

MUSICAL FEAST AT THE “ZOO”

英文電子報

In the next consecutive four weekends starting from this Saturday (March 5th), there will be a series of music-till-you-drop gigs at the famous venue “The Zoo” on Shui-yuan Street in Tamsui. Concepts of such a musical feast is the brainchild of Chang Yong-zhi, a Tamkang alumnus, who has invited some heavyweights—student or commercial bands that are extremely popular according to Internet surveys or their record sales. Entrance requires tickets, which can be purchased on-line or at the box office at the venue on the day of the performance you wish to visit.

This event is mainly organized by outside bodies but the Guitar Club of TKU assists in some of the work. Together, concerts apart, they have organized an evening outdoor Bazaar consisting of stalls that sell craftwork, live portrait sketching, T-shirts, and foods such as assorted barbecue meat, vegetable and hot dogs. There will also be some pinball machines and other regular fun-fair favorites for visitors to enjoy under beautifully lit streetlights that shine brightly against starry sky.

As for the indoor concerts, a five-hour non-stop gig each time, will begin at 5 pm and end at 10 pm. The first hour is reserved for student bands who have been voted on the Internet as the hottest bands of the moment, such as Lian Wen-sheng & Friends, Huang Pei-yu & Friends, Sing For Free & Skymu, A-GI-BIA, just to name a few. From 7 pm onward, veteran bands that jam at the Zoo regularly and other established commercial bands that have great track record in album sales will be there to rock you to the bones. All these will only cost you merely a small fee of NT\$ 500 for a day ticket, a free drink and discount valid for the Zoo cafe. For further details, please call 02-231 710 553 during the week and 02-262 389 25 at weekend.

Some of you may have never heard of the Zoo or been wondering about this unusual name and would be surprised to learn about the legacy that is connected to the place. For those who are old enough to remember the Campus Music Movement that started approximately 30 years ago in several Taiwanese universities may recall the name of a charismatic and heroic singer/activist, Lee Shuang-zhe. He shook the youth of his generation by once smashing a coca cola bottle on the stage while he was performing in a Tamkang Western Music Concert in 1976 taunting the audiences of favoring western songs to Chinese songs. This incident was part of his and his other fellow singers/activists' quest to finding a voice of their own as well as for the whole generation who they saw as living in an identity void. He used to hang out with some of them at the Zoo writing songs, poems and contemplating on their role in their era. Unfortunately, he was drowned from saving someone in Tamsui River in 1977. However, his friends and fans had continued to drop by and hanged out at this place, a sort of shrine by then, even after his death until some years ago. As for the name of the place, the Zoo, irreverently, was named due to the figure of Lee, who was on the round side. Many of his friends called him 'piglet' or 'bull', which later on got spun into "the Zoo".

Chang Yong-zhi is fully aware of the legacy and is working on restoring the Zoo, which had been in decline since 1999, to its former spirit. Three years ago he and his friends reopened the place after a thorough makeover with the money they received from generous contributors. In this spatial (approx. 300 ping) location, there is a bamboo garden, coffee shop, recording room, a theatre and a storage room—a total relaxing place for artists, musicians and poets to hang out and bounce ideas off one another. No one more than him wants this place to be like the way it was when Lee Shuang-zhe was still alive—a place that is filled with freedom, innocence, creativity and solidarity. For Change, it is a home of his soul. (Ying-hsueh Hu)