

JUE FESTIVAL ★ LITERARY FESTIVAL ★ CRAFT BEER ★ SHOTS

thebeijinger

2015/03

GOAL MODEL

HOW STEPHON
MARBURY BECAME
BEIJING'S FAVORITE
FOREIGNER



ISBN 978-7-900747-75-4



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A Publication of

True Run Media

Helping the international community get the most out of life in Beijing

出版发行: 云南出版集团

云南科技出版社有限责任公司

地址: 云南省昆明市环城西路609号, 云南新闻出版大楼2306室

责任编辑: 欧阳鹏, 张磊

书号: 978-7-900747-75-4

全国广告总代理: 深度体验国际广告(北京)有限公司

北京广告代理: 北京爱见达广告有限公司

地址: 北京市朝阳区关东店北街核桃园30号孚兴写字楼B座6层

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CITY SCENE

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Stat: Beijing fourth most popular city with billionaires
Best of the Blog: The most popular stories from *theBeijinger.com*
Scene & Heard: Go on, take a look at yourselves, you beautiful people

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For this month's cover feature we bagged an interview with Beijing's favorite foreigner, Stephon Marbury; spoke with two of this year's Bookworm Literary Festival's most interesting authors, Chang-Rae Lee and Faramerz Dabhoiwala; and perused the pictures of China's Heavy Metal Annie Leibovitz, Wizard Tang.

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Just Desserts: Sweet Tart
Dining Feature: Seeking out Beijing's best artisanal food products
Back For More: Fratelli fresh
Cafe Culture: Fresh Bean
Dining Q&A: Zhang Fangzhong, Head Chef, Hua's Restaurant
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FOOD, FOOD,
FOOD

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MARCH 12

This month's cover features Stephon Marbury. Image shot by Ken.



The most important dates this month

WHAT'S HAPPENING



MAR 1-15

March Madness

It's time to make life nothing but net as March Madness takes over Home Plate BBQ. Represent your favorite teams and take part in their bracket challenge for a chance to win a Vedett keg party.

MAR 14

SinoScuba Project AWARE Dive Against Debris

SinoScuba is on a mission to clean up the site they used most in 2014, Ma Pao Quan, aka "The Well," in Fangshan, about an hour and fifteen minutes south of central Beijing. Join them and show your concern for clean dive sites in Beijing!



MAR 12-22

JUE | Music + Art Festival

March doesn't only bring a little springtime relief from the icy winter, but also some pretty far out concerts and exhibitions with the 2015 JUE | Music + Art Festival taking place at multiple venues across the capital.

MAR 27

Street Kids Five Year Anniversary

Street Kids will bring the noise as they celebrate half a decade on the planet with an all out rager. They will have a pop-up shop, a Street Kids themed cocktail, and other massive surprises to keep you engaged until the wee hours.



Visit thebeijinger.com for even more events and details.

For more events, see p66.

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

March in the northern hemisphere can be the worst month of the year: it's 31 days, winter hasn't ended and spring hasn't really begun. The holidays that break up the beginning of the year are most certainly over. It's back to work. March feels like a forced march at times.

But in Beijing we're lucky, as two of the best multi-day events of the year take place during the month: the annual JUE Music + Art Festival, and the Bookworm International Literary Festival, for a few doses of world-class culture.

For this issue though, we thought we'd tip off with a different kind of superstar. Thanks in part to being a basketball dynamo who has led the Beijing Ducks to two China Basketball Association (CBA) championships (as of time of writing), and in part to being an all-around nice guy who genuinely loves Beijing, Stephon Marbury may well be our city's most famous foreigner. Our sports guy Patrick Li visited him at his home in Wangfujing to talk about life in Beijing, basketball, and what it's like to be Stephon Marbury for a day.

Now for all that festival goodness. Wizard Tang has captured the chromium-plated, boiling soul of Beijing's metal scene for years, and many of those images will be exhibited at Yugong Yishan during JUE. On the other side of the globe, Awesome Tapes From Africa Founder Brian Shimkovitz will be bringing many of those recordings to Beijing, also as part of JUE. When was the last time you saw somebody DJ with cassettes? Do you even know what a cassette is? Check it out, it should be ... awesome.

The Bookworm International Literary Festival falls in the middle of the month, which should give you time to read books by Pulitzer Prize nominee Chang-Rae Lee, whose latest work (and next one, apparently) focuses on China. Our Kyle Mullin talked to him about the muse that is modern Chinese society. Mullin also interviewed Faramerz Dabhoiwala about his book *The Origins of Sex: A History of the First Sexual Revolution*, an academic look at changing views on everyone's favorite subject. Both are coming to our fair city for the Bookworm's event, so do your reading, and then go see them at the festival.

In the rest of the issue, we look at new places and extensions of brands in Beijing's expanding craft beer scene. And there are the usual restaurants, bars, new venues, and even travel tips to get you through the month.

We hope you enjoy the March issue of *the Beijinger*.


Steven Schwankert
Executive Editor


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CITY SCENE

STAT // CHINABUZZ // BEST OF THE BLOG // SCENE & HEARD

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Sixty-eight people with personal wealth of over USD 1 billion live in Beijing, behind only New York, Moscow, and Hong Kong. Beijing is one of five cities in China in the top 20.

Beijing is fourth on a list of the cities preferred by the world's 2,089 billionaires, more of whom live in China than any other country except for the US, the Hurun Report announced in February.

Surprisingly, China's leading billionaire isn't Alibaba CEO Jack Ma, it's Hanergy Holdings Chairman and solar energy entrepreneur Li Hejun. That oughta win you some points during your next China billionaire quiz night.

Bill Gates is the world's richest man again, followed by Carlos Helu of Mexico. No Chinese billionaires have cracked the top 10 yet.



PHOTO: WIKIMEDIA

HAO CHUSHI BRINGS RESTAURANT QUALITY COOKING TO YOU

Love home cooked food but hate cooking? New Chinese app Hao Chushi (Great Chef) could be just the thing for you. The app, whose founders recently raised RMB 5 million in angel funds, allows you to browse a list of nearby chefs who specialize in a range of Chinese cuisines (including Cantonese and Sichuan) and then hire one of them to cook in your own kitchen. The chefs will even call to check the state of your fridge and pick up any ingredients you're lacking on the way. It turns out that the luxury of convenience comes pretty cheap too: a romantic dinner for two consisting of four dishes and one soup is only RMB 79, while dinner for a party of eight will set you back just RMB 169. Afterwards, users rate the chefs just as they would an Uber driver. The only downside? Apparently the chefs won't go as far as doing the dishes for you.



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Every month we tally the hits from theBeijinger.com and bring you the most viewed blog posts from our website.



1. Malaysia Airlines MH370 Father Calls Accident Declaration 'An Insult'

The husband and father of missing Malaysia Airlines MH370 passengers called Malaysia Airlines' declaration that the incident was "an accident" and that all on board are dead "an insult." Malaysian and Australian officials are still searching for wreckage in the sea off the coast of Perth.



2. China Ministry Says Foreign VPN Operators Must Register

China has reiterated the illegality of Virtual Private Networks (VPNs) after a few popular VPNs appeared to have been blocked, especially those on Apple's iOS devices. China has now demanded that foreign VPN operators must register, leaving their future viability undetermined.



3. Beijing Subway to Clamp Down on 'Illegal Activities' in May

Watch out potential subway freeloaders, starting in May, the Beijing Subway will increase its vigilance with regards to beggars, buskers, and people cheating the ticketing system. The price increase has allegedly lead to an increase in the amount of people jumping the barriers and finding other ways to avoid buying the correct ticket.

4. Plane with 58 Onboard Crashes in Taipei

TransAsia Airways flight GE235 from Taipei to Kinmen crashed into the Keelung River following take off on the morning of February 4. Current reports indicate that 10 people survived, with 48 are confirmed dead. Pilots believe engine failure caused the plane to go down, but further investigations are still underway.



5. Could Beijing Introduce Women-Only Subway Cars?

Two members of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, an assembly of legislative advisers, proposed introducing women-only subway cars. This step has already been taken in Japan and Malaysia, but the real question in Beijing's case is whether or not the Beijing Subway can spare the cars during rush hour, the time when this legislation would arguably be the most beneficial to women.



6. There Goes Da Shan Da Jie: Beijing Bans Naming Streets after Leaders, Foreigners and Dung Beetles

In the spirit of banning random things, Beijing has banned naming streets after leaders, foreigners, and dung beetles. Street names named after anything to do with excrement will be replaced by homophones. 'Dung Beetle Hutong', for example, has been renamed as 'Always Shining Hutong'.



7. Beijing to Create 400 Free Wi-Fi Areas

Beijing has claimed it will establish 400 free Wi-Fi areas using 13,000 access points to create greater connectivity. We are skeptical though, as previous Wi-Fi promises have not been fulfilled. For example, the Olympics' alleged free Wi-Fi never worked, Beijing airport's Wi-Fi is spotty at best, and there is barely any mobile reception on the subway, so don't give up your 3G just yet!



8. Outbreak in Chaoyangmen Brings Back Measles Memories

At least 23 Beijingers were infected with the measles after an outbreak at the Kaiheng Centre in Chaoyangmen. Workers in the building were all vaccinated following the outbreak, and medical personnel quarantined patients and disinfected the site. The situation is now under control.

9. Argentinian President in Hot Water Over China Tweets

Argentinian President Cristina Kirchner caused a stir following her racist tweets during her visit to China. After her tweet: "Did they only come for lice and petroleum?" in Spanish, people were left wondering whether that was the cleverest move for the leader of a nation that is desperately banking on Chinese investment.

Read theBeijinger.com/blog for daily updates more on life, work, and happiness in Beijing.



SCENE & HEARD



Footprint Sessions with Ninetoes at Lantern on January 27. Photos by Ken



PENG - Party Animals Vol. 2 at Migas on January 24. Photos by Lao Xiang





Shang Xia 2015 S/S Collection Preview at China World Apartments on February 5. Photos courtesy of Activation Liquid



Fundraising event for Lulu Galore at Fubar on February 7. Photos by Laurent Hou

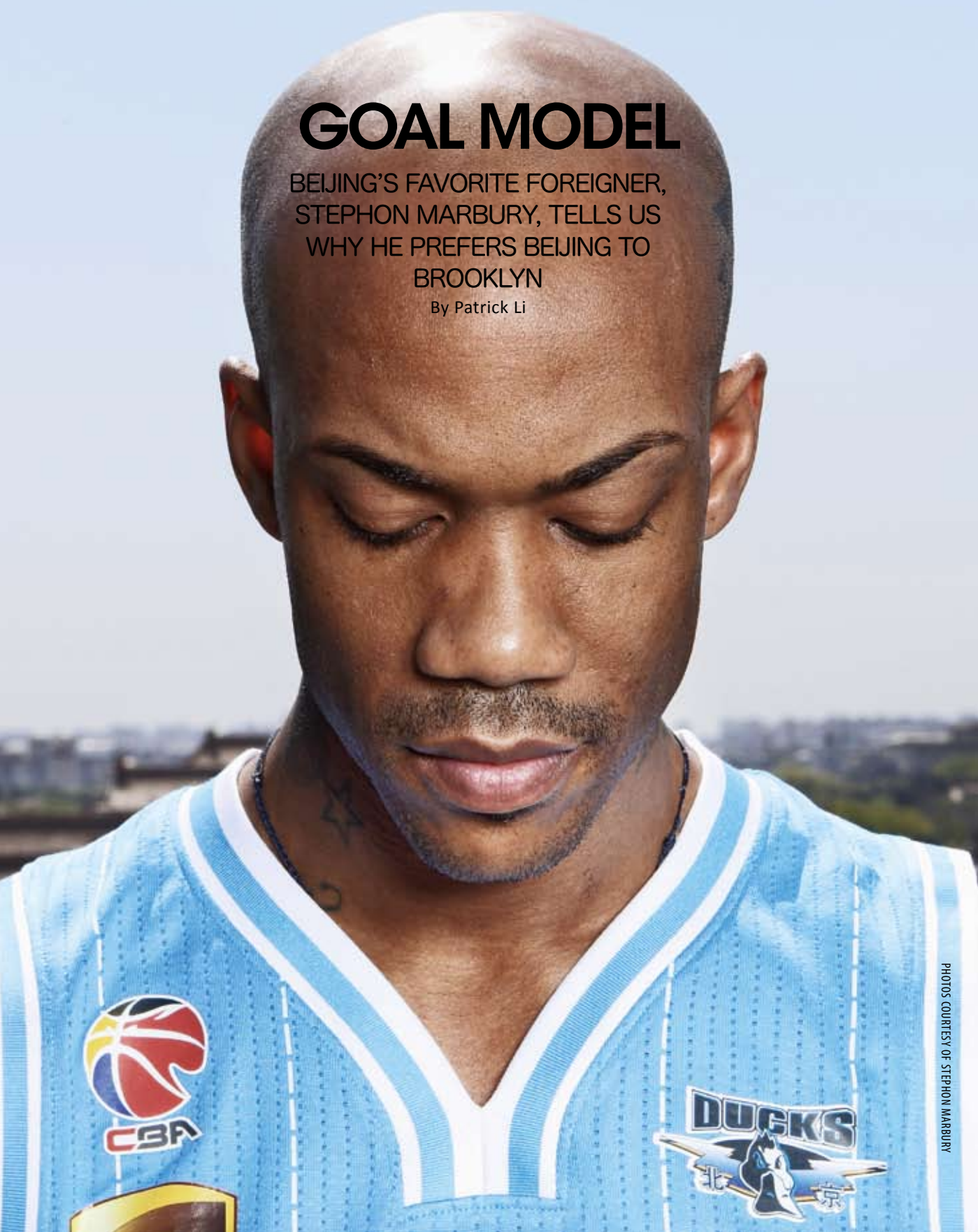


Portacones Flamenco Festival at Qing Lan Theater on February 8. Photos by Laurent Hou

GOAL MODEL

BEIJING'S FAVORITE FOREIGNER,
STEPHON MARBURY, TELLS US
WHY HE PREFERS BEIJING TO
BROOKLYN

By Patrick Li





Stephon Marbury is arguably Beijing's favorite foreigner. Now in his sixth year in China, he's popular for a good reason: the former NBA star has helped to bring two championships to the Beijing Ducks, his current team, which, at the time of writing, had just made the China Basketball Association's (CBA) semi-finals.

Born and raised in the Coney Island neighborhood of Brooklyn, the talented sixth of seven children has his eyes on a third championship, and the start – or continuation – of a basketball dynasty in China's capital.

