

Climbing to live your passion

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A rainbow of hope

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Letter from the Editor

The highlight of this issue is the stunning photos that our reporters took during a study trip to Yangon, Myanmar. During this 7-day trip, our reporters and editors visited museums, pagodas, monuments, as well as local news organizations. They also exchanged ideas with local journalism students over workshops and conferences. It was a valuable experience to students from both cities.

Also in this issue we have a range of other stories, including a photo essay of the annual pride parade. The weather was quite gloomy on the day of the parade, but it did not affect the high spirits of the people who take this chance to showcase their pride and fight for equality. Another featured photo essay are a team of beach volleyball athletes, who train professionally despite insufficient funding.

Other stories include a feature on the delicate art of the bamboo steaming baskets, which has been used to steam-cook dim sum for decades, as well as a story of a male pole dancer who tries so hard to change the society's perception on the activity.

This is the eighth and final issue

from the 16-17 editorial board. On behalf of the whole editorial board and our reporters, I would like to thank our readers and followers for your support along the way.

Looking back, we are proud to say that we brought considerable changes to TYR, for instance introducing the duty reporting desk, increasing multimedia content and covering more local news, therefore I would like to take this opportunity to thank our dedicated reporters and editors for making this possible.

The same goes for our news features, like the LegCo New Territories East by-election in February 2016, Annual Policy Address and Budget, and the LegCo Elections in September 2016. It would not be a success if it was not for our reporters and editors' outstanding work. Well done, and thank you.

I wish every success for the upcoming editorial board, and I, too, look forward to all of the exciting content that they are going to produce.

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PEOPLE

Climbing to live your passion

“Once they watch my performance, they will surely change their thoughts because what I am doing is really a sport”



Fancy costumes and high heels, clubbing music, sexy girls and strippers... These are things people often associate with the term “Pole Dancing”.

The Hong Kong general public’s acceptability towards this seemingly female-dominated sport is generally low. Not to mention a young and energetic male pole dancer who represented Hong Kong in an international pole dancing competition.

“It was a video of a Russian girl dancing pole on Youtube that attracted me to the sport,” said Narlton Tsang, a 26-year-old male pole dancer in Hong Kong. “I wonder if a man can do such elegant moves as what she did.”

Having a gymnastic background, Tsang mastered most of the skills of pole dancing in just a short period of three years.

“The training of core strength and

muscle control in my gymnastics class helps me a lot in pole,” said Tsang. “So that I can get onto the pole more easily with my strength and flexibility.”

As one of the few male pole dancers in Hong Kong, he said he is frequently being asked about the difference between male and female pole dancers.

“The only difference that I can think of is in physical aspects only. Females can usually endure more than us and they can handle tricks which requires higher flexibility,” said Tsang.

He believes that it is essential for pole dancers to have a well-prepared mindset and loads of preparation to be able to get into the tricks.

Speaking of the Japan Pole Sports International OPEN Competition 2016, Tsang said it helped broaden

his horizons because he got to see the quality of different teams from countries like China, Japan and Korea.

“Hong Kong has no resources for us as I don’t have any coaches or partners that can help me with the training,” he added. “I can’t be a full-time athlete as well because I need to work and earn a living under such high living standard in Hong Kong.”

Although Tsang opened his own studio and business has become increasingly smoother, he said his attitude towards pole has been completely changed.

“Pole is like a marriage to me now. When I have to face it everyday, it becomes a burden,” he said. “I still enjoy teaching and doing pole dance but I just have to find another hobby to relieve my stress.”

Even though it is hard and nerve-





NARLTON TSANG
BY
SIUMAN PHOTOGRAPHY

wracking to be the only instructor as well as the boss of the studio, Tsang has never thought of giving up.

"Life is not a bed of roses," added Tsang. "It makes me feel depressed when people have a shallow understanding of pole dance and they are not willing to learn a new concept of the sport before saying no to us."

Having participated in the Pride Parade as a guest performer for three years, he learned that everyone is just the same and it is useless to distinguish whether people are gay or lesbian.

"We are all human beings. Just like we have different styles of performing pole in the industry," Tsang

added. "We should learn to appreciate other's efforts instead of judging them blindly."

