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PUBLISHED EVERY FRIDAY

May 7 2010 - May 13 2010

NO. 465 CN11-0120

HTTP://WWW.BEIJINGTODAY.COM.CN

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Clutches sure to stand out

Page 16



北京青年报
BEIJING YOUTH DAILY



What's lost in import looks?

Page 15



Chefs vie to be in top 50

Page 17

The touch of luxury



Whether in China or abroad, you probably see the same clothes, the same buildings and the same big-label products. In a world where luxury is mass produced, real luxury is something hard to come by.

But some designers have an answer to the monotone of modernity.

Eight Chinese and Dutch designers are displaying their new designs for buildings, clothes, books and daily commodities at Today Art Museum. Their designs dig into the past for lost techniques that define "unique."

Read more on Pages 12-13

Noah's Ark found again, now by China

Page 3

14 young in the short life of a gymnast?

Page 4

Czech's ink art shows off mastery

Page 8

Cops ready to inspect Rover's ID

Page 11

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SOUTH AFRICA 2010
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Organ donor trial opens new sources to sick patients

By Han Manman

Guangdong is among 10 municipalities and provinces, including Shanghai, Xiamen, Nanjing and Wuhan, participating in a pilot effort to regulate donation, distribution and management of human organs.

The program, started in March as a collaboration between the national and provincial Red Cross Society, collects data to connect registered postmortem organ donors with waiting recipients.

China ranks second in worldwide organ donations, with 10,000 transplant surgeries performed each year. However, there are as many as 1.5 million recipients waiting for organs at any given time.

The new system is intended to help combat organ trafficking and corruption and create an even playing field for patients.

"We will start promoting donations now that we have a registry system for donors and a distribution system for recipients," said Chen Zechi, director of rescue and aid at Guangdong's branch of the Red Cross.

The province will set up a committee to manage organ donations and a provincial databank for donors and recipients. All information concerning human organ donation and demand will be stored in the committee's database, Chen said.

Deputy health minister Huang Jiefu, a liver transplant surgeon, said last August that most organs in China come from executed prisoners or are donated by blood relatives.

There are very few non-relatives donations in China.

Experts said voluntary

organ donation is rare on the mainland because of an old superstition that bodies must be kept whole out of respect for the dead.

That reluctance is exacerbated by a system unprepared for the few willing donors.

The demand for organs and limited donation resources has created a thriving black market for organ trafficking. Illegal organ traders often create fake papers to pass off paid donors as blood relatives.

The government issued its first regulations on human organ transplants, banning the sale of organs, in 2007. But the black market continues unabated.

The new trial program would open up more sources of organs, and may allow classifying people with brain death as dead, allowing families to donate their organs, Chen said.

The non-governmental Red Cross Society will serve as an independent third party in supervising and facilitating organ donations, distribution and transplant procedures, he said.

"If the donation procedures are simple and convenient and there is no 'under-the-table trade' in donated organs, I would consider registering as a donor," Lin Xuefeng, a school teacher, said.

Organ shortage is a worldwide problem, but some countries have succeeded in raising the number of organ donors.

Countries like Spain, Belgium and Norway have passed "presumed consent" laws where individuals are automatically considered an organ donor unless they opt out.

US nationals can make



The new trial program would open up more sources of donor organs.

CFP Photo

their organ donation wishes known by signing the back of their driver's license, signing up online or through a health-care proxy.

Huo Feng, a surgeon at the General Hospital of the Guangdong Military Command, said the pilot was a big step in the right direction.

"It might be years before China's organs come mainly from voluntary donors because of traditional superstitions, but it's a very important start for government and relevant bodies to start educating people about donations so that attitudes may change," Huo said.

City determined to 'break' officials' iron ricebowls

By Zhao Hongyi

The municipal government is leading the charge to put an end to civil servants' "iron ricebowls," according to its list of projects for 2010.

Starting next year, all civil servants employed by the municipality will be subject to annual evaluations. Officials will be given a yearly performance grade of excellent, qualified, basically qualified and unqualified.

If an official receives a low score, he or she will be denied a yearly bonus and demoted. After two years in a row of receiving low scores, the official will be sacked.

Evaluation will focus on political quality and stands, professional quality and capability, professional responsibility and morals. Officials who fail to get things done, commit fraud or whose work suffers from audacious mistakes that harm the people will be scored lower.

During the last three decades of reform, the central government has broken 90 percent of the "iron ricebowls" that guaranteed a job and money for life - no matter how incompetent you were at it.

Government is the only layer in the country that provides such an incredible layer of insulation. Millions of university graduates take the civil service exams each year hoping for a politically powerful job with ample opportunities to earn or extort gray income.

Most graduates and their parents believe government positions are the most stable jobs.

But the public remains suspicious.

Wei Shile, a famous commentator, said the government has not announced who will be conducting the evaluations or how they will be done.

While evaluation by senior officials is one option, Wei said it is terribly incomplete unless congress, the public, the media and independent parties get a say in the process.

"Otherwise, how can any of these evaluations be trustworthy?" Wei said. "I hope the evaluations won't simply open the door to new annual power struggles and political fighting."

30 charging stations coming for electric cars



The new charging stations are required before cars like this one, seen at Auto China 2010, can take the road.

IC Photo

By Chu Meng

The municipal government is working with State Grid and Sinopec, the country's largest gas station operator, to build 30 electric charging stations in the capital to promote clean energy, Liu Xinfang, a State Grid spokesperson, said at a press conference Sunday.

Sinopec Beijing Oil Products Company (Beijing Petroleum) and Beijing Capital Sci-tech Group Corporation founded Beijing Sinopec First Division New Energy Technology Company to offer fueling and charging services.

The new joint venture will refit 30 of Sinopec's gas stations with electric vehicle charging sta-

tions. The stations may also be extended to parts of Tianjin and Hebei Province.

State Grid already has some charging stations in Shanghai, Tianjin and Xi'an. It is expected to build 75 more and add 6,000 charging centers in 27 cities this year.

Each charging station is estimated to cost 3 million yuan to set up.

Charging stations for electric vehicles are a new business opportunity for domestic oil companies, said Lu Qingchun, a professor of automotive engineering at Tsinghua University and an expert in electric automobile technology.

Oil consumed by transporta-

tion accounts for 40 percent of the nation's total oil consumption, and the figure is expected to rise to 60 to 70 percent in 2020.

Development of new-energy vehicles, including electric vehicles, will help reduce oil consumption, he said. "At present, over half of the crude oil we are using is imported. Using clean energy to power automobiles would help ensure the country's energy security," Lu said.

Clean energy automobiles can also help China achieve its target of reducing pollution, he said.

"Companies should focus on building stations at major parking lots instead of upgrading existing gas stations, as the charging process takes several

hours," he said, noting the inconvenience of the current "upgrade" plans.

Another problem is the location. He said that according to the plan issued by the State Grid, most of the grid companies' substations will be located in the suburbs or underground, which is not convenient for charging.

Charging technology is another bottleneck, since car charges usually take several hours. "Who can waste hours at the charging station?" he said.

According to the plan issued at the 2010 International Automotive Show, Beijing will be using 5,000 new-energy vehicles such as buses, taxis and private cars before 2012.

Police gear up to keep students safe

By Han Manman

Police cars, their lights flashing, stood parked outside Beijing schools on Tuesday as guards in orange jackets monitored children on their way to class.

It was the first day back to school after the three-day May Day break, and a very noticeable sign of the city's decision to beef up school security after a string of primary and kindergarten school murders over the last few weeks.

Campuses around the capital have been given pepper spray, slash-resistant gloves and new security cameras to monitor their facilities.

Other cities around the country have taken their own preventative measures.

In Chongqing, the public security bureau dispatched police squads at all kindergartens, primary and middle schools. Police were instructed to "shoot on sight" anyone violently offending or hurting students on or near campus, the *Chongqing Evening News* reported.

People who have been diagnosed with mental problems and who live near schools will also be subject to monitoring. Those discontent with society and who have threatened revenge will also be watched, it reported.



Police and safeguards are standing watch at schools to protect the students.

IC Photo

Guangzhou authorities ordered schools to check and register every visitor, prohibiting unauthorized people from entering the campus and preventing knives explosives or flammable and toxic materials from being carried into schools.

The response came after Monday, when senior leader Zhou Yongkang declared at a news con-

ference that campus security was a "major political task."

Zhou called for a major boost to campus security with more police presence, better-equipped campus guards and a system that holds headmasters and officials accountable for security breaches.

He called on public health and civil authorities to improve treat-

ment and management of people suffering from mental disorders as some of the campus attackers were found to have a long history of mental illness.

The worst of the recent attacks occurred in Nanping, Fujian Province, where a man killed eight elementary school children in March.

In the latest case, five kinder-

garten students and a teacher were injured when a man attacked them with an iron hammer before killing himself at a school in Shandong Province last Friday.

"I fear for my child after hearing about the attacks, even though nothing like this has happened in Beijing. The security measures are necessary and will put my mind at rest," Chen Zheng, mother of a 9-year-old pupil, said.

"But I think the roots of these attacks are social problems and the government should take action to deal with things like the disparity between the rich and poor," Chen said. "Some killers were also reported to have mental problems, so I think the government should create channels for people to express their grievances before they turn into rage."

"China is overhauling its healthcare system and some efforts are under way to improve mental-health care. At the central level, there's also an increasing awareness of the importance of mental illness and I think these recent events will magnify this," said Michael Phillips, a Shanghai-based psychiatrist and the executive director of the World Health Organization's Collaborating Center for Research and Training in Suicide Prevention.

Team that found Noah's Ark stands by claim

By Han Manman

Chinese explorers are standing by their claim that they found Noah's Ark on Mount Ararat in Turkey after skeptics declared their findings a hoax.

The team said it discovered a wooden structure in the Turkish mountains whose fragments date back 4,800 years. According to Christian and Jewish scripture, after the earth flooded and the waters receded, Noah's Ark ran aground on a mountain that many believe to be Mount Ararat, the highest point in the region.

Speaking at a press conference in Hong Kong on April 25, the Chinese and Turkish explorers from Noah's Ark Ministries International (NAMI) said they found several compartments with wooden beams and suggested they were used to house animals.

The team also cited as evidence Christian, Muslim and Jewish texts which described the ark's location, color and structures.

"We're not 100 percent sure that it is Noah's Ark, but we are 99.9 percent sure that it is," said Yueng Wing-cheung, a Hong Kong documentary filmmaker who was on the exploration team. Yueng said local Turkish officials were trying to win protected status for the site so that a more extensive archaeological dig can be conducted.

While many were excited

about the discovery, others criticized the team for lacking compelling evidence.

The *Christian Science Monitor* reported that Randall Price, a former member of the NAMI expedition, said the recent discovery may not withstand closer observation.

"If the world wants to think this is a wonderful discovery, that's fine," Price said. "My problem is that, in the end, proper analysis may show this to be a hoax and negatively reflect how gullible Christians can be."

The *Monitor* reported Price had reason to believe that a group of local Kurdish men hauled the wood to the discovery site, staging a hoax for the NAMI team.

Current president for Dallas' Institute for Creation Research, John D. Morris, said he believes there is not enough evidence to prove that the team's finding is actually Noah's Ark.

But he said he doubts Kurdish workers would have been able to haul the wood to the site and that the evidence remains inconclusive.

Members of the expedition team stood by their findings.

Panda Lee, a Chinese explorer on the team, said the find was not a hoax. People could not carry such heavy wood 4,000 meters up the mountain, and the location was inaccessible by vehicle,

he said.

"Everyone who has ever climbed Mount Ararat would know the terrain is so rugged that you cannot carry anything more than a backpack," Lee said.

The team also contacted Muhsin Bulut, the director of the Agri Province ministry of culture, where Mount Ararat is located, to ask about the possibility of transporting timber and planting a large wood structure at 4,000 meters.

"He assured us that the mountain is a restricted area and is strictly monitored; therefore, such an act was impossible," Lee said.

A video of the exploration shows team members wearing crampons and trekking through snow to reach the site.

Lee said the team only worked with Price for two weeks and split after a difference of opinion. Lee said Price had neither been in the location of the wooden structure in Ararat nor followed the expedition.

"We have received feedback and email from many ark researchers. Some of them we know and some we don't. Most of them showed great interest and were positive about this discovery," Lee said.

He said the team's next step is to coordinate with scientists, researchers and the Turkish government on further studies.

UNICEF opens new space to migrant children



Migrant children can meet up to play.

Photo provided by Fan Li

By Liang Meilan

The city's first Child-friendly Space with play and educational facilities for migrant kids and teens opened April 20 in Dongcheng District.

Though the infrastructure is there, it has gone largely unused because there are few volunteer instructors and few migrant families who know about it.

UNICEF, which opened 40 Child-friendly Spaces for young victims of the Wenchuan earthquake, is now looking to an even more disadvantaged group – the migrant children who follow their parents from city to city in search of prosperity.

The State Council Working Committee on Women and Children and other organizations collaborated in the project.

The new Space is located in Chaoyangmennei Community Service Center, which has a spacious play area and a library in its three-story building. Facilities include thousands of books, toys, sports equipments and multimedia devices.

"Those kids come to new cities with their parents and usually end up lonely. They don't get along with local kids, and it's hard for them

to adapt. Getting support from the community and a chance to mingle with other children is important for their growth" said UNICEF official Wu Binghui.

"Kids from either migrant families or local families are both welcomed to come and have fun. The kids are not simply given something for nothing; they pay the center back by taking turns at watching and helping to keep it clean," said Fan Li, an administrator at the center and director of the women federation of Chaoyangmennei Sub-district Office.

While early, the center has already had problems. "The most pressing one is the lack of volunteer teachers who are experienced in early childhood education, music and psychology – the people who can help these families with instruction and guidance," Fan said.

The center is sending out a questionnaire to find out what topics and services would most attract migrant families.

"Giving out questionnaires is also a good way to let them know about the project and to encourage them to take part in its continued improvement," Fan said.

A matter of age

Olympic medal loss rejuvenates age debate

By Huang Daohen

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) ruled former gymnast Dong Fangxiao was underage at the time of the Sydney 2000 Olympics.

Dong was stripped of her bronze medal as IOC rules require that gymnasts turn 16 during the Olympic year.

While cheating, in any form, is inexcusable, many say the age rules are pointless. In a sport where athletes are considered past their prime at 20, a minimum age may be meaningless.

"Sweet 14"?

No one was more surprised than veteran sports journalist Aladdin Wong.

Wong, 41, was in Sydney in 2000 to cover the Games for a Beijing newspaper and saw Dong win her bronze.

Wong said he still remembered the moment he got a close-up look at Dong as she waited for the medal winners' news conference to begin.

"She looked shy, unlike her foreign counterparts who were obviously delighted with their victories. Dong showed little emotion," Wong said.

Like most Chinese athletes, Wong said Dong smiled obediently when reporters asked her to pose for photos, but her little mouth pursed again when their lenses left.

