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Celebrating all-inclusive,  
all-diverse Hong Kong

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It's not too late  
to win \$60,000  
worth of prizes!

## Transcend This

Last week Zhang Xiaoming, the director of the central government liaison office, gave a speech saying that the Chief Executive "possesses a special legal position that transcends the executive, the legislature and the judiciary." We've looked into it and it turns out that there's quite a lot the CE is allowed to transcend...

### All Appeals to Reason.

A 2005 speech by a mid-level Liaison Office official relieved the office of the Chief Executive of any responsibility to listen to reasoned, logical debate. This landmark decision has freed up the CE to behave not according to his conscience, but according to how he's told to act.

### The Line at D-i.

While it was long assumed that the Chief Executive would have to queue like the rest of us to get into Dragon-i—a mere 10-minute walk from Government House—a close reading of the Basic Law has revealed that the CE is in fact able to walk straight to the front of the line and he will be waved through with no trouble. This does not apply to Tasmania Ballroom, where the CE must queue with the rest of us.

### The Conservative "Rules" of So-called "Society."

Thanks to a quiet word with Premier Li Keqiang at the urinals just off the Great Hall of the People in July, the Chief Executive is permitted to appear at all official functions in the nude, or "skyclad." However, he must loop a red ribbon around his testes to signify an awareness of the precarious position he is in.

### "Transcendence" (2014).

This lackluster movie about the rise of an all-powerful man/machine intelligence didn't win over audiences. But with Hollywood courting the Chinese market, NPC Standing Committee chair Zhang Dejiang has now authorized the face of the Chief Executive to be superimposed on top of Johnny Depp's in all scenes, making it even more unwatchable.

### The Limitations of Our Frail Physical Forms.

Thanks to a recent CPPCC adjudication, the Chief Executive is now able to shrug off his earthly shell and journey into the realm of the soul, there to commune with luminaries of nuanced political thought such as Karl Marx, J.S. Mill and Tung Chee-hwa, who is a gifted spirit walker.

### Death Itself.

As decreed by President Xi Jinping over bagels last Tuesday, the Chief Executive of Hong Kong will be remembered forevermore, living on in the hearts and minds of Hongkongers from now until the end of time. However, in a stunning lapse of judgment Xi has forgotten to specify what we're actually meant to think of him. Whoopsie!

### Who's in charge?

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# HOME



## Mr. Know-It-All's

Guide to Life

Dear Mr. Know-It-All,

### We're talking about gay rights a lot more these days. What's the reason behind it? – LGBTQuestion

Much of Hong Kong society's acceptance of LGBTI people has come—where else?—from its celebrities.

We owe much of it to actor and singer Leslie Cheung, one of the most talented performers of his generation. Cheung was at the forefront of the rise of Cantopop as a singer and a composer, before shifting into an acting career and setting the template for every Hong Kong entertainer to come after him. Officially bisexual, Cheung was unafraid to take on film roles that others would think twice about. In Chen Kaige's 1993 "Farewell My Concubine" he played a gay opera singer, while as one of the central couple in Wong Kar-wai's 1997 "Happy Together" he appeared in what was (at the time) a relatively explicit sex scene. His suicide on April 1, 2003 due to depression was a tragic end to a brilliant career. He left behind a boyfriend of 18 years and legions of mourning fans. Given Cheung's incredible popularity, it's no exaggeration that he helped to change the public perception of gay people in Hong Kong and across Asia.

It seems to be as late as 2012, though, that gay Hong Kong celebrities began to talk about themselves. In 2012, Cheung Nak holdings tycoon Cecil Chao thrust his lesbian daughter Gigi into the limelight when he offered \$65 million—later raised to \$80 million—to any man who would marry his daughter. Gigi publicly refuted the idea with an open letter in the SCMP. "Since this whole thing has played out, it has opened my eyes to how many people out there are voiceless, and living in fear," she told HK Magazine in January 2013. The greatest irony of Chao's egregious offer was that it showed how amazing his daughter truly is.

Cantopop star Anthony Wong Yiu-ming came out publicly in April 2012 at the end of a reunion concert,

telling the whole of the Hong Kong Coliseum that he was gay—to roars of applause. Cantopop singer Denise Ho, aka HOCC, came out in November 2012. The pair has since used their celebrity status to advocate tirelessly for gay rights, in particular pushing for the introduction of anti-discrimination legislation that covers the LGBTI community.

Much of Hong Kong society still may not welcome gays and lesbians with open arms, but the current of public opinion is only going one way. Celebrity is a tricky brew, but at its very best it can be used not to sell Nespresso machines, but to help change the world. The times are changing and Hong Kong's celebrities—along with countless others—are helping us to get there. If Leslie Cheung were still with us, he'd be right at the front of the march.

Mr. Know-It-All answers your questions and quells your urban concerns. Send queries, troubles or problems to [mrkia@hkmagmedia.com](mailto:mrkia@hkmagmedia.com).



My Perfect  
HK

This week in My Perfect HK:  
Wear pink on Sunday! We're the media partners for Pink Dot this Sunday, September 20, which is a huge all-day get-together in Tamar Park to celebrate inclusion and diversity. We've also launched the Pink Dot Index: A database of super-cool equality-friendly businesses and public figures. We need your help to build it up, so check it out on p.10. Don't own a pink shirt? Go buy one! It would look gorgeous on you.

## Letters

### "Hong Kong bosses will want to charge you for sleeping under your desk."

#### Median Growth

Our story "Median Intensity" (Sep 11, issue 1113), in which we looked at what the median wage of \$14,800 could get you in Hong Kong, was incredibly popular online. Among other solutions, we proposed moving to Yuen Long or sleeping under your desk. Our readers write in...

Millions of Hong Kongers are getting less than \$14,800 (>,<), with the High Living Cost in HK, it is a living hell here!

#### Howie Xerxes

This is supposed to be a humour piece for expats and rich locals.

#### James Chou

Funny how everyone thinks they should live downtown and drive lambos! Stupid article!

#### Paul Hornsby

Not sure where are those figures came from but some are quite true, most are not. For example, constructors are usually getting more than \$1,000 a day, more than \$1,500 for those who are skilful. They earn a lot more than most low classes workers.

#### KY Chan

@KY Chan Construction work is highly unstable. In low seasons the workers could be offered jobs for only few days a month.

#### Derek Yip

Hong Kong bosses will want to charge you for sleeping under your desk.

#### Kees van Es

Mean and median are different measures: Median refers to the 50th-percentile of the sample, while mean refers to the arithmetic average of the measured individuals in the sample. Median = \$14,800, Mean = \$18,780 (can be easily calculated based on the raw data), it implies a few percent of individuals are earning very high income. It should be noted that 50% of the working adults are earning less than \$14,800, which implies that they can't even afford the above.

#### Toby Butt

There they go again knocking Yuen Long... sigh. Great place for shopping and far friendlier than the island clique...

#### Sarah Jenkyn-Jones

## #PrivateEyeHK



#### Lovely Knockers

Photo by Cindz Dela Cruz

Write us! [letters@hkmagmedia.com](mailto:letters@hkmagmedia.com)



# The Chinese Music Time Machine | 中樂時光機

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Suona Duet and Orchestra

**The Flower Drum Song of Fengyang**

Huqin Quartet

**Cloud · Wind  
No Rules**

Huqin Quartet, Guan, Suona and Orchestra

**Sing Sing Sing**

**Take Five**

Chinese Wind and Percussion Ensemble

**A Toasting Song of Joy**

**Horse Race – New Version**

Banhu Solo **Shandong Tunes** (23/10)

Guan Solo

**Three Variations on Yangguan** (23/10)

Gehu Solo **Shaliha** (23/10)

Jinghu, Suona and Orchestra

**One Night in Beijing** (24/10)

Guan Solo **The Dream of Loulan**

(The 4th Movement of *The Silk Road Fantasia Suite*) (24/10)

Erhu Solo **A Henan Ditty** (24/10)

唢呐二重奏與小樂隊 **鳳陽花鼓**

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隨想**

胡琴四重奏、管、唢呐與小樂隊

**Sing Sing Sing  
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吹打奏樂 唢呐領奏 **喜酒歌  
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中音板胡獨奏 **山東小曲** (23/10)

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京胡、唢呐與小樂隊 **北京一夜** (24/10)

管子獨奏 **樓蘭夢**

(《絲綢之路幻想組曲》第四樂章) (24/10)

二胡獨奏 **河南小曲** (24/10)



Artistic Advisor: **Chew Hee-chiat** | Huqin Quartet: **Zhang Yuhui** (Gaohu), **He Yang** (Erhu), **Li Xiaoding** (Zhonghu), **Zhang Ya-han** (Gehu)  
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For latest information, please visit HKCO website. Hong Kong Chinese Orchestra reserves the right to change programme and artists.

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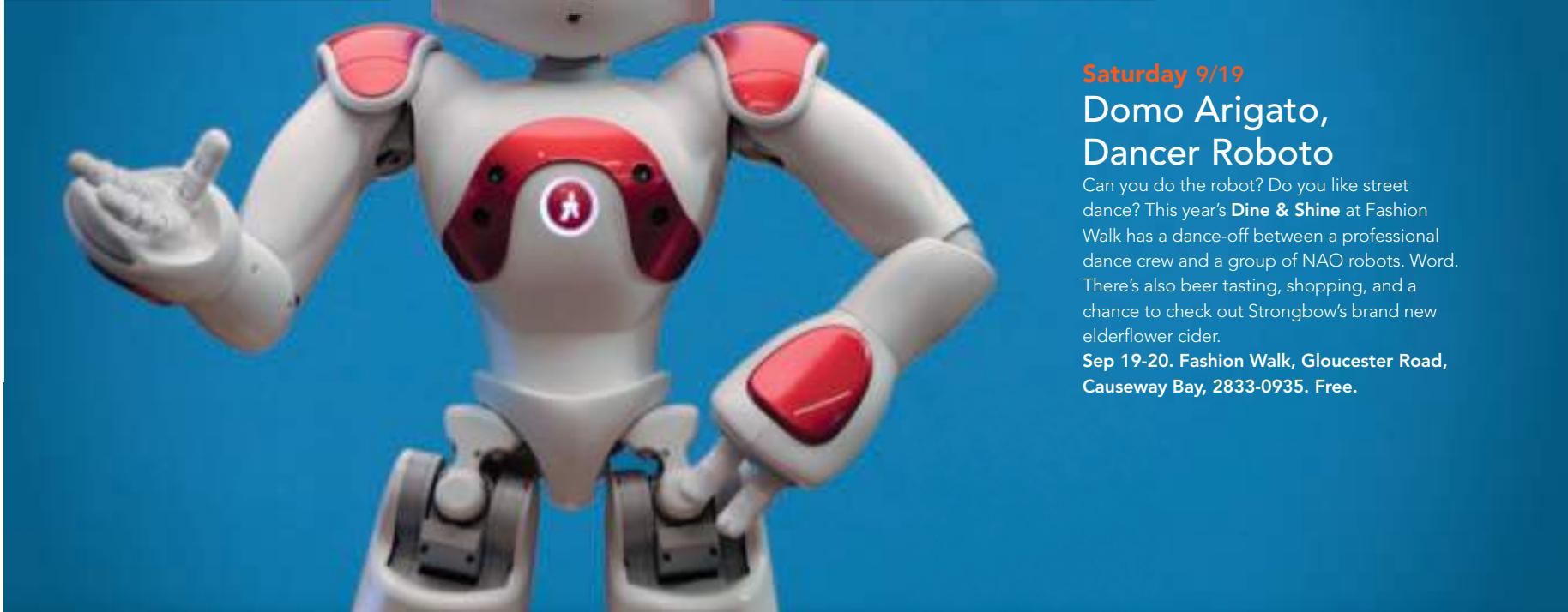
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# THE WEEK



**Friday 9/18**

## La Dolce Cinema

If you're a cinema buff, this is your chance to meet Italian film director **Francesca Archibugi** in person as part of the Cine Italiano! film festival. She'll be introducing her film, "An Italian Name" at the Istituto Italiano di Cultura Hong Kong. **9:30pm. Suite 3201, 32/F, Central Plaza, 18 Harbour Rd., Wan Chai.** \$80 from [www.thegrandcinema.com.hk](http://www.thegrandcinema.com.hk). More info from [www.cine-italiano.hk](http://www.cine-italiano.hk).

**Sunday 9/20**

## Jiminy Cricket!

The **Philippines national cricket squad** is coming to the SAR for a few friendly matches against three teams: HKCA Dragons/HK Development Squad combo (Sep 19, 10am), the 2014-15 HKCA Premier League Team of the Year (Sep 19, 2pm), and the HK Under-19s (Sep 20, 10am). HOWZATTT???

**Sep 19-20. Tin Kwong Road Recreation Ground, 17 Tin Kwong Rd., Ho Man Tin.** Free.



**Monday 9/21**

## Romantic Night

Missed the HK Philharmonic's rendition of the Mendelssohn E Minor violin concerto? Chinese violinist **Ning Feng** comes to the SAR to perform the concerto and two Beethoven romances with UK orchestra the Southbank Sinfonia.

**8pm. Concert Hall, City Hall, 5 Edinburgh Place, Central.** \$120 from [www.urbtix.hk](http://www.urbtix.hk).

**Tuesday 9/22**

## Wasted Talent

Shadow Players director Julian Lamb and Aussie cellist David Pereira bring to life T.S. Eliot's modernist masterpiece **The Waste Land**. Lamb's dramatic performance will be accompanied by Pereira's improvisations, original compositions, and direct quotations from the likes of Shostakovich and Schoenberg.

**Sep 22-26, 8pm; Sep 26-27, 4pm. Black Box Theatre, Kwai Tsing Theatre, 12 Hing Ning Rd., Kwai Fong.** \$230 from [www.urbtix.hk](http://www.urbtix.hk).

**Wednesday 9/23**

## Beer & Bets

Now that racing season has begun, the Hong Kong Jockey Club's back with their **Happy Wednesday** parties to get you through hump day. They'll be gearing up for Oktoberfest (already!)—expect lots and lots of beer. Prost!

**5:30pm. Happy Valley Racecourse, 2 Sports Rd., Happy Valley,** [happywednesday.hkjc.com](http://happywednesday.hkjc.com), \$10 at the door.

**Thursday 9/24**

## Fashion, Sustained

Sustainability charity Redress and Pizza Express team up to host a **charity pop-up shop** selling second-hand branded goods. It's all about wasting less, so bring a reusable bag.

**Sep 22-24. Pizza Express, 10 Wing Fung St., Wan Chai, 3528-0541.**

**Friday 9/25**

## This Much Is True

Following a 19-year hiatus, UK pop-soul-new wave band **Spandau Ballet** has been super active for the past six years, touring and performing all over the world. Is it the burning desire to make music? Or do they just have bills to pay?

**8:15pm. AsiaWorld-Expo, Hall 10.** \$380-1,380 from [www.hkticketing.com](http://www.hkticketing.com). See **Nightlife** (p.28) for more info.

**Saturday 9/19**

## Domo Arigato, Dancer Roboto

Can you do the robot? Do you like street dance? This year's **Dine & Shine** at Fashion Walk has a dance-off between a professional dance crew and a group of NAO robots. Word. There's also beer tasting, shopping, and a chance to check out Strongbow's brand new elderflower cider.

**Sep 19-20. Fashion Walk, Gloucester Road, Causeway Bay, 2833-0935. Free.**

**Saturday 9/26**

## Street Style

Crafty Cow, Mitte, Little Burro, Secret Ingredient and other hipstertastic joints come together for the **PoHo Street Fest**: food, drink, booze, a live DJ and giveaways. The five best Instagram pics get a prize, so get those filters ready. We suggest Valencia.

**Noon-6pm. Upper Station St., Sheung Wan.** Free entry; \$50 for each drink or food item, cash only.



## The Hippest Hops

Hong Kong's largest craft beer festival, **Beertopia**, is back—and just in time for Oktoberfest! The two-day event will include beer, beer, and more beer; more than 200 IPAs, ciders, stouts and porters will be present. Grab your early bird tickets by September 21.

**Oct 9-10. Central Harbourfront.** \$280-500 before Sep 21; \$330-550 thereafter from [beerweek.hk](http://beerweek.hk).



