

# TAIPEI

WINTER  
2016

Vol. 06



## Living Repository of Old-Time Flavors

The Culture of the Old City – Bangka

## Visits With Master Craftspersons Down Quiet Lanes:

Using Stories to Awaken a City's Memory



## Perspectives of a German Tourist and Loyal Annual Visitor

Grand Cycling Tour of Taiwan

## Twenty, Thirty, Forty

Kitamura Toyoharu's Filmmaking  
Dream



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# Navigating the City With a Literary *Flow*

Under the brilliant contrast of endless poinsettias, the Taipei of winter seems ablaze. The radiant red captures the warmth and passion of this city under its blanket of chill.

In 2015, Akira Higashiyama's novel *Ryu* ("Flow") won Japan's prestigious Naoki Prize. Taipei is the stage for this novel's story, immersing the reader in scenes of yesteryear that inspire waves of nostalgia. Under Akira's pen, the old China Plaza's wondrous homestyle aromas from different regions of China drift by once more, and many readers are transported back to the days when they came here to get school uniforms made. Akira lived for a time on Guangzhou Street, and the Longshan Temple and Ximending area have thus left vivid impressions on his life. First love blossomed for him in the Taipei Botanical Garden, and the bewitching old-time charms of the Dadaocheng neighborhood also fascinated him.

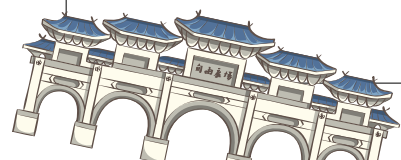
In this issue of *TAIPEI* we explore old and new Taipei through literary eyes and the footsteps traced in this novel. Many decades have passed, and the Longshan Temple in the novel remains shrouded in wisps of smoke from incense sticks. Huaxi Street and its foods remain a place of pilgrimage for tourists. Ximending is still a favorite haunt for the youth, with the addition of today's many iconic arts and culture and trend-setting attractions. Akira's beloved Taipei Botanical Garden is an urban oasis of exotic flowers and elegant historical buildings. Busy Dihua Street, with its intriguing old architecture, regional specialty goods, distinctive cultural-creative style, and inexpensive yet tasty cuisine, offers travelers an "authentic Taiwan" feast for both body and mind. In the pages to follow we take you on a tour of the city using Akira's literary work as our guide.

In our fast-paced industrial society, the warmth of goods made carefully by hand is something both invaluable and irreplaceable. Expert craftspeople dedicated to preserving traditional handicrafts have carved a deep cultural heritage for Taipei, and made the Taipei story richer and filled with wonder. In this *TAIPEI* issue, we introduce Wanhua's heritage bakeries, history-steeped teahouses, a venerable blacksmith shop, and Buddhist implement shops. The great panoply of local products may change with the times, but what is even more important than the passing down of traditions from one generation to the next – trustworthiness.

If you were to use handmade pencil and paper, do you think you'd feel differently? Who would think that once mastered, handmade paper can be used to develop paper necklaces and lanterns! A heritage maker of calligraphy brushes and ink can crossover to the production of cosmetic brushes, bringing new life to an old brand. Elsewhere, we explore the traditional art of decorative lantern making, each work a showcase of the skill involved, as well as the worlds of wood, tin, and pottery arts, which add zest to life.

Culture and creativity are the catalysts of a city's kinetic energy. In this edition, we speak with Peter Zec, CEO of the world-renowned Red Dot Award and founder of the World Design Capital project, who provides insightful observations on Taiwan's design industry. We also spend time with Korean Mission in Taipei Representative Cho Baek-sang, whose term has just ended, and Japanese film director Kitamura Toyoharu, asking the two to share their Taipei impressions.

We're now within 250 days of the upcoming 2017 Taipei Summer Universiade, and we specially share the stories of Taiwan national women's volleyball player Wang Sin-Ting's victory over a rare disease and world-class indigenous skater Sung Ching-Yang's determination to overcome many obstacles. We invite you to give a rousing cheer for a successful Taipei Universiade!





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Fighting a Rare Disease, Continually  
Challenging Herself

# Women's Volleyball Super-Spiker Wang Sin-Ting

Article \_\_ Xie Yingjie

Photos \_\_ Wang Sin-Ting, Taipei City Government Department of  
Information and Tourism



(Photo: Department of  
Information and Tourism,  
Taipei City Government)

National women's volleyball player Wang Sin-Ting (王欣婷) had the honor of carrying the flag for the Chinese Taipei team at the 2015 Gwangju Summer Universiade. Her freshness and natural personality are reminiscent of actress Gwei Lun-mei (桂綸鎂). When she walks down the street the statuesque Wang carries herself with the comportment of an elite model. Beyond her bright exterior are superlative athletic skills. She is currently a spiker of the Taipower (台電) women's volleyball team, and looks forward to giving her best at the 2017 Taipei Summer Universiade, and winning gold for the home team!

## Bravely Facing a Rare Disease – Embracing the Best in Sportsmanship

Wang's volleyball career started at an early age. "When I was young I liked watching the cartoon series *Attacker You!* (東洋魔女), and developed an interest in volleyball. I joined my school team, and have been playing ever since." However, it has not all been smooth sailing on her volleyball journey. "My whole third year in high school did not go well," she says. "There were many things I didn't agree with, and there were many tears." She was filled with doubt after graduation, thinking she perhaps should give up playing, but with her father's guidance decided to continue.



"When I score, of course I'm happy. But what I like best, in games and practice, is how everyone concentrates all their mental and physical energies on that ball, fighting and working their hardest." (Photo: Wang Sin-Ting)

In 2009, Wang was selected for the national training team and then named to the representative team. Her game was maturing, and the future ahead looked bright. Then, in 2013, she was diagnosed with a rare disease – multiple sclerosis. Recalling that time, she says: "The disease affected my optic nerves. My focus was slow, and I couldn't see the ball. I felt great pressure during that period, worried about not playing well and affecting my team's results."

"However, it had happened, so obsessing about it was useless. So, as part of my physician's treatment, I went home to concentrate on recuperating for more than three

months." This proactive medical rehabilitation brought positive results, and she gradually got better. "I still suffer some after-effects," she says, "and sometimes my visual focusing will be a little slow, but I've learned to deal with it, and know how to compensate."

The pain caused by her sickness could not defeat Wang, and she fought with all her will to climb out of the abyss. She has been resolute on her path back to the playing court and the recovery of her elite skills. In 2015, she received the highest honor in domestic sports – the Best Sportsmanship Award at the Taiwan Sports Elite Awards (體育菁英獎最佳運動精

神獎). Said Wang of that experience: "I hope that winning this award provides inspiration and motivation for other people!"

### 1,000-Plus Points in League Play – Hoping for Universiade Gold

Wang is now in her fourth year of studies in the Department of Leisure and Sport Management at Cheng Shiu University (正修科技大學休閒運動管理系), and as already mentioned is a member of the Taipower women's volleyball team. Her days are busy, with work in the morning and practice in the afternoon. In June this year she burst through the 1,000-point mark in Top Volleyball

League ( 企業排球聯賽 ) play, leading Taipower to the league throne. She says modestly that “Breaking through 1,000 was very nice, but considering my ratio of spikes to points, it wasn’t all that good!”

In both training and competition, Wang says the feeling is different playing in the Top Volleyball league and on the national team. In the league, each player belongs to a different home team. The national team is composed of the best from the league teams. She says “Just as the first half of the league season finishes, we go into training for the national team. So my

teammates from Monday to Friday become my opponents on the weekend again! Everyone is familiar with each other, and knows how each other is developing. So you have to find more ways to break through. With such healthy competition, you find even more space for improvement.”

Competing in the Olympics has always been Wang’s dream. “I hope to do well in my role as a front-line attacker, continually break through personal barriers, and win individual awards. Not to be looking up from the bottom at the world’s elite players, but to be able to climb up there with

them, and to be as strong as they are!” For her, playing is a form of enjoyment. “When I score, of course I’m happy. But what I like best, in games and practice, is how everyone concentrates all their mental and physical energies on that ball, fighting and working their hardest.”

Readying for the 2017 Taipei Summer Universiade competition, Wang is now hard at work with the national training team. “We’re establishing a solid foundation,” she says, “and hope that everyone will be able to play in top form, keeping the gold medal here in Taiwan!” 🇹🇼

### Wang Sin-Ting – Achievements

- 2011 Olympic women’s national training team
- 2012 Women’s national team (FIVB Volleyball World Grand Prix, Olympic Qualification Tournament)
- 2013 Women’s national team (Asian Club Volleyball Championship)
- 2014 Women’s national team (Asian Eastern Zone Volleyball Championship)
- 2015 Olympic women’s national training team, women’s national team Asian Volleyball Championship (4<sup>th</sup> place), Gwangju Summer Universiade Chinese Taipei delegation flag bearer



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# 2017 Taipei Summer Universiade – The Quest for Roller Sport Gold Paiwan Skating ‘God of War’ Sung Ching-Yang

Article \_\_ Xie Yingjie

Photos \_\_ Li Tinghuan, Wang Guanwen



Sporting his tribe's sacred hundred-pacer snake totem on his clothing, his hair shaved on both sides, with the remaining gathered up into a ponytail, he flies around the track like a sharp hunting knife cutting through air. Sung

Ching-Yang (宋青陽) is a member of the Paiwan tribe (排灣族) and his indigenous name is Pagalefa Ranalang. He is a champion in both inline and long-track speed skating, and his prey at the 2017 Taipei Universiade is 4 gold medals!

1. Sung Ching-Yang is a rarity, a double-sport athlete competing in both roller and ice skating. (Photo: Wang Guanwen)
2. Sung is fully confident in his medal chances at the 2017 Taipei Universiade. (Photo: Li Tinghuan)



## Racing the Wind – Inline & Long Track Two-Sport Athlete

Sung is from the Paiwan community of Rulakes (魯拉克斯) in Taitung County (台東縣)'s Jinfeng Township (金峰鄉). Over the course of 20 years of effort and the mentoring of his coach, Dai Yongsong (戴永松), dedicated to uncovering and developing his talents, Sung has written page after page in a developing legend

centered on Taiwan inline and long-track speed skating.

Coach Dai, who is nicknamed “Daddy Dai” (戴爸), is one of the most important people in Sung’s life. Originally a foreman at the construction site where Sung’s parents worked, he was also an amateur skating coach. At an early age Sung began roller skating for fun with Dai’s chil-

dren, and fell in love with the thrill of moving at high speeds. Dai saw his potential, and began actively cultivating his talent. When Sung was in the fifth grade, Dai took him to mainland China for higher-level training.

At 17, Sung competed in the World Roller Speed Skating Championships for the first time in the Junior category, and raced away with 5 gold medals. “I was moved to tears,” he says. “That event gave me great confidence!” In the following year he took part in Taiwan’s Citizens Sport Games (全民運動會), the Asian Roller Skating Championships, and the Guangzhou Asian Games, skating away with 9 golds, 1 silver, and amazing momentum.

In 2012, Sung ended up in a dispute with the national skating association, and was suspended from competition for three years. “Three years with no competition in skating, the thing I love best,” he says. “Of course I felt wronged, and for a time I felt like giving up on my sports career. In the end, with Daddy Dai’s encouragement I took up speed skating, though I had to start all over again.” Sung says that the difference between inline and speed skating is like that between basketball and korfball. “In basketball you can score off the backboard, but in korfball you need a 100% clean shot into the basket. In speed skating your contact with the surface is minimal, resistance is small, and your actions must be precise and rapid,

making it more difficult than inline skating.”

Sung’s suspension had unexpectedly resulted in him becoming a rarity – a double-sport athlete. After more than a year of practice he decided to take on the challenge of the long-track speed skating competition at the winter Olympics. However, he could not break the 36.7-second mark in the 500m event. “I was very frustrated,” he says, “and this result kept me from qualifying. I was very depressed.” However, things suddenly began to click for him at a qualifying competition in Canada, where he clocked a time of 35.2 seconds, and afterward he posted a time of 34.64 at his second World Roller Speed Skating Championships. He had punched his ticket to the 2014 Sochi Winter Olympics, and became the first-ever skater from Taiwan to compete.

## Breakout of His Indigenous Spirit – On the Hunt for Glory

In sport, the road can be lonely and difficult. To prepare for the Sochi Olympics, Sung went alone to Germany for three months of special training at a skating school. “The others there looked at me and, seeing I wasn’t very talkative, seemed to think I was a little odd, but that I was also pretty good.” They were quite impressed with his abilities, and a Dutch roller-sports magazine even did a report on him.

However, the effects of a back injury meant that the results for Sung at the Olympics were less than ideal. After-

wards, he shaved his head as a way to express his fierce determination, then allowed a tuft to grow back in. This invariably made him the most distinctive figure on the track. “Beyond the advantages of inherent explosiveness and coordination that comes with being indigenous,” he says, “of course you have to add your own hard work.” Whether on wheels or on blades, his quest is speeds faster than the wind, “Like a cheetah, expending everything I have in the hunt for glory!”

In 2015, Sung won gold in the 500-meter event at the Asian Roller Skating Championships, breaking the

record eight years consecutively. After this, the very next time he competed, at Taiwan’s Citizens Sports Games, he won double gold while setting a new national record. Putting the dark cloud of his ban well behind him, Sung now moves easily between inline and long-track speed skating. His skies opened and horizons broadened, he says that, “I am very confident about the 2017 Taipei Universiade, and hope to win gold. Then I’ll get back to working hard, and believe I have a chance to snatch some medals at the 2018 Pyeongchang Winter Olympics!” 📌

## Sung Ching-Yang – Achievements



- 2009 World Roller Speed Skating Championships, Junior category: Gold, 300m / Gold, 500m / Gold, 1000m / Gold, Marathon / Gold, Relay
- 2010 Citizens Sport Games: Gold, 300m Event / Gold, 500m / Gold, 100m / Gold, Relay
- Asian Roller Skating Championships: Gold, 300m Track / Gold, 500m Road / Gold, 200m Road / Gold, 500m Track
- Guangzhou Asian Games: Gold medal, 300m / Gold medal, 500m
- 2011 World Roller Speed Skating Championships: Bronze, 200m Road
- 2013 Winter Universiade: Bronze, 1000m Long Track
- 2015 Winter Universiade: Bronze, 500m Long Track
- Asian Roller Skating Championships: Gold, 500m (meet record)
- Citizens Sports Games: Gold, 300m Roller Skating / Gold, 500m Roller Skating


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## A Literary World *Flow* Tour of Taipei

### A Look at the Old City's Elegance

Article \_\_ Xu Ciqian  
Photos \_\_ Shi Chuntai, Wang Nengyon

There are many reasons to fall in love with Taipei – embracing Taipei's history and falling in love with her being one of the most “in fashion”!

Taipei is an endlessly progressive city home to magnificent architectural structures, luxury commercial office buildings, fashionable shopping plazas, and comprehensive transportation and telecommunications systems. However, this progress has

not come with a price of wanton destruction. In addition to the process of construction and innovation, the world is provided with a full view of Taipei's cultural and historical depth.

In recent years, the Taipei City Government has engaged in vigorous revitalization efforts in the older sections of the city. As one example, the Zhongxiao Bridge (忠孝橋) elevated highway has been demolished,

restoring the Beimen (North Gate) Plaza (北門廣場) to unfettered view. These initiatives enable more intimate contact between residents and the old city's elegance, and provide foreign visitors with an inclusive experience of Taipei's colorful beauty.

Most touching is how, in lifting the veil of time and digging into the deep historical roots of this place, people achieve clarity and under-



1. Taipei's old-city heritage areas possess charming historical elegance. (Photo: Shi Chuntai)
2. In days gone by, lush Taipei Botanical Garden was a green oasis and a paradise for couples in love. (Photo: Wang Nengyou)



standing of this city's life experiences, embracing all her beauties and sorrows.

