三里屯西五街5号院

Cao Yong Hebei native and Los Angeles County Honorary Volunteer Fireman Cao Yong's Lucky Street gallery is a lucky find for those interested in adorning the lair with machine-made reproductions of the master oil painter's finest works – each of which promises to celebrate the "haling of beauty." Daily 9am-10pm. 25 Hanyun Jie, Chaoyang District. (5867 0229) www.caoyong.cc 北京曹勇国际艺术馆, 朝阳区好运街25号

CAT 938 Daily 9am- Midnight. A3 Xiaobao Shangyeyie, Huajia Cun, Songzhuang, Tongzhou District. (138 1132 9402, cat_938@yahoo.com) www.cat938.com 通州区宋庄画家村小堡商业街A3

Cathay Gallery Daily 10am-6pm. 12 Chaoyangmenwai Dajie, Bldg 3-2603, Chaoyang District. (139 0116 5920) 震旦画廊, 朝阳区朝阳门外大街乙12号3号楼2603号

Central Academy of Fine Arts Gallery Tue-Sun 9.30am-4pm. Shuaifuyuan, Wangfujing, 5 Xiaowei Hutong, Dongcheng District. (6527 7991) 中央美术学院美术馆, 东城区校尉胡同5号王府井师附后

Chambers Fine Art Tue-Sun 10am-6pm. Red No.1-D, Caochangdi, Chaoyang District. (5127 3298) www.chambersfineart.com.cn 前波画廊, 朝阳区草场地红一号D座

Chen Changfen Art Center Daily 10am-7pm. 12 Sunhe, Jingshun Lu, Chaoyang District. (8459 0382) 陈长芬艺术中心, 朝阳区京顺路孙河12号

Chen Ling Hui Contemporary Space Tue-Sun 11am-7pm. 1) A1, Beigao, Cuigezhuang Xiang, Chaoyang District. (6431 8830, celiali@chenlinghui.com); 2) Dashanzi art district, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District. (6435 9665, celiali@chenlinghui.com) www.chenlinghui.com 陈陵惠当代艺术中心, 1) 朝阳区崔各庄北皋甲1号; 2) 朝阳区酒仙桥路4号大山子艺术区

China Art Archives and Warehouse Wed-Sun 1-6pm, or by appointment. Opposite the Nangao Police Station, Caochangdi, (take the Airport Service road one exit past Wuhuan Lu, take the first right past the Chang Jian Driving School), Chaoyang District. (8456 5152/5153, mail@caaw.com.cn) www.archivesandwarehouse.com 艺术文化仓库, 朝阳区机场辅路草场地村南皋派出所对面(机场辅路由南往北五环外第一个路口)

China Art Seasons Tue-Sun 11am-7pm. Dashanzi art district, 2 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District. (6431 1900, fax 6431 1990) www.artseasons.com.sg 北京季节, 朝阳区酒仙桥路2号798大山子艺术区

China Blue Gallery Daily 9.30am-5.30pm. 2-3/F, Bldg 7, Ego Center, 16A Baizhuan Lu (just south of Dawanglu subway station), Chaoyang District. (8774 6332/6339, chinabluegallery@yahoo.com.cn) www.chinabluegallery.com 环碧堂画廊, 朝阳区百子湾路甲16号易构空间7号楼2-3层

China Millennium Monument World Art Museum Apr15-Oct 7: Mon-Thu 8am-6pm, Fri-Sun 8am-9pm. Oct 8-Apr 14: Daily 8.30am-5.30pm. 9A Fuxing Lu, Haidian District. (6852 7108) www.bj2000.org.cn 中

华世纪艺艺术馆, 海淀区复兴路甲9号

China Visual Arts Center Tue-Sun 10am-6pm. Zone D, Artistic Area, 1, Hegezhuang Village, Cuigezhuang, Chaoyang District. (137 0107 8774, info@chinavarts.com) www.chinavarts.com 威诺里萨艺术中心, 朝阳区崔各庄乡何各庄村一号地艺术园区D区

Chinese Contemporary Beijing Daily 11am-7pm. Dashanzi art district, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District. (8456 2421, beijing@chinesecontemporary.com) www.chinesecontemporary.com 中国当代, 朝阳区酒仙桥路4号798大山子艺术区

Contrasts Gallery Tue-Sun 10am-6pm. Dashanzi art district, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District. (6432 1369) 对比窗艺廊, 朝阳区酒仙桥路4号大山子艺术区

CourtYard Annex Tue-Sun noon-7pm. 155 Caochangdi Village, Nangao Xiang, Chaoyang District. www.courtyard-gallery.com 四合苑艺术空间, 朝阳区南皋乡草场地村155号

CourtYard Gallery Tue-Sat 11am-7pm, Sun noon-7pm. B1/F, 95 Donghuanmen Dajie, Dongcheng District. (6526 8882, fax 6526 8880, courtart@cinet.com.cn) www.courtart-gallery.com 四合苑, 东城区东华门大街95号地下一层

Creation Gallery Daily 10am-7pm. North end of Ritan Donglu, Chaoyang District. (8561 7570, creationgallery@sohu.com) www.creationgallery.com.cn 可创艺苑, 朝阳区日坛东路北口

C-Space Tue-Sun 11am-6pm. C1 and C2, Red No.1, Caochangdi, Chaoyang District. (5127 3248, info@c-spacebeijing.com) www.c-spacebeijing.com C-空间, 朝阳区草场地艺术区红1号C1, C2座

Currents – Art and Music Tue-Sun 11am-6pm. Dongbajianfang, Shuangbao Xiaoku 2, Huantie Art District, Chaoyang District. (5205 3805/07, info@currents.cc) www.currents.cc 朝阳区环铁艺术区东八间房双宝小区2号

Dafeng Art Gallery Tue-Sun 10am-6pm. 1) Dashanzi art district (just past Dimensions Art Center and 3+3 Gallery), 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District. (6433 7317); 2) 241 Beijie, Xiaopu Cun, Songzhuang Artists Village, Tongzhou District. 大风画廊, 1) 朝阳区酒仙桥路4号798大山子艺术区南边; 2) 通州区宋庄画家村小堡村北街241号

Dashan Art Gallery Tue-Sun 10 am-9pm. B2/F, China World Hotel, 1 Jianguomenwai Dajie, Chaoyang District. (6505 2988, fax 6505 3988) www.dashan-art.com 大山美术馆, 朝阳区建国门外大街1号中国大饭店地下2层

doArt China Tue-Sun 10am-6pm. 261 Caochangdi, Chaoyang District. (8457 4550) www.doartchina.com 都亚特画廊, 朝阳区草场地261号

DONG Tue-Sun 10am-7pm. Dashanzi art district, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District. (8459 9602) 菊香书屋798艺术空间, 朝阳区酒仙桥路4号大山子艺术区

East Gallery Tue-Sun 9am-5.30pm. 3/F, Deshengmen Watchtower, Beierhuan Zhonglu, Xicheng District. (8201 4962) www.bj-eastgallery.com 艺森画廊, 西城区北二环中路德胜门箭楼三层

Expol-Sources Art Space Tue - Sun 10.30am-6.30pm. Dashanzi Art District, 2 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District. (6477 3728) 爱源庄艺术空间, 朝阳区酒仙桥路2号大山子798艺术区

F2 Daily 10.30am-6pm. Guanghantang Nangao, East Dashanzi Lu, Chaoyang District. (134 8870 9596) www.f2gallery.com 广恒堂画廊, 朝阳区大山子路东机场辅路南皋F2画室内

Fa Fa Gallery Daily 10.30am-8pm. 4, Yuyang Lu, Houshayu Town, Shunyi District. (84302587, fafagallery@sohu.com) www.fafagallery.com 发发画廊, 顺义区后沙峪镇榆阳路4号(优山美地俱乐部)

Fake Space Rm 111, Bldg 3B, Pingod (North Zone), 32, Baizhuan Lu (next to Today Art Museum), Chaoyang District. (5826 3132) 朝阳区百子湾32号苹果社区北区3B-0111 (今日美术馆旁)

Faurschou Gallery Beijing Tue-Sun 10am-

6pm. Dashanzi Art District, 4, Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District. (8459 9316/14) 林冠画廊, 朝阳区酒仙桥路4号大山子艺术区

Felix Ringel Beijing Dashanzi art district, 2, Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District. (8096 9200) 德国三月画廊, 朝阳区酒仙桥路2号大山子艺术区

Ferry Art Center Tue-Sun 10am-6pm. F8-1003 Jiuchang Art Factory, Anwai Beiyuan Beihuqu, Chaoyang District. (5202 3955/56) 渡那国际艺术中心, 朝阳区安外北苑北湖渠酒厂ART艺术园F8-1003

The First Sound Gallery Tue-Sun 9.30am-6.30pm. Dashanzi art district, 2 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District. (6431 2501, thefirstsound798@yahoo.com.cn) www.firstsound.com 先声画廊, 朝阳区酒仙桥路2号798艺术区

Front Line Contemporary Only by appointment. Rm 2710, Embassy House, 18 Dongzhimenwai Xiaojie, Chaoyang District. (8449 9716, artinfo@frontlinecontemporary.com) www.frontlinecontemporary.com 朝阳区东直门外小街18号万国公寓2710室

Funart Space Tue -Sun11am-7pm. 2 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Dashanzi art district, Chaoyang District. (8459 9257, info@funartspace.com) www.funartspace.com 方音空间, 朝阳区酒仙桥路2号入口300米

Galerie Urs Meile, Lucerne-Beijing Tue-Sun 11am-6.30pm. 104 Caochangdi Village (take the airport service road north past the 5th Ring Road, turn right at the "China Film Museum" billboard and continue to the traffic light. At the light, veer right onto a slanted road and continue heading right. The gallery is the two-story gray building on the left), Chaoyang District. (6433 3393, fax 6433 0203) www.galeriemesle.com 麦勒画廊, 朝阳区草场地村104号

Galleria Continua Tue-Sun 11am-6pm. Dashanzi art district, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District. (6436 1005) www.galleriacontinua.com 常青画廊, 朝阳区酒仙桥路4号798大山子艺术区

Gallery Artside Tue-Sun 10am-7pm. Dashanzi art district, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District. (8459 9335/9336, beijing@artside.org) www.artside.org 北京阿特塞帝画廊, 朝阳区酒仙桥路4号大山子艺术区

Gallery Beijing Space Tue-Sun 10am-6.30pm. 3818 Warehouse, Dashanzi art district, 2 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District. (8459 9304, gallerybeijing@vip.sina.com) 北京空间画廊, 朝阳区酒仙桥路2号3818库内

Gallery Perif Tue-Sun 11am-6pm. Dashanzi art district, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District. (135 8185 9097(Eng), 134 2606 3725 (Chi)) www.perif.net 另辟蹊径, 朝阳区酒仙桥路4号, 798 大山子艺术区

Gallery Soemo-Fine-Arts 2 Daily 10am-6pm. 66 Xiaopunan Jie, Songzhuang, Tongzhou District. (8957 9113, lucy@soemo-fine-arts.com) www.soemo-fine-arts.com 苏蒙画廊空间二, 通州区宋庄小堡南街66号

Gallery TN Dashanzi art district, 2 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District. (8459 9550) www.mookgallery.com 天画廊, 朝阳区酒仙桥路2号大山子艺术区

IEUM Tue-Sun 10am-6pm. Dashanzi art district, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District. (6438 3551, spaceium@sina.com) www.ieshu.com 交流空间, 朝阳区大山子798艺术区

Imagine Gallery Daily 10.30am-5.30pm. Feijiacun Donglu, Cuigezhuang, Laiguangying Donglu, Chaoyang District. (6438 5747) www.imagine-gallery.com 想象画廊, 朝阳区来广营东崔各庄费家村香格里拉附近同达饭店对面

Institute of Chinese Traditional Paintings Daily 9am-4pm. 54 Xisanhuan Beilu, Haidian District. (6841 1369) 中国国画研究院展览馆, 海淀区西三环北路54号 (300 路紫竹院站)

Instituto Cervantes (A Gongti Nanlu, Chaoyang District. (5879 9666) <http://pekin.cervantes.es> 北京塞万提斯学院, 朝阳区工体南路甲1号

Inter Art Center and Gallery Tue-Sun 11am-6pm. Dashanzi art district, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District. (6437 0593, info@intergallery.cn) www.intergallery.cn 映艺艺术中心, 朝阳区酒仙桥路4号大山子艺术区

J.F. Art Gallery Tue-Sun 10am-7pm. Jingshun Lu (head 200m west from the Beigao exit, beyond North Fifth Ring Road), Chaoyang District. (6438 2161/5276, jfgallery@126.com) 杰孚画廊, 朝阳区京顺路, 北五环外第二个红绿灯, 北皋出口向西200米

Jiucaxuan Gallery Daily 8.30am-10pm. 1/F, Beijing Hotel, Xicheng District. (6513 7766 ext 1853) 九彩轩画廊, 西城区北京饭店一层

Keumsan Gallery Tue-Sun 11am-6pm. B-0024 Dashanzi Huantieni art district, Chaoyang District. (6436 6176, beijingqinshan@yahoo.com.cn) www.chinakeumsan.com 泰山画廊, 朝阳区大山子环铁内艺术城B0024

Ku Art Center Daily 10am-6pm. Ku Art Center B-006 Huantie Lu, Huantie art district, Jiangtai Xiang, Chaoyang District. (8456 9660/0850/2770, kuart@kuartcenter.com) www.kuartcenter.com KU艺术中心, 朝阳区将台乡环铁艺术城环铁路内B-006

L.A. Gallery Beijing Tue-Sun 10.30am-6pm. 319-1 East End Art (Zone A), Caochangdi Village, Chaoyang District (Take the Airport Service road one exit past Wuhuan Lu, take the first right and turn north on the road opposite the Chang Jian Driving School), Chaoyang District. (6432 5093) www.la-gallery-beijing.com 紫禁轩, 朝阳区草场地村319-1 艺术东区A区内 (机场辅路由南往北五环外第一个路口路东, 长建驾校对面路口)

Long March Tue-Sun 11am-7pm. Dashanzi art district, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District. (6438 7107, lm@longmarchspace.com) www.longmarchspace.com 长征空间, 朝阳区大山子艺术区

March Art/Felix Ringel Gallery Beijing Dashanzi art district, 2 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District. (8096 9200) www.march-art.com 三月空间, 朝阳区酒仙桥路2号大山子艺术区

Marella Gallery Tue-Sun 10am-6pm. Dashanzi art district, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District. (6433 4055) www.marellart.com 朝阳区酒仙桥路4号798大山子艺术区

Melodic Gallery Daily 10am-4.30pm. 14 Jianguomenwai Dajie, opposite Friendship Store, Chaoyang District. (6515 8123) 墨岚画廊, 朝阳区建外大街14号, 友道商店对面

Memo Wall Gallery Daily 11am-7pm. Dashanzi art district, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District. (5129 0798) 朝阳区酒仙桥路4号, 798-大山子艺术区

Moran Studio Daily 10am-6.30pm. Dashanzi art district, 2 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District. (139 1092 3743) 朝阳区酒仙桥路2号大山子798艺术区

National Agricultural Exhibition Centre Dongsanhuan Beilu, Chaoyang District. (6502 1727) 中国农业展览馆, 朝阳区东三环北路

New Age Gallery Dashanzi Art District, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District. (8459 9282) 新时代画廊, 朝阳区酒仙桥路4号大山子艺术区

New Art Centre Daily 9am-5.30pm. 136 Nanchizi Dajie, Dongcheng District. (6528 9103) 牛氏经典文化艺术中心, 东城区南池子大街136号

New Beijing Gallery No 1-3, Nanxincang, 22 Dongshihitiao, Dongcheng District. (6409 6382) 东城区东四十条南新仓1-3号

New Millennium Art Gallery Daily 10am-7pm. 3818 Warehouse, Dashanzi art district, 2 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District. (6432 4122) www.2000gallery.com 千年时间画廊, 朝阳区酒仙桥路2号3818库

Nike 706 Gallery Dashanzi art district, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District. www.nike706.com 706 展览馆, 朝阳区酒仙桥路4号798大山子艺术区

Nine-tripods Shenzhou Art Museum Daily 8am-late. North of Beiguan Huandao, Tongzhou District. (8088 6131) 北京九鼎神州艺术馆, 通州区北关环岛北侧

NY Arts Beijing Daily 10am-4pm. 318 Art Park, He Ge Zhuang, Chaoyang District. (8457 3298, 134 3951 8846, info@nyartsbeijing.com) www.nyartsbeijing.com 纽约艺术空间 · 北京, 朝阳区何各庄318艺术园

offiCina Tue-Sun noon-7pm. Dashanzi art district, 2 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District. (6436 1191) www.officialtd.com 意中艺术工作室, 朝阳区酒仙桥2号大山子艺术区