"Dong and her team did well that night. They deserved the medal," Wong said, expecting Dong to do better in gymnastics as she gained in age and experience.

But what Wong did not expect was that the girl's age would matter a decade later.

On April 29, the IOC announced that it would strip Dong of the bronze medal after finding she was too young to compete at the time.

The IOC's probe said that Dong registered a January 20, 1983 birthday in Sydney, but eight years later, when she was accredited to act as an official in the vault event at the Beijing Games, Dong declared her birthday as January 23, 1986.

That would have made her 14 – ineligible to compete in Sydney, the probe said.

Dong, now living in New Zealand with her husband, could not be reached for comment.

The Chinese Olympic Committee (COC) has said it respects the IOC decision. In a statement on its website, the COC said the committee has always been committed to safeguarding the fair-play principle in sports and will endeavor to prevent a repeat of such incidents in the future.

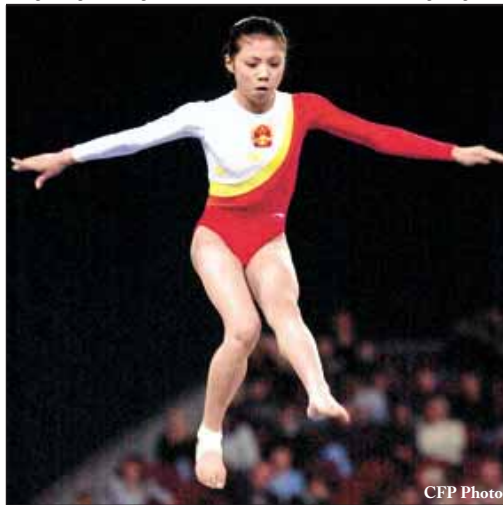
Controversial age rule

Cheating is unforgivable, but in a sport where athletes are past their prime at 20, something seems



Dong Fangxiao (right one) won the bronze medal at the Sydney 2000 Games.

Xinhua Photo



Dong Fangxiao was stripped of her medal for being underage.

CFP Photo

wrong with the IOC's choice to shorten gymnasts' careers.

The decision to strip Dong of her medal split the gymnastics community: while the US was delighted as it was named medalist after China was disqualified, others, especially Asian nations, said the age rule should be scrapped.

Romanians agreed.

During a recent interview with Reuters, Nicolae Forminte, a Romanian gymnastics coach, said Dong did nothing wrong and that the Chinese team should not have to accept the penalty.

"For me, the age is not a problem, I don't think there is a big difference between a 15-year-old gymnast and a 20-year-old," he said. "What matters is the quality of the gymnast. But I don't expect to see many gymnasts compete after 20, because it becomes very difficult at this age."

Others agreed with Forminte.

"Individual athletes and their coaches should have a right to decide when they are ready to compete," Russian national coach Alexander Alexandrov told a recent conference at the European championships in Birmingham, England.

"It is better to start at 14. It is really hard to stay under pressure so long," Alexandrov said.

An early start will leave more time for athletes to think about their future and education. "So perhaps it is better for them to do it earlier rather than later," he said.

In the last few decades, the Federation Internationale de Gymnastique repeatedly revised its age rules.

Prior to 1981, 14-year old female gymnasts could compete. In 1981, the age was raised to 15 and then raised again in 1997 to 16.

Background

A look into Chinese gymnastics school

Gymnastics, in any country, is a tough and painful sport. In order to win, countries spare no effort to cultivate superior athletes.

Training often starts as young as age 4.

China is no exception. Wong, who covered the sport for years, once visited the Li Xiaoshuang Gymnastics School in Xiantao County, Hubei Province, a typical sports training school.

Though the location is remote, the Li Xiaoshuang gymnastics school has benefited under the country's sports edu-

cation system. Over the past decade, the school has received 96 million yuan in funding.

There are around 100 kids, all between the ages of 4 and 9, who train there, Wong said. Most of them board at the school and they have nine gymnastics coaches, some of whom are three-time Olympic gold medalists.

"These tiny athletes know they are part of a glorious tradition," Wong said. Every day they get up early at 4:30 am to exercise.

"Our Chinese sports system is like a pyramid. Schools like

Li Xiaoshuang are the base. The middle of the pyramid is the professional provincial teams, and the national team is the apex," Wong said.

"Their goal is clear: to find future athletes."

But selection at that stage can be brutal. "Competition is a war without gunfire; these sports schools are designed to produce gold medalists," Wong said.

In order to win more big events, Wong said, some schools and coaches have faked the ages of athletes who were

younger than 16 but who outshined their peers.

No figure is available as to how many gymnasts China has, but Wong said the number is on the decline.

One reason is that fewer parents are willing to let their children suffer the grueling training, Wong said.

"However, once an athlete wins an Olympic medal, life is different," Wong said. "It's not just glory for the nation – an Olympic medal means wealth and a promising future."

The world in a mirror

Foreign visitors see China, world through Shanghai Expo adventure

The 2010 Shanghai World Expo opened last Friday night, attracting international attention and foreign guests. Themed "Better city, better life," the Expo provides visitors a preview of urban homes of the future as well as promising scientific developments.



Visitors from across the world rushed into the national pavilions when the World Expo in Shanghai opened this week.

IC Photo

Barbara Boyce rushed into the China National Pavilion on the opening day of the Expo, together with thousands of enthusiastic Chinese visitors.

"It's incredible and fantastic! I speak fast because I am too excited!" said Boyce, who is a development manager with the New Zealand China Business Council.

"The pavilion shows the coun-

try's transformation from an ancient civilization to creating better cities and better lives in the modern world," she said. "There used to be many misunderstandings about China. I think many more foreigners should come to explore the country."

Scores of foreign tourists joined some 200,000 Expo visitors last Saturday to see the pavilions branded with each country's

unique culture and history and to have a better understanding of the host city.

"Shanghai is so huge. The people and the architecture here are amazing," said Fredrick McCabe, a 42-year-old information technician with the Boeing Company, who brought his wife and two children from their hometown of Seattle.

"I hope to be enlightened by

new technologies at the Expo," McCabe said.

The Expo would not only educate, entertain and fascinate visitors but it would also spark the energies to build the cities of the future on some of its foundations, said Vicente Gonzales Loscertales, secretary-general of the Bureau of International Exhibitions, at the Expo's opening ceremony.

Many Chinese visitors com-

plained about the crowds and the shortage of tickets for the China pavilion, but Barbara Boyce said the long queues gave foreigners an opportunity to interact with locals.

"I talked to them while queuing. I learned Chinese from them and took photos with them," she said.

The six-month event, which runs till October 31, is expected to attract 70 million visitors from home and abroad.

Opinion

An opportunity business world couldn't afford to ignore

Shanghai has always been all about business, and nowhere is that more evident than at the World Expo, a giant bazaar of ideas, technologies and PR offensives focused on the world's fastest-growing major market.

In a cash-strapped 21st century of market meltdowns and big bailouts, the Expo is a multibillion-dollar business opportunity that has yielded massive contracts for design, equipment and engineering firms.

Since they started out displaying new industrial technologies alongside new design and cultural offerings in the mid-19th century, world fairs have always been something of a global marketplace in miniature.

With China's economy growing faster than most and poised to soon overtake Japan's as the second biggest after the US, the Expo's role as a venue for networking and marketing is bigger than ever before.

"It gives everyone an excuse to come to China. It's going to be parties and receptions and networking and mingling and looking around," said James McGregor, a senior counselor for consulting firm APCO Worldwide Inc, and author of the book *One Billion Customers: Lessons from the Front Lines of Doing Business in China*.

Given China's growing status and power, even crisis-stricken Greece and Iceland went ahead

with pavilion plans, wary of the costs of lost opportunities in this huge and growing market.

"We're getting the word out that we stand for so much more than just maybe the headlines about the financial crisis and ash closing down the airports in Europe. We have other things to offer," said Hreinn Pálsson, Iceland's consul general in Shanghai and its Expo commissioner general.

"We're using this event and these facilities to establish con-

nections, establish a point that companies can come to and work out of here in China," he said.

Corporations both Chinese and foreign are also here in force. Cisco Systems, Coca-Cola and General Motors have pavilions built on a scale to match some of the biggest countries'. Chinese shipbuilders, appliance makers, telecoms companies and food providers – practically everyone with a stake in China's huge market – are here.

Sidelights

Media lauds organization of Shanghai Expo

Newspapers and news agencies of many countries have lauded the outstanding organization of the Shanghai Expo.

The Expo is crowded with visitors but everything is in perfect order, said a report by Romania Press Agency last Sunday.

The agency's reporter also heaped praise on Shanghai's cleanliness, saying China is trying

to show through the Expo the image of a modernized city with a strong consciousness for environmental protection.

Indonesia's largest Chinese-language newspaper, *International Daily News*, said Monday that the Shanghai Expo displayed China's boom and the rise of emerging countries, revealed the charms and great strides of civilization and expressed the world's pursuit of a better life in cities.

The article suggested leaders and

residents in Indonesian metropolises learn from the Expo and make contributions to building their own cities and improving humanity.

Austrian media published many stories before and after the Expo's opening ceremony.

Austria's largest daily, *Neue Kronen Zeitung*, said last Saturday that the Expo is now the most expensive Chinese extravaganza, costing twice as much as the Beijing Olympic Games.

"Shanghai, the window of

China, will also become a center of the world," the paper said.

"Whoever does not show up here would disappear from China's sight within 50 years," the paper quoted the deputy commissioner of Austria's Expo delegation, Brigitt Murr, as saying.

Foreign journalist says 'everything is modern'

A French journalist said Thursday that the only dissatisfaction she had with the Shanghai Expo's

media center was that the coffee needed to be stronger.

Helene Franchineau, who works for France's *Slate* magazine, told Xinhua that the work conditions at the Expo Park were otherwise flawless. "The facilities are great. Everything is modern. We have lots of space to work," she said.

Maurice Guibord, a reporter for Radio Canada, seconded Franchineau, saying the services provided to journalists were of the highest quality. (Agencies)

HP senior official wins friendship award

By Huang Daohen

The Chongqing municipal government recently presented Hewlett-Packard's (HP) Senior Vice President Tony Prophet with a Three Gorges Friendship Award, the municipality's highest accolade for foreigners, given to honor significant contribution to the municipality's development.

Prophet, who manages HP's Worldwide Supply Chain and Partner Management organization, was honored this year for the company's continuous "In China, for China" commitment

in Chongqing.

"It is an honor for me, but more importantly, it is a recognition of HP's commitment in Chongqing, and will help strengthen the ties between the company and the Chongqing government," Prophet said.

Every year, Chongqing's municipal government solicits nominations from the city's universities and business groups for the Three Gorges Friendship Awards. Prophet, a nominee from the IT field, was one of the 10 foreigners to receive this year's award.



Tony Prophet (center) accepts the Three Gorges Friendship Award on April 29.



HP's Chongqing manufacturing plant began production in January.

Photos provided by Chongqing Daily

Marriage with Chongqing

Referring to the company's cooperation with the Chongqing municipal government, Prophet said he calls it a "marriage."

In 2008, when the global financial crisis was at its peak, many multinationals were forced to reduce their overseas investments in China. But HP made a bold move by announcing plans to build a notebook and desktop PC manufacturing plant in Chongqing.

The 20,000-square-meter plant, with a capacity of 4 million PCs per year, began operations in January, and has contributed many jobs to the local economy.

The manufacturing plant is only the latest in a string of HP investments in Chongqing — other investments include a call center and software testing center — which not only allow HP to quickly meet demand in the fast-growing Chinese market, but also accelerate economic development in western China.

State Councilor Liu Yandong, during a recent inspection tour of the municipality and visit to the HP manufacturing plant, called HP's Chongqing investments a "win-win situation" for the company and western China. She further called for more efforts in scientific and technological innovation to boost development in western China.

Huang Qifan, mayor of Chongqing, agreed with Liu. Huang said HP's investments will increase Chongqing's technology assets, encourage more multinational investment, and thus accelerate Chongqing's industry restructuring, helping build the municipality into China's "west Silicon Valley."

"We're very respectful of what those — social, economic and legal — requirements are. And we think our job is to live up to those requirements and exceed those requirements."

In particular praise for Prophet, Huang said before the award ceremony that Chongqing has witnessed the highest increase in foreign investment in China, and experts such as Prophet serve as a strong bridge between foreign countries and the municipality.

On receiving his award, Prophet said, "I am proud of having the opportunity to grow with Chongqing. In the days to come, HP will continue to enhance its commitment to China, and honor its responsibilities and obligations in order to contribute its humble share to China's western development."

In China, for China

Prophet is not the only HP official to have received an award from the Chinese government. Last year, Todd Bradley, executive vice president of HP's Personal Systems Group (PSG), was honored with a 2009 Friendship Award for HP's development and remarkable performance in China.

HP was the first Sino-US high-tech joint venture in China, having entered in 1985, and the company has a long track record of investments to boost manufacturing, innovation and corporate social responsibility (CSR) in the country.

Before the launch of the Chongqing plant, the IT giant had already established manufacturing operations Shanghai.

Currently, HP has expanded its business and services into 700 cities and 2,000 counties in China, making contributions to China's progress and also benefiting from the country's rapid economic growth.

During a recent interview with Xinhua News Agency, Bradley said HP, already the leading foreign PC vendor in China, still sees opportunities to grow in the world's most populous country, with a population of 1.3 billion.

Bradley said HP has adopted an "In China, for China" strategy and is committed to mutual advancement with China. He emphasized that the company views its relationship with China as "a long-term partnership."

Bradley pointed out that a critical factor in HP's success in China is the company's ability to understand and meet local requirements. "We're very respectful of what those — social, economic and legal — requirements are. And we think our job is to live up to those requirements and exceed those requirements," he said.

HP's attention to local requirements includes rigorous work to understand its Chinese users. Its HP China Design Center, opened in Shanghai in 2004, was established to design products specifically suited to Chinese consumers. HP also brings its award-winning global solutions to China; these

include HP TouchSmart PCs, HP Mini Vivienne Tam Edition PCs and HP Z-series workstations — used by Hollywood's DreamWorks Animation in all of its 2010 releases. In this way, Chinese users receive the benefit of both HP's China and global innovation.

HP also tries to exceed local requirements in the area of CSR, and the company has the goal of being one of the most respected corporate citizens in China.

HP has been establishing PC centers in rural areas and offering PC skills training to rural residents to decrease the urban-rural resource and wealth divide. This year, the company has started working with university student village officials — university graduates the Chinese government sends to develop the countryside — to create a better life for rural residents.

HP also works with various Chinese NGOs to establish and operate PC and entrepreneurial skills-training centers, and to provide grants to help the growth of microenterprise. So far, nearly 2,000 individuals have received training and some 300 of them have started their own businesses.