## Taipei, Under the Pen of Akira Higashiyama

The different eras and different historical atmospheres of the city of Taipei have provided creative inspiration for many writers over the years, from Pai Hsien-yung (白先勇) and his *Taipei People* (台北人) short stories in an earlier times to today's Akira Higashiyama and his novel *Ryu* (流). The story of *Ryu*, which means "flow," strongly recreates detailed imagery

from the collective memory of many of Taipei residents.

For numerous Taipei residents who grew up in the 1950s, '60s, and '70s, *Ryu* is far more than just a lyrically descriptive youth novel. The scenes depicted are vivid and personal. For example, the beloved China Plaza (中華商場), now long gone, was a grand bazaar of regional Chinese foods and homestyle flavors. It was a favorite destination for homesick military personnel and dependents who had come to Taiwan with the Nationalist government in the late 1940s. Stu-

dents also came here to have their school uniforms made and student ID number embroidered. As described by Akira, the China Plaza's Huxian ("Fox Fairy") Temple (狐仙廟) served as a bridge between devotees from mainland China and Taiwan, and this now-disappeared icon has been given an air of mystery.

Akira lived on Taipei's Guangzhou Street (廣州街) when he was a youngster. As he grew older, his horizons expanded outward through Wanhua and Ximending (西門町). These neighborhoods, which stood



directly outside the old walled city, have in recent years become hubs of transformation as the city government has worked to revivify its oldest sections. The messy, cacophonous world depicted in *Ryu* is today a Taipei “renaissance” base, both a place of celebrated nostalgia for middle and older generations and a stage for showcasing the creative talents of the young.

In the novel, a preferred hideaway where sweethearts could talk of love was the Taipei Botanical Garden

(台北植物園), today still a key central-city green oasis for residents. Akira spends a good deal of time here, describing the joys of love’s genesis and clues about the strange and disturbing death of the protagonist’s grandfather. The scenery and character descriptions give us a vivid window into the lives of Taipei’s people in days past.


Since its earliest days, Dadaocheng (大稻埕) was a key center of activity and influence in the old city. Akira specially recommends exploring this

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3. Under the pen of Akira Higashiyama, the old railway of yesteryear seems to reappear right before your eyes. (Photo: Shi Chuntai)

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community if you want to understand Taipei and experience its charms.

Travel through time and space in Taipei along the road recorded by Akira, winner of the prestigious Naoki Prize. *Ryu* shall be your guide for sailing the seas of youthful memory, and discovering sweetness in sorrow. 



# Living Repository of Old-Time Flavors

## The Culture of the Old City – Bangka

Article — Xu Ciqian  
Photos — Shi Chuntai

The old name for the district of Wanhua, still used by many locals, is Bangka (艋舺). In an earlier time, it was one of Taiwan's three major urban centers. In turn, its prosperity drove the development of the transportation infrastructure. Recalling the days of his youth living on Guangzhou Street, author Akira Higashiyama remembers the north-south railway running parallel to Zhonghua Road (中華路), and how it divided Guangzhou Street, one side home to many new immigrants who had followed the Nationalist government from mainland China to Taiwan, the

other home to those whose ancestors had come from China in imperial times. The railway partitioned what were, in effect, two different peoples, creating two enclaves busy with distinct languages and living customs of different ethnic groups. In *Ryu*, Akira reimagines his childhood days crossing the Guangzhou Street tracks, heading west toward Lungshan Temple (龍山寺) and today's Bopiliao Historic Block (剝皮寮歷史街區), and the curiosity and fear that children oft felt seeing the big world beyond their doorstep. The novel's Wanhua has an air of chilling ruthlessness. He also uses classic Huaxi

Street (華西街) scenes of snakes being killed and gutted to emphasize the strikingly different perspectives of the common people.

Though the disappearance of the beloved China Plaza causes people great regret, the atmosphere that prevails among the everyday folk of Wanhua is like the call of their distant hometowns. As long as you are willing

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1. In recent years, Bopiliao has served as a platform for those in the arts sector to curate exhibits or create art works, injecting Bangka with artistic and cultural energy. (Photo: Shi Chuntai)

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to go to her, the sights and sounds experienced by the children of today are in truth not distant from those experienced by their ancestors. The red-brick architecture of Bopiliao, the swirling incense-smoke curls of Lungshan Temple, the endless streams of sightseers along Huaxi Street, and the heady fragrances of fresh herbs and herbal medicines on Herb Alley (青草巷) all remain. The sight of locals traipsing along streets and alleys in tank tops and flip-flops, and the many, many long-in-place eateries serving up delicious foods and snack delicacies, for Akira, who has lived in Japan for many years, these are all elements in the cultural pageantry he holds so dear. The vignettes, changing yet not changing, forming a timeless unfolding Taipei scroll painting.

## Lungshan Temple & Herb Alley – The Sustenance of Life

In such a scroll painting, invariably the most distinctive local structure is the Lungshan Temple. The imposing temple, now over 200 years old, is a key center of worship. Adding to the religious element is the stunning architecture and the mythical tales surrounding the complex, which people find fascinating. There is a steady parade of celebrations and ceremonies throughout the year, and if you want a look at the continued power of folk belief in local people's lives, this is a fine place to start. Beyond the fact that this Class II National Monument has been part of this community for hundreds of years, another key to its far-flung renown are the many ven-

dors of delicious snack foods around it, which foodies find irresistible. “Two Happinesses” Thick Squid Soup (兩喜號魷魚羹), Zhou's Meat Congee (周記肉粥), and Longdu Ice Dessert Parlor (龍都冰菓專業家) are all great spots to sample authentic local flavors.

Right beside Lungshan Temple is Lane 224, Xichang Street (西昌街). This pedestrian-narrow lane, less than 50 meters long, is known all over Taiwan as Herb Alley. After the heady fragrance of the temple's wafting curls of incense smoke, the aromas of the medicinal herbs are refreshing. With temple and alley adjacent, starting about 40 or 50 years ago, when local residents would not feel well they would go to the temple to ask the



gods for guidance, then come to the alley to buy the suggested medicinal herbs. However, in the 1980s, the government implemented medical regulations that prohibited the temple from issuing medicinal divination slips, bringing the practice of deities “treating” illness to an end.

Today, nevertheless, Herb Alley possesses even more charm than in the past, with many pleasant little surprises awaiting the tourist. The facilities here are comprehensive and have been well planned out: the transparent covering over the lane allows natural light to stream in, and the ventilation and cool shade provided are beneficial for medicinal herb preservation. The result is a little tucked-away city corner of elegance and

elegant fragrances that city residents enjoy coming to linger in – an attractive sightseeing spot for travelers. It has even become a popular “living classroom,” where students learn about traditional local culture. While browsing, buy a cup of the herbal tea, thirst-quenching and a traditional way to disperse heat. Each sip brims with the wisdom of Taiwan’s cultural ancestors, and even international visitors interested in Chinese medicine come, seeking to learn more about the use of fresh, medicinal herbs.

### Guangzhou Street & Huaxi Street – Cooking Up Food Nostalgia

Guangzhou Street is almost surely the thoroughfare mentioned most often in *Ryu*. The protagonist lived here,

2. The over 200-year-old Lungshan Temple is Wanhua’s key local center of worship and a must-visit attraction for tourists. (Photo: Shi Chuntai)

3. For Akira Higashiyama, the ambience among the everyday folk of Wanhua is like the call of one’s hometown. (Photo: Shi Chuntai)

4. If interested in a window into the dynamism of local folk religion, time at Lungshan Temple is recommended. (Photo: Shi Chuntai)

Chinese mainlanders clustered here, the sounds of different accents and languages flowed back and forth, and chickens and dogs roamed between the houses. Kids from the same age groups formed gangs and alliances or else became strangers to each other. The injury and pain experienced in the process of growing up were the mark or badge of the era. The fact that one was bullied was never something to keep secret, nor a source of embarrassment.

The scenes from a simpler day portrayed in *Ryu* no longer inhabit Guangzhou Street. Occasionally, the cry of a tofu pudding (豆花) hawk-



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er is heard, and people listen to his tales of his life experiences in a busy residential area. Today's Guangzhou Street becomes very lively, with night-market vendors packed tightly together in a veritable paradise of traditional Taiwanese snack delicacies. Add to this the many game booths set up and you have a recipe for fun, perfect for outings by groups of friends and families – and perfect for experiencing the everyday culture of ordinary Taiwan folk.

In Taipei's old city neighborhoods, the charms are myriad and the nostalgia-inducing food and drink nigh endless. The home-style offerings on Guangzhou Street and the ostentatious exuberance on Huaxi Street

each have their following. Huaxi Street between Guilin Road (桂林路) and Guangzhou Street was Taiwan's first tourist night market. Its entrance arch is dramatically eye-catching, and colorful red lanterns hang in rows down both sides of the narrow pedestrian-only street. As night falls they are lit up to welcome the ever-growing surge of fun-seekers, creating the bustling, festive scenes that make this a must-see destination for travelers. In days past, the "snake shows" brought many sightseers, but today the horde of snake shops is a thing of the past. One shop still in place, eclectically called the Asia Poisonous Snake Research Institute (亞洲毒蛇研究所), is in fact one of the old-style small snake eateries.

The menu is wide-ranging, testing the courage of tourists. Other must-try culinary options include bowl rice cakes (碗粿), chilled Aiyu jelly (愛玉冰), and Dan Zai noodles (擔仔麵).

Asia's night markets are among the prime attractions for visiting international tourists. The traditional Taiwanese culinary fare found in Wanhua can justifiably be placed among the leaders. When traveling through, whatever you do, do not simply pass by without stopping!

### Retro & New – The Evolution of Culture

The area bounded by Guangzhou Street, Kangding Road (康定路), and Kunming Street (昆明街) is today

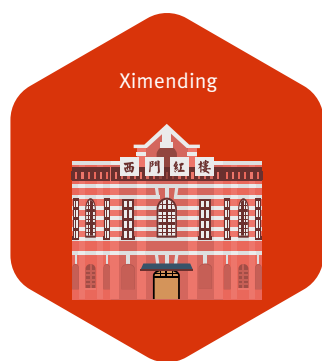


called the Bopiliao Historic Block. From the Qing Dynasty, Bopiliao was a hub for key arteries leading between Wanhua and other settlements. The Qing Dynasty streetscape has been preserved in this popular tourist attraction, and the hit 2010 Taiwanese gangster film *Monga* (艋舺) generated a lasting surge in interest. Local and international tourists come to immerse themselves in the quiet ambience of bygone days, savoring the architecture and cultural relics. In addition, in recent years more and more artists and artisans from Taiwan and abroad have come to create exhibits and new works, pouring artistic and cultural energy into Bopiliao.

Yet, though with deep currents of nostalgia running through it, Wanhua

is much, much more. Ladies with a focus on personal beauty must visit Dali Street (大理街). In its heyday the Bangka Clothing District (艋舺服飾商圈) was home to more than 1,000 apparel outlets. Beyond the sale of finished apparel, enterprises are engaged in design, pattern and sample making, production, and marketing. All through the chain, competitive prices and quality are offered. In days past, many consumers headed to Dadaocheng's Dihua Street (迪化街) to buy fabrics, then asked the shops to custom-tailor clothing. Today, ready-to-wear clothing is the norm, and Dali Street's comprehensive range of women's and children's attire has made it a "fashion password" for female shoppers. 1

5. Bangka serves up an almost endless array of must-try traditional Taiwan snack treats. (Photo: Shi Chuntai)
6. Right beside Lungshan Temple is Lane 224, Xichang Street, the renowned Herb Alley, which is less than 50 meters long. (Photo: Shi Chuntai)
7. Huaxi Street Tourist Night Market's striking entrance arch and the excitement of the steady crowds attracts many international sightseers. (Photo: Shi Chuntai)



# The Rise of Post-Youth Culture and Creativity

## Arts Pilgrimage – Ximending

Article — Xu Ciqian

Photos — Shi Chuntai, Lai Jianhong, Lu Enci, Taipei City Government Department of Information and Tourism

Tattoos, pop music, trendy fashions, imported goods, movies – today's Ximending is a veritable temple of youth subcultures. However, in the late Qing Dynasty, this area, directly outside the Ximen (西門) or West Gate of the old walled city, was a cultural wasteland. It wasn't until Taiwan became a Japanese colony that the Japanese, in a show of strength and dominance, created a high-end entertainment and commercial district here, and mapped out residential quarters for Japanese nationals. Fifty years of Japanese rule left the Taiwan people deeply influenced by Japanese popular culture,

and it was here that the first dedicated movie theater in Taiwan appeared. Ximending became a key center for the growth of Taiwan's film-entertainment culture. After the end of the Second World War, Taipei absorbed a flood of refugees from the mainland China, and business-savvy immigrants from Shanghai, in particular, took to opening department stores and other businesses in Ximending, turning it into a pleasure zone for singing, dancing and shopping. In the 1960s, the China Plaza was built along the Ximending and old walled city area boundary line, linking the two and in a single leap creating the nation's

commercial and entertainment heartland.

In the world created in the pages of the novel *Ryu*, Ximending's long period of prosperity has peaked, but the enclave remains the gathering spot of choice for young people. In those days, the area attracted gang members, young runaways, and youngsters playing hooky, engaging in the familiar outlets of bored youth, playing pool and getting in gang fights. For that generation of young people with nowhere to vent their energies, an outlet was found in Ximending, and a unique imprint on life was forged.





Though only a limited amount of ink is spent on Ximending in *Ryu*, the relation between the prosperity and decline of the area and the oft-mentioned China Plaza is clear. Major transportation construction was launched in the 1990s after the China Plaza was demolished, and the city's west district fell into what was called a "traffic dark age." Ximending went into a decline that lasted until a little more than a decade ago, when the government began injecting resources, transforming the area into a pedestrian-friendly commercial district. This, matched with the regeneration of its historic buildings, has rekindled Ximending's historical and cultural value. Ximending's prosperity and glory has reappeared before the eyes of the public.

## The Red House – Revivified Splendor of an Arts and Culture Bastion

Exit MRT Ximen Station and, whether you walk toward the pedestrian area or along Chengdu Road (成都路), your eyes will almost surely be drawn to the red-brick building called

The Red House (西門紅樓). Elegant during the day, bright and resplendent at night, since its construction over a hundred years ago The Red House has been a Taipei City entertainment diamond. Film screenings and theatrical shows both opened the eyes of young students and soothed the spirits of immigrants from mainland China.

However, the original role of what is today called The Red House was as Taiwan's first public market. This is Taiwan's best-preserved and most extensive Class III National Monument. The octagonal red-brick main building and market entrance in the shape of the *Bagua* (eight trigrams) were avant-garde for their time.

In 2011, a comprehensive relaunch of Ximen Market restored The Red House to its original elegance. The Red House Theater (紅樓劇場) was reopened the following year, with various performance groups working together to reclaim the joy and excitement of the venerable marketplace.

1. In recent years, Ximending has been relaunched as a cultural and creative platform; the Taipei Culture Foundation has employed a diversified management approach to make The Red House a landmark attraction. (Photo: Shi Chuntai)

2. The Red House, built as Taiwan's first public market, is Taiwan's best-preserved Class III National Monument. (Photo: Lu Enci)

The public and private sectors thereafter continued to focus their attention on The Red House, organizing a variety of lively arts and culture activities and exhibitions of cultural and creative goods. Attractions include the theater on the second floor of the Octagon Building (八角樓), Creative Boutique (16工房) area in the Cruciform Building (十字樓), Riverside Live House (河岸留言), North Square Market for Artists & Designers (北廣場創意市集), South Square Outdoor Café area (南廣場露天咖啡區), and Moonlight Movie Theater (月光電影院). These have made The Red House a key cultural and creative development



The Outdoor Café area is a mini-forest of choices, a favorite spot with young folk for evening get-togethers filled with pleasant conversation. The cafes and bars here are LGBT-friendly, helping to make this an all-inclusive gathering spot for good food and drink known throughout Asia.

### Different Eras of Ximending Fashion

From the fashionable public market of a 100-plus years ago to today's bustling Ximen Pedestrian Area (西門徒步區), Ximending has been home to the trendiest shops.