"When I came here, I was in a really bad place. I had a lot of turbulence in the NBA, but China gave me the peace and tranquility that I needed to regain my balance and to get back to who I was as a human being. I am forever grateful and indebted to that," he said.

Marbury doesn't even have a basketball at his relatively modest apartment near Wangfujing. "Maybe that's my way of keeping my business in the office," he laughed.

Marbury spoke with *the Beijinger* about life in Beijing, basketball, and why he'll be staying on in China even when his playing days are over.

How does play in the NBA compare to that in the CBA?

It's a different game. In the NBA you already know your position. When you are a point guard, you are going to play the point guard position. Two-guard position is two guard position. Here in China you have to pretty much do everything. The CBA is a second tier league. It is less competitive than the NBA, but it could be harder for foreign players. Here, you are expected to score.

What is a day like for Stephon Marbury in Beijing?

My life is pretty ordinary here. It's just like living back at home in the States. I mean, during the season, there's really not much to do because you are tired, you have practice, you play three games a week. So, I'm really not doing too much during the week. Monday would be a day that I would normally do something like go out to eat. I'll go to The Village (Taikoo Li Sanlitun), something like that. Or sometimes hanging out with some of my friends, locally."

Do you have a favorite restaurant?

I've been to a variety of different restaurants so I won't specifically say that I have a favorite one. But there are some places that I do like. Like the Chinese restaurant right down the street. Mr. Hua's (commonly known as Hua's Restaurant), I go there and I go to the one at Gongti. I also go to some of the restaurants in The



Village (Taikoo Li Sanlitun). I go to a place called The Big Smoke. This place has a variety of different styles of food, mostly Western food. But for the most part I eat at the hotel restaurant here.

So you don't cook?

Yeah I cook sometimes, I cook sometimes. I have an *ayi* too. She cooks sometimes as well. She cooks. She goes to the store. She cooks mainly Chinese food.

What about during off-season, when your life is not as intense as it is right now?

Yeah I mean pretty much the same thing. I go to like China Grill, but my life is pretty simple. I mean, I've kind of just blended in. It's not anything spectacular, just basically like living here. This would be my fourth year living here, so it's not as, you know, extravagant as people would probably think. It's really simple. It's a really simple life.

Why do you think you are so popular in Beijing? Arguably you are the most famous foreigner in the city. Why do you think that is?

Because we won championships? (*Laughs*) I mean I think that's it. We won one championship and we

weren't satisfied. A lot of people would say to themselves, "Oh that's it! You know Beijing won a championship. We are great. We are good." I didn't, that's not where I wanted it to end. When I first came here and when I started talking about winning championships, people were like, "Oh no, let's just make to the top eight." And I'm like, we can do that, but that's not where my mind frame and mindset are. That's not why I trained all summer to just make it to the top eight, or the top four. My mind frame is to be the best team. We trained and we worked hard to be the best team. You know, it's there for you.

You were recently named one of Beijing's model citizens. Is being a role model something you embrace or are you more of a Charles Barkley sort (Barkley famously declared, "I am not a role model")?

I like to think of myself as more of a goal model, you know. It's not being the role model as well, but the parents are pretty much the role models because they are around the kids that are growing up every day in the daily life, you know. No one is perfect and I'm far from perfect. So you know the role that I play in a life may not be conducive for someone to look at my life and say 'I want to follow that role in a life.' But the posi-



tive thing that I've done I think is that kids can actually look at me and have a guide toward doing something positive in life. So, it's probably more like being a goal model, you know, towards being that type of person or individual.


Has your experience in China changed you? If so, in what way?

Definitely. When I came here, I was in a really bad place. I had lost my family members, I had lost my coach, the coach that taught all my brothers how to play basketball. It was in succession, not like years apart. This was all in one year, you know, three deaths within a month. Then I was facing a lot of turbulence in the NBA. So at that time, China was the perfect place for me, to come and to be. Not only for basketball just for my life because it gave me the peace and tranquility that I needed to regain my balance and to actually get back into the realm of who I was as a human being. Not speaking the language is a great thing for me because I had time to actually to meditate on me, to meditate within my thoughts, to regain my peace and balance within myself, which was much needed in order to continue to take steps and move forward in my life. China has a special place in my heart, in my life. I don't

say I love China just because a lot of people say, "Oh you say you love China because you get to make money in China." I'm like, you know, my life is not about money. I'd rather live a peaceful life and have nothing than have everything and feel like I want to kill myself, you know what I'm saying? What's the use of having a whole bunch of money if you are miserable every single day. If you are happy and peaceful, you can always go and make money and do something to take care of yourself. So, you know, China gave me the peace I've needed to keep myself when I came here. So I'm forever grateful and forever indebted to the country.

So this is the best storyline that could ever be written for you?

I mean, thus far. I mean it's been better than I could probably have dreamed. I couldn't go and say "Ok, tonight I'm going to dream to have a statue of myself in Beijing, the capital of the most populated country on the planet." Even if I dreamt something like this today I would tell myself I was crazy. So, the things that happen to me here are far beyond anything that I could have ever imagined for my life, let alone someone else imagining it for me, or thinking or saying it. So, how can you not enjoy or embrace or love the situation?



WizardTang has been both center stage and in the studio photographing the raucous images of Chinese music greats for over a decade. Using his lens to capture the new wave of Chinese rock, Wizard has been the official photographer of the MIDI (Beijing), Strawberry (Beijing), and Summer Sonic (Japan) festivals, and also developed a lengthy list of portraits and album covers for Chinese rock icons like Xie Tianxiao (XTX), Second Hand Roses, and Queen Sea Big Shark that bear his signature influence. So it's appropriate that he teamed up with this year's JUE Festival to showcase his work in an upcoming exhibition, titled *Limitless*, where he will be showing a selection of his most important photos.

WIZARD TANG: PRINCE OF THE DARKROOM

CHINA'S HEAVY METAL ANNIE LEIBOVITZ

by Kipp Whittaker



Working as an associate creative director at Ogilvy Beijing, Wizard learned about the key parallels between effective portraiture and advertising. While portraiture tells a story about life, change, or love, advertising creates something that generates a similar emotional response to a fabricated event.

"The downside is that advertisements take too much of a functional role in China so the designers' creativity is usually very restrained," he said.

As a portrait photographer, with few of these restrictions, Wizard was delighted to find how he could transcend commercial motifs and free himself to work with musicians who trust in his ability to creatively and accurately portray their image as a band.

He began by shooting bands live at concerts and festivals, believing that capturing this energy on stage is the essence of rock 'n' roll. It wasn't until 2010 that he started to photograph these personalities in a studio. This shift subsequently changed his understanding of the medium into something broader and more inclusive, where the relationship between photographer and musician could be created and documented. For him, once in the studio, the same energy and essence of the performance could also emerge, then be captured in this controlled environment. The photos become an

artifact of the subject's power and how their creativity and style mingle with the camera and the eye of the photographer.

It's not surprising that Annie Leibovitz is a big influence. Wizard respects her because of the success she has had finding a balance between commercial and fine art photography. Although his pictures are of a different vernacular, he still strives to combine a similar kind of simplicity and elegance to effectively capture the spirit and style of his subjects.

As you will see from his exhibit at Yugong Yishan from March 12-22, in cooperation with Genjing Records and JUE, his scope is not limited to music. Wizard is interested in anything unique or profound that happens to emerge from the lights and shadows and recorded by his camera, before these images are lost forever in the deep dark void of time.



SUBTLE DYSTOPIA

PULITZER PRIZE NOMINEE
CHANG-RAE LEE TALKS ABOUT
HIS FUTURISTIC NOVEL

By Kyle Mullin

Chang-Rae Lee's latest novel, *On Such a Full Sea*, is set in an oppressive futuristic society. But this is not your average dystopic tale. It has no high-tech gadgets, no epic action sequences, and no brave rebel leader.

"I wanted a character that wasn't anything like your typical, charismatic hero," the Pulitzer Prize-shortlisted, Korean-American author said in a phone interview, of the lead character in his 2014 novel. "These dystopic heroes always have so much exuberance, especially if they tell their own story. I was really interested in writing about a protagonist that said nothing at all. I like the idea of a hero who doesn't know she's a hero," he added. The book was recently nominated for a National Book Critics Circle Award, the winner of which will be announced on March 12.

That hero's name is Fan. She's a fish tank cleaner descended from immigrants, who fled polluted Shanxi province to labor in restrictive, but safe, colonies for a greedy "charter class." Below, Lee tells us more about that not too distant future, and the present day locales that inspired it.

You told the *New Yorker* the B-Mor community, where Fan lives, was inspired by your train rides through Baltimore. How is that locale post-apocalyptic?

It's like many post-industrial American neighborhoods: abandoned, if not physically, then governmentally. That's what's driving the whole book — the Charter Village being the one percent, the notion of American decline, and with it more rigidity of class structure.

Before becoming a novelist you worked as a Wall Street equities analyst. Did you feel like Fan in *Full Sea*?

Did I feel like a factory worker? (*Laughs*). I felt like a cog

in a machine. But I don't even like fitness centers, where everyone's on treadmills. The hive unsettles me, even in fun things.

In 2011 your novel *The Surrendered* was nominated for the Pulitzer Prize. Was that empowering or daunting?

It didn't impact my process. I was just so disappointed that I didn't win (*laughs*). Prizes are so arbitrary. They help by prompting people to read. But the Pulitzer didn't affect my writing of *On Such a Full Sea*.

Have you begun a follow-up?

Yes, and it also has a China angle. It's about a white American kid who meets a fascinating Chinese entrepreneur, becomes his assistant, and they go about the world on these crazy adventures. It's narrated by the younger fellow. The hero is the Chinese fellow. The entrepreneur is based on someone I know. He has a certain spirit that's very Chinese, at least contemporary Chinese. He has a hand in every pot, he's fearless in many ways. The world is continually expanding for him and he wants to be part of it. And he wants to push that expansion. I find that intoxicating and a bit frightening, and everything that makes for good storytelling.

Why has China been your recent muse?

China is the new world, or the new new world. The college kid in this new book, I'd never write about him going around Europe with some count (*laughs*). All those stories have been done for hundreds of years. China is where my natural and novelistic interests gravitate.

See Chang-Rae Lee at the 2015 Bookworm International Literary Festival (www.bookwormfestival.com).





AMUSING PRUDES

FARAMERZ DABHOIWALA DETAILS
THE HILARITY AND HORROR OF
THE WEST'S SEXUAL HISTORY

By Kyle Mullin



Readers of Faramerz Dabhoiwala's *The Origins of Sex: A History of the First Sexual Revolution* shouldn't expect a titillating yarn. In fact the author says researching his book was more amusing than arousing.

"I found a manuscript by Jeremy Bentham, who was not only the greatest English-speaking philosopher of the 18th century, but also a funny commentator about sexual prohibitions," Dabhoiwala said during a phone interview. "Bentham catalogued the various sexual aids that existed in his time. He wasn't just a stuffy philosopher."

Of course, Dabhoiwala's book isn't a mere romp under yesteryear's bedsheets. His research uncovered details that were both hilarious and horrific, which he further explains below.

Aside from Bentham's sex toy inventory, what other funny details did you come across while researching *Origins*?

My favorite line about the new attitude to sex in the 18th century was written by the poet John Wilks, in which he says: "Life can little more supply / than just a few good f*cks, and then we die." That's actually quite profound. It's not just about sex being a good thing. He's talking about how difficult life can be, and how important pleasure is.

Those funnier passages offer some much needed comic relief from *Origins*' grislier details.

That is the hidden story that most people don't know about, that until very recently the Western world was very restrictive about sex, making all sex outside of marriage illegal. The West's current sexual freedom is a recent creation of the Enlightenment. So, all these stories from centuries and centuries of punishment, before the 18th century, make your hair stand on end.

Which of those incidents upset you the most?

People were flogged, exiled, and sometimes executed. There was this one story about Susan Bounty, who is probably the last person to be executed in England for adultery, in 1654. She was pregnant when she was

condemned, and begged for the judge's mercy. So they let her live on in prison for a few more weeks. Then they took the baby from her, paraded her through the street, and killed her.

What can modern readers learn from such cases?

Sexual privacy, and the right to do what you want with your own body, is a very fragile, modern victory. And we shouldn't take it for granted.

In *Origins*' first chapter you write that such harsh punishments for fornication are now "associated with the Sharia law... with people far away and alien in outlook. Yet until quite recently... our own culture was like this too." Can that reminder help prevent Westerners from becoming too judgmental?

Well, it's ... (Pauses). I would like to be respectful of other cultures. When the *Guardian* published a long excerpt of my book, I was shocked to see people Tweeting about it across North Africa and the Middle East, drawing parallels between it and what's going on in their own societies. I don't think Western sexual culture is superior in every regard. But I do think it's better to have a society where people are free to do what they like with their bodies, rather than having old people decide it for young people, or men deciding it for women.

What gave you that outlook? The bio on your website says you grew up in Amsterdam— did that have any impact on your writing of *Origins*?

Amsterdam's a wonderfully rich and tolerant place. What I remember most is being brought up there and taking for granted certain ways of living and behaving. Then I remember moving back to England during the heyday of Mrs. Thatcher, and her introduction of new laws against homosexuality. That was a striking contrast. So I've had an interest in sexual politics, and I've been sensitive to those politics, ever since.

See Faramerz Dabhoiwala at the Bookworm International Literary Festival (www.bookwormfestival.com).

Sip, nibble, gulp, chew, guzzle, savor, feast

FOOD & DRINK

CRAFT FOOD // BUSINESS LUNCHES // SPICY SAUCE // BEST SHOTS



Enjoy a taste of springtime in Yunnan at Crowne Plaza Beijing Sun Palace's Rainbow Restaurant, with a series of 10 authentic dishes developed in partnership with the Yunnan Cuisine Research and Development Center.

PHOTO COURTESY OF CROWNE PLAZA BEIJING SUN PALACE

NIBBLES AND SIPS

Openings & Closings

The people behind the creatively named The Bar on the third floor of Sanlitun Youth Hostel have taken over the former By The Tree space downstairs and opened the even more creatively named **The Bar-B-Q**. Where the space differs is that it serves authentic Texas barbecue, with a simple menu including smoked brisket, ribs and sausages. The food is good, but there is some room for improvement, especially in terms of the accompanying sauces.

We recently discovered that the branch of **Middle 8th** at The Place has closed. Don't worry, you can still experience their modern Yunnan cuisine at their branches in Taikoo Li and Sanlitun.