"I dare not to criticize others being sexy as their style of performing pole," he added. "I don't need to dress up because I think what I do in pole is already called 'sexy'."

Living in Hong Kong where it is often praised as an 'international city', Tsang said he would rather commented it as an 'anti' one.

"They think they are open-minded enough to accept this sport but they are not," he said. "And they are not willing to change their mindsets at all."

Tsang has been trying to promote

pole dancing to the general public by performing as much as possible to increase its popularity.

Speaking of the future development of pole dancing in Hong Kong, he believes that nothing can be predicted and he could only do his best in performing pole dance.

"If people don't want to understand you, you can do nothing to wake them up," said Tsang.

*By Connie Fong
Edited by Choco Chan*

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ART&CULTURE

Bamboo Baskets - A Culture Carrier

The irreplaceable art form is catching up with our fast-paced society



Every morning at three, lights and noises leak out from the rusty shutter of an old-styled Chinese restaurant.

The owners of Saam Hui Yaat, located in Sai Ying Pun, prepare the dim sums before five, the time when they start the business. Three workers in their sixties have been performing the same routine for more than 30 years. They knead the dough, chop the meat and fold the dumplings. The delicate products are then placed into bamboo baskets for steaming. Ten baskets a stack. The stove on which a lid with five holes is put can hold a total of five stacks at once. There are three stoves in the kitchen.

"We make nearly 800 dim sums a day. I guess we use a hundred steamers everyday. We have a cleaner who keeps washing the steamers so that

we can continue steaming other food," said Lee Kwing-yiu, one of the owners of the eatery seating 40 customers.

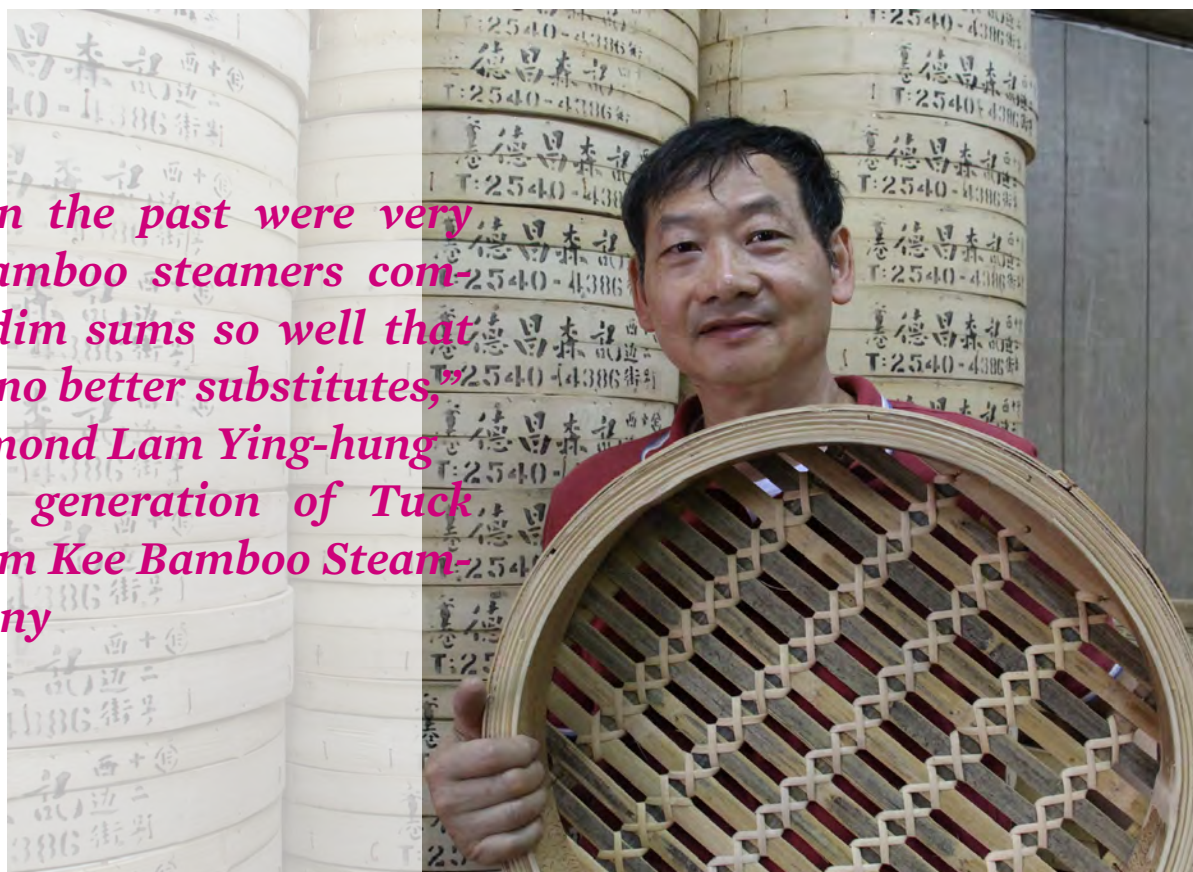
Apart from Chinese restaurants, Chinese bamboo steam baskets, the icon of Chinese traditional food, can commonly be seen from street food stalls to banquet halls. They have been used for thousands of years since the Han dynasty. Though application and manufacturing of the steam baskets had evolved over the historical years, it has come to a stand-still.