# COUNT ME IN HONG KONG!

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**Volunteer at [handsonghongkong.org](http://handsonghongkong.org)**

#CountMeInHK #HandsOnHongKong



## Last Week In Reality

SAT 5

**Plucking Hell** A 44-year-old man cooks and eats wild mushrooms he picked near Yuen Long Tai Tong village. Two hours later he is sent to Pok Oi Hospital to be treated for abdominal pain, vomiting and diarrhea. The Department of Health urges the public to refrain from picking wild mushrooms in the countryside or in parks for consumption.

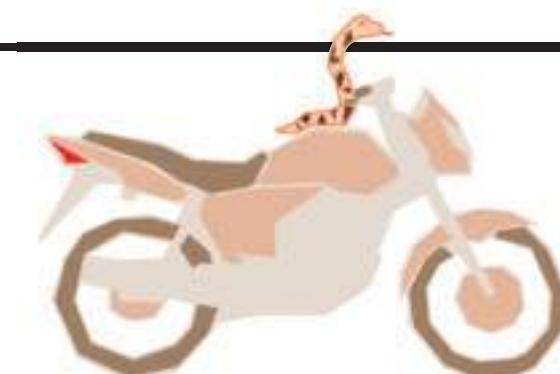


SUN 6

**Monkey Business** Nine monkeys sneak into the swimming pool of Po Leung Kuk Siu Hon Sum Primary School in Sha Tin at noon. Some dive into the water by jumping off the surrounding fences. The temperature reached a high of 33°C that day, and a witness suggests that they were just trying to cool off.

MON 7

**Slappy Bird** At around 11pm, an 85-year-old man sees his 13-year-old son is still playing video games instead of getting ready for bed. He scolds his son, who talks back. The father slaps his son across the face and the boy's face and neck swell up. The son calls the police, who arrest the father for suspected child abuse. The boy is taken to hospital.



TUE 8

**Snake Snooze** A foot-long female baby python is found nestling on the dashboard of a motorcycle in Happy Valley. The owner of the vehicle goes to retrieve his motorcycle at around 8am to head to work and finds the reptile slumbering under the cover. He calls the police, who seek assistance from reptile expert "Snake King Fook." He explains that the snake was born not long ago and that it probably lost its way. It takes the expert several minutes to retrieve the baby python, which has moved and is hiding inside the engine.

WED 9

**Holey Water** At around 2pm, a Ngau Tau Kok street collapses under the weight of a water delivery truck. The front of the truck gets stuck in a five-meter-deep hole. A tow truck driver arrives and stands at the edge of the hole, but that section collapses as well, and he falls into the muddy water. Nearby construction workers lower a cable to pull him out. At 5pm police bring a crane to lift the truck out of the hole, and one of the bottles of water that was in the truck is used to rinse the mud off the tow truck driver.

THU 10

**Thigh Thief** At 2am, a 32-year-old man taking a minibus from Mong Kok to Kwai Chung falls asleep with his iPhone 6 Plus nestled between his legs. The passenger sitting next to him grabs the phone as he leaves, but a 33-year-old man spots the attempted theft and wakes the phone's owner. The two passengers alight together to chase the thief and tackle him to the ground. During the fight, the thief bites the 33-year-old. Police arrive and arrest the thief.



FRI 11

**Taxi Dangle** A taxi in Kowloon Bay drops a passenger off at 8am and tries to turn around to exit the car park. The driver mistakes the way out and does not see a flight of stairs until he drives onto them, leaving the car stuck and dangling over the top of the stairs. Staff from a nearby building get a car jack to hold the car in place and a tow truck is able to recover the car.

## Quote of the Week

"If CY can override the executive, legislative and judicial branches, what's the difference between CY and an emperor?"

Civic Party leader Alan Leong criticizes Liaison Office director Zhang Xiaoming for stating that the post of Chief Executive is superior to the three branches of government. CY Leung has insisted that Zhang's words were taken out of context.

## Talking Points

We read the news, so you don't have to.

### Did the EOC Fire Its Chairman?

The Equal Opportunities Commission announced on September 10 that the post of Chairperson was open to applications, **effectively firing incumbent chairman Dr. York Chow** Yat-ngok from the job. Chow says he had no plans to leave his post. Pro-gay rights group Pink Alliance criticized the move, saying that under Chow, the EOC has taken on "many important issues in society" regarding gender, ethnic and sexual minority, and disability rights. Some conservative and religious groups have **criticized Chow for participating in activities such as the Hong Kong Pride Parade**, fearing that he would not be impartial and would promote same-sex marriage. Chow's term as chairman officially expires in March 2016.

**Our take:** Nothing beats finding out you've been fired when you read about it in the paper...

### ATV Sells 40 Percent of Shares to Mainland Investor

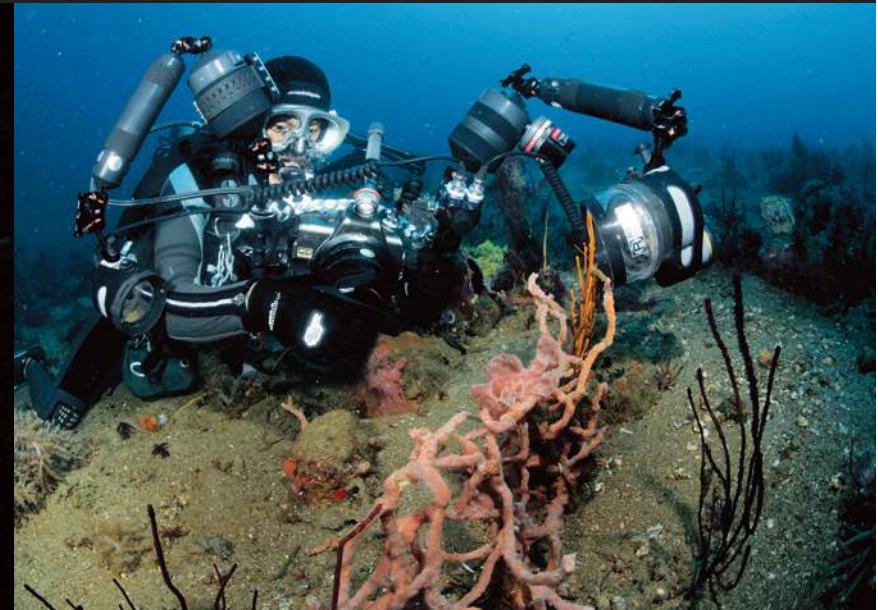
ATV executive director Ip Ka-po has announced that China Culture Media International has **bought 41.66 percent of ATV's shares** and that the mainland company is planning to **inject \$5.1 billion into the company over six years**. Ip insisted that the **mainland funding would not compromise ATV's editorial independence**, and the investors would use a management fund to run the company. However, Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development Greg So Kam-leung has raised concerns over the sale, as the **deal was completed prior to authority approval**; the Communications Authority had not finished processing ATV's application for its shareholder changes.

**Our take:** At this point, anything's better than reruns of ancient, badly dubbed "Visit China!" specials.



## Street Talk

**Photographer Alan Lo is a winner of the UN's 2014 World Oceans Day Photo Contest for his photo (right) of an octopus hidden in a clam shell, "Stretching." He tells Adrienne Chum about his fear of swimming and his beloved sea creatures.**



**HK Magazine: How did you start shooting underwater?**

**AL:** I only learned to swim when I was about 15; I'd always been afraid of swimming for some reason. In 2008, my then-fiancée (and now wife) Connie arranged a live-on-board diving trip in Komodo, Indonesia. I had three weeks to get my open water and advanced open water diving licenses. Komodo is known for its strong currents and when we got there I had no experience with them—and when I dove down, I panicked. I cleared my mask more than 30 times in the five minutes I was in the water! Back on the boat I saw a compact waterproof camera we could rent; I thought it might help. I rented the camera the next day. When I dove with the camera, I was completely focused on it. Since then, I've brought a camera to every dive.

**HK: You bring your DSLR diving. Isn't it heavy?**

**AL:** The camera setup with flashes and waterproof case weighs about 14 pounds, but when you go underwater, it feels weightless. The water basically holds it up for you. I also only bring one camera and one lens at a time: One dive might be about 60-90 minutes long, and I only take photos of one type of creature in a single dive.

**HK: Do the sea creatures get scared of you?**

**AL:** Not really. I don't just take pictures of the creatures; I try to capture their natural behavior. I don't touch them,

so they're not scared. You have to be patient and wait. In other scenarios, I go back to the same spot several times to check back on the creatures: To take a photo of a flamboyant cuttlefish hatching, I dove to the same spot 17 meters deep to check on the eggs every two days, and saw the embryos develop until the moment they hatched. That moment was only one second long, and I knew that most of the baby cuttlefish wouldn't make it to adulthood—so to be able to share the moment with them was very special.

**HK: How do the sea creatures react to you?**

**AL:** There is one fish in Indonesia that follows the dive master all the time, because it recognizes him. Another time, a sea lion in the Galapagos swam in front of my lens like he was dancing. Because my camera is covered by a glass dome, he saw his own reflection in the dome, and started moving while watching the dome as he had never seen himself before.

**HK: What's your favorite creature to photograph?**

**AL:** Small octopuses, the kind that are the size of a pork bun. They're very clever creatures: They adapt to new situations very well. When things like cups and bottles sink down to the sea floor, they use them to hide from predators and protect themselves.

**HK: If you could be a sea creature, what would you be?**

**AL:** A sea turtle! If they aren't caught by humans or eaten by sharks, they have very long lifespans, often over 100 years. I'd go to Bali's coral reefs; they're beautiful and well protected.

**Check out Alan's photos at [www.alanlo.com.hk](http://www.alanlo.com.hk), or learn to take underwater photos with Alan at [www.divinghk.com](http://www.divinghk.com).**



## Blowing Water

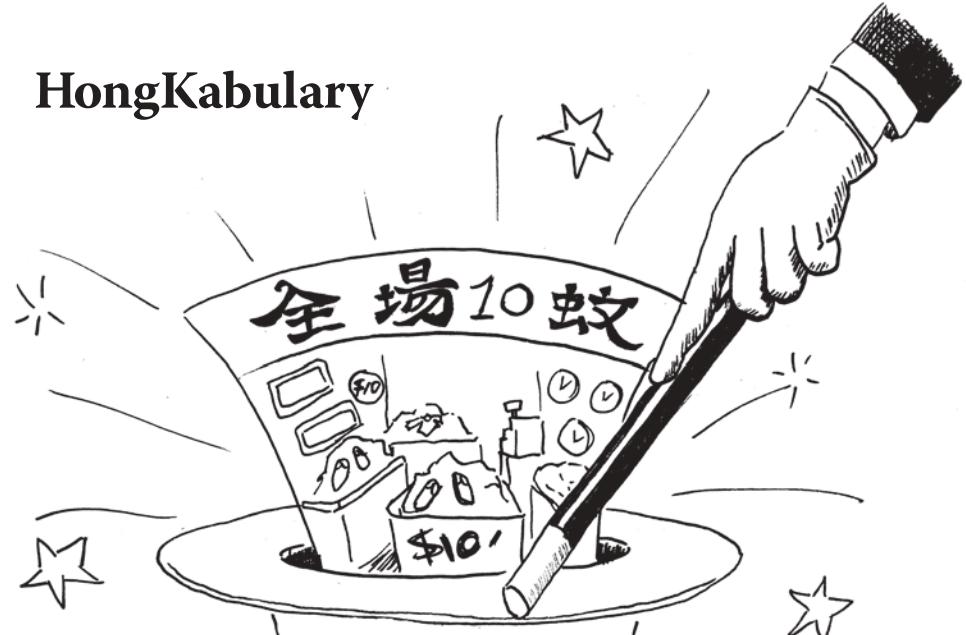
吹水 (*chui sui*), v. Cantonese slang. To chat, bullshit.

geen<sup>1</sup>      lei<sup>4</sup>      dei<sup>4</sup>  
**堅離地**

### "KENNEDY"

"Totally out of touch." Derives from *geen* meaning "strongly, firmly," and *lei dei* "away from the ground," i.e. above the common people. Used because it sounds similar to *geen nei dei sing*, "Kennedy Town."

## HongKabulary



### Por Por Pop-Up (pɔ: pɔ: pɔpʌp), n.

Empty shop space taken over by an old granny to sell hair accessories, cooking utensils, bras, VCDs, children's clothing and shoe insoles.

*"Hey, that's a nice Spongebob t-shirt and flip-flop combo!"*  
*"Oh, thanks! I got it from a por por pop-up."*





"Hong Kong claims to be a cosmopolitan city: It must work harder to learn and become genuinely cosmopolitan so it won't lag behind other international cities in being inclusive towards sexual minorities. Besides being inclusive we must learn to give them adequate protection and equal treatment in conducting their everyday lives."

#### **Anthony Wong Yiu-ming**

Wong was a member of Cantopop duo Tat Ming Pair. He came out to his fans in April 2012 at the end of a gig at the Hong Kong Coliseum. He's the founder of LGBT group Big Love Alliance.

It's not that difficult: Equality's good for everyone. Our city is quietly, irrevocably changing to become more equal, more inclusive, and better. On the eve of the Pink Dot festival on September 20, where we all get together to celebrate the theme "Love is Love," we speak to the city's LGBTI (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex) community about how the city could do better... and what it does fabulously.

By Adam White

#### **The Pink Dot Index**

Is our city changing far enough? In honor of the annual Pink Dot fest we've created the **Pink Dot Index**, designed to create a barometer of the most gay-friendly companies, public figures, places and more in Hong Kong. Look for it regularly in the pages of HK Magazine.

##### **Most Gay-Friendly Companies in Hong Kong**

In May, the non-profit organization Community Business released its first Hong Kong LGBT workspace inclusion index. Here's the top 5:



We want YOU to define the Pink Dot Index. We want YOUR ideas for what should factor into the PDI, from companies to public figures to places. Write us letters@hkmagmedia.com with your ideas. Put "Pink Dot Index" in the subject or we won't pay attention.

#### **Gregory Wong Chung-yiu**

Wong made his name thanks to starring roles in HKTV dramas "The Election" and "The Menu." He's an official ambassador for Pink Dot 2015.

"'Love is Love' means we should interpret love as it is: It is an equal right for every one of us, to love whoever we want. I believe every one of us has the capacity to be inclusive and accommodating to others—including those who are different."





### Raymond "Slow Beat" Chan

"Slow Beat" got his nickname during his time at Commercial Radio Hong Kong. The People Power legislator for New Territories East was ousted during his election campaign, but Chan has embraced his role as the city's first openly gay politician.

"All Hong Kong citizens have a responsibility to build an inclusive society. My greatest wish is that Hong Kong should catch up with the world and enact LGBT anti-discrimination legislation to afford some protection to sexual minorities. A debate about same-sex civil union will be held in Legco this year. I hope that society can respect the equal rights of LGBT people."



**Kaspar Wan** is a transgender activist and the founder of Gender Empowerment, which provides speech therapy sessions for transgender people and employment counseling and support.

### HK Magazine: What's important for transgender individuals in Hong Kong?

**Kaspar Wan:** Awareness is still one of the most important things. But it is not just to be aware of their existence, but be aware of their needs. Support from family and friends, and equal opportunities in employment. In thinking of the trans community, the general impression from Hong Kong people is that trans people have medical needs, because they want surgery to be a different gender. They don't know the other meanings of what it means to be transgender: Not to be the other gender, but to be themselves.

### HK: What's the one most important thing an ally could do to help?

**KW:** Not to judge. Listen. Try to show that you are friendly, that you like to listen and want to learn more about the story—the reason behind the decision.

### HK: What's the hardest thing you've had to deal with as a trans person?

**KW:** The hardest thing is that people have a very binary concept of gender. So they have a very stereotyped concept about gender and how a transgender person should be. Even when I talk to the transgender community, they still have that very binary concept. They would very much like to be accepted, and they think that being the stereotype of the gender can get acceptance more easily. But I see variety and diversity among men and women. We always say that gender is a spectrum. From the masculine to the feminine end, there are varieties and differences. People don't realize that diversity.

