

** WELCOME

As the 2020-2021 academic year begins, we are excited to announce the return of our newsletter! In it, we will be providing updates about ITASA, as well as highlighting other events going on within the greater Taiwanese and Taiwanese American community.

Dear members, alumni, and friends of ITASA,

Welcome back! My name is George, and I am the National President of ITASA. On behalf of my amazing Vice Presidents Darren and Lisa, I am extremely excited to share with you our visions and upcoming goals.

This year, ITASA aims to highlight three main pillars of our work: cultural enrichment in our community, public empowerment for our community, and programming engagement through our community. In recent years, ITASA has seen not only a substantial growth in our outreach, but also increasingly broadening definition on what it means to be a part of the Taiwanese/ Taiwanese American identity. To that end, we strive to be a truly inclusive organization, supporting each and every segment of our wonderful community.

In the following year, we have planned a series of partnerships, programs, and public initiatives highlighting different aspects of our culture. We will continue our public engagements and advocacies safeguarding our identity on college campuses, initiate creative partnerships with health, media, and grassroots organisations addressing the inequities we are currently combatting, and adopt our annual national conference to a more agile model suitable in the global health crisis, just to briefly name a few. In the following newsletters, we will shine more light on each of the aforementioned projects.

As the onboarding process and summer summit comes to an end, our national board is ready to face all our challenges head on. Each department plays an irreplaceable role in realising ITASA's vision. I am incredibly grateful and humbled to have the opportunity to work with such a talented, dedicated, and diverse team. We look forward to sharing with you our future progress - thank you all so much for your continued support for ITASA!

All the best,
George Tang
DID YOU KNOW?

Ghost Month (鬼月) is observed in the 7th month of the lunar calendar. It is believed that the gates of hell open in this month, and hungry ghosts, or respectfully called “Good Brothers,” roam the mortal world searching for food, entertainment, and money. This year, the Ghost Festival (中元普度), the 15th day of the 7th lunar month, fell on September 2nd.

Here are some taboos people avoid in Taiwan:

1. Don't go swimming. Evil spirits might drown you for a chance at rebirth.
2. Don't whistle, especially at night. It may attract unwanted attention from evil spirits.
3. If you feel a pat on your shoulder at night, don't turn your head. Turn with your whole body to avoid snuffing out the protective flames that the living have on each shoulder.
4. Don't sit in the first row of Taiwanese operas (歌仔戲). Those seats are reserved for ghostly audiences.
5. Don't hang lanterns or windchimes. They will both be taken by Good Brothers as calling for them to enter.
6. Avoid taking the last bus or train. You don't want to be taken away by a phantom driver or unknowingly have spirits following you home.
7. Knock on a hotel room door before entering for the first time, and remember to step in side-ways to avoid collision with a Good Brother.

CALENDAR IN TIME

September 21, 1999 | 9/21 Earthquake

On September 21, 1999, at 01:47:12 AM local time, a great earthquake struck Taiwan, centered in Jiji Township, Nantou County. It is the second deadliest earthquake recorded in Taiwanese history— The 921 Great Earthquake (九二一大地震).

The earthquake had a 7.3 magnitude measured on the Richter scale. Over 2,400 people were killed, more than 11,000 others were injured, and thousands of buildings were destroyed or damaged due to shoddy construction. NT\$300 billion worth of damage was done.

The quake had a profound impact on Taiwan's economy and became a significant part of people's consciousness, often referring to the disaster simply by the date it occurred.

CALENDAR IN TIME

While some of you may have heard of the iconic heavy metal band Chthonic and the lead singer-turned-legislator Freddy Lim, there is another Taiwanese band that holds the flag of Taiwanese pride just as high:

Fire EX. (滅火器), or literally translated "fire extinguisher," is a Taiwanese punk rock/pop punk band started from Kaoshiung in 2000, consisting of Sam (vocals), Orio (guitar), Pipi (bass), and Wu Ti (drums). The band has penned one politically charged anthem after another, largely performed in Taiwanese Hokkien, and championed social and political causes close to Taiwan's younger generations, from same-sex marriage to Taiwan's unfair treatment in the international arena.

They are, perhaps, best known for their involvement in the Sunflower Student Movement in 2014, where students and civic groups led mass protests and even occupied the Legislative Yuan in opposition to the too-hasty review of a service trade agreement with China. Protesters played "Good Night! Formosa! (<https://itasa.us4.list-manage.com/track/click?u=c1d8139ab08f29368ac362fbf&id=aab5e8c6e5&e=38442de982>)" and Fire EX. produced "Island's Sunrise (<https://itasa.us4.list-manage.com/track/click?u=c1d8139ab08f29368ac362fbf&id=875860628a&e=38442de982>)" specifically for the Sunflower Student Movement. The moment cemented the band's status as a band for the Taiwanese people and an emblem for youth activism.

TAIWAN PLAYLIST

SONG | 好樂團 Good Band - 他們說我是沒有用的年輕人

(<https://itasa.us4.list-manage.com/track/click?u=c1d8139ab08f29368ac362fbf&id=9428740c17&e=38442de982>) (They Say I am a Useless Young Person)

* The title more or less gives away why I feel this song. Though not the most uplifting of songs you could be listening to, it is a song that hits the nail on the head when it comes to the terrifying numbness of maturing into adulthood—when you no longer have the strength to want for more than the comfort of a stable life, when you put your hopes and dreams of a better world on others to fulfill, and when you can't even see the future ahead. It's the kind

of song that actually articulates your closest and most real anxieties when you don't dare to.