Happenings

The ever-creative kitchen team at **Migas** has added some delicious-sounding new dishes to the menu, including a duck tataki served with candied peppers and roasted apple and a dish of roasted foie gras with mushrooms and fried egg, a version of which we tried and very much enjoyed at their Sunday brunch.

Feast have teamed up with French fashion brand Bread n Butter to offer a special set menu – featuring, naturally, a dessert of bread and butter pudding – starting March 1. Be sure to reserve early – only the first 100 diners will get to enjoy the menu and also take home a limited edition goodie bag.

Great Leap Brewing are accepting entries for their Fourth Annual Back Alley Chili Cook-Off, which takes place on April 11. Competitors will need to provide 15L of their very best chili, the catch being that they can only use one imported ingredient. If you think you're up to the task, email contact@greatleapbrewing.com and tell them why your chili is awesome.

Dining City's ever-popular **Restaurant Week** is back for another round from March 11-22. Most will be familiar with the format by now, but for those that aren't, Beijing's best restaurants offer special priced set menus for one week only, which you book through Dining City's website. The full list of restaurants isn't out yet, but expect big names like Opera Bombana to take part as usual.



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酒仙桥路18号颐堤港商场1层L173商铺 (星巴克对面)

JOY CITY CHAOYANG STORE
(opening soon....)
50/5F JOY CITY chaoyang Mall,
101 Chaoyang north road, Chaoyang District
朝阳北路101号朝阳大悦城购物中心5楼50号

GREAT LEAP BREWING #45 BREW PUB

THIRD TIME'S A CHARM



WHAT'S NEW RESTAURANTS

Sun-Thu 11am-1am, Fri-Sat 11am-2am. 45-1 Xinyuan Jie, Chaoyang District
朝阳区新源街45-1

🚶 800m west of Liangmaqiao (Line 10)

Craft beer and pizza. This is what *the Beijinger* readers told us they most enjoyed together during 2014's *the Beijinger* Pizza Cup. Great Leap has heeded the call and called in Daniel Gutter, a pizza consultant from one of Philadelphia's top pizza kitchens, and Kin Hong, the man who created the heart-stopping burgers at Great Leap's #12 location, to put together a menu of six classic pizzas.

How's the pizza? It's really good, it may even be great. It's New York-style, served in 16-inch pies. Slices will be available in three varieties from 18-inch pizzas. Great Leap hits all the points: the crust is crispy, there's plenty of cheese without inducing a heart attack, and the toppings are fresh. Each pizza gets a finish when it comes out of the oven, such as the sprinkling of fiery pickled chilies on the spicy sausage Little Nunzio.

Classics like the spicy sausage are deeply satisfying but the biggest surprise is the Green Machine, a veggie pizza with kale as its primary topping. Unlike most vegetable pizzas, which become soggy due to the moisture in the veggies, this was crisp and fresh throughout. It's absolutely guilt-free and vegetarians will be very, very happy.

The #45 site was still being welded when we visited, but its Beijing-on-the-East-River feel and visible brewing tanks will be familiar from their other locations. The space seems smaller compared to #12, but expands to an outdoor deck with considerably more seating for warmer weather. The amazing touch at this location is the laser-cut steel map of Beijing, to the right of the entrance. Find your house on it. Seeing that alone is worth the trip. However, we're certain it's the pizza that will make what is otherwise a neighborhood spot into a destination. *Steven Schwankert*



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BOTTEGA FRATELLI SALVO

CARB NATION

Daily 6pm-midnight. 18 Sanlitun Lu (in the alleyway east of Page One), Chaoyang District (6416 1752)
朝阳区三里屯路18号

 700m northwest of Tuanjiehu (Line 10)

Based on the more than 150 pizza venues that we identified in the run up to the Pizza Cup last year, it could be argued that Beijing doesn't really need any more pizza. However what it does need is more skilled pizza and this is where Bottega Fratelli Salvo comes in. With the eponymous Fratelli brothers in the kitchen, Bottega specializes in Neopolitan pizza, which can be differentiated from its doughy siblings by its thin-yet-tender crust and sparser toppings. For the discerning diner, the advantage of this is it leaves less room to hide behind complicated toppings. Luckily Bottega delivers in this regard, the Margherita pizza (RMB 60) topped with just enough tangy tomato sauce and creamy, rather than stringy, mozzarella

to allow the flavor of the dough to shine.

The non-pizza offerings hold their own too. Non-carb based dishes are few and far between, but we did enjoy the Positano salad (RMB 65), a healthy bowl of spinach and succulent grilled chicken, segments of orange and grapefruit giving a nod to Positano's location on the citrus-producing Amalfi Coast. Perhaps the only dish that failed to live up to expectations was a plate of vegetable ravioli in pesto sauce (RMB 78), lacking in flavor and looking for all the world like a plate of over-sized *jiaozi*. However, we're confident the talented team can work out kinks like this and make Bottega a key fixture on Beijing's Italian dining scene. *Robynne Tindall*

WHAT'S NEW RESTAURANTS

HAKATA IKKOUSHA

ROCKIN' RAMEN

Daily 11am-10pm. LG2-10, Parkview Green, 9 Dongdaqiao Lu, Chaoyang District (5730 6035)

博多一幸舍: 朝阳区东大桥路9号侨福芳草B2楼 LG2-10

 200m south of Dongdaqiao (Line 2)

As you may expect for a dish that carries with it such national importance, there are as many styles of ramen as there are regions of Japan. Newly opened in Parkview Green, international chain Hakata Ikkousha specializes in Fukuoka's Hakata-style ramen (which you will have already tried if you have ever visited Ippudo).

Hakata-style ramen is all about the *tonkotsu* (pork bone) broth and you can taste the hours of simmering that have gone into Hakata Ikkousha's (RMB 38). And what broth it is, clouded with slow-rendered fat and unashamedly porky. Each bowl of ramen comes topped simply with sliced wood ear mushrooms and a slice of slow-braised pork, already enough for a dish this rich, but you would still be remiss not to add a soft-centered egg (RMB 8), the oozing yolk an almost neon orange.

The dining experience at Hakata Ikkousha is as authentic as the ramen, with staff zipping around the stark wooden room shouting out greetings and orders in Japanese. A battalion of condiments awaits on each of the low wooden benches, another signature of Hakata-style ramen, but when the broth is this good it hardly needs any embellishment. *Robynne Tindall*



HAKATA IKKOUSHA
PORK BONE RAMEN





XIAO WANG FU

CONSISTENTLY CLASSIC

Daily 11am-10.30pm. Bldg 2, Guanghualu Dongli, Chaoyang District (6591 3255)
朝阳区光华路东里2号楼

 500m northwest of Guomao (Line 1, Line 10)

With four locations throughout Beijing, you would expect a restaurant to boast a consistent, if not high, standard. However, Xiao Wang Fu brings up feelings of mild bewilderment as half of their dishes wow, and the other half leave you questioning your daily food choices.

The Xiao Wang Fu close to the Kerry Hotel Beijing is awkwardly located in what is best described as a dimly-lit alley, and the front door would probably work better as the back entrance. The décor inside the long hallway-like restaurant creates an ambience of not-so-fine European dining in a second tier Chinese city, which is somewhat surprising for a Chinese restaurant catering to tourists. We can't deny we were expecting a more Chinese-themed experience.

The service is friendly, and not overbearing regardless of the sheer extent by which the waiters outnumber the diners. The observant will notice that Xiao Wang Fu almost exclusively employs male servers, rare in Beijing, and even more so in the rest of the country. The restaurant has a long and somewhat hard-to-physically handle menu that expands like an uncontrollable and never-ending accordion, offering a diverse range of dishes whose origins lie throughout the entirety of China. A novel idea but perhaps not the best execution.

Out of the four dishes, two were especially to our liking: the wilted spinach and vinegar peanuts cold starter and the *gongbao jiding* (RMB 28), also known as kung pao chicken. Although the spinach with peanuts served in other restaurants is often a battle between the spinach, and salt and MSG, Xiao Wang Fu's version was perfectly seasoned and retained its moreish quality. The *gongbao jiding* was composed of large chunks of marinated meat rather than leftover pieces of fat, and was not lacking in vinegar-soaked nutty delights. There was also the occasional fried garlic chunk for the fans – we know you're out there! Their version was hands-down one of the best variations of this classic dish we have tasted in Beijing.

The other two dishes we ordered are also both classics: the *ganbian biandou* (RMB 32), or deep fried

beans, and the *huiguorou* (RMB 42), twice-fried pork. The *ganbian biandou* seemed is considered by some to be Beijing's best, but for those expecting chili peppers and a reasonable amount of pork – Xiao Wang Fu's isn't the place. The *huiguorou* had the opposite conundrum: particularly over-seasoned. The seasoning mix, and the amount used, left us extraordinarily thirsty and we didn't even make it halfway through a dish that is usually a staple.

Part of Xiao Wang Fu's longevity has been its reliability in a pinch. Walk in, get a table, ask for a half or full Peking duck (RMB 88 per half), and there it is, providing a foolproof back-up plan when the unexpected visitor appears. It's easy to order Beijing favorites here, and while none will be best in class, there will be little disappointment.

Xiao Wang Fu's success has come as a safe bet that's conveniently located for the central business district. Foreigners find it consistent – and its Ritan Park location is genuinely lovely, although with higher prices than its other locations. *Margaux Schreurs*





SWEET TART

A SWEET TASTE OF HOME

Beijing has no shortage of over-wrought, style-over-substance cakes and confections, the stuff of local bakeries and hotel coffee shops. Proper home-baked cakes and pies on the other hand? If you don't happen to have a friend who's particularly gifted with a whisk and an oven, then you'll probably have to resign yourself to those rare trips home to experience a real sweet treat.

Unless, that is, you happen to have the email for Sweet Tart Bakery, the latest of Beijing's growing population of one man (or one woman in this case) delivery companies. Founder Britt Langford, who originally hails from Maine, decided to fill the gap in the market with a short but sweet menu of baked delights including cupcakes, muffins, cheesecake, and fruit tarts. Her signature is her "painted cookies" (three cookies from RMB 60), inspired by time spent painting watercolors with her artist father growing up. The cookies are true works of art, the simple sugar cookie base holding a layer of slightly lemony icing decorated with vivid designs like flowers and WeChat emoticons. In fact, her cooking painting skills are so good that Paul Frank recently commissioned her to bake 500 branded cookies for their annual party. High praise indeed.

The large bakes we tried, a classic cheesecake (RMB 360, 9-inch) and apple tart (RMB 220, 11-inch), were both on the sweet side, but we wouldn't mind indulging for the occasional treat. The cheesecake in particular was a big hit, departing from the usual graham cracker crust with a sentry-like wall of upright savoiardi biscuits, which added an interesting new dimension. *Robynne Tindall*

Sweet Tart is currently available for delivery only. Order via their WeChat store: SweetTart2014 or email them at sweettartbakery@outlook.com for more information.

CARAVAN

GET ON BOARD



WHAT'S NEW RESTAURANTS

Mon-Thu 11am-midnight, Fri-Sat 11am-2am. 44
Guanghua Lu, Chaoyang District (188 0112 3456)
朝阳区光华路44号

 700m southeast of Chaoyangmen (Line 2, Line 6)

Cuju mastermind, Badr Benjelloun is at it again with his new restaurant Caravan. Situated in the old digs of Casa Brasil, across from the Brazilian embassy, he will be serving up a wicked rotating menu of Moroccan-inspired eats for dinner (RMB 150 for a three course meal) and a set business lunch during the day.

We started things off with Carrots Sharmula, a fresh carrot based salad mixed with mint, parsley, greens, black pepper and a Moroccan style vinaigrette dressing. It was a fresh mix and pleasing to the eye, with gigantic slices of carrots protruding from the bowl.

Next up was the main course, a leg of lamb, sprinkled with prunes and almonds over red rice pilaf. The meat was deliciously tender and fragrant. We enjoyed mingling the pilaf with the natural juices of the lamb, a customary way to consume this dish. Needless to say, the plate was clean, with only a bone and a couple prune pits remaining.

Finally, for dessert, they served up a flambé banana with rum raisin ice cream and cracked black pepper. If you know Badr's MO, no meal is quite complete without putting a little rum in the mix. A deliciously sweet combination of hot and cold that rounded off the meal perfectly.

The space has a sharp, rustic look. While it's still in the process of being filled with Moroccan and other appropriately themed flair, Caravan is set to inject a little color into the embassy area, where the only signs of life seem to be a couple Russian restaurants and Maggie's Bar. After 7pm this end of Guanghua Lu, near the second ring road, turns into a ghost town and Caravan has the chops needed to not only shuttle in the embassy crowd but also attract people who wouldn't normally venture into this diplomatic wasteland. *Kipp Whittaker*



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GET CRAFTY

SEEKING OUT BEIJING'S BEST ARTISANAL PRODUCTS

By Robynne Tindall

Beijing's enterprising food community is making it that much easier to cut supermarkets out of our lives (unless their products are stocked there, that is), with a range of home-grown products that have you covered for breakfast, lunch and dinner. We've compiled a list of the best craft food producers in town and where you can get hold of their wonderful products.

1



2



3



4



5



MEAT**Charlie's Bacon (Kitchen Collective)**

The joy of good bacon cannot be underestimated and that's exactly what Kitchen Collective provide, their bacon dry cured and smoked in a hutong courtyard.

Get it: Deli de Luxe, Chez Gerard
kitchencollective.cn

Andy's Craft Sausages

Andy's sausages having made it onto the menu at XL Bar and Slow Boat, to name just a few. Sample flavors like Spicy Italian, Cheddar Bratwurst and Cajun Andouille (RMB 150/kg).

Get it: Order online or pick up from Andy's soon-to-open Sanlitun deli space
beijingsausages.com

Balmain Gourmet Sausages

Australian expat Drew grinds up brilliant bangers (RMB 70-100/500g) in traditional flavors like Lincolnshire Breakfast. He also makes pretty tasty burgers, perfect for summer barbecues.

Get it: Sign up to their weekly mailing list
balmaingourmet@vip.163.com

Recette Tradition par Camille (2)

French-Chinese foodie Camille Reynaud makes a range of traditional French-style pâtés, including our personal favorite, *rillettes de porc* (thinly shredded pork mixed with pork fat, RMB 50).

Get it: Farm to Neighbors or order by email
Reynaud.ca@gmail.com

DAIRY**Le Fromager de Pekin (1)**

Le Fromager's Liu Yang trained in Corsica and makes a range of French style cheeses, including renditions of Camembert and *fromage blanc* (from RMB 28).