Onemoon Contemporary Art Tue-Sun, 10am-6pm. Inside Ditan Gongyuan (enter from the south gate), Dongcheng District. (6427 7748) www.onemoonart.com 一月当代, 东城区安定门外地坛公园

Pace Beijing Dashanzi art district, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District. 朝阳区酒仙桥路4号大山子艺术区

Paris Beijing Photo Gallery Daily 10am-7pm. Dashanzi art district, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District. (8459 9263, pbphotogallery@gmail.com) www.paris-beijingphotogallery.com 巴黎北京摄影空间, 朝阳区酒仙桥路4号798大山子艺术区

Passage Gallery Daily 9am-6pm. 368 Liulichang Xijie, Xuanwu District. (6303 4259) 正品斋, 宣武区琉璃厂西街乙36号

Pata Gallery Tue-Sun 1-6.30pm. 5, 3818 Warehouse, Dashanzi art district, 2 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District. (6433 5120) 八大画廊, 朝阳区酒仙桥路2号3818库5号

Pekin Fine Arts Daily 10am-4pm. 10-124 Qijiyuan Diplomatic Compound, Janguomenwai Dajie, Chaoyang District. (8532 2124) www.pekinfinearts.com 艺画廊, 朝阳区建国门外大街齐家园外交公寓10-124

Pickled Art Centre Tue-Sun 10am-5pm. Feijiacun, Laiguangying Donglu, Chaoyang District. (6432 7590) www.pickleart.com 酱艺术中心, 朝阳区来广营东路费家村

PKM Gallery Tue-Sun 10am-6pm. 46-C Caochangdi, Chaoyang District. (8456 7429) www.pkmgallery.com 北京朴敬美术馆, 朝阳区草场地46号C

Platform China Tue-Sun 11am-6pm. 1) Dashanzi art district, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District. (6438 8451); 2) 319-1 East End Art (Zone A), Caochangdi Village, Chaoyang District (Take the Airport Service road one exit past Wuhuan Lu, take the first right and turn north on the road opposite the Chang Jin Driving School), Chaoyang District. (6432 0169/0091) www.platformchina.org 站台 中国当代艺术机构, 1) 朝阳区酒仙桥路4号大山子艺术区; 2) 朝阳区草场地319-1 艺术东区A区内 (机场辅路由南往北五环外第一个路口路东, 长建驾校对面路口)

Potential Gallery Daily 10am-6pm. Dashanzi art district, 2 Jiuxianqiao Lu (opposite to 798 Red Gate Gallery), Chaoyang District. (6433 7416 13911195654, qianart@gmail.com) 潜空间, 朝阳区酒仙桥路2号798大山子艺术区2号院 (红门画廊对面)

PYO Gallery Beijing Daily 9.30am-6.30pm. Liquor Factory, Beihuqu Lu, AnwaiBeiYuan, Chaoyang District. (5202 3814) www.pyoart.com 表画廊, 朝阳区安外北苑北湖渠酒厂艺术区

Pyongyang Art Studio Call for appointment. Inside Youyi Youth Hostel, 43 Sanlitun Houjie, Chaoyang District. (6416 7544) www.pyongyangartstudio.com 朝阳区三里屯后街43号友谊青年旅店

Qian Jing Gallery Daily 9am-10pm. Feijiacun, Lai Guang Ying, Chaoyang District. (8456 1373, 139 0106 2126) 千景, 朝阳区来广营费家村

Qin Gallery Tue-Sun 9.30am-6pm. Rm 1E, Bldg 1, Enjoy Paradise, Huaweili (north of Beijing Curio City), Chaoyang District. (8779 0461) www.qingallery.com 秦昊画廊, 朝阳区华威里壹景嘉园1座1E室(北京古玩城北)

Red Gate Gallery Daily 10am-5pm. Levels 1 and 4, Dongbianmen Watchtower Chongwenmen, Chongwen District. (6525 1005) www.redgategallery.com 红门画廊, 崇文区东便门角楼

Russian Art Gallery Daily 10am-5.30pm. Inside the Sanyu Hotel, Dabaiyao, Dong-

sanhuan Zhonglu (500m south of Guomao Qiao), Chaoyang District. (6776 8593, elshl@sina.com) www.bjrusia-art.com 北京俄罗斯艺术画廊, 朝阳区东三环中路大北窑三宇宾馆内国贸桥往南500米路东

San Ban Studio Tue-Sun 11am-6pm. Dashanzi art district, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District. (6437 3432) www.tzhart.com/sanban 三板工坊, 朝阳区酒仙桥路4号798大山子艺术区

Sanshang Art Beijing Space Tue-Sun 9.30am-6pm. 46 Caochangdi, art district D, Cuigezhuang, Chaoyang District. (6431 0085/38, sanshang.bj@3sunart.com) 三尚艺术 北京空间, 朝阳区崔各庄草场地46号(艺术D区)

Shang Elements Contemporary Art Museum Tue-Sun 9am-5pm. Yihao Di International Artbase, Hegezhuang, Chaoyang District. (64051082) 尚元素艺术馆, 朝阳区何各庄村崔各庄乡一号国际艺术区

ShanghART Beijing Tue-Sun 11am-6pm. 261 Caochangdi, Chaoyang District. (6432 3202) www.shanghartgallery.com 香格里拉北京, 朝阳区草场地261号

Siheyuan Project Tue-Sun 10.30am-6pm. Dashanzi art district, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District. (8656 3396) www.litout.jp 四合院项目空间, 朝阳区酒仙桥路4号

Soemo Fine Arts Daily 10am-5pm. No 66, Xiaopu Nanjie, Songzhuang, Tongzhou District. (8957 9113, 8092 3038, info@soemo-fine-arts.com) www.soemo-fine-arts.com 西蒙画廊, 通州区宋庄小堡南街66号

Soka Art Centre/ Soka Modern Tue-Sun 10am-9pm. Rm 101, Bldg B, Tianhai Shangwu Dasha, 107 Dongsi Beidajie, Dongcheng District. (8401 2377) www.soka-art.com 索卡(北京)艺术中心, 东城区东四北大街107号天海商务大厦B座101房

South Stream Studio Mon-Fri by appointment, Sat-Sun 10am-6pm. Inside Chaoyang Liquor Factory (near Arario Gallery), Beihuqu Lu, AnwaiBeiYuan Jie, Chaoyang District. (5202 3828) www.southstreamstudio.com 南溪美术空间, 朝阳区安外北苑北湖渠酒厂国际艺术园

Space Noon Dashanzi art district, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District. (6438 3551, spacenoon@yahoo.com) 朝阳区酒仙桥路4号大山子艺术区

Star Gallery Tue-Sun 11am-6pm. Dashanzi art district, 2 Jiuxianqiao Lu (inside 3818 Cool Gallery warehouse), Chaoyang District. (8456 0591) www.stargallery.cn 星空间艺术中心, 朝阳区酒仙桥路2号院内, 3818库

SZ Art Center Dashanzi art district, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District. (6438 1088/6435 7838) 圣之空间艺术中心, 朝阳区酒仙桥路4号大山子艺术区

Taikang Top Space Call for hours. 11/F, Taikang Life Bldg.156, Fuxingmennei Dajie, Chaoyang District. (6642 9988 ext 8302, 138 0132 6510) www.taikangtop-space.com 泰康顶层空间, 朝阳区复兴门内大街156号, 泰康人寿大厦11层

Tang Contemporary Gallery Tue-Sun 10.30am-6.30pm. Dashanzi art district, 2 Jiuxianqiao Road, Chaoyang District. (6436 3518/3658, info@tangcontemporary.com) www.tangcontemporary.com 当代唐人艺术中心, 朝阳区酒仙桥路2号, 大山子艺术区

The Fifth Element Gallery Tue-Sun 10am-6pm. Dashanzi art district, 4 Jiuxianqiao Road, Chaoyang District. (6432 1338, dong.show@yahoo.com.cn) www.798gallery.net 第五元素画廊, 朝阳区酒仙桥路4号大山子艺术区

Thinking Hands Tue-Sun 10.30am-6.30pm. Dashanzi art district, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District. (6437 9737) 思想手, 朝阳区酒仙桥路4号798大山子艺术区

Three Shadows Photography Art Centre Tue-Sun 10am-6pm. 155 East End Art, Caochangdi Village (Next to Platform China), Chaoyang District. (6432 2663) www.threesadows.cn 三影堂摄影艺术中心, 朝阳区草场地艺术东区155号(站台中国旁)

Timezone 8 Daily 10am-8pm. Dashanzi art district, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District. (8456 0336) timezone8.com 现代书店北京艺术书屋, 朝阳区酒仙桥路4号798大

山子艺术区

Today Art Museum Daily 9am-5pm. Pingod Space, 32 Baizhuan Lu, Chaoyang District. (5862 1100) www.todayartmuseum.com 今日美术馆, 朝阳区百子湾路32号

TRA Gallery Rm C 2006, Jiu Chang Art Garden, Beihu Qu, Beiyuan Anwai, Chaoyang District. (5202 3883) www.tra-gallery.com.cn TRA 画廊, 朝阳区安外北苑北湖渠酒厂国际艺术园C2006室

TS1 Gallery Tue-Sun 10am-6pm. Dashanzi art district, 2 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District. (6433 1588, mailto: ts1beijing@gmail.com) www.ts1.com.cn 壹空间 画廊, 朝阳区酒仙桥路2号大山子艺术区

Two Lines Gallery Daily 10am-5.30pm. Dashanzi art district, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District. (139 1011 8792) 平行线画廊, 朝阳区酒仙桥路4号艺术区内

Vanessa Art Link Tue-Sun 10am-6pm. 46B Caochangdi Art Centre, Chaoyang District. (8456 7260/4273) 朝阳区草场地村艺术东区46乙

Wall Art Museum 10am-7pm. 6/F, Bldg B Fullink Plaza, Chaowai Dajie, Chaoyang District. (8618 4138, ccad@aer.net.cn) www.artornet.net/ad/sjq 墙美术馆, 朝阳区朝外大街丰联广场大厦B座6层

Wan Fung Art Gallery Mon noon-6pm, Tue-Sun 10am-6pm. 136 Nanchizi Dajie, Dongcheng District. (8523 3320) www.wanfung.com.cn 云峰画廊, 东城区南池子大街136号

Wenzheng Gallery Daily 9am-7pm. 1/F, Area 3, Fengyuan, Huilongguan, Changping District. (136 1127 4444) 闻正画廊, 昌平区回龙观风雅园三区底商

White Space Beijing Tue-Sun noon-6pm. Dashanzi art district, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District. (8456 2054) www.alex-anderocch-galleries.de 空白空间, 朝阳区酒仙桥路4号798大山子艺术区

Xin Dong Cheng Space For Contemporary Art Daily 10am-5pm. 1) Chaoyang Liquor Factory, Beihuqu Jie, AnwaiBeiYuan, Chaoyang District. (5202 3868); 2) Dashanzi art district, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District. (6433 4579) www.chengxindong.com 程昕东国际当代艺术空间, 1) 朝阳区安外北苑北湖渠朝阳区酿酒厂内; 2) 朝阳区酒仙桥路4号798大山子艺术区

XwhyZ Space Call for opening hours. A5 Chaoyangmennei Dajie, Cangnan Hutong, Chaoyang District. (6403 8851 ext 112, xiaomei46@hotmail.com) 朝阳区A5朝阳门内大街, 仓南胡同

XYZ Gallery Daily 10.30am-6.30pm. Dashanzi Art District, 2 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District. (8459 9299) 朝阳区酒仙桥路2号大山子艺术区

Yan Club Arts Centre Daily 10am-6pm. Dashanzi art district, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District. (8457 3506) www.yanclub.com 仁画廊, 朝阳区酒仙桥路4号798大山子艺术区

Yimeicang Gallery Daily 9am-6pm. 837 Kangyincun, Sunhexiang (800m south east of the terminus of the 405 and 415 bus route), Chaoyang District. (8456 8415/1884, yimeicang@sohu.com) www.art-it.cn 艺美仓画廊, 朝阳区孙河乡康营村837号(405和415总站东南800米)

Zenith Gallery Tie-Sun 10am-7pm. (6525 6932/6631, info@zenithgallery.cn) 盛世今来画廊, 东城区南池子大街7号

MUSEUMS

Beijing World Art Museum Daily 9am-6pm. 9A Fuxing Lu, Haidian District. (5980 2222) www.worldartmuseum.cn 中华世纪坛世界艺术馆, 海淀区复兴路甲9号

Capital Museum Daily 9am-5pm. 16 Fuxingmenwai Dajie, Xicheng District. (6337 0491/2) www.capitalmuseum.org.cn 首都博物馆, 西城区复兴门外大街16号

China Minority Art Museum Daily 8.30am-6pm. 1 Minzuyuan Lu, Chaoyang District. (6206 3610) 中华民族博物馆, 朝阳区民族园路1号

China National Film Museum Tue-Sun 9am-4.30pm. 9 Nanying Lu, Chaoyang District.

(6431 9548) www.cnfm.org.cn 中国电影博物馆, 朝阳区南影路9号

Chinese Numismatic Museum Tue-Sun 9am-4pm. 17 Xijiao Min Xiang, Xicheng District. (6608 1385) www.cnm.com.cn 中国钱币博物馆, 西城区西交民巷17号

Confucius Temple and Guozijian Daily 8.30am-5pm (4.30pm last ticket). RMB 10, RMB 3 (students). 13 Guozijian Jie (near the Lama Temple's main gate), Dongcheng District. (8401 1977) 孔庙和国子监, 东城区国子监街13号

Guan Fu Classic Art Museum RMB 20, RMB 10 (students). Daily 9am-5pm. B1/F, Huazhi Office Bldg, Nanzhuan Hutong, Nan Xiaojie, Chaoyangmennei, Chaoyang District. (6526 3208/5566 ext 308) 观复古典艺术博物馆, 朝阳区朝阳门内南小街南竹竿胡同华智商务大厦地下1层

Guanghantang Furniture Museum Daily 9am-6pm. Nangao Lu, Jichang Fulu, Dashanzi Dong Lu, Chaoyang District. (8456 7943/7945) 广汉堂古典家具艺术馆, 朝阳区大山子东路机场辅路南皋路

Iberia Center for Contemporary Art Tue-Sun 10am-6pm. Dashanzi art district, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District. (8459 9640) www.iberiart.org 伊比利亚当代艺术中心, 朝阳区酒仙桥路4号大山子艺术区

Imperial City Museum Daily 10am-5.30pm. 9 Changpuheyuan, Dongcheng District. (8511 5104) 皇城艺术馆, 东城区昌蒲河沿9号

Jintai Art Museum Daily 9.30am-4pm. Inside Chaoyang Park, near West Gate, 1 Nongzhan Nanlu, Chaoyang District. (6501 9441) 北京金台艺术馆, 朝阳区农展南路1号, 朝阳公园西门内

Laojia Art Museum Sat-Sun 9.30-11.30am, 1.30-4.30pm. Huoying (opposite New Oriental School), Changping District. (8170 6445, 136 9300 9369) www.laojia-art-museum.com.cn 老甲艺术馆, 昌平区霍营

Lu Xun Museum RMB 5, RMB 3 (students). Tue-Sun 9am-3.30pm. 19 Gongmen Ertiao, Fuchengmen, Xicheng District. (6616 4080) www.chnmuseum.com/lx1.htm 鲁迅博物馆, 西城区阜成门内大街二条19号

National Art Museum of China RMB 20. Daily 9am-4pm. 1 Wusi Dajie, Dongcheng District. (6401 2252/7076) www.namoc.org 中国美术馆, 东城区五四大街1号

The Palace Museum RMB 60. Daily 8.30am-4pm. Forbidden City, 4 Jingshan Qianjie, Xicheng District. (6513 2255, 8511 7099) www.dpm.org.cn 故宫博物院, 西城区景山前街4号

Sackler Museum Daily 9am-5pm, last ticket 4.30pm. 75 Haidian Lu, inside the west gate of Peking University, Haidian District. (6275 1667) 北京赛克勒考古与艺术博物馆, 海淀区海淀路75号北京大学西门内

Song Qingling's Former Residence RMB 20, RMB 10 (College students), RMB 5 (Middle & Primary school students). 46 Houhai Beiyuan, Xicheng District. (6404 4205) 宋庆龄故居, 西城区后海北沿46号

Ullens Center for Contemporary Art Tue-Sun 10am-6pm. Dashanzi Art District, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District. (6438 6576) www.ucca.org.cn 尤伦斯当代艺术中心, 朝阳区酒仙桥路4号大山子艺术区

Workers' Cultural Palace RMB 2. Daily 6am-8.30pm. East of Tian'anmen Square, Dongcheng District. (6512 2103) 劳动人民文化宫, 东城区天安门东侧

Xu Beihong Museum RMB 5, RMB 2 (students). Tue-Sun 9am-4.30pm. 53 Xinjiekou Beidajie, Xicheng District. (6225 2042) 徐悲鸿纪念馆, 西城区新街口北大街53号

Yanhuang Art Museum RMB 5, RMB 3 (students) Tue-Sun 9am-4pm. 9 Huizhong Lu, Asian Games Village, Chaoyang District. (6491 0909) 炎黄艺术馆, 朝阳区亚运村慧园路9号

Yong He Art Museum Daily 10am-5pm. 13/F, Ge Hua Tower, 1 Qinglong Hutong, Dongcheng District. (84186821) 雍和美术馆, 东城区青龙胡同1号歌华大厦13层



Sep 23: The Slaughterhouse Pavilion

Catherine Sampson launches her fourth crime novel at The Bookworm. See listing, this page.