In February 2008, HP donated 3.6 million yuan through the American Red Cross to the snow-storm-hit areas in south China. HP also has donated 24 million yuan in cash and equipment to help those affected by the Sichuan earthquake. Further, HP established 24 HP Hope PC Classrooms to improve educational opportunities for students in Sichuan quake-affected areas.

Last month, HP announced it is donating up to \$400,000 (2.73 million yuan) in cash to help those affected by the Qinghai province earthquake.

Opinion

Why China is right on the yuan

After a period of high tension between the US and China, it is now evident that a change in Chinese exchange-rate policy is coming. The government is finally prepared to let the yuan resume its slow but steady upward march.

We can now expect the yuan to begin appreciating again, very gradually, against the dollar, as it did between 2005 and 2007.

Some observers, including those most fearful of a trade war, will be relieved. Others, who see a substantially undervalued yuan as a significant factor in US unemployment, will be disappointed by gradual adjustment.

Still others dismiss the change in Chinese exchange-rate policy as beside the point. For them, the Chinese current-account surplus and its mirror image, the US current-account deficit, are the central problem. They argue that current-account balances reflect national savings and investment rates.

China is running external surpluses because its savings exceeds its investment. The US is running external deficits because of a national savings shortfall, which once reflected spendthrift households but now is the fault of a feckless government.

There is no reason, they conclude, why a change in the yuan-dollar exchange rate should have a first-order impact on savings or investment in China, much less in the US.

In fact, both sets of critics have it wrong. China was right to wait in adjusting its exchange rate, and it is now right to move gradually rather than discontinuously. The Chinese economy is growing: forecasts put the prospective rate for 2010 at 10 percent; the first-quarter flash numbers, at 11.9 percent, show it expanding as fast as any economy can safely grow.

The government successfully navigated the crisis, avoiding a significant slowdown, by ramping up public spending. But, as a result, it now has no further scope for increasing public consumption or investment.

To be sure, building a social safety net, developing financial markets, and strengthening corporate governance to encourage state enterprises to pay out more of what they earn would encourage Chinese households to consume. But such reforms take years to complete. In the meantime, the rate of spending growth in China will not change dramatically.

As a result, Chinese authorities have been waiting to see whether the recovery in the US is real. If it is, China's exports will grow more rapidly. And if its exports grow more rapidly, they can allow the yuan to rise.

Without that exchange-rate adjustment, faster export growth would expose the Chinese economy to the risk of overheating.

— Barry Eichengreen, professor of Economics and Political Science at the University of California, Berkeley

Marriage certificate, hukou checks expected to cool housing market

By *Chu Meng*

Housing buyers in Beijing are now required to present their marriage certificates to ensure that each family purchases only one residential property after May 1, as the government tries to reign in rampant property speculation and soaring prices. The regulation is proactive and does not take into account the family's number of existing properties.

The municipal regulation also orders banks to block mortgage applications for individuals purchasing their third property and those purchasing their first but who cannot prove they have paid taxes and made social security contributions for at least a year.

"One of the most important items in the guidelines is that from now on, when buying a residential property, people have to present their marriage certificates and household registration, or *hukou*, since these documents can prove family ties," Chen Zhi, deputy director of the Chinese Real Estate

Association, told Beijing TV.

Chen said the law describes a "family" as composed of a legally wed couple with a child under age 18. If their offspring is older than 18, the person is eligible to buy another property under a new family unit.

The new regulation marks the strictest in a series of measures by Chinese authorities as they seek to reduce the risk of the red-hot property market overheating and derailing the booming economy.

At the Beijing Real Estate Expo in March, the average price of a new apartment in the capital had risen to 21,164 yuan per square meter, double that of last year. That meant an average size, 90-square-meter apartment would cost 1.9 million yuan, a huge burden for a populace with an average per capita income of 17,175 yuan.

This week, domestic media said the government is likely to introduce a property tax on residential real estate on a trial basis in Beijing, Shanghai and Chongqing.



The capital's new housing policy aims to cool the red-hot housing market.

CFP Photo

Comment

Prudent response to problems

The regulation is clearly Beijing-oriented as checking marriage certificates and household registration upholds the interest of average Beijingers who just want a home. Checking tax and social security certificates will also prevent speculation from nonresidents; data from the past 12 months shows that more than 50 percent of Beijing housing buyers are not city residents.

The guidelines will squeeze wealthy families who want three or four more luxury units, but not newlyweds who just want their own home or families wanting to upgrade to a larger home. But the bottom line is that consumer demand should be met by a healthy market; the regulation is merely a temporary measure to cool an overheated market.

— Zhou Hu, property analyst with Bohai Securities

More counterfeiting expected

The new regulation has led to couples faking divorces. This shows that when people want more than one house, it is really a case of "when there's a will, there's a way." The guidelines will also have people coming up with fake names and fake ages for their children.

The authorities have taken it for granted that people will always find ways around the law. The Chinese are super smart people.

— David Feng, netizen on Soufun.com

Victim of unscrupulous employer

I'm from Harbin and have been working as a hair-salon stylist in Beijing for six years. My boss has never paid taxes or social security for his employees. Last month, I sold my house in Harbin for 430,000 yuan to

make a down payment for a house in south Beijing. Suddenly, I was told by the Construction Bank of China that I was not qualified for a loan.

My case is not unique. Many small and medium enterprises in town give salaries in cash to avoid paying taxes and similar fees. I'm not a property speculator. I work here and have decided to stay here because I want to marry my girlfriend. Now I have to wait another year to get married.

— Meng Jiahui, hair stylist

Old new for expats

For expats, this is old news. Foreigners are only allowed to own one house — whether we like it or not. Under Beijing's new housing rules, can I say that the Chinese are now being treated the same as us?

— Bruce Connolly, Scottish photographer

Gov plans real-name registration on online forums, mobile phones

By *Zhao Hongyi*

After requiring netizens to register their real names when commenting on news websites, the government is now considering the same guideline for online forums and bulletin boards.

In early April the State Administration for Industry and Commerce released a draft regulation requiring people to provide information such as their names, ID numbers and addresses before opening a store online.

The two directives have been successfully implemented, Wang Chen, director of the State Information Office, was quoted by Xinhua News Agency as saying. "Therefore, we are now studying the possibility of requiring real-name registration on online forums, BBSes, notice boards and all interactive platforms within the year," Wang said in a speech before senior deputies of the

National People's Congress (NPC), according to the Xinhua report.

Wang said his office will also request the same personal data from people who use the Internet through their mobile phones to better protect the public against online scams, pornography and other crimes.

"We need to clarify the basic rules for protecting the Internet and upholding information security, including the roles, obligations and responsibilities of each side," he said.

The official also urged lawmakers to step up the revision of related laws, such as criminal laws, civil laws and the secrecy law.

Media reports however say the new guidelines on real-name registration have yet to be fully implemented as most news and business websites simply require netizens to register, rather than insisting on getting their real names and ID numbers.

Comment

Real name registration only half the solution

The reason why so many security problems occur on the Internet is the rapid increase of information and user population and the expansion of the Internet framework. We understand that China's purpose in promoting real-name registration is to attack the spread of pornography, scams, online crimes and to better manage the flow of information. But obtaining real names will only solve part of the problem. How will you deal with registration using fake IDs? How will you manage site operators who move their servers out of China? Strategy, rather than technology, is the top issue we must resolve. Legislation is urgently needed.

— Arthur Coviello, Jr., executive vice president for e-business security, EMC

System should not limit freedom

The real-name system has been adopted only in Singapore and South Korea so far. In South Korea, a number of actresses have committed suicide under the pressure brought by irresponsible rumors and slander. That is the reason why the

country introduced the system.

All in all, the system should be used only to prevent crimes and suspects, rather than preventing people from expressing their views and expose problems in their life. That's the key point!

— Lai Hounglan, a Singaporean netizen

Take the long view

I fully agree with the government's proposal since most countries have already adopted the use of real names to access online services. The critical point in this process is fully implementing the laws and regulations. Websites should understand that though the system might reduce their number of customers and viewers, in the long run it will improve the security and reliability of their sites.

— Mao Qiyuan, chinabytes.com

Real names needed ASAP

We have seen too many irresponsible stories, scams and insults on the Internet over the years. Many of these have crossed the line of law and morality. The real-name system must be implemented as soon as possible!

— Lin Yongchun, People's Daily

Czech master of ink painting

By Li Zhixin

At the Czech pavilion at the Shanghai Expo, visitors are being drawn to a foreign guy in traditional Han costume and cloth shoes painting on a huge rice paper with an equally big brush. The artist, 44-year-old Jiri Straka, has devoted almost half his life to Chinese ink painting.

Album leads to Chinese art

When Straka was 13, he found on his father's bookshelf an album of ink paintings by Qi Baishi (1864-1957), one of the country's most famous modern artists. As a teen he became fascinated with the art, and with his father's Chinese antique collection.

"My father knew what I liked most, so he always managed to find antiques like Chinese porcelain, Buddha statues, calligraphy brushes and ink stones and gave them to me as birthday presents," he said.

After high school Straka wanted to study ink painting at The Central Academy of Fine Arts (CAFA) in Beijing. "But Oldrich Kral, a famous Czech sinologist, said that if I wanted to learn Chinese painting, I should start from the language, history and literature," Straka said. So he enrolled at Charles University in Prague, majoring in Chinese.

"He is so interested in books about Chinese history and classical literature. His knowledge of China exceeds mine," Straka's wife Qin Kunying, a Chinese national, said.

After university graduation in 1995, Straka came to Beijing and studied ink painting at CAFA. "On the first day of class, the teacher told us that people took at least 10 years to master painting a plum flower, orchid, bamboo and chrysanthemum," Qin, a former classmate, said. "Many of the foreign students quit the next day."

Straka took the revelation as a challenge.

Life in China an inspiration

Straka worked for the Czech National Gallery for five years after graduating from CAFA. The job was good, but he longed to be around people who could understand his love for Chinese ink painting; many of his colleagues laughed off his fascination with the classical foreign art.

"They don't understand the delicate relationship between paper qual-

ity, ink and brush ... We didn't have much to talk about," he said.

In 2005, Straka finally decided to move back to China with Qin. "What made me quit the job was that I couldn't find artistic inspiration in Europe," he said.

At this point, he was already working on ink paintings that would appeal to the present-day art market after meeting a group of contemporary Chinese artists who did an exhibition in Prague in 1997.

Straka's breakthrough came with paintings inspired by a pig's heart. "One day in Guangxi, I found a stall selling pig hearts when I passed by a meat market. They looked as beautiful as roses, so I rushed back home to fetch my camera and then took many pictures of them," he said.

His series of heart painting became a hit in Europe, where art critics compare his bold use of light and shadow to Baroque art. "His art is worth at least 50,000 yuan," Qin said.

Embracing the spiritual

Dead chickens, cows, pigs – even flies – are usual subjects for Straka. This was influenced by his study of Buddhist doctrine, particularly sam-sara, the repeated cycles of birth, misery and death caused by karma.

Straka also likes to paint natural scenery of the south. "He has a deep interest in strange, wild plants," Qin said. "As long as he can take his brush, he can get lost in his own world ... Painting is a way to lift his spirit, and no one can interrupt him."

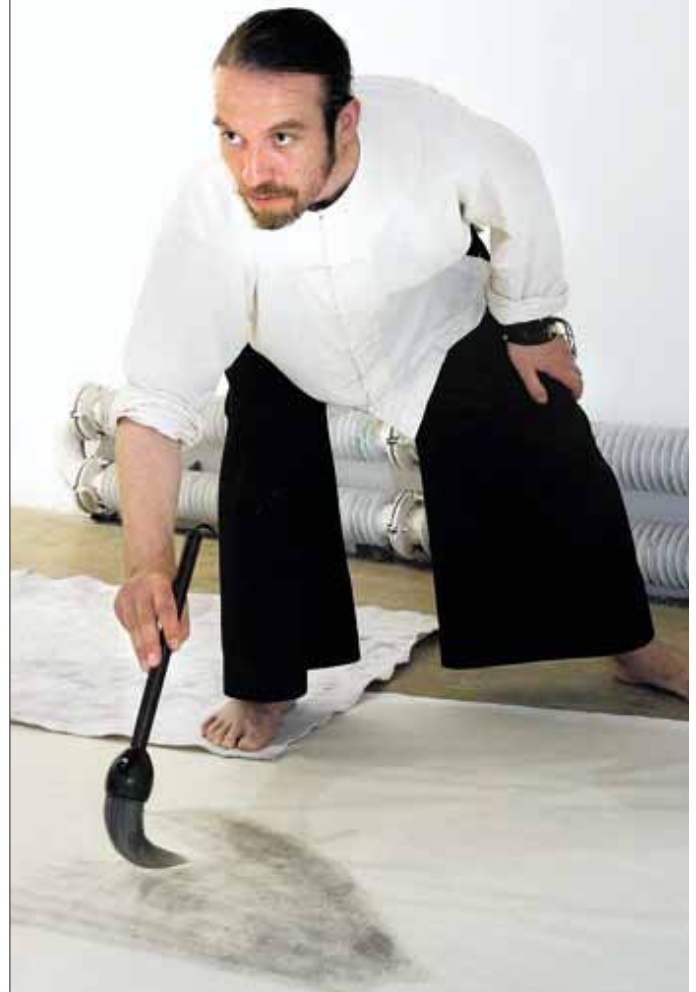
Qin said Straka's life has undergone a tremendous change since he embraced Buddhism, including quitting smoking and drinking. "Czech people's capacity to drink is amazing and Jiri is typical of them. In university, he was nicknamed 'Erguotou,' a local alcohol brand, because whether he was in or out of class, he always had a bottle of Erguotou in his bag."

Straka said staying clean has been for his art as much as his body and soul. "Drinking has wasted so much of my time. Each time I got drunk, I could do nothing the next day," he said.

But the artist has his weaknesses, like any individual. "He is a really forgetful man. He has already lost 15 cell phones," Qin said with a laugh.



Visitors are drawn to Jiri Straka painting on a huge rice paper with an equally big brush in the Czech pavilion.



Jiri Straka said many people in his country don't understand why he is so fascinated by classical Chinese ink painting. Photos provided by Jiri Straka

Panel discusses making art in a foreign country

By Liang Meilan

A dozen artists, curators and critics discussed current issues in the art market, including the challenges of creating art in a foreign country, in a panel discussion at the Ullens Center for Contemporary Art (UCCA) last Friday.

The event, titled "Foreign Artists in China," was organized by curator Luca Zordan to help examine the perspectives and visions of foreign artists living in

China or those frequently visiting the country for work.

"Globalization has created tremendous opportunities for collaboration among different countries. At the same time, it has also generated a unique set of problems and issues relating to day-to-day contact between cultures ... Because of this, understanding other cultures and effectively relating to them are fundamental," Zordan said during the day-long event, part

of Art Beijing 2010 Contemporary Art Fair.

"The panel wants to examine the works of foreign artists who have decided to take the challenge of working within a new culture such as China," he said.