**See Kaspar's short film "Kaspar X - If I had a soul" at the Hong Kong Lesbian & Gay Film Festival on Sep 28 or Oct 3. More at [hkgiff.hk](http://hkgiff.hk).**



"He walked into a coffee shop and was asked where his mother was. We told him to say he has no mom, but he has two dads."

**Marty Forth (L) and Patrick Sinclair (R)** have been married for nine years and moved to Hong Kong from New York last January. Patrick is a criminal defense lawyer and Marty is a stay-at-home dad. Their adopted son Grayson is five years old.

### HK Magazine: How did you meet?

**Marty Forth:** Patrick and I met online when we were both living in Queens, New York. We were in a chat room for people living there. I started up a conversation with him because he had a great smile and very rosy cheeks in his pictures. We went on a date the next night and have been together ever since.

### HK: What's the secret to staying in love?

**MF:** I am not sure if there is a magic formula for that. We have supported each other as we have both grown and changed as people, professionals, and as a couple. I would have to say keeping an open mind, talking things through, and being open to what the other needs and can offer. And lastly, being realistic.

### HK: What's the sweetest thing the other has done for you?

**Patrick Sinclair:** Marty threw me a dueling-pianos birthday party recently with 70 of my friends and family—people from every aspect of my life.

### HK: Tell us about your son. What's it like being fathers to a kid in Hong Kong?

**MF:** Our son is amazing! He loves playing, building, running and being very active. Most of all he loves us to tell him stories.

**PS:** It's awesome. There's so much stuff for kids in Hong Kong. There's also a welcoming expat community—Grayson has been on more playdates in Hong Kong than in New York.

### HK: How did you explain to your son how your family is different?

**PS:** The first time Grayson realized this was when he was two years old. Grayson walked into a coffee shop and the person working there asked where his mother was. He ran out and asked us about it. We told him to go back and tell the guy he has no mom, but he has two dads.

**MF:** We have an open adoption and our son knows his mother and spends time with her. In fact she was one of our first visitors, and is down as immediate family in our expat package, which is amazing.

### Michael Vidler

Vidler is a longstanding champion of LGBT rights in Hong Kong. The human rights lawyer was instrumental in the landmark "W" case which allowed a transgender woman to marry her boyfriend.

"It seems that the Hong Kong government is steadfastly refusing to update itself and bring itself in line with comparable jurisdictions. It seems inexplicable. You would hope that governments do take proactive steps, but the Hong Kong government seems to be caught in a continual round of damage limitation and crisis management."





Photo: Laura Simonsen

**Betty Grisoni** (L) and **Abby Lee** (R) are Hong Kong's lesbian royalty. They have been married for 16 years and moved to Hong Kong 14 years ago. They are the organizers of Les Peches, which hosts events for lesbian and bisexual women, the founders of marriage equality group Double Happiness, and co-directors of Pink Dot 2015.

#### HK Magazine: How have you stayed together for so long?

**Betty Grisoni:** There's a secret we can share—"who plays together, stays together." This means you have fun together. It doesn't mean you have to have all the same interests, but there has to be one thing you both enjoy.

**Abby Lee:** With many things culture-wise we were similar—French and Chinese people love their food, and we were raised in families with the same respect for elders.

#### HK: What's the sweetest thing the other has done for you?

**B:** Saying yes to me at a commitment ceremony in front of other people, when people said negative things [about it].

**A:** It's the little things—surprising me in the mornings with breakfast.

#### HK: Was it difficult coming out to your friends and family?

**A:** I came out when I was 9 or 10. I told my mom I liked to play with boys, but I wanted to marry girls. My mom told me I was still very young and that I might not know what I wanted yet, and said that maybe later I could decide again. I came out again when I was 21. Later, I brought Betty home after our third date to meet my family.

**B:** It's a stereotype that Chinese families are traditional and Western families more OK [with homosexuality], but it didn't go down well at all with my family. Abby went to my parents to ask for my hand, but they didn't accept her. For a year and a half we didn't really talk, but little by little, they accepted it, and now they love Abby more than they love me!

#### HK: What difficulties do you face in Hong Kong?

**A:** LGBT couples who were legally married overseas might face difficulties, because if one partner gets a job here, the other would not be entitled to a spouse permit and might have to come in as a tourist. If one of them is in hospital, the other might not be allowed to visit or make decisions for them. We're not fighting for special treatment, just equal rights.

Additional reporting by Shaun Tan

### LGBT Rights in Hong Kong

The criminalization of homosexuality in Hong Kong came from British laws, but it was only as late as 1991 that **Legco decriminalized consensual homosexual relations** for men under 21. It took another 15 years, until 2006, before the age of consent was equalized to 16, the same as heterosexual relationships. (The law has always remained silent on lesbian relationships, presumably because the British didn't believe they existed.)

There's currently **no law against discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation**, outside of government employment. Which means that yes—you can indeed not get that job because you're gay. A 2013 study found that 60 percent of people agreed that Hong Kong should enact legislation to protect people against discrimination based on sexual orientation, so at least we're getting somewhere.

#### Same-sex marriage and civil unions aren't recognized in Hong Kong.

In May this year, a British lesbian woman challenged the high court after the Immigration Department refused to recognize her civil partnership and grant a dependent visa. Judgment in the case will be handed down at the end of November.

Meanwhile, in May 2013 the Court of Final Appeal of Hong Kong ruled that a postoperative transsexual woman known as "W" had the right to marry her boyfriend. However, **the government has dragged its heels** when it came to enacting legislation. "After the 'W' case, Hong Kong was entitled to expect a comprehensive gender recognition ordinance," says human rights lawyer Michael Vidler, who acted for "W." "It seems to me glaringly obvious what the Court of Final Appeal was speaking to, and the government has just chosen to ignore that. They never even attempted to put it together."

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**The Podium, Level 4, Cyberport 2**

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Live Broadcast of Rugby World Cup 2015 at night  
Food and Beverage Booths Available

<b>4 pm</b>	<b>EXCLUSIVE Screening of HEROES REBORN</b>	<b>FOX</b> now TV ch.518
<b>7 pm</b>	<b>Australia</b> vs <b>Uruguay</b>	<b>FOX</b> now TV ch.671
<b>9:30 pm</b>	<b>Scotland</b> vs <b>USA</b>	<b>FOX</b> now TV ch.671
<b>11:45 pm</b>	<b>Ireland</b> vs <b>Romania</b>	<b>FOX</b> now TV ch.671

**Ocean View Court, The Arcade**

**18/9 - 31/10**

**Live Broadcast of  
Rugby World Cup 2015  
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**DELANEY'S THE IRISH PUB**

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# THE PINK CALENDAR

Everything you need to know about Hong Kong's pinkest season.



## Sep 20 Pink Dot

A daytime, family-friendly event in Tamar Park that's all about diversity and inclusion. There'll be free food and drink, plus live music from the likes of Anthony Wong, Denise Ho, GDJYB and MastaMic. Last year's event saw some 12,000 people take part, and with more expected this year. All are welcome!

2-7pm, Tamar Park, Admiralty, [pinkdot.hk](http://pinkdot.hk).



## Sep 19-Oct 10 Hong Kong Lesbian & Gay Film Festival

The 26th Hong Kong Lesbian & Gay Film Festival is Asia's longest-running festival of its kind. Highlights include opening film "Front Cover," about a Chinese-American stylist who must style Beijing's newest, most patriotic, star. Check out the **opening party** on Sep 19, 10:30pm at Zafran (B/F, 43-55 Wyndham St., Central, 2116-8855). \$100 with a drink or free with opening night ticket stub.

[www.hkglff.hk](http://www.hkglff.hk).

## Sep 26 Behind

DJ Angus Wong has put together the newest, hipsterest gay night in town.

10pm. Post 97, UG/F, 9 Lan Kwai Fong, Central. Free, [facebook.com/ClubBehind](http://facebook.com/ClubBehind).

## Oct 10 Pink Season Launch / HKGLFF Closing Party

Shake your thang to art, fashion, dance and music at this event, which simultaneously celebrates the start of Pink Season and the end of the Lesbian & Gay Film Fest.

Kee Club, 32 Wellington St., Central, 2810-9000.

## Oct 18 Floatilla

The legendary gay junk party turns 10 this year, and the theme is "Sailors and Sailorettes." There are spots available on open boats, or you can charter your own and head down. Never been on a gay junk? They're awesome. South Bay, [tiny.cc/hk-floatilla](http://tiny.cc/hk-floatilla). \$500-700 depending on boat.



## Oct 20 Fruits in Suits

LGBT Networking event on the third Tuesday of every month. Suits not mandatory. [fruitsinsuits.com.hk](http://fruitsinsuits.com.hk).

## Oct 24-25 Out in HK Camping Weekend

Barbeque, bonfire, sports and camping on a Sai Kung beach. [www.facebook.com/groups/outinhk](http://www.facebook.com/groups/outinhk).

## Nov 1 Amazing Race Out in HK

A day of sprinting around the city in search of adventure, clues and secrets spread all over the SAR.

11am, [pinkseason.hk/events/oikh-amazing-race](http://pinkseason.hk/events/oikh-amazing-race).

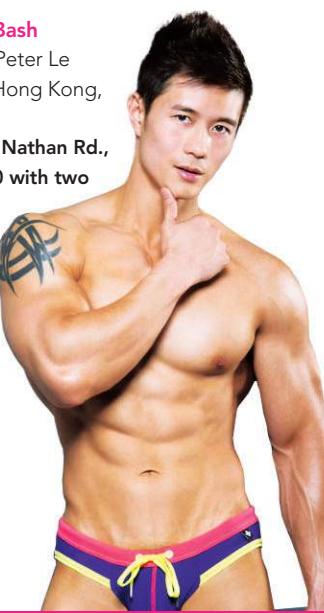
## Nov 3 "Why Our Marriage Matters and Brings Honor to Our Family"

New York-based activists Charles Ignacio and John Catania talk about and present documentary segments on why their own marriage matters—and why LGBT marriage matters. 7-9pm, KB223, Knowles Building, University of Hong Kong.

## Nov 6 Peter Le Birthday Bash

Asian-American porn star Peter Le celebrates his birthday in Hong Kong, complete with floor show.

9pm. 3/F, 238 Centre, 238 Nathan Rd., Jordan, 9349-5482. \$1,000 with two drinks and signed souvenir from [peterleparty.com](http://peterleparty.com).



## Nov 7 Hong Kong Pride Parade

Annual march for equality and gay rights. This year's dress code: "funny yellow." Prep a month earlier with the **Hong Kong Pride Parade Official Kick-Off Party** (Oct 9, 10pm, Wink, 79 Bonham Strand, Sheung Wan. \$120, proceeds go towards Hong Kong Pride)

2pm. Victoria Park to Admiralty, [www.hkpride.net](http://www.hkpride.net).

## Nov 14 "Sexual Outlaws, Rebels and Renegades: Hidden Heroes of the Gay American Experience"

Screening of documentaries about unsung gay and lesbian icons, including jazz great Billy Strayhorn and bandleader Billy Tipton, who cross-dressed for his entire life.

7:30pm. Fringe Upstairs, Fringe Club, 2 Lower Albert Rd., Central, 2521-7251. \$60 from [www.hkticketing.com](http://www.hkticketing.com).

## Nov 15 Out in the Open

Annual beach party put together by LGBT magazine Plug. Promises balloon animals, body art, live music and more.

2-9pm. Bistro One, Repulse Bay, [pinkseason.hk/out-in-the-open](http://pinkseason.hk/out-in-the-open).

## Nov 19-21 "A Language of Their Own"

Initially banned in its home country, Singaporean playwright Chay Yew's "A Language of Their Own" is all about the challenges of being both gay and Chinese in the west.

Fringe Upstairs, Fringe Club, 2 Lower Albert Rd., Central.

## Regular events Guerilla

"Gay bombers" Guerilla take over hetero bars with more fabulosity than a pink feather boa caught in a glitter storm. More at [facebook.com/guerrillahongkong](http://facebook.com/guerrillahongkong).

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FOR CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF 13. NO COSTUMES OR MASKS ALLOWED.

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**Lion Rock Pride**

The Hong Kong Lesbian & Gay Film Festival is in town this month, and its director Joe Lam has taken a series of photographs demonstrating the diversity of Hong Kong's LGBTI community, showcased in the exhibition "**Queers of Hong Kong**." The HKLGFF will bring a selection of shorts to the exhibition space at HKU on Sep 21 (6:30-8:30pm), followed by a talk from the Department of Sociology. Through Oct 2. MC<sup>3</sup> @ 702 Creative Space, Room 702, Jockey Club Tower, Centennial Campus, The University of Hong Kong, [facebook.com/hkumccc](http://facebook.com/hkumccc).

# FASHION

## LOOKBOOK

Edited by Zoe Chan

Blogger & Stylist at [normalchic.com](http://normalchic.com) | Instagram @zoe\_normalchic



### Falling for Stripes

I've always been a big fan of stripes, and this year's Fall/Winter collections agree. Here I'm wearing a boyish striped suit from **Max & Co:** Slim cut blazer and straight pants. To reinforce the dandy look, they're matched with a pair of **Adidas Stan Smith** sneakers. After all, fashion trends are cyclical, and the original Stan Smith kicks are a hit again. Here's a secret: I'm actually wearing the kids' version of the shoe—size 38. It's the same design as the adult version—but a way better price! Grab yours quick, as shops are running out of stock.

Striped blazer (\$4,280) and trousers (\$2,480) from Max & Co, Shop 2122, Ocean Centre, Harbour City, 3-37 Canton Rd., Tsim Sha Tsui, 2722-9617.

14K Gold Ring (top), \$3,499 from Pandora, 57 Queen's Rd. Central, 2117-4650.

Overlay pinstripe vest (\$TBC), also from Max & Co.

Kenzo Tiger Ring, \$780 from Kapok, PMQ, 35 Aberdeen St., Central, 2858-8170.

Adidas Stan Smith sneakers, \$526 from Melijoe.com



Got a great street style shot?  
Tag us on Instagram @HK\_Magazine!



## ESCAPE ROUTES

Edited by Daniel Creffield  
daniel.creffield@hkmagmedia.com



### Get Stuck In

Love colorful Asian festivals? Love Thai-style vegetarian food? Love large, sharp objects thrust through your cheeks and tongue?

If you answered "yes", "yes" and "not sure" there's good news. You can party at **The Phuket Vegetarian Festival**, which takes place on the Thai island from Oct 15-23, and you only need to impale yourself along with the religious devotees if you really feel like it.

What's with the impaling, you ask? Well, while the festival is a joyous affair—with participants showing their devotion to the gods by eating only vegetarian food, taking part in street processions, visiting Buddhist temples and Chinese shrines where they pray, sing, and light joss sticks and candles—acts of sacrificial ritual are an increasingly prominent part of it. Becoming more spectacular and gory with each passing year, they include fire walking, climbing ladders made of sharp iron blades and piercing of bodies, often while devotees are in a trance state.

The festival is believed to have started a couple of hundred years ago after a wandering Chinese opera group,



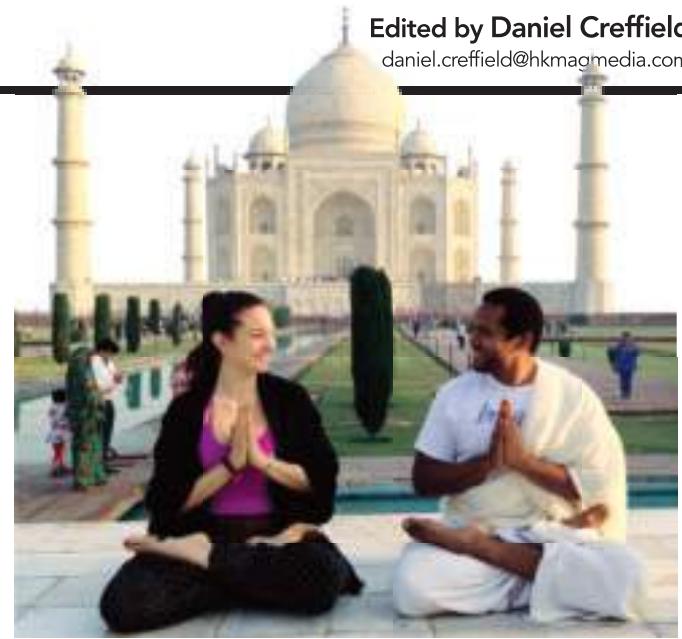
who had fallen ill with malaria while performing on the island, decided to eat only a vegetarian diet and pray to the Nine Emperor Gods. After making a miraculous recovery, local people celebrated by holding a festival to honor the gods, which has grown into the spectacular event it is now.