A whole new world of reading options have opened up to Shunyi residents over the past few months since the launching of three new foreign language bookstores in the area. Although all the stores are quite small, new branches of **The Bookworm**, **Chaterhouse** and the **Foreign Language Bookstore** might make a trip to the suburban district worthwhile.

Set to open on September 9 is the second phase of China's National Library in Haidian, where students and other interested folks can explore the rich holdings of this great institution. The sleek new design is decked out with comfy chairs, improved heating, and will offer more reader-focused services in continuation of a trend that did away with fees for storing bags and lower photocopying fees last year. According to Sina, the library's 250,000sqm of floor space makes it **the third largest library in the world**. The opening of the new building follows closely upon the library's development of the National Digital Library of China Program, which has generated large amounts of e-books (including winners of **China's Wenjin Book Prize and local chronicles**), as well as other digital resources like Spring Festival pictures and online lectures.

And don't expect to escape the Olympics just yet, for they'll continue to make their presence felt on bookstore shelves around town, as biographies of creative director **Zhang Yimou** and renowned pianist **Lang Lang** (in both English and Chinese) go on sale. One book that won't be making it to stores is the **IOC's official Beijing Olympics book**. According to the *Wall Street Journal*, only 800 copies of the gold and silk-covered books were printed, and IOC will present them as gifts to the chiefs of Olympic sporting federations and heads of state that attended the Opening Ceremony.

Did anybody out there notice one of those **special newsstands** that were licensed to sell foreign newspapers and magazines during the Olympic period? We certainly didn't. According to Chinese media reports before the Games began, close to 100 venues were slated to sell **formerly unattainable foreign journals**. On our walks around the Olympic city, we failed to see any copies of periodicals like the *Washington Post* or *Time Magazine*. The Olympic newsstands or kiosks are supposed to operate until September 24, so drop us a line if you spot one.

Finally, this month's **2008 Beijing International Book Fair** will actually be held in **Tianjin** from September 1-4. You can find more information about the book fair at the official site (www.bibf.net). The fair should be held back in Beijing next year, but the biennial **Beijing Book Fair** seems to have gone the way of the Beijing Pop Festival – that is to say, it won't be held this year. *Paul Pennay*

For venue details, see directories below

Send events to listings@thebeijinger.com by **Sep 12**

Sep 11

Basically Beethoven

At this monthly music night, musicians take the floor and wow with their musical talents. Expect everything from trumpets to kazooos. Free. 7.30pm. The Bookworm (6586 9507)

Sep 16

Booktalk: Lily Briscoe's Chinese Eyes: Bloomsbury, Modernism and China

Following the cross-cultural romance between Virginia Woolf's nephew Julian Bell, and writer and painter Ling Shuhua, the book studies China's relationship with the famous Bloomsbury set of modernist writers. The talk will be given by Patricia Laurence. RMB 20-30. 7.30pm. The Bookworm (6586 9507)

Sep 18

The Bookworm Wine Club

Hosted in association with ASC wines, this month's wine club looks at organic wines. RMB 150 (includes 4 wines, plus organic nibbles). 7.30pm. The Bookworm (6586 9507)

Sep 20

The Bookworm Third Anniversary Party

Celebrating three years of Beijing's favorite intellectual hangout. This event is ticketed. See www.chinabookworm.com for details. The Bookworm (6586 9507)

Sep 23

Book Launch: The Slaughterhouse Pavilion

Crime writer Catherine Sampson launches her fourth novel, which exposes the hidden underbelly of Beijing. The fourth in her series, it features, as always, journalist Robin Ballantyne. Free (tickets required). 7.30pm. The Bookworm (6586 9507)

Every Sunday

Kids Club at The Bookworm

Kids books are selected and read from every week in a fun and encouraging atmosphere to promote a love of reading outside the classroom. RMB 30. 11am. The Bookworm (6586 9507)

BOOKSTORES

Shunyi Bookstore Daily 9am-6pm. 606 Pinnacle Plaza, South of Hualikan Cun, Tianzhu Town, Shunyi District. (8046 1276) 顺义书店, 顺义区天竺镇花梨 坎村南荣祥广场606.

All Sages Bookstore Although it doesn't have many English-language titles, the range and quality of All Sages' Chinese titles and the stylish cafe on the second floor make it one of the best bookstores in Beijing. It has a great selection of Chinese translations of the latest academic releases as well as a large range of social and political science texts. Daily 10am-10pm. 1) Bldg 10, Fangcaodi Xijie, Chaoyang District. (8561 4331, 8563 1710); 2) 123 Lanqiying, Chengfu Lu, Haidian District. (6276 8748) www.allsagesbooks.com 北京万圣书店. 1) 朝阳区芳草地西街10号楼; 2) 海淀区蓝旗营成府路123号

Beijing Book Building Take the escalator to the basement to find a large but eclectic range of English-language books. The staff is fluent in English and happy to help you search for a particular title. Dictionaries and books related to learning Chinese language can also be found on the third floor. Daily 8.30am-9pm. 17 Xichang'an Jie, (right near Xidan subway station), Xicheng District. (6607 8477) www.bjbb.com 北京图书大厦. 西城区西长安大街17号

Beijing Forestsong Bookstore Specializing in humanities- and social science-related titles, this store stocks only Chinese-language books. Organizes regular lectures and book signings. Daily 9am-9pm. 46 Haidian Lu, (south gate of Peking University), Haidian District. (6276 8736) www.foresong.com.cn 北京风入松书店. 海淀区海淀路46号(北大南门)

Beijing International Book Store This huge bookstore in Beijing's far west stocks a large range of English-language titles. 9am- 9pm. 117 Xisihuan Beilu, Haidian District. (8849 9030, gjsd@mail.cibtc.com.cn) 北京国际书店. 海淀区西四环北路117号(四季青桥西南)

Beijing Publishing Logistics Center The BPLC is Asia's largest book city and book warehouse. It stretches over 300,000sqm and houses over 500 state-owned publishers and overseas publishers, including Random House and Penguin. You can also purchase second-hand Chinese and foreign books. Daily 9am-5pm. 12

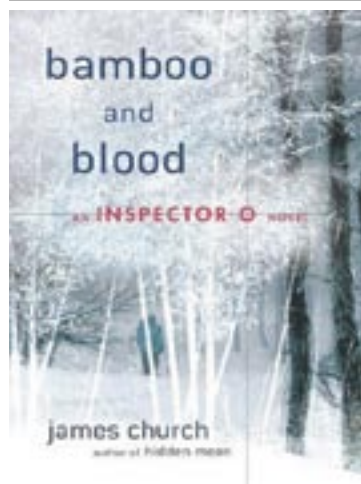
Zhengfu Dajie, Taihu Town, Tongzhou District. (8080 8888) www.beifabook.com 北京出版发行物流中心. 通州区台湖镇政府大街13号

Big and Little Books Specializes in imported English language children's books, including a range of books in creative formats that are great for younger readers. 1) Shop 4001N, 5/F, Golden Resource Mall, 1 Yuanda Road, Haidian District. (6436 5197); 2) Daily 9am-9pm. 7A-02, Disanj Bookstore, 66 Beisihuan Xilu, Haidian District. (8248 6283); 3) Daily 10am-10pm. F4, Wangjing Mall, 33 Guangshun Beidajie, Wangjing, Chaoyang District. (8478 0428); 4) Mon-Fri, 9.30am-8.30pm, Sat-Sun, 9.30am-9.30pm. 102A, Beijing Lido Holiday Inn, Jiangtai Lu, Airport Expressway, Chaoyang District. (6437 6338) 小读者儿童书店. 1) 海淀区远大路1号金源新燕莎五层4001N; 2) 海淀区北四环西路66号第三极书局7A-02区; 3) 朝阳区望京广顺北大街33号嘉茂(望京华联)购物中心四区; 4) 朝阳区首都机场路将台路丽都假日饭店102A

Blue Goat Books & Cafe The walls of this tiny store are plastered with movie posters and the shelves are filled with quality film art books – though the majority of them are Chinese-language editions. They also have a good range of hard-to-find Chinese movies. There is now also a small cafe in the courtyard. Daily 12.30am-midnight. 3 Shuimo Xinqu (200m north of west gate of Tsinghua University), Haidian District. (6265 5069) 蓝羊书坊. 海淀区水磨新村3号(清华西门向北200米)

The BookMark Beijing's largest multi-lingual lending library provides a wide range of English and other foreign language books for the whole family, including an impressive selection of children's titles, fiction (both classic and contemporary) and a small selection of foreign language books. Story time for young readers with integrated arts activities held on Sat morning at 10am. Wed-Sun 10am-6pm. 1 Kaifa Jie (between Ms. Shanen's Bagels and Smallville Café), Xibaixinzhuang, Houshayu, Shunyi District. (8049 9175, shunyilibrary@aol.com) www.bookmarkbeijing.com 顺义区后沙峪西白辛庄开发街1号

BooksChina.com Daily 8.30am-6pm. 2/F, Xueyuanku Post Office, 17 Chengfu Lu, Haidian District. (8237 5220, wh0461@126.com, www.bookschina.com) 中国图书网. 海淀区成府路17号学院

Bamboo and Blood James Church

The cover text of the review copy of this book claims that it "reintroduces enigmatic North Korean police inspector O." Enigmatic is certainly the right word – this guy barely makes any sense at all. O is a bizarre lead character, both philosophical and self-deprecating; Church is clearly attempting to shy away from the usual clichéd detective novel hero. In practice, however, O just comes off as awkward and cynical.

The reader can be forgiven for thinking that a novel from a pseudonymous American intelligence operative would

be somewhat biased against North Korea. Rather, Church's description of 1990s Pyongyang is about the only reason to read this book. A convoluted, half-baked plot focused on the North Korean nuclear missile program, an Israeli spy, and the murder of a diplomat in Pakistan is intertwined with O's rambling observations about life in the North Korean capital; weaving it all together is O's bizarre obsession with little pieces of wood. The pace of the book is off-balance and plods along like a rickshaw driver with a wooden leg, and the allegedly "thrilling" finale doesn't quite redeem the rest of the novel. Characters are flat and left undeveloped, with seemingly not much thought going into any of them. Even worse are Church's blatant attempts at making O mysterious and obtuse, which only results in making him sound more like someone with ADD than a dedicated police officer.

Ardent fans of anything to do with North Korea might find something useful in *Bamboo and Blood*. Otherwise, a much better detective novel awaits elsewhere. Scott Lewis

The Big Necessity Rose George

When Lettre Ulysses-winner Rose George told her family and friends that she would be writing a book entirely about poop, they thought she was either crazy or a coprophagist. But what she has produced is an in-depth account of modern attitudes towards waste and sanitation, and a lambasting of the poverty and corruption that has left some 2.9 billion of the world's population without access to a lavatory.

This is a crap book – literally. It's a book about crap, where it goes, what is done with it after it leaves our bodies, and how it's

dealt with all over the world. It's also one of the most compelling reads of the summer. George's research takes her from the slums of India to the sewers of New York, to a toilet exhibition opposite the Kremlin, and to a biogas plant in Dali. She examines the benefits and dangers of using human waste to fertilize crops, and debates whether or not our own excrement is a viable fuel source. Her conversations with people from all branches of waste management introduce a cast of characters that any novelist would find hard to match – a street sweeper in Mumbai, scientists in Washington attempting to turn human waste into car fuel, and the head of the World Toilet Organization all make appearances in this rich tapestry of turd.

The subject matter may be somewhat distasteful, but *The Big Necessity* is an eye-opening look at a subject that affects all of us, and one we so often choose to ignore. Scott Lewis

Fu Pianpian (福翩翩) Chi Zijian

Adapted from Chinese Spring Festival couplets, the title of this collection of newly-written short stories, translated as "Fluttering Blessings," is precisely what Fu Pianpian encompasses – short and concise fragments of prose that paint poignant pictures. The collection from Chi Zijian begins with the title story, "Fu Pianpian," an episode into the lives of two couples who live in a small, quiet town along the Wuji River, until mistrust and money interrupts their quaint lives and alters them forever. The subtlety of Fu Pianpian is then contrasted against Chi's ruthless

portrait of Huamangzi, a poor man living in the countryside doomed to a life of bachelorhood, in "Huamangzi de Chuntian" (or "Huamangzi's Spring"). Among the seven short stories, "Qi Wu" (or "To Dance") is one that stands out – through the tracing of a woman's lifetime, the changes of Harbin over half a century are reflected. Reminiscent of Wang Anyi's *Everlasting Sorrow of Song* (1996), Chi writes an elegy of a beautiful and historical city disappearing in the sweep of modernization.

Like Xiao Hong of the 1930s, who was also a female writer from northeast China well-known for writing about life in Heilongjiang, the backdrop of Chi's stories are never far removed from dreary Dongbei, yet her delicate naturalness reads elegantly and can easily attract any reader into the fictional worlds she creates. Juxtaposed next to the author's longer works, these short stories are touching and to the point, and leave the reader longing for more. Alice Wang

What's China Reading:
Love, marriage and everything in between

compiled by Cecily Huang

1. *Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus* 男人来自火星, 女人来自金星, by John Gray, Chinese translation by Yu Haisheng 于海生

The theory offered by John Gray (that men and women are from different planets) seems to apply in China as well. The Chinese version of this book was published in 2005 and has since been regarded as the best guidebook for Chinese couples to improve their relationships.

2. *Love Zoo* 情感动物园, by Guo Pengzi 郭彭子

The credited author is actually a combination of characters from the names of a married couple, who are also cooperating to do indie film and animation. Recommended as the most affecting adult love fairy tale in 2008, this book portrays the trivial yet interesting interactions that occur between couples.

3. *A Handbook on the 40 Weeks of Pregnancy* 40周孕程全程手册, by Xu Yunhua 徐蕴华

Compiled and written by gynecologist Xu Yunhua, this book provides a comprehensive guide for expectant mothers that includes facts about baby growth, diet and nutrition during pregnancy.

4. *Meditation in Love* 在爱中修行, by Su Hei 素黑

Su Hei is a famous psychologist and writer in Hong Kong. Her blog on Sina.com provides a platform for people to exchange opinions about love, and this book collects the articles from her column and blog.

5. *Let Go, Love* 放下, 爱, by Su Hei 素黑

In her first psychological treatment book, Su Hei analyzes the common problems that women face when in a relationship – including willfulness, greediness and desperation. Through 52 case studies, Su provides solutions to help women better understand men, and themselves.



FEMININE FICTION

Novelist Lü Yao creates the modern woman

by Alice Wang

Young novelist Lü Yao is just in her 20s but has already published two works of fiction, *Women de Zhutiqu* (*Our Theme Song*) and her latest book, *Lanshan Ji* (*Notes of Wading Light*). Lü began as a columnist for the Chinese-language magazine *Hua Xi* in 2001, but has since become popular among Chinese female readers for writing stories that touch on the lives of modern, career-driven women. Reminiscent of Hong Kong's popular writer Yi Shu, who writes romantic stories in a sober and realistic way, but unlike other urban writers, such as Anni Baby or Wei Hui, whose fictional worlds seem to be a bit distanced from the reader, Lü Yao intrigues readers with her close-to-life style of writing, and out of the depths of her characters, shadows of ourselves are revealed.

In August, *the Beijinger* caught up with Lü Yao during a stop at Yufeng Bookstore in Haidian, where she introduced her new book, released in June 2008.

the Beijinger: What is *Lanshan Ji* about?

Lü Yao: The title *Lanshan Ji* draws from Qing dynasty literary critic Wang Guowei's lyrics in *Renjian Cihua*. It has many different explanations – one interpretation might be “the wading of light,” another could also be “the brightly lit light.” But it describes a state of contradiction. The book consists of eight different love stories about women. Each one has to struggle between a career and love.

tbj: In your novels, women are usually successful in career but fail in love. Would you say this is a feminist or non-feminist approach?