The panel discussion also touched on how foreign curators handle art exchanges with China and the experiences of Australian artists in Beijing alongside those of a Chinese artist who worked Down Under for 10 years.

Some speakers presented their artwork, besides talking about the creation process in China and commenting on works by local artists.

"Hearing different artistic perspectives and cultural viewpoints can teach us more about ourselves. Contact with what we consider foreign can help us know more intimately the reality around us, look at things we have never noticed before and prepare us to change some of our opin-

ions," Zordan said.

Among the forum's guest speakers were Horst Hoertner from Austria, Alexandra Hungerbuhler from the US, Menene Gras from Spain, Martin Wehmer from Germany and Jayne Dyer from Australia. Two journalists with AP's Beijing bureau also joined the panel.

Art Beijing 2010 Contemporary Art Fair was an exhibition of works made in China or inspired by Chinese elements.



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Interactive drumming class for kids and parents

By Liang Meilan

The children's class at Toning School of Drumming is both an introduction to music and a happy family gathering.

The class, titled Early Music Maker and held at The British School of Beijing Sanlitun campus, has been designed as an interactive program for children ages 1 to 8 and their parents.

"The most frequently used instrument is the djembe," a West African drum played by beating with the hand and manufactured by Toning's own drum factory, said Ning Ning, co-founder of the school. She said their students also use shakers, sticks and chimes.

Their teachers are members of Toning Drum Circle, a professional percussion group that has been performing around Asia for the past five years. "They come from different countries and have extensive music and early-childhood teaching experience," Ning said.

She said music helps children develop both the right and left spheres of their brains by introducing them to a multi-sensory experience and promoting motor skills and hand-eye coordination. Improvisation, musical composition and public performances also help children develop self-confidence, Ning said.

"Group performances also teach them about teamwork and help them learn to trust others. On top of that, drumming is a fun way to strengthen chil-



Children have fun with drums at Toning School of Drumming.

Photo by Ning Ning

dren's relationship with caregivers," she said.

Not least, music exposes children to other cultures. "Through various beats, like Latin or African, kids can learn hand drumming on their own and know about other cultures," Ning said.

Many of Toning's students are children of expats and the

class is taught in English – which has drawn Chinese families who want to expose their children to an English-speaking environment.

"An interesting phenomenon is that 95 percent of our Chinese parents send their children here to tap their musical talents at an early age and pave the way for a

possible career in music. But expat parents don't have this intention: they just want to see their kids having fun," Ning said.

The children's class is held 11 am to noon every Saturday. The school also has classes and activities for adults. For more information, contact Ning Ning at 13701177596.

University of Chicago to open center

By He Jianwei

The University of Chicago will open a center in Beijing this September to support collaborations between scholars and students from China and Chicago, the university announced last week.

The Chicago Center, to open September 15 in Haidian District, will provide a space for seminars and conferences, as well as faculty offices and study areas. It will host Chinese students and scholars and serve as a base for University of Chicago students and teachers doing work in Beijing and throughout the region.

President Robert Zimmer said the center represents his university's long-term commitment to building relationships in China to foster research and education and to exchange and test scholarly ideas.

"After more than a century of significant research collaborations between China and Chicago, the center will provide a focus for building upon that legacy," Zimmer said.

Chinese scholars have deep ties with the University of Chicago. Chen Ning Yang and Tsung-Dao Lee, joint winners of the 1957 Nobel for physics and the first Chinese laureates, received their PhDs at the university. The founder of the physics depart-



Robert Zimmer (left) and Yang Dali, the new center's president and director



ments at Peking University and Tsinghua University also studied at Chicago.

Chicago professors have also maintained close relations with China the past 90 years. Frank-

lin McLean, the first director of the University of Chicago Medical School, was earlier the founding dean of Peking Union Medical College, which opened in 1919.

"As China undergoes its remarkable transformation, there has never been a more important time for scholars from the US to form fruitful partnerships with their counterparts in China and the region," said Dali Yang, the founding faculty director of the Chicago Center and a professor of political science at the University of Chicago.

The center aims to build on a strong body of work already underway, such as Janet Rowley's work on leukemia at leading Chinese hospitals and Paul Sereno's study of dinosaurs with Chinese paleontologists.

University of Chicago undergraduates currently have opportunities to study language and Asian civilization with the university's faculty in Beijing, a program that focuses on the intellectual heritage of other countries. Graduate students in China are engaged in fieldwork in areas such as anthropology and history.

The university broadened its international collaborations in 2004, when it opened a center in Paris. It also has business schools in London and Singapore and has its Oriental Institute headquarters in Egypt. Zimmer said there are plans to establish a center in India.

Event

Writing workshop for kids

The Hutong is holding an introductory writing class for children who want to write about their life experiences. The instructor will help participants determine important aspects of their lives using a "heart map," then teach them how to organize topics into small and larger stories. The class will also look at different ways of recording great ideas through mind maps, sketches and scrapbooks.

Where: The Hutong, 1 Jiudaowan Hutong, Beixinqiao Lu, Dongcheng District
When: May 8, 1-2:30 pm
Tel: 15901046127
Cost: 150 yuan, 130 yuan for members

Education in the 21st Century

Social Innovation Meet-up, an organization that runs monthly networking activities revolving around social innovations and entrepreneurship, will be talking about contemporary education issues affecting China at its gathering tomorrow. Guest speakers will discuss the China Education Initiative, the first and only organization to pair outstanding graduates from top universities in the US and China in a long-term service initiative aimed at improving education in China's impoverished areas.

Where: 35 Dongmianhua Hutong, Jiadaokou Nan Dajie, Dongcheng District
When: May 8, 2-4 pm
Cost: 30 yuan (includes a drink)

Email: hello@fyse.org

Street basketball games

Beijing Ballerz, a newly established street basketball club, is organizing a summer league for both Chinese and foreign teams. Each team can have up to six players, of which only three can play at one time. The following are needed for registration: name of team, name, age and photograph of players.

Where: To be decided
When: May 8, 4-7 pm
Cost: Free
Email: beijingballerz@gmail.com

Talk on black-and-white photography

The Beijing Center of Photography is presenting a talk on black-and-white photography by Qiao Xiaobing, a professional photographer who started his career in the 1970s and now sits on the editorial team of Canon's in-house magazine in China.

Where: Xidan Canon Communication Space, 1/F Building A, Zhidixingzuo Plaza, 13 Huayuan Lu, Xicheng District

When: May 9, 2-4 pm
Tel: 5869 1383
Cost: Free

(By Liang Meilan)

Police begin annual inspection of pet certificates, licenses

By Zhao Hongyi

Community police stations are conducting checks of pet dogs' health certificates and licenses through June 30, the municipal public security bureau said.

The annual inspection, which began May 1, includes renewing licenses due to expire by June 30 and providing free rabies vaccinations to pets.

"Owners can contact police stations in their community to receive the service," said Tang Yunli, deputy director of the municipal public security bureau's security department.

In Xuanwu District, the police added nine sites that are offering vaccinations as well as free one-year insurance which will safeguard owners in case their pet attacks people.

"Last year, more than 200 people were hurt by pet dogs," Pei Ji, deputy head of the security sector under Xuanwu public security bureau branch, said, "but we were able to settle the disputes smoothly, and insurance played a very important role."

The department said the elderly, sick and disabled can call their local police station for assistance and the authorities will send representatives to conduct the paperwork and vaccination in their homes.



Existing pet licenses need to be renewed before June 30.

CFP Photo

The department asked community police stations to survey city blocks and villages pegged for demolition as relocating families usually abandon their pets, which can lead to health and sanitation problems.

The police promised an incentive of 200 yuan to owners who get their pets neutered or spayed to control the population of stray animals.

According to police records, there were 910,000 pet dogs in Beijing as of the end of last year. All pet certificates and licenses will expire June 30.

The public security department takes charge of instability that can affect public order, including the management of special businesses, and dangerous items.

Service hotlines

Dongcheng District: 6420 6881
Xicheng District: 6805 2003
Chongwen District: 6712 0124
Xuanwu District: 6354 0375
Chaoyang District: 8552 7171
Haidian District: 8251 9533
Tongzhou District: 8088 2380

2010 Village Fair invites participants

The Village Fair held in Shunyi District has been a popular local event for eight years. Each time, it attracts visitors from China and abroad for a blend of the East and West, traditional and modern, art and craft, music and dance, food and drink, activities and games, a food court and an organic farmers' market.

This year, the fair is inviting

businesses, organizations and volunteers to participate in The HeGeZhuang Village Street Fair. It will be taking place along the pedestrian street in HeGeZhuang Village, starting from The Yin Yang Community Center and traveling up the east road through the village and out the other side toward Art Base 1, Green T. House and Daystar.

There are buses for visitors to

travel from one end of the village to the other.

Confirmed activities include a luxurious afternoon tea at Green T. House, French wines, chocolates and art at La Plantation in Art Base 1. Participate in a tennis clinic at Daystar Academy or browse the bookshelves at The Yin Yang Community Center's extensive book collection provided by The Bookworm.

Artists and artisans will also display and sell their wares, give away free samples of products, and give a demonstration of how products are made. Tables are 50 yuan for charitable organizations and 200 yuan per day for businesses.

Deadline for applications is May 18. Anyone interested should contact thevillagefair@yahoo.com.

(By Wei Ying)

ASK Beijing Today

Email your questions to: weiyang@ynet.com

I recently bought a pet rabbit and need to find out where I can get her proper food and other supplies. Her vendor told me to feed her vegetables, but it's obvious by now that she does not like them.

To keep your rabbit healthy, give her a good supply of hay, which provides fiber that aids in digestion. As a nutritional supplement, get her pellet feed from a reputable pet store. You can check out the one on the fourth floor of 109 Department Store on 109 Xidan Bei Dajie, Xicheng District, Tel. 6332 9472.

Is there a Moroccan restaurant in town?

There are very few restaurants in town that serve Moroccan food. Moro is Beijing's first Moroccan restaurant, on 8 Xinyuan Nan Lu, Chaoyang District. Its chef, who comes from Casablanca, makes quality chicken tagine and lamb couscous. Its Moroccan tea is also good. Call 8448 8250 to make a reservation.

I've been wanting to learn hang gliding in Beijing but have not yet been able to find an instructor. Can you help me out?

There are only two clubs in town that offer training and equipment. One is Beijing Flying-man Aviation Sport Equipment, the country's top aviation sport club founded 10 years ago. Its professionally run training is conducted at its base in Changping District. Call 400 8081 882 for more information. The other club is Super-wing Paragliding Club, which sells hang gliding equipment on its website superwing.com.cn.

(By Liang Meilan)

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Make way for the old

By He Jiamen

We live in a designed world, but it is increasingly uniform as globalization, commercialization and standardization prevail. Everywhere there are towering buildings, and everywhere people dress the same.

But significant designers are questioning their role in the process and smashing some of the monotony.

Last Tuesday, eight Chinese and Dutch designers displayed their works in architecture, fashion, daily commodities and books at Today Art Museum. Their pieces discuss the conflicts between mass production and traditional technique, between working on commission and working to create and between globalization and the call for identity.

Making objects alive

Graphic designer Irma Boom has made over 250 books, 50 of which are permanently housed in New York's Museum of Modern Art. Her *Think Book* for a giant coal company has become an international icon of Dutch design.

She sees her books as objects that communicate ideas and stories and speak to all human senses. "The types of books I made tend to have an objective quality," Boom said. "I don't want to communicate ideas and stories and speak to all human senses."

A Dutch designer, Boom said, MEWE insists on a conceptual approach familiar to the Dutch designer, but their work is imbued with Chinese personality. They compare their work to a landscape, giving people a chance to see the ordinary in a subtly new way.

"Chinese society is inclined to similarities. People often refuse change. In my work, I have to play detective and collect details and reconstruct the story through reasonable and logical analysis. I'm like a chef who has to calculate the balance and relationship between paper, printing, text and typography to make a tasty soup," Liu Zhizhi, one member of MEWE, said.

They treated a book as a story. For example, Guang Yu's *Helongjiang Box* is an album for an artist whose works deal with memory. So Guang put the invitation for the exhibition inside it. Held together with a rusty pin, the invitation looks like an old photo. There are also things from childhood in the book, such as old pens and marbles. It is everything I liked and collected when I was young, Guang said.

"If I get a letter written with a fountain pen or a ballpoint pen, I know that care has gone into it. That, to me, is luxury."

— Alexander von Slobbe, Dutch fashion designer



Helongjiang Box by Guang Yu

SHV cover by Irma Boom



SHV cover by Irma Boom

Balancing mass production and craftsmanship

Industrial designer Hella Jongerius' work encompasses ceramics, porcelain, textile and furniture. Jongerius' products reveal specific archetypes but in a fresh, quirky way. She received worldwide recognition in 1994 for her traditional vase made of gum elastic. For the exhibition, Jongerius has designed a cupboard for the colored vases.

Striking a new balance between mass production and craftsmanship is the heart of her work.

"I'm fascinated by the industrial process, by factories and machinery, but I don't like the industrial products," Jongerius said.

Despite Jongerius' love-hate relationship with mass production, she opted to work with major commercial companies like Vitra and Ikea.

With her innovative combinations of materials and techniques she pushes the boundaries of both industrial production and traditional craftsmanship. Her goal is a symbiosis between the perfection of mass production and the imperfection of hand production.

"Today, all colors are made industrially. If you want to darken red, you should mix it with green to get a vibrant dark color. That's how painters work. For the industry, that's much too expensive with all the testing, so they simply use black. Through her collaboration with major companies, such as Vitra, she realized that "we have to act to stop industry from destroying something so beautiful and ending our wealth of colors."



Colored Vases by Hella Jongerius

"There's conflict between a journalist's motivation, which is to understand things, and architect's motivation to change things."

— Rem Koolhaas, Dutch architect

Redefining luxury

As a pioneer in Dutch fashion, Alexander von Slobbe resists the codes and conventions of the fashion industry. His designs are reexamined, elegant and they can reflect the role of fashion in mass production.

Von Slobbe creates new luxury products by designing clothes on a small scale and having them hand-made in the Netherlands. It is an approach in which Von Slobbe makes consistent use of old, forgotten craft techniques.

"In the past 20 years, the definition of luxury had to include a brand name. Doesn't luxury have much more to do with the quality of being singular? We all get emails that say and we are really worried to read other anyone. I'd get a letter written with a ballpoint pen, I know that care has gone into it. That, to me, is luxury," Von Slobbe said.

His garments often consist of simple squares of fabric with ribbons stitched into or onto them so they can be elegantly shaped to fit the body. His installation in this exhibition illustrates his ethos and design technique.

Chinese fashion designer Ma Ke feels the same way. Ma's research into recycling, sustainability and traditional design techniques challenges the fashion industry. She is a pioneer in Dutch fashion, and her designs are reexamined, elegant and they can reflect the role of fashion in mass production.

Ma has placed dramatic emphasis on the organic, sustainable aspects of fashion, and the use of old, forgotten craft techniques.