In the 1980s and 1990s, cabarets, referred to as red envelope clubs, became very popular, with an especially flourishing cluster in Ximending. When this fad went into decline the folk-music restaurant, beloved by the young crowd, stepped in. Today, it is live stage shows that are all the rage with local youth, with Ximending in the vanguard, Riverside Live House

platform in the city's west district.

The Creative Boutique has been repositioned as a "life cultural and creative department store." In addition to remodeling this unique space, integrating old and new, it has been made into a bazaar of Taiwan cultural and creative brands, sparking a rich surge

of creative energy and stimulating international exchanges and cooperation. The weekend Market for Artists & Designers is a lively bazaar of colorful artist and designer stalls. With a new creative theme each month, the North Square bursts with a happy holiday atmosphere, attracting sightseers hunting for lifestyle-enhancing creative gems.



and Legacy mini are the powerhouse drivers of Ximending's dynamic music scene. As part of the Taipei Culture Foundation's ( 台北市文化基金會 ) diversified management approach, a café, historical-materials exhibit, cultural and creative market, and cultural and creative development center have also been established, further solidifying the attraction of The Red House as a cultural and creative landmark.

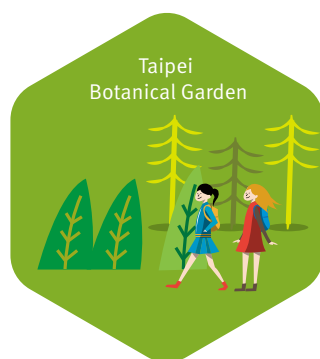
The Red House is a cultural and creative bellwether, with scores and scores of inventive enterprises in the immediate area, among them trendy hair salons, spicy-hotpot joints, hand-made beverage outlets, KTVs, and even backpacker hotels and hostels. Each has been a product of the times, hitting wave after wave, driving Ximending as a pop-culture mecca and stimulating consumption surges. A key difference between the Ximending of today and the yesterday of *Ryu* is that today's youth believes in letting a "hundred flowers bloom," meaning that everyone

can do their own thing with no need of holding the passion inside. As long as there is kindred spirit, each makes his/her own unique contribution. It can be tattoos, it can be street dance, it can be good coffee, and it can even be the cultural-guide work once dominated by those more senior. The cultural landscape is thus like a kaleidoscope, changing endlessly.

From youth subculture to arts energy, there is a great injection of creativity and arts and culture activity. Ximending, as it always has for people who have spent part of their youth here, continues to bring endless surprises. On the one side colorful pop fashion reigns, yet on the other is rich historical depth. Beyond The Red House, just a short walk away is Xiben Temple (西本願寺), another heritage site where original glory has been restored for the world to enjoy, sitting beautifully in characteristically quiet Japanese elegance. After being immersed in the incoming tide of Japanese and Korean pop fashion in Ximending's

3. The Riverside Live House and other venues are showcases of the energy of Ximending's music scene. (Photo: Lu Enci)
4. Ximending was a key birthplace for movie entertainment in Taiwan; today cinemas are clustered along what is called "Cinema Street." (Photo: Taipei City Government Department of Information and Tourism)
5. Today's Ximending is a veritable temple of youth subcultures. (Photo: Lai Jianhong)
6. Xiben Temple, which exudes deep Japanese character, has been transformed into an arts, culture and leisure space. (Photo: Shi Chuntai)

bustling main area, change the pace with quiet moments in its oases of tranquility, savoring tea Japanese-style in Xiben Temple Square or a coffee hipster-style in a creative café. Lively, colorful, and endlessly wonder-filled, in Ximending the things that change and the things that happily remain the same reflect the essential Ximen/West Gate area character, the perpetual air of vitality and creativity thrilling all who come. ❶



# Travels Through Time and Timeless Beauty

## A Time/Space Oasis – The Taipei Botanical Garden

Article — Xu Ciqian

Photos — Taipei City Government Department of Information and Tourism, Shi Chuntai

If the novel *Ryu* can be described as a youth novel, the Taipei Botanical Garden, which makes repeated appearances in the book together with scenes of first love, can be said to be a place blooming with the hard-to-miss poetry of the old city. Protagonist Ye Qiusheng (葉秋生) makes frequent visits to the garden. In the beginning, this is to trace the reasons behind the death of his grandfather. Later, he comes to talk of love. In the 1970s and 1980s, the Taipei Botanical

Garden was busy morning to night. At daybreak, seniors would come to practice *tai chi* or ballroom dancing, or carry out another form of exercise. During the day, many students would be by Lotus Pond sketching. With nightfall, the garden became an oasis for sweethearts. When Qiusheng takes Mao Mao (毛毛) to the garden it is a confirmation of their relationship. The scene is set thus in the novel: amidst the grove of bamboo, sweetheart couples line the railings of

the pond-side pavilion. “The couples are perched like sparrows on a telephone line.” Pairs do silent battle with each other any time a space opens up, vying to fill it.

For today’s generation, romantic relationships are more open and straightforward, and the whole city serves as a stage for lovers. The botanical garden is still a place for the elderly and their morning fitness routines, and a pilgrimage spot for students to sketch and paint





lotus blossoms, as well as for photo buffs. And now, as before, the garden landscaping exists in attractive harmony with the architecture of the Nanhai Academy (南海學園) historical buildings spread about the grounds.


### Exotic Plants and Flowers Bring Out The Beauty of Heritage Sites

However, what the author of *Ryu*, Akira Higashiyama, has always loved best about the botanical garden is its tropical plants. Their shadows shelter people from the boiling heat, and they accompany the field of lotus blooming during summertime. Established 120 years ago, the garden occupies 8.2 hectares, within which over 2,000 plant species are cultivated. Such botanical classrooms are precious rarities within the heart of a city. In addition to the evergreens and pageantry of the seasonal flowers is a rich array of cultural attractions. Throughout the park and grounds of neighboring Jianguo High School (建國中學) are archeological sites from what is called the “Botanical Garden Culture” (植

物園文化), from the Neolithic period around 3,000 years ago. Also within the park is the Guest House of Imperial Envoys (欽差行臺), a city-designated historic site. This was the largest government-office complex built in Taiwan during the Qing Dynasty, with a total of 18 structures. Today, the only sections remaining are the main gate for the local security garrison and a portion of the main hall, built by Taiwan Governor Tang Jing-song (唐景崧). In the early Japanese period, the Taiwan Governor General’s Office was located in the former security garrison facility – i.e., before the completion of today’s Presidential Office Building (總統府) this was the seat of the highest authority in the land. A little time spent here gives a strong feeling for the majesty of the office and sophistication of the architecture.

The National Museum of History (國立歷史博物館), located within the Taipei Botanical Garden, offers a rich supply of exhibitions and arts and culture activities. These splendidly complement a slow stroll

1. The poetic rhythms of the old city are difficult to ignore during a Taipei Botanical Garden visit. (Photo: Department of Information and Tourism, Taipei City Government)
2. A familiar early morning sight at the garden is groups of people practicing tai chi and exercising. (Photo: Shi Chuntai)
3. The Guest House of Imperial Envoys, a city-designated historic site, is on the garden grounds. (Photo: Shi Chuntai)

through the light and shadow of the garden, enjoying the wonders of the exotic flowers and plants in the Chinese Zodiac Plants Garden, Chinese Classical Literature Botanical Garden, and other sections. Whether you come with your sweetheart to whisper sweet nothings, to do some photography or sketching, or simply to linger on the benches spending a half-day contentedly mulling over this and that, the Taipei Botanical Garden is more than the “lungs of the city” – it is a serene oasis for mind and spirit. Here, spend some of your free time enjoying the “luxury of happiness.” 



# The True Tastes of Old-Time Taipei

## Unforgettable Food Tours – Dihua Street

Article — Xu Ciqian  
Photos — Shi Chuntai



In *Ryu*, novelist Akira Higashiyama describes the Taipei of his childhood – the charms of the old-city area, the unique ambience arising from the fusion of the old with the new. He feels that the best way to get to know the “true tastes of Taipei” is to immerse yourself in the bustling neighborhood atmosphere, exploring the past to better know the present. Leisurely stroll about and sample the tasty foods, savoring the many colorful and curious new things that serendipity brings your way within this world of nostalgia. The writer specially recommends Dihua Street to experience the warmth and sense of coziness that travel to old and new Taipei can bring.

Dihua Street is the heart of Dadaocheng, which long had a roaring international tea trade. Many of its great merchants were believers in Christianity, and some celebrated their business success by building churches. One such person was Lee Chun-Sheng (李春生), known as the “father of Taiwan tea,” who contributed funds to build the Dadaocheng Branch of the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan (大稻埕長老教會) and Lee Chun-sheng Memorial Christ Presbyterian Church (李春生紀念館). These provide a vivid visual contrast with such local Eastern centers of worship as the Taipei Xia-Hai City God Temple (台北霞海城隍廟).

Of course, the historic buildings along Dihua Street itself are also a sight to behold. Today, the majority house Chinese-medicine shops and sellers of regional specialty products. And it’s not only locals who come here to shop. For the international tourist, this locale means a different experience from that found at a modern mall, providing an interesting exploration through space and time.

In addition to the well-preserved streetscapes, in recent years many shops have gone down the cultural and creative industry road, successfully luring back young consumers. In days past, author Akira lingered over tea while savoring the refined blending of past and present in the building, now renovated, that houses one of the city’s ArtYard (聯藝埕) operations. Linger in Dadaocheng, it’s easy to find yourself feeling sentimental over times now gone. Akira specially recommends a visit to the Taiyuan Asian Puppet Theatre Museum (台原亞洲偶戲博物館), where you can learn about the puppets and puppetry traditions of Taiwan and the world. The Dihua Street experience is an enchanting, superlative time-space tour.



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On any Dadaocheng visit, exploration of the endless traditional culinary delights is a must. The nondescript vendor's stand or eatery is often a spot that has been open for decades and treasured by locals, and the urge to join the excited queues is irresistible. Within delectably short walks from each other are Minle Street's Minle Swordfish Rice Noodle Soup (民樂旗魚米粉湯), Yongle Tainan Mackerel Soup (永樂台南土魷魚羹), and stinky tofu sellers, and Dihua Street area's Yan's Almond Dew (顏記杏仁露), Yongle Mitaimu Noodles (永樂米苔目), Miao Kou Steamed Baozi (meat-stuffed buns) (妙口肉包), Jincheng Fishball Shop (進成魚丸店), Jia Xing Fuzhou Fishballs (佳興福州魚丸), and Summer Tree Sweet (夏樹甜品). There's also the alley before Cisheng Temple (慈聖宮), a foodie paradise known far beyond neighborhood residents, featuring A-Lan's Egg Fried Rice (阿蘭蛋炒飯), Ye Family Pork Congee (葉家肉粥), Shan Ben Rice Noodle Soup (山本米粉湯), and

Squid Strips (魷魚標). If interested in snack treats, some good choices are Wei Fone Foods (維豐肉類食品; meat products), Lee's Cake (李亭香餅店; traditional bakery), and Chiang Ji Hua Long Foods (江記華隆肉紙; pork crisps), which always has long lines when traditional festivals roll around.

Beyond the palate-thrilling experience of great food at equally great low prices, another fine idea is copying writer Akira's Dihua Street "hipster" tour. Places like URS329 – Rice & Shine (URS329稻舍), Bloom (民藝埕), ArtYard67 (民藝埕), ArtYard2022 (眾藝埕), and ArtYard1 (小藝埕) percolate with



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1. The Dihua Street area once flourished as a tea trading hub. (Photo: Shi Chuntai)
2. Dadaocheng Branch of the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan stands as an architectural witness to the history of Taipei. (Photo: Shi Chuntai)
3. The tasty traditional foods served up in Dadaocheng continually attract tourists on culinary explorations. (Photo: Shi Chuntai)

innovative-cum-classical style. Dihua Street not only provides a feast for the palate, but also an arts and cultural banquet, making travelers "flowing" through the old city fall in love with its beauty. **T**



# Presenting Taipei's Diverse Charms to Its Sister Cities

## Exciting Developments in City Diplomacy

| Article · Photos — International Affairs Division, Secretariat, Taipei City Government

In early 2015, Taipei Mayor Ko Wen-je visited Taipei's sister cities in the US and Japan to enthusiastic response. In the latter half of 2016 representatives from these cities paid a return visit to Taipei. In addition to strengthening relationships with its sister cities, Taipei was able to show off its diversity of attractions and rich culture. The hope is that more travelers will be inspired to take in the sights of Taiwan and Taipei. In the future, efforts will continue to be made to create opportunities to mar-

ket Taipei and present its advantages to the world.

### Taipei Day in Wellington – Attention Focused on Taiwan's Capital City

Taipei Day (台北日) came about due to a visit by then Wellington mayor Celia Wade-Brown to the Taipei International Book Exhibition (台北國際書展) in February of 2015. While in Taipei, she signed an exchange and collaboration memorandum of understanding with Mayor Ko for the

organizing of sister-city exchange activities.

Taipei Day included three major events: a Taiwan movie screening, Taipei photography exhibition, and Taipei food festival. *Dream Ocean* (夢想海洋) was the film screened. This documentary tells the story of Su Tazzen (蘇達貞), professor emeritus at National Taiwan Ocean University (國立臺灣海洋大學), and 16 young people from Taiwan, who designed and sailed a canoe to Yonaguni, Japan.

The subject matter resonated with the New Zealand audience due to a shared love of the sea. Among those who attended the screening were Wade-Brown, members of the New Zealand Film Commission, Wellington residents, students, and Taiwanese living in the city, with every seat at the City Gallery Wellington filled. The photography exhibition was held in the lobby of the Wellington City Library. On display were 50 images representing Taipei's characteristic cultural and scenic landscapes. Through these images, Wellington residents were able to gain a better understanding of Taipei.

The grand finale was the Taipei food festival. This opened with a lion dance performed by a youth group. Chefs from The Westin Taipei (台北威斯汀六福皇宮) volunteered their time to support this event, making use of local New Zealand ingredients to prepare such internationally recognized Taiwanese dishes as beef noodles, fried rice noodles, fried rice, and Dan Zai noodles, giving visitors a taste of authentic Taipei. The delicious food received a great response from New Zealanders, and brought the flavors of home to Taiwanese living in New Zealand.

## City-Level Exchanges, Strengthening Friendships

Taipei and the US city of Phoenix, Arizona established their sister-city relationship in 1979. In March of this year Mayor Ko led a delegation to Phoenix, meeting with the city's mayor, Greg Stanton. The two enjoyed a very friendly discussion. Stanton paid



a visit to the Taipei City Government in October, signing an agreement reaffirming the sister-city relationship and highlighting the unwavering friendship between the two cities.

Phoenix is located in a dry desert area. On his first visit to Taiwan, Stanton experienced Taiwan's sometimes abundant rainfall, which left a deep impression on him. Although the weather was not very cooperative, his cheerful mood was in no way dampened.

In addition, 2016 marks the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the signing of a sister-city agreement with Yokohama, Japan. Yokohama Mayor Fumiko Hayashi led a delegation to Taipei to celebrate this milestone, and to further cement ties between the two cities. On October 21<sup>st</sup>, mayors Ko and Hayashi signed a conservation agreement between the two cities' zoos, focused on exchange and collaboration in the areas of species conservation, population management, animal care and treatment, education, and recreation.