LY: No one's life is perfect. In contemporary society, everyone must run fast to keep pace. A woman has to be independent and brave. But that doesn't assure that she'll find love. Whether in China or other countries, it's the same situation. When it comes to choosing between bread and love, I think women should choose bread first. Only when you have bread, can you have the dignity and freedom to choose love.

“When it comes to choosing between bread and love, I think women should choose bread first”

tbj: When you wrote for women's magazines, you produced a lot of good interviews and film reviews, but now you've turned to writing novels. Have you decided to concentrate on fiction writing instead of non-fiction in the future?

LY: I think I'll still write some people interviews. It's part of the work I like to do. Interviewing others is a valuable communication experience for me. I can pick up on excellent story ideas from those people. I seldom watch movies now, so I don't think I'll be writing many more film reviews. In general, I feel much happier writing novels than anything else. Writing novels is like growing crops – getting your own land, sowing seeds, watering plants and cultivating the soil. It is really difficult sometimes. Fiction writing can be a physical labor.

tbj: You like to use titles of pop songs to be the titles of your novel, and some pop song lyrics also appear within your work. Does pop culture influence your writing a lot?

LY: Pop music has played an important role in my growth. Although sometimes it's very simple, it really has influenced me a lot.

Director Jia Zhangke also likes to use pop music in his movies! I think sometimes pop music is really powerful and direct, especially when it's used to express ordinary people's feelings.

tbj: Who is your favorite writer?

LY: I like a lot of writers. Wang Xiaobo is a spiritual model for the people of my generation. Xiao Hong's *Tales of Hulan River* is one of my favorite works. Bernard Malamud is my idol – he writes with great emotion.

tbj: What's your next project?

LY: It's a long novel, and I haven't decided the title yet. It's also about the urban woman's life story, but the characters will be developed more completely than those in my shorter works.

The Bookworm This sleek lending library and bookshop has the best selection of English language books and magazines in town and is often cheaper than Amazon et al. The bibliophile manager arranges a fabulous lecture series that features both local and international authors. Other draw cards include the rooftop terrace, comfy couches and a kitchen that serves European fare. Daily 9am-2am. Courtyard 4, Gongti Beilu, Chaoyang District. (6586 9507, books@beijingbookworm.com, kidsclub@beijingbookworm.com) www.beijingbookworm.com 书虫书吧, 朝阳区工体北路4号院

Chaterhouse Booktrader Prices are generally a bit higher than those at the Foreign Language Bookstore, but they do stock a good range of travel, kids, health and coffee table books. 1) Daily 10.30am-7.30pm. River Garden Clubhouse, 7 Yuyang Lu, Houshayu, Shunyi District. (8046 6211, customer@chaterhouse.com.cn); 2) Daily 10am-10pm. Shop B107, The Place, 9 Guanghua Lu (Dongdaqiao Lu), Chaoyang District. (6587 1328, customer@chaterhouse.com.cn) 1) 顺义区后沙峪乡榆阳路7号; 2) 朝阳区光华路9号世贸天阶中心地库B107

China National Publications Import & Export (Group) Corporation A wealth of foreign-language books, periodicals and multimedia products are available at this little-known store. 2/F, 16 Gongti Donglu, Chaoyang District. (6508 2324) www.cnpeak.com 中国图书进出口公司, 朝阳区工体东路16号

Cuckoo Bookstore Although small, this pricey store has an impressive selection of foreign magazines. Daily 9.30am-8pm. NB54, B1/F, China World Shopping Mall (next to the Bank of China), 1 Jianguomenwai Dajie, Chaoyang District. (6505 9286) 布谷鸟书店, 朝阳区建国门外大街1号国贸商城地下1层NB54 (中国银行旁)

Designer Books They stock all you could want in terms of domestic and international design books. 9am-6pm. Bldg 2, 3 Desheng Xieziou, Babukou Hutong, Gulou Xidajie, Xicheng District. (6406 7653, hr@designerbooks.net) www.designerbooks.net 北京迪塞纳图书, 西城区鼓楼西大街八步口胡同3号德胜写字楼2号楼

Disanji Bookstore This gigantic store is billed as the biggest Chinese-language bookstore in the world. They sell various kinds of Chinese-language books, CDs, DVDs and have a great selection of original editions from Taiwan and Hong Kong. Daily 9am-10pm. 66 Beishuan Lu (opposite the south gate of Peking University), Haidian District. (5128 2300, fax 6253 4396) www.d3j.com.cn 第三极书局, 海淀区北四环西路66号

Foreign Languages Bookstore This cavernous shop offers Beijing's most extensive line of English language fiction, art books, travel books, magazines, maps, dictionaries, kids' books (Dr. Seuss!) and more. A lot of the more popular English titles can now be found on the first floor although it is still worth a visit to the third floor. Daily 9am-9pm. 235 Wangfujing Dajie, Dongcheng District. (6512 6903, bxwjsjb@public.bta.net.cn) www.bpiec.com.cn 外文书店, 东城区王府井大街235号

Friendship Store Why shop here? The goods are viciously overpriced, it's overrun by tourists and service is snooty. Its only redeeming feature is the foreign language books section, where the previous day's editions of the South China Morning Post, the IHT and other foreign publications including an extensive selection of travel books are available. Daily 9am-8.30pm. 17 Jianguomenwai Dajie, Chaoyang District. (6500 3311) 北京友谊商店, 朝阳区建国门外大街17号

Garden Books This English-language bookstore above Sequoia Cafe (in the former location of Tim's Texas Bar-B-Q) is the Beijing branch of a Shanghai favorite. 8am-8pm. 44 Guanghua Lu, Chaoyang District. (6585 1435, gardenbooks@yahoo.cn) 朝阳区光华路44号

Guo Lin Feng Bookstore Located in the basement of Haidian Book City, and a little hard to find, this store has a decent selection of English and other foreign language books. Daily 9am-9pm. B1/F, Haohai Lou, Haidian Book City (south of Haidian Qiao), Haidian District. (6253 4371) 国林风书店, 海淀区中关村海淀图书城昊海楼地下一层(北四环海淀桥南)

Haidian Book City Haidian Book City gets props for its enormous size alone - its four stories house nearly 200 shops that sell the biggest and most up-to-date collection of publications you can find in the city. Books available cover a range of topics, including literature, sociology, economics, science and technology, plus a limited selection of English fiction in the basement. Daily 9am-6pm. 36 Haidian Xidajie, Haidian District. (6257 3167) 海淀图书城, 海淀区海淀西大街36号

Hanfen Lou Bookstore Supported by Commercial Press, this store holds regular weekend lectures featuring local authors and academics speaking on a range of subjects. Most of the books and all of the lectures are in Chinese. You can find out more about upcoming events by calling 6525 8899 ext 544. Daily 9am-9pm. 36 Wangfujing Dajie, Dongcheng District. (6559 5282) www.cp.com.cn/hf/ 涵芬楼书店, 东城区王府井大街36号

Hui Yuan Bookstore Looking for Chinese character cards? Popular with students cramming for the HSK, this store offers a large range of Chinese-language learning materials, at decent prices. Daily 9.30am-7.30pm. A1 Qinghua Donglu (inside Jingyu Hotel), Haidian District. (6232 9778) 汇缘书店, 海淀区清华东路甲1号(京裕宾馆内)

Ivy Kids Book Club The Ivy Kids Book Club offers the best selection of English children's books in Beijing, with over 1,400 titles suitable for children between 0 and 6 years-old. The book club is open to the general public, although students of Ivy Academy and Ivy Bilingual have priority in joining. Membership RMB 400/year for individuals and RMB 600/year for families. Tue-Fri 10am-12.30pm, 1.30-6pm; Sat 10am-6pm. Bldg E, Ocean Express, 2 Dongsanhuai Beilu (behind Silver Tower), Chaoyang District. (8446 7286, info@ivybookclub.cn) www.ivybookclub.cn 朝阳区东三环北路2号远洋新干线E座(南银大厦后面)

Le Petit Gourmand A lending library/French bar and restaurant that has a great selection of secondhand English and other foreign language books. Membership is RMB 150 for 6 months or RMB 250 a year, this entitles you to borrow 3 books at a time. Daily 9.30am-midnight. bar open until 2am. 3/F, Tongli Studios, Sanlitun Houjie, Chaoyang District. (6417 6095, fax 6413 0765) www.lepetitgourmand.com.cn 小美食家, 朝阳区三里屯后街同里3层

O2SUN Bookstore This Macanese chain's Beijing flagship attracts the student crowds in Wudaokou with its wide selection of Chinese-language learning books. It also houses a few shelves of English-language books, a wide array of magazines and a great cafe on the second floor. The second branch also stocks some classic English-language works. 1) Daily 9am-midnight. Bldg 1, Huaqing Jiayuan, Chengfu Lu (across from Wudaokou light-rail station), Haidian District. (8286 3032/33); 2) Daily 10am-10pm. B1083, Shin Kong Place, 87 Jianguo Lu, Chaoyang District. (6533 1369); 3) Daily 9am-midnight. S3001, Bldg B, Soho New Town, 88 Jianguo Lu, Chaoyang District. (8580 2786/2789) www.o2sun.com 光合作

用, 1) 海淀区五道口华清嘉园1号楼; 2) 朝阳区建国路87号新光天地地下1层1083号; 3) 朝阳区建国路88号Soho现代城B座S3001

One Way Street Library Though hard to find and with a limited selection of English-language books (the small collection is not for sale and can only be browsed in store), this small and sunny bookstore is still worth visiting thanks to the interesting events organized on a regular basis and its peaceful atmosphere. 1) Daily 9am-8.30pm. East Gate of Yuanmingyuan, enter the parking lot and

keep heading north past the entrance to the park and then turn left (next to Mima Cafe, Haidian District. (6257 0357, fax 6257 0357, onewaystreetlibrary@gmail.com); 2) Daily 10am-11pm. Rm 1314, Bldg 19, Wanda Plaza, 93 Jianguo Lu, Chaoyang District. (5820 5369, 5820 6125, onewaystreetlibrary@gmail.com); 3) Daily 9.30am-10pm. Blue Rock Club, Area B, China Millennium Monument, 9A Fuxing Lu, Haidian District. (6857 3382, onewaystreetlibrary@gmail.com) www.onewaystreet.cn 单向街图书馆, 1) 海淀区圆明园东门内停车场北侧(在左右间旁边); 2) 朝阳区建国路93号万达广场19座1314; 3) 海淀区复兴路甲9号中华世纪坛B区蓝石俱乐部内

Peekabook House A library for kids, Peekabook House offers a wide range of English titles and also video and audio materials for rental. Based on similar stores in the US, the library organizes plenty of activities including reading clubs, story time, arts and crafts and more. They can also help readers to purchase books from abroad. Tue-Sun 9.30am-8.30pm. 1) 2/F, Huatengyuan Club, Jingsong Qiao, 54 Dongsanhuai Nanlu, Chaoyang District. (8773 8382/5884, peekahouse@yahoo.com.cn); 2) 2/F, Wanliu Shequ Shenghuo Guan, 15 Wanliu Zhonglu, Haidian District. (8256 7276, 8256 6324, peekahouse@yahoo.com.cn) www.peekabook.com.cn 皮卡书屋, 1) 朝阳区东三环南路54号花藤园俱乐部二层(劲松桥); 2) 海淀区万柳中路15号万柳社区生活馆二层

Poplar Kids Republic Bookstore One of the most extensive children's bookstores in Beijing. The unique design encourages children and their parents to stop by, read together and enjoy the in-store facilities, which include a comfortable play area. Daily 10am-7.30pm. Rm 1362, Bldg 13, Jianwai Soho, 39 Dongsanhuai Zhonglu, Chaoyang District. (5869 3032) www.poplar.com.cn 蒲蒲兰绘本馆, 朝阳区东三环中路39号建外Soho13号楼1362

Sanlian Taofen Bookstore Filled with quality philosophy and art books. Head up to the second floor to find a large range of English-language editions and a small cafe. The store also organizes occasional lectures and has a good magazine selection. Daily 9am-9pm. Meishuguan Dongjie (East of National Art Museum of China), Dongcheng District. (6407 1664, 6400 1122) www.sdxjpc.com 北京三联韬奋图书中心, 东城区北京美术馆东街(中国美术馆东侧)

San Wei Bookstore This small bookstore stocks artsy and literary titles. After making your purchases, join the hipsters in the upstairs teahouse for live jazz or traditional Chinese music performances. Daily 9.30am-10.30pm. 60 Fuxingmennei Dajie, Xicheng District. (6601 3204) 三味书屋, 西城区复兴门内大街60号

Timezone 8 This shop sells an amazing selection of fashion and art books from both local and foreign publishers. They also offer Chinese teas, fresh fruit smoothies and selection of healthy and light cuisine. On Saturdays they play host to regular book talks. Daily 10am-8pm. Dashanzi art district, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District. (8456 0336) timezone8.com 现代书店北京艺术书区, 朝阳区酒仙桥路4号798大山子艺术区

Trends Lounge This bookstore-cafe is sure to catch your eye with its sleek curves and spirals in fresh whites and greens. The expansive layout yields plenty of comfy nooks for face time over coffee or an afternoon of reading. Impressive range of magazines and books includes a decent English-language selection. Daily 10am-10pm. L214, 2/F, Trends Bldg (connected to The Place's north building), 9 Guanghua Lu, Chaoyang District. (6587 1998) 时尚廊, 朝阳区光华路9号时尚大厦2层L214

Wangfujing Bookstore One of the city's biggest and most comprehensive bookstores. Struggle through the crowds to reach the third floor, where you'll find a smattering of original English editions and a good range of Chinese language learning materials. Lectures are held on the sixth floor on weekends, usually in Chinese. Daily 8am-5pm. 218 Wangfujing

Dajie, Dongcheng District. (6513 2842, 6525 2592) www.wfjsd.com 王府井书店, 东城区王府井大街218号

Yansha Books Stocks Lonely Planet and Frommers guidebooks, coffee table tomes and kids books, notably by Richard Scarry, Sesame Street and Disney. Daily 9am-10pm. 4/F, Lufthansa Center, 50 Liangmaqiao Lu, Chaoyang District. (6465 3388) 燕莎购物中心, 朝阳区亮马桥路50号燕莎购物中心4层


Zhongguancun Bookstore Located in the university district, this store is up there with Xidan and Wangfujing in terms of range of English-language titles. Head to the third floor for English books, which can be found alongside a broad selection of textbooks for Chinese-language study. Daily 9am-9pm. 68 Beishuan Xilu, Haidian District. (8267 6696/97/98) www.zgcb.com 中关村图书大厦, 海淀区北四环西路68号

LIBRARIES & MUSEUMS


Capital Library While its range of foreign language books is not as impressive as the National Library's, it does offer foreigners the option of borrowing books. It costs RMB 10 to process a reader's card and, depending on the type of card you choose, a deposit ranging from RMB 100-500. Foreign language newspapers and periodicals can also be accessed and regular lectures are organized on weekends. Daily 9am-7.30pm. 88 Dongsanhuai Nanlu, Chaoyang District. (6735 8114) www.cln.net.cn 首都图书馆, 朝阳区东三环南路88号

National Library This national institution has a great range of English and other foreign language editions, including periodicals and academic titles. Foreigners can only access the books at the library and are not permitted to borrow, but the selection makes it well worth the trip. Their website has a searchable online database that is available in both Chinese and English. Reader's cards are available for RMB 5/month or RMB 20/year. Daily 9am-9pm. 33 Zhongguancun Nandajie, Haidian District. (8854 5593/4089) www.nlc.gov.cn 国家图书馆, 海淀区中关村南大街33号

National Museum of Modern Chinese Literature This large and rather forbidding state institution offers dry exhibitions but is also the venue to catch great lectures (in Chinese) from some of China's leading intellectuals. Tue-Sun 9am-4.30pm. RMB 20. 45 Wenxueguan Lu, Shaoyaoju, Chaoyang District. (8461 9060, 8461 5522 ext 2131) www.wxg.org.cn 中国现代文学馆, 朝阳区芍药居文学馆路45号



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Sep 9: Gladiator

In the immortal words of Congressman Traficant: "I'll grab a sword and stab people in the crotch." See listing, this page.

Last September, period drama director **Hu Mei** left the television production of *Dream of Red Mansion*, unsatisfied with the actors that **won their roles in a reality TV competition**. At the time, Hu said that she would film her own version with professional actors, but that project has been sidelined in favor of a **Confucius biopic**. Hu has assured audiences that the Confucius character will not be played by the sad-eyed star **Tony Leung**. A Sina.com poll indicates that web users support **Chen Daoming**, who played Qin Shihuang in *Hero*, but Hu isn't likely to bow to public opinion. Shooting starts in November, with a release date tentatively scheduled to coincide with next year's National Day holiday. The script was written by one of the screenwriters for John Woo's *Red Cliff*.