"It's a real shame that a lot of young people know nothing about embroidery even though their mothers or grandmothers were experts," Ma said.

Ma's workshop in Zhuhai, Guangdong Province, employs a team of workers skilled in traditional clothing manufacture. All stages of production are done in-house: spinning, weaving, dyeing and sewing are done using traditional equipment such as a 90-century hand-loom.

"Ma Slobbe thinks these techniques are useless nowadays, but I think they are one of the connectives between human and nature," she said.

Some of her designs incorporate recycled materials and discarded objects, including a paint-covered sheet made into a dress and an old tarpaulin turned into an overcast coat.



Wowing by Ma Ke



New Luxury by Alexander von Slobbe
Photos provided by Today Art Museum

"Chinese society is inclined to similarities. People often refuse change... I'm like a chef who has to calculate the balance and relationship between paper, printing, text and typography to make a tasty soup."

— Liu Zhizhi, member of MEWE, a Chinese design group

Taking a Stance — 8 Critical Attitudes in Chinese and Dutch Architecture and Design
 Today Art Museum, Building 4, Pinged Community, 32 Bateiwan Lu, Chaoyang District
 When: Until May 14, daily except Monday, 10 am - 5 pm
 Admission: 20 yuan, 10 yuan for students
 Tel: 8976 9804

Bringing culture to urban life

Distinctive architecture is an easy target for critics, but architects still try to bring new character to each city.

The exhibition showcases Rem Koolhaas' design for the Taipei Performing Arts Center. Koolhaas explores and grasps urban culture beyond building design. Rather than relocate a night market famous for local food, he built three theaters above it.

"Taipei is an exciting city. On average, there's nowhere else in the world where people stay up later. This makes for an exciting night market. Koolhaas was a journalist. There's conflict between a journalist's motivation, which is to understand things, and an architect's motivation to change things. As a journalist, you might say, I like the restaurants, and as an architect, I'm involved in changing the situation. So as a journalist I kept what was there, and as an architect, I constructed the building over it," he said.

Chinese architecture group Urbans also explores the role architecture can play in improving the rapidly changing contemporary urban environment and the quality of life of city dwellers.

Its project *Taipei in Guangzhou* is an example. This project reinvigorates traditional Hakka housing: a circular, multi-story building with a central courtyard. The new social housing program follows the same spatial configuration and program. With this project, Urbans intends to improve the living conditions of the poorer members of society, and reduce their social isolation.

"After people started living in the Taihu, we did some research. We found we really had achieved this social effect, which cannot be achieved through normal residential buildings. The residents there all know each other from childhood to adulthood," Meng Yan, a member of Urbans, said.

Taipei Performing Arts Center, by Rem Koolhaas



Chinese and Dutch designers' creations use techniques of the past

Random House publisher a food connoisseur

By Charles Zhu

Jason Epstein, editorial editor of Random House, a pioneer of the paperback revolution and a founder of the *New York Review of Books* and the Library of America, guides readers on a pleasant and mouth-watering journey of fine food and wine in his *Eating: A Memoir*.

The book is collected in part from food columns he wrote for the *New York Times* since in 2002. As Proust once demonstrated with his madeleine cakes, taste is a powerful unleasher of memories.

Epstein cultivated his love of food, especially New England cuisine, in childhood when he spent his summer days at his Russian-born grandparents' home in Auburn, Maine.

"I began cooking as a child as other children of my generation toyed with chemistry sets or electric trains," he says. Though his grandmother was no great cook, he took from her wainscoted kitchen a sense of warmth that he has replicated in his own, and "the desire that persists long after her death to help her improve her cooking."

He took summer jobs as a professional cook during college summers on Cape Cod. His

most outstanding recipes include chicken pot pie, lobster rolls, potato cakes and fried chicken.

He maintains two kitchens, one at Sag Harbor on Long Island and the other in Manhattan, entirely a copy of his grandmother's. "My lifelong interest in recreating the cuisine of my childhood is proof of the persistence of memory and its power to shape one's days," he says.

Epstein has lived a life as "a valet and evangelist for writers." He is a legendary editor of Norman Mailer, Vladimir Nabokov, Gore Vidal and E. L. Doctorow, among many other distinguished writers. In the book, he recounts one of his encounters with Norman and Norris Mailer on the latter's deck in Provincetown, Massachusetts, "lobster over linguine with a bottle of Chablis beneath a perfect sky," he writes.

Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis once took him to lunch at Lutece, where they ate shad roe and she asked him for an editing job at Random House. He turned her down. He once had a shipboard meal with Edmund Wilson, the powerful literary critic of the day, and a New Year's dinner aboard the old Ile de France with

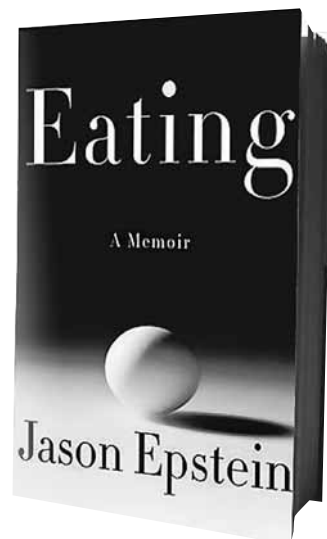
Buster Keaton. He dined with the dreaded Roy Cohn one evening at New York's glamorous "21" restaurant and had Chinese omelettes with the great Jane Jacobs at the edge of the Arctic Ocean. He had to examine the chair before sitting down to dinner with W. H. Auden.

Among the repasts he describes are several with Long Island neighbors, including the late Craig Claiborne and recently deceased Sheila Lukins. Other dining companions include Maida Heatter of dessert fame, in Miami.

He was also the editor of such great chefs and bakers as Alice Waters, Wolfgang Puck and Maida Heatter.

The author says he takes some cooking advice from the Greek philosopher Heraclitus who said that you can never step in the same river twice. He urges readers to be creative in every dish and avoid rigid formulas. Recipes unfold as stove-side stories, and he demonstrates his personal touches in putting a dish together.

The memoir offers recipes, ingredients and tips on technique. The book's recipes – from steak tartare enclosed in burnt hamburger crust to a



Eating: A Memoir
By Jason Epstein, 192pp, Knopf, \$25

simple braised duck with olives – will undoubtedly set your mouth watering.

"Recipes should be more like stories than maps or formulae. So in this book I tell practical stories about some favorite dishes and how they fit into my life," he says.

Critics say Epstein's book,

like M.F.K. Fisher's *The Art of Eating* (1954), Laurie Colwin's *Home Cooking* (1988) and, more recently, Amanda Hesser's *Cooking for Mr. Latte* (2003), tucks recipes into an entertaining, alternately informative and autobiographical narrative.

And that narrative is why it outshines other cookbooks.

Story of youth told on mainland after 33 years

By He Jianwei

Teenage confusion, angst, sexuality, alienation and rebellion are forever themes in popular literature. American literature has J. D. Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye*, and Chinese literature has Chu Tien-hsin's *Songs of Touching Earth*.

Where Salinger's book is driven by testosterone, Chu's is more forthright and romantic.

The prose collection, *Songs*, was Chu's first book written when she was 18. It was first published in 1977 and its simplified Chinese version was released this February.

"Li Zicheng (1606-1645) joined the rebels when he was 18. How I wasted my days when



Songs of Touching Earth
By Chu Tien-hsin, 264pp, Guangxi Normal University Press, 24.80 yuan

I was fagging away at my mathematics," Chu said last month at One Way Street Bookstore.

In her last summer holiday of high school, she started to write about her three-year campus life at Taipei First Girls' High School. Under the pressure of college entrance exams, she and her classmates skipped class to read beyond their textbooks, watch movies and take trains to other cities.

Like Salinger's novel, Chu's book influenced several generations of readers, both adults and teenagers.

Chu was born to a literary family in Taiwan Province.

Her father Chu His-ning has been an important writer since

the 1950s. His fictions display an interest in the impact of modernity on ordinary people and in the clash of social forces.

Her older sister Chu Tien-wen writes many scripts for Taiwanese director Hou Hsiao-hsien, including *A City of Sadness*, winner of a Golden Lion at the 1989 Venice Film Festival.

Unlike her older sister, Tien-hsin has a restless soul. She wanted to be a farmer when she was 5, an artilleryman at 8, and then a Minor League Baseball player in Williamsport and a journalist.

As a teen, she met Hu Lancheng, a writer and editor and the husband of novelist Eileen Chang. Hu served in Chi-

na's puppet government headed by Wang Jingwei from 1930 to 1940. After World War II, he went into hiding in Japan. In the early 1970s, he lived in Chu's house in Taiwan.

Chu treated Hu as her teacher and always called him "grandpa." When she started to write *Songs*, Hu was writing studies on Buddhism. "He brought a good-quality ballpoint pen to me and made a bet to see who could finish a book first," she said.

Hu's publications were forbidden at that time in Taiwan. In her last chapters, Chu "borrows" many of Hu's works. "I wanted to make them, in my own words, heard free of oppression," she said.

Timezone8 book listing

Timezone8 is a Hong Kong-based publisher, distributor and retailer of books on contemporary art, architecture, photography and design. This week, it recommends three new titles to *Beijing Today* readers.

To Each His Own

Edited by Gu Zhenqing, 151pp, Timezone8, \$40

A critique of the value system espoused by global capitalism and the consumerist frenzy of the art market. Commentators include the artists Sui Jianguo, Li Xiangqun and Jin Jianguo.

Liu Ren's Photographs

By Zhang Zhaohui, 48pp, Timezone8, \$18

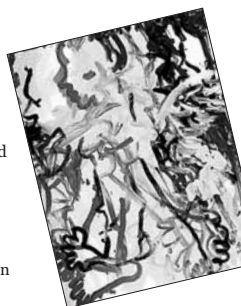
Liu Ren's works are tinged with Surrealism and informed by contemporary art. In the spirit of Cindy Sherman, Liu's

self-portraits – in which she is digitally duplicated throughout the frame – take place in an ethereal fantasy world replete with carousel horses and iridescent bubbles.

Visible/Invisible

Edited by Jan Learning and Ma Rong, 240pp, Timezone8, \$80

Contemporary Chinese abstraction seen through the works of Xu Hongming, Zhang Fan, Tan Ping, Wang Guangle, Zhou Yangming, Li Yang, Chen Ruo Bing, Tang Kaizhi and Lin Yan. This volume explores both West-



ern notions of abstraction and the possibility that abstract art existed in ancient China.

(By He Jianwei)

By Wang Yu

Beijing is unique in its blending of a variety of styles and ideas. These days "yinglun fan'er," British Style, is all the rage with the youth. Fan'er is Beijing slang for "style" and is an important word in the urban lexicon. British style has spread from the niche to the mainstream, and fashion magazines and TV commercials depict it as elegant and high-class. But influenced by arts and second-hand culture, the underground fashion scene is ready to start a new fashion revolution.

The perils of importing a style

Music leads the way

Chris Zhang, a TV director, still remembers the first time he listened to "Drugs don't work," a classic by the British band The Verve. Its sensitive tones and lyrics opened a new world to him at college.

"I started to learn the piano when I was six and listened to a lot of Western music, especially from the US. The Verve's CD introduced me to Britpop and changed my taste in music. No matter how noisy and wild the music is, British musicians are still British," Zhang says.

Song Nannan, a fashion editor, also got her introduction to British style in 2006 after listening to Coldplay. She branched off from their songs to study British fashion and style.

"I think Pete Doherty, Alexa Chung and Keira Knightley epitomize British style. Oxford shoes, Burberry coats and scarves are essential to looking British," Song says.

Local band Super VC also contributed to the trend. As one of the most famous "Brit-rock" bands in China, its members were never really "stars" until they adopted a Mod look.

"It's the same as what happens with mainstream idols - maybe even moreso. Super VC is a good band but I don't think they deserve the attention their fan base gives them," Tony Zhu, a promoter, says. "They copy the style and dress of the Beatles, and they are the handsome young musicians the fans wish they could be," says Tony Zhu, a music promoter.

Sun Lingsheng, lead singer of Super VC, says the charm is part of their game plan. He went to study overseas and learned the importance of fashion in rock. Now the band members are regularly seen in fashion magazines and are selected as spokespersons of brands like Ben Sherman and Metersbonwe.

Music opened the door to other elements of British culture like fashion, drama, movies and literature. When walking through Beijing's urban areas like the Place, young stylists in well-made slim-cut suits with decent shirts and top hats are now commonplace.

New attitude to life

"But yinglun fan'er is more than clothing or taste. It's an attitude - a unique sense one gets through study and experience," Song says.

Those who studied in the UK are rarely opinion leaders because Chinese students rarely get into the local culture. The ones who have never left China often learn the most, because they devour information with enthusiasm.

"British style comes from English history and modern trends mixed with modern music and independent films," says David Vaughan, a football coach and model from London.

"It takes the most unique and flamboyant parts of historical English trends like punk, Edwardian, '50s and other notable eras and creates and fuses a new unique style from those. It has a sense of daring and originality with a fierce sense of patriotism," he says.

Vaughan is a typical British youth and it shows in his dress. He drinks tea and rejects American pop. Some of his friends in Beijing who are involved in the music and fashion scenes share those interests.

"New growing countries like China and Korea borrow their style from the US, but countries like Japan have really taken to British culture - especially music," he says. "But most of the people who adopt it are serious about their fashion and music. These are the people who take style seriously and make it their hobby."

"I have seen mostly punk influence, but now I am seeing older eras like Edwardian and Victorian influencing current trends in Asia," Vaughan says.

Soccer is another crucial part of the trend. Big names from England such as Manchester United FC have many fans in China and one can hardly pass as an yinglun fan'er without being able to talk about last night's match.

"Some young people even want to be part of the mobs in a London pub when there is a local team playing. The trend shows how powerful the country's culture can be. That fusion of tradition and modern city life is something we lack in China," Song says.

Second-hand culture

But the more the mainstream embraces British style, the more it is misunderstood.

"British style" is now every-



where from TV commercials to local fashion media. But the media presentation is a shell of a concept.

Most people having only a passing familiarity with the style equate Britain with tradition and nobility. That left yinglun fan'er in the precarious position of being used to describe anything that is luxury.

"Recently I saw an article about the yinglun fan'er costumes in the movie *Go Lala Go*. But the costumes were a slideshow of luxury brands that did not fit any of the actresses. But now those clothes are being worn everywhere," Song says.

Even in the indie scene, all it takes is a pair of skinny pants, a slim jacket and a Fred Perry polo shirt to be a "stylist." If you don't have them, tough luck.

Modern China is a country dominated by second-hand culture. Before widespread adoption of the Internet, trends traveled from the West to Japan or Korea, then to Hong Kong and Taiwan: the mainland was always the last stop.

"Mainstream taste has been twisted for years. People accept foreign culture in a unique way. But sometimes it is ridiculous to describe a thin Korean singer in an overdesigned suit to be a sample of yinglun fan'er," Chris Zhang says.