A highlight is the raising of the Lantern Pole, which alerts the nine Chinese gods that the festival is taking place, in the hope they will descend, bringing spiritual power to the event. Our advice? Absorb the spiritual power and veggie food, avoid the sharp stuff. To allow visitors to take in this amazing event in comfort (getting impaled notwithstanding), **Amari Phuket** is offering a 'Seascape Suite Stay' package for a three-night stay in a recently opened sea-facing suite. Included in the package is a welcome bottle of sparkling wine, round-trip airport transfers, free access to the clubhouse, a 60-minute Thai massage, late checkout and complimentary wi-fi. You'll have to supply your own large sharp objects.

**From \$5,045 (plus tax and service charges of 17%).**  
**2 Meun Ngern Rd., Patong Beach, Phuket, 83150, Thailand.**  
**(+66) 76-340-106** [www.amari.com/phuket](http://www.amari.com/phuket).



Amari Phuket Ocean Wing Clubhouse and pool—not a sharp object in sight



### Tantric Twosome

If only a up-close and personal spiritual experience will do it for you, two international yoga teachers, Yogi Bangora and Yogi Charu, have announced their first joint retreat in Southeast Asia. **Retreat Thailand** aims to provide guests with a holistic yoga experience at The Sanctuary in idyllic Koh Phangan. The retreat includes two daily yoga asana classes and a variety of other classes such as yoga nidra, known as the "art of conscious relaxation," and yoga history.

Bangora and Charu will also host special workshops, including yogic breathing and posture, yogic cleansing, and meditation for daily mental hygiene. Guests will also have the opportunity to enjoy one of The Sanctuary's many detox programs and its comprehensive cleansing menu as part of the greater wellness experience.

With yoga retreats gaining in popularity across Asia, Yogis Bangora and Charu chose to meet the increasing demand from their students by hosting Retreat Thailand with the aim of offering the perfect combination of spirituality and physicality, against the stunning backdrop of Surat Thani's most beautiful scenery. Where do we sign up?

**November 4-9. The Sanctuary Thailand, Koh Phangan,**  
[www.yogibangora.com](http://www.yogibangora.com).



Watery wellness as far as the eye can see at Mandapa Ubud

### A Safer Sanctuary

For those seeking a spiritual experience where the only sharp objects are the cutlery with which you dine on "tailored health-conscious menus for wellness and detox programs incorporating the freshest local ingredients" then **Mandapa**, a Ritz-Carlton Reserve in Ubud, Bali, may be more up your street.

The third bespoke resort in the Ritz-Carlton Reserve portfolio, Mandapa is set along the majestic Ayung River as it meets the jungle in Ubud, the cultural and spiritual heart of Bali. The property offers tailored spiritual, wellness, health and detox programs, complemented by a dedicated patih, or butler. Who will probably frown disapprovingly if you order a beer.

Detox and nutrition, alternative therapy, body therapy and healing are offered at the spa's eight treatment rooms, fitness center, sauna, river-front yoga studio, vitality pool and relaxation areas. With only 35 suites and 25 private pool villas, you'll be feeling better before you know it.

**From US\$570 (\$4,400) per night.** **Jalan Kedewatan, Banjar Kedewatan, Ubud, 80571, Gianyar, Bali, Indonesia,**  
**(+62) 361-479-2777,** [www.mandapareserve.com](http://www.mandapareserve.com).

Traveled anywhere incredible lately? I want to hear about it!  
Email me at [daniel.creffield@hkmagmedia.com](mailto:daniel.creffield@hkmagmedia.com)

# World Wide Edibles

The best way to learn about another culture? Through their food, of course.

**Tammy Ha** meets six restaurateurs bringing a taste of authenticity to the SAR.



## Beyond the Sea

**Taverna del Mar**—"tavern by the sea"—is a Spanish gem tucked away in Quarry Bay. Apart from popular tapas such as ham croquetas or tortilla and frittatas, as the name suggests this cozy, laid-back Spanish restaurant also offers affordable Mediterranean dishes, such as classic seafood paella or tiger prawn cannelloni. It's a nod to the Catalan heritage of the Barcelonan owner and chef, Domenec Lopez, who opened the restaurant with his wife Kim three years ago. A culinary teacher back home, Domenec prepares all his sauces from scratch, which is one of the most important elements of a good paella. All of which means the siesta break the restaurant generally takes at 3:30pm is a well-deserved rest before all the food fiesta starts again two hours later...

Shop 1A, G/F, Hon Way Mansion, 11 Hoi Kwong St., Quarry Bay, 2813-6355.

## Grande Appetite

Wine, black-and-white movie screenings, dim lighting and an enthusiastic pair of Parisians: Does it get any more French than this? Anthony Rost and Stephanie Suor are always around to introduce each course as it's served fresh out of the open-kitchen at **La Grande Bouffe**. You won't be finding escargots and oysters in this casual French resto, because "that's not what we eat every single day in France," explains Anthony. Instead, you'll be finding more quotidian favorites such as minced beef patty, beef tartare and duck leg confit. Wash it all down with a glass of wine. *Santé!*  
LG/F, 66 Hollywood Rd., Central, 2324-1408.

## Madam, May I?

Most Hongkongers are pretty familiar with Taiwanese cuisine but it doesn't stop us from craving it. Get your fix at **Madam's Kitchen**, opened by Mary Lam in memory of her Taiwanese mother, whose family runs a food stall in Taipei. Mary and her chef spent three weeks in Taiwan learning her aunt's home-cooked recipes, and then seven more months perfecting the taste before opening the restaurant. Order traditional braised pork rice, beef noodles, pan-fried oyster omelet, deep fried salt chicken, and many more signature Taiwanese flavors. But there's one thing Lam has adapted for the tastes of Hong Kong: her bubble tea. "Hong Kongers are very specific with and proud of their milk tea," says Lam. And rightly so...

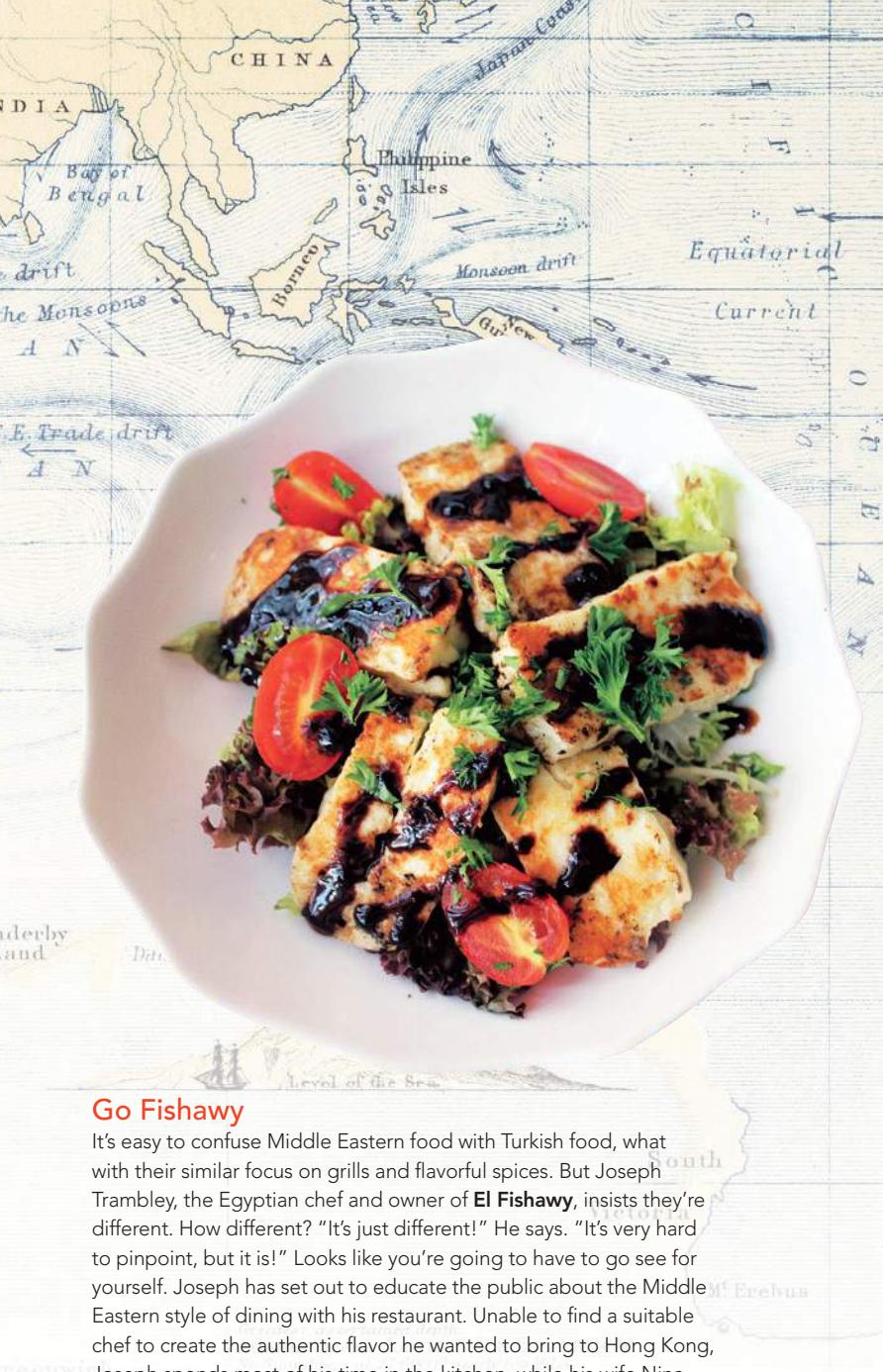
100 Lai Chi Kok Rd., Prince Edward, 2330-3330.



## Soo Pho King Good

While it's not hard to find a Vietnamese restaurant in Hong Kong which proclaims it's authentic, most times you'll just end up with a fish sauce-filled bowl of Chinese noodle soup. Hong Nguyen and Eric Dao of **Soo Viet** were so frustrated with being unable to find a bowl of "real pho" in the city to satiate their hangover cravings that they decided to start their own Vietnamese restaurant. The friendly neighborhood joint offers staples such as beef pho and pork chop vermicelli, and crowd favorites like spring rolls, squid cakes and Vietnamese crepes—all at affordable prices (a lunch set is just \$33). A final tip: Those who really know their Vietnamese cuisine and have a specific dish in mind can order off-menu.  
247 Des Voeux Rd. West, Sai Ying Pun, 2858-1855.





### Go Fishawy

It's easy to confuse Middle Eastern food with Turkish food, what with their similar focus on grills and flavorful spices. But Joseph Trambley, the Egyptian chef and owner of **El Fishawy**, insists they're different. How different? "It's just different!" He says. "It's very hard to pinpoint, but it is!" Looks like you're going to have to go see for yourself. Joseph has set out to educate the public about the Middle Eastern style of dining with his restaurant. Unable to find a suitable chef to create the authentic flavor he wanted to bring to Hong Kong, Joseph spends most of his time in the kitchen, while his wife Nina mans the bar. They recommend the halloumi cheese salad, mazza (tomatoes, cheese, hummus and other spices with falafel and pita bread) and of course, the grilled meat platter. Top it off with a bottle of Lebanese wine—and perhaps some bubbling shisha to wrap up your Persian meal.

123-125 Third St., Sai Ying Pun, 5921-8796.



### Not Just Kebabs

Most of us are no stranger to a quick Turkish kebabs at the end of a long night—but often they seem like the only dishes we're familiar with. Fatih Baydar, owner and chef at Mong Kok's **Our Restaurant**, says there's much more to the Turkish cuisine than that. So much, in fact, that Baydar complains he can't fit it all on the menu of his decade-old restaurant. But there's already enough to be getting on with in the exotic spices and onion-filled flavors of the country. Other than their signature assortment of donor rolls, give lesser-known dishes like menemen (Turkish-style scrambled eggs with tomatoes and other spices), lahmacun (Turkish pizza) and yoghurt-drizzled chicken sausage a try. Round off the meal with a cup of Turkish red tea or coffee.

Shop 9, G/F, Witty Commercial Building, 1A-1J Tung Choi St., Mong Kok, 2781-0583.

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# DINING

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## NEW AND NOTED



Mauro Colgreco: talented AND good-looking

### The World Fare

The Island Shangri-La (Pacific Place, 88 Queensway, Admiralty, 2877-3838) will be hosting chef **Mauro Colegreco** from two-Michelin-starred and 11th World's Best Restaurant Mirazur in Menton, off Cote d'Azur, next month. It's part of the hotel chain's worldwide food fair series, which takes place in different cities across the globe. The Shangri-La International Festival of Gastronomy will see chef Colegreco cooking up a storm from October 27-31. He'll be offering lunch (four courses, \$650) and dinner (six to eight courses, starting from \$2,888), giving diners a taste of everything from jumbo prawn carpaccio to black garlic John Dory. Book in advance if you want to secure a spot for the special occasion. In the meantime, chef Ip Chi-cheung from Summer Palace will also offer a special six-course tasting menu for \$1,388 just for the festival.

### Tongue Thaied

Thai food just got hotter with **Siam 28** (28/F, Macau Yat Yuen Centre, 525 Hennessy Rd., Causeway Bay), a trendy establishment

that serves tapas-style Thai dishes, a.k.a. "Thaipas." Siam 28 will offer lesser-known fare such as sweet and sour eggs and roast duck salad, instead of your usual pad Thai and tom yum goong. But you'll also be able to indulge in classics like stir-fried curry crab, grilled skewers, and mango sticky rice—so there are still safe bets if you're not an adventurous foodie.

### Food for Thought

The Sunday markets in Quarry Bay are back, and this time, it's all—and only—about the food. **Tong Chong Street Market** will showcase local farm produce as well as up-and-coming hipster restaurant stalls and food suppliers every Sunday between October 4 to December 27. And you'll be sampling exclusive goodies that you won't be able to find anywhere else, by the likes of 3/3rds, Teakha, Grassroots Pantry, Pololi and a whole bunch more.

[www.tongchongstreetmarket.com](http://www.tongchongstreetmarket.com).

Email me at [adele.wong@hkmagmedia.com](mailto:adele.wong@hkmagmedia.com) or follow me on Twitter: @Adelewong\_hk.

## RESTAURANT REVIEWS

### Da Via ★★★★★

Italian. 14-16, G/F, Johnston Road, Wan Chai, 3956-9873.



Da Via is definitely a testament to the popularity of Italian food in Hong Kong: After Opera House closed two blocks over, Da Via has popped up with a warmer ambience and casual seating.

■ HIT We shared a serving of arancini, deep-fried rice balls stuffed with mozzarella and slow-cooked beef cheek (\$70). They were crunchy and well made, although a little lacking in beef. Homemade flat pappardelle

pasta with tuscan veal stew and black trumpet mushroom (\$148) had a great flavor and held the sauce well. Homemade lemonade (\$45) hit the right balance of sweet and sour and a Menabrea draft beer (\$68) washed it all down.

■ MISS Though the pappardelle was excellent, the veal in the sauce was quite dry and not all that tender. The fish of the day, a fillet of pan-fried skin-on sea bass with oven-roasted vegetables (\$175), was a little overdone, slightly dry and fairly tasteless. Seating was comfortable and casual but our table was too small and ordering more than one course turned into a game of plate Tetris, with the waitress rushing us to finish.

■ BOTTOM LINE Da Via has some of the basics down but it falls flat on flavor.  
**Open Sun-Thu 11:30am-10:30pm,  
Fri-Sat 11am-11pm. \$\$**

### El Loco Gringo ★★★★★

Mexican. 49 Bonham Rd., Sai Ying Pun, 2858-8833.