What is worth noting is that specific benefits and achievements come from these diplomatic visits to sister cities

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1. The year 2016 marks the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the signing of a sister-city agreement with Yokohama, Japan. Yokohama Mayor Fumiko Hayashi led a delegation to Taipei to celebrate this milestone. (Photo: International Affairs Division, Secretariat, Taipei City Government)

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2. Wellington's Taipei Day included a Taiwan movie screening, Taipei photography exhibition, and Taipei food festival. (Photo: International Affairs Division, Secretariat, Taipei City Government)

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overseas and other city-to-city cooperation and exchanges. On November 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> of this year, the Taipei City Government cooperated for the first time with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (外交部) and various cities in the Pacific region to jointly stage the 2016 Asia-Pacific Culture Day (亞太文化日) exhibition at the Taipei railway station. The purpose of this event was to bring the public better understanding of city-to-city diplomacy. Through such cultural exhibitions, and other key city events as the upcoming 2017 Taipei Summer Universiade, the Taipei City Government hopes that the public will be energized to participate and push forward the city's diplomacy, allowing the world not only to see Taipei, but also the beauty of all of Taiwan. T

# Perspectives of a German Tourist and Loyal Annual Visitor

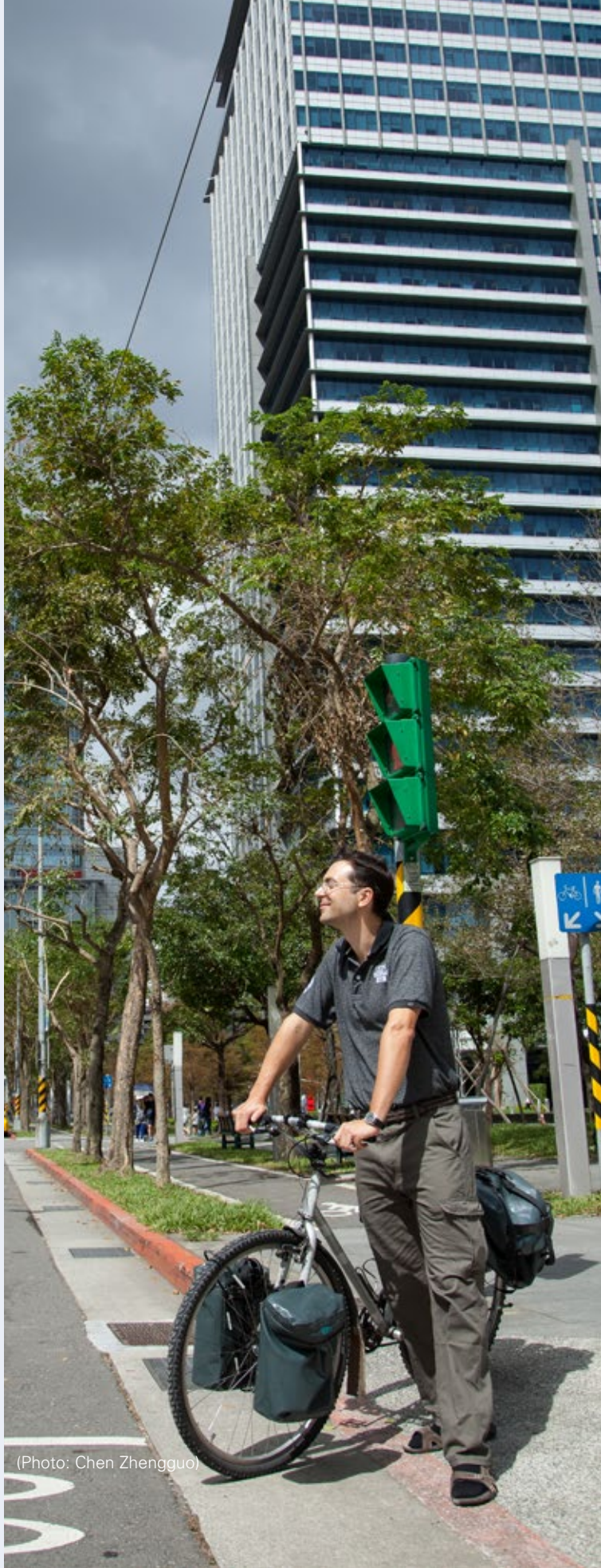
## Grand Cycling Tour of Taiwan

Article \_\_ Cai Jiawei  
Photos \_\_ Chen Zhengguo

The “grand tour” has long been regarded as the true essence of travel. It involves trekking on one’s own through various landscapes, enjoying the warmth of the sun and the scenery and learning the lessons associated with loneliness and being alone. Travel is not just a simple sightseeing process of drinking, dining, and fun. It is a journey that requires changing one’s circumstances to find emotional and spiritual peace.

### Traveling Taiwan’s Landscapes on Bicycle

Markus, who is from Germany, first visited Taiwan in 2009 and fell in love with the gorgeous scenery and amazing cultural landscapes here. There seems to be an invisible thread that connects him to Taiwan, as every summer he brings his well-traveled bicycle and a simple bag, embarking on yet another grand tour. “I have been to Taiwan a total of nine times,” he says. Not yet very proficient in Chinese, Markus uses simple gestures and a sincere heart to travel around Taiwan, easily making friends with the enthusiastic people he meets along the way. He says that, “Taiwanese are all very lovely, very warm.” This is the main reason that he likes visiting so much.



(Photo: Chen Zhengguo)

(北橫公路), visiting various communities in the mountainous areas of northern Taiwan, such as Baling (巴陵), Xinguang (新光), Simakusi (司馬庫斯; also known as Smangus), Luchang (鹿場), and Nanzhuang (南庄). He crossed many of northern Taiwan's famous mountains, using all his five senses to experience the peaks, rivers, flora, and fauna to the full.

Markus says that riding a bicycle is actually the most comfortable way to travel. He experiences firsthand the undulating topography of the mountains as he exerts effort to ride uphill and then breezily coasts downhill. At the same time, he feels the breathing and vitality of the mountains through every pore in his body. He can stop anytime and continue anytime. In this way, he can change the tempo of his travel, making it sometimes fast and sometimes slow. "When my bicycle and clothes become covered in splashes of mud, these represent the details of actual experiences."

## Savoring the Flavors of Local Life

To Markus, warmth and friendly enthusiasm are Taiwan's characteristics. They are the important support that has encouraged him to continue to travel here. "Getting around Taiwan is very convenient," he says. He doesn't have to set his daily itinerary in any specific detail, something he considers to be an advantage, and he can find accommodation and eateries everywhere. This allows him to freely adjust his pace. Taiwan is safe, and



For nine years, Markus has traveled to Taiwan's large cities and mountains, experiencing the beauty of this island at a leisurely pace.

thus there isn't much worry of being a victim of robbery or fraud. While traveling in Taiwan, it is possible to feel the same warmth and peace of mind as being at home.

Taiwan's food culture is another of its charming advantages. Markus, who has a remarkable memory, can list many of Taiwan's specialty foods, such as pineapple cakes, pearl milk tea, and chayote shoots (龍鬚菜; literally "dragon whisker vegetable"). Desserts, beverages, snacks – with each trip Markus has accumulated rich taste memories. "Taiwan's vegetables are fresh and delicious." He shares the thought that each mouthful of fresh vegetables he has eaten in Taiwan has been crispy and sweet, and he can taste the high mountains and vast fields. In contrast with Europe, which covers

a wide area, Taiwan has a large advantage in terms of transportation of produce to market, so no matter where you are in Taiwan you can enjoy foods grown at different elevations. Giving his sincerest praise, he says that, "The Taiwanese people are really very fortunate!"

Markus also says that, "I hope that even more people will come to know about the beauty of Taiwan." He has already planned out his time in Taiwan next year. Based on his experiences, he wants to tell other international travelers that Taiwan is well worth visiting – with an open mind, the beauty of Taiwan's mountains and forests will naturally linger in your memory, beckoning you back for another grand tour. 📌

# Cho Baek-sang: Taiwan, the Beautiful Pearl of the Pacific Ocean

Article \_\_ Yen Ai-Chueh

Photos \_\_ Yang Jiaying, Korean Mission in Taipei

Entering the Korean Mission in Taipei on the 22<sup>nd</sup> floor of the Taipei World Trade Center, we are greeted by the tourist-favorite Taipei 101 tower through the office window of representative Cho Baek-sang. It almost seems as though the building is looking in and waving, as if saying goodbye to Cho as the end of his term in Taipei approaches.



## Though Living in Taipei, Very Familiar With All of Taiwan's Attractions and Resources

Time flies, says Cho in Chinese, in which he is fluent. From his first day in April 2014 through to the end of October this year, when *TAIPEI* visited him, he had been busy at his official duties maintaining and developing friendly and cooperative relations between South Korea and Taiwan. While here he took every chance, whether related to his official tasks or during his leisure time, to explore the island's northern, central, and southern areas.

He says that whether talking about geographical or natural environment, cultural customs or foods, on each and every trip he discovered new charms and advantages. His favorite travel destination is Dongyanshan National Forest Recreation Area (東眼山國家森林遊樂區) in Taoyuan City's Fuxing District (桃園市復興區). In Taipei, he specially recommends Daan Park (大安森林公園). "On weekends and holidays, I often take the metro to the park and spend an hour or two strolling through it. I see many people, meditating, practicing *tai chi*, jogging or having fun with their kids. Getting a taste of how Taipei people enjoy their leisure time reminds me a great deal of Central Park in New York." He adds that the public space at the park's metro station is well worth a visit for foreign tourists, with a beautiful landscape waterfall and water-dance fountain show that lasts about 10 minutes.

## Stationed in Many Lands – Deeply Impressed by Taiwan

Cho is a graduate of the Department of Political Studies and International Relations at Seoul National University and the Foreign Policy Research Institute at the University of Pennsylvania. Over his 34-year diplomatic career, he's been posted to South Korea embassies and consulates in the United States, Nepal, Japan, Vietnam, mainland China, and other locations. In 2012, when serving as consul general in Shenyang in mainland China, his mission was chosen "Best Consulate." Fluent in Chinese, English, Japanese,

and German, he is South Korea's only ambassador (representative) to have been specially appointed as a Ministry of National Defense international policy officer on military policy and multilateral security and protection cooperation affairs.

South Korea-Taiwan relations underwent a fundamental shift in 1992. Fortunately, through the dedicated efforts of both sides, in recent years each has become the 5<sup>th</sup>-largest trading partner of the other. The resumption of direct scheduled flights between the two countries in September 2004 has gradually brought robust tourist traffic, and the addition of 90-day visa-free entry plus coverage of Taiwan in 2013 by the Korean travel show *FlowerH4* (花漾爺爺) has attracted even more South Korean travelers to Taiwan. In 2014, the number of tourists visiting each other's countries exceeded 1 million for the first time. At present, there are 110 direct flights between the two countries per week, and exchanges are increasing daily. The tourist-visitor number for 2016 is expected to reach 1.7 million.

Cho brings a fresh foreigner's perspective when looking at Taiwan, often leading to pleasant surprises. Most of his time has been spent in Taipei. He finds the city very clean and safe, the people kind-hearted and warm, and the scenery rich and varied – an extremely attractive city with a fusion of the beauties of Seoul, Washington, and Tokyo. Taipei 101

1. Cho Baek-sang says that whether it's geographical and natural environment, cultural customs, or food, with each tour he discovers ever more charms and strengths of Taiwan. (Photo: Yang Jiaying)



has made a deep impression on him; he lives in the Xinyi District, and much enjoys the tower's rainbow spectrum of colors, with the colors changing every evening.

Cho expresses special gratitude for the assistance the city government's Department of Cultural Affairs (文化局) has provided him with venue-use applications. He staged a "Korea-Taiwan Friendship Exchange" event three years in a row, the most recent on October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016, with the department's help. The last event was staged on the Taipei City Hall East Entrance Plaza (台北市市政大樓東門廣場), with the soaring Taipei 101 as backdrop, creating a setting both majestic and rare. There were performances by Taipei Percussion and Korean singers RK Kim Seung Hee and Lu.E. Stalls were

set up to serve Korean cuisine and provide Korean cultural experiences.

### Soon to Leave Office – Suggestions for Korean Travelers

For first-time visitors to Taiwan, he recommends first exploring the north. Must-visit attractions include Yangmingshan (陽明山), Yeliu GeoPark (野柳), Jiufen (九份), Jinguashi (金瓜石), Pingxi (平溪), Tamsui (淡水), Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Hall, Dr. Sun Yat-sen Memorial Hall, Taipei 101, Longshan Temple, and Ximending. Some people who come to Taiwan but stay in Taipei go on themed tours each time. For example, a hot-spring tour could include Beitou, Yangmingshan, Wulai (烏來), and Jinshan (金山). If adults are traveling with kids, a good idea would be to add a visit to the

Taipei Zoo (台北市立動物園) to see the famous pandas.

On a return visit to Taiwan, Cho recommends an in-depth excursion taking in Sun Moon Lake in Nantou County (南投縣日月潭), Fort Zelandia in Tainan City (台南市安平古堡), and down the east coast exploring Yilan (宜蘭), Hualien (花蓮), and Taitung counties. He describes Taiwan as a place of countless hidden gems well worth numerous visits and, expressing his love for this land, goes so far as to state that, "The beautiful pearl of the Pacific Ocean is not Hawaii, it is Taiwan." He believes that tourism should be a key focus for systematic development in the future, and that target markets should be more deliberately segmented, with promotions tailored more specifically for each.

2. For the last Korea-Taiwan Friendship Week in early October, the iconic Korean performance troupe BIBAP was invited to Taiwan to perform. (Photo: Korean Mission in Taipei)
3. The 2016 Korea-Taipei cultural exchange festivity was held on the East Entrance Plaza of Taipei City Hall. (Photo: Korean Mission in Taipei)
4. Korean Mission in Taipei Representative Cho Baek-sang gives a speech. (Photo: Korean Mission in Taipei)

Over the past decade or so Korean pop culture has swept across Asia, and even the globe – Korean pop-idol TV dramas, Korean music, the PSY phenomenon, Samsung mobile phones, and premium cosmetics. The Korean people have achieved the perfect integration of national characteristics and IT information-industry capabilities, creating a “Korean wave” that has swept through countries around the world. Cho has watched Taiwanese TV dramas and variety shows, and is of the opinion that local entertainment artists are attractive, creative, and charming, and the entertainment industry cultivates impressive talent, such as internationally renowned film directors Ang Lee (李安) and Hou Hsiao-hsien (侯孝賢).

It would be a great opportunity if Korean talent could work with them co-writing and producing scripts.

Summing up, Cho uses the term “brothers in hardship” to describe the close relationship between South Korea and Taiwan. Both have export-oriented economies, and both are facing employment difficulties among youth and the highly educated, aging societies, industrial pollution, and other issues. Most special is the fact that in both countries power is peacefully handed over between elected political parties, and both are today headed by a woman. “We are perhaps the two most similar countries in the world,” he states, and precisely because the two have faced such similar difficulties, they can work in close concert in the future to find solutions. **T**

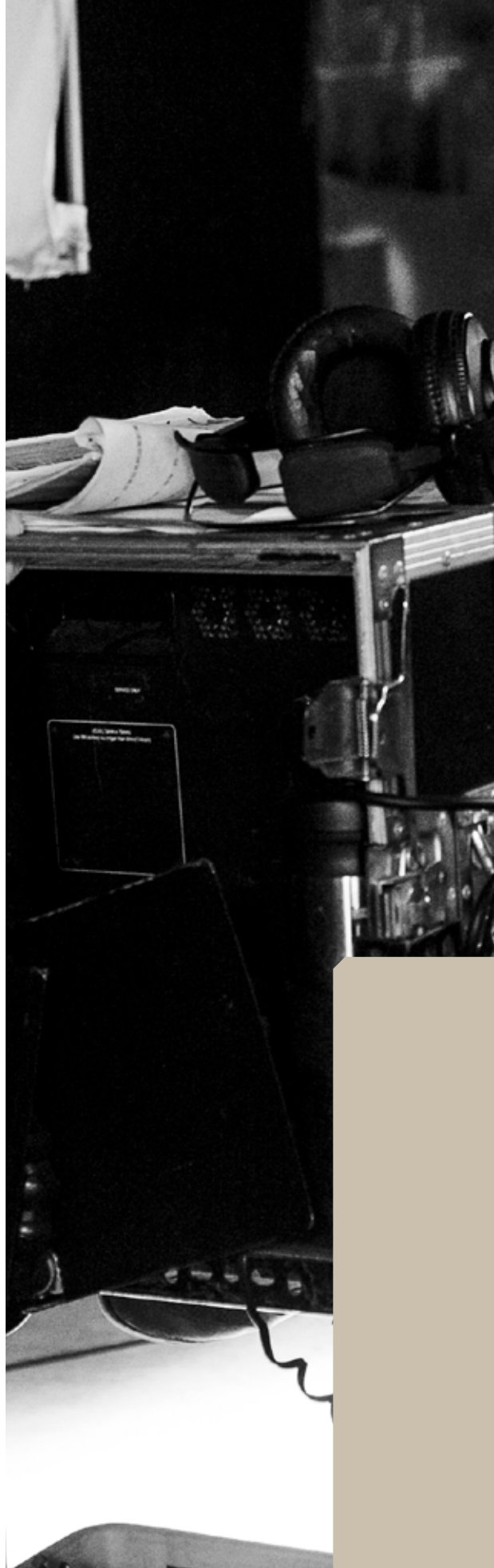


## *Twenty, Thirty, Forty* Kitamura Toyoharu's Filmmaking Dream

Article \_\_ Jiang Xinying  
Photos \_\_ Kitamura Toyoharu



“A father going through a midlife crisis, a mother with an empty nest and three children facing issues of work, love, interpersonal relationship and adolescence....” These are the core themes of director Kitamura Toyoharu’s latest work, *Q Series: Love of Sandstorm* (植劇場——戀愛沙塵暴). Kitamura consistently uses humor and exaggerated visual techniques to easily move between the imaginary and the real. At the same time, he breaks away from his portrayal of love stories in the past with script realistically portraying the social tensions of everyday life. The audience laughs with the recognition of things familiar from their own lives. Watching the story unfold is more than just a window into myriad aspects of life in Taipei – we also see ourselves living in this sprawling metropolis.