"We are still at the first step of copying others' looks and lifestyles. British style has its roots in the country's culture and it only belongs to people there. In the era of globalization, there must be crossover between cultures, but a real mixed style is still a long ways off," Song says.



Candy-colored clothes and all-natural clutches

By *Anmie Wei*

As citizens of a country that mass produces for the world, young Chinese are becoming increasingly enthralled with "original designs." But finding noteworthy products remain a challenge.

This week, *Beijing Today* introduces two shops that are standing out from the crowd through their stylish creations: candy-colored outfits and limited-quantity clutch bags made from all-natural materials.



Cute as Buttons (550 yuan): hand-dyed snakeskin with kamagong wood flaps.

Exquisite yet discreet clutches

By *Anmie Wei*

Currie Lee's tropics-inspired clutch designs are a hit among visitors to Nali Patio. The pieces, which bring to mind Bottega Veneta bags, come in bright colors and interesting shapes with a Southeast Asian flavor.

Lee, a Canadian of South Korean descent, retired from her law practice to follow her lifelong dream of designing. Lee said her passion for fashion began when she was a girl, when she cut up her mother's couture pieces to create clothes for her Barbies' very own "fashion week."

She also developed a love for vintage and black-and-white designs through the skirts and jackets her mother and grandmother made out of their tweed, chenille and hoothstooth Chanel suits.

The women in her family also passed on to her their Bottega Veneta treasures, so it's no wonder the Italian fashion house became a major influence in Lee's clutch designs. She says she adores Bottega bags because they are "exquisite yet discreet."

The idea to design her line of clutches came one day when Lee got so tired of "overpriced accessories flaunting little more than oversized logos," she said. Lee wants her creations to be recognized primarily for their designs and quality materials.

"All the materials I use are either natural or up-cycled and all of the pieces are hand-made in cottage industries," she said. These materials include silk, brocade, batik, the palm fiber *buntal* and the Philippine abaca *tinalak*.

D-SATA by Cur

Where: Unit A116, Nali Patio, 81 Sanlitun Bei Lu, Chaoyang District
Open: 10 am - 9 pm
Website: d-sata.com



The UMA (868 yuan for summer promotion): hand-woven, hand-dyed wicker with hand-dyed snakeskin.



The Lea (1,250 yuan), hand-dyed snakeskin in viridian green and hand-polished water buffalo horn handle and accents, and the Love Bean (1,250 yuan), hand-dyed snakeskin in viridian green and hand-inlaid/dyed abalone bobbles. (Available in many colors.)



188 yuan



228 yuan



228 yuan

Our summer pick on Taobao

By *Anmie Wei*

It's a shame that when people go to Taobao.com in search of fashionable clothes, the first thing on their minds are imitations of designer brands like Chloe, Burberry and Alexander Wang.

Some stores are trying to be "unique" by advertising "original designs," but most of their goods are just hand-made T-shirts featuring popular cartoon characters or poorly copied minority-style dresses.

Then there is Simplecut.

Its home page is simply designed and features magazine-style photos, giving it a young, relaxed and cheerful air. Its model is a young woman with cropped hair and a generous smile, enjoying a day out in a Beijing *hutong* and amid

old, red-brick buildings. Her candy-colored clothes look stylish and comfortable, each with a distinguishing element.

This summer, the brand introduces a pink checkered version of the *qipao* (348 yuan), a bow dress in colorful traditional print but with a modern cut - the bow can be found behind the neck (228 yuan) - and a 100 percent cotton, blue-and-white sailor tee with side drawstrings (188 yuan).

Simplecut designs put a premium on comfort, so most of them are roomy below the shoulders, accented by flattering layers and shapes. Just the right clothes for a carefree summer afternoon outdoors.

Bencai-Simplecut

Web: simplecut.taobao.com



348 yuan Photos by Ben Cai

'Star chef' specialties

By Annie Wei

To show that Chinese chefs can compete with the best of the world has to offer, domestic food manufacturer COFCO last month launched a nationwide search for the Best 50 Star Chefs.

Two contestants, Liao Yong and Yu Meisheng, talked to *Beijing Today* about some of their specialties.



Wish's green outdoor in early summer



Zhejiang duck with rice wine, 48 yuan



Sesame-based cucumber, 28 yuan



Goose liver, garlic and mushrooms, 108 yuan

Photos by Hu Xiao

Wish's new menu is out

Fusion in Chinese cuisine is something few restaurants get right; Wish is one of the few.

Credit goes to Executive Chef Yu Meisheng, 41, known as one of the four Talented Young Chefs of Beijing. Before joining the restaurant in 2007, Yu had 24 years' experience preparing international specialties at Jianguo Hotel's Western food group and St. Regis's Japanese restaurant. But Yu said he had always dreamed of merging traditional Chinese food and aesthetics with contemporary trends in global dining.

"Chinese cuisine centers on taste using ingredients that promote health and well-being," which Yu said he has built on in his fusion menus.

Yu said Chinese cooking uses a lot of seasonal vegetables to help the body cope with climatic changes. Chongqing and Sichuan cui-

sine widely use peppers to help battle the region's notorious humidity.

Yu prepares each dish like an artist would create a piece of work: he selects the freshest quality ingredients, takes his time in the kitchen – using the best tools – and artfully arranges the food on a plate. He frequently uses *xieyi*, a traditional painting style that uses many techniques of calligraphy and is characterized by the spontaneity of lines. *Xieyi* can be done very quickly, but needs long years of practice to master. Yu's focus on detail is part of the reason why a meal at Wish can be heavy on the pocket.

After three years of research and development, Wish is coming out this month with a new menu that contains more than 70 dishes.

Yu recommends the cold dish *chuangyi majiang guatiao* (28 yuan), or sesame-based cucumber. It has the flavor of traditional Chinese

cucumber appetizers, the simple presentation of Japanese cuisine and the emphasis on organic ingredients popularized in the West.

Other chef's favorites are *diaojiu gancai mendaya* (48 yuan), a fusion version of the traditional Zhejiang duck flavored with rice wine, and *er'gan dasuan juzhenjun* (108 yuan), goose liver, garlic and mushrooms served looking like potted greens – perfect for the warm weather.

Wish's new offerings have been much-awaited by industry watchers and Chinese restaurants inside and outside Beijing – which fly in their staff to learn from one of the capital's best maestros in the kitchen.

Wish

Where: 6 Fangyuan Xi Lu, Xiaoyunqiao Wai, Chaoyang District
Open: 11: 30 am – midnight
Tel: 6438 1118



Canzuigu, or fried ribs, 68 yuan

Guizhou's chef is back

Liao Yong, 30, is the executive chef of Sange Guizhouren, a popular Guizhou restaurant near Workers' Stadium.

The restaurant's name ("three Guizhou people") refers to its founders: three artists who set up shop on Sanlitun South Street 10 years ago. That original location did not stand a chance against the wrecking ball of real-estate giants.

Liao, who hails from Guizhou's capital Guiyang and who has been in the food business for 13 years, joined Sange Guizhouren in 2004 and managed its six branches. He decided to go home in 2008, after which patrons complained of a marked deterioration in the restaurant's quality.

Now, the chef is back in Beijing to help reclaim the restaurant's place of honor among the city's Chinese dining establishments.

"Guizhou food is distinguished by its intensely sour and spicy chili peppers," Liao said. The spiciness of Guizhou food can easily be distinguished from that of the most popular Chinese cuisines: it's not as "spicy hot" as Sichuan's or as "spicy dry" as Hunan's; it is milder with the hint of sourness from fermented vegetables, meat or rice.

Liao recommends one of his restaurant's most popular dishes, *canzuigu*, or fried ribs (68 yuan). It is 1 kilogram of pork ribs, deep fried then sprinkled with red and green peppers. The result is pork that is so tender it melts in your mouth. "Some customers like it so much one person can finish an order by himself," Liao said.

The dish is available at many Beijing restaurants serving southwestern specialties – but Liao claims they all learned it from him.

For people who do not like pork, here's some good news: Liao has developed a duck version of the dish (78 yuan). Another option not far off is *sangui miaoweiyu*, or Miao style fish (78 yuan), mind-numbingly spicy but healthy and quite light.

Suntangyu, or sour fish soup (50 to 78 yuan per 500 grams of fish), is a hit among their diners, Liao said. The soup is made with fermented rice and cherry tomatoes, shipped from the Miao minority areas of Guizhou.

Liao is unapologetic about his food philosophy: "I have not and will not change the traditional methods of cooking Guizhou food just to accommodate the taste buds of northerners." This approach is the reason Sange Guizhouren is again packed every evening.

Sange Guizhouren

Where: 8 Gongti Xi Lu, Chaoyang District
Open: 10 am – 10 pm
Tel: 6551 8517

Other Guizhou restaurants Liao recommends

Miaoxianglou
Where: Room 5-19, Building 5, Jinyuan Shidai Shopping Mall, 1 Yuanda Lu, Haidian District
Open: 10 am – 10 pm
Tel: 8887 2894

2gui

Where: Building 1, Guluyuan Nan Li, Qingnian Lu, Chaoyang District
Open: 10 am – 9 pm
Tel: 8575 1765



Sangui miaoweiyu, or Miao style fish, 78 yuan

Photos by Liao Yong

Mystery in simple lines

By Zhang Dongya

"Painting has always been a mystery to me. It has brought me to this world and here, I stay in crystal purity while the mystery remains hidden." This is how Canadian artist Michel Madore describes the impetus for his works.

Madore's drawings, paintings and sculptures will be on show at Yishu 8 gallery in Cable 8 Culture Creative Center until May 22. It is the fourth stop on the artist's China exhibition tour - after Guangzhou, Shanghai and Xi'an - that began three years ago.

Madore, 61, uses charcoal with a light, stroking touch to create an ephemeral effect, almost as if the lines and the images could be brushed away.

To heighten the contrast between lines, he often uses a special canvas: European hand-made paper with a piece of xuan paper glued at the center. Xuan is a type of paper first produced in Anhui Province during the Tang Dynasty (618-907) and is noted for its durability, smooth surface and clean texture.

Madore is fascinated with the

various kinds of papers and carefully studies local products whenever he is overseas. "I prefer paper from Huangshan Mountain, Anhui Province. They make good kinds of paper," he said.

He also likes to draw on onion skin paper from India.

The heads and bodies in his works are shadowy and mysterious, with a marble-like quality, reminiscent of sketches by Italian classical master Michelangelo and German Renaissance painter Albrecht Durer.

"His paintings convey a relaxed feeling. It is rare to find this quality in the work of Chinese artists," Li Xin, a painter, said. "His paintings remind me of the Song Dynasty artist Liang Kai, whose portrait of Tang Dynasty poet Li Bai has simple lines but is very vivid ... It is not easy to create such works."

Figures in Silence

Where: Building F, Cable 8 Creative Culture Center, Langjiayuan, Jianguo Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Until May 22, daily

except Sunday, 11 am - 6:30 pm

Admission: Free

Tel: 6581 9078



Upcoming

Nightlife

Peter Von Poehl

The Swedish singer-songwriter has released two albums *Going to Where the Tea-Trees Are* in 2006 and *May Day* in 2009.

Where: Yugongyishan, 3-2 Zhangzizhong Lu, Dongcheng District

When: May 12, 9 pm

Admission: 80 yuan advance purchase, 120 yuan at the door
Tel: 6404 2711

Stage in June

Concert

Daniel Harding and the Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra

Where: Concert Hall of the National Center for the Performing Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District

When: June 11, 7:30 pm

Admission: 180-980 yuan

Tel: 6655 0000

Joshua Bell and the Academy of St. Martin in the Fields Chamber Orchestra

Where: Concert Hall of the National Center for the Performing Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District

When: June 24, 7:30 pm

Admission: 180-680 yuan

Tel: 6655 0000

Dance

Behind

Where: 46 Theater, 46 Fangjia Hutong, Dongcheng District

When: June 3-5, 7:30 pm

Admission: 50-280 yuan

Tel: 6417 0058

B-Boyz & Ballerina

Where: PLA Theater, 60 Dengshengmen Dajie, Xicheng District

When: June 4-13, 7:30 pm

Admission: 80-880 yuan

Tel: 8322 0726

Marlet by Beijing Contemporary Dance Theater

Where: Multi-purpose Theater of the National Center for the Performing Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District

When: June 19-20,

7:30 pm

Admission: 160-280 yuan

Tel: 6655 0000

Drama

Thunder and Rain

Where: Peking University Hall, 5 Yiheyuan Lu, Haidian District

When: June 5, 7 pm

Admission: 80-150 yuan

Tel: 6275 8452

Musical

Love, Crazy

Where: Haidian Theater, 28 Zhongguancun Dajie, Haidian District

When: June 2-6, 7:30 pm

Admission: 80-880 yuan

Tel: 6405 4842

Opera

Verdi's La Traviata

Where: Opera House of the National Center for the Performing Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District

When: June 1-6, 7:30 pm

Admission: 180-680 yuan

Tel: 6655 0000

(By He Jianwei)

5 Friday, May 7

Exhibition

Tokyo Construction

The exhibition shows Hiroyuki Suzuki's photos of expressway construction sites in Tokyo. The photos tread through the gaps that lie between the city's high-rises and network of subway lines.

Where: Tokyo Gallery, 798 Art District, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Until May 30, daily except Monday, 10 am - 6 pm

Admission: Free

Tel: 8457 3245

Movie

Good Bye Lenin! (2003)

In 1989 East Germany, a young man protests against the regime. His mother watches as the police arrest him and she suffers a heart attack and falls into a coma. A few months later, she regains

consciousness in a reunited Germany. To avoid stressing her out, the son recreates a world where East Germany still exists.

Where: Sculpting in Time - Beihang (Beijing University of Aeronautics and Astronautics), 37 Xueyuan Lu, Haidian District

When: 7:30 pm

Admission: 15 yuan

Tel: 8231 0664

Nightlife

Shan Ren Band

The Yunnan band presents their take on folk music together.

Where: Jianghu Bar, 7 Dongmianhua Hutong, Jiadaokou Nan Dajie, Dongcheng District

When: 9:30 pm

Admission: 40 yuan

advance purchase, 50 yuan at the door

Tel: 6401 4611

6 Saturday, May 8

Exhibition

Coca Project

To many young Chinese, Coca-Cola is not only a soft drink, but also a symbol of trendy American culture. He Xiangyu discusses through his works the influence of US consumer culture in China.

Where: Wall Art Museum, 34 Dong Sanhuan Zhong Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Until May 31, daily

except Monday, 10 am - 6 pm

Admission: Free

Tel: 6564 8232

Nightlife

Throw Me the Statue

Scott Reitherman formed the Seattle band after self-releasing CDs of indie pop in 2004.