Castelo Concepts is taking over Sai Ying Pun one restaurant at a time, and one of the newest is this super-high-ceilinged restaurant/bar in a big basement just off Bonham Road, with laundry hanging from the ceiling for that extra barrio feel.

■ HIT "Big Boss Nachos" with beans (\$60) were well above the usual Hong Kong standard, with particularly good corn tortillas. Beef and cheese Jalapeno poppers (\$15 and

\$10 apiece, respectively) were juicy and moreish—the beef was better—although the blue cheese ranch sauce was pretty unremarkable. Chicken and pork tacos (\$35 and \$40 for one) were piled high with meat, and the pork taco with its pineapple and habanero chutney in particular was worth a second helping. The cocktails are good, strong and heavy on the tequila: go for the Michelada or a margarita (\$100).

■ MISS Their baked potato tamales (\$60) were fairly bland, and were served next to a decent beef tartare that was totally out of place—two separate dishes slapped together on a single plate.

■ BOTTOM LINE Good, affordable tacos will have us coming back—and this time the tequila's coming out.  
**Open daily 6pm-late. \$\$**

#### Ratings

\* Don't go    ★★ Disappointing    ★★★ We'll be back    ★★★★ We'll be back—with friends    ★★★★★ You MUST go

#### Price Guide

\$ Less than \$200    \$\$ \$200-\$399    \$\$\$ \$400-\$599    \$\$\$ \$600-\$799    \$\$\$\$\$ \$800 and up

#### Our Policy

Reviews are based on actual visits to the establishments listed by our super-sneaky team of hungry reviewers, without the knowledge of the restaurants. Reviews are included at the discretion of the editors and are not paid for by the restaurants. Menus, opening hours and prices change and should be checked. New restaurants are not reviewed within one month of their opening. Reviews are written from a typical diner's perspective. Ratings are awarded in accordance with the type of restaurant reviewed, so the city's best wonton noodle stall could earn five stars while a fancy French restaurant could be a one-star disaster.



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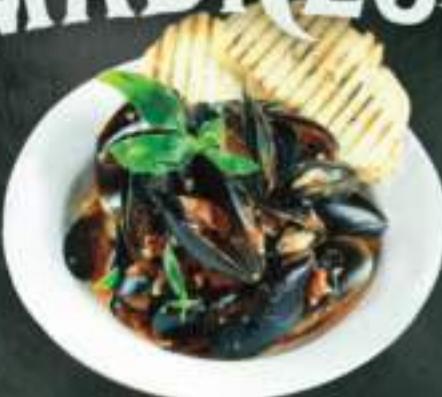


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TAKU SOHO

# CITY STROLL

## Star Street Precinct, Wan Chai

Wandering around our city on foot is the best way to discover its secrets: a delicate little antiques shop, a dim sum resto tucked away in a back alley, a hipster café so cool even the owners haven't heard of it yet. Each month we set out on a treasure hunt to find the city's most interesting sights and sounds. This month: Star Street.



### 1 45R

This Japanese boutique has been around since the late 1970s, with outposts in New York, Paris, and now Hong Kong. It specializes in hand-dyed denim, which is EXACTLY as trendy as it sounds.

G/F, Vincent Mansions, 7 Star St., Wan Chai, 2861-1145.



### 2 TED'S LOOKOUT

This hipstertastic joint at the end of the Moon Street cul-de-sac is trendier than a moustache wearing skinny jeans. On the menu: "stack your own" burgers (\$120) with homemade sauces and plenty of toppings, piled inhumanly high.

G/F, Moonful Court, 17A Moon St., Wan Chai, 5533-9369.

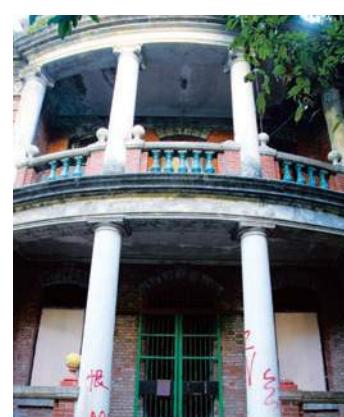


### 3

#### CHEZ PATRICK DELI

It's all about simple, hearty French fare at Chef Patrick Goubier's bistro: Think snails, onion soup, duck confit and beef bourgignon. Although if you can fit all of that into a single meal then you might as well move to France, where your talents will be more appreciated.

3 Star St., Wan Chai, 2527-1408.



### 4

#### NAM KOO HOUSE

Hong Kong's most popular haunted house. This three-story building was built by businessman To Chun-man in 1915. It was evacuated at the start of the Japanese occupation of Hong Kong, and was said to have been used as a military brothel. The site was bought by Hopewell Holdings in 1993, but has remained derelict. It's said that you can still hear the ghostly wails of the women forced into prostitution.

55 Ship St., Wan Chai.

## Stars, Sparks... and Bodies

Star Street Precinct was the earliest burial ground assigned to the non-Chinese population of Hong Kong, remaining so for almost 50 years. In 1890, Star Street became home to the Wan Chai Power Plant, the first electricity generating station in Hong Kong. In honor of the region's new street lights, the streets of the area were renamed "Sun," "Moon" and "Star" Streets, the "three luminaries" which are named in classical Chinese text the "Three Character Classic."



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Website: [www.woodlandschools.com](http://www.woodlandschools.com)

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[www.loveramics.com](http://www.loveramics.com)



## OMD Tops Recma's Media Agency Rankings in HK

OMD Hong Kong announced that OMD is the leading agency in HK based on the latest RECMA report. Among the 12 media agencies assessed, OMD ranked No.1 for its success in the strongest YOY growth in the industry.

"Our competitive advantage is mainly driven by our unique planning process (VISION) with support from our specialist units, which helps us to present a truly integrated communications offering."—Roid Sin, CEO

[www.omd.com/hong-kong](http://www.omd.com/hong-kong)



## Sundance Film Festival: Hong Kong From Sept 17 – 27, 2015

Sundance Institute and The Metroplex will present the 2015 Sundance Film Festival: Hong Kong from September 17 to 27, hosting the Hong Kong premieres of 11 quality independent films featured in the 2015 Sundance Film Festival at Park City, Utah, U.S.A. The festival will also host the post-screening Q&As, Filmmakers Panel Discussion and Film Music Day Lab for indie-film-lovers.

Tickets and More Information at [hk.sundance.org](http://hk.sundance.org)



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# CULTURE



## Mandolin Virtuoso Avi Avital & The Cologne Academy Chamber Orchestra

Mandolinist Avi Avital and the 14-member Cologne Academy Chamber Orchestra perform a program that includes baroque classics from Bach and Vivaldi, and more modern pieces such as Bartók's "Romanian Folk Dances" and De Falla's "Danse Espagnol". Avital's the first mandolin player to get a Grammy nomination, so you can trust he's real good with his fingers. Nov 2, 8pm. Concert Hall, City Hall, 5 Edinburgh Place, Central. \$80-480 from [www.pphk.org](http://www.pphk.org).



## 2nd Stage: Creations Never Stop

City Contemporary Dance Company gets together with E-Side Dance Company for a performance of pieces by choreographers Tracy Chan and Camy Wong. Both "Disorder 2" by Chan and "Something you know... you SCARED" by Wong explore emotion as a source of creativity. It's true: That's why we're so scared before deadlines. Sep 19-20, 8pm; Sep 20, 3pm. CCDC Dance Centre, G/F, 110 Shatin Pass Rd., Wong Tai Sin. \$80 from [www.ccdc.com.hk](http://www.ccdc.com.hk).

## Musicals

### Singin' in the Rain

Hot off the trail of "The Sound of Music," and "Phantom of the Opera" and "Mamma Mia" last year, Lunchbox Theatrical Productions presents the SAR with another catchy song-and-dance spectacle straight from the West End. Never seen it? The beloved umbrella-touting, rainboot-splashing Hollywood musical—arguably the best of them all—follows three performers in the thick of the transition between the silent film and talkie era. The current production will be recycling 12,000 liters of water per performance, so prepare to get splashed. Sep 25-Oct 11. Lyric Theatre, Academy for Performing Arts, 1 Gloucester Rd., Wan Chai, 2584-8500. \$445-1,125 from [www.hkticketing.com](http://www.hkticketing.com).

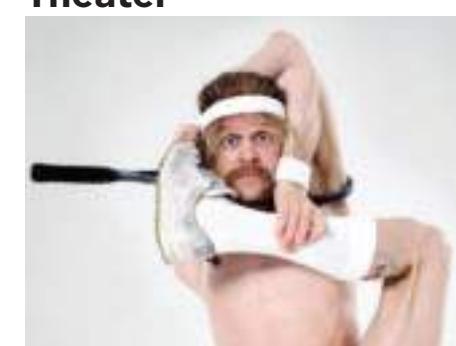
## Comedy



### 9th Annual HK International Comedy Festival

The HK International Comedy Festival is back for a ninth round, featuring comedians from the US, Australia, the UK, and more. Local comedians Vivek Mahubani and the People's Liberation Improv will also be performing for some good giggles. Don't forget to check out the comedy competition for up-and-comers: This weekend is the preliminary round of the competition. Various locations; check the website for more info. Through Sep 26. \$150-300 from [www.hkcomedyfestival.com](http://www.hkcomedyfestival.com).

## Theater



### La Soirée

Move over, Cirque du Soleil. La Soirée is a hair-raising contemporary circus sideshow descending on Hong Kong this September. Met with rave reviews and winning awards in London and New York, it brings a slew of twisting acrobatics, burlesque and vaudeville acts to the Hong Kong stage. Through Sep 20. Lyric Theatre, Academy for Performing Arts, 1 Gloucester Rd., Wan Chai, 2584-8500. \$395-1,095 from [www.hkticketing.com](http://www.hkticketing.com).

## Dance



### Hong Kong's Best Dance Crew 2015

Studiobanz brings in dancers and choreographers from all over the globe to judge Hong Kong's Best Dance Crew 2015. Under-18s and adult crews will be compete in styles ranging from hip hop to house to jazz funk, all night long. Will it be like the final scenes in every dance movie ever made? We can only hope. Sep 18, 7:30pm. Southorn Stadium, 111 Johnston Rd., Wan Chai. \$170-220 from [www.hkticketing.com](http://www.hkticketing.com).

### The Naked Magicians

Just when you thought "Magic Mike XXL" was intense, here comes the real magical deal: This Aussie duo brings sneaky R-rated sleight-of-hand to the stage—but the magic wands aren't exactly what you'd expect. Promising "full frontal illusions," these strip sorcerers will be worth a watch. Just one question: where did he pull that rabbit from, exactly? Through Sep 20. Drama Theatre, Academy for Performing Arts, 1 Gloucester Rd., Wan Chai. \$395-595 from [www.hkticketing.com](http://www.hkticketing.com).

### Love Pings

One woman, seven men, and a lot of pings from her phone: Love Pings, by American director Kate March, is all about finding meaningful connections in the Tinder age. A woman explores her relationships through texts, social media, online messaging, and live meetups. Can e-love really exist? Or is she just another one of those Hot Girls In Your Area? Oct 8-10, 7:30pm. Fringe Club, 2 Lower Albert Rd., Central, 2521-7251. \$350 from [www.hkticketing.com](http://www.hkticketing.com).

## Classical

### Happy Go Lucky Big Band

Kenny Matsuura of The Flying Machine Revival Quartet and the HGL Big Band take over the Fringe Dairy for a night of slick classical jazz. Expect all things Duke Ellington. Take it as read that this gig means a whole lot—after all, "it don't mean a thing if you ain't got that swing." Sep 26, 10pm; Dec 19, 10pm. Fringe Club, 2 Lower Albert Rd., Central, 2521-7251. \$150 in advance; \$180 at the door.



### Bang!

Hong Kong New Music Ensemble explodes their season open with music from the last three decades by the likes of Michael Gordon, David Lang and Steve Hui. You'll be hearing some Jimi Hendrix sampling, funky sound processing, and amped-up instruments. Don't miss their pre-concert talk (in English, 6:30pm), which includes insights from composer Steve Hui himself. Sep 18-19, 8pm. Multimedia Theatre, HKICC Lee Shau Kee School of Creativity, 135 Junction Rd., Kowloon City, 2180-9595. \$60-120 from [www.urbtix.hk](http://www.urbtix.hk).

### Cellomania: Peter Wispelwey Plays Prokofiev

HK Sinfonietta's Cellomania Series brings cellist Peter Wispelwey to the SAR for a night of modern Russian fun. The program contains some Stravinsky and Shostakovich, and ends with Prokofiev's notorious Sinfonia Concertante, which sounds easy but is actually stupidly hard to play. How does he do it, magic fingers? Probably magic fingers. Sep 19, 8pm. Concert Hall, City Hall, 5 Edinburgh Place, Central. \$140-340 from [www.urbtix.hk](http://www.urbtix.hk).



### Symphonic Sorcery: Harry Potter in Concert

Need a little magic in your life, muggle? Take a trip to Hogwarts with the HK Philharmonic. Your guide will be an old, long-haired wizard who will teach you about spells, Quidditch and potions, and play the music of the "Harry Potter" movies along the way. Ten points to Slytherin! Sep 18-19, 8pm. Tsuen Wan Town Hall Auditorium, 72 Tai Ho Rd., Tsuen Wan. \$120-380 from [www.urbtix.hk](http://www.urbtix.hk).

### The Shadow in the Moon: How the Mid-Autumn Festival Began

Mooncake season returns, and to kick off the festivities Premiere Performances of Hong Kong is back with two performances of "The Shadow in the Moon," a collaborative project between composer Alexis Alrich and writer Christina Matula-Häkli. It's the origin story of the Mid-Autumn Festival, told by a chamber music octet playing a blend of traditional Chinese and western instruments. Focusing on inspiring young people to learn more about Chinese culture, kids can also join a fun paper lantern making workshop an hour before the concert. Sep 20, 3pm, 4:30pm. Asia Society, 9 Justice Drive, Admiralty, 2103-9511. \$250-300 from [www.pphk.org](http://www.pphk.org) and [www.asiasociety.org.hk](http://www.asiasociety.org.hk).



**Edited by Adrienne Chum**

adrienne.chum@hkmagmedia.com

## Exhibitions



### In Between White

Axel Vervoordt Gallery presents "In Between White," an exhibition on the meditative works of the late German painter Raimund Girke. His white and grey monochrome paintings highlight his fascination with simplicity and his belief that white is "the Queen of Colours." Question: If we just showed you a plain white box, would you have known the difference? Through Oct 22. Axel Vervoordt Gallery, Unit D, 15/F, Entertainment Building, 30 Queen's Rd. Central, 2503-2220 / 2503-2331.



### Only Now

Artist Gloria Wong draws attention to the beauty of nature within the city in her maiden exhibition, "Only Now." Her prints, influenced by Chinese ink paintings, reveal the combination of strength and fragility in the flowers of Hong Kong. So that's like a bauhinia started hitting the gym, or what? Through Oct 10. Parkview Art Hong Kong, Shop 6, Upper G/F, Sunrise House, 27 Old Bailey St., Central, 2413-0028 / 2413-0068.

### Fields of Abstraction

American artists Freddy Chandra, Paul Clipson, Jesse Gottesman and Meghann Riepenhoff come to Hong Kong for the first time in a joint exhibition at Galerie du Monde. The 16 specially commissioned works are influenced by minimalism, abstract expressionism, scroll art and Asian brush painting. They include experimental photography, installations, etching and more as an exploration of texture and tone, of patterns and chaos. Through Nov 9. Galerie du Monde, Room 108, 1/F, Ruttonjee Centre, 11 Duddell St., Central, 2525-0529.

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# NIGHTLIFE

## OPEN BAR K-POCHA

**The buzz:** K-fans are blessed with a brand new Korean drinking joint, which puts a slice of Seoul nightlife smack-bang in the middle of LKF. Like silly and loud drinking games, lots of soju and large plates of food to share? You've come to the right place.

**The décor:** K-Pocha is spacious and decorated with the usual industrial look: raw concrete floors and exposed brickwork. While dimly lit, it's perked up by colorful chairs and the neon light paintings which adorn the walls—each referencing a different Korean drinking game. Don't know how to play? There are instructions printed on the menus.