On that note, the historical epic has, at the time of press, earned **more than RMB 300 million at the box office**. Representatives from the distributors suggest that by the time you read this magazine, it will have overthrown *Titanic's* record as the highest-grossing film in Chinese history. Meanwhile, **Chen Kaige's biopic *Mei Lanfang***, with less than a quarter of *Red Cliff's* budget, will open in the second weekend of December.

The Weinstein brothers' current project, a love story entitled *Shanghai* that takes place in WWII-era Shanghai and stars **John Cusack, Chow Yun-fat and Gong Li**, had originally planned to shoot on site; but "with the Olympics approaching," ended up relocating to Bangkok. Production there put a politically correct spin on the change: "With greatest respect to the Chinese people ... [the filmmakers] felt that this was not the right time for them to get into this movie. And we did not want to press them on it. We feel there's a great future for ourselves as the producers and for **The Weinstein Co. in China**. So we respectfully took their decision at face value." **Harvey Weinstein** was reportedly so pleased with Bangkok that he's considering filming his remake of Kurosawa's *The Seven Samurai* on the same set.

Meanwhile, the mainland opening of ***Mummy: Curse of the Dragon Emperor*** has been rescheduled yet again for early September. Director **Rob Cohen** has already suggested that the third sequel will be set in Peru. *Matt P. Jager*

Sep 1, 3, 5, 6

Sentimental Destinies (Les destins sentimentales)

In the early 1900s, a former clergyman divorces his wife, marries another woman and settles in Switzerland. When he must return to France to take over the family porcelain business, the move affects his second marriage. See www.ccfpekin.org/cinema for details. RMB 20/10 (students). French Cultural Centre (6553 2627)

Sep 1, 5, 7, 8, 10, 12, 14

Hiroshima, My Love (Hiroshima mon amour)

Elle is visiting Hiroshima to play a nurse in an anti-war movie. During her time in the city she has a one-night stand with Lui. As she recalls the city's history, she reconsiders her own life and past experiences, while growing ever closer to Lui. See www.ccfpekin.org/cinema for details. RMB 20/10 (students). French Cultural Centre (6553 2627)

Sep 4

Run China and Search for Happiness

Run China is a half an hour investigation on the streets of California on how much Americans know about China, starting with a question about Mao Zedong on the RMB 100 note. *Search for Happiness* visits countries along the Tropic of Cancer, asking locals in Mali, India, Hawaii, and Shanghai about the meaning of happiness. In English and Chinese with English subtitles. Reservation required. Free. 7pm. Channel Zero Salon (8855 0623)

Sep 4, 5

Camaron

Jaime Chavarri's biopic about flamenco giant Jose Monge Cruz, aka Camaron de la Isla, features a critically acclaimed performance by Oscar Jaenada as the title character, thrilling concert scenes, and the standard musical-genius-does-too-much-drugs angst. Includes Camaron's childhood, the wooing of his wife, and his collaborations with Paco de Lucia. See photo, p57. Free. 7pm. Instituto Cervantes (5879 9666)

Sep 7

Mainland, Not Mainstream

A selection of short films and documentaries from the My China Now collection. Short film programmer Gu Lei and director Liu Hao are at hand to take questions following the screenings. Details at yugongyishan.ning.com. RMB 40/20 (students). 8pm. Yugong Yishan (6404 2711)

Sep 7, 8, 10, 12, 14

Madame Bovary

The daughter of a country squire marries a local doctor. Idealistic and full of romantic fancy, she soon loses all her illusions of happiness when she comes into contact with successful, middle-class men. See www.ccfpekin.org/cinema for details. RMB 20/10 (students). French Cultural Centre (6553 2627)

Sep 7, 13, 17, 21, 27, 28, 30

Donkey Skin (Peau d'ane)

A lyrical fantasy based on a fairy tale by Charles Perrault, where a queen's dying wish is that her husband remarry someone more beautiful than her. Unfortunately, that woman turns out to be their

daughter. After consulting her fairy, the princess conceives several schemes to escape her father, finally escaping in the skin of her favorite donkey. See www.ccfpekin.org/cinema for details. RMB 20/10 (students). French Cultural Centre (6553 2627)

Sep 9

Gladiator

Winner of five Academy Awards in 2000, this Ridley Scott adventure set the bar for historical epics. Maximus Decimus Meridius (Russell Crowe), is sold into slavery as a gladiator in the Roman Empire, his family is murdered, and he is nearly killed. But he burns for vengeance against the usurper who killed not only his family, but also the Emperor Marcus Aurelius. In English with Chinese subtitles. Shown on the ground level in case of rain. Free popcorn. See photo, left. Free. 9pm. Obiwan (6617 3231)

Sep 10

Gone With the Wind

The epic tale of a woman's life during one of the most tumultuous periods in America's history. It takes Scarlett O'Hara from her young, innocent days as a Southern belle on her family's plantation to the war-torn streets of Atlanta, from her first love through three husbands, from the utmost luxury to absolute starvation and poverty, from her innocence to her understanding and comprehension of life. Winner of eight Academy Awards. In English with Chinese subtitles. Shown on the ground level in case of rain. Free popcorn. Free. 9pm. Obiwan (6617 3231)

Sep 11

Mr. Wong's World

Mr. Wong's mission is to buy any old properties of historic value that face demolition in Shanghai, disassemble them, and set them up again on a large property that he aims to turn into a national park of endangered buildings. The story of a man with a vision (and lots of money). In Chinese with English subtitles. Reservation required. Free. 7pm. Channel Zero Salon (8855 0623)

Sep 12, 13

The Other Side of the Bed (El otro lado de la cama)

Pedro's best friend Javier is secretly sleeping with his ex Paula. Pedro is sleeping with Javier's girlfriend Sonia. Javier thinks Sonia has gone lesbian. Pedro hires a detective to investigate the identity of Paula's lover. Hilarity ensues. A musical comedy set in Madrid, with tangled webs of love and Broadway-style dance numbers. Free. 7pm. Instituto Cervantes (5879 9666)

Sep 13, 14, 17, 20, 21, 22

Time Regained (Le temps retrouvé)

Raoul Ruiz directs this adaptation of Marcel Proust's masterpiece. On his deathbed in 1922, Proust begins reflecting upon his past experiences, but the line between his actual life and the characters in his novels begins to blur, until the two merge into one magical whole. See www.ccfpekin.org/cinema for details. RMB 20/10 (students). French Cultural Centre (6553 2627)

Sep 17, 19, 21, 24, 27, 28

The Piano Teacher (La pianiste)

Approaching middle age, piano teacher Erika lives and sleeps with her doting mother. Her beautiful playing seduces youthful Walter, who then takes the instructor's advanced class. Walter reveals his desire during a class session. Erika then presents a long list of humiliating sexual acts she would like him to perform on her. See www.ccfpekin.org/cinema for details. RMB 20/10 (students). French Cultural Centre (6553 2627)

Sep 18

On Bicycle to China

Thor Haraldsen rides his bicycle from Norway to China. He and his two friends smash through the obstacles in their path like the hammer of Haraldsen's namesake. Their route takes them through Siberia, Mongolia, and eventually to Tiananmen Square. Reservation required. Free. 7pm. Channel Zero Salon (8855 0623)

Sep 19

Rain Man

Selfish yuppie Charlie Babbitt's father dies and leaves a fortune to Raymond, the institutionalized savant brother that Charlie didn't know he had. They set out on a cross-country journey of discovery. Winner of four Academy Awards. In English with Chinese subtitles. Shown on the ground level in case of rain. Free popcorn. Free. 9pm. Obiwan (6617 3231)

Sep 19, 20, 26, 27

Hunting and Gathering (Ensemble, c'est tout)

Camille works evenings as an office custodian and makes graceful drawings in her free time, living in the attic of a Parisian apartment block. Philibert is a young, aristocratic history buff living – temporarily – in an apartment lower down, part of the estate of his late grandmother. He has rented out part of it to up-and-coming cook Franck, a gruff young loner and womaniser with a genuine love for his frail grandmother, Paulette. When Camille falls ill, Philibert insists she stay with the two of them so he can look after her. And even though she and Franck clash, the trio manages to live together and learn from each other. See www.ccfpekin.org/cinema for details. RMB 20/10 (students). 7.30pm. French Cultural Centre (6553 2627)



Sep 21: Big Cities, Small Episodes

Short films from all over Asia. See listing, this page.

Sep 20

2008 Asian Youth Awards Animation Exhibition

A screening of animated shorts by Asian students from Korea, India, China, Japan, and Taiwan. RMB 20. Space for Imagination (6279 1280)

Sep 21

Big Cities, Small Episodes

A selection of short films and documentaries from the Hong Kong Independent Short Film & Video Awards festival. Director, author, and professor Zhang Xianmen fields questions after the screening. Details at yugongyishan.ning.com. See photo, below. RMB 40/20 (students). 8pm. Yugong Yishan (6404 2711)

Sep 22, 24, 26, 28, 29

Le Poulpe

Amateur sleuth Gabriel Lecouivre, a Gallic gumshoe with no fixed address, travels with his girlfriend Cheryl to a harbour town in western France. The graves of Cheryl's grandparents have been desecrated. Hilarity ensues in the subsequent investigation. See www.ccfpekin.org/cinema for details. RMB 20/10 (students). French Cultural Centre (6553 2627)

Sep 24

The Untouchables

The story of Elliot Ness' ruthless pursuit to bring mafiosos to justice in the height of America's worst crime wave. Starring Kevin Costner and Sean Connery as the good guys, and Robert De Niro as Al Capone. In English with Chinese subtitles. Shown on the ground level in case of rain. Free popcorn. Free. 9pm. Obiwan (6617 3231)

Sep 25

Losers and Winners

A critically acclaimed documentary – winner of ten awards of independent film festivals around the world – recounts the disassembly of the most modern Coke factory in the world for transportation to China. Filmed over the course of a year and a half, German workers train the Chinese and assist in outsourcing their livelihoods to China, while the Chinese workers deal with the strain of long work-weeks and separation from their families. In German and Chinese with English subtitles. Reservation required. Free. 7pm. Channel Zero Salon (8855 0623)



Sep 4, 5: Camaron

The tragic story of the greatest singer in the modern flamenco tradition, who burned out too young. See listing, p54.

CINEMAS

9.30 Cafe 91 Nanluogu Xiang, Dongcheng District. (6402 9800) beijing930.bokee.com 九点半咖啡, 东城区南锣鼓巷91号

BC Cafe Bldg 13, Jianwai Soho, Chaoyang District. (5869 5022/5030, bcoffeen@gmail.com) www.bcoffee.cn 铂澜咖啡, 朝阳区建外SOHO13号楼

Beijing Shunboyuan Cinema Shiyuan South, Shunyi District. (8944 9474) 北京顺博苑影院, 顺义区石园南区

Beijing Theater Area 3, 10 Anhui Beili, Yayuncun, Chaoyang District. (6491 1228) bj-show.51.net 北京剧院, 朝阳区亚运村安慧北里三区10号

Beijing Youth Palace Cinema 68 Xizhimen Nanxiaojie, Xicheng District. (6615 2241) www.ntcc.com.cn 北京青年宫影院, 西城区西直门南小街68号

Changhong Cinema 75 Longfusi Jie, Dongcheng District. (6404 2159/1160) www.chfilm.cn/ 长虹电影院, 东城区隆福寺街75号

Channel Zero Salon 7G, Bldg 4, Meilin Garder, 33 Zizhuyuan Lu, Haidian District. (8855 0623) www.bjdoc.com 零频道沙龙, 海淀区紫竹院路33号美林花园4号楼7G

Chaoyang Culture Center/TNT Theater Corner of Jintai Xilu and Chaoyangmenwai Dajie (east of Jingguang Qiao), Chaoyang District. (8599 6011) www.cyqwhg.com 朝阳文化馆, 朝阳区朝阳门外大街和金太西路路口

Chaoyang Theater Shows daily 7.15pm (call for additional show times). 36 Dongsanhuan Beilu, Chaoyang District. (6507 2421/1818) 朝阳剧场, 朝阳区东三环北路36号

Cherry Lane Movies Currently closed, they'll open for business again in early Jan 2008. Anjia Lou inside the Kent Center (turn north at Gaolan Dasha traffic light, off Liangmaqiao Lu, 70m ahead), Chaoyang District. (139 0113 4745) www.cherrylanemovies.com.cn 北京电影发行公司, 朝阳区高澜大厦红绿灯向北70米路东安家楼青特中心院内

China Cinema 25 Xinjiekouwai Dajie, Haidian District. (6223 0207) www.cfc.com.cn 中影影院, 海淀区新街口外大街25号

China Film Archives 3 Wenhuiyuan Lu, Xiaoxitian, Haidian District. (6225 4422 ext 1214) www.cfa.gov.cn 中国电影资料室, 海淀区小西天文慧园路3号1213室

China National Film Museum Tue-Sun 9am-4.30pm. 9 Nanying Lu, Chaoyang District. (6431 9548) www.cnfm.org.cn 中国电影博物馆, 朝阳区南影路9号

China Puppet Theater 1A Anhua Xili, Beisanhuan Lu, Chaoyang District. (6425 4798, 6424 3698) www.puppetchina.com 中国木偶剧院, 朝阳区北三环安华里甲1号

Chonggong Cinema 44 Xingfu Dajie, Chongwen District. (6714 5358) 崇工电影院, 崇文区幸福大街44号

Cultural Office of the Mexican Embassy 5 Sanlun Dongwujie, Chaoyang District. (6532 2574) 墨西哥大使馆文化处, 朝阳区三里屯东五街5号

D-22 Daily 6pm-2am, closed Monday; Movies shown Wed-Thu 7-10pm. 242 Chengfu Lu (two doors west of 13 Club), Haidian District. (6265 3177, charles@d22beijing.com) www.d22beijing.com 海淀区成府路242号

Daguanlou Cinema 36 Dashilan, Qianmen, Xuanwu District. (6303 0878) 大观楼电影院, 宣武区前门大栅栏36号

Dahua Cinema 82 Dongdan Beidajie, Dongcheng District. (6521 2647) 大华电影院, 东城区东单北大街82号

Dizhi Cinema 30 Yangrou Hutong, Xisi, Xicheng District. (6616 8376) 地质电影院, 西城区西四羊肉胡同30号

Dongchuang Cinema 3 Xinzhongjie, Dongzhimen, Dongcheng District. (6415 7332) 东创影院, 东城区东直门新中街3号

Dongsi Workers' Culture Theater 47 Longfusi Jie, Dongcheng District. (6403 1596) 东四工人文化宫, 东城区隆福寺街47号

Dongtu Cinema 85 Jiaodaokou Dongdajie, Dongcheng District. (6404 2764) 东图影院, 东城区交道口东大街85号

Drive-in Cinema 100 Daliangma Qiao (1,500m east of Yanshaqiao), Chaoyang District. (6431 9595, 5165 2832) www.drive-in.net.cn 汽车影院, 朝阳区燕莎桥东1500米路北, 大亮马桥100号



A RIVER RUNS THROUGH HER

Zhao Tao returns to Venice

by Alice Wang

As Gong Li is to Zhang Yimou (renowned “Fifth Generation” director of Chinese cinema), actress Zhao Tao is to “Sixth Generation” director Jia Zhangke. Born in Shanxi province and a graduate of the Beijing Dance Academy, Zhao has already starred in five of Jia’s films – from her debut in *Platform* (*Zhantai*) to *Cry Me a River* (*Heshang de Aiqing*), a new short film that will be shown at the 65th Venice International Film Festival in September.

Before heading to the Suzhou of the West, the actress talked to *the Beijinger* about her latest work with her long-time collaborator, the contemporary Chinese woman, and her career in film thus far.

the Beijinger: *Cry Me a River*, which will be screened at the Venice in September, is your fifth collaboration with director Jia Zhangke. Can you tell us about the film?

Zhao Tao: It’s a 20-minute short film about four schoolmates who once studied in a university in the river town Suzhou. They used to be couples, but after graduation they went to different cities. Ten years later, to celebrate their teacher’s birthday, they are reunited in Suzhou, and the film tells the story of the day they reunite. The woman I play has a stable life and family in another city, but sometimes she misses her youth, and the time she spent at university. I think the story will resonate powerfully with people who share the same experience. Jia Zhangke says it’s an elegy on the generation of the ‘70s.

tbj: You have been in almost all of Jia Zhangke’s films. What’s so special about your relationship?