Where: D-22, 242 Chengfu Lu, Haidian District

When: 10 pm

Admission: 40 yuan, 30 yuan

for students

Tel: 6265 3177

Movie

Todo Sobre Mi Madre

(All About My Mother, 1999)

The Spanish drama written and directed by Pedro Almodovar deals with complex issues such as AIDS, transvestitism, faith and existentialism.

Where: Lady Book Saloon, 69 Chengfu Lu, Haidian District

When: 7 pm

Admission: Free for members,

20 yuan for non-members

Tel: 6270 1928



7 Sunday, May 9

Exhibition

The 5th A+A

The exhibition does not have fixed subject and mainly embodies artists' different cognition toward life and the times.

Where: PIFO New Art Gallery, 798 Art District, 2 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Until May 30, daily except Monday, 10 am - 6 pm

Admission: Free

Tel: 5978 9562



Movie



Echoes of the Rainbow (2010)

The film is based on the real life of its director

Alex Ro: a tortuous story of Ro's shoemaking family in 1960s Hong Kong.

Where: Broadway Cinematheque, 2/F Building 4, North section of the Museum of Modern Art (MOMA), 1 Xiangheyuan Lu, Dongcheng District

When: 1:15 pm, 7:40 pm

Admission: 60 yuan

Tel: 8438 8258 ext. 8008

Nightlife

Chuan Zi 2010 Live

Chuan Zi, a Beijing native, sings about contem-

porary life, such as the exorbitant price of houses.

Where: Peking University Hall, 5 Yiheyuan Lu, Haidian District

When: 7 pm

Admission: 40 and 50 yuan

Tel: 6275 8452



What you crave may be killing your mood

By Li Zhixin

When Vivienne Tang, a 28-year-old assistant video editor, feels down, she reaches for chocolate.

"I like Dove's hazelnut chocolate bars, Scharffen Berger's wafer, Reese's peanut butter cups and chocolate cake," she says. "I feel better at first, and then guilty when I realize I just ate thousands of calories."

Tang's emotional relationship with chocolate is common. New research suggests people suffering from depression tend to eat more chocolate than those with a normal mood.

Chocolate, depression – match made in heaven

Many consider chocolate a mood booster, but few studies have managed to find a connection. And most of those studies ignored men.

Beatrice Golomb, a professor of medicine at the University of California at San Diego School of Medicine, surveyed 900 women and men about their weekly chocolate consumption and their overall diet. The people surveyed were not using antidepressants and were given a standard questionnaire used to screen for depression.

According to the study published last week in the *Archives of Internal Medicine*, the men and women who were considered to be depressed ate 8.4 servings of chocolate per month, while their counterparts who weren't depressed consumed 5.4 servings each month. Those with serious depression based on the screening ate 11.8 servings per month.

A serving was considered to be one small bar, or 28 grams of chocolate.

Depression was significantly related to higher chocolate consumption, the researchers wrote. It could be that depression stimulates chocolate cravings, and people eat chocolate to self-medicate, confirming some studies on rats that suggest chocolate can improve mood.

It could also be that depression stimulates chocolate cravings for some other reason. People in the study did not appear to benefit from chocolate treatment, the team said.

The possibility that chocolate contributes to depression was not ruled out, the researchers noted. "Like alcohol, chocolate may make depressed people feel better in the short term, but eating it regularly may have a negative effect on health and mood in the long run — especially if the chocolate is in products such as candy bars that are filled with saturated fat and other unhealthy ingredients," Golomb said.



CFP Photo

Other foods may worsen mood

"Chocolate raises levels of the brain chemical serotonin — as do some antidepressants — and also boosts blood-sugar levels, which can make you feel more energetic. But a chocolate rush is often followed by a crash, and the crash will exacerbate the depression," said Zhou Qinlu, a nutritionist at Beijing Research Institute of Sports Science.

The following nutritional downers should also be avoided to maintain a healthy mood:

1. Doughnuts, cookies and sugary foods. These sweets lack the fiber and other nutrients to slow digestion.

2. Bacon, creamy sauces, fries and oily foods. Foods high in saturated fats are digested very slowly, diverting blood from brain to stomach, which can leave people muddled. They can also raise low-density lipoprotein cholesterol: the bad kind.

3. Excess meal. Big lunches that are 1,000 or more calories can bring on afternoon malaise because their digestion time means less blood for your brain. "For sustained energy, eat five to six times a day and three main meals of no more than 400 to 600 calories each," Zhou said.

4. Excess caffeine and alcohol. A drink or two of each may have health benefits, but don't go over your limit. Too much caffeine can make you nauseous. Too much booze can put you at greater risk of cancers, high blood pressure, stroke and heart failure — and, more immediately, mess with your sleep cycle, leaving you tired and blue.

Foods that can improve mood

"What makes certain foods mood elevating is based on whether they contain essential ingredients such as omega-3 fatty acids, tryptophan and Vitamin B or D," said Zhou Qinlu, a nutritionist at Beijing Research Institute of Sports Science.

"Unfortunately, what we crave when we're depressed usually isn't flaxseed or salmon. Our cravings are usually in the form of French fries and foods that comfort us briefly but make us feel even more sluggish and moody later on."

1. Walnuts: They are high in omega-3 fatty acids. In one study, people with lower blood levels of omega-3 were more likely to report symptoms of depression and have a negative outlook, whereas

people with higher levels tended to be more agreeable.

2. Pistachios: A handful is all you need to tame stress. Pistachios contain fiber, antioxidants and unsaturated fatty acids, all of which have been linked to lower blood pressure.

3. Almonds: Not only do almonds contain healthy fat and lots of fiber, but they're also packed with magnesium, which helps to convert carbohydrates, protein and fat into energy.

4. Avocado: Avocado is high in monounsaturated fat and potassium, both of which help lower blood pressure. Monounsaturated fat also helps keep receptors in the brain sensitive to mood-boosting serotonin.

5. Beans: Protein- and fiber-

filled legumes like black beans and lentils are packed with iron, an essential mineral that combats lethargy and gives us energy.

6. Pineapple: Like all carbohydrates, it breaks down quickly into sugar to give people an energy boost. But unlike simple carbs such as plain bagels or white rice, it has nearly 10 percent of your daily fiber requirements and other nutrients that slow down digestion to prevent a carb crash.

7. Whole-grain toast: It is digested slowly, boosting blood sugar and giving the brain a steady supply of glucose. "Processed and refined foods — like packaged cookies or white bread — also provide glucose, but because these foods break down much

more rapidly in your body, they cause your blood sugar to spike and then crash, leading to a loss of judgment, memory and analytical abilities," Zhou said.

8. Water: Between one and two thirds of the population is dehydrated by two to four cups of water at any given time. And since people need water for nearly every function in the body — like converting food into energy — even a minor H₂O shortfall can zap one's system. "With just a 1 percent to 2 percent loss of body weight in fluid, you'll feel fatigued and you won't think clearly or remember as much," she said. "Get five to six cups of water a day, and eat lots of fruit and vegetables, which are naturally water packed."

9. Milk: The protein in milk has been shown to decrease anxiety and frustration. The calcium in dairy has also been shown to calm muscles and help keep blood pressure in check, though these effects can take up to a couple of weeks to kick in.

10. Coffee: The right amount of caffeine stimulates the central nervous system and acts on brain chemicals in a way that improves memory, attention and concentration.

11. Wine: In addition to offering disease-fighting antioxidants, a glass of wine acts as a central nervous system depressant. It initially relaxes people and lowers blood pressure. Just don't overindulge, Zhou said. Too much can leave you feeling depressed.

An overlooked city in Hunan

Yongzhou's natural scenery, Buddhist culture, Women's Characters and Yao tradition

By Zhang Dongya

Xiaoxiang is another name for Hunan, a portmanteau of Xiaoshui and Xiangjiang rivers, the most important in the province. But in olden times, Xiaoxiang referred to Yongzhou, a city in Hunan's south.

In late March, flights from Beijing to Yongzhou were opened, cutting to four hours the previous travel time of 20 hours by train. This makes more accessible to Beijingers one of the country's most overlooked cities that has much to offer tourists, such as the cradle of Yao Nationality and characters exclusively used by women in ancient times.



A cluster of buildings dating back to Ming and Qing lies at the foot of Yangming Mountain.

Photos provided by News Office of Yongzhou Municipal Government



Historic city between two rivers

Located at the junction of Xiaoshui and Xiangjiang rivers, Yongzhou has a history of 2,000 years and was an important area in imperial times.

Lingling, one of its districts, was among the country's only 22 cities existing before the Xia Dynasty (2070-1600 BC). Yongzhou was also an important passage between Hunan and the southwestern provinces, thus it was nicknamed "the south gate of western Hunan."

It features in a poem by Lu Yu of the Song Dynasty (960-1279): "No painting without picturesque scenic spots, while no poems without Xiaoxiang."

Attractions on Yangming Mountain

Yangmingshan Scenic Area, located northeast of Shuangpai County, boasts of a pristine natural environment and a rich Buddhist culture.

The mountain is covered with 10,000 hectares of bamboo, a large area of which is primary forest. Visitors can enjoy its springs, waterfalls, mists as well as majestic views of the clouds.

It is also dotted with ancient architecture, including Wanshou

Temple, the biggest and most popular of the mountain's 27 temples and shrines.

Built in Song, Wanshou was originally named after Yangming Mountain; it was renamed in Ming (1368-1644). The temple's renown has reached even the provinces of Guangxi and Guangdong, so it's not surprising it draws a million pilgrims a year, particularly on October 2 of the lunar calendar, the birthday of the Zen Buddha.

At the foot of the mountain is the Deng Family Courtyard, a cluster of buildings dating back to the Ming and Qing (1644-1912). The well-preserved site consists of 22 houses and five yards as well as tombs, temples and ancient roads.

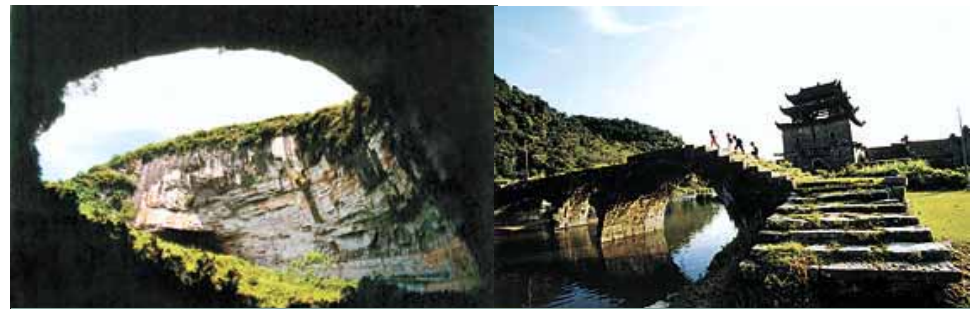
A popular springtime attraction is the Sea of Azalea, a wide area carpeted with azalea blossoms from the end of April till the beginning of May. Visitors marvel at the flower's brilliant colors - red, purple and white - and the numerous species growing there.

It should be noted that there is also a Yangming Mountain in Taiwan, which apparently has historical connections with Yongzhou's. The management of the two scenic areas have established cooperation, including joint annual activities.

Continued on page 21...



Azalea blossoms is a springtime attraction at Yangmingshan Scenic Area.



Xiaoxiang, another name for Hunan, referred to Yongzhou city in olden times.



Yangmingshan Scenic Area boasts of a pristine natural environment and ancient architecture.

... continued from page 20

Characters exclusively for women

Yongzhou gave birth to a special kind of Chinese characters used exclusively by women in Jiangyong County's Shangjiang Town and in certain communities around the city.

Discovered in 1982, the "Women's Characters" are believed to be the only one of their kind in the world. They may have been created some time in the Ming or Qing dynasty to allow women to surreptitiously communicate in a society that put them under men's control and banned female literacy.

The characters can be found written on paper fans and embroidered in handkerchiefs – another distinguishing characteristic of Women's Characters. Translations of the writings reveal their grievances and complaints toward life.

The special characters were secretly passed from one generation of women to the next, surviving hundreds of years. The last woman to have been part of this exclusive club died in 2004. Meanwhile, officials in Yongzhou are trying to preserve the relics of this ancient tradition by establishing a museum.

The museum, Pumei Women's Characters Village, showcases daily items, art and calligraphy bearing Women's Characters. It also contains documents and research

on the special writing system. Beside the exhibition halls is a gift shop selling replica of artwork with Women's Characters.

The local government also built an academy that conducts classes and lectures about the special characters. Among the speakers are the daughters and granddaughters of the women who practiced the secret code.

Cradle of Yao culture

Jianghua, the Yao Nationality Autonomous County in Yongzhou, is home to the biggest concentration of Yao people in the country. The residents have kept their old practices, including using their traditional costume as everyday wear and celebrating festivals like Birds' Celebration and Bulls' Dance.

In Tuojiang Town is a Panwang Palace, a place of worship dedicated to Panwang, the Yao's ancestor. Panwang Palaces are usually found in Yao communities, surrounded by the minority group's traditional hanging homes.

Located 10 kilometers off Jiangyong County is Qianjiadong, the spiritual hometown of the Yao. Surrounded by mountains and rivers, it only has one road leading to the "outside world," helping preserve its tranquil environment. It also features historical and cultural relics, like a Pingwang Temple, written folk tales and sceneries unique to Yao culture.



Jiuyi Mountain features a mausoleum said to belong to Shun Emperor of 2100 BC. CFP Photo

Other attractions:

Jiuyi Mountain

Located 30 kilometers from Yongzhou's Ningyuan County, the mountain features a mausoleum said to belong to Shun Emperor, who lived in 2100 BC. The structure, rebuilt in the 1990s, draws thousands of tourists a year.

Liuzi Temple

The temple was built in Qing to commemorate Tang literati Liu Zongyuan, once exiled in Yongzhou for 10 years. The building contains some of Liu's belongings, including his poems and articles, as well as his biography and the *Statue of Liu*.



Panwang Palace gathers Yao people to worship their ancestor Panwang.

Photos provided by News Office of Yongzhou Municipal Government

Aviation



Continental adds bed seats to China flights

Continental Airlines introduced BusinessFirst flatbed seats to China flights on April 22. The seats were introduced to serve visitors coming during the peak travel season of the 2010 World Expo in Shanghai. The seats fold completely flat to offer 2 meters of sleeping space and can be adjusted with electronic controls to provide lower back support.

Power, headset and USB plugs are available by the seat's shoulder;

iPads can be connected at the seat. Each seat has a 15.4-inch video monitor. The beds will be available on all Sino-US routes by the end of September.

Continental was the first US airline to open daily, nonstop service between Beijing and New York in June 2005. Since then, Continental has expanded with daily nonstop service between Shanghai and New York in 2009. The carrier also operates daily nonstop service between Hong Kong and New York and resumed its twice-weekly Hong Kong-Guam route on April 2.