**The drinks:** Aside from beers and a healthy list of whiskies on the menu, those fond of the lighter flavor of soju cocktails will enjoy signatures such as the K-Pocha (\$120), a drink made with yakult, Korean pear and lychee; or the more tropical Gangnam Beach (\$120), a mix of peach, orange and cranberry—essentially an Asian Cosmo. Both are sweet, but surprisingly potent. K-Pocha is also the first bar in Hong Kong to brew their own makgeolli (\$150/jug). The fermented rice wine is milky and smooth, with a nicely rounded sweetness, but you can ask for a milder flavor—

alternatively, water it down with some Sprite or Chilsung Cider. After a game or two of "007 Bang," you might decide to go to town on the soju shots (\$120/bottle): K-Pocha stocks a dozen different brands and flavors, with highlights being the Jinro grapefruit soju, which is a juicy, addictive blend, and the pomegranate, which leaves a pleasant cherry-like aftertaste.

**Why you'll be back:** In this rowdy, fast-played-drinking-game atmosphere, copious (responsible) drinking demands a well-lined stomach, and K-Pocha's awesome happy hour satisfies that with free-flow Korean fried chicken from 6-9pm. You can also load up on tried and true favorites such as ddeokbokki spicy rice cakes, cheesy egg rolls and kimchi pancakes. Whether the conventions of Korean nightlife (the game chants, the punishments, and the rapid downing of shots) will show up remains to be seen, but do come with a large group, pick your poison and pray your reflexes are fast enough. Evelyn Lok

7/F, Ho Lee Commercial Building, 36-44 D'Aguilar St., Central, 2770-0611, [www.kpocha.hk](http://www.kpocha.hk).



## Clubs



### Malik So Chic

Ready to get ratchet? The fabulous gender-bending rap queen and performance artist Malik So Chic hits the stage at D-i this month. Gear up with last year's astonishing hit "#BitchesBeSoThirsty"... which pretty much sums up a night at D-i. Go on, YouTube it. Sep 18-19, 10pm. Dragon-i, U/G, The Centrium, 60 Wyndham St., Central, 3110-1222. \$300 at the door.

### Sam Binga Wasted Days Asia Tour

Sam Binga, formerly known as Baobinga, has moved on from his breakbeat rave music and is now touring his debut album under his own name, boasting yet faster drum 'n' bass. Sep 18, 11pm. XXX, B/F, 212 Wing Lok St., Sheung Wan. \$150 from [www.ticketflap.com](http://www.ticketflap.com), \$180 at the door.

### Kristian Nairn: Rave of Thrones

Hodor from TV's "Game of Thrones" may be a hulking blockhead of one word (it's "Hodor"), but in real life he's actually a seasoned DJ who's been spinning deep house tunes for over 16 years. He's played with the likes of Scissor Sisters, Calvin Harris and Mylo. And now he's on the deck at Zuma. For Winterfell! Sep 19, 10pm. Zuma, 5-6/F, The Landmark, 15 Queen's Rd. Central, Central, 3657-6388. \$250 from [next.fatsoma.com](http://next.fatsoma.com) and at the door.

### The Return of the Sky Party

Groove to disco tunes, 101 floors up, at the return of Ozone's Sky Party. Six DJs—including Beijing's Dim Sum Disco and Shanghai's DJ Raz—will be spinning across two areas with two distinct atmospheres. Sep 26, 10pm. Ozone, 118/F, The Ritz-Carlton, 1 Austin Rd. West, West Kowloon, 2263-2263. \$200 at the door, includes one drink.

### Recondite

Volar brings a touch of Berlin's stoic cool to Hong Kong with techno sorcerer Recondite, also known as Lorenz Brunner. Those who get excited by the idea of dramatic drum synth loops will want to catch this one. He's supported by Push resident DJs Frankie Lam, Lukas and AKW. Sep 30, 10pm. Volar, B/F, 38-44 D'Aguilar St., Central, 2810-1510. \$250 from [www.ticketflap.com](http://www.ticketflap.com), \$300 at the door before 12:30am, \$350 thereafter; both include two drinks.

### Don't Let Daddy Know Official After Party

Follow up the celebrity DJ fest with yet MORE celebrity DJ-ing. An unmissable special guest—who won't be revealed until the night of—is slated to hit the decks, accompanied by rising star DJ Mija. Sep 30, 11pm. Levels, 2/F, On Hing Building, 1 On Hing Terrace, Central, 2811-1568. \$550 from [www.eventbrite.hk](http://www.eventbrite.hk), \$680 at the door; Don't Let Daddy Know VIP ticketholders get free entry.

### Kings of House: David Morales, Louie Vega and Tony Humphries

Tazmania Ballroom is throwing a party dedicated to SAR club scene legend DJ Roy Malig. Three giants of the international house scene will grace the decks:

David Morales,  
Louie Vega and  
Tony Humphries.  
Oct 7, 10pm.  
Tazmania  
Ballroom, 1/F,  
LKF Tower, 33  
Wyndham St.,  
Central, 2801-  
5009. \$300 at  
the door.

HK PICKS

### Disco Naps at Vibes

Those hungry for more (and lazier) untzing on a Sunday can be satiated at Vibes' new chill-out party, which will welcome Brazilian-Japanese model-turned-DJ Gaby Endo to the decks. Sep 20, 5pm; Oct 11, 5pm; Nov 15, 5pm. Vibes, 5/F, The Mira Hong Kong, 118 Nathan Rd., Tsim Sha Tsui, 2315-5999. \$60 for a drink; \$100 for two.



Edited by Evelyn Lok  
evelyn.lok@hkmagmedia.com



## Lil Jon

Lil Jon is ready to Turn Up at Levels. What, were you hoping for a quiet Tuesday night in? Oct 20, 11pm. Levels, 2/F, On Hing Building, 1 On Hing Terrace, Central, 2011-1568.

## Concerts

### Spandau Ballet

Seems like Spandau Ballet can't get enough of Hong Kong... lead singer Tony Hadley has performed solo here in the SAR, and he's bringing the whole gang back to perform their best hits. All the words you'll need to know: ah, ah, ah, aah, ah... Sep 25, 8:15pm. Star Hall, KITEC, 1 Trademart Drive, Kowloon Bay. \$380-780 from www.hkticketing.com.

### Muse

Brit-rockers Muse have been around since 1994, making them one of the most successful, most consistent rock bands in the world. Bellamy and co. always rock their live shows, so this gig will be one to watch. Sep 29, 8pm. AsiaWorld-Arena, Sky Plaza Rd., Chek Lap Kok, 3606-8828. \$780 from www.hkticketing.com.

### Gig

#### Irma: Face to Face

French Cameroonian folk-pop singer Irma returns to the SAR after her sold-out performance in May with a "music-meets-light" show—expect sway-worthy melodies and heartfelt lyrics. Date night? Sep 18, 8pm. Vine Centre 2, 29 Burrows St., Wan Chai, 2573-0793. \$380 from www.ticketflap.com, \$430 at the door.

### Kina Grannis: The Elements Tour

Youtube's favorite songstress embarks on her Asia tour this summer, with a one-night-only performance in Hong Kong. You'll know the singer-songwriter from her sweet vocals, internet-breaking covers and collab videos with Wong Fu Productions. The \$780-tickets get you in on the meet and greet session: Don't be creepy, OK? Doors open 7pm. Sep 20, 8pm. Rotunda 2, KITEC, 1 Trademart Drive, Kowloon Bay. \$380-780 from www.cityline.com.



#### True To This

The Underground is putting on a high energy Saturday night gig that promises "a night of elevated consciousness through music..." or maybe that's just all the pints of Singha talking? The headliners are three ambitious regional bands: pop rockers Zpecial, pop punk stalwarts F.B.I., and Taiwan's Outlet Drift, who play avant-garde psychedelic garage rock. Sep 26, 9:30pm. \$120 from tickets.undergroundhk.com, \$180 at the door, both include a beer.



#### Jäger x Underground Show

The Underground brings a mixed bag of local rock bands for your Jäger-pounding enjoyment: Ranging from hard rock from Narcissus, happy rockers Exloud!, cinematic rock newcomers Nowhere Boys, and metalheads Escharotic. Oct 3, 9:30pm. \$120 from tickets.undergroundhk.com, \$150 at the door; both include one Jäger shot.

## Nightlife Events

### Shock Wave Summer Series 2015: Encore

Back by popular demand, the W Hotel's Shock Wave Summer Series hosts one more of its notorious pool parties before summer cools down for good (although in Hong Kong, it really doesn't). Casey Anderson of Typhoon8 Records and W Music's Arun R will be spinning the summer's top hits as well as house beats—all alongside antics from flame-throwers, dancers and a live LED light show. The night continues at

Woobar, where DJ Re:Flex will be playing upbeat house and electro as you slather your inebriated selves with UV-paint. Sep 19, 8pm. W Hotel, 1 Austin Rd. West, West Kowloon, 3717-2222. \$400 in advance or \$500 at the door, including one drink at the pool and one at the after party. \$950 for "WIP" tickets in advance or \$1,100 at the door, including free-flow drinks and champagne until 1am. Tickets from www.w-hongkong.com/en/shockwave.

### Club Cubic Full Moon Party

Club Cubic launches their inaugural Full Moon Party to celebrate Mid-Autumn Festival. There'll be special cocktails for the occasion, live performances, and plenty of glow props to go around. What's missing? Boozy mooncakes. Sep 26, 11:30pm. Club Cubic, 2/F, Hard Rock Hotel, City of Dreams, Estrada do Istmo, (+853) 6638-4999. \$250 from www.cubic-cod.com. Free entry for girls in swimwear before 1am.



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## American Ultra ★★★★

(USA) Action Comedy. Directed by Nima Nourizadeh. Starring Jesse Eisenberg, Kristen Stewart, Topher Grace, John Leguizamo. Category IIB. 96 minutes. Opened Sep 17.

"American Ultra" begins at the end, with a menacing close-up of Jesse Eisenberg's bloodied face as he's about to be interrogated by the CIA to recall the day's events. Photos of the evidence fill the screen: a bloody spoon, a metal dustpan, a mangled teddy bear. As the story progresses through each murder weapon, we learn more about this amnesiac-stoner-slash-deadly assassin. Sure, it's a clearly signposted plot, but it still manages to be surprising. "American Ultra" is great fun and a solid action comedy affair—with occasional bouts of violence that will have you squirming in your seat.

Jesse Eisenberg is Mike Howell, a convenience store clerk in West Virginia who lives with his girlfriend Phoebe (Kristen Stewart). The sensitive, self-professed fuck-up is plagued with panic attacks that render him unable to leave town—but that's because he's actually a protected government asset, with latent ass-kicking abilities he didn't even know he had. Mike becomes the target of a rival super-soldier program, and he must figure out what's going on—and save himself and his girlfriend in the process.

The setup may be solid action comedy fodder, but at times the film takes a serious dramatic turn. Sometimes it works: Mike's weed-induced philosophical ramblings are quietly delivered to great comedic effect, but they also manage to touch you with their truthfulness. But sometimes it gets downright confusing: A hazy and nightmarish minute-long montage as Mike begins to remember glimpses of his past life goes past completely unexplained.

Kristen Stewart and Jesse Eisenberg are no strangers to each other, previously working together in the low-key summer coming-of-age flick "Adventureland." The pair fit their roles perfectly, Eisenberg with his befuddled anxiety and Stewart with her quiet stressed out pragmatism, again exuding great on-screen chemistry in what is a genuinely endearing romantic side-plot.



A psycho villain comes in the form of Topher Grace as Yates, the megalomaniac in charge of the operation to destroy Mike. The exchanges between the constantly aggro Yates and a constantly perplexed Mike work particularly well. But just before the credits roll, we're given a glimpse of Mike as he emerges shiny and new—undermining the charm of his eccentric, loser personality. The storytelling gets lazy at the final moment: an irksome scene as Eisenberg attempts to muster up some Chinese, in a setting that doesn't make sense.

At 96 minutes, "American Ultra" has just the right length and pacing to make it all good fun—especially in the speedy action sequences, which contain just a little more blood and gore than your average secret agent action romp. For the



best unlikely superhero award, the undefeatable Mike Howell would've gotten my vote... If only it wasn't let down by its irrational epilogue. **Evelyn Lok**

## Coming Soon

### Hong Kong Trilogy: Preschooled, Preoccupied, Preposterous

**(Hong Kong)** Christopher Doyle's latest work is a three-part movie that weaves in the voices of three generations in Hong Kong: "preschooled" schoolkids, unsatisfied "preoccupied" youth and the "preposterous" elderly. It's one of the first features to cast a spotlight on the Occupy movement, filming and interviewing those who were involved as it unfolded last year.

Opens Sep 28.

### The Beauty Inside

**(South Korea)** Could you fall in love with someone who became someone else every day? Woo-jin suffers from that exact predicament: He transforms every day into a totally different person; a man, a woman, even a foreigner (No! Not a foreigner!). When he falls for a girl at first sight, can he muster up the courage to confess his feelings? And is this what it's like when you get rhinoplasty in Seoul? Opens Sep 24.

### The Intern

**(USA)** 70-year-old widower Ben Whittaker (Robert De Niro) rebuffs retirement and decides to get back in the game as an intern at an online fashion site, headed by Jules Oshin (Anne Hathaway)—in what is basically reverse "The Devil Wears Prada." Does he even know SEO? Opens Sep 24.

### Irrational Man

**(USA)** Recently closing the Summer International Film Festival, "Irrational Man" is Woody Allen's latest bit of neuroticism. Joaquin Phoenix takes the lead as a troubled philosophy professor who believes he's hit rock bottom. In typical Allenian fashion, he gets involved with two women: a lonely but married faculty member, and his best, much younger student (Emma Stone). Obviously. Opens Sep 24.

### Love & Mercy

**(USA)** Paul Dano and John Cusack play the younger and older Brian Wilson, the musical mastermind behind The Beach Boys. It's a tale that divulges the darker side of the band's sunny sounds: Wilson's decades-old battle with mental illness, substance abuse and misdiagnosis by his therapist (Paul Giamatti), before eventually finding care and solace through his relationship with Melinda Ledbetter (Elizabeth Banks). \*Cough\* awardbait \*cough\*. Opens Sep 24.



## Opening

### American Ultra

**(USA)** See review, above. Opened Sep 17.

### Attack on Titan: End of the World

**(Japan)** The second of the two-part, giant-annihilating action epic is here. After the destruction of the protective wall that keeps the human-eating Titans at bay, Eren Jaeger and his team are suddenly ambushed. Will they fail humanity or will they vanquish the damn things once and for all? Opened Sep 19.

### Everest

**(UK)** A story based on the 1996 Mount Everest disaster, in which eight climbers of two expeditions were caught in a blizzard and perished during their attempts to reach the summit. "Everest" sees two star-studded entourages attempt the same: one led by Jake Gyllenhaal as Scott Fischer, and another by Jason Clarke playing Rob Hall. This ain't gonna end well. Opened Sep 17.

### Guia in Love

**(Macau)** Sam Leong Tak-sam is behind this sweeping (or sappy?) romance set in our sister SAR. Ka-sing and Kai-kwong are two best friends who look back over 45 years of being in love with the same girl. Now Kai-kwong is a powerful Macau tycoon, and they look at the romances of the next generation. Opened Sep 17.

### La Famille Bélier

**(France)** A teenager growing up on a dairy farm, Paula is a vital member of the family as she plays interpreter between her deaf-mute parents and younger brother. One day she finds out she's gifted with an incredible singing voice, and must decide on pursuing her musical dreams in Paris—or staying behind to look after her family. Opened Sep 17.

### Office

**(Hong Kong)** No Ricky Gervais or Steve Carell for you here. Johnnie To directs this tale of corporate intrigue, centering on a billion-dollar company getting ready for its IPO. Chow Yun-fat is the chairman about to make good on his promise to make his mistress and CEO (Sylvia Chang) a major shareholder. And they would have gotten away with it too, if it weren't for those pesky IPO auditors... Opens Sep 24.

### Northern Limit Line

**(South Korea)** This real-life story is set during the 2002 World Cup in South Korea. As the country is swept up in football frenzy, the North Korean navy begins to attack, silently encroaching on the Northern Limit Line. It's here where the south's unassuming Chamsuri 357 patrol boat is docked... Opens Sep 24.