MOVIE | 海角七號 Cape No. 7 (2008) dir. Wei Te-sheng

* Was recently reminded of this iconic movie on a trip to Kenting. A romantic musical comedy-drama film set in southern rural Taiwan, Cape No. 7 is the highest grossing Taiwanese film and the second highest grossing film overall after Titanic in Taiwan's film history. This is the film that more or less single-handedly revived Taiwan's domestic film industry after roughly a long decade of stagnancy and disinterest.

I'm not only fond of this movie for how ingrained it is in my childhood but also for how precisely Taiwanese it is, from the humor, the music, the plot, the ensemble cast that incorporates all kinds of ethnic groups in Taiwan, and the emotions it evokes. Definitely worth a watch if you want to experience a strongly local and nostalgic flavor of Taiwanese cinema. (Plus, it may or may not be fully available on Youtube with English subtitles.

<https://itasa.us4.list-manage.com/track/click?u=c1d8139ab08f29368ac362fbf&id=de5657107f&e=38442de982>)

* Also, Wei Te-sheng continued to bring life to Taiwanese history by creating Warriors of the Rainbow: Seediq Bale (賽德克·巴萊), an epic saga of films depicting the Wushe Incident, and producing KANO, based on the story of the Taiwanese ragtag, multi-ethnic baseball team that made it to the top of the Japanese high school league against all odds.

Now, he is currently pursuing an even more ambitious project called the "Taiwan Trilogy," which will be five epic movies set at the beginning of Taiwan's recorded history in the 17th century from pluralistic viewpoints including indigenous people, Han immigrants, and Dutch colonizers. "This is a gift we present to Taiwan," as Wei says. You can support the fundraising efforts for Taiwan Trilogy here

<https://itasa.us4.list-manage.com/track/click?u=c1d8139ab08f29368ac362fbf&id=60db7e23ce&e=38442de982> .

What have you been listening to or watching?

<https://itasa.us4.list-manage.com/track/click?u=c1d8139ab08f29368ac362fbf&id=16eb2706d5&e=38442de982>

ITASA is partnering with Asians for Miracle Marrow Matches (A3M), a non profit organization whose mission is to diversify the Be The Match Registry!

Started in 1991, A3M works to find bone marrow matches for those in the API community, who make up just 5% of the current registry. Below is a video testimony from Sandy, a 42-year-old woman living in Taipei who recently found a matching donor. You can also learn more about A3M at their website here (<https://itasa.us4.list-manage.com/track/click?u=c1d8139ab08f29368ac362fbf&id=8630622d56&e=38442de982>) . We will be working with A3M to provide additional resources, so be on the lookout for that!

<https://itasa.us4.list-manage.com/track/click?u=c1d8139ab08f29368ac362fbf&id=30bfad47d1&e=38442de982>

QUICK RECAP: WHAT'S HAPPENING IN TAIWANESE-AMERICA?

On June 29th, U.S. lawmakers introduced the Taiwan Fellowship Act to provide opportunities for U.S. federal officials to glean a better understanding about Taiwan.

- * It will be modeled after the US-Japan Mansfield Fellowship Program (1994) and will grant federal government employees a two-year fellowship to live, work and learn in Taiwan.

- * It was introduced by Senator Marco Rubio (Rep.), Ted Yoho (Rep.) and Ami Bera (Dem.) in both chambers of Congress

On August 9th, United States Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS) Alex Azar arrives in Taiwan in a historical moment, marking the highest-level visit by a U.S. cabinet official since 1979 (when Washington severed ties with Taiwan)

- * A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on health cooperation was signed between the U.S. and Taiwan; its objectives include expanding collaborative efforts in the field of global health security, vaccine development and infectious disease control.

PRISMATIC TAIWAN: From September 4 to 13, the Austin Asian American Film Festival (AAAFF) held a virtual screening of six Taiwanese films, celebrating and showcasing queer Taiwanese cinema as it developed throughout the past three decades.

- * Taiwan's legalization of same-sex marriage served as the inspiration and impetus for AAAFF's theme this year.

- * Lineups included: Spider Lilies (Starring Rainie Yang and Isabella Leong),

Small Talk and The End of the Track.

TAIWAN'S COVID-19 RESPONSE

Taiwan has had one of the most effective responses to the COVID-19 outbreak worldwide. Since the outbreak, Taiwan has had a total of 495 confirmed cases (<https://itasa.us4.list-manage.com/track/click?u=c1d8139ab08f29368ac362fbf&id=3622811177&e=38442de982>) (with 475 recovered) and 7 deaths.

How?

Taiwan's success is owed to the implementation of highly effective prevention and home isolation measures.

Taiwan's COVID-19 prevention policies are characterized by five main principles:

- * Transparent and publicized information
- * Proper allocation of resources
- * Timely border regulations
- * Medical and virus screening technologies
- * Intelligent pandemic prevention measures in communities

Isolation policies are classified into three main categories: home isolation, home quarantine, and self-health management. Different regulations are laid out for different policies: for example, people under home isolation and home quarantine are required to stay at home or at designated residences for a certain period of time, during which going outside is strictly forbidden.

Digital Fencing Tracking System: Home isolation and quarantine are enforced by GPS satellite tracking for 14 days. Although such policies have indeed been extremely effective, questions about the possible infringement on rights to privacy and freedom of movement have been raised.

FOREIGN POLICY: TAIWAN IS SOUTHBOUND

It aims to:

1. expand Taiwan's international presence and market in South/Southeast Asia and Oceania
2. foster business relations with ASEAN
3. integrate new immigrants and explore avenues for educational as well as cross-cultural exchanges

Read more about developments on Project Taiwan's website!

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