Summer indulgence

Get that summer glow! The Spa at Hilton Beijing Wangfujing is offering a "Summer Indulgence package" from now through August 31. Take a dip in the sparkling waters of the rooftop swimming pool, and then unwind with a healthy drink and an Aromasoul Ritual Scrub and Aromatic Massage, a body scrub with nourishing cream and a relaxing tension relief aromatic massage



(90 minutes). The package is priced 780 yuan each - 35 percent off the regular price of 1,240 yuan.

Where: Hilton Beijing Wangfujing, 8 Wangfujing

Dong Jie, Dongcheng District
When: May 1 - August 31, 10 am - 10 pm

Cost: 780 yuan per person (15 percent surcharge)
Tel: 5812 8888 ext. 8560

Event

Timberland's tree planting milestone

To commemorate its 10-year-long green project to plant 1 million trees in Khorchin, Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, sport brand Timberland planted its millionth tree at the foot of Badaling Great Wall at the end of last month.

Jeff B. Swartz, company president, also launched Green Great Wall Project, which aims to plant 2 million trees in North China to help weaken sandstorms and offset carbon emissions.



Spa

Hotel

InterContinental Mauritius Resort Balacava Fort

InterContinental Mauritius Resort Balacava Fort is located on one of the most stunning beaches of the islands: a pristine stretch looking out over the Bay of Balacava just north of the capital, Port Louis. The hotel has 140 Deluxe Ocean rooms and 20 Deluxe Terrace rooms, which have whirlpool and private roof terraces. The hotel also has 40 Family Rooms and 10 Presidential Suites with private hot tubs, terraces and balconies, all of which offer stunning views of the Indian Ocean.

Tel: 400 886 2255

Best local hotel in Greater China

After a slew of honors in 2009, Gloria Hotels and Resorts has been named "Best Local Hotel Chain

Operating in Greater China" by the major travel-media group TTG Asia. The award ceremony was held in conjunction with IT&CM China in Shanghai.

Visit gloriahotels.com for more information.

Futian Shangri-La Shenzhen celebrates best business award

Futian Shangri-La Shenzhen is celebrating being named by TTG China as "Best Business Hotel in Shenzhen" with its new promotion, A Night on Us. Guests who stay two nights at the Best Available Rate will receive a third night free through August 31. The deal includes 25 percent off spa treatments, complimentary in-room broadband Internet access and late check-out until 2 pm.

For information and reservations, contact a travel agent or visit shangri-la.com.

Dining



to an already scrumptious buffet selection. There will be pink Veuve Clicquot champagne and a raffle for the ladies. Jumble sales and part of the brunch revenue will be donated to support the foundation's projects.

Where: The Westin Beijing Chaoyang, 7 Dongsanhuan Bei Lu, Chaoyang District

When: May 9
Cost: 428 yuan, 398 yuan, 368 yuan (15 percent surcharge)
Tel: 5922 8880

A great Mother's Day

Show mom how special she is with an extravagant buffet of the best international and Asian dishes.

Where: Beijing Kerry Center Hotel, 1 Guanghua Lu, Chaoyang District

When: May 9
Cost: 148 yuan per adult (moms half off, free cake and carnations)
Tel: 6561 8833 ext. 40

New Sichuan dishes

This June, Executive Chef Tian Qiuming of The Great Wall Sheraton Hotel Beijing introduces his take on Sichuan cuisine in a series of innovative dishes at the 21st Floor Restaurant. Come try his "glutton" bullfrog with chili sauce, silver sea bass with pickled chili and ginger, prawn balls with fresh pepper and "grandmother" chili sauce.

Where: 21st Floor Restaurant, The Great Wall Sheraton Hotel Beijing, 10 Dongsanhuan Bei Lu, Chaoyang District
Tel: 6590 5566 ext. 2295

Pink Bubblicious brunch

Spoil mom this Mother's Day with a hearty and lavish Pink Bubblicious Brunch. The award-winning Bubblicious Sunday Brunch is hosted in collaboration with the Pink Ribbon Foundation. Feast on indulgent pink treats in addition



Charms of Chaozhou cuisine

Master Chef Stanley Yuen unveils the charms of Chaozhou cuisine, known for its superb seafood and vegetarian dishes, at Summer Palace this spring. The flavors bring the fresh breeze of the South China Sea to Beijing. Chaozhou dishes are regarded as very healthy and are rapidly becoming popular. Don't miss out on fragrant, fresh classics that showcase the chef's skill with a knife.

Where: Summer Palace, China World Hotel, 1 Jianguomen Wai Dajie, Chaoyang District
Tel: 6505 2266

(By Sun Feng)

Chinglish story

This column focuses on Chinglish mistakes in our daily life. If you have any experiences to share, send them to Wang Yu at wangyu2008@ynet.com.

Blacklist

This is a column of words or phrases commonly misused by Chinese speakers. If you're planning to be an English teacher, reporter or employee of a multinational company, then watch out for this page each week.

A person called Parker

By He Jianwei

Confucius once said that a person in his 30s should already be well established. To many young Chinese nowadays, the definition of "well established" is quite narrow: it means being married and having a good career.

During Labor Day holiday I had dinner with some Chinese and foreign friends in the media. Most of us were nearing 30 and the topic eventually turned to marriage and career.

"The age of 30 seems like a milestone, but I have not yet accomplished anything. I'm not married and I've changed jobs three times," Allen Liu, a magazine editor, who was seated beside me said, taking a sip of wine.

Most of the Chinese people nodded in understanding.

"Were you scared when you turned 30?" Allen asked Roger Luo, 35, a Chinese-American journalist and the second generation in his family born in the US.

"No, it didn't bother me," Roger said. "It was just like any other birthday."

"Didn't your parents have a discussion with you about your future plans?" I asked.

"They're pretty open-minded. It's my grandparents who give me a hard time. They're nosy parkers and always ask about my love life and when I plan to get married," he said.

Roger saw the Chinese people's quizzical expressions and realized we did not get "nosy parker," so he explained: "They're busybodies and like to meddle in my affairs."

While everyone continued chatting, Allen – who has always had an insatiable curiosity – used his phone to go online and read up on "nosy parker."

A few minutes later, he leaned over to me and whispered, "Nobody seems to know where the expression came from, but there are some interesting theories."



One traces its origins to Matthew Parker, the Archbishop of Canterbury during the reign of Elizabeth I in the 16th century. Parker was a reformist cleric, known for sending out detailed inquiries and instructions related to the running of his diocese. Like many reformers, he was regarded as a busybody – a person who meddles or pries into the affairs of others.

Another theory, according to Eric Partridge's *Dictionary of Slang and Unconventional English*, says the expression dates to the Great Exhibition – the first World's Fair – in London's Hyde Park in 1851. Since medieval times, park keepers had been called "parkers"; during the expo, their tasks included controlling the huge crowds, earning them the reputation of being meddlesome.

Chinglish on the way

This column aims to identify Chinglish in public areas. If you see any Chinglish signs, please send a picture of it to wangyu2008@ynet.com together with your name and address.

Cash recycling system



By Tiffany Tan

If cash could be recycled like paper, plastic and glass, people's monthly salary would go a longer way and we might have a happier world. But I bet we would just find more unnecessary things to buy. For now, we have to accept that once we spend money, it's gone – until our bank accounts get replenished the following payday.

But come to think of it, the process of depositing and withdrawing money is a lot like recycling: you hand over pieces of paper and later take out "new" ones. This was the idea behind the ATM sign, which actually means, "automatic teller machine for deposits and withdrawals."

Like recycling, the rule with money is you don't get something out of nothing. Wise reminder from our neighborhood ATM.

1. It does more than entertain.

Professor Zhu Shida (ZS): It does more than entertain. I presume there is something wrong with this sentence. "More than" can serve as a conjunction. When it is in the sense of "in comparison with," we may have: He is taller than his sister. He is older than I (am). I like his cousin more than (I like) him. The form of the "than" clause is determined by its function as subject or object. When it is in the sense of "compared to that which," we have: She has more money than she needs. Or we may say: She has more money than is needed. In this type of case, the subject of the clause is often omitted. So, in the sample sentence, it should be: It does more than it entertains.

Native speaker Steven Sandor (SS):

The problem with this suggestion is that it radically changes the meaning. In his correction, the subject favors action over entertainment. However, the sentence actually means that in addition to providing entertainment, it also does other things. It is a quite common phrase. Consider this headline from the *Chicago Tribune*: "Hospital mural does more than entertain." Here is an excerpt from its use in a book: "Great literature does more than entertain: it demands of readers that we think about good and evil, life and death and moral and immoral."

2. The village the monk ministered

ZS: When "minister" serves as a verb, it is an intransitive verb, meaning to attend to comforts or wants. She ministers to the homeless. He ministers to the sick, or He ministers to the sickman's wants. It may also mean serving as a clergyman, servant or a nurse. He ministers to the congregation. As in one of the quotations from Robert Louis Stevenson, "My lord's cleanness of mind had not ceased to minister to my amazement." We also have an example quoted from the Bible, Mark 10:45, "For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." So, with the sample sentence, it is right to say: the village the monk ministered to.

SS: I agree with the professor's analysis.

3. The rescuers set up settling points for quake victims.

ZS: As we know, "to settle" as a transitive verb can mean "to establish colonies in: colonize," as The English settled New England. It may also mean "to set in a fairly permanent position, place or way of life" as We settled in our new houses. As an intransitive verb, it means "to take up residence in a new country or place," "to be set in a fairly permanent position, place or way of life," as He settled very quickly in his new position at the company. However, when it comes to expressing the idea of relocating, "settling points" is obviously not a very proper term. It should be: resettlements or resettling camps. So, the sample sentence should be: The rescuers set up resettlement camps for quake victims.

SS: The initial sentence is a little ambiguous. Setting up settling points could be as simple as marking them on a map. Actually constructing a camp there is a more concrete action. If we know that the rescuers were clearing land and pitching tents for the victims, then it would be best to say, "The rescuers set up camps for quake victims." I'm iffy on adding resettlement to the sentence, because it carries an air of permanent relocation rather than temporary. I hope the quake victims will not have to live out the remainder of their lives in a resettlement camp.

The Messenger (2009)



Movie of the week

Hollywood loves making movies about the US's wars around the world. Katherine Bigelow recently made it into the Oscar history with *The Hurt Locker*.

The Messenger tries something different. It is an emotional look at the psychological effects of war. The film has a curious flow to it. It begins predictable, yet remains engaging, exposing the heart-breaking consequences of war no family wants to face. Although the news remains the same, emotions run just as deep. Every scene is handled marvelously through subtle performances.

As the film unfolds, the viewer understands the complex characters, discomforted by their internal struggles that slowly surface.

Synopsis

While on deployment to Iraq, US Army Staff Sergeant Will Montgomery is injured when a nearby improvised explosive device detonates. Back in the States he is recovering from the more serious of those injuries, including one to his eye and leg. He has resumed a sexual relationship with his long-time girlfriend Kelly, despite the fact that she is now engaged to another man who Will knows. With the few months Will has left in his enlistment, the army reassigns him to the Casualty Notification Team in his area.

Not having a background in counseling, psychology or grief management, he is unsure whether he is suited to this job. He is partnered with a career soldier, Captain Tony Stone, who teaches Will the protocol of the job. As Will learns to adapt to the range of emotions of the next of kin, he is unprepared for the reaction of Olivia Pitterson, whose husband was killed in Iraq.



Scene 1:

At Colonel Dorsett's office

Colonel Dorsett (D): At ease. How you getting on, Montgomery?

Sergeant Montgomery (M): It's going well, sir.

D: I have an assignment for you, Montgomery. It so happens that over the few months you have left on your enlistment ... you will get your chance to render some of your most valuable service to your country. I'm assigning you to a Casualty Notification team.

M: Sir?

D: Captain Stone will show you the ropes (1). He is the expert. But until he does, I just want to make myself very clear that although most of your time will remain occupied by your other duties, CNO is to be your absolute priority. This mission is not simply important. It is sacred.

M: Sir, if I may?

D: Go ahead.

M: I've never received any grief counseling, let alone given it. I'm not a religious man, sir.

D: We're just there for notification.

Scene 2:

At a bar

Captain Stone (S): Where'd you see action?

M: Desert Storm/Desert Shield. **S:** Never got a crack at Enduring Freedom or Iraqi Freedom, much to my chagrin. Wasn't much of a war, but ... I got my baptism (2) too. You weren't the only one



getting shot at. So they say you saved your buddies.

Emily: Let me know if you guys need anything else.

S: Oh, you know it already, Emily. (Stone turns to Montgomery) I'd like to strap her on and wear her like a government-issue gas mask. I got my sights on her, so don't even go there.

M: Roger that.

S: I figure I could play the sensitivity card. Tell her what my

day was like down in death valley. Then again, sympathy backfires ... she'll never leave. Trust me, I've been married three times. Twice to the same woman. So now you know what the mission is.

M: Yeah.

S: Hey, if you're not cut out for (3) it ... you're not cut out for it. So you have a girl? You got to think about it?

M: Kelly. We were together since we were little kids. Then when

I was deployed, everything ...

S: She wanted you to commit, you balked ... and the minute you were gone, Jody plunked his ass down in the La-Z-Boy. You probably dodged a bullet. The only reason to get married like that is the extra pay. Cut them in, then cut them loose. Of course, they can always get pregnant and bleed you dry. It's too easy.

M: I just told her she was free. I didn't want you knocking on her door.

S: Yeah, well. Anyway, lot of Shellys out there.

M: Kelly.

Scene 3:

At Stone's house

S: Are you awake? Just making sure you're on your toes (4).

M: Is this a joke, sir?

S: No, no. I just ... You know, since I stopped drinking, I stay up nights ... especially after notifying someone. So you think you might stay on after your enlistment's up?

M: I ...

S: What's your email anyway? Do you IM?

M: I don't have a computer.

S: Really? How does that work? Hey, you're funny.

M: What?

S: You calling my beeper.

M: No, I'm not.

S: Oh, shit. Get ready. I'll meet you on post.

Scene 4:

At Mrs. Pitterson's house

Olivia Pitterson (P): Anybody looking at us right now would say that you're a lowlife (5)

trying to take advantage of my grief, and that I'm a slut and that I'm not really grieving. You ever lose anybody?

M: Yeah. Friends, over there. My father during peacetime. A drunk driver.

P: Did they catch him?

M: No, my father was the drunk driver. My mom woke me up in the middle of the night and she said his brakes failed. Never saw her cry. But it made me want to be a mechanic by age 10.

P: So your mom notified you. (Montgomery tries to kiss Mrs. Pitterson)

P: Do you want to dance?

M: There's no music.

P: I'm gonna go get a shower.

M: But why?

P: Cause I smell. I'm going to get a cup of coffee. Do you want one?

M: No, thanks.

Vocabulary

- show ... the rope:** to teach one how something is done
- baptism:** contracted from baptism by fire, an extremely difficult experience
- cut out for:** built for or able to do something, in this case commit to a relationship
- on one's toes:** to be alert
- lowlife:** a degenerate or immoral person

(By Huang Daohen)