### We Are Your Friends

**(USA)** Zac Efron is Cole, a 20-something at a crossroads in his life, struggling with his dreams of becoming a universally recognized DJ. A douchey Zefron character with a hint of (b)romance—so what else is new? Opens Sep 24.



**Edited by Evelyn Lok**  
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## Need to Know

AMC Cinema, 2265-8933  
[www.amccinemas.com.hk](http://www.amccinemas.com.hk)

Broadway Circuit,  
2388-3188  
[www.cinema.com.hk](http://www.cinema.com.hk)

Golden Harvest Cinema,  
2622-6688  
[www.goldenharvest.com](http://www.goldenharvest.com)

MCL Cinema, 3413-6688  
[www.mclcinema.com](http://www.mclcinema.com)

UA Cinema,  
3516-8811  
[www.uacinemas.com.hk](http://www.uacinemas.com.hk)

The Metroplex, 2620-2200  
[www.metroplex.com.hk](http://www.metroplex.com.hk)

The Grand Cinema,  
2196-8170  
[www.thegrandcinema.com.hk](http://www.thegrandcinema.com.hk)

## Continuing

### The Assassin

(Taiwan/China/Hong Kong) A slow wuxia epic starring Shu Qi as the protagonist of the Tang dynasty tale "Nie Yinniang." And by slow, we mean sloooow: It's full of impossibly beautiful, impossibly long shots, but the story rambles on without much actual assassination. ★★★

### Boyschoir

(USA) Dustin Hoffman, Kathy Bates, and Eddie Izzard (!?) manage a prestigious singing academy for young boys. Looks to be a movie celebrating metaphor for the pre-teen male singing voice: fleeting and gone in the blink of an eye... or is it just Hoffman having another go at the angry offbeat mentor role?

### The Emperor in August

(Japan) Set at the end of World War II's Pacific theater in 1945, "The Emperor in August" recounts the final days before Japan's unconditional surrender from the point of view of its monarchy.



### Maze Runner: The Scorch Trials

(USA) It's the long-awaited sequel to the YA-lit sci-fi thriller. This time, Thomas and his fellow amnesiac "Gladers" who survived the magical maze last time continue the search for why they're all there—all while struggling to survive in the next desolate arena that is the Scorch, a desert wasteland full of hidden dangers.

### P.K.

(India) Rajkumar Hirani, who was behind the tear-inducing box office hit "3 Idiots," brings us a lofty comedy of ideas disguised as a benign alien's wacky adventure on Earth, in which the search for a lost gadget becomes a hopeful pilgrimage in search of God. Touching and thought-provoking in parts, but you'll be wading through cheesy Bollywood conventions to get there. ★★★



### A Royal Night Out

(UK) Ever wondered what princessy debauchery would have been like in 1945? The future Queen Elizabeth and teen Princess Margaret get freaky as they're allowed out on V.E. Day for the night of their lives...

### Skin Trade

(USA) Dolph Lundgren is American detective Nick Cassidy, who teams up with a Thai cop (Tony Jaa) in the race to eliminate a Thai human trafficking ring... led by a man who killed Nick's wife and daughter.

### A Tale of Three Cities

(China/Hong Kong) Award-winning director duo Mabel Cheung and Alex Law ("Echoes of the Rainbow") base their latest sweeping period romance on a true story. A war-torn couple (Sean Lau Ching-wan and Tang Wei) struggles to stay alive in Anhui, Shanghai and Hong Kong in the midst of the turbulent 40s.



## Film Festivals

### Sundance Hong Kong

A selection of best picks from this year's Sundance Festival reaches the SAR. Don't miss: "Dope," a coming-of-age flick about a California hoodrat with dreams of Harvard, and "The Witch," a horror about puritanical New England told through the eyes of a teenage girl. Through Sep 27. The Metroplex, G/F, E-Max, KITEC, 1 Trademark Drive, Kowloon Bay. \$90 from [www.metroplex.com.hk](http://www.metroplex.com.hk).

## Special Screenings

### Spandau Ballet (Meet the Band)

Still haven't caught "Soul Boys of the Western World?" On an Asian tour following the band's long-awaited documentary release last year, Spandau Ballet will drop by AMC Pacific Place to meet fans after the movie. Sep 23, 7:55pm. AMC Pacific Place, 1/F, Pacific place, 88 Queensway, Admiralty. \$250 from [www.amccinemas.com.hk](http://www.amccinemas.com.hk).

### National Theatre Live: Of Mice and Men

Chris O'Dowd, James Franco and Leighton Meester dream of "living off the fatta' the lan'" in this play based on John Steinbeck's classic Depression-era novel. It was directed last year by Anna D. Shapiro at London's National Theatre: Catch it on screen this month. Sep 19-20, 26-28, Oct 3, 24, 27, 31. Screenings are at Broadway and AMC Cinemas. \$200 from [www.cinema.com.hk](http://www.cinema.com.hk) and [amccinemas.com.hk](http://www.amccinemas.com.hk).

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# FREE WILL ASTROLOGY

ROB BREZSNY

**VIRGO (Aug 23-Sep 22):** Some people express pride in gross ways. When you hear their overbearing brags, you know it's a sign that they are not really confident in themselves. They overdo the vanity because they're trying to compensate for their feelings of inadequacy. In the coming weeks, I expect you to express a more lovable kind of self-glorification. It won't be inflated or arrogant, but will instead be measured and reasonable. If you swagger a bit, you will do it with humor and style, not narcissism and superiority. Thank you in advance for your service to humanity. The world needs more of this benign kind of egotism.



**LIBRA (Sep 23-Oct 22):** The rooster is your power animal. Be like him. Scrutinize the horizon for the metaphorical dawn that is coming, and be ready to herald its appearance with a triumphant wake-up call. On the other hand, the rooster is also your affliction animal. Don't be like him. I would hate for you to imitate the way he handles himself in a fight, which is to keep fussing and squabbling far beyond the point when he should let it all go. In conclusion, Libra, act like a rooster but also don't act like a rooster. Give up the protracted struggle so you can devote yourself to the more pertinent task, which is to celebrate the return of the primal heat and light.

**SCORPIO (Oct 23-Nov 21):** Since you seem to enjoy making life so complicated and intense for yourself, you may be glad to learn that the current astrological omens favor that development. My reading of the astrological omens suggests that you're about to dive deep into rich mysteries that could drive you half-crazy. I suspect that you will be agitated and animated by your encounters with ecstatic torment and difficult bliss. Bon voyage! Have fun! Soon I expect to see miniature violet bonfires gleaming in your bedroom eyes, and unnamable emotions rippling through your unfathomable face, and unprecedented words of wild wisdom spilling from your smart mouth.

**SAGITTARIUS (Nov 22-Dec 21):** The Adamites were devotees of an ancient Christian sect that practiced sacred nudism. One of their central premises: How could anyone possibly know God while wearing clothes? I am not necessarily recommending that you make their practice a permanent part of your spiritual repertoire, but I think you might find value in it during the coming weeks. Your erotic and transcendent yearnings will be rising to a crescendo at the same time. You will have the chance to explore states where horniness and holiness overlap. Lusty prayers? Reverent sex? Ecstatic illumination?

**CAPRICORN (Dec 22-Jan 19):** One of your key themes in the coming weeks is "grace." I suggest that you cultivate it, seek it out, expect it, and treasure it. To prepare for this fun work, study all of the meanings of "grace" below. At least two of them, and possibly all, should and can be an active part of your life. 1. Elegance or beauty of form, movement, or proportion; seemingly effortless charm or fluidity. 2. Favor or goodwill; a disposition

to be generous or helpful. 3. Mercy, forgiveness, charity. 4. A temporary exemption or immunity; a reprieve. 5. A sense of fitness or propriety. 6. A prayer of blessing or thanks said before a meal. 7. An unmerited divine gift offered out of love.

**AQUARIUS (Jan 20-Feb 18):** Be good, but not necessarily well-behaved. Be extra exuberant and free, but not irresponsible. Be lavish and ardent and even rowdy, but not decadent. Why? What's the occasion? Well, you have more-or-less finished paying off one of your karmic debts. You have conquered or at least outwitted a twist from your past that had been sapping your mojo. As a reward for doing your duty with such diligence, you have earned a respite from some of the more boring aspects of reality. And so now you have a mandate to gather up the intelligent pleasure you missed when you were acting like a beast of burden.

**PISCES (Feb 19-Mar 20):** "I am the least difficult of men. All I want is boundless love." That's the mantra that Frank O'Hara intoned in his poem "Meditations in an Emergency," and now I'm inviting you to adopt a modified version of it. Here's how I would change it for your use in the coming months: "I am the least difficult of passion artists. All I want is to give and receive boundless, healthy, interesting love." To be frank, I don't think O'Hara's simple and innocent declaration will work for you. You really do need to add my recommended nuances in order to ripen your soul's code and be aligned with cosmic rhythms.

**ARIES (Mar 21-Apr 19):** I won't go so far as to say that you are surrounded by unhinged maniacs whose incoherence is matched only by their self-delusion. That would probably be too extreme. But I do suspect that at least some of the characters in the game you're playing are not operating at their full potential. For now, it's best not to confront them and demand that they act with more grace. The wiser strategy might be to avoid being swept up in their agitation as you take good care of yourself. If you are patient and stay centered, I bet you will eventually get a chance to work your magic.

**TAURUS (Apr 20-May 20):** Many of the heroes in fairy tales survive and thrive because of the magical gifts they are given. Benefactors show up, often unexpectedly, to provide them with marvels—a spinning wheel that can weave a cloak of invisibility,

perhaps, or winged shoes that give them the power of flight, or a charmed cauldron that brews a healing potion. But there is an important caveat. The heroes rarely receive their boons out of sheer luck. They have previously performed kind deeds or unselfish acts in order to earn the right to be blessed. According to my analysis, Taurus, the coming weeks will be prime time for you to make yourself worthy of gifts you will need later on.

**GEMINI (May 21-Jun 20):** We humans need nourishing stories almost as much as we require healthy food, clean air, pure water, and authentic love. And yet many of us get far less than our minimum daily requirement of nourishing stories. Instead, we are barraged with nihilistic narratives that wallow in misery and woe. If we want a break from that onslaught, our main other choices are sentimental fantasies and empty-hearted trivia. That's the bad news. But here's the good news: Now is a favorable time for you to seek remedies for this problem. That's why I'm urging you to hunt down redemptive chronicles that furnish your soul with gritty delight. Find parables and sagas and tales that fire up your creative imagination and embolden your lust for life.

**CANCER (Jun 21-Jul 22):** Now is an excellent time to close the gap between the Real You and the image of yourself that you display to the world. I know of two ways to accomplish this. You can tinker with the Real You so that it's more like the image you display. Or else you can change the image you display so that it is a more accurate rendition of the Real You. Both strategies may be effective. However you go about it, Cancerian, I suggest you make it your goal to shrink the amount of pretending you do.

**LEO (Jul 23-Aug 22):** Born under the sign of Leo, Marcel Duchamp was an influential artist whose early work prefigured surrealism. In 1917, he submitted an unusual piece to a group exhibition in New York. It was a plain old porcelain urinal, but he titled it "Fountain," and insisted it was a genuine work of art. In that spirit, I am putting my seal of approval on the messy melodrama you are in the process of managing. Henceforth, this melodrama shall also be known as a work of art, and its title will be "Purification." (Or would you prefer "Expurgation" or "Redemption"?). If you finish the job with the panache you have at your disposal, it will forevermore qualify as a soul-jiggling masterpiece.

**HOMEWORK:** What's your favorite method for overcoming the inertia of the past?  
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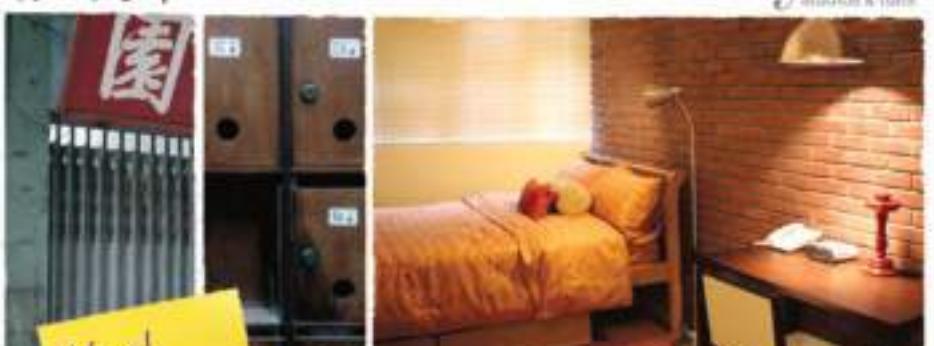
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## SAVAGE LOVE

Dan Savage

My son, who is almost 30 years old, was married four years ago. He just shared with us that for the last three years, he and his wife have been practicing polyamory. They are committed to their relationship but have each had relationships with both men and women. We are trying to get our heads around this, as we come from a more traditional background (we've been married 40 years in a loving and respectful relationship), and we find ourselves feeling very sad. We are accepting and nonjudgmental, just trying to understand how he came to this decision. He feels that to make love "finite," to love only one person, is "not being true," and that their kind of relationship prevents dishonesty and is based on truth. He shared that his wife was the first one to broach this idea—and after many deep conversations, he eventually overcame his jealousy and is embracing this practice. They do not have children or plan to have any. I asked my son if he's happy, and he says he is.

— Sad Mama

If your son says he's happy, SM, you should believe him and be happy for him.

It's unfortunate that your son framed the news about his choices and his marriage—which make him happy—in what sounds like a clumsy critique of your choices and your marriage. (If that's what he did, SM, I've only got your characterization of his comments to go on, not a tape recording of them, and it has been my experience that monogamous folks sometimes hear critiques of their choices when we nonmonogamous folks talk about our own choices. "We're not doing what you're doing" ≠ "You're doing it wrong.")

There's nothing necessarily "finite," untruthful, limiting, or dishonest about monogamy. If that's what two people want, SM, and it makes those two people happy, that's great. Monogamy is what you and your husband wanted, it's what made you and your husband happy, and it worked for your marriage. You could see your son's choice to be nonmonogamous as a rejection of everything you modeled for him, or you could see his choice as modeled on the fundamental bedrock stuff—for lack of a better word—that informed the choice you made. Your son and his wife are doing what they want, they're doing what makes them happy, and they're doing what works for their marriage. They're not doing monogamy (or kids), but they're doing what's right for them and what works for them—just like his mom and dad did.

There are lots of people out there in happy, fulfilling open/poly relationships, SM, and lots of people out there in happy, fulfilling monogamous relationships. (And there are lots of miserable people in both kinds of relationships.) There are also lots of people in happy, fulfilling monogamous relationships who will one day choose to open, and lots of people in happy, fulfilling nonmonogamous relationships they will one day choose to close. It's happiness, consent, and mutual respect that matters, not whether a relationship is monogamous or nonmonogamous.

If your son is happy, SM, you should be happy for him. But if he states—or clumsily implies—that you and his dad couldn't be happy because you're not doing the same thing he and his wife are doing, you tell him from nonmonogamous me that he's full of nonmonogamous shit.

Two pieces of recommended reading: the book "Open: Love, Sex, and Life in an Open Marriage" by Jenny Block, and an informative interview poly activist and frequent Savage Lovecast guest Diana Adams did with The Atlantic. But I don't think you need to do a whole lot of homework about this. Love your son, respect his choices, don't blame or shame his wife, and

be kind to any partners they introduce you to. Having a poly kid is a lot simpler than you think.

Many years ago, what was for me a bizarre sexual incident happened to me, and while I've largely laughed it off with no traumatic effects, the incident has always puzzled me. For the record, I'm a straight man in a good, loving marriage with no sexual issues to report. I was off on a golf weekend with a bunch of über-hetero buddies. We stayed in a condo that didn't have enough beds for everyone, so I ended up sharing a bed with an ex-marine. In the middle of the night, I thought my girlfriend was waking me up with a blowjob, and a damn fine one at that. However, as I gradually became awake, I realized the mouth on my penis wasn't my girlfriend's. I called this guy's name, and—this is the interesting part—he sprang up suddenly, like I just woke him up. I was also a little afraid, because he was a big guy who could have easily pummeled me to death out of embarrassment. But he jumped out of bed, went into the bathroom, and gargled before coming back into bed. Neither of us said a word afterward about what happened. Needless to say, I didn't sleep too well after that. (And frankly, I was a little offended by the gargling.) So the question is: Can you fellate in your sleep? Can you sleep-blow and still be a straight guy?