Get it: April Gourmet, Chez Gerard, Beijing Organic Farmers' Market (Country Fair)
lefromagerdepekin.com

Be Yogurt (5)

Started by a Czech expat, Be Yogurt (RMB 14.5) is made to a traditional recipe using a yogurt starter from the Czech Republic.

Get it: April Gourmet, Chez Gerard, Café Zarah
WeChat: BeYogurt 比优格健康杂志

CAKES AND BAKERY**Two Guys and a Pie**

After closing their Sanlitun storefront last year, Two Guys and A Pie returned with a brand new website for easy online ordering (pies from RMB 25).

Get it: Janes and Hooch, Sweet Tooth Bakery, Deli de Luxe
twoguysandapie.com

Big Bear

After winning The Hutong's Cookie Monster Bake Off last year, Jon Ellis decided to take his passion for baking a step further with Big Bear Baked Goods. Don't miss his signature Mud & Snow cookies.

Get it: The Corner Melt
bigbearbakedgoods.com

Rager Pies

Delight dinner guests with Rager Pies' homestyle take on the likes of pumpkin, pecan and apple pies (6-inch pies from RMB 60).

Get it: 10 Fensiting Hutong
ragerpie.com

MISCELLANEOUS**Bonne Nani Fresh Fruit Jams (4)**

Caroline Nath makes fresh jams and chutneys in fusion flavors (RMB 80) using the freshest seasonal ingredients from the market nearby her home.

Get it: Farm to Neighbors
carolinenath@yahoo.com

Parwaaz Spice Route Concepts (3)

Chef Reshma Khan makes seasonal fruit chutneys (RMB 80) with a touch of Indian spicing. We especially love her Korma curry paste.

Get it: Farm to Neighbors and various craft fairs around town
parwaazscr@yahoo.com

Miss Muesli

Miss Muesli mixes the best local and imported fruits, nuts and grains for their five pre-mixed mueslis (RMB 35) and granolas (RMB 45), or you can get creative and mix your own.

Get it: 42 Xiguan Hutong, Dongcheng District
missmueslibeijing.com

THE MEATBALL COMPANY

BALL SO HARD

When humans figured out how to get the ball rolling many moons ago, they didn't just stop at effective transportation. Somewhere down the line some smart brain clicked and figured out that mashing meat with herbs and spices into a nice spherical shape and applying heat would result in carnivorously satisfying meals. With names like *albondigas* (South America), *bola-bola* (Philippines) or *polpette* (Italy), Max Rosales informs us that the humble meatball has a very long history, a history whose timeline has now reached Beijing.

Max and his girlfriend are the small team who make up The Meatball Company – a meatball delivery service catering to those who need a meat fix. Each order supplies a generous serving of four prime meatballs slathered in

your choice of sauce (RMB 38), a fresh slice of homemade bread, and one or more side options, all through the power of WeChat ordering.

Their kitchen base in Gulou offers three main meats for you to choose from – beef, pork, and chicken. Doused in pesto sauce and served alongside a whopping amount of creamy mash, the chicken balls fared pretty well, but the biggest hit was the succulent beef meatballs with a piquant classic tomato sauce and swirls of pasta.

Note that every Friday you should seriously consider chowing down on their chicken, as you can pair that bad bird with a free side of your choice. That's pretty baller yo.

Erin Strong

Available for delivery only. Order via their WeChat: [themeatballcompany](#).



WHAT'S NEW RESTAURANTS

BLUE MARLIN

MIGHTY MEAT

Daily noon-1.30am. 4 Dongsanhuan Beilu (opposite the Korean Embassy), Chaoyang District (6462 9976)
朝阳区东三环北路4号 (韩国大使馆对面)

 300m north of Liangmaqiao (Line 10)

The napkins at Blue Marlin are proudly emblazoned with the phrase "Home Away From Home" and a quick browse through the menu suggests they are certainly doing their best to make as many nations as possible feel at home, with German pork knuckle (RMB 178) sitting happily next to American barbecue ribs (RMB 178), Spanish seafood rice (RMB 138) and Vietnamese pho.

Prices are high, but portions are prodigious (see also the 1.5kg Australian tomahawk steak) and while nothing is groundbreaking we did enjoy our crisp pork knuckle, pre-hacked into manageable chunks and served with a deep and savory beer sauce. Skip the tired dessert selection and instead indulge in a moreish coconut, sea salt and matcha smoothie (RMB 56), which with its piña colada and ice cream base probably has more calories than the average dessert anyway.

The formidable portions are complemented by an equally formidable drinks selection, spanning several Technicolor pages at the back of the menu. At RMB 50-70 cocktails are about market standard, but it is still worth visiting during their daily happy hour (4-7pm) when selected drinks are half price. Stay on later and enjoy their in-house band, playing on a stage that takes up one side of the sizeable two storey space.

With its crowd-pleasing formula and savvy embassy area location, Blue Marlin is sure to be a hit. After all, with 13 locations around China (Beijing is the 13th), they must be doing something right. *Robynne Tindall*



CRISPY PORK KNUCKLE

PHOTO: UNI



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朝阳区东三环中路61号北京富力万丽酒店1层

 500m north of Shuangjing (Line 10)

Following recent openings such as 10 Corso Como, Fiume and Bottega, to name but a few, Italian food seems to be having somewhat of a renaissance in Beijing, so the time seems ripe to re-visit some of the stalwarts of Beijing's Italian dining scene. Fittingly located in the Renaissance Beijing Capital Hotel, Fratelli Fresh has been serving up reasonably priced, high-end Italian since the hotel opened in 2009. The ground floor room suffers a little from lack of atmosphere but all will be forgotten when you encounter the restaurant's rambunctious personality, Chef Stefano Balduccio.

Balduccio is a palpable presence throughout the restaurant, whether shouting out orders to staff in the open kitchen or calling by the table of a regular guest to offer a taste of an antipasti or a dessert. Chef Balduccio is Sicilian and hints of the cuisine of his home region can be found throughout the menu, for example in a dish

of seared cod with Sicilian eggplant stew (RMB 198). Of course, that doesn't stop the kitchen from serving up excellent renditions of Italian classics from around Italy, including a stand-out seafood risotto (RMB 135), replete with grinning langoustine head.

All of which is fine and good. But the one dish that will keep you going back to Fratelli Fresh is the cannoli (RMB 60). Balduccio resists the temptation to update this Sicilian classic, sticking to a tried and tested combination of crisp fried dough and lightly sweetened ricotta and candied fruit filling that has chefs around Beijing calling him up for his recipe. *Robynne Tindall*

Visit Fratelli Fresh in March to enjoy their "Cervo e Vino" promotion, pairing venison with Italian Banfi wines. Don't miss the venison carpaccio appetizer, marinated with juniper berries and served with fried ceps and ciabatta croutons.



VENISON CARPACCIO

PHOTO: KEN

CAFÉ CULTURE

FRESH BEAN

A TASTEFUL HABIT

Daily 10am-10pm (summer), daily 10am-8pm (winter). 60 Wudaoying Hutong, Dongcheng District (157 0151 8397)

东城区五道营胡同60号

 150m west of Yonghegong (Line 2, Line 5)

"Coffee is simple. You see everyone (in Beijing) with all this technology and they charge ten bucks because of it, and people buy it. Coffee isn't meant to be this complicated."

Simon has been drinking joe for almost two decades and decided to leave his secure position as a trader to delve into the world of another organic matter – coffee. From humble DIY days with his minuscule roaster, buying beans from suppliers on Taobao and Alibaba – "you have to try a lot of beans" – and roasting each batch to almost obsessive perfection, Simon has now upgraded to an industrial machine while culling his supply pool. "I'm trying to find the most stable supplier," he says.

On his refine menu at Fresh Bean are eight specialty coffees, some hailing from the jungles of Columbia, others from the wild Kenyan grasslands and tropical Hawaiian climes. His menu clearly states whether it's a half or full city roast, as well as if it is bitter or sour. "That's the most important (thing). If they like sour they have more choice because many specialty coffees have a sour profile." Flavor is the golden rule for Simon, and he extracts it perfectly across a range of brewing techniques. For cold weather sit down for a 300ml pour-over (from RMB 25) and when the sun comes back indulge in a cold brew (from RMB 38).

As China embraces coffee, more and more attention is being paid to the nuances of different beans found both abroad and in the southern areas of Yunnan, where the historical influence of tea is giving way to new drinking habits. Simon says there's one big difference between mainland drinkers and everyone else. "In the US people drink coffee like a habit. They need it. But they don't have a very good taste for coffee. In China I think people do want the habit, but they also want better taste. I want to create a market that is better in both supply and quality. I want to form a habit with taste." *Erin Strong*

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HUA'S TRIED AND TRUE TRADITION

ZHANG FANGZHONG, HEAD CHEF, HUA'S RESTAURANT

by Kyle Mullin

Peking duck may well be our city's most renowned dish, but it's far from the only local tradition honored by Hua's Restaurant. The tables at this restaurant's Beixinqiao location are nestled in a hutong courtyard, and that perimeter of ancient Chinese rooftops helps Hua's recapture the ambiance of dynasties past. Head chef Zhang Fangzhong concedes that the historical decor is impressive, but adds that the restaurant's signature dish has an even more storied lineage.

"Our Peking duck is a bit fatty, making it extra tasty. But the best part about it is the soft texture of its skin, making it very easy to chew," Zhang says of Hua's delectably delicate signature Baye roast duck. He adds that the sides are as crucial as the dish's main ingredients: "Usually Peking duck will have sides like carrots, onions, and sauce. But here, we also use fruits like pineapple and vegetables like cucumber, to give the dish a more unique taste. Most importantly, we don't use onion as a side, because of its odor. Instead, we have a special sauce that tastes similar, but won't be so bad for your breath."

Hua's take on the dish has a deeply serious, almost epic back-story. The recipe came courtesy of the restaurant's founder, Hua Lei. He learned it from a 600-year-old, Qing dynasty book that was passed down in his family from one generation to the next.

This time honored recipe was a hit upon Hua's opening on Gujia in 1998, so much so that the restaurant has since added 13 locations throughout Beijing. Zhang came into the fold in 2007, and has combined Hua Lei's reverence for tradition with a few modern twists. In addition to the aforementioned fruity sides, Zhang also steams three different colors of pancakes, one made with flour, another with carrots until it turns a fiery orange, and another with spinach that gives it an emerald hue. He says these little variations strike a balance between fresh trends and rich traditionalism. Another such example is the restaurant's portion options for some of its most popular dishes.

"We usually serve our *ba wang ji* chicken in portions for four or five people," Zhang says, adding: "Now we also have a smaller option for business people or Western diners, because they often prefer individual dishes."

Hua Lei and his team of chefs drummed up the *ba wang ji* recipe in 2002, when he was informed that Anita Mui, a beloved Hong Kong film starlet, would be visiting Beijing and dining at his restaurant. After learning about Mui's love of chicken, Hua Lei's chefs readied a savory poultry dish that incorporated both Chinese and Western sauces. After sampling it, Mui enthusiastically talked the dish up in the media, and her endorsement has been all the more cherished since she succumbed to cancer in 2003.

But above all, Hua's is most renowned for its Peking duck, both locally and internationally. Zhang recalls readying the signature Baye duck for a recent conference that brought chefs from around the world to Beijing: "We were prepping the dish for people that had cooked for presidents and kings." He admits the prospect was intimidating, but adds with a laugh: "The conference's manager nearly ate two ducks by herself. Cris Comerford, a Filipina chef who cooked for Obama at the White House for years, was there. Even she came up and told us how much she enjoyed the duck. I'm especially proud of that."



PHOTO COURTESY OF HUA'S RESTAURANT



G

...goji berries 枸杞

According to some sources goji berries have been cultivated for over 3000 years and are a mainstay of traditional Chinese medicine, added to tonic soups and herbal infusions. Nowadays, health food peddlers have cottoned on to their benefits (they are a good source of many vitamins and minerals including vitamin C and beta-carotene) and the humble goji has been labeled a "superfood".

...grass jelly 仙草

This cooling (*yin*) dessert can be found all over southeast Asia, usually served with sugar syrup, evaporated milk or, following the inevitable march of progress, iced coffee. The jelly is made by boiling the stems of *mesona chinensis* (*xiancao*) with potassium carbonate and starch, before cooling to form a dark brown jelly. Not to be confused with *guilinggao*, a jelly-like Chinese medicinal product traditionally brewed from bitter herbs and the powered bottom shell of the golden coin turtle.

...ganguo 干锅

A popular cooking style in Hunan and Sichuan cuisine, *ganguo* literally means dry pot. Meat and fresh vegetables like celery and onion are tossed in a base including dried chili, Sichuan pepper and other fragrant spices, before being served at the table in a sizzling wok complete with mildly dangerous gas flame underneath. Popular *ganguo* preparations include rabbit head and bullfrog, the latter a specialty of restaurant chain Wawa Jiao.

...gongbao jiding 宫保鸡丁

Ah *gongbao jiding* (or Kung Pao chicken as many will know it), that defining dish of so many expat culinary experiences in China. Said to be named after late Qing dynasty official Ding Baozhen, whose official title was *gongbao*, the dish was declared politically incorrect and renamed during the Cultural Revolution, before its rehabilitation in the 1980s.

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TASTE TEST

HELLISH RELISH

GETTING SAUCY IN THE KITCHEN

by Kipp Whittaker

Upon first inspection we figure these sinister sauces were not made for the weak of stomach or quite possibly pregnant women, but sometimes you need to add a little oomph to your noodles or homemade

pepper spray. We understand this and wanted to guide you spice-aholics when figuring out which sadistic sauces to dance with next time you decide to melt your taste buds into oblivion.



Tantan Xiang Chopped Pepper Sauce (RMB 7.4)

"Tastes like getting violently tongued by Lucifer."

"Salty and spicy in equal measure, this jar of Chinese heat will put a sweat on your brow and hair on your pepper."

"It definitely looks like one the freshest of the bunch, the others appear to have been made 70 years ago when condiments existed purely to cover the flavor of bark."

Liu Bi Ju Chili Sauce (RMB 11.5)

"A decent mix of chilies and other more savory ingredients, but loaded with a despicable amount of oil."

"This one has a little heat and would probably taste great for cooking, or for making an impromptu pepper spray."

"Totally spicy, but lacks the savory elements of the others."