(Photo: Kitamura Toyoharu)

## Heading Toward the Unknown on a One-Way Ticket – Youth ACTION

Kitamura says that, “Actors should be a kind of weapon, and dialogue is a kind of weapon.” The pursuit of his filmmaking dream began in 1997, when he left his job working at a small theatre in Osaka, Japan to enroll in the Central Academy of Drama in Beijing. He originally planned to study Chinese and drama, with the dream of becoming a fluent Chinese-speaking

Japanese actor. But after four months in China the high cost of tuition and living forced him to put his plans on hold, and he had to think how to make a living. Some students from Taiwan suggested that he go to Taiwan to work and save up for his tuition. His plan was to return to Beijing after saving enough money, but his fondness grew for Taiwan due to the culture, living standards, and cost of living being similar to his hometown in Japan, and he has stayed for 20 years.

“That was how I first came to know Taiwan,” he says. “But, looking back, there had always been Taiwanese people around me.” His first job in Taipei was at the Mousieur Riuma Hair Salon (中村龍馬髮藝), opened by a former colleague. Before he was able to enter the film industry, his life took many twists and turns. After the hair salon, he worked at a Japanese restaurant, curry restaurant, and Italian restaurant. From National Chengchi University Chinese

Language Center (國立政治大學華語文教學中心) to National Taiwan University of Arts (國立台灣藝術大學) and Taipei National University of the Arts (國立台北藝術大學), during his youth, Kitamura spent time in Muzha (木柵), on Yongkang Street (永康街), in the East District (東區), and in Guandu (關渡) with the constant stalls of his Vespa scooter serving as frustrating and unforgettable interludes.

Thinking back on the first year he worked in a Japanese restaurant, Kitamura says he had thought about leaving. “However, a Taiwanese co-worker said to me, in a very serious tone, ‘I think you are very talented.

Work for one more year. After that, no matter what you do you will be successful.’” Perhaps it was the purity of youth that had made this sincere compliment decisive. He decided to stay. At that time, his goal was to be “the first Japanese person to create a Taiwanese film.” A decade-plus later, he had directed two feature films and three television dramas, and taken on countless production and acting jobs. For Kitamura, Taiwan has been a place where dreams come true.

He says that, “When filmed, a script of high score will not be less than 90 points. During post-production good material can be added, along with the musical score, which

will definitely not deduct points.” In other words, the likeability, emotions, and laughter that a film offers to an audience come from the exacting execution of the entire team from start to finish. The filming of *Love of Sandstorm* was a twist of fate that came about by chance. “It is very rare for a director, when looking at a script, to decide at first glance that he/she wants to make a film,” says Kitamura. Wen Yu-Fang (溫郁芳) and Chang Ke-Hsin (張可欣) wrote the realistic, detailed screenplay, which was complemented by director Kitamura’s preposterous, zany methods of expression. The characters were brought to life and introduced to the audience through the



1. This usually amiable director becomes focused and serious when working. (Photo: Kitamura Toyoharu)

camera lens making the story come to life and easier to resonate with audiences. “When I read the script, I wondered if someone had told the screenwriters about my life,” says Kitamura with a smile. Sometimes, the absurd reveals life’s truths.

## From Being on His Own to Heading an Extended Family

In 2010 Kitamura’s parents came to Taiwan and opened a Japanese restaurant, naming it Kitamurake (北村家; “Kitamura Family”). His father had 40 years of experience as a Japanese-cuisine chef, and in Taipei has recreated the tastes of the Kitamura family, living up to the name perfectly.

Three generations of this family now have roots in this land. Kitamura has hired a teacher to give his parents weekly Chinese lessons every week – though with little effect. This inability to communicate has led to some very interesting situations. Not knowing whether to laugh or cry, Kitamura says that, “My mother once took a taxi, wanting to go to Tonghua Street (通化街). The driver heard Tonghe Street (通河街), and drove all the way to the Shilin (士林) area. My father once bought a helmet imported from Italy that was more expensive than his bicycle, and was scolded by me and my mother.” His parents at first depended on him to take them around, but in the past few years have

started to explore Taipei on their own. “Taipei’s Metro and buses are very convenient, and it’s more interesting for them if they go on their own,” he says. They like to use the Taipei Metro for food explorations, mango shaved ice and *xiaolongbao* their favorites. They have also not missed out on Beitou Park (北投公園) during the Pokemon Go craze.

When he was a student, Kitamura liked to photograph in the Wanhua area, fascinated with the city’s old and traditional street scenes. Today, the father of a son and a daughter, on weekends he racks his brain in an attempt to satisfy their demands. The East District, Beitou, Yangmingshan, Dadaocheng, and Tonghua Street – his family has visited every corner of Taipei. Already a director, an actor, an izakaya owner, and father of two, next year Kitamura will take on another identity as he attempts to use Chinese to write about his experiences in Taiwan over the last 20 years. He spent his first 10 years working on making his dream a reality, and over the next 10 Kitamura went from living on his own to being part of an extended family of six. What will the third decade bring? He says that, “I have not yet had my fill of romantic comedies.” Since he is steadfast to continue on living out his cinema dreams, we’ll just have to wait and see what comes next! 📌



2. Kitamura and his parents. The sign on the right, which reads “Kitamura family,” resembles a Japanese-style doorplate, creating a sense of warmth. (Photo: Kitamura Toyoharu)

## Kitamura's Pocket Dining Guide



### Kitamurake

#### 北村家くるみ小料理屋

📍 17, Leli Rd. (樂利路 17 號)

☎ 0929-200-518

After work, visit the Kitamura family! Filmmaker Kitamura Toyoharu and his parents have created an izakaya of Japanese home style with a cheerful and warm atmosphere, well suited for gatherings of friends and an evening meal.



### Shihdahua Specialty Noodles

#### 史大華精緻麵食

📍 4, Ln. 74, Sec. 2, Anhe Rd.  
(安和路 2 段 74 巷 4 號)

☎ (02)2706-4436

Beef noodles, the signature dish here, are made using thin and elastic egg noodles and beef from Taiwan yellow cattle. The flavors are rich and fresh.



### Nanchuan Noodle Shop

#### 南川麵館

📍 91, Sec. 3, Heping East Rd.  
(和平東路 3 段 91 號)

☎ (02)2732-5580

"I always order one bowl of noodles with broth and one bowl of noodles without," says Kitamura. Just thinking about it makes the director hungry for this noodle shop's simple flavors. The diverse side dishes are also popular.



### Takumi Dumplings

#### 巧之味手工水餃

📍 6, Sec. 2, Jinan Rd. (濟南路 2 段 6 號)

☎ (02)2321-4693

"I order ten of the scallop and five each of the other two flavors," says Kitamura when introducing his favorite dumpling shop. There are three flavors, specialty, leek, and scallop, creating a simple yet delicious menu.

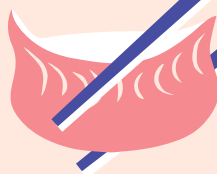


(Photo: Kitamura Toyoharu)

# Visits With Master Craftspersons Down Quiet Lanes:

## Using Stories to Awaken a City's Memory

Article \_\_ Yeh Yawei  
Photos \_\_ Lin Yanyi



Wanhua was one of the earliest areas to develop in Taipei. Today, you'll find concentrations of tea sellers, Chinese bakeries, Chinese herbal-medicine shops, clothing, clock, and watch wholesalers, and traditional blacksmith shops. From these old-time industries, so closely related to people's daily lives, it's easy to find traces of the lives of their ancestors as well. The community is a living landscape of master craftsmen and traditional skills passed on generation after generation.





### Master A-Bao's Curry Dumplings – An Old Bakery With Innovative New Tastes

“Master A-Bao’s Curry Dumplings” (阿寶師咖哩餃) was originally the “Fengmingxiang Food Shop” (鳳鳴香食品行). Second-generation proprietor Tang Kai (唐楷) inherited his craftsmanship from his father, Chen Jinbao (陳錦寶), who came to Taiwan in the Nationalist government exodus after the Chinese Civil War. Settling in Wanhua, he opened the Fengmingxiang Food Shop, choosing the name of his old business in Fuzhou (福州), mainland China. The main offerings were Fuzhou pastries and baked goods, such as *jiguang* buns (繼光餅), fried dough twist, and steamed spring roll, along with special seasonal offerings at Chinese New Year and Mid-Autumn Festival. In 1950, after taking over operations, Tang Kai began researching curry dumplings. Words spread quickly,



and he decided to change the name to Master A-Bao’s Curry Dumplings. Sporting a different surname from his father, the latter marrying into his wife’s family and Tang taking his mother’s surname, Tang chose *bao* (寶; “treasure”) for the shop name so that following generations would continue to honor his father.

Tang says that the most important thing in hand-made Fuzhou pastries and baked goods is the degree of aged gluten used, which can be judged when kneading. “You can tell if there is enough gluten by the intensity of the sound when pounding the dough,” he says. In the past this was entirely dependent on the personal experience and skill of the master, but today machines can be used to measure the dough’s pH value. This can also be distinguished by checking the color of the dough during trial baking.

The shop’s curry dumplings, carefully pleated by hand, have a special shape. The ratio of oil-created crispiness/flakiness is also closely monitored, and is key to the texture and moistness. In business 70 years now, Tang still seeks to improve each and every day, and hopes that local industries will play an even deeper role in Wanhua’s future.

### TaiHo Traditional Biscuit – Tastes That Bring Back Old Memories

Opened in 1946, TaiHo Traditional Biscuit (太和餅舖) was originally a grocery store. Third-generation manager Chen Junjie (陳俊傑) says that his grandfather once worked at the “Dahe Sugar Factory” (大和糖廠) in Taichung. In 1945, he returned to Taipei to open a shop with his siblings, calling it “A Little Bit More Than Dahe” (比大和多一點). Candied fruit, groceries, specialty goods, traditional Chinese cakes, and other

items were sold. In the 1960s, flour from the United States began to be imported and baking courses offered. Chen's father and uncles acquired new skills, and began hand-crafting baked goods. "Back then, *baozi* (包子; steamed meat-filled buns) and *mantou* (饅頭; steamed buns) were mainstream, but the new soft, puffy breads, filled with oils and sugar, proved very popular." For the past two-plus decades, Chen and his family have been trying to reset the tone for this market segment. Presenting traditional Han pastries and baked goods as its signature offerings, Tai-Ho Traditional Biscuit has remained steadfast and true in preserving old-time flavors.

Chen says that the preparations for Han pastries and baked goods are complex, and even the gathering together of ingredients takes significant time and effort. Using wintermelon meat cakes as example, the ingredients are wintermelon, nuts, lard, and milk

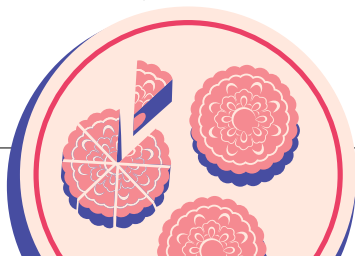
powder. Time is first needed to soften the first two ingredients, so that they mix properly into the cake. "The ratio of the melon and minced meat and the proper cooking temperature are both key to bringing out the flavor. My hope is to bring out the flavors of childhood memories." He recalls what his father used to say: "You have to make cakes and pastries you'd like to eat yourself; only these can be sold to your customers. In making cakes and pastries, you have to pass on a feeling of happiness to your buyers." Continuing in the spirit of integrity, while, at the same time, willing to innovate, "baked cheese" (烤乳酪) treats have been rolled out in recent years. These have attracted young consumers, introducing them to the traditional and bringing a new stream of customers to the old shop.

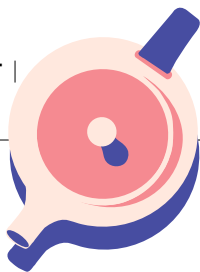
### San Xiu Blacksmith Shop – Family-Crafted Handmade Farm Implements

Once upon a time, Xichang Street

(西昌街) in Wanhua District was renowned as a street where blacksmiths were concentrated. Today, the sole remaining blacksmith shop is "San Xiu Blacksmith Shop" (三秀打鐵店). Second-generation owner Zhang Rongxiu (張榮秀) recollects how his father and friends went into partnership to open the business way back in 1925, how the partnership was later dissolved, and how his father independently setting up San Xiu. "In its heyday, blacksmith shops lined Xichang Street from no. 2 to no. 26," says Zhang. "We were the only clan to have three different enterprises. 'Jin Sheng' (金勝) which produced butchers' knives, 'Yuan Yi' (元益) which made chefs' knives, and San Xiu which crafted agricultural implements. They were highly skilled and worked quickly, and together formed a specialty source for myriad sorts of working tools." The wide range and functional diversity of San Xiu's products had a wide impact, the fact that blacksmith

1. The skin-oil crispiness/flakiness ratio is the key for Master A-Bao's tasty curry dumplings. (Photo: Lin Yanyi)
2. Three generations of care and persistence are contained in each batch of traditional Chinese treats hand-made using ancient methods. (Photo: Lin Yanyi)
3. Zhang Rongxiu says the glory days of blacksmiths may be past, but the noble spirit of the trade is immortal. (Photo: Lin Yanyi)





4. Tea is no mere commodity; it is immersed in a long-standing culture, and tea with friends is the epitome of calm, contented happiness. (Photo: Lin Yanyi)

5. Longshan Buddhist Implements has a long and illustrious history. Its Buddhist sculptures are known far and wide. (Photo: Lin Yanyi)



shops from as far away as the Jinshan and Hualien areas wanted to act as wholesalers serving as testament.

The techniques passed on to Zhang have their origin in the Hui'an (惠安) area of Fujian (福建) in mainland China. "Before doing any hammering, you have to work the scrap metal first and then heat the material to 1,300 degrees. After heating twice the metal is forged into shape. When hammering, red-hot sparks fly and the blacksmith's hands get burned. Thus, the hands of a blacksmith are invariably covered with scars." Today, machines have replaced traditional farm implements, and the 90-plus-year-old shop has turned to repairing construction equipment. The 70-year-old Zhang has no thoughts of retiring, however, and continues to put all his energies into preserving the blacksmith trade.