Steaming can be traced back to Yangshao culture during the Neolithic era (5000BC-3000BC). Zeng was invented for steaming food. Made from ceramics, zeng consists of two parts: a cauldron with small holes under-

neath and a hollow tripod called li. The food inside the cauldron can be cooked with the steam from the boiling water in li. It can still be found in China but is now shaped like a barrel for distilling wine.

The ceramic steamer later appeared in different forms and shapes, on par with the improvement in craftsmanship. Steamers made from porcelain emerged thanks to the prevalence of their ceramic counterparts. The cookware did not change much until Han dynasty (221-206 BC) in which steamers made of bamboo were generated from folk wisdom. There is no accurate historic record but a popular anecdote. General Han Xin ordered his soldiers to make bamboo baskets. He knew that steaming food with the baskets would not let

“People in the past were very clever. Bamboo steamers complement dim sums so well that there are no better substitutes,” said Raymond Lam Ying-hung. The fifth generation of Tuck Chong Sum Kee Bamboo Steamer Company



out smoke which would reveal their location in the battle. In addition, the food could be kept warm and tasty inside the baskets.

“People in the past were very clever. Bamboo steamers complement dim sums so well that there are no better substitutes,” said Raymond Lam Ying-hung, the fifth generation

of Tuck Chong Sum Kee Bamboo Steamer Company, “The steamers can keep the dim sums from being affected by condensation as bamboo absorbs moisture. Who will eat a slimy cha siu bao?”

Master Lam, as he is commonly called, has been making bamboo steamers in a traditional manner for

more than 30 years. The company which has operated for nearly a century, is the only remaining basket manufacturer in Hong Kong.

Each steamer is made with half a shoot of bamboo. Immersing the bamboo into water for a day, Master Lam pares the hardest part with a Chinese machete. He soaks the pared bamboo for another half an hour to further soften the texture. The softened bamboo strip can then be curled to form a circular shape.

“Each bamboo has its own quality and texture. That is why bamboo baskets cannot be mass-produced. Some bamboos are less flexible and would be easily cracked by machines. Therefore they must be hand-made,” said Master Lam.

Master Lam has several tools inherited from the past generation to make the bamboo steamers. An arm-length wooden clip is used to position the bent strip before he fixes the shape with wires. Criss-crossing finger-long bamboo battens as the base, he embeds it to the bent strip. He then





pierces holes in the strip by pulling and dragging the handle of the hand drill like he is playing the erhu.

Inserting bamboo nails into the holes, he hammers them to fixate the steamer with the base. The stool-like cutting board, used for more than five decades, supports the steamer when it is hammered. Master Lam finishes the bamboo baskets in an hour after weaving the base with wet straw.

“There is no breakthrough for steamer making. People accept only bamboo steamers,” he said.

Some steamers made of stainless steel were introduced in the 1980s. But within a year, they disappeared from the market.