Penquan Garlic Chili Sauce (RMB 2.4)

"This looks like the cheapest of the bunch but tastes decent. Like a spicy Chinese version of Heinz Ketchup."

"I love how it's made at the Tianjin Seasoning Research Institute. That sounds like they should have good taste down to a science."

"It's the cheap stuff you would find at a soul food restaurant, nothing special but it will do the trick."

VERDICT

The best was definitely the Lee Kum Kee garlic sauce. While it isn't very spicy it has just enough burn, followed by a lovely garlic zing. We are fairly certain you can find a spicier variety packed with more heat, which would make the flavor pop even more. If you are looking for spicy, then go for Tantan Xiang, which is loaded with enough piquancy to corrode a diamond.



Lee Kum Kee Chili Garlic Sauce (RMB 19.4)

"There are two chili peppers on the side signifying the heat level. It would be more Zen with two or three."

"It's like El Paso Salsa, but from Hong Kong. Could you imagine those cowboys getting all furious, 'this is made in Hong Kong City.' Then they would proceed to lynch whoever procured it."

"It's delicious but more savory than spicy. Would go great on some late night dim sum."



A Xiang Po Savory Beef Sauce (RMB 12.9)

"There's a little heat here, but more essence of bovine scraps than anything else."

"Maybe throw this on some ramen if you want a depressing dinner for one, but I wouldn't break this out during a dinner party."

"This is gross. We should be cooking with these, not eating them with a spoon."



Laoganma Soy Bean and Pepper Sauce (RMB 7.5)

"A little too carcinogenic for my taste, but could taste great in a stir fry."

"It looks like the sludge you might find at the bottom of a grease trap."

"Made with burned flakes of chili and soybeans submerged in oil, I bet the sad lady on the label doesn't even like it."

THE FOXHOLE

TALK BIRDY TO ME



WHAT'S NEW BARS & CLUBS

Daily 5pm-2am. 4 Ritan Beilu, Chaoyang District
(8563 5026)

朝阳区日坛北路4号

 1km southwest of Dongdaqiao (Line 2)

As you step towards the bathroom. Tracing the graceful nude spine upwards you are met with piercing black, soulless eyes. And feathers. An anthropomorphic menagerie of portraits featuring a naked dove, a wolf in a billowing ball gown, and a high-ranking monkey in full dress uniform, among others, grace the walls of Ritan's newest watering hole, The Foxhole.

The sleek, darkened interior, akin to a fancy cigar box with its wooden clad interior and tight, one room compactness, makes transitioning into an after work hours vibe that much easier, though their overly plush seats will also do the trick. Dig into the complimentary Japanese spiced bar mix while you flick through the rolling Scottish tongues of fermented grains.

Highland, Lowland, and Islay are the keywords for much of their whiskey-laden menu, though blended malts and further afield flavors such as Japanese whiskey also make a prominent stand. The Bruichladdich Port Charlotte (RMB 80) was heavily peated, with a nose that reminded us of frostbitten winters and left a sweet aftertaste similar to vanilla. The Auchentoshan Three Wood (RMB 110) started with juicy bursts of springtime fruits that rolled into a slight cinnamon spice on the tongue. Lastly, the Tobermory 10 Year (RMB 70) led one to imagine that after downing the heavily smoky, slightly peppered amber liquid a rousing arm wrestle between cigar toting, potbellied gents could be happening right in front of you.

While no cocktails are printed yet, the dapper staff were quick to reassure us that they can deliver some of the finest standard drinks around, so if one person in your company doesn't particularly enjoy the swill of moonshine they won't feel perturbed inside this classy whiskey haven.

Erin Strong



A close-up photograph of a bartender, a young woman with dark hair, pouring a golden liquid from a bottle into a clear plastic tray containing several small shot glasses. She is wearing a black long-sleeved shirt with a white and pink floral pattern. The background is a warm, out-of-focus bar setting with red and orange lighting.

HIT ME WITH YOUR BEST SHOT

**RECOMMENDED SHOOTERS FROM
BEIJING'S FAVORITE WATERING HOLES**

by Kipp Whittaker

When you find yourself already a couple beers deep in the thralls of the night's intoxicating grip, it can be difficult to say no to these efficient, poisonous injections being passed around. But, sometimes, what can be even more difficult is the selection process. It's not very common for a shot's name to describe exactly what's inside, so sometimes it's just, uh, a shot in the dark. Forgive us, we've already had a couple.

Here's our selection of Beijing favorites, a mix of forward-thinking creations and old standbys. None of these have stupid names like "nipple freezer," so there will be minimal blushing next time you order up a round for you and your compatriots.

BRANDY DREAMS (RMB 65)

While not technically a shot, consume it like one. Douglas Williams, co-founder of BBC, says it pays tribute to the coffee shot of Café de la Poste and Temple Bar. While it does its predecessors proud, it also goes a step beyond by using top-shelf ingredients, adding a little class to the juvenile tradition of shot pounding.

Espresso

Brandy

Orange Armagnac liqueur

Bar spoon Indonesian cinnamon syrup



BBC (Bottle, Boot, and Cigar) 1 Taipingzhuang Nanli, Chaoyang District (186 1405 7407)
朝阳区太平庄南里1号

HOUSE SPICED RUM (RMB 15)

This specially-infused rum conjures up memories of a past life partying with Gloria Estefan at a Sandals resort in the Caribbean. It is a delicate, but complex combination of flavors that will sneak up on you like an anaconda from a terrible Hollywood blockbuster. It's dangerous yet smooth, with a strong aroma of vanilla and quite frankly the stuff of fiction.

White Rum

Cardamom

Cinnamon and clove

Black peppercorn

Mace



Super Mario (RMB 35)

A deviant potion, akin to what Joaquin Phoenix's character in *The Master* would concoct with probably all of the same psychotic inducing effects, but sans the addition of photo chemicals and engine fluid. It's called Super Mario, but this is honestly Bowser's expressway to a diabolical buzz.

Absinthe

Tequila

Grenadine



Temple Bar B202, 206 Gulou Dongdajie, Dongcheng District (131 6107 0713)

东城区鼓楼东大街206号B202

Mala Tequila (RMB 25)

Wow! Two of the most intense flavors on the planet combined to create a potion so devilishly potable that over-consumption will probably melt you into the floor, but only after you do irreparable damage to your reputation, self-respect, and most likely your stomach lining.

Tequila infused with Sichuan Pepper



Mao Mao Chong 12 Banchang Hutong, Dongcheng District (6405 5718)

东城区板厂胡同12号

Penicillin (RMB 20)

Not often experienced in shot form, the Penicillin is a delicious mix with a spicy, tangy kick. We could see this one being extremely popular with the ladies as it goes down easy while gradually freeing you from all of those pesky inhibitions with every dose.

Freshly juiced ginger syrup

Grant's Scotch Whiskey

Bacardi 151



Dada Unit 101, Bldg B, 206 Gulou Dongdajie Dongcheng District (183 1108 0818)

东城区鼓楼东大街206号B栋101室

Más 25 Beixinqiao Toutiao, Dongcheng District (6405 4337) 东城区北新桥头条25号



NBEER PUB (SANLITUN)

SANLITUN SOHO GETS CRAFT BEER

Daily 10am-3pm, 5pm-midnight. B1-625, Tower 6, Sanlitun Soho, 8 Gongti Beilu, Chaoyang District (136 8330 8384)

朝阳区工体北路8号三里屯Soho 6号商场B1-625

 500m west of Tuanjiehu (Line 10)

It's no secret that the once soulless Sanlitun Soho is being gradually pumped with character, with dance clubs, award-winning restaurants, and even an archery bar. This is perhaps what NBeer owners Yin Hai and Xiao Bian'r were banking on when they duplicated their Xicheng craft brew pub and landed it on the other side of Beijing, in Sanlitun Soho's lowest level, next to much-hyped Korean haunt, Don Chicken. Yet, so far, NBeer seems to have more varieties on tap than it does customers in one sitting.

NBeer's claim to fame was the fact that the owners, who are members of the Beijing Homebrewing Society, courteously invited other amateur brewers to rent out equipment to make sizeable batches of beer in their space. Their newest location is a taproom only, but posters on the wall remind customers that brewing is still an

option at their original spot. Thirteen house brews are on offer for RMB 40 a pint (we recommend the Ginger Pale Ale), along with one Chengdu Lager, made by Chengdu Fengshou, craft brewers in the Sichuan capital.

There is plenty of space to sip on-site, with a few simple bar bites available. The beer sausage (RMB 24) may have been better had NBeer not imported it from Germany and made it themselves. Honestly though, most people probably have more action going on in their homes than in this craft beer establishment and for them, NBeer has an entire two walls of empty growlers ready to be filled and hauled away for RMB 99 each. Their novelty is in the labels, each featuring a cheeky reinterpretation of vintage Chinese propaganda posters. More than anything, the new NBeer is the spot to grab a growler as a gift for your local beer lover. *Jessica Rapp*

WHAT'S NEW BARS & CLUBS

LARK BREWPUB

BIG BREWS IN A SMALL ROOM

Daily 10am-2am. 277 Dongzhimen Neidajie, Dongcheng District (139 1130 2258)

东城区东直门内大街277号

 Beixinqiao, Exit B (Line 5)

If you live in the greater Beixinqiao area, then you have most likely encountered Lark Brewpub. The small hole in the wall, formally on Beixinqiao Toutiao, was demolished over a year ago, along with BVarious Dumplings to make way for that chic new creative space Aotu. Before Lark was Lark it was actually Panda, but management experienced a schism.

After briefly re-opening in the storefront that was occupied by Pengyou Izakaya Japanese restaurant, they quickly shut down again to renovate their new space into a bar/café hybrid. The redesign has a northwestern, Native American vibe mixed with 40s and 50s wartime and pop culture memorabilia. It feels like any second General Patton or Chief Seattle could hobble out the back and pull you a beer or serve up a cup of joe.

It's actually the perfect location for a coffee house, sitting right outside Exit B of Beixinqiao station. While there are other coffee options in the area, none are so pleasant or so close to the station as Lark Brewpub.

Immediately upon entering, there was a group of young ladies getting an early evening buzz on. By buzz, we mean they could barely walk out. So we can safely say that the beer works. At the time we visited, only three out of their seven beers were available, and they were all lagers. We tried the dark lager (RMB 30), which was more than satisfactory. The staff assured us that the other flavors would be ready soon, along with food options and who knows what else as they settle into these new digs. *Kipp Whittaker*



PHOTO: KIPP WHITTAKER

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IT'S THE BUSINESS

BEIJING'S BEST LUNCH DEALS

By Robynne Tindall

Lunch meeting? Important business to discuss with a client visiting from out of town? Time for a quick catch up with friends? Whatever your lunch requirements, we have rounded up some of Beijing's very best lunch options, whether they be set menus or just really good deals.

Migas

Three courses, RMB 95

Migas' creative lunch menu changes on a weekly basis, making the most of seasonal ingredients. Pol Anter's desserts are a particular delight, sweet enough to satisfy but not so heavy as to leave you in a food coma. Those with no afternoon meetings will definitely want to add a glass of Spanish wine for just RMB 20 extra.

Mosto

Two courses, RMB 95

It's easy to see why Mosto has topped the "Best Business

Lunch" category in our restaurant awards every year since 2011. Modern Mediterranean and South American dishes like sea bass ceviche and grilled beef tenderloin appear promptly from the kitchen and the relaxed space is the perfect location for a business meeting or a casual tete-a-tete with friends.

Tavola*

Four courses, RMB 118 or RMB 158

Stalwart of Beijing's Italian dining scene Tavola is a solid choice for Liangmaqiao office and embassy workers. The food is classic Italian — tomato bruschetta, spaghetti carbonara, pizza quattro formaggi — but the menu is broad enough that you could go back again and again and never get bored.

Hatsune

From RMB 78

Hatsune's lunch deals offer outstanding value. Choose

from 15 options accompanied by either mixed tempura or steamed egg custard, and all served with rice and miso (the pork kakuni and grilled mackerel are particular favorites of ours). Available at all three of their locations, this is a good choice for office workers wherever they are in town.

Aria*

Three courses, RMB 188

Aria's stately dining room is the perfect venue to entertain business guests from out of town. The thick-carpeted room may be quiet but the food is anything but; the flavors of young chef Philip Taylor's cooking practically cry out from modern dishes like seared foie gras with cherries, dark chocolate and brioche or truffled roast chicken.

Gung Ho! Pizza

Pizza and salad buffet, RMB 59

Yes, that's just RMB 59 for as much pizza and salad as you can eat, making this one of the best value — if not the best value — deals in town. They've got Pepperoni and Margherita pizzas, and Caesar salads on every day, plus a rotating selection of carnivorous and veggie options. Kids under 10 eat for half price.

Grill 79*

Two courses, RMB 180

Wait with bated breath for one of Beijing's increasingly rare blue sky days, then hustle over to Beijing's tallest building and grab a table by the window at Grill 79. Spanish Chef Daniel Quintero's food is exemplary, combining modern technique with unexpected flavors like Kashmir curry ice cream. This is fine dining but you won't be there for hours:

they call their lunch menu the "45 minute lunch."

Pekotan

Bento boxes from RMB 38

Japanese-run deli and bakery Pekotan is an ideal option for a quick and healthy lunch in the CBD. In addition to a range of freshly baked sandwiches and pastries, they have a deli counter where you can fill up a bento box with a mix of western and Japanese-inspired salads. Be sure to order the peppered beef when it's available.

Suzuki Kitchen

From RMB 35

Set lunch options are naturally more limited in the hutongs than in the office-heavy CBD, but the ever-reliable Suzuki Kitchen swoops in and s the day with a good value menu of hearty Japanese comfort food. The katsu curry is among the best in town and the fish bowl-sized salads are nothing to sneer at either. Suzuki Kitchen has locations in Beixinqiao, Mao'er Hutong and Dashilan.

Ganges

Lunch buffet, RMB 48

It may not be the most highbrow Indian food, but it's certainly one of the best lunch deals in town for hungry diners. Go earlier rather than later to enjoy free rein on the buffet choices (we always hold out for the pudina chicken, marinated in mint and spices) and a quieter environment for those sensitive business chats. The lunch buffet is available at their Sanlitun and CBD stores.

**Restaurants with an asterisk are subject to service charge*



MIKE SIGNORELLI

FOUNDER, SIGNATURE WINE CLUB



If Beijing were a wine, what notes do you think it would evoke?