### Fudatong Tea Shop – A Century of Expert Tea Roasting

Fudatong Tea Shop (福大同茶莊) has been a firsthand witness to the Taiwan tea industry and its ups and downs over its history of well over a century. Owner Cai Xuanfu (蔡玄甫) says that original settlers of Wanhua, formerly known as Bangka, were from north Fujian. Tea was not yet grown in Taiwan, and they brought tea leaves via sailing ship from sellers in Xiamen (廈門). However, the tea often suffered moisture damage because transport took over one and a half month. After arrival in Bangka the leaves had to be cleaned and roasted before selling. In those days porters would wait for work in teahouses around today's No. 2 Water Gate (二號水門), sipping tea and chatting, helping to form the tea culture of the common people. Kung Fu

Tea (功夫茶) from Fujian's Anxi (安溪) region was sold to the wealthy – primarily Wuyi Narcissus (武夷水仙), Anxi Tieguanyin (安溪鐵觀音), and Lao Cong (老欖). "Storytelling teahouses" (說書茶館) also became a main attraction in the promotion of tea culture.

In the early days, tea was taken into the walled city for sale by porters using carrying poles. There were no tea shops; the function of *chazhuang* (茶莊; tea houses/manors) was solely to process tea. In the Hengyang Road (衡陽路), Bo'ai Road (博愛路), and Gongyuan Road (公園路) area, shops where today general merchandise, clothing, and jewelry are sold once housed tea sellers. Later, when Taiwan began growing its own tea, local *chazhuang* switched to developing floral teas. According to Cai, with good tea you cannot see flowers in the



leaf, but a fresh and elegant floral fragrance wafts forth. Osmanthus flower from the city's Nangang area and jasmine flower from its Luzhou area are used, with one layer of tea leaves and one layer of petals, with paper used for separation. With premium-quality teas, the stacks are left to mature for four days and nights, and referred to as "four flavors and four extractions" (四韻四提), and sometimes even "eight flavors and eight extractions" (八韻八提).

## Longshan Buddhist Implements – Promoting the Art of Sculpture

Opened in 1895, "Longshan Buddhist Implements" (龍山佛具) has a long and illustrious history. Its Buddhist sculptures are known far and wide, with the store regularly visited by buyers from Buddhist implement shops and temples from as far afield as

central and southern Taiwan, Penghu (澎湖), and Hualien.

Seventy-eight-year-old Li Ziyong (李子勇), from the sixth generation, is the current manager. Before the age of 20 he had already created two icons for the Longshan Temple, one of the Wei Tuo Bodhisattva (韋陀菩薩) and one of the Qie Lan Bodhisattva (伽藍菩薩). Speaking of Buddhist sculptures, he states: "The most difficult carving is the facial expression. Some people will study for over a decade and still not be able to capture the look of dignified, contemplative solemnity."

Li adds that the process of making Buddhist statues is complicated. Originally cotton-paper paste was used to mold the shape of the statue, later replaced with clay. Finally came the evolution of the *tuotai* (脫胎) or "bodi-

less" method, with clay used to mold the shape of the deity and then paper pasted on the surface. When the clay dries it is removed, like an embryo. The shell is then painted and the *anjin* (安金) process is carried out – the pasting on of a layer of gold foil – thereby completing a sturdy, artistic Buddhist statue. This method is still used today to create large statues, though with glass fiber used for the exterior instead. To satisfy people's textural preferences, small and medium-sized statues are carved from wood.

The stock at Longshan Buddhist Implements goes far beyond what one might expect, appearing all-encompassing. Beyond the Chinese-style Buddhist icons, images of the Virgin Mary and Jesus Christ can also be carved! "The industry for Buddhist implements will not decline," says Li confidently, "because people will always worship. Just look, Buddhism is flourishing all over the world. A single center of worship can have over a million followers."

Each city looks to create its own unique flavors as a mark of its identity. It explains who we are, and serves as a showcase of a city's charms. Through the steadfast eyes of its expert craftspeople, the irreplaceable value of Wanhua is seen. The process of heritage transmission preserves the warmth of the old days, while at the same time being integrated with the thinking of a new era, leading Wanhua to new and different heights. 📍



# Meng's Handmade Paper & Lam Sam Yick Calligraphy Brushes

## Traditional Crafts – Writing a New Page in Taiwan's Memory

Article — Fan Yujie  
Photos — Wu Jinshi, Shi Chuntai

Each day, we continually check our cellphones and spend much time on our computers, as if we have already forgotten the warmth and emotion of writing by hand. However, there is a group of people who, due to their love of the unique qualities of handmade paper and writing instruments, have learned traditional production methods and have even endowed them with novel meaning, bringing new life to ancient crafts.

### Handmade Paper – A Warmth That Technology Cannot Replace

The warmth and positive feeling associated with paper can never be replaced by high-tech products. Due to her sentimental attachment to paper Li Meng-Shu (李孟書), the founder of

Meng's Handmade Paper (二皿手作紙設計), quit her stable teaching job to devote herself to the research and development of handmade paper. She creates unique postcards, paper necklaces, and paper lamps. Hers is one of Taiwan's few paper-based cultural-creative brands.

Her education in fine arts began in junior high school, which she studied all the way through graduate school. Since the beginning, Li has dedicated herself to the art and design fields. She talks about the first time that she came in contact with handmade paper. It was in elementary school, when she used xuan zhi (Chinese rice paper) for calligraphy. As she was just a child, she wasn't deeply affected by that experience. In graduate school, as she was searching for a thesis

topic, she knew that she wanted to focus on the cultural-creative industry. She used pineapple fiber to create paper boxes, and traveled to the Philippines to visit a Taiwanese-owned paper factory. This was when she first understood that there are many methods for making paper. It also marked the birth of the idea of making paper art her profession.

After that experience, Li began learning how to make paper on her own. She started by gathering information and making videos of the methods used by a master paper artist, then attempted to use different materials and papermaking techniques on her own. After a period of continuous practice, she gradually mastered the characteristics of each type of paper, and began



1. From the handmade details, the dedication of Li Meng-Shu is clear. (Photo: Shi Chuntai)

2. Traditional papermaking techniques infused with new design meaning result in cultural-creative products. (Photo: Shi Chuntai)

producing the results that she wanted. After receiving her graduate degree, Li taught high school advertising design courses, but in her heart was the desire to produce paper. She resolutely quit her stable teaching position, and opened Meng's Handmade Paper at

the Treasure Hill Artist Village ( 寶藏巖國際藝術村 ) in 2010. This began a tug-of-war between her ideals and her reality, for in addition to focusing on paper making and design, she also had to slowly learn how to manage and operate her workshop.

## Infused With Design Elements, Creating a New Soul for Papermaking

Li loves the warmth of paper. Through touch and visual expression, each piece of paper can convey a different type of esthetics. At the same time, through design and innovation, paper can appear rich and refined. She believes that paper has a very gentle quality. "Take lampshades and screens as examples. By using paper, the light becomes pleasantly warm, and no longer as intense."

In contrast to traditional papermaking artisans, Li brings her design talent into play to create new life for handmade paper and to lead in reacquainting the public with handmade paper. She also infuses paper with the concepts of daily

use and practical function. In addition to the familiar notebooks and cards, she transforms handmade paper into such things as coasters, lampshades, screens, partitions, and wrapping paper to embellish home decor.

More than 90 percent of the materials for her creations come from easily accessible resources, such as corrugated paper, milk cartons, and discarded paper towels. These are materials that were originally going to be thrown out. Instead, they are made into environmentally friendly paper pulp. She has even used wheat dregs left over from the production of liquor to make paper packaging for distillery designed products, and she develops products for local farmers. The shells of locally produced bamboo shoots are among the environmentally friendly local materials that she accesses.

In addition to operating her Treasure Hill Artist Village workshop on weekends, Li has a space in the Eslite Spectrum Songyan Store (誠品生活松菸店). Through her papermaking classes, she

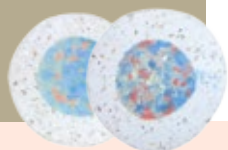
### Meng's Handmade Paper

#### 二皿手作紙設計

📍 Treasure Hill Artist Village; 2, Aly. 59, Ln. 230, Sec. 3, Tingzhou Rd. ( 寶藏巖國際藝術村; 汀洲路3段230巷59弄2號 )

☎ (02)2364-5313, ext. 314

🕒 Fri~Sun 12:00~22:00



### Process of Making a Coaster From Wheat Dregs



1. Place sun-dried wheat dregs and waste paper into a blender. Add water and blend to produce pulp.



2. Add glue and evenly spread out the pulp. Then place the pulp on a papermaking frame and drain away the water. Use an egg-frying mold to fix the shape.



3. Use absorbent paper to absorb any excess moisture.

4. Finally, press flat with an iron.

connects with different groups of people, such as families, domestic and foreign travelers, handicrafts lovers, and hipsters. She also volunteers at homes for the physically and mentally challenged, as well as organizations that help the underprivileged, teaching papermaking. Li hopes to plant seeds that encourage others to teach underprivileged children, enabling them to bring their creativity into play and, at the same time, improve their finger dexterity through practice.

Insisting on completely MIT (made in Taiwan) paper, she will continue to search for plants native to Taiwan that can be used as materials, to infuse her handmade paper with even more uniquely local character.

## Century-Old Brand, From Calligraphy to Cosmetics Brushes

Along the quaint streets of Dadaocheng stand many century-old stores. Among them is Lam Sam Yick (林三益). Due to its sophisticated and complicated production process, this store has become synonymous with handmade

calligraphy brushes. Walking inside, there is an assortment of calligraphy brushes, cups for adding water to inkstones, inkstones, name chops, and Shoushan stone carvings on display. The space is infused with an elegant Asian style. Strewn throughout another area of the store is a diversity of makeup brushes, such as eye shadow, powder, and acne brushes, creating an air of fashion. Writing materials and cosmetics brushes – these symbolize the successful coexistence of the traditional and the modern.

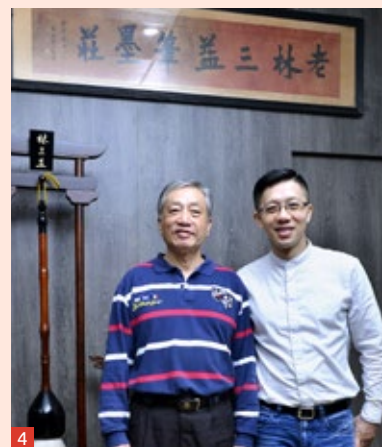
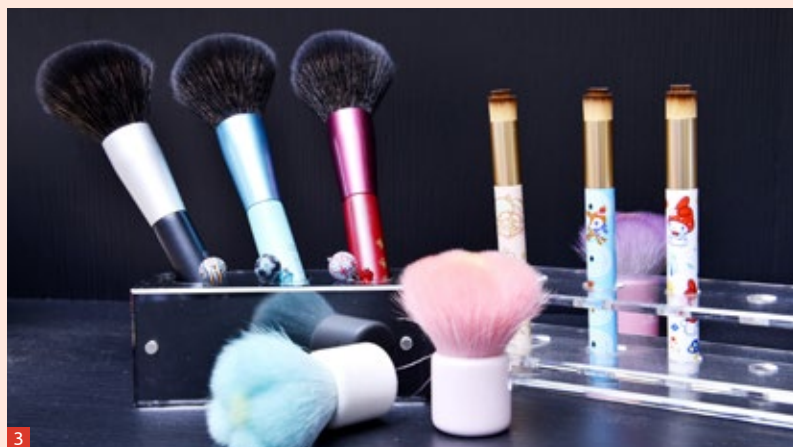
The story of the Lam Sam Yick brand can be traced to the late Qing dynasty. At that time, the production of writing implements was the least expensive craft trade to learn. The first-generation owner, Lin Wanwu (林萬務), became proficient in this craft. In his hometown of Fuzhou, mainland China, he served as an apprentice and learned how to produce calligraphy brushes at a shop, the first two characters of which were Sam Yick (三益). After completing his training he continued to work in his former master's store, then after several years opened his own. To show his gratitude, he named

it Lam Sam Yick (the surname “Lin” is Mandarin Chinese; “Lam” is the Fujianese). In 1946 he moved his family to Taipei, continuing to build the Lam Sam Yick brand in Dadaocheng and becoming a well-known calligraphy brush and ink family business.

## 48-Step Production Process – Ingenious Perfection of Brush Points

How can we define a good calligraphy brush? Lin Changlong (林昌隆), the fourth-generation manager of Lam Sam Yick, says that the brush materials and components must be correct and in the right proportions, and the point where the brush tip is formed must be smooth and flexible to allow the user

3. Lam Sam Yick has passed down calligraphy brush-making methods over the past century. In recent years, it has collaborated with Sanrio to successfully enter the cosmetics market. (Photo: Wu Jinshi)
4. In the face of changing times, father and son have persisted in the spirit of traditional craftsmanship while extending it to modern makeup brushes. (Photo: Wu Jinshi)




to freely and smoothly write or paint. He emphasizes that at least 48 steps are required to produce a handmade calligraphy brush. Each step must be carried out by a master brush maker, who checks every detail. The quality of the brush depends on the master worker's skill and attention to detail.

The process begins with choosing the hairs. Hairs without natural tips are removed. Those remaining are combined and any down is removed. They are then arranged, the composition of the hairs is completed, and the shape of the brush is set. The hairs are thereafter combed neatly and rolled around the core, wrapped, and bound in place. Following this strict process, if the brush passes the quality-control check a handle is chosen based on material and form, for example ox horn, silver, or porcelain, to increase the beauty of the brush.

## Sticking to One's Roots – Respecting Tradition Yet Welcoming Innovation

With the changing times, the number of people practicing Chinese calligraphy has been on the decline. Added to this is the elimination of calligraphy from the junior high school curriculum. In 1996, Lin Changlong took over the brand, and to enable the store to continue operating, he visited stationery stores, bookstores, and Buddhist-implement stores in an attempt to open new markets. The response was always the same: "There is no demand, there is no sales volume. We don't need to stock this!"

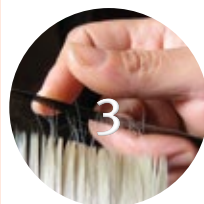
Searching for his breakthrough, Lin Changlong received inspiration from a nail-art salon. He decided to develop makeup brushes for salons, and in 2008 entered the market with the launch of the LSY brand. With a hundred-year-old foundation of expertise in making brushes by hand, rich knowledge of materials, and an insistence on quality, Lam Sam Yick has maintained its traditional craft-making spirit while developing new types of brushes. Innovative marketing methods have also been introduced. For example, in recent years this brand has worked with Sanrio to create Hello Kitty calligraphy and makeup brushes. In addition, Taiwanese indigenous motifs have been added to the cloth covers of makeup-brush sets, resulting in successful entry into the cosmetics market and products coveted by the public.

From Lam Sam Yick, expert in calligraphy items, to LSY, expert in makeup brushes, this 100-year-old shop has undergone a successful transformation. With its product positioning in "brush writing instruments," tradition and innovation have both moved in parallel and intersected. In the future, in addition to continuing to develop the makeup-brush market, Lam Sam Yick will work to promote calligraphy culture. Plans are underway to offer courses that will help students in achieving inner calm through the practice of calligraphy. The Lam Sam Yick official website will also be launched, in the continuing effort to infuse this century-old brand with new life. 

## Process for Making Calligraphy Brushes



1. Choose hairs.



2. Align hair tips.

3. Eliminate hairs with relatively short and fine tips.



4. Align hairs using comb.

5. Arrange into the shape of the brush.



6. After binding brush head, connect strands.

7. After wrapping around handle, carry out final trimming.



8. Finally, fix with addition of glue.

Lam Sam Yick (LSY)

林三益筆墨專家

📍 58, Sec. 2, Chongqing N. Rd.  
(重慶北路2段58號)

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🕒 Mon~Sat 09:00~18:00





## Wood Products, Tinware, Ceramic Art Daily Use Items Infused With the Warmth of ‘Handmade’

Article — Du Yunru

Photos — Shi Chuntai, Woo Collective

When daily-use objects are infused with “handmade” warmth, they are no longer mere implements. Rather, they enhance the esthetic style of the home. In Taipei, artisans and designers use their ingenuity and creativity to transform traditional materials through touch, embellishing the city’s already pleasant every day.