ZT: We have collaborated on five features over the past eight years. He offers me the opportunity of playing different contemporary Chinese woman – the woman in a dance troupe in *Platform*, the model in the *Unknown Pleasure*, the dancer in the *World*, the nurse in *Still Life*, and the post ‘80s modern girl in *Twenty-four Cities*. His films witness the changing of Chinese society. I’m proud that through these films, I am able to portray different images of contemporary Chinese women who seek freedom and liberation.

tbj: We heard the shooting of this film only took three days.

ZT: The script is very short, but it covers a lot of things within ten years. Most of the scenes are very common, like eating or playing mahjong, but different stories about the four people in the past decade are expressed delicately and unconsciously behind such scenes. This was really a great challenge for me. Also, it was my first time meeting Guo Xiaodong, who plays my ex-boyfriend. We had to get to know each other quickly and build up a kind of relationship, because we needed to express something very subtle between the two previous lovers.

tbj: Last year, you supervised the production of Jia’s documentary *Useless* (*Wu Yong*). Do you plan to continue working behind the scenes in the future?

ZT: The experience of being a producer allows me to learn more about the production of film. A producer must coordinate well with others. I do hope I’ll have more opportunities to do some work behind the scenes in the future.

“I think of Venice as the starting place of my career”

tbj: Of the many international film festivals you have been to, what does Venice mean for you?

ZT: In 2000, I went to Venice with the film *Platform* (*Zhan Tai*). That was my first time attending an international film festival, and *Platform* was also my on-screen debut. So, I sort of think of Venice as the starting place of my career. Historically the city was a bridge between East and West. It’s like a fairy tale city. The festival not only gives the film an opportunity to be shown to the world but also brings a sense of dignity to the filmmakers. This will be my third year there.

tbj: You are currently shooting a television drama. Is this the first time you’ll be starring in a TV production?

ZT: Yes, the movie is *Big Life* (*Da Shenghuo*). In addition to films, I enjoy having an opportunity to try a television drama. It’s a totally new experience for me. The rhythm is really fast. We have to adapt our feelings to the roles we play within such a short span of time. We don’t have much time to prepare. In this drama, I play a single mother who lives a hard life but makes a great effort to live.

Stars are Born (星光传奇) Director: Ming-Chun Hsu



The pop idol show One Million Star, which began in the spring of 2006, has taken Taiwan by storm, drawing ordinary people out to exhibit their singing talents on TV for a chance to win over USD 30,000. Stars are Born is a documentary that follows the lives of One Million Star's second season participants outside the studio.

Each participant has a story to tell. Season winner Lai Yunming comes from a family with roots in a local opera troupe. Like many of the younger generation, Lai deviates from tradition by gravitating towards rock music, something his family doesn't quite understand

(although they support him anyway). Liang Wenying, the runner-up with a beautiful voice, cultivated her love for singing while growing up in an orphanage.

Interviews with participants and their families alternate between scenes of their performances on stage.

The difference between success and failure seems to occur in the span of brief moments, and this documentary offers a delicate portrayal of the personal lives of these aspiring pop idols, reflecting on their upbringing, family life and cultural backgrounds. Perhaps the message that lingers the longest is the film's focus on young people's persistence and courage in pursuit of their dreams. And though they are not exactly famous and may quite possibly be forgotten by the public sooner than later, some will, perhaps, be remembered by the audience for being people like us – those who dream. Well-edited and nicely paced, the film presents some moving, real-life stories that go beyond the spotlight. Alice Wang

Batman: The Dark Knight Director: Christopher Nolan



Christopher Nolan's grim sequel picks up where 2005's Batman Begins left off, as Bruce Wayne (Christian Bale) and policeman James Gordon (Gary Oldman) team up to battle corruption in Gotham City. With support from district attorney Harvey Dent, played by Aaron Eckhart (who is dating the object of Batman's affection, Rachel Dawes), they meet with moderate success. Nolan's replacement of Katie Holmes with Maggie Gyllenhaal as Dawes is a relief, as Gyllenhaal offers a meatier portrayal of Bruce Wayne's love interest. But the lovers' angst is overshadowed by the appearance

of the Joker, a clown-faced madman (Heath Ledger). To foil Batman's plans, the Joker offers to rid Gotham's crime lords of the superhero in exchange for a fat chunk of cash. With big shoes to fill after Jack Nicholson's ironic interpretation of the role, Ledger re-imagines the Joker as a truly heinous character, a cruel psychopath with an icy black heart. In the face of Bale's laconic Batman, the Joker takes over the screen.

As a superhero story, The Dark Knight surprises with depth and performances from a standout cast. The film progresses through rapid cuts and inhabits a gloomy ambiance, succeeding in balancing visually compelling effects with an elaborate storyline. Nevertheless the movie loses wit through Nolan's artistic severity, suffering in comparison to Tim Burton's morbid interpretations of the Batman canon. Although The Dark Knight pushed the The Godfather from the top of the most popular 250 movies of all time on the Internet Movie Database, it remains in the realm of entertainment, not genius. Katharina Schulz

East Gate Cinema B1/F, Bldg B, East Gate Plaza (behind the Poly Theatre), 9 Dongzhongjie, Dongcheng District. (6418 5931) www.dhycn.cn 东环影城, 东城区保利大厦北侧东环广场B座地下一层

Espace France Cinema 5/F, Huateng Xintiandi, 195 Dongsihuan Zhonglu, Chaoyang District. (8795 2618) www.dd-cinema.com 世纪东都国际影城, 朝阳区东四环中路195号华腾新天地5层

French Cultural Centre 16 Gongti Xilu, Chaoyang District. (6553 2627) www.ccfpekin.org 法国文化中心, 朝阳区工体西路16号

Goethe Institute 17/F, Bldg B, Shuma Tower, 2 Zhongguancun Nandajie, Haidian District. (8251 2909, info@peking.goethe.org) www.goethe.de/peking 歌德学院北京分院, 海淀区中关村南大街2号数码大厦B座17层

Guang'anmen Cinema 8 Baiguanglu, Xuanwu District. (6352 1766/2713) 广安门电影院, 宣武区白广路8号

Guo'an Theater 16A Huayuan Donglu, Haidian District. (6202 6328) 国安剧院, 海淀区花园东路甲16号

Haidian Theater 28 Zhongguancun Dajie, Haidian District. (6255 8026) 海淀剧院, 海淀区中关村大街28号

Hart Centre of Arts Dashanzi art district, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District. (6435 3570) www.hart.com.cn 哈特沙龙, 朝阳区酒仙桥路4号798大山子艺术区

Honglou Cinema 156 Xi'anmen Dajie, Xicheng District. (6605 1908) 红楼电影院, 西城区西安门大街156号

Hongxia Cinema 13 Hongxialu (opposite Jiuxianqiao Market), Chaoyang District. (6437 1383) 红霞影剧院, 朝阳区红霞路13号酒仙桥商场对面

Hujialou Cinema Xinjie Dayuan, Chaoyangmenwai Xiaozhuang, Chaoyang District. (6593 1765, 6593 1720) 呼家楼电影院, 朝阳区朝阳门外小庄新街大院

Instituto Cervantes 1A Gongti Nanlu, Chaoyang District. (5879 9666) http://pekin.cervantes.es 北京塞万提斯学院, 朝阳区工体南路甲1号

Italian Embassy Cultural Office 2 Sanlitun Dong Er Jie, Chaoyang District. (6532 5015) 意大利大使馆文化处, 朝阳区三里屯东二街2号

Jinsong Cinema Bldg 404, Area 4, Jinsong Zhongjie, Chaoyang District. (6778 2727) 劲松电影院, 朝阳区劲松中街4区404

Jinyi International Cinemas B1/F, New Zhongguancun Shopping Center, 19 Zhongguancun Dajie, Haidian District. (8248 6800) 金逸国际影城, 海淀区中关村大街19号新中关村购物中心B1层

Ladies' Book Saloon Daily 10am-11pm. 69 Chengfu Lu, Haidian District. (6270 1928) 雨枫书馆, 海淀区成府路69号

Mega Box 3/F, Area C, Zhongguancun Mall (West of Dinghao Mall), Haidian District. (5986 3777) www.imegabox.com 美嘉欢乐影城, 海淀区中关村广场购物中心C区三层(鼎好西侧)

National Library Concert Hall 33 Zhongguancun Nandajie, Haidian District. (6848 5462) www.btwfhfz.com.cn 国家图书馆音乐厅, 海淀区中关村南大街33号

New Capital Cinema 10/F, Joy City, Xidan, Xicheng District. (6601 8177) www.sddy.cn 新首都电影院, 西城区西单大悦城商场10层

Obiwan Weekdays 1pm-2am, weekends 1pm-late. 4 Xihai Xiyuan (300m from Jishuitan subway station), Xicheng District. (6617 3231) clubobiwan.com.cn 西城区西海西沿4号

Sam Cinema 29 Shijingshan Lu, Shijingshan District. (6687 9104) 山姆电影院, 石景山区石景山路29号

Shengli Cinema 55 Xisi Dongdajie, Xicheng District. (6617 5091) 胜利电影院, 西城区西四大街55号

Shoudu Shidai Cinema B1/F, Capital Time's Square, Xidan, Xicheng District. (8391 3643) shoudushidai.blog.sohu.com 首都时代电影城, 西城区西单时代广场地下一层

Show Max Cinema Daily 9am-midnight. 9/F, Soshow Market, 40 Chongwenmenwai Dajie, Chongwen District. (5167 1298, 5167 1299) www.bjshowmax.com 搜秀影城, 崇文区崇文门外大街40号搜秀城9层

Soho New Town Cinema 3/F, Soho Club, Bldg D, Soho New Town, 88 Jianguo Lu, Chaoyang District. (8589 8990/92) www.startimes.cc Soho电影放映厅, 朝阳区建国路88号Soho现代城D座三层电影院

Space for Imagination Daily 10am-2am. 5 Xiwangzhuang Shuangqing Lu, Haidian District. (6279 1280) www.hzcafe.com 盒子咖啡馆, 海淀区双清路西王庄5号

Star City Daily 9am-10pm. B1/F, Oriental Plaza, Dongcheng District. (8518 6778) www.b-cinema.com.cn 新世纪影城, 东城区东方广场地下一层

Stellar International Cineplex 1) F3, Hualian Shopping Mall, 111 Huilongguan Xidajie, Changping District. (8077 1188); 2) 4/F, Bldg A, Wangjing International Business Center, 9 Wangjing Jie, Chaoyang District. (5920 3788); 3) 5/F, Golden Resources Shopping Center, 1 Yuanda Lu, Haidian District. (8887 8695) www.bjxingmei.com, www.vjxingmei.com 美国国际影城, 1) 昌平区回龙观西大街111号华联商厦三层; 2) 朝阳区望京街9号望京国际商业中心A座4层; 3) 海淀区远大路1号金源购物中心5层

Story Club 61 Beisanhuan, Haidian District. (8207 1909 ext 1202) 老故事餐吧, 海淀区北三环中路61号

Sun Cinema North Gate of Sun Square, 68 Anli Lu, Chaoyang District. (6489 3954) blog.sina.com.cn/ygyg 阳光影城, 朝阳区安立路68号阳光广场北门一层

The Seventh Prison 7 Baimi Xiejie, Qianhai Nanyan, Shichahai, Dongcheng District. (6403 2968) 第七监狱电影吧, 东城区什刹海前海沿白米斜街7号

UME International Cineplex 44 Kexueyuan Nanlu, Shuangyushu, Haidian District. (8211 5566) www.bjume.com 华星影院, 海淀区双榆树科学院南路44号

Wanda International Cinema 1) Daily 10am-9pm. F5, Longde Square, 186 Litang Lu, Changping District. (8484 4742); 2) Daily 9am-10pm. 3/F, Bldg B, Wanda Plaza, 93 Jianguo Lu, Chaoyang District. (5960 3399) www.wandafilm.com 万达国际电影城, 1) 昌平区立汤路186号龙德广场五层; 2) 朝阳区建国路93号万达广场B座三层

Wudaokou Workers' Club Cinema 23 Chengfulu, Haidian District. (6231 3624) www.wdclub.com.cn 五道口工人俱乐部电影, 海淀区成府路23号

Xiangshan Huandao Drive-in Cinema Southwest corner of Wofosi Lu, Fragrant Mountain, Haidian District. (6259 0438) 香山环岛汽车影院, 海淀区香山卧佛寺路口西南侧

Xicheng Workers' Culture Cinema 24 Yuetan Nanjie, Sanlihe Dongkou, Xicheng District. (6852 7788 ext 6302) 西城工人文化宫电影院, 西城区三里河路口月坛南街24号

Xindong'an Cinema 5/F, 138 Wangfujing Dajie, Dongcheng District. (6528 1988/1898) xindongan.blog.sohu.com 新东方影城, 东城区王府井大街138号5层

Xinjiekou Cinema 69 Xi'nei Dajie, Xicheng District. (6225 6713) 新街口电影院, 西城区西内大街69号

Yingxie Cinema 22 Beisanhuan Donglu, Chaoyang District. (6420 7759) 影协电影院, 朝阳区北三环东路22号

Youth Palace Cinema 68 Xizhimen Nanxiaojie, Haidian District. (6615 2241) 青年宫影院, 海淀区西直门南小街68号

Yugong Yishan Daily 5pm-late. 2-3 Zhang Zizhong Road (former Duan Qirui government building, east of Ping'an Dadao), Dongcheng District. (6404 2711) www.yugongyishan.com 愚公移山, 东城区张自忠路2-3号段祺瑞政府旧址西侧

Ziguang Cinema 5-6/F, west section of Landao, 168 Chaowai Dajie, Chaoyang District. (6599 2228/2229) www.bjzgy.com 紫光电影院, 朝阳区朝阳门外大街168号蓝岛大厦西5层6层

Stage

STAGE



Aug 29-Sep 2: Turandot

Puccini's famously unfinished opera gets a new ending. See listing, p58.

August was an exceptional month of multicultural stage exchange. (Opening Ceremony. Enough said.) And now that the big show is over, it seems the drama world has moved to the back burner. Fortunately, however, concert music is charging forward (see Concert Events, p59). In particular, Beethoven's Symphony No. 9, which will be presented by the **China National Symphony Orchestra** on September 15-16, is certainly something to pay attention to.

Theater and dance choices will be much less Mt. Olympus-inspired as life gets back to a normal pace. Throughout the month **Momix Dance Company** will be using incredible illusions and astounding props to twist their bodies into poetic formations in "The Sunflower Moon" and "Opus Cactus" (see listings, right). But with the Cultural Year of Greece still in swing, expect Greek-themed events to continue, especially as the Paralympics take place throughout the month. Two such dramas, **Prometheus Bound** and **Sylvia**, are oldies but goodies and will be performed by the **China National Ballet**.

The inspirational **Sang Lan**, former member of China's National Woman's Gymnastic Team, paralyzed from a vaulting accident, is one of several cameos celebrating the **Night of Asia**, a multimedia dance and singing performance of Asian cultures, traditions and lifestyles. The **Riverside Scene at Qing Ming Festival** is another event to watch, with its symphonic performance accompanied by images from Zhang Zeduan's famous 12th century panoramic painting. Boats are drawn to scale, and people come to life as their bodies become one in the moment of village festivities, fishing, trade and exchange.

Lastly, as the Mid-Autumn Festival approaches and mooncakes multiply, be sure to pay attention to what's happening locally, as the **Beijing Improv** group guarantees a solid theatrical performance. "Since we couldn't perform during the Olympics, we will do something big for September," says a lead cast member.