“Though the metal steamers are more durable, they scald. Their stacks are also prone to collapsing because of the glossy surface,” said

Wong Charn-chee, another owner of Saam Hui Yaot.

Master Lam welcomed any innovation on steamers and is willing to comply with it. “I am a master but also a businessman, I have to act with the social development. If one day, plastic steamer are favoured by most people, I would definitely include it in my business line. It could save human resources at the same time.”

Located just two blocks away, Saam Hui Yaot constantly buys the baskets from Tuck Chong Sum Kee. The two long-standing shops are icons in Sai Ying Pun. Without any renovation, they have both retained metal fans from the last century on the ceiling.

At around 2.30 p.m. the crowds at Saam Hui Yaot have disappeared. The three owners are ready to call it a day. Mr Lee wipes the grease off the bas-

kets behind the back door while the cleaner rinses piles of baskets with a hose of hot water. Mr Wong sweeps the floor with a broom. Mr Law Shu Tak, one of the employees, brings out heaps of washed bamboo baskets to the catering tables to let them dry. He picks the baskets with exposed nails, cracks and deeper colours and throws them out into a bin.

*By Celia Lai
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Photo Essay

A rainbow of hope

Gay rights activists march on despite heavy rain





Strong winds and heavy rain did not stop thousands to raise the signature rainbow flag and led it through the city.

As more Asian counterparts move to legalize same-sex marriage, the LGBT community criticized the government for lagging behind in protecting the rights of sexual minorities.

“Most of the Hong Kongers backed legislation covering sexual orienta-

tion discrimination in a survey early this year. It’s time for the government to put it into law,” said Yeo Wai-wai, spokesperson for the event.

The crowd had a diverse group of people including some who travelled from neighboring cities of China, Korea and the top diplomats of European consulates.

“Many people asked me why I’m here to support my friend. There’s no why. You support the people who you

love,” said Charlotte Lum, a participant from Guangzhou.

Named as the rainbow ambassadors, lawmakers “Long Hair” Leung Kwok-hung and Alyvin Yeung Ngok-kiu led the march from Victoria Park to Edinburgh Plaza in Central.

Mr. Yeung said he hoped the next Chief Executive would cater the rights of sexual minorities.

By Crystal Tai
Edited by Phoebe Chau





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1. A man from Guangzhou dresses in outrageous outfits and holds green balloons, this year's theme color.

2. Volunteers greet participants with free hugs at Connaught Road Central.

3. As more Asian counterparts move to legalize same-sex marriage, the LGBT community criticized the government for lagging behind in protecting the rights of sexual minorities.

4. The crowd had a diverse group of people including some who travelled from neighboring cities of China, Korea and the top diplomats of European consulates.



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Photo Essay

Keep The Volley Going

Hong Kong beach volleyball girls team go professional



Going professional may be the dream of many athletes. But in Hong Kong, that is not easy, especially for uncommon sports such as beach volleyball. Yet there are those who take up the challenge.

Mei Wong and Cat Ng, both in their 20s, are representatives of the Hong Kong Women Beach Volleyball Team. They have represented Hong Kong multiple times and achieved some great results, and has even won the fourth place in the AVC Women's Beach Tour.

However, just like any other dedicated sportswoman, they were not satisfied with their achievements.

"While competing in overseas tournaments, the teams we encountered are all professional and they always have the upper hand," Ms Ng said.

This triggered them to have the motivation to beat the professionals, and to train as much as a professional team.





In March 2016, Ms Wong and Ms Ng decided to go full-time and resigned from their jobs. They started to train intensively and spent most of their time practicing wherever and whenever there were venues available.

But they could not afford to hire a coach without sufficient funding. Instead, they had to get on their own feet by filming practices and competitions themselves, as well as inviting their friend, Pak, to assist their trainings.

Their determination paid off when the duo played their way into the semi-final of the AVC Women's Beach Tour and finished fourth, the best in Hong Kong Beach Volleyball history.



*By James Ho
Edited by Phoebe Chau*

Myanmar in Pictures

The Young Reporter visited Myanmar this year and captured the daily lives of the Burmese in photographs.

Photos by:
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