### Warm Wood for Decorating the Home

Wood is a type of natural material

with many uses, including the making of a diversity of everyday items. Each piece of wood has a distinctive grain, creating a unique esthetics. Moreover, its gentle quality and natural aroma bring a sense of warmth and a reassuring energy. This magical power is what inspired Woodline (木質線) partners Lin Guisheng (林貴生) and Yu Wan (魚丸) to enter the world of wood art.

Lin has been professionally trained.

In vocational school he began learning how to make models from wood, and at a very young age won many wood-model competitions and awards. In college he came in contact with ceramic arts, which helped to train his keen sense of esthetics, as well as provide inspiration for his wood creations. His good friend, Yu Wan, has a love of weaving, and came in contact with woodworking as a way to build his own weaving equipment. The two decided to collaborate and establish Woodline, a brand that incorporates the creative elements of wood and weaving.

Woodline mainly produces small-sized daily-use items with wood. Lin says that he hopes that his works will not just be put on display after being purchased, as after a long period of use the traces that come with usage become part of the wood, giving the works more style and charm. For example, if a wood handle is repeatedly touched over a period of time, it will





1. Although wood art appears to have simple lines and curves, it possesses the ingenuity and skills of its creator. (Photo: Shi Chuntai)
2. Their love of the warm quality and aroma of wood inspired Lin Gui-sheng (left) and Yu Wan (right) to establish the Woodline brand. (Photo: Shi Chuntai)

become smooth and develop a bright sheen. On the contrary, if wood items are not often used and not preserved under suitable conditions, they can easily become moldy or damaged. Handmade wooden items are warm artworks. Whether bowls, chopsticks, or spoons to be placed on a table, these items, used three meals per day, will not only bring about a cheerful and positive mood, but also enhance the taste of one's food.

## Hard-to-Handle Wood Results in Unique Refinement

Looking at a spoon or a cutting block, there may be the misconception that it was simple to produce. On the contrary, many methods and skills were involved. For example, to create a shallow dish requires starting with a rough design sketch. The wood must then be cut to the appropriate thickness. The depth and arc are achieved through chiseling. This is followed by sanding and polishing, and the application of protective oil or paint.

The process takes several hours and involves many steps. Added to this are differences in the type of wood and original position in the tree. This produces differences in hardness and grain. Techniques and applied force must be adjusted accordingly. Lin laughs as he says that, "Some wood is very mischievous. You plainly created a circular shape, but the next day it has become oval in shape. The finished product may therefore be different from the original design. This often happens. I can only say that wood has its own personality, and can be a difficult material to handle. More often than not, artists have a love-hate relationship with wood."

To enable more people to experience the beauty of wood-produced items, Woodline offers courses in creating handmade works. Those with an interest can learn simple wood-crafting techniques, as well as design and create their own woodworks. What is interesting to note is that many of



## Artisan Recommendation!

Functional yet traditional daily-use item

### Wooden tub

For those who grew up in a farming community in Taiwan, the memory of the wooden tub is a familiar one. Wooden tubs for bathing came in various sizes and shapes. There were also wooden rice buckets and water buckets. In the past, wooden tubs and buckets were indispensable items in the home, especially wooden buckets used for cooking rice. The wood added a delicate fragrance to the rice, and it was the best container for steaming rice.

### Woodline 木質線

Has a booth some Sundays at the 44 South Village Simple Market (四四南村簡單市集).

Wood crafts classes are offered on a continuous basis.

📍 54, Songqin St. (松勤街54號)





3. The Woo Collective, founded by three young designers, has allowed traditional tin handicrafts to stand out on the international stage. (Photo: Shi Chuntai)

4. It is very important that temperature is well controlled during welding. This requires complete focus. (Photo: Shi Chuntai)



these students, once they learn the skills, buy materials in large quantity to produce wooden chopsticks, plates, and pens at home to give as gifts to friends and family members.

One of the advantages of working with wood is that it is possible to reuse the edges and corners not wanted by wood factories. There is even expensive wood left over from the production of large pieces of furniture. However, because these are odd pieces that are inconsistent in shape, they test the ingenuity of the artist, and can be the best materials for practicing basic skills. Therefore, whenever they have time Lin and Yu Wan visit large wood factories to “search for treasure.” Sometimes what is considered waste material, after being crafted by these two artisans, undergoes metamorphosis to emerge as a small artwork that is both practical and beautiful, giving new life to discarded wood.

## Forging New Fashion Trends for Traditional Tinware

In Chinese the word for tin is *xi* (錫). In the Hokkien (福建) dialect this sounds similar to *ci* (賜), which means blessing. Thus, at traditional rites many of the utensils on the table, such as incense burners, candlesticks, and vases, were made from tin to symbolize “blessings.” From ancient times tinware, representative of an ancient eastern handicrafts, in addition to being used as ceremonial objects was often found among wealthy families, who liked to use tin water pitchers, wine pitchers, tableware, tea containers, and rouge boxes to highlight their status. However, as a result of lifestyle changes and the misconception that tin is toxic, there has been a gradual decrease in the use of tin and a decline in traditional tin handicrafts.

The Woo Collective was established by three young designers. They pro-

duce tin handicrafts that are extremely simple and exquisite, expressing unique Asian character, that have gained international attention. At first, however, tin was something quite unfamiliar to them. Through the National Taiwan Craft Research and Development Institute (國立臺灣工藝研究發展中心), these three designers had the opportunity to learn from national treasure and master tin artisan Chen Wanneng (陳萬能). At the same time, due to the courage of this team to take on an experimental spirit, they were gradually able to combine modern design aesthetics with this centuries-old traditional art form. They have given tin art a whole new look, and tin handicrafts have once again come under the spotlight.

To create a work in tin, pieces of tin must first be melted. The liquid tin is then injected into a mold or



### Artisan Recommendation!

Functional yet traditional daily-use item

#### Incense burner

Worship and prayers for blessings are among Taiwan's long-standing folk-religion customs. Incense burners are essential to worship practices, especially tin incense burners. This is because tin is associated with blessings. In addition to finding tin incense burners in temples, many families who worship gods or ancestors at home place a tin incense burner or Buddhist implement on the altar to represent respect for the ancestors.

#### Woo Collective

Stores in Huashan 1914 Creative Park (華山 1914 文化創意產業園區), Eslite XinYi Branch (誠品信義店), The One Zhongshan (The One 中山), and Fujin Tree 352, etc. For more details, check the official website.



Excessive consumption of alcohol is harmful to health.

pressed and formed into pieces. The work then goes through cutting, pounding, welding, filing, polishing, grinding, and washing to complete. Based on the size of the finished product, production time can vary from a few hours to a few months. One of the team members, Lai Siyu (賴思羽), says that, "Currently, it is difficult to find a tin-product factory in Taiwan to work with. We have to handle most of the production process ourselves. But, compared to the requirement for a complete set of equipment for producing glass or metal art, the threshold for producing tin works is low. All that is needed is mastery of the basic steps; then you can try more advanced techniques on your own." However, as tin is relatively soft, if forging skills are lacking or unrefined it's easy to damage the metal. For example, if the welding temperature isn't high enough, it's

not possible to connect the pieces. If too high, it's easy to melt and damage the work. Therefore, the production of tin works requires the artisan to be well versed in a variety of skills, as well as focused and patient enough not to rush the process.

#### Using the Simplest of Lines to Produce Asian-Style Esthetics

Tin is a non-toxic, tasteless, and not easily oxidized stable metal. At the same time, it has water-purification properties. In literature, it has been written that with use of tinware: "Liquor that is served becomes mellower, and water tastes fresher and sweeter. The color of tea will not change when stored, and flowers will last longer." Many high-end Japanese restaurants serve sake in tin cups, for it is said the tin mellows the liquor.



The Woo Collective seeks to infuse its products with Asian esthetics, and hopes they naturally enter the lives of modern people. The designers have developed a natural-texture printing technique that creates lines similar to those of wood or cloth, producing simple and artistic tableware. New concepts have also been applied in the design of a pure-tin spiral for the mellowing of liquor. This is placed inside a glass wine decanter to increase contact between the wine and air, allowing the wine to rapidly breathe. Tin also retards the pungency of alcohol, helping to release the bouquet and making it richer and smoother.

In this way, practical items that fulfill the tastes of modern people have completely overthrown the negative stereotype of traditional tin handicrafts. Moreover, tin has once again become a symbol of fashionable esthetics.

### Everyday Ceramics Evolve Into Trendy Items

Ceramics are commonplace items in daily life, such as bowls, plates, cups, tea sets, and vases. They have widespread uses. If a little bit of creativity and ingenuity are added, ordinary items can present incredible esthetics.

Ceramics are produced from a mixture of clay and sand. After kneading and sculpting, ceramic artworks are fired to become finished products. Based on the artist's imagination, different colors, patterns, and forms can be created. These can serve as decorative artworks or items for practical use. Two Hong Kong artists/designers Monkey and Donkey, amazed at the diversity and malleability of ceramics, decided to use them as their creative materials, and whimsically develop interesting, ever-changing ideas.

Monkey and Donkey found it diffi-



#### Artisan Recommendation!

Functional yet traditional daily-use item

#### Teapot

Taiwan's tea culture is particular about the steeping and brewing of tea. This creates demand for sampling of good tea and good tea implements. Carving, engraving, painting, and inlay are used to decorate refined tea sets, adding to the visual value. Such sets are not only artworks to be collected, but when used also make the tea more mellow and flavorful.

#### Monkey And Donkey Design

驢仔窯 · 馬騮燒

The Red House Creative Boutique / 2F D5 (西門紅樓16工房2樓D5)

📍 10, Chengdu Rd.  
(成都路10號)



cult in Hong Kong to access the materials and firing techniques needed to produce ceramics. Although the firing of ceramics in China is low-cost, it is not of sophisticated quality, and not equal to that of Taiwan. Additionally, Taipei City's arts and cultural-creative industry environment is continuously growing. The two wanted a space in which they could freely create, and decided to come to Taiwan to establish their brand, Monkey And Donkey Design (驢仔窯 · 馬騮燒).

A better idea of their creative concept comes from a look at their trademark. "Monkey" and "Donkey" are based on the pronunciation of their surnames in Cantonese. The imagery is delightful, and symbolizes strength without taking away from their personality or animated style. In addition to ceramic arts, Monkey


and Donkey are adept at a variety of other art forms, including figurine sculpting, cartoon sketching, installation art, dynamic/static imagery, and mixed-media works. Moreover, they have an impressive record of overseas exhibitions and awards. Their experience has given them the confidence to break away from the traditional framework. It is no wonder their ceramics-design inspiration is so unrestrained and all-encompassing.

### Creative Products Stimulate the Imagination

Displayed in their shop, located on the second floor of The Red House Creative Boutique (西門紅樓16工房), is a series of brightly colored tea sets, as well as cone-shaped ceramic containers that can be used as vases or cups. There is even a ceramic plate with comic strip-like dialogue frames.

These innovative and unconventional forms stimulate the imagination. From their interactions with customers, Monkey and Donkey have discovered something very interesting. Generally, it is the international tourists who admire their designs and creativity and buy their works, while Taiwanese customers tend to place priority on "functionality." The design duo believes, however, that no matter how beautiful something looks, it should also be practical. Any work can make life more beautiful, and should be chosen based on personal preference.

The most challenging aspects of ceramic production are the processes of applying glaze and firing. Variations in temperature in the kiln, and firing times, are the key to success or failure with ceramic works. Moreover, these are the hardest steps to control. Monkey forces a smile while saying, "Every time I put a new work into the kiln, it is a torture. You must wait two or three days to know what the work will look like, including any changes in the color or luster of the glaze or the lines. These can be entirely different from what you expected. But, sometimes, there is also a pleasant surprise!"

Each handmade ceramic work is thus unique. Even if the design and production methods are similar, the changes that come about during the firing make it impossible to create two identical works. This is the true allure of handmade products. 



5. Monkey (right) and Donkey (left) are from Hong Kong. Their love of Taipei's cultural-creative industry environment brought them to Taiwan to establish their brand. (Photo: Shi Chuntai)

6. Brightly colored tea cups break through the stereotype of traditional ceramic arts. (Photo: Shi Chuntai)





## The Figure Behind the Brilliance

### Lantern Artist Chen Zurong, Man of Many Talents

Article — Fan Yujie

Photos — Shi Chuntai, Chen Zurong

The 12-meter-tall “Monkeys Presenting Peaches” (祥猴獻桃) lantern in the secondary lantern area of the 2016 Taiwan Lantern Festival, and the “Confucius Travels Through All the Kingdoms” (孔子周遊列國) and “Procession of Wang Zhaojun (昭君出塞)” lanterns in the Glorious History theme area of the 2014 Taipei Lantern Festival, were created by a national treasure, master lantern artist Chen Zurong (陳祖榮). A lantern that he produced for the 2013 Taipei Lantern Festival, entitled

“Traditional Temple Parade” (傳統藝陣), was the first-ever work representing Taipei City at the Seoul Lantern Festival, displayed with other beautiful lanterns along the Cheonggyecheon waterway.

On display in Chen’s studio are countless lanterns of various sizes. From the diversity of goggles, pliers, fabrics, ribbons, light bulbs, wires, and solders, it is possible to catch a glimpse of the complexity and sophistication involved in lantern making.

#### Midlife Career Change – Devotion to Lantern Art

The story of how Chen became a lantern artist can be described as a classic case of a midlife career change. After graduating from Fu-Hsin Trade & Arts School (復興美工), he spent his youth seeking a stable income. He first worked in the news department of the China Television Company, beginning as a satellite news gathering (SNG) truck driver and eventually working his way up to dispatch chief.



1. "Joyous Spring of the Phoenix," a secondary lantern created for the 2015 Taiwan Lantern Festival, has been the greatest challenge of Chen's lantern-making career. (Photo: Chen Zurong)

Though enjoying a secure existence, his inner creative soul caused him to become restless. In 1998 he participated in a lantern competition organized by the Taiwan Tourism Bureau (觀光局), and received a certificate of excellence. Chen then began creating lanterns in his spare time.

In 2009, after retiring from his full-time job, Chen finally opened his own company, and devoted himself completely to lantern making.

Now, at the age of 63, he smiles as he says, "A lantern that is well made can bring both fame and profit. But it is very hard work, and there is a lot of pressure. Since I began lantern making I have not been able to enjoy the Lunar New Year holidays. From the beginning of this period, I have to work day and night to complete my lanterns in time for the Lantern Festival."

He has invested nearly 20 years of his life creating lanterns. To date, the greatest challenge in his career has been a secondary lantern created for the 2015 Taiwan Lantern Festival, entitled "Joyous Spring of the Phoenix" (鳳凰嬉春). "This work was 14 meters in height," he states. "Just the wings were eight meters. I had to take into consideration the possibility of strong winds and heavy rain, and was very worried that this phoenix would really fly!" He constantly sought advice from more experienced artists, and spent every day at a metalworking factory researching how to strengthen the steel-bar structure. A team of 10 people and over three months of hard work were required to finish this large-scale art piece which weighed more than one ton. The result a successful rendering of the legendary image of the phoenix.

### A Man of Great Versatility— Learning the Craft Through Experience

Chen differs from traditional lan-

tern makers in that his first step in the creative process is the production of a sketch. To ensure the proper proportions of the lantern, he then tests transparency variations in different cloth thicknesses, uses light bulbs of different brightness for dispersity of light sources, and adds LED light strips for multi-colored effect. Moreover, he makes use of motors to produce animation, such as swaying of the head, rotation, and blinking of the eyes. Remote-control devices are integrated to control LED-blinking speed and color changes. At the same time, he has overcome the problem of electricity leakage due to rain by developing plastic covers for the light bulbs.

Each time he commits to producing a lantern, he works tirelessly for a long period. "Traditional Temple Parade," developed for the 2013 Taipei Lantern Festival, featured dozens of light groups, and took two months to complete. He read books related to traditional temple parades to understand the associated allusions, shapes, and other components. He smiles again as he says, "To produce a lantern really requires a full complement of skills, including design, frame, structure, metalworking, electricity, welding, and painting. You have to understand all of it. You must also consider details such as assembly and transport to ensure the consummate presentation in the eyes of the crowds."