I had help from our expert Fongyee Walker answering this one. We think if Beijing were a wine it would be a rich opulent red, to reflect the Forbidden City's wall, with complex layers showing both aged and new characteristics, and expensive! Something like a 1990 La Chapelle Hermitage.

Who would you most like to go out drinking with?

Elon Musk. I want to know, how does he manage his time? He has three companies, five children, and two ex-wives, how does he do it?!

When did you first start to appreciate drinking?

In college I had a few friends who became bartenders, and they opened up a world beyond beer for me. They took it as a profession, not just a college job, and would experiment and make interesting drinks far from what I was doing, which at that time was just beer. Wine just came over time, especially when I started going to more business events.

Has your favorite drink changed over time?

Sure, and it's always changing as I try new wines and spirits. One thing I'm really enjoying right now is Hendricks gin with cucumber and a splash of soda water, not just tonic water, it cuts the sweetness down.

What's your most outrageous drinking experience?

At a wedding in Nagano, Japan, drinking sake ladled directly out of giant oak casks that had been smashed

open. Quite a cultural experience, and the sake was like sweet water, so delicious! From what I remember overall it was a fantastic night!

You're hosting a dinner party, what's on the menu?

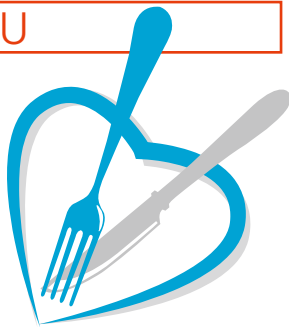
We're an East-meets-West family at the dinner table, so you will find mini versions of Chinese dishes like *hongshaorou* and *yangrou chuan'r* paired with red wines, and then you will find Italian antipasto that I think work well with everything! I especially like to invite friends to see what their reactions are to pairing Chinese cuisine with wine.

What is influencing the development of wine appreciation in China?

Knowledge and experience found outside of China. Many returnees come back with good exposure to wine from countries like Australia, Chile, and New Zealand, which they then look for in China with friends and family - but often buying those wines here is a challenge. You go to a (generic supermarket) store and the people are nice, but not knowledgeable about wine. You don't know how the bottles are stored, and you can't let wine freeze or get too hot. Beijing has massive extremes of both weathers, which people don't pay attention to when thinking about wine. All in all though, the knowledgeable consumer is on the rise.

Signature Wine Club brings a hand-picked selection of new and undiscovered wines to your door every month. Two bottle subscription packages start from RMB 299 per month.

P.S. WE ATE YOU



Every month, we like to shine a spotlight on the most delicious dishes we've stumbled upon recently. Chow down!

bun tron thit nuong

Vietnamese House, RMB 65

This is a comfortable little lunch spot with great service, on the bottom level of Sanlitun Soho. The dish is loaded with roasted pork, on a bed of vermicelli doused in fish sauce. Add a little Sriracha and other table-side sauces and you have a flavor combo that's delightfully spicy and refreshing.

salmon burger

MODO Urban Deli, RMB 68

Salmon may not seem like the first choice for a burger, but this combination of savory fish patty and tangy dill sauce is more than a match for its beefy brethren. Perfect for a light lunch or dinner.

gooey mooeey

Cows Creamery, RMB 35

It's not always the best idea to pig out on ice cream in the dead of winter, but sometimes a craving takes over and the perfect scoop of ice cream is the only remedy. Gooey Mooeey has a vanilla base filled with chocolate, mini Reese's Cups, and a thick caramel swirl.

sliders

Lark Brewpub, RMB 10

We stopped by Lark again, after our first look, only to discover that they started serving food. Well, at the moment it's just these mini hamburgers, but they are worth a try. They ended up being a pretty delicious and cheap snack to go along with their interesting selection of beers.

kimchi chicken bowl

Suzuki Kitchen, RMB 30

This rice bowl is a delectable fusion of Korean and Japanese flavors to create a spicy dish that has "satisfaction guaranteed" written all over it. The fermented cabbage gives it a little bit of a sour taste that compliments the tender slices of chicken perfectly.

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Things to do, places to be, stuff to try

GO

FLORETTE // TRIPLE-MAJOR // KING BABY // CLOTHING CHRONICLES



COOKIE MONSTER CHARITY BAKE-OFF

MAR 14 — LumDimSum is teaming up with The Hutong for their second annual Cookie Monster Charity Bake-Off, showcasing local bakers and supporting community charities all at the same time. This year all proceeds go to Bethel China. RMB 100 (includes sample bites of all 20 cookies and a hot drink). 2-5pm. The Hutong (159 0104 6127)

PHOTO: PORTFOLIOFATISERIE.FILES.WORDPRESS.COM




FLORETTE

BOUQUETS FOR PROLONGED ENJOYMENT

Daily 10am-6pm. Courtyard 5, Shimencun, Baiziwan Lu, Chaoyang District (400 835 6937)

百子湾路石门村5号院内大烟囱西侧

 500m north of Baiziwan (Line 7)

If there were ever a place that could once and for all convince men to buy flowers for the women in their lives, Florette is it. The abandoned factory-turned florist located just outside the Fourth Ring Road is well worth the trek, if only to get a whiff of founders Isabelle Sun and Kris Pei's contagious enthusiasm for everything botanic. They want to change China's minds about the bouquet, taking it up a few notches from a sappy gesture of love to a lifestyle choice.

You won't find painted cacti or bouquets of stuffed bears here. Florette deals with the raw, beautiful basics, stocking their refrigerator with a seasonal selection of cuts. Each paper-wrapped bouquet (RMB 650-1,320) comes with care instructions and plant food. For the uninspired, Florette's bilingual website is a visual confectionery for ideas on practical settings for flower arrangements and offers online ordering via Alipay and PayPal.

Florette's "fresh cut" offerings (RMB 550-1,920) allow

for the hands-on flower lover to put together their own bouquet using flowers the store chooses for them. In case you are not convinced as to just how much Florette cares how fresh their fresh cuts are, here's what they blogged after they nailed down a deal with their same-day delivery service partners (who deliver anywhere in Beijing): "Standing by the doorway, we felt like we were some old worrying parents, marrying off our baby daughters, hoping that whoever receives them on the other end of the aisle will treat them [with] plenty of love and respect." Now that's dedication.

Their dreamy, minimal, open-plan space of concrete floors, tiled walls, and light wooden tables is roomy enough and complete with all of the tools for wreath-making classes and gardening workshops. Come spring, their spacious backyard, a rare sight in Beijing, may play host to photography sessions, crafting days, and more.

Jessica Rapp



TRIPLE-MAJOR

A DOSE OF DOPE DESIGN

Wed-Sun 1-6pm (soft opening schedule). 26 Yangmeizhu Xiejie, Xicheng District
(8402 0763)

西城区杨梅竹斜街26号

 500m southwest of Qianmen (Line 2)

We've known for the past couple of years that Dashilan is turning into a hotbed of creative activity. With its Beijing Design Week programming, experimental exhibitions, third wave coffee joints and various designer clothing boutiques, the area attracts not only tourists visiting nearby attractions, but also locals looking for some inspired cultural fodder.

Triple-Major has been a major part of this design bubble, with their rapidly expanding brand that showcases emerging designers from all over the world, while also providing a space for creatives to exhibit unique works of conceptual craft. So it makes sense that they would move from their modest Baochao Hutong location to a place with more traffic.

We visited their new location, which evokes a traditional Chinese medicine shop motif. Each room is designated as a various department of a traditional *yaodian*. Even though you will not find a cure for anything but bad

fashion, they sell plenty of beautiful clothes, objects, and print media to make this a worthwhile stop on your next journey in the vicinity.

You'll find threads from designers like Anntian, ffiXXed, and Reality Studio, all imported and predominantly for women unless you have one of those special Bowie-esque figures to pull off something long and flowy. Men are not completely left out of the fold. There is a selection of smart apparel for dandy gents, like a wool pea coat from Études (RMB 5,980), socks from Henrik Vibskov (RMB 98-198), and deliciously vibrant Knitwear hats (RMB 498).

Don't leave the shop without visiting their bi-monthly rotation of small creative projects from local and international designers. This month they are featuring a small pop-up shop from Beijing's Yi Zhou, where everything, ranging from teas and assorted sweets, is available to purchase for RMB 1. A nice touch to this sweet new venue. *Kipp Whittaker*

PHOTO: KIPP WHITTAKER

KING BABY

HEAVY METAL

Daily 10am-10pm. Unit 26, 1/F, Xidan Joy City, 131 Xidan Beidajie, Xicheng District
西城区西单北大街131号西单大悦城1号楼26号单元

 500m north of Xidan (Line 1, Line 4)

The dawn of the 1970s in America saw mainstream hippy love being kicked out, and reality-warping ideas from the new alternative wave come howling in. The “Me Decade” was born, and a key mantra for these ten years came from a phrase coined by Sigmund Freud many years prior – “His majesty, the baby.” This phrase was used to describe people who had a mental condition that perpetuated the idea that the whole world revolved around them.

Fast-forward a few years and Freud’s idea has had a bit of leatherwork done to it, and has been molded into the egotistical American jewelry brand, King Baby. Rather than conforming to the nine-to-five norm most of us have adopted, King Baby thinks you should grab life by its motorcycled handlebars (a prime black and chrome example of which sits ready to roar out of their Xidan store) and flaunt the untamed drippings of leather wraps,

precious and semi-precious stones, fossilized mammoth bone, and beaten die-cast sterling metals around your fingers, neck, and any other place you want the world to see that biker bravado that’s been hiding in you.

If, however, you find that your ego doesn’t actually make the world go round, then the money you’ll be dropping on King Baby’s handmade jewelry will certainly make your head spin. Don’t expect any bling around your fingers for less than RMB 1,500, and tack an extra digit on the end for the chunky and bold necklaces (some of the sterling pieces will set you back a bit less, with RMB 7,000 a standard starting figure for less extravagant neck decor).

With a first location firmly established in Xidan’s colossal Joy City mall, and a second store opening up in Taikoo Li Sanlitun, timeless death-and-glory aesthetics are still very much alive and well in Beijing. *Erin Strong*



PHOTO COURTESY OF KING BABY



WHERE TO GO THE REST OF THE YEAR

by Steven Schwankert

So all of the beginning of the year throat-clearing and all the interruptions such as Spring Festival are now over and it's time to settle into 2015. There are still three long-weekend holidays and of course, the week-long October 1 period during which to plan travel – and those don't even count annual leave. Now that the preliminaries have past, here's where to go for the rest of the year.

Cuba (pictured): In the wake of President Barack Obama's announcement that the United States will begin normalizing relations with Cuba, quite a number of Europeans have jumped to declare that they've been visiting the place for years. As Cuba's tourism scene is about to be transformed into southern Miami, get there now so you can say that you went before.

Brazil: Same as last year: in 2014 Rio de Janeiro hosted the World Cup. In 2016, it will host the Summer Olympics. This year is a good shoulder year to enjoy all it has to offer, with all the buzz of both events but none of the crowds. Not to mention Brazil is an enormous country, a growing economy, and an outdoor enthusiast's dream. Few Chinese tourists visit the place. Just bear in mind it's one helluva flight (or series of flights) to get there from Beijing.

Myanmar: Southeast Asia's hottest destination in 2014 will remain so in 2015. Although hardcore expats in Bang-

kok recently told your correspondent they were getting tired of hearing about it, it's the one place (except for Laos) that doesn't yet have a worn tourist path, there's still plenty of discovery to be done there, and it's an exciting time to witness a country going through significant change. It's Thailand without the banana pancakes.

Kyrgyzstan: Your correspondent's best trip of the year was to this friendly, gorgeous Central Asian nation that is visa-free to a whole host of passport holders (although not PRC passport holders). It's like Xinjiang without all of the, um, recent, um, issues there, although the food isn't as quite as good. Expect amazing snow-capped vistas, the vast and beautiful alpine lake Issyk-Kul, and a country that borders China that exhibits almost no Chinese influence whatsoever.

Thailand: Just when you think you've been there, done that with Thailand, you realize there's a reason it's one of the world's most popular travel destinations. What's not to like? The food is fantastic; there's "Asian chaos" in Bangkok, one of the few truly distinctive cities in Asia; there are beaches galore; it's one of the world's scuba diving capitals; and Chiang Mai/Chiang Rai has all that stuff people go to Yunnan for, namely ethnic minorities and mountain air. Travel there is still great value. Unless your choice is one of the places named above, you can't go wrong going to Thailand.

GET OUT NEWS

AIR TRAVEL IS ALL ABOUT CHINA LATELY

One of the phrases that echoes throughout Bernardo Bertolucci's 1987 Beijing epic *The Last Emperor* is "Open the door! Open the door!" Clearly domestic airline passengers have seen this as an inflight movie too many times because they are heeding the call in record numbers.

Apparently finding the windows next to their seats a bit too hard to crack, some passengers have taken to popping open aircraft emergency doors in search of a bit of fresh air. Originally an expression of air rage, the most recent incident, which took place on a flight out of Nanjing, was more Zen. The passenger, who declared "the door is not important," simply opened it while waiting for other travelers to board. He was rewarded for the act with 10 days in jail during the Spring Festival holiday. We'll take that as an improvement, both the jail term and the non-violent evolution of emergency door opening. To start 2015, angry air passengers became such a problem on both domestic and international flights that it led the *Wall Street Journal* to declare "Forget Louis Vuitton handbags, air rage is the new black in China."

Regardless of air passengers' behavior, the demand for air travel in China won't be declining anytime soon. To meet that demand, being second-biggest and second-busiest just isn't enough for Beijing. ADP Ingénierie (ADPI) and Zaha Hadid Architects have designed the world's largest passenger terminal for the new Beijing airport being built in Daxing County.

The terminal is designed to handle 45 million passengers per year, just over half of the 86 million people that passed through Beijing International Capital Airport (BCIA) in 2014, which is already over capacity.

Interestingly, while the overall design looks like a six-pointed throwing star, the front facade looks very similar to BCIA's profile. See all the sketches here. Take that, Dubai!

Don't forget, 18 months ago, Beijing Capital International Airport was named the world's most delayed airport.

Stay abreast of Beijing travel news on www.thebeijinger.com/blog.

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CLOTHING CHRONICLES

TWO OF BEIJING'S STYLISH
SHARE THEIR SECRETS

by Jessica Rapp

Valeria Chan
Marketing and PR Assistant for Mosto Group

Her style: "Gypsy-ish, ethnic, comfortable, convenient, and eclectic." She likes clothes that tell a story.