Unsatisfied spectators can also put their acting chops to practice by auditioning for an upcoming holiday-themed play. The English Broadway Theatre **Beijing Playhouse** is looking to fill several roles for their annual production of **Christmas Carol**. Executive director Chris Verrill says, "We love experienced actors, but **our directors are looking to discover new talent**, too." As their mantra goes, nationality doesn't matter, so long as you speak English and can possibly sing (and hopefully act). Possibly hopeful? Not too much to ask. *Rachel Bradsell*

For venue details, see directories, p61

Send events to listings@thebeijinger.com by **Sep 12**

Aug 29-Sep 2

Opera: Puccini's Turandot

Giacomo Puccini left opera buffs disconsolate when he died before he could finish his opera about the Chinese princess. With this NCPA debut, composer Hao Weiya has created a highly acclaimed conclusion to the incomplete score; the revised account of Princess Turandot – a beautiful woman with a heart of stone and many suitors – suggests a feminist tone and psychological depth to her battle to remain unmarried. See photo, left. RMB 180-1,280. 7.30pm. NCPA Opera House (6655 0000)

All Month

Dance: Momix

Dancers in fluorescent costumes roll and twist across the stage, molding their bodies into a human Rorschach, titled "The Sunflower Moon." Moses Pendleton directs these intricate designs and other dance vignettes such as "Opus Cactus" – featuring the beauty of a Southwest desert. The Momix Company has traversed the globe for 25 years offering various multimedia dance illusions. Price and time TBA. Haidian Theater (6255 8026)

Sep 5-20

Drama: Thunderstorm (Lei Yu)

Based on the famous Chinese novel, *Thunderstorm* has been popular since it debuted in the 1930s. This tragedy follows two families over a single day, depicting complicated and incestuous relationships and class struggle. In Chinese only. Tickets available at 6417 7845. RMB 40-500. 7.30pm. Capital Theater (6524 9847)

Sep 11

Drama: Moussais – A Spectacle on Aristophanes

Another offering of the Cultural Year of Greece, this play critiques ancient texts by the "Father of Comedy." Aristophanes' political and social satire is performed and read in the context of today. Directed by Vassilis Papavassiliou. See photo, p61. Price and time TBA. NCPA Theatre (6655 0000)

Sep 16

Dance: Night of Asia

One hundred stars from throughout Asia will share the stage in song, dance, and various Olympics-inspired numbers. Performers include Sang Lan, the former gymnast and current Paralympics ping-pong competitor. Paintings from Indonesia, Vietnam, and Thailand create the backdrop, creating a diverse East Asian experience. RMB 180-1,280. 7.30pm. Beijing Exhibition Theatre (6835 4455)

Sep 18

Drama: Prometheus Bound

The mythic Titan famed for giving humans the gift of fire was punished by being chained for eternity to a mountain, and tormented by Zeus, the King of Gods and monarch of thunderbolts. In four acts, Prometheus' knowledge of who can overthrow Zeus tests his fate. The dialogue is mostly speeches. RMB 50-500. 7.30pm. NCPA Theatre (6655 0000)

Sep 21-22

Open Auditions: A Christmas Carol

Beijing Playhouse is at it again, offering Charles Dickens' Christmas-themed story about Tiny Tim and the temperamental party-

pooping Scrooge. If you're between the ages of 4 and 90, speak English, and enjoy acting, this is your chance to show your talent. Show up to the two-day open casting call; be ready to do a cold script reading and to perform a song or a monologue. For more information, visit www.beijing-playhouse.com. Free. 7.30pm. Beijing BISS International School (6443 3151)

Sep 26-Oct 12

Drama: Rhinoceros in Love (Lianai de Xiniu)

Avant-garde theater phenom Meng Jinghui (and his wife) made a big stir among young audiences across China with this show last year, prompting a reprise this month at Meng's new theater. A young boy, Ma Lu, falls madly in love with a sexy, mysterious girl, Ming Ming. When she rebukes all his approaches, his desperation drives him to kidnap her. Tickets available at 6417 7845. RMB 100-250. 7.30pm. Fengchao Theater (8404 9981)

Sep 27

Drama: Beijing Improv

This comedy troupe guarantees a night of laughter, song and extemporaneous entertainment; audience members will participate in creative theatrical games such as "sing inner thoughts" and "adjective scenes." In English. For more information, e-mail beijingimprov@gmail.com or visit www.beijingimprov.org. Donations suggested. Time and place TBA.

Sep 28-Oct 1

Ballet: Sylvia

A nymph is a nature spirit with a human female form. In this three-act ballet, written in 1876 by Leo Delibes, the attractive quasi-woman is pursued by two men: the evil hunter Orion and a humble shepherd. Other mythological creatures such as naiads, dryads, and fauns, share the stage. Presented by the China National Ballet. RMB 80-500. 7.30pm. NCPA Opera House (6655 0000)

Every Wed

Beijing Improv Bilingual Workshop

A weekly class of improvised theatre to stretch your creativity and test your spontaneity. Open to all levels of theater experience. The first class is free. RMB 10 (members), RMB 20/class. For more information, visit www.beijingimprov.org. In English and Chinese. 8-9.30pm. Jiangjinjia Bar (8405 0124)

Every Fri & Sat

Kunqu Opera: The Peony Pavilion

One of the most ancient forms of Chinese opera, hailing from Zhejiang province, Kunqu traces its roots back to the Ming dynasty. The Peony Pavilion – a mythical tale of true love battling conservative feudal ethics – is one of its definitive pieces. RMB 380-1,200. 7.30pm. Nanxincang Imperial Granary (6409 6499)

Every Sun (starting Sep 14)

Beijing Actors Workshop

Beijing Actors Workshop will start the fall season with a special new workshop based on the works of Shakespeare. To help actors grow as performers, "I Heart(e) Shakespeare" creatively uses scenes and monologues from the Bard's most famous works. Separate workshops for beginners and practiced

performers. In Chinese and English. For more information, see www.bjactorsworkshop.googlepages.com or bjactorsworkshop@gmail.com.

Ongoing

Great Acrobatics Show

The Beijing Acrobatics Troupe's award-winning program is packed with all the classics: plate-spinning, contortionists, jugglers, and balancing on tubes. Standard tourist fare, but still an enjoyable family outing. RMB 180-580. 7.15pm. Chaoyang Theater (6507 2421/1818)

Peking Night Show

Kublai Khan, Tibetan Buddhism, flames raging from the Great Wall, ladies dressed up in *qipaos*, and Beijing history explained through dance and Peking opera. Don't miss this spectacle that comes in the form of an 80-minute dinner show with lion dancing and an imperial Qing dynasty ceremony. RMB 240-680. Tickets at 6471 7845. 7.30pm. 1 Dayabao Hutong (6471 1845)

CONCERT MUSIC

Sep 4

China Film Symphony Orchestra

This national orchestra has been at it for 54 years. They've recorded music in over 2,000 feature films, plays, and TV documentaries. RMB 50-580. 7.30pm. NCPA Concert Hall (6655 0000)

Sep 5

China Broadcasting Orchestra

The 96 performers of this ensemble are tested annually to keep their seat rankings; the orchestra is led by Peng Xiuwen, who has composed more than 1,000 symphonic pieces. RMB 50-580. 7.30pm. NCPA Concert Hall (6655 0000)

Radio Folk Orchestra

The Chinese orchestra features folk string and wind instruments. Program TBA. RMB 50-580. 7.30pm. Beijing Concert Hall (6605 7006)

Sep 9-10

Itzhak Perlman

Solo performance by the Israeli-American studied at Juilliard, collaborated with legendary composers such as John Williams,

and was one of 12 first-generation US citizens to receive the Medal of Liberty. Mr. Perlman brings his string and bow genius to the Egg. Price TBA. 7.30pm. NCPA Concert Hall (6655 0000)

Sep 10

Erhu Multimedia

An illustrious roster fills this ticket: The iconic mural *Riverside Scene at Qing Ming Festival* (by Northern Song dynasty painter Zhang Zeduan) is brought to life in multimedia form and accompanied by the eponymous work by composer Shi Zhiyou. *Erhu* soloist Song Fei is also along for the ride, and impresario Chen Zuohuang conducts the combined forces of both the China National Symphony and the Guoyue Tianjiao Girl Soloists. RMB 180-1,080. NCPA Opera House (6655 0000)

Sep 11

The Romeros

Perhaps the world's greatest guitar family quartet. They play an incredible range of repertoire, with an emphasis on classical pieces. Headed by Papa Pepe, who's famous for his solos. RMB 80-580. NCPA Concert Hall (6655 0000)

Sep 12-13

St. Florian Choirboys

Nearly a thousand years old (and with illustrious alumni like Anton Bruckner), this boys' choir gives fellow Austrian boys' choirs a run for their money. The program features short pieces, with a special emphasis on Johann Strauss and Austrian folk arrangements. RMB 80-1,000. 7.30pm. Beijing Concert Hall (6605 7006)

Sep 13

La Scala Philharmonic Orchestra

In celebration of China's Autumn Concert Series, this ensemble makes its Beijing debut. The program consists of five pieces: two by Rossini, one by Puccini, Verdi, and Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 4. Conducted by Korean-born pianist Myung-Whun Chung. RMB 280-1,680. 7.30pm. NCPA Concert Hall (6655 0000)

Sep 14

Night with the Full Moon

In celebration of the Mid-Autumn Festival, this orchestra perform-



Sep 18: Drama – Prometheus Bound

The ancient Greek legend brings fire to the people. See listing, p58.

ance features various string instruments and a traditional East Asian chorus. Musical pieces are presented by the China Central Ensemble. RMB 50-380. 7.30pm. NCPA Concert Hall (6655 0000)

Mid-Autumn Festival Concert

The China Opera Folk Orchestra Ensemble offers a holiday-themed concert, featuring well-known folk tunes from around China. The program puts solo *dizi*, *sheng*, *jinggu*, *pipa*, and *guzheng* on display. RMB 80-1,080. 7.30pm. Beijing Concert Hall (6605 7006)

Sep 15-16

Beethoven Symphony No. 9

Nearly deaf when he composed this masterpiece, Ludwig Van Beethoven celebrated Friedrich Schiller's paean to brotherhood, "Ode to Joy," in the fourth movement. It's now the official anthem of the European Union. Presented by the China National Symphony Orchestra. Price and time TBA. NCPA Concert Hall (6655 0000)

Sep 19

Beethoven

The Forbidden City Concert Hall continues its series of Beethoven piano works (by anonymous performers). Tonight's program of earlier sonatas includes Op. 2, No. 1-3; and the E-flat major sonata, Op. 7. RMB 30-600. 7.30pm. Forbidden City Concert Hall (6559 8285)

Sep 19-20

Cultural Year of Greece Closing Concert

Concluding the 2008 China-Greek festivities, orchestras will bid Mt. Olympus, Greek mythology and the athletic culture a musical farewell. Price and time TBA. NCPA Concert Hall (6655 0000)

Sep 21

Beethoven Recital

This ongoing series offers the following program: Op. 10, No. 1-3; and the C-minor "Pathétique" sonata. RMB 30-600. 7.30pm. Forbidden City Concert Hall (6559 8285)

Zagreb Percussion Ensemble

Straight from Croatia, this performance promises to be one of the best of the month. RMB 50-380. 7.30pm. Beijing Concert Hall (6605 7006)



Sep 28-Oct 1: Ballet – Sylvia

Nymphs, dryads and fauns in a Leo Delibes classic. See listing, p58.

Sep 26

Symphonic Spring

The Guizhou Symphony is only two months late for the major nationwide symphonic festival that took place earlier this spring. But they make up for it with an interesting program featuring composers Cui Wenyu, Tang Changqi, and Zhu Shuhua, as well as Tchaikovsky's Piano Concerto No. 1 with soloist Chang Hanguang. RMB 50-380. 7.30pm. NCPA Concert Hall (6655 0000)

Sep 27

China National Symphony

Program and price TBA. 7.30pm. NCPA Concert Hall (6655 0000)

Sep 28

Dejan Lazic recital

At the forefront of the up-and-coming piano artists, Lazic has performed with some of the world's better orchestras and has won rave reviews for his nuanced solo recitals. Born in Croatia and raised in Austria, he is currently in residence with the Netherlands Chamber Orchestra when not touring the world. Tonight's program includes much Chopin: the A-flat major Ballade, the E-major Mazurka, and the B-flat minor Polonaise, and two Nocturnes. In addition, he plays six Scarlatti sonatinas, and Bartok's six Bulgarian Dances. RMB 30-380. 7.30pm. Forbidden City Concert Hall (6559 8285)

Paul Badura-Skoda Piano Recital

Now over 80 years old, Badura-Skoda has worked with many of the illustrious conductors and orchestras of the last century. He's a grand piano virtuoso who has recorded over 200 LPs and is most famous for his Mozart, Beethoven, and Schubert performances. RMB 80-580. 7.30pm. NCPA Concert Hall (6655 0000)

Sep 29-30

Male Symphonic Chorus Concert

The performance will include "Song of the Volga Boatmen," a famous Russian folk song based on the misery and suffering of burlaks (men who hauled large barges). RMB 80-580. 7.30pm. NCPA Concert Hall (6655 0000)

Sep 30

Piano Recital

A program featuring French music. RMB 30-380. 7.30pm. Forbidden City Concert Hall (6559 8285)



A MAN, A WOMAN AND A RHINO

An unconventional love story

by Cecily Huang

Those fooled into thinking that this story involves some sort of bestiality or Disney-like anthropomorphism will be disappointed. Everybody else will find *Rhinoceros in Love* to be quite an entertaining story. It tells of a beautiful but tragic romance between a rhinoceros keeper, Ma Lu, who falls madly in love with his neighbor, Ming Ming. Though he does everything he can to win her love, Ming Ming does not reciprocate his affections, persisting in her love for another man, the artist Chen Fei. In a desperate display of emotion, Ma Lu sacrifices his rhinoceros to show her the depths of his emotion.

Since 1999, Meng Jinghui (the Chinese avant-garde director) has, with his wife (acclaimed playwright Liao Yimei) presented *Rhinoceros in Love* at the Beijing Youth Theater. Its theatrical run has stimulated many Chinese youth to rethink their attitude toward love, and has awakened a desire and passion that, perhaps, has been faded by time and the practical aspects of material life. The production has been regarded as the “love bible of a new generation” by both the media and the play’s “super fans.”

Playwright Liao Yimei has been asked the same question numerous times: Is it worth it for Ma Lu to persist in his love for Ming Ming? In response, Liao remarks that Ma is a person who over-exaggerates the difference between one woman and another, and in her eyes he represents the “rhinoceros” in society – sort-sighted and impulsive, unable to control his actions and feelings. Liao portrays Ma in this way because she believes that without perseverance and spontaneity, love cannot exist.

Liao and Meng have collaborated with each other on numerous projects, including three dramas and one motion picture (*Xiang Ji Mao Yi Yang Fei*, or *Fly Like a Chicken*), since meeting each other at the Central Drama Academy, located in Beijing’s Nanluogu Xiang. It was their honeymoon, in fact, that inspired Liao to write *Rhinoceros in Love*. “He can direct whatever I write,” Liao Yimei has said of Meng.

As one of the leading theater directors in recent years, Meng has stirred up quite a following with his new types of experimental drama, deliberately performed in small theaters. He has created and/or

directed over ten plays, including *Comrade Ab Q*, *Waiting for Godot*, *The Balcony*, *I Love XXX*, as well as *Amber* (another popular collaboration with Liao). When he began his career in the early 1990s, Chinese theaters were producing very few plays and little attention was being paid to the stagnating scene. It was difficult, even, to find actors, since they were all tempted to move in the direction of TV and film. Meng noticed that modern arts (such as installations, multimedia, and visual and action art), which had been developing in China the previous decade, had not been incorporated into theater. Thus, he began to develop ways to include electronic music, dazzling lighting and innovative stage settings, and in doing so he helped to push the boundaries of China’s modern performance arts scene.

Nine years and an overall investment of RMB 280,000 later, *Rhinoceros in Love* has grossed over RMB 400,000 and has been translated into Korean, English and Romanian. And the success of Meng’s experimental drama is not only represented in box office returns, but also in the revival of China’s theater arts. Meng has spent RMB 5 million to refurbish Fengchao Theater, otherwise known as “the Beehive,” to stage *Rhinoceros*, with the dream of performing 1,000 times over the next five years.

To date, Meng has put on three versions of the play – in 1999, 2003 and 2004. The most recent rendition, which wrapped up on August 3, featured a fresh lineup with even stronger visual elements, such as electric sparks and floods of water. In these ways, film and television can never directly translate the experience of watching the production. This latest performance is also, unfortunately, without English subtitles, but for Meng, to add English subtitles would cause the production to “lose the essence of the show.” Tickets for *Rhinoceros in Love* were sold out two weeks prior to the opening curtain, so we advise buying far in advance when the second round of performances returns.

Rhinoceros in Love returns to Fengchao Theater on Sep 26. See Stage listings on p58 for more details.