2. The eye-catching secondary lantern “Monkeys Presenting Peaches” displayed at the 2016 Taiwan Lantern Festival. (Photo: Chen Zurong)

Chen says that most lanterns are used for celebrations. Therefore, producing a happy atmosphere is very important. During the day a lantern is a work of art, and at night it becomes a dazzling light installation. It must be attractive both day and night. “An outstanding lantern must make a powerful first impression,” he states. “If people like it at first sight, this means that the colors, proportions, and form have all been meshed properly. Moreover, structure and craftsmanship are key, including the overall work, the cloth neatly pulled into place, wire frame, wire connections, and painted embellishments. All are indispensable.”

### Passing on Lantern Making Techniques – Showcasing ‘The Light of Taiwan’

Chen has recently served as chair of the Chinese Artistic Lantern Association (中華花燈藝術學會). Any free time in his busy schedule is used to promote lantern art. For many years, he has been engaged in the passing on of techniques at detention centers, and has also taught at his alma mater, Fu-Hsin Trade and Arts School. In preparation for the upcoming Taiwan Lantern Festival in Yunlin (雲林), he has been spending time there providing guidance to schools and teachers throughout the county in the hope of having this

art form become more prevalent on school campuses. He has represented Taiwan on many occasions at exhibitions or by giving lectures in Japan, Singapore, Malaysia and South Korea, allowing the world to see “the light of Taiwan.”

Although he has long been considered a national treasure for his lantern-making skills, he says in all modesty that, “I learn as I create. I observe the works of others in the hope that my painting and proportions can become more refined.” Talking about the soon-to-be-held 2017 Taipei Lantern Festival at Beimen and in Ximending area in the city’s west district, he says that he is already concentrating on designs that combine light art with the local landscape, in the expectation of providing the public with innovative new works. 

(Photo: Bernd Lauter)

# Surveying Taipei City – Using Design to Improve Life

Red Dot Award CEO Peter Zec

Article — Cai Shutian

Photos — Bernd Lauter, Red Dot Award

The Grim Reaper aimed and then shot at the tires. The blast was ear-splitting. The car spun ferociously like a boomerang, and onlookers gasped. Fortunately, the car owner escaped the clutches of death. Speaking of his recent car accident, the head of the Red Dot Award, Dr. Peter Zec, takes out his mobile phone to show the photos. “If it had happened 50 years ago,” he says, “I would have died! Instead, I stood beside the severely damaged Ferrari

smoking a cigar. This is what design means to me – good design and good technology, enhancing convenience and safety, and making life easier.”

## Cultural Hybridization – Internationalization as the Cornerstone of Success

Zec, who is from Germany, has in the past served as president of the International Council of Societies of Industrial Design and chairman of the International Design Alliance. He is

also the initiator and CEO of the Red Dot Award, as well as founder of the World Design Capital project. He has dedicated more than 30 years of his life to promoting the design industry and academic research, gaining recognition for industrial and social design, and now in his senior years, utilizing the wisdom and insight he has attained, continues promoting the great enterprise of design restlessly, and serving as a world-class design-industry expert, consultant and advocate.

As the world's third Red Dot Design Museum is located in Taipei's Songshan Cultural and Creative Park (松山文創園區), and Taipei was the World Design Capital for 2016, Zec has visited the city on numerous occasions. The city's cultural constitution and the design of its architectural spaces has left a deep impression on him. "Design and social structure are intimately related," he says, "and Taiwan's education and social atmosphere are quite free and open. Taipei is Taiwan's capital and premier city, and very early on developed extensive linkages with the rest of the world. These are the keys to Taipei's dynamic design energy."

Providing a little personal background, Zec says that his father worked for the Germans during the Second World War. Afterwards, he responded to recruitment efforts and became a British soldier, and met and married Zec's mother. As a result, Zec enjoyed exposure to the cultures and languages

of a variety of European regions while growing up, helping him to develop an international perspective.

In the same vein, he has observed how Taipei City has broadened its horizons in recent years, breaking through the barriers of nationality. The best talent from different fields has been concentrated to carry out myriad innovative social design endeavors with an international perspective and focused on achieving the highest quality. The people of Taipei have also become more proactive regarding the imagination, transformation, and implementation of a better society.

Zec believes that Taiwan's understanding of and demand for design has grown, and he finds the ecology and structure of its design industry intriguing, with so many energetic and dynamic small and medium-sized design firms. Taiwan has also long participated in the Red Dot Design Award competition, its entries in-

creasing year by year and its performance becoming better and better.

"Germany, the United States, England, France, Japan, and other countries have strong national characters," he says, "and selling goods to these countries is not easy. The same dilemma has been encountered with the Red Dot Award. The way I break through these limitations is to invite international reviewers of different types of experience and background to use multiple evaluation models to review the design of products. In addition, I have staged numerous exhibitions in the United States and Asia, raising awareness of the Red Dot Award. This has been the first step in my success – globalization." Zec recommends the same model for Taipei in its step-by-step progress toward internationalization. Use ample talent from all fields, and lead all of Taiwan in the use of a macro, diverse perspective to take in the environment in its entirety. This will showcase Taiwan's design dynamism for all the world to see.



1. The 2015 Red Dot Award: The Junior Prize went to the cutting-edge design team of Wang I-fang (left), Chen Hsuan-eng (center), Chen Chien-hsing (right), and Lin Yi-ying. (Photo: Red Dot Award)

## Pragmatic Nature – Good Design Creates Breakthroughs

Free of flattery or hyperbole, Zec has an extremely positive and pragmatic view of design. In his analysis, such things as furniture, home decorations, and tableware are “crafts,” while real design is found in industrial products which brings breakthroughs in daily living, and has the ability to create beneficial economic effects. “New technologies and new materials are the driving forces behind design,” he states. “The task of design is to improve quality of life for people. Designers must think: What sort of contribution do I want to make? How can I change our lives? We should not blindly believe in brands, or celebrity designers. Making a good chair represents, at best, the introduction of another chair. The design of smart phones or smart cars can be a major breakthrough in the development of human society. However, such designers often remain unknown. The focus of the story should be on ‘making our lives more convenient and comfortable.’ The rest is extraneous, just for show!”

In the 2015 competition, the Red Dot: Junior Prize went to students Chen Hsuan-eng (陳萱恩) and Chen Chien-hsing (陳潛心) from National Taiwan University of Science and Technology (國立台灣科技大學) and Wang I-fang (王奕方) and Lin Yi-ying (林禕瑩) from National Chengchi University. This team developed BlindNavi, an App that helps the

visually impaired to navigate. It imitates the identification methods used by the visually impaired on the streets, which are then integrated with commonly used multi-sensory messages. In this case, design has met a social need. This work demonstrates the strong sense of social responsibility possessed by contemporary designers, who use design to improve quality of life, which deeply impresses Zec.

Over the past few decades, Taipei has comprehensively revived the cityscape. This endeavor has encompassed its intricate transportation system, as well as its medical care and cultural infrastructure, and the sustained transformation has brought continued international attention. The core concept of Taipei as 2016 World Design Capital was Adaptive City – Design in Motion, with social issues a focus of attention and designers addressing the structural problems and individual issues facing society. Designers must have solid understanding of the latest technology, production techniques, and materials processing to satisfy increasingly important social design needs. This reflects the spirit of Zec’s statement “making life more convenient and comfortable.”

## Celebrating Glory, Living Life Vigorously

Since the establishment of the Red Dot Award, a website, books, exhibitions, and museums have been created. The next step is to launch a

## Red Dot Award

Red Dot Award is one of the world’s three major awards for the design industry, along with the iF Design Awards of Germany and the International Design Excellence Awards (IDEA) of the United States. What is today known as the Red Dot Award competition was established in 1955 by the German design association Design Zentrum Nordrhein Westfalen. Each year, designers from over 60 countries participate, with 10,000 submissions. Winning works are displayed at the Red Dot Design Museum in Essen, Germany, and the designers are invited to attend an awards ceremony.



**red**dot design award




2. The world's third Red Dot Design Museum, opened in Taipei's Songshan Cultural and Creative Park. (Photo: Bernd Lauter)

dedicated TV channel. Zec believes that glorifying design heroes, recognizing their value, and opening up more opportunities for award winners are the key tasks in recording and promoting human civilization. This was the purpose in establishing the Red Dot Award. He compares a visit to a Red Dot Design Museum for the design world to a pilgrimage to Mecca for religious devotees. These museums serve as an individual showcase stage for “design heroes” normally hidden from public view. The Red Dot Design Museum in Taipei's Songshan Cultural and Creative Park is part of the transformation of a historical to-

bacco-factory complex into a design cluster, and serves as a window on the vigorous development of future Taiwan creative energy. In this regard, his hope is that the Red Dot Design Museum not only enables the Taiwanese to enjoy viewing award-winning works, but also leads to deeper understanding of the stories behind these works.

Harboring no illusions about the future, Zec shares his pragmatic views on life, reminding us that earnestness brings the trust of others and that passion and a sense of responsibility must be the driving

forces behind hard work. “I cannot tell you what the day I die will be like,” he says. “I only imagine what it will be like after getting out of bed tomorrow morning, and how I will plan a new day, so that life is more fulfilling. With each new day I discover what small, subtle changes can be made that day.” In the same vein, he looks forward to seeing Taiwan continuing in its passion and sense of responsibility toward the social environment. This attitude will enhance innovative dynamism. A love of science and technology, and the search for the means to make life better, brings with it much fascination! 

# Travel Information

For traveling between Taipei and Taiwan Taoyuan International Airport, whether by inexpensive, high-quality shuttle, safe and fast taxi, or high-grade professional airport limo service, you're spoiled for choice in satisfying your particular time and budget.

## Taxi

### Service locations:

North of the Arrivals Hall of Terminal I and South of the Arrivals Hall of Terminal II

### One-way fare:

Meter count plus 15%, with freeway tolls extra; average fare to Taipei around NT\$1,100.

### Terminal I Arrivals Hall taxi-service counter

Tel:(03)398-2832

### Terminal II Arrivals Hall taxi-service counter

Tel:(03)398-3599

## Passenger Shuttle Bus

### Service locations:

Southwest of the Arrivals Hall of Terminal I (exterior vehicle pickup corridor) and northeast of the Arrivals Hall of Terminal II (exterior vehicle pickup corridor)

### Shuttle-service companies:

Kuo-Kuang Motor Transportation, Evergreen Bus, Free Go Express, Citi Air Bus

### One-way fare: NT\$85~145






### Travel time:

40~60 minutes depending on routes (60~90 minutes for Citi Air Bus, which has more stops)

### Schedule: Every 15~20 minutes

## Metro Taipei

Service Hours: 06:00~24:00; 24-Hour Customer Service Hotline: (02)218-12345

Ticket	Price
 One-Way Trip	NT\$20-65
 Easy Card	Price: NT\$100 (without deposit).The card provides discounts on transit fares and can also be used for small purchases at convenience stores and other designated shops.
 iPass	Metro station information counters are only authorized to sell the General Adult Card, which is sold outright without any deposit or credit. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eligibility: Ordinary passengers.</li> <li>• Price: NT\$100 (without deposit).</li> <li>• Availability: Select stores, online, all Taipei Metro stations.</li> <li>• Metro discount: 20% discount on each trip.</li> <li>• Transfer discount: Passengers who use a General Adult Card to transfer from the metro to a bus or vice versa within one hour will receive an NT\$8 discount.</li> </ul>
 Day Pass	NT\$150
 Taipei Pass	The Taipei Pass is activated upon first use on bus or metro ticket readers and valid for unlimited use till expiration. The Taipei Pass can be purchased at all Metro stations, and is used on the Taipei Metro and on Taipei and New Taipei City public buses (with Taipei Pass stickers showing). <p>One-Day Pass: NT\$180  Two-Day Pass: NT\$310  Three-Day Pass: NT\$440  Five-Day Pass: NT\$700  Maokong Gondola One-Day Pass: NT\$350</p>
 Taipei Metro Pass	24hr: NT\$180 48hr: NT\$280 72hr: NT\$380

### NOTICE

In order to facilitate inquiries by the public, the city government has set up the 1999 Taipei Citizen Hotline. Whether by telephone, cell phone, or Voice over IP (payphone excluded), dial 1999 for free access. There is a time limit, with service personnel restricted to 10-minute service availability, and a 10-minute limit on call transfers. Callers are asked to make the most efficient use of this resource, making all calls as brief as possible. For more information, call 1999 or visit <http://english.rdec.gov.taipei/>



## TAIWAN EMERGENCY TELEPHONE NUMBERS

### Police / 110

Crimes, traffic accidents, and other incidents for which police assistance is needed

### Fire and Emergency / 119

Fire, injury or accident, or other urgent matters for which emergency relief is needed

### Women and Children Protection Hotline / 113 ext. 1

24-hour emergency, legal information, and psychological services for victims of domestic violence and/or sexual abuse. Foreigner 24-hour General Inquiry Hotline: 0800-024-111

## NON-EMERGENCY TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Unit Tel.	No.
Taipei City Govt. Citizen Hotline	1999 (02-2720-8889 outside Taipei City)
English Directory Service	106
IDD Telephone Service Hotline	0800-080-100 ext.9
Time-of-Day Service	117
Weather Service	166
Traffic Reports	168
Tourism Bureau (MOTC) 24-Hour Toll-Free Travel Information Hotline	0800-011-765
Tourism Bureau (MOTC) Toll-Free Traveler Complaints Hotline	0800-211-734
International Community Service Hotline	0800-024-111
Tourism Bureau Information Counter, Taiwan Taoyuan International Airport	Terminal 1: (03)398-2194 Terminal 2: (03)398-3341
Bureau of Foreign Trade	(02)2351-0271
Taiwan External Trade Development Council (TAITRA)	(02)2725-5200
Taiwan Visitors Association	(02)2594-3261
The Japanese Chamber of Commerce & Industry, Taipei	(02)2522-2163
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	(02)2348-2999
Ministry of Foreign Affairs Citizens Hotline	(02)2380-5678
Police Broadcasting Station	(02)2388-8099
English Hotline for Taxi Service	0800-055-850 ext.2
Consumer Service Center Hotline	1950
Bureau of National Health Insurance Information Hotline	0500-030-598
AIDS Information Hotline	0800-888-995

Source for Above Information:

Information For Foreigners Service / Tel: 0800-024-111  
Tourism Bureau, Ministry of Transportation and Communications  
Tel: (02)2349-1500

※ Entries in brown columns indicate service in English provided

## LIST OF TAIPEI VISITOR INFORMATION CENTERS

### Taipei Main Station

(02)2312-3256  
1F, 3, Beiping W. Rd.

### Songshan Airport

(02)2546-4741  
340-10, Dunhua N. Rd.

### MRT Ximen Station

(02)2375-3096  
B1, 32-1, Baoqing Rd.

### MRT Jiantan Station

(02)2883-0313 65  
65, Sec. 5, Zhongshan N. Rd.

### MRT Beitou Station

(02)2894-6923  
1, Guangming Rd.

### MRT Taipei 101/World Trade Center Station

(02)2758-6593  
B1, 20, Sec. 5, Xinyi Rd.

### Plum Garden Visitor Center

(02)2897-2647  
6, Zhongshan Rd.

### Miramar Entertainment Park Visitor Center

(02)8501-2762  
20, Jingye 3<sup>rd</sup> Rd

### Gondola Maokong Station

(02)2937-8563  
35, Ln. 38, Sec. 3, Zhinan Rd.  
(Exit area, Maokong Station)

### Dadaochang Visitor Center

(02)2559-6802  
44, Sec. 1, Dihua St.



2017.8.19-8.30



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# 2017



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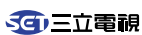
SET Metro (Channel 30) / Full Live Broadcast

For details, please visit the Taipei Travel Net website



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