— Blown Latently One Wild Night

Sexomnia is a real thing—sleepwalking plus sex—but it's an exceedingly rare thing. Closeted guys are a lot more common, BLOWN, and guys who seem über-hetero are often more successfully closeted than your lighter-in-the-loafer guys. Three other details lead me to believe this was a crime/blowjob of opportunity: It's typically pretty difficult to wake a sleepwalker/sleep-blower (it takes more than calling out a name), the skills on display during the incident (it takes practice to give a "damn fine" blowjob), and his actions after he woke up with your dick in his mouth (rushing to the bathroom to gargle) smack of overcompensation.

I have no disagreement with what you said to letter writer WHIFFING (the man who wanted to know how to broach the subject of a female partner's unpleasant vaginal odor). But I wanted to add something that seems to be largely unknown: A common side effect of long-term SSRI use is that the scent and amount of sweat can change to be offensive and copious. While it's worth getting checked out if the person is unaware of the cause of an offensive groin smell (it could be a health issue), sometimes the cause turns out to be something the person is not willing to change because of the benefit it brings to their life. I've been in this position. Nothing I did to treat the sweating (beta blockers were offered to reduce the amount but couldn't change the odor) made a difference, and my intimacy with my partner really suffered. We could basically be intimate only after I just showered; it took months for my partner even to bring it up. When I finally discovered the sweating in a list of side effects in a medical app, it was quickly confirmed by my prescriber as common but not talked about because it's not physically harmful, so other SSRI users may not be aware of the connection. Just wanted to let your other readers know!

— Shower Power

Good info to have, SP. Thanks for sharing.

On the Lovecast, Dan chats with trans porn star Bailey Jay: [savagecast.com](http://savagecast.com).

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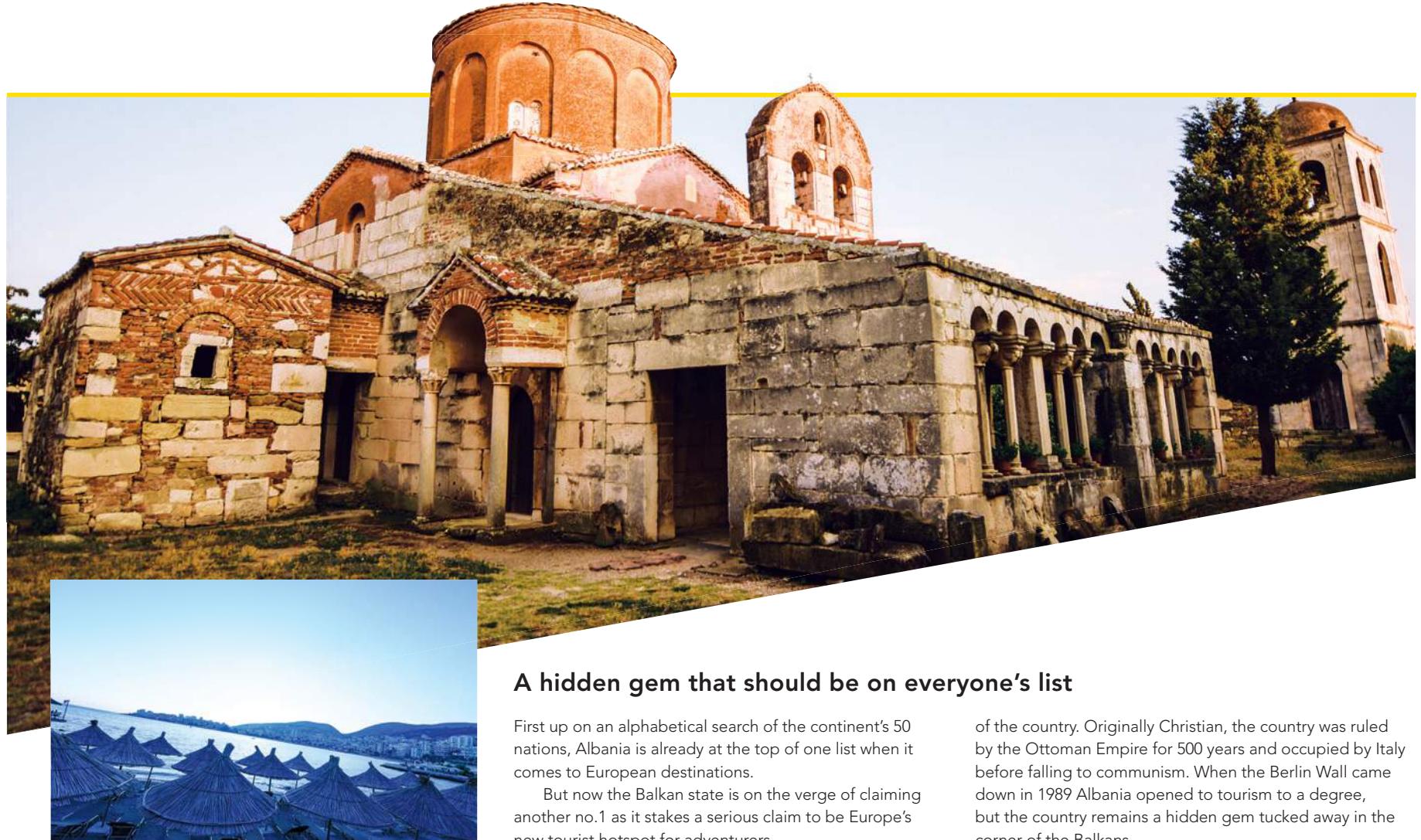


## Looking for Sharp F & B Staff?

Call Celia Wong at 2565-2310.

# SPOTLIGHT

The latest news and deals from our partners



## A hidden gem that should be on everyone's list

First up on an alphabetical search of the continent's 50 nations, Albania is already at the top of one list when it comes to European destinations.

But now the Balkan state is on the verge of claiming another no.1 as it stakes a serious claim to be Europe's new tourist hotspot for adventurers.

At the moment only a handful of in-the-know travelers recognize that it's rapidly becoming the hottest alternative choice as a tourist destination in Europe.

Albania is a well-kept secret that offers a rich tapestry of cultures and an intriguing historical past. It lies along the beautiful Adriatic coastline, borders the Ionian Sea and is surrounded by Greece, Macedonia, Kosovo and Montenegro. It's a country of mountains and rivers that make exploration a divine pleasure.

The history of Albania is complex and fascinating, but goes a long way to explaining the magical attraction

of the country. Originally Christian, the country was ruled by the Ottoman Empire for 500 years and occupied by Italy before falling to communism. When the Berlin Wall came down in 1989 Albania opened to tourism to a degree, but the country remains a hidden gem tucked away in the corner of the Balkans.

Tirana, the capital, is the beating heart of Albania with its colorful buildings and public squares. Sarandë offers a more relaxed atmosphere and an opportunity to swim and soak up the sun, while Durrës is an ancient port city boasting wonderful walking and sight-seeing options for visitors.

Want to win a fabulous holiday package to the Balkans? Check out HK Giveaways, opposite!



Photos: Kirk Kenny / studiozag.com



## Globe-trotting superstars ready to rock Macau

When rock band Bon Jovi plays Macau for the first time on September 25-26, they will have performed in around a staggering 60 countries, making them one of the most widely toured groups of all time. But this is no ordinary band, and across a glittering 30+ year career Bon Jovi is used to dealing in superlatives.

The figures speak for themselves. They have sold

around 130 million albums globally, performing to 37 million+ fans at 2,900 shows worldwide, and sold 2.6 million tickets in 2013 alone.

To understand why the band has been named the no.1 touring act in the world four times in the past five years, you need to experience first-hand the musical phenomenon that is Bon Jovi.

**Bon Jovi plays the Cotai Arena at the Venetian Macao on September 25-26, 8pm.  
Tickets from \$580: 6333-6660, [www.cotaitungket.com](http://www.cotaitungket.com).**

# HK GIVEAWAYS

Welcome to HK Magazine's Giveaways and week two of our three-week Balkans competition! Read below to find out how to enter, if you haven't already. Meanwhile you've still got time to get your entry in for a chance of winning tickets to see rock supergroup Bon Jovi, including ferry tickets and a night at the Holiday Inn Macao Cotai Central.

You've got to be in it to win it, so start thinking about getting your entries in, and please note competition deadlines. Good luck!

1  
WIN A \$50,000+  
TRIP TO THE  
MEDITERRANEAN!



**Win a romantic getaway for two to beautiful Albania and the Balkans, worth more than \$50,000!**

Sun, sea and untapped natural wonders: Albania's a beautiful and unvisited corner of the Mediterranean just waiting for you to discover it. Don't believe us? Check out our travel story to find out just how perfect it is:

[hk-magazine.com/travel/article/albanian-escapes](http://hk-magazine.com/travel/article/albanian-escapes)

We've got a **two-week trip for two** to Albania and the Balkans to give away worth more than **\$50,000**, courtesy of GGF Globe Syndicate Limited! Want to win? If you were reading last week, you should have already found an *italicized* word in an article on the **Spotlight** page of that issue. Now you have to do the same with this and the next issue! Once you've got all three, include them in a paragraph of no more than 30 words about how you feel about Hong Kong. Go to **hk-magazine.com/hk-giveaways** to submit your entry before 10am on **September 28, 2015**. The best, most convincing entry will win the top prize. Good luck! Winner will be announced on October 2. Prize is valid for one year from date of prize announcement.



## Win Tickets to Bon Jovi + Ferry and Hotel Stay!

Want to see one of the biggest rock bands in history when they play **The Venetian Macao** on Saturday, September 26? Thanks to The Venetian we've got a **pair of concert tickets** up for grabs, as well as **return ferry tickets** and a **night's stay at the Holiday Inn Macao Cotai Central**, total value \$5,200!

Want to rock out to "It's My Life"? All you need to do is explain in 20 words why you should win. Down on your luck and need a bit of a break? A huge Bon Jovi fan? Both? Whatever your motivation, let us know! Submit your entries to **hk-magazine.com/hk-giveaways** by 10am on **September 21, 2015**.

The winner will be announced in our September 25 issue.  
(Don't worry—we'll let the lucky person know in good time!)

2  
WIN A \$5,200  
PACKAGE TO  
ROCK OUT!

# FIRST PERSON



“Just adding red wine to an Asian dish is not fusion.”

Celebrity fusion chef **Susur Lee** has come a long way since his apprenticeship mixing milk tea in cha chaan tengs. Named one of the “Top 10 Chefs of the Millennium” in 2000, Lee is the force behind Toronto restaurants Luckee, Lee, and Bent. He has made appearances on Iron Chef America and was a finalist in Top Chef Masters. Now a judge on the first season of Masterchef Asia, the chef sits down with Evelyn Lok to talk fusion cooking, relationships and chicken feet.

I grew up in Hong Kong, in a family of six. I'm the youngest. My family didn't cook well and we weren't well off, so I loved to eat street food.

Back then, street food wasn't like the junk food we have now. It was gourmet homemade food. There was less fried stuff. More like stewed chicken feet or beef brisket, stuffed peppers, things that you have to go to restaurants nowadays to find.

I never thought of becoming a chef. But if there was a table of toys in front of me, and you put a plate of food in front of me, I'd eat the food first.

As a kid I didn't like studying. I got held back in school many times. I liked to experience things: touch things, smell things, see things. I had to go experience it before I felt I could understand it.

I was born in the Year of the Dog. Maybe it's something to do with that. My ears and nose are very sensitive.

My favorite childhood memory was going to the movies at the Apollo Theatre [in Sham Shui Po]. I was tiny and it was crowded, so my brother would sneak me in without paying.

I would always eat their *lo sui* soyed chicken feet, with mustard and sweet sauce. Everyone would just spit the bones onto the floor. And then you'd suddenly feel little things scurrying about next to your feet...

As a working class family, we tried to save money. My mom would always put the

freshly cooked rice on top, and the old overnight rice on the bottom of the cooker.

I just had to smell it, and I'd say “I'm not eating this! It's old rice!” Then my mom would go and buy char siu for me to eat.

One day, I had an argument with my mother. I took some money, took the keys, and left home. I was only wearing a pair of shorts. I stayed at my friend's house for a few nights.

It was at the Kowloon Walled City, which was very dangerous. But at the time, I felt free. I was a big boy.

After a few days, I called my brother. I lived with him for a while. After some time, he said, “Hey, you need to start paying rent.” He found me a job at a drinks station in [cha chaan teng] Mei Lai Tsuen opposite Yung Kee in Central.

My mother is 91 years old, so in the last few years I've really treasured my time with her. Eating with her, spending time with her, understanding her.

[On moving to Canada] I met a girl. We ended up going backpacking across the Middle East and Europe.

We didn't have a lot of money, so we just pitched a tent on the beach. We lived like vagabonds, but we were eating good food from the markets. It's how you absorb the local culture. It was an education.

When my kids were born, I wanted to be their *sifu*, rather than a father figure. It changes all your expectations. It's a way of educating them. To this day, that's why

they enjoy working with me, and joined my businesses to take care of my restaurants.

I'm very happy working with my three sons. They're my best friends.

[On creating fusion dishes] A lot of people don't understand that fusion cooking needs to have traditional foundations in two cultures, merged together to become one.

Just adding red wine to an Asian dish is not fusion.

Restaurants really need someone who's good with people. You can't function otherwise.

If you're always thinking about making money and work, then there's no meaning.

To this day, what I teach my kids is all about building interpersonal relationships: from morals to doing business, to how to treat your employees, to how you should see other people.

I teach my kids how to eat as well. I always take them around the world, trying new foods. My father also taught me—he'd say things like “mm, this dish is quite sour” and I'd learn those flavors by following his chopsticks.

My son is opening his own restaurant in a few months.

I'm helping him plan his kitchen and menu, but my accomplishment is seeing him come out and do business on his own: his growth, his excitement.

I'm going to step back and watch. I feel very content.

Today, everything is fast. Back then, when you made a dish it was from A to Z. You couldn't be lazy. Now young chefs find the procedures too complicated. They don't understand that cooking, experience, history—it all takes time.

Slow cooking is the best.

I think the biggest change in Hong Kong is its coffee culture.

When I still lived here, people used to just drink *yuen yeungs* in cha chaan tengs. Society started to thrive. Now there are coffee shops, espresso bars everywhere.

It's for people to re-energize, because everyone's busy now. You don't drink coffee to relax.

I won't think of retiring. I'm fortunate to be busy. The human brain needs to be creative. I don't want my mind to be like a vegetable.

People open a restaurant as a business. But for me, you have to do it from the heart.

## NEED TO KNOW...

Susur Lee is a judge on the first season of Masterchef Asia, which pits 15 Southeast Asian home cooks against each other to find the best amateur chef in Asia.

**Catch it Thursdays at 9pm on Lifetime, NowTV Channel 525.**



**Dinner \$388**  
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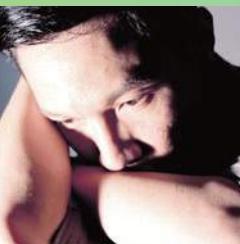


# CHOREOGRAPHERS' SHOWCASE 2015

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\$260 \$160 | \* \$130 \$80 \* Available for full-time students, senior citizens aged 60 or above and people with disabilities

**Artistic Director:**  
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**藝術總監：歐美蓮**

Dancers: Wei Wei, Lucas Jerkander, Liu Yu-yao | Photographer: Tim Wong

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Suitable for ages 6 and above • The performance lasts approximately 1 hour and 25 minutes, including an intermission • Latecomers will not be admitted until a suitable break or the intermission • The presenter reserves the right to alter the programme and artists • Hong Kong Ballet is financially supported by the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region • Hong Kong Ballet is a Venue Partner of the Hong Kong Cultural Centre