To add English subtitles
would cause the
production to “lose the
essence of the show”

THEATERS

Bayi Theater 16 Xisanhuan Beilu (next to Wanshou Si), Haidian District. (6686 8800) 八一剧场, 海淀区西三环北路16号万寿寺旁

Beijing Conference Center 88 Laiguangying Xilu, Chaoyang District. (8490 1199) 北京会议中心, 朝阳区来广营西路88号

Beijing Exhibition Theater 135 Xizhimenwai Dajie, Xicheng District. (6835 4455) 北京展览馆剧场, 西城区西直门外大街135号

Beijing Modern Dance Company Theater 7 Xichang'an Dajie, Xicheng District. (6601 5542, 6758 6513/7161, info@bmdc.com.cn) 北京现代舞团, 西城区西长安大街7号

Beijing North Theater Bei Bingmasi Hutong, 67 Jiadaokou Nandajie, Dongcheng District. (6404 8021, 6406 0175) 北兵马司剧场, 东城区交道口南大街67号北兵马司胡同

Beijing Peking Opera Theatre 30 Haihu Xili, Fengtai District. (6724 8222) 北京京戏院, 丰台区海户西里30号

Beijing Playhouse 38 Liangmaqiao Lu, Chaoyang District. (137 1890 8922, performance@beijingplayhouse.com) www.beijingplayhouse.com 北京剧场, 朝阳区亮马桥路38号

Beijing Seven-Color Light Children's Theater 14A, Ju'er Hutong, Jiadaokou, Dongcheng District. (8402 2285) 北京七色光儿童剧院, 东城区交道口菊儿胡同甲14号

Beijing Traditional Opera Theater 8 Majiapao Dongli, Fengtai District. (6757 2221 ext 2155) 北京校校排演剧院, 丰台区马家堡东里8号

Beijing Yingzhibao Theater 2 Lize Dong Er Lu, Chaoyang District. (6439 8559/8997) 北青盈之宝剧场, 朝阳区利泽东二路2号

Beijing Youth Palace 68 Xizhimen Nanxiaojie, Xicheng District. (6615 2211) www.bjqng.com.cn 北京青年宫, 西城区西直门南小街68号

Caochangdi Work Station Daily 10am-8pm. 105 Caochangdi, Chaoyang District. (6433 7243/6143, ccdworkstation@163.com) www.ccdworkstation.com 草场地工作室, 朝阳区草场地105号

Capital Theater 22 Wangfujing Dajie, Dongcheng District. (6524 9847) 首都剧场, 东城区王府井大街22号

Central Academy of Drama Theater 39 Dongmianhua Hutong, Dongcheng District. (6407 4406) 中央戏剧学院实验小剧场, 东城区东棉花胡同39号

Central Conservatory of Music 43 Baojia Jie, Xicheng District. (6642 5746) www.ccom.edu.cn 中央音乐学院, 西城区鲍家街43号

Central Experimental Drama Theater 45A Mao'er Hutong, Di'anmenwai Dajie, Dongcheng District. (6403 1009, 6402 0151) www.ntcc.com.cn 国家话剧院, 东城区地安门外大街猫耳胡同甲45号

Century Theater 21st Century Hotel, 40 Liangmaqiao Lu, Chaoyang District. (6466 4805, 6468 3311 ext 3126) 世纪剧院, 朝阳区亮马桥路40号(21世纪饭店)

Chang'an Grand Theater 7 Jianguomennei Dajie, Dongcheng District. (6510 1309/1310) www.changantheater.com 长安大戏院, 东城区建内大街7号

Chaoyang Culture Center/TNT Theater Corner of Jintai Xilu and Chaoyangmenwai Dajie (east of Jingguang Qiao), Chaoyang District. (8599 6011) www.cyqwhg.com 朝阳文化馆, 朝阳区朝阳门外大街和金太西路的路口

Chaoyang Theater Shows daily 7.15pm (call for additional show times). 36 Dongsanhuan Beilu, Chaoyang District. (6507 2421/1818) 朝阳剧场, 朝阳区东三环北路36号

China Children's Art Theater Daily 9am-9pm. 64 Donganmen Dajie, west of Wangfujing, Dongcheng District. (6521 1425, 6513 4115) www.ccat.name 中国儿童艺术剧场, 东城区东安门大街64号

China Grand Theater 27A Wanshou Temple, Xisanhuanlu, Haidian District. (6841 9381) www.china-theater.com.cn 中国剧院, 海淀区西三环万寿寺甲27号

China Ping Opera Theater 19, Block 4, Xi Luoyuan, Yangqiao, Fengtai District. (8726 6331) 中国评剧大剧院, 丰台区洋桥西罗园四区19号

China Puppet Theater The theater puts on shows every Saturday and Sunday at 10.30am. RMB 50-100/show. 1A Anhua Xili, Beisanhuan Lu, Chaoyang District. 1A Anhua Xili, Beisanhuan Lu, Chaoyang District. (6425 4798, 6424 3698) www.puppetchina.com 中国木偶剧院, 朝阳区北三环安华西里甲1号

Chongwen Workers' Palace 44 Xingfu Dajie, Chongwen District. (6711 6135) 崇文工人文化宫, 崇文区幸福大街44号

Daguan Yuan Theater 12 Nancayuan Jie, Xuanwu District. (6351 9025) 大观园剧场, 宣武区南菜园街12号

Dongyuan Theater In the Garden of Chang Pu River, Dongcheng District. (8511 5372) 东苑戏楼, 东城区昌蒲河公园内

East Pioneer Theater 8-2 Dongdan Santiao (East of Oriental Plaza), Dongcheng District. (6559 7394) 东方先锋剧场, 东城区东单三条8-2号

Ethnic Cultural Palace Theater 49 Fuxingmennei Dajie, Xicheng District. (6605 2404) 民族文化宫大剧院, 西城区复兴门内大街49号

Fengchao Theater 200m east of Oriental Ginza, 12 Shizipo, Dongzhimenwai Dajie, Dongcheng District. (8404 9981) 蜂巢剧场, 东城区东直门外大街十字坡12号东方银座东200米

Guo'an Theater 16A Huayuan Donglu, Haidian District. (6202 6328) 国安剧院, 海淀区花园东路甲16号

Haidian Theater 28 Zhongguancun Dajie, Haidian District. (6255 8026) 海淀剧院, 海淀区中关村大街28号

Heaven and Earth Theater 100 meters north of Poly Theatre, Dongcheng District. (6416 9893, 6415 7775 ext 102) 天地剧场, 东城区保利剧院北100米

Huguang Guild Hall 3 Hufang Lu, Xuanwu District. (6351 8284, 6352 9134) www.beijinghuguang.com 湖广会馆, 宣武区虎坊路3号

Huguang Guild Hall Opera Museum Mon-Fri 9-11am, 1.30-5pm (opera performance 7.30-8.40pm). Hu Guang Culture Center, 3 Hufang Lu, Xuanwu District. (6351 8284) www.beijinghuguang.com 北京戏曲博物馆, 宣武区北京湖广会馆内, 虎坊路3号

The Imperial Granary Nanxincang, 22 Dongshishitiao, Chaoyang District. (6409 6477/99, 136 0125 9568) 皇家粮仓, 朝阳区东四十条22号南新仓

Lao She Teahouse Daily 10am-10pm. Bldg 3, Qianmen Xidajie, Xuanwu District. (6303 6830) 老舍茶馆, 宣武区前门西大街3号楼

Li Yuan Theater 1/F, Qianmen Hotel, 175 Yong'anlu, Xuanwu District. (6301 6688 ext 8860 or 8864) 梨园剧场, 宣武区永安路175号前门饭店一层

Mei Lanfang Grand Theater 32 Ping'anli Dajie (southeast of Guanyuan Qiao), Xicheng District. (5833 1288/1388) http://yule.sohu.com/s2007/mfjdj/ 梅兰芳大剧院, 西城区平安里西大街32号(官园桥东南角)

National Centre For The Performing Arts (NCPA) 2 Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District. (6655 0000) www.chncpa.org 国家大剧院, 西城区西长安街2号

Peking University Hall Inside Peking University, 75 Haidian Lu, Haidian District. (6275 1278) www.pku-hall.com 北大百年纪念礼堂, 海淀区海淀路75号北京大学内

People's Art Experimental Theater 3/F, Capital Theater, 22 Wangfujing Dajie, Dongcheng District. (6526 3338) 人艺实验剧场, 东城区首都剧场3层, 王府井大街22号

People's Art Theater 22 Wangfujing Dajie (behind Capital Theater), Dongcheng District. (6525 0123) 人艺小剧场, 东城区王府井大街22号, 首都剧院后面

People's Theater 74 Huguosi Dajie, Xicheng District. (6618 1634) 人民剧场, 西城区护国寺大街74号

PLA Song and Dance Theater 60 Deshengmennei Dajie, southeast corner of Jishuitan Bridge, Xicheng District. (6813 1718, 6613 0726) www.pla-theater.com 解放军歌舞剧院, 西城区德胜门内大街60号积水潭桥东南角

Poly Theatre Poly Plaza, 14 Dongzhimen Nandajie, Dongcheng District. (6500 1188 ext 5126/5127) www.polytheatre.com 保利剧院, 东城区东直门南大街14号保利大厦1层

Red Theater Workers' Cultural Palace, 44 Xingfu Dajie, Chongwen District. (6710 3671/72/73) 红剧场, 崇文区幸福大街44号工人文化宫

South Gate Space South gate, Dashanzi art district, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District. (6437 9737) 南门空间, 朝阳区酒仙桥4号798大山子艺术区南门

Tianqiao Acrobatics Theater Shows daily 7.15pm. 95 Tianqiao Shichang Lu, east end of Beiwei Lu, Xuanwu District. (6303 7449) 天桥杂技剧场, 宣武区北纬路东口天桥市场街95号

Tianqiao Theater 30 Beiwei Lu, Xuanwu District. (8315 6300) 天桥剧场, 宣武区北纬路30号

Universal Theater (aka Heaven and Earth Theater) Shows daily 7.10pm. 10 Dongzhimen Nandajie, Dongcheng District. (6416 9893) 天地剧场, 东城区东直门南大街10号

Workers' Stadium Gongti Beilu, Chaoyang District. (6501 6655 ext 5033) 工人体育场, 朝阳区工体北路

Xin Rong Theater 16 Baizhifang Xijie, Xuanwu District. (8355 9285) 鑫融剧院, 宣武区白纸坊西街16号

Zhengyici Theater 220 Xiheyuan Dajie, Xuanwu District. (8315 1649) 正乙祠戏楼, 宣武区西河沿大街220号

CONCERT HALLS

Beijing Concert Hall 1 Beixinhuajie, Xicheng District. (6605 7006/5812) 北京音乐厅, 西城区北新华街1号

Capital Gymnasium Daily 9am-8pm. 54 Baishiqiao Lu, Haidian District. (6835 8306) 首都体育馆, 海淀区白石桥路54号

Central Conservatory of Music 43 Baojia Jie, Xicheng District. (6642 5746) www.ccom.edu.cn 中央音乐学院, 西城区鲍家街43号

Chinese National Peking Opera Company Experimental Theater 22 Ping'anli Xidajie, Xicheng District. (5851 9688) 国家剧院实验剧场, 西城区平安里西大街22号

Currents - Art and Music Tue-Sun 11am-6pm. Dongbajianfang, Shuangbao Xiaoqu 2, Huantie Art District, Chaoyang

District. (5205 3805/07, info@currents.cc) www.currents.cc 朝阳区环铁艺术区东八间房双宝小区2号

Forbidden City Concert Hall Inside Zhongshan Park, Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District. (6559 8285) 中山公园音乐堂, 西城区西长安街中山公园内

Goldsail Concert Hall 24 Wangfujing Dajie, Dongcheng District. (6528 9047) 金帆音乐厅, 东城区王府井大街24号

Great Hall of the People Daily 8am-4pm, but closed during government meetings. RMB 30, RMB 15 (children). West side of Tian'anmen Square, Dongcheng District. (6309 6156) 人民大会堂, 东城区天安门广场西侧

Instituto Cervantes 1A Gongti Nanlu, Chaoyang District. (5879 9666) http://pekin.cervantes.es 北京塞万提斯学院, 朝阳区工体南路甲1号

Muse Daily 10am-midnight. 3/F, Bldg II Blue Castle Apartments, 3 Xidawang Lu, Chaoyang District. (8599 9088) 缪斯古典音乐俱乐部, 朝阳区西大望路3号蓝堡国际中心II座3F

National Library Concert Hall 33 Zhongguancun Nandajie, Haidian District. (6848 5462) www.btwfhfz.com.cn 国家图书馆音乐厅, 海淀区中关村南大街33号

South Gate Space South gate, Dashanzi art district, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District. (6437 9737) 南门空间, 朝阳区酒仙桥4号798大山子艺术区南门

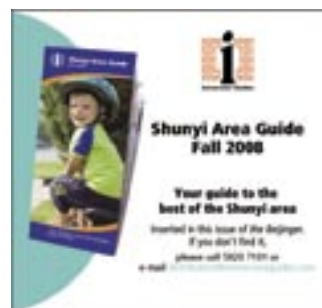
Stadium of Beijing Olympic Sports Center 1 Anli Lu, Haidian District. (6491 2233) 国家奥林匹克中心体育场, 海淀区安立路1号

The Star Live Daily 6.30pm-late. 3/F, Tangou, 79 Heping Xijie (50m north of Yonghegong subway station), Dongcheng District. (6425 5677) www.thestarlive.com 星光现场, 东城区和平西街79号糖果三层(雍和宫桥路北50米)

St. Joseph's Wangfujing Church (Dongtang Cathedral) 74 Wangfujing Dajie, Dongcheng District. (6524 0634) 东堂, 东城区王府井大街74号

Workers' Gymnasium Gongti Beilu, Chaoyang District. (6501 6300) 工人体育馆, 朝阳区工体北路

Workers' Stadium Gongti Beilu, Chaoyang District. (6501 6655 ext 5033) 工人体育场, 朝阳区工体北路



TRANS-PACIFIC OVERTURES

An Amy Tan novel hits the stage

by Eric Mendel

In July, we wrote about Tan Dun's first opera to be performed in China, *Tea*, which debuted at the NCPA. Now, another take on cross-cultural opera is in the works, one with a decidedly Chinese-American bent. Pairing Stewart Wallace and celebrated author Amy Tan in a collaboration stretching years, it has taken them both to China on numerous occasions to work with some of the nation's best artists. The result premieres in San Francisco this month.

The Bonesetter's Daughter, based on Tan's 2001 novel of the same name, takes place in present-day San Francisco and late Qing/early Nationalist-era Zhoudoukan, near Beijing. The book enjoyed popular success in the States and was translated into a number of languages (including Chinese). Now recast in operatic mold, the project features

Tan herself as librettist and Wallace steering the musical project with a score incorporating Chinese percussion and winds.

The opera is rumored to be coming to China in the next couple of years, and producer Sarina Tang seems poised to be able to make that happen. (Tang is the owner of the nonprofit Currents, an art and music space in the Huantie art district). For now, Beijingers will have to be content with the fact that it's the first time such a diverse group of Beijing-based musicians has been put on an opera mainstage anywhere in the world.

We asked several esteemed musical residents of Beijing who hold key spots in the cast to share some of their thoughts on the new production and its connection with China.



Wu Tong (former Lun Hui lead singer and current Chinese wind specialist with Yo-Yo Ma's Silk Road Ensemble): Stewart's not the normal classical composer. In Beijing, we talked about rock music and drank and smoked and sang Aerosmith songs. Most of Stewart's music is not that difficult, but some of the suona parts are hard because we're on stage and have to memorize them.

There's a strong excitement in the music – not “East” or “West,” but something in between.



Tian Haojiang (bass, frequent singer at the Met):

Of the 50 or so operas I've done, this one is completely different. I don't know how to describe it, but the melody, the tempo, the energy are all American – and particularly, very “New York.”

Playing a character like Chang (the villain), sometimes you didn't realize there was a bad seed planted in you just waiting to sprout. We Chinese, especially my generation and a little older, have a culture of keeping everything inside. When you find a window to let those feelings out, you gain the energy to move forward.



Li Zhonghua (lead percussionist, Central Peking Opera Troupe):

Before meeting Stewart, I had been thinking of how to break out of the whole set tradition of Peking Opera. I worked with composer Guo Wenjing, who uses a Western way of presenting music, but inside he is still very Chinese. All of the movements are traditional. With Stewart, it was a matter of completely destroying the tradition from within.

Most of the time, when Chinese opera uses Western-style instrumentation, the instruments stick out. Getting the balance is always tricky. You have to tilt toward the Western side, I think, because the tolerance for Western culture in China is much higher than Western audiences for Chinese opera ... [but] I think here, we've made a true mingling of Eastern and Western culture.



Liang Ning (mezzo-soprano, chairwoman of the China Conservatory voice department):

It's tempting to say, “I'm Chinese, so I can play Chinese.” It's much more than that. It has to be part of you, and you have to know yourself, which in opera can be more difficult than playing someone from another time and place.

I'm still a little embarrassed because the first thing I said to Stewart when I met him at lunch was, “I don't play old women.” But he explained that the role was inspired by Amy's own mother when they found out she was experiencing Alzheimer's. I realized this would be a real challenge. Amy understands how people who left and who stayed in China had entirely different lives.

Much of contemporary music today can be very harsh. You hear the characters singing about love and you think, “Ai! That's supposed to be love?” But Stewart not only imagined the story in the music but *feels* how it can be told. He writes melodies that you can remember, which is pretty rare today.