Favorite places to shop: Secondhand markets (including Beijing's Fatou Market), vintage fairs, and flea markets. "I stopped buying clothes in shops when I was 19."

How China has changed her style: A trip to Sichuan inspired her to borrow a few style trends from a Tibetan community: layers, jewelry, and even a hairdo.

Most coveted garment: Handbags, particularly those that are leather or velvet. "In Milan, I used to hang them on a big white wall in my room. The 30 hooks were obviously not enough for all of them."

Most interesting accessory: A weatherproof military bag from the 1930s used by Nazi soldiers for underwater missions.

What she's wearing: Leather and wolf fur coat made in Europe, but passed down from her dad who used to wear the coat in China when he was a teenager; Zara scarf; sweater, shirt and dress bought in a Milan market for EUR 1 each; 1990s Dr. Martens shoes bought in Israel; elephant tail bracelet from South Africa; Cambodian bracelet; rings from Turkey and India; traditional Bai ethnic minority earrings from Yunnan.

Look for Valeria's graphic design work in collaborations around town, or catch her at Beijing's next vintage fair.



Sebastian Linack
Fashion Designer, Architect,
Founder of Pecha Kucha

His style: "I prefer simple, minimal geometric lines and shapes, but with a fun twist. I love playing with colors to show individual character and refreshing details."

Favorite place to shop in Beijing:

The fabric market and his tailor. "As an architect, I wear a suit and shirt on a daily basis. It's not easy to find individual pieces with good design in Beijing, so that's why I started doing my own design and have almost all of my shirts and suits tailor-made."

How architecture affects

fashion: "At least with my modern understanding of architecture and design, you are playing with very reduced lines and making decisions based on overall appearance ... That's the philosophy behind how I design my clothes and combine my outfits."

Color of choice: "Orange is my all-time favorite, but green gives off vibes of spring and freshness, which is what Beijing needs."

Style transformation: "I wear what I personally like rather than worrying about impressing someone."

Who inspires him in Beijing's style

scene: Zhang Chi, Xander Zhou, Emma Zhang, and Vega Zaishi Wang

What he's wearing: Shirt and suit jacket by Sebastian Linack; handmade Italian leather belt; shoes by Flecs; watch by NOMOS Glashütte; glasses by JINS; socks from H&M.

Look out for more from Sebastian as he puts the finishing touches on launching his own clothing label, featuring fine fabrics and fresh, modern cuts.

Introducing the people who matter

MEET

JULIANA LIMA // BORIS // ROSS HARRIS // AWESOME TAPES FROM AFRICA



KAWABATA MAKOTO & KK NULL

MAR 6 — *Legendary psychedelic journeymen Kawabata Mokoto and KK NULL join forces for an all-out love fest of inter-dimensional sonic exploration. Catch them at XP, where they will be supported by a slew of local freaks. RMB 50. 9pm. XP (6406 9947)*

PHOTO: GEOFF-NICHOLSON.TRIPOD.COM

JULIANA LIMA

DJ

How cool is it to be from Brazil right now, between hosting the World Cup and the Olympics? With all that going on there, why are you here in Beijing?

I left Brazil eight years ago. Since then I only go back to visit. It doesn't look like I'm going back to live there anytime soon. I am happy for my country to be hosting these events. I would love to be there but I can't, my life is here now.

Can you play any instruments? If so, what?

I am currently learning how to play piano and classical guitar. I think that to call yourself a musician the least you should know is how to play an instrument. The decks are also instruments, they also require practice but I reached a level where matching beats isn't enough. I chose piano because it's the basis for making music and classical guitar because back in Brazil most of our songs are played on a classical guitar. It's also good to practice my singing. That's another thing that I definitely want to add to my list of skills.

What song would you sing on a TV talent show?

So I have a good friend, helping me out. She is the singer at the hotel where I used to work and she is also coaching. She gave me the idea for this one song that could not have worked out better. It's called "Soldier Of Love" by Sade. I felt really connected to the song, so I've been practicing it for a while.

Name a song or record for your time in Beijing?

I've been in Beijing for almost eight years ... It's been a looong ride to here, so it's difficult to name one song in particular. There have been lots of different phases. I started working here as a model and three years later became a DJ. So a lot has happened and musically speaking as well. A lot of the artists that I used to like



nowadays are very commercial but a song that stood out for me was "Man With The Red Face" by Mark Knight & Funkagenda. It's a song that I still play and still love.

What was the first record you ever bought?

This one I remember well. I usually don't buy tracks, I think artists should be paid well to perform but music should be free. But this particular song called "Hold Back Love (Lovebirds Instrumental Remix)" by Kraak and Smaak Feat. Lex Empress was impossible to find. I've got a project called "Ju & Yu" which I DJ with a singer, her name is Daria and she is Russian. We are very limited on having to find instrumentals for songs we want to perform so sometimes we have to buy them!

What was your favorite period or year for music?

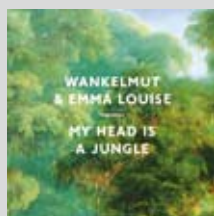
I think the 1990s was definitely was the best period for music. People actually cared about art in the 1990s; there was actual thought put into the music. Art was a form of work not just what it is nowadays, just beats that you can move to, lyrics that you can easily remember that make no sense, or teach our children things that they should not be learning at an early age.

Catch DJ Juliana Lima's latest tracks on Soundcloud, soundcloud.com/julianalimadj.

JULIANA LIMA'S FIVE-SONG PLAYLIST



"Changes" by Sandy Rivera ft. Haze



"My Head Is A Jungle (Gui Boratto Remix)" by Wankelmut & Emma Louise



"Scala" by Agoria



"Underground Is Armed (Peter Brown Bootleg 2007)" by Pryda vs. Celeda



"Beachball (2010 DBN Remix)" by Nalin & Kane



CHAOTIC ENLIGHTENMENT

BORIS FINDS PEACE IN THE NOISE

by Kyle Mullin

Boris isn't a mere band. They're a trio of monks, and experimental rock is their temple. Since forming in 1992, drummer and vocalist Atsuo, guitarist Wata, and bassist Takeshi have incapacitated fans with paralyzing noise rock, bone-breaking drones, concussive sludge metal, and more. That repertoire may be wide-ranging and lethal, like a grandmaster's fighting styles, but Boris' approach is far more meditative. Atsuo shared some of that Zen wisdom in an interview with *the Beijinger*.

Last year Boris released *Noise*, the 19th studio album since your 1996 debut. What sets *Noise* apart?

Our works are pretty similar to climbing mountains. Each gives us various labors and pleasures at once. With *Noise*, we tried to reduce multi recording tracks so that there was more space and room within the songs, compared to our other albums.

You've released so many albums in such a short time. What drives and motivates you?

I know we are a bit more prolific than others, but it's because music is born ad infinitum! We are not writing music at all. Music is hidden in an invisible and unheard world, waiting to be born someday.

Speaking of work ethic, you told Pitchfork that the tour for Boris' 2005 album *Pink* gave you "a good kind of exhaustion." How is that fatigue beneficial?

Since *Pink*, we've gradually established our composing style. Rather than follow our egos, we wanted the

music to lead us. The lyrics of "Just Abandoned Myself" on *Pink* capture that feeling. During that busy time, our egos vanished. We still let music lead us, so our daily lives are very unstable. Sometimes it is so slow, and on other days the pace is too fast.

Tell us about opening for Nine Inch Nails in 2008.

It was a great experience. Their shows are definitely some of the best in the music industry. And their chef was amazing. Wata put on weight during the tour. Usually she loses weight whenever Boris plays outside of Japan.

What do you think of Jim Jarmusch comparing Boris to "jazz musicians" after you scored his film *The Limits of Control*?

I agree. Every time we play a song it sounds very different. Since we are a trio, very minor changes lead to lots of variations and major transformations.

Are you aware that most of Beijing's experimental rock acts cite Boris as a key influence?

Unfortunately I am not familiar with any artists in Beijing. But it would be fantastic to meet up with someone who could potentially work with Boris in the future!

Are you working on a follow up to *Noise*?

We are working on a new album already, along with several other projects, so it is very hard to explain our current activity in a few words. It's chaos, as usual. It is fun though. We are very excited with everything. In that sense, our condition and mood are all good and healthy.

ROSS HARRIS

FOUNDER OF MÁS

In the biopic of your life, which scene should be filmed as a silent movie?

Definitely those border runs years ago, when I used to take a rickety sleeper bus to the Mongolian border and hitchhike a ride across, just so a clearly intoxicated border patrol could stamp an exit in my passport. I would go 48 hours with saying maybe 15 words, which could easily be edited to a few inter-titles spaced throughout the film. The soundtrack would be Russian jeep motors.

What TV box set do you revisit most often?

Golden Girls. A gay guy staple. It's witty, catty old ladies in bouffant hair-dos and caftans bitching on the Lanai, so of course. And I'm so clearly Dorothy and my boyfriend is so clearly Blanche, it's scary.

What was the first pirated film you saw?

I bought a DVD on the street in Wudaokou with the words "CULT FILMS" printed on copy paper over the front. It felt dangerous, and had some truly dark films on it, like Pasolini's *Salo* and Malcolm McDowell's *Caligula* and other such pornography. Disappointingly, I never saw the seller again.

What's the scariest movie you've ever seen?

I love horror, but Michael Haneke's 2007's shot-for-shot remake of *Funny Games* is nearly unwatchable in its brutality. No thanks. For more fun scary, watch pre-1990s John Carpenter.

What's the last movie that made you cry?

Recently, I cried at the ending of this obscure horror film from 1991 called *Mom*. It was about an older woman who takes in a boarder who ends up turning her into a werewolf. It was goofy, but the actress who played the title character sold it very well.

What TV show or movie did you have to be coerced into watching but now readily admit that you love?

A good friend of mine convinced me to see *Showgirls* way back when it wasn't quite the cult classic it is now. I had zero interest but was transfixed with its trashy badness. I never laughed harder and have seen

it countless times, including screening it for friends. It remains my favorite "so bad it's good" movie, and I have quite a few of those.

What's the finest breakout performance you can remember?

Candace Hilligoss in 1962's *Carnival of Souls* and Cathérine Deneuve in Roman Polanski's *Repulsion*. Both of these women are losing themselves to forces outside of their understanding. The acting seems deeply personal and uncomfortable.

Look out for Más' screening of films that match up with the music of Pink Floyd, called "Dark Side of the Rainbow," on March 8.



PHOTO: KEN



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Brian Shinkovitz began Awesome Tapes From Africa (ATFA) as a way to share the compelling tapes he found crate digging around Ghana. This eventually evolved beyond the blogosphere and into a fully functional record label that provides a platform for unknown musicians and their recordings to breathe new life and keep the sounds of those funky grooves in circulation.

What compelled you to search out African music and what were your initial aims for the blog?

I initially wanted to make a blog that had music that my friends would not hear anywhere else. I began looking for African tapes during my first trip to Ghana in 2002, as I am obsessive about collecting music and tapes were the main format at the time.

When searching for a tape, is it always random or are you ever looking for something specific?

I am often looking for a specific genre or song style or language, but most of the time I end up receiving or finding a bunch of tapes and sorting through them to find the ones I enjoy.

What are some of your criteria for purchase? Is the artwork a big part of the selection process?

Sometimes the artwork stands out and I have to buy the tape. Although that can be hit or miss for sure. So the good thing about buying tapes in markets in Africa is that the shopkeepers usually let you listen before you buy!

Is this something you'll be doing for a while, or do you feel like eventually you'll move on to a different continent?

I am so into African music (and most music, really) and I definitely need to hear a lot more sounds from various countries I've never visited. I don't really plan on expanding to other continents as far as a project like this.

I've heard that you have over 4,000 tapes in your collection thus far. How do you organize this massive collection?

The collection is quite massive and lives in three to four different cities so it is highly disorganized. Once I finally

Tape

AWESOME TAPES FROM AFRICA
FOUNDER BRIAN SHIMKOVITZ

by Kipp Whittaker



settle in one place to live I will begin to sort it into a system and try to digitize most of it. I am still finding more music to add!

At what point did you decide to take Awesome Tapes on the road and play the music you've been collecting in a live setting?

Well, the funny thing is I never meant to be a DJ and I never imagined ATFA the blog as anything more than



HEAD



share of logistical and technical problems. Are tapes worth the effort?

DJing tapes is super fun but yeah, kind of not the most efficient method. I like how it sounds and I like the feel of mixing on tapes. Once the vibe is right and I am getting into the set there is a really good hard to describe feeling of playing powerful sounds out of cassette decks on a big system. The tapes keep me busy the whole time because I have to cue up the song (or the point in the middle of a song) I want to play. I do not plan the sets beforehand or rewind/fast forward the tapes in advance.

Do you make backup copies of your favorite tapes in case they get destroyed while playing them live?

I do not make copies of the tapes and I play only the originals. I am into preserving but more into having the music sound great and feeling like I am playing the real thing. I am not into tapes turning into this vinyl thing where people are trading them for hundreds of dollars on eBay ... They are meant to be played!

What tracks on the Awesome Tapes From Africa blog would be on your make-out mix?

"Baby making music" is a special thing and I have always thought of it as being American R&B slow jams. However, if I had to make an ATFA make-out mix it would definitely include something from Boubacar Traore's tape, which is among my favorites, as well as something from Getachew Mekurya's saxophone and drum machine tape of mellow tunes, and finally something from Egyptian songstress Shadia.

In the 80s and 90s, there was a huge cassette culture here in Beijing and throughout China. Any chance you'll be hunting for tapes while in Asia?

I lived in Bangkok for a year in 2003 and while I was there I found many tapes. I am in love with Chinese traditional and folk music, especially from the interior and western provinces so I will hopefully have time to find some music around China while I am visiting.

Make sure to catch Brian Shimkovitz and his Awesome Tapes From Africa on March 19 at Dada.

that. But a few years ago in about 2009 or 2010 people began to ask me a lot about gigs and I got an agent in Europe. From 2011, I decided to quit my job because I had started the label and realized there was no way to do it right without spending all my time on it. I am very low on money because of this, but I am happy doing something interesting and rewarding.

You DJ with cassettes, which obviously causes its



What are you planning to do?

EVENTS

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SUB-CULTURE PRESENTS: THE BUG

MAR 20 – He's provided bass-booming remixes for Grace Jones, Thom Yorke, and Primal Scream, and is considered to be one of the most versatile producers on the planet. Experience his unique genre melting live set as he's joined by London-based grime king, Manga, as a part of this year's JUE Festival. RMB 100. 10pm. Dada (183 1108 0818)

PHOTO COURTESY OF SPLIT WORKS

DON'T MISS

DON'T MISS – JUE | Music + Art Festival

BORIS

MAR 14 – Prolific Japanese rock band Boris is finally coming to Beijing. They're best known for their monolithic sludge tracks, but incorporate experimental sounds to teleport audiences to other zones of musical appreciation. RMB 180, RMB 150 (advance). 8.30pm. Mako Livehouse (5205 1112)

JAY ELECTRONICA AND MISS KO

MAR 17 – Jay Electronica, New Orleans rhyme machine, and Queens hip-hop act Miss Ko meet for the first time at JUE. Prepare for an unforgettable night, with Iron Mic crew supporting. RMB 220, RMB 150 (advance). 8pm. Yugong Yishan (6404 2711)

EMILIE SIMON

MAR 20 – Welcome Emilie Simon for a special performance following her short but successful tour of China back in 2010. Her sound is a lush mix of electronic textures and pixie vocals that's hard not to love. RMB 180, RMB 150 (advance). 8.30pm. Yugong Yishan (6404 2711)

GENJING RECORDS PRESENTS: PRIMITIVE CALCULATORS

MAR 13 – Australian synth-punk legends bring their synthesized happening to the Beijing stage. Expect voltage spikes and rock 'n' roll hammer drops galore. RMB 80, RMB 60 (student). 9pm-12am. Yugong Yishan (6404 2711)

JUE CREATIVE MARKET

MAR 15 – The perfect event for all of you craft loving foodies. An assortment of Beijing's weirdos will join forces to hawk handmade and vintage goods, then feast on an assortment of edibles and libations. If last year was any indication of the amount of fun and treasure hunting you'll encounter, then you can count us in. Free. 11am-6pm. LANNG Art Center

WOOOZY OFFLINE: LOGOS + FORMA

MAR 13 – Forma will take you on a Tangerine Dream vision quest with a heavy arsenal of analog synths and drum machines, followed by Logos, a gent known for tearing things up with his grimy, reality-shattering beats. RMB 50, RMB 30 (students). 10pm. Dada (183 1108 0818)

AWESOME TAPES FROM AFRICA

MAR 19 – For the past couple of years, Brian Shimkovitz's Awesome Tapes From Africa blog has been shedding light on obscure and wonderful sounds from across the African continent. As a DJ, he travels from club to festival to DIY space bringing the blog to life with two to three hour sets blending his massive collection of exotic pop tunes. RMB 50. 10pm. Dada (183 1108 0818)

GULOU DOUBLE DECKER #2: HVAD

MAR 12 – Join the second installation of Gulou Double Decker with the sonic wizardry of Hari Shankar Kishore, aka DJ HVAD. Be prepared for a unique blend of Indian percussion, glitched breaks, and melted samples. He's joined by White+'s Wang Xu, Linan, and Fratricide. RMB 30. 10pm. Dada (183 1108 0818)



JIAN CLUB
ARES IS COMING

JIAN ARCHERY CLUB

Daily 11am-midnight. B1-308, Sanlitun SOHO, 8 Gongti Beilu, Changyang District (010 5290 2981 & 400 016 9882)
朝阳区工体北路8号 三里屯SOHO商场3 B1-308
[400m west of Tuanjiehu Station (Line 10)]

Would you like a convenient, non-physical way to weaponize your inner wimp? How would you survive a hunt-or-be-hunted scenario where you are pitted against a predator in a duel to the death? Well, the recently opened Jian Archery Club is a decent option to develop those survivalist instincts in the pleasant atmosphere of patrons imagining their bosses at the other end of a graphite arrow.



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EVENTS



1



2



3



4



5

1. CINE.FORUM

MAR 10, 17, 24, 31 – Four films spread over every Tuesday night of March touch on some of the most powerful human emotions, ranging from sexual awareness of self, the terrifying abyss of being alone, and where extravaganza and debauchery collide. Free. 7.30pm. AOTU Studio (8408 4189)

2. NCAA BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT

MAR 1-15 – Sponsored by Vedett, the madness of NCAA Basketball can be found in Sanlitun. Fill out your Bracket Challenge sheet for the chance to win a Vedett Keg Party at Home Plate Bar-B-Que. Free. Home Plate Bar-B-Que (400 096 7670)

3. MATT HULSE: DUMMY JIM

MAR 7 – Twelve years in the making and nominated for the Michael Powell Award, *Dummy Jim* pulls together fiction, documentary, and animation to explore the adventures of profoundly deaf Scots long-distance cyclist James Duthie. RMB 20, RMB 10 (UCCA members). 5pm. UCCA (5780 0200)

4. WOMEN AND SLOW BOAT

MAR 8 – Slow Boat Brewery host a tap takeover with three upcoming women brewers, with all profits going towards The Starfish Project, a China-based charitable organization that provides employment support and skills training for women. Free. 11.30am-10pm. Slow Boat Brewery Taproom (6538 5537)

5. THE FIXX PRESENTS: UZ (MAD DECENT)

MAR 14 – Having shared the stage with the likes of Snoop Dogg and Mobb Deep it's no wonder UZ wears the Trap crown. Dropping tunes on Mad Decent within months of his first release shows that while his physical features remain a mystery, his ferocious style is certainly grabbing headlines. RMB 120, RMB 80 (advance). 9pm. 8MM



1. D-A-D

MAR 13 – These hard rockers from Denmark are brought to China by the Danish Chamber of Commerce. Proceeds from this savage display of musicianship go to the Surmang Foundation. RMB 320, RMB 260 (advance). 9pm. MAO Live House (6402 5080)

2. THE HUTONG YELLOW WEASELS ALBUM RELEASE PARTY

MAR 14 – The Hutong Yellow Weasels are back with some savory American folk music. Make sure you have your dancing shoes on for the inevitable square dance madness. 100 RMB. 9.30pm. Jianghu Bar (155 1012 5274)

3. WUYUAN 'FIELDS OF FLOWERS', JIANGXI PROVINCE

MAR 26-29 – Beijing Hikers are organizing a beautiful hike through the fields and ancient river towns in southern China's Jiangxi province. This hike also passes through Jingdezhen, a once-in-a-lifetime chance to visit the 'Porcelain Capital' of China. RMB 6,500. All day. Beijing Hikers (6432 2786)

4. STREET KIDS FIVE-YEAR ANNIVERSARY: “?”

MAR 27 – DJs Yauman, Ludo V, OSHI, and Shackup will be laying down some thick and sweaty tunes, while a pop-up shop, eats, and a special Street Kids themed cocktail are served up in hard knock fashion. RMB 60. 10pm. The Bar at Migas (5208 6061)

5. NEON ZOO

MAR 20 – Beijing's wildest party series, Neon Zoo, is back again! There will be UV lights, neon decorations, face/body painting and two rooms of the finest tech-house from some of Beijing's most exciting DJs. RMB 60. 10pm. Lantern (135 0134 8785)



EVENTS



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4

1. GOA PRODUCTIONS: MADE IN CHINA RELEASE TOUR

MAR 20 – Goa Productions hosts a special milestone wherein the first generation of China's psytrance wave, including renowned producer Atoned Splendor, will bring together their collective years of dance-floor destroying artistry in an all out night of acid madness. RMB 50. 9pm. Mako Livehouse (5205 1112)

2. EIKASIA: VIDEO INSTALLATION BY ALESSANDRO ROLANDI

MAR 21 – This video installation from Alessandro Rolandi calls to mind Plato's cave and the questioning behind what is brought to our cognitive distinction when defining what is real and what is imagined. Free. 2-7pm. Jiali Gallery (8402 5613)

3. INPUT: 10 YEARS OF SPANISH PHOTOGRAPHY IN CHINA

MAR 21 – From an obsessive study of growing individualism to a reflection of survival in uncontrollable environments, these six photographers have captured their personal experience of China and what its role has been in their artistic developments. Free. 6.30pm. AOTU Studio (8408 4189)

4. DINING CITY RESTAURANT WEEK

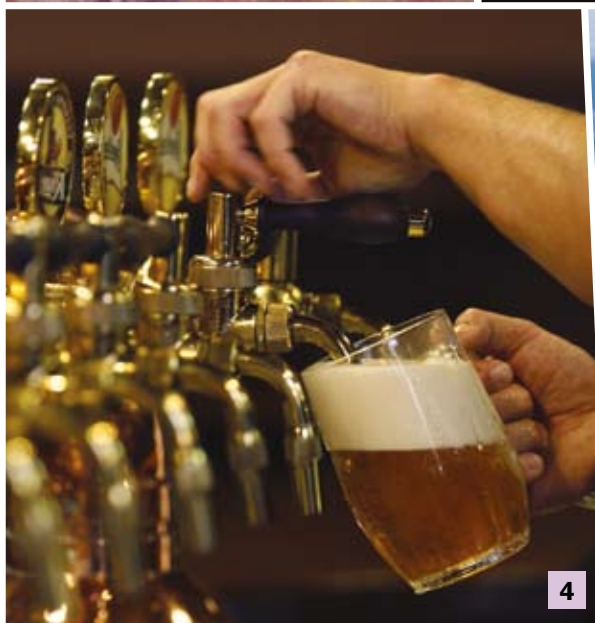
MAR 11-22 – Beijing's biggest dining extravaganza is back again with a whole week of dining deals allowing you to experience set menus at the very best of the city's restaurants whatever your budget. RMB 88-258. Multiple Venues



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3

1. BACK 2 BASICS PRESENT ERIC SNEO (GERMANY)

MAR 27 – Developing rhythm through instruments like drums, piano, and accordion gave Eric Sneo the tools and the passion to become one of the most highly requested international techno artists. RMB 100, RMB 60 (advance). 11pm. Lantern (135 0134 8785)

2. KEMPINSKI VIENNA BALL

MAR 21 – The Kempinski Hotel Beijing re-creates a true Austrian society event, with music by the Original Wiener Strauss Capelle orchestra. Dance lessons will be provided to help you get your fancy footwork in order. RMB 1,380. 6.30pm. Kempinski Hotel Beijing Lufthansa Center (6465 3388)

3. “RICKSHAW BOY”

MAR 5-8 – Rickshaw Boy combines the talents of well-known composer Guo Wenjing, playwright Xu Ying and emerging director Yi Liming in the NCPA's fifth Chinese opera. The piece boasts old Peking themes full of unique aesthetic values and regional charm. RMB 100-880. 7.30pm. National Center for the Performing Arts (186 0020 8126)

4. THE CHEF AND THE BREWER

MAR 7 – The Great Leap Brewery team and Feast's Executive Chef Rob Cunningham present a family-style banquet topped off with Great Leap Beer pairings and free flow Pale Ale #6 and Edmund Backhouse Pilsner at the new #45 location. RMB 250. 1pm. Great Leap Brewery #45 (181 4657 4527)

ANSWERING TEXTS

by George Ding

I'm a pretty popular guy so it's no surprise that I get a lot of text messages. In fact, most are from people I don't even know. But out of respect, I try to answer them all. Yes, I actually received all of these.

From: 1352174****

Eighty meters from Line 7 Zhushikou station, luxurious apartments, eight percent rate of return, no purchase limit. 31,000 RMB/m², 58 m² to start, height 5.2 meters.

To: 1352174****

Hi there, thank you for your text message. I am indeed looking to buy an apartment or apartments, if the price is right. Unfortunately, your quoted price of RMB 31,000 per square meter is a little out of my price range. Do you have anything around RMB 100 per square meter? Preferably within Second Ring. I'll take lower ceilings or a lower rate of return if necessary. Also, it's not ideal but I can live on a fourth floor if it's cheaper. Thanks a lot!

From: 1326130****

Hi! This is your landlord. I've changed my number. Please pay rent to my wife's ICBC account: 62122617020***** Mr. Li.

To: 1326130****

Thanks for letting me know. I was just about to go to the bank when I received your message. How dumb I would have looked depositing RMB 30,000 into the wrong account! Egg on face, am I right? Anyway, I've saved your new number and will get the money to you shortly.

From: 106575586266****

How can we manage wealth in this post-QE era with significant RMB depreciation? Pingan Trust investment starts at 1 million RMB, expected annual interest rates of up to 10%, for more information contact 400820**** or reply "Y"

To: 400820****

Dear Pingan Trust, I'm a little short of RMB 1 million right now. Please check back in a decade.

From: 1861034****

Baili Immigration. Our company offers safe and trustworthy immigration services. Canadian green card for RMB 90,000. Giving birth in America starting at RMB 10,000.

To: 1861034****

To Whom It May Concern, I think you might have the wrong number, as I am a male American citizen who cannot give birth at present. And, as I'm sure you know, giving up my US passport for a Canadian green card would be like trading in a Maserati for a Pinto. I have to pass on your offer but thank you all the same.

From: 1312120****

High-class Beijing hotel and apartment massage service: schoolgirl, office lady, flight attendant, car show model, youthful nurse, B- and C-list movie and TV stars, Japanese and Korean, Western girls. Secure hotline: 1312005****. Replies will be ignored, sorry for the disturbance!

To: 1312005****

All of the above. Is there a bulk discount? Here is my address. Come quickly.

To: 1312005****

Ignore last sentence. Freudian slip.

To: 1312005****

Actually, it's not a Freudian slip because it never happens. Ever.

From: 1561109****

Hi! This is your landlord. I've changed my number. Please pay rent to my wife's ICBC account: 6215581805000686615 Ms. Shi.

To: 1561109****

Did you change your number again? I got a message from you earlier this week and paid rent to the account you sent me. Please check to see if you got it. I hope you don't mind my prying but did you get a new wife? Her name is different. Or maybe you have more than one, which is totally cool. Actually, I should probably tell you this now: I might be buying a reasonably priced apartment within Second Ring with really high ceilings. If the deal goes through I will have to move out. Just letting you know ahead of time. But who knows, the real estate company might be trying to rip me off. Their offer almost sounds too good to be true.

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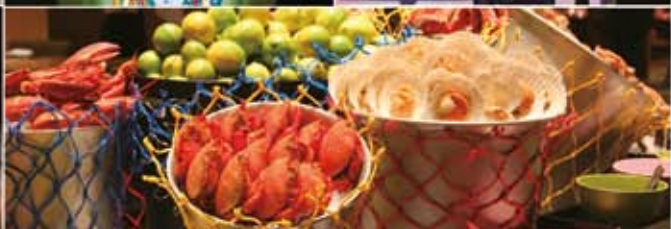
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