

A Collecting Strategy for

# Taiwan House

創刊號

臺灣浩司  
臺灣浩司  
臺灣浩司

臺味新生代

**Eatopia**

廖小子

Nymphia Wind

修龍

**Megaport Festival**

人生的音樂祭。

**Detention**

ABAO

Japan Rules

台灣博覽會

二二八

**White Terror**

白色恐怖

美麗島

Formosa

Wild Lily Movement

**百合花學運**

Curator: Chieh-Yu Liu

Supervisor: Donna Loveday

# A Collecting Strategy for Taiwan House

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## Introduction

This collecting strategy serves as a creative project outcome of my research on establishing a distinct Taiwanese cultural identity. My research underscores the importance of cultivating this identity through democratic values and cultural institutions, particularly in light of the political pressures Taiwan faces. I propose that a new Taiwanese cultural institute in London could act as a bridge connecting Taiwan and the world through culture, functioning as an instrument of soft power diplomacy.

In this proposal, I will demonstrate how a permanent collection can help stabilise and promote Taiwanese cultural identity, especially within the context of political influences on daily life in Taiwan. The proposed collection would serve as a cultural anchor, preserving and showcasing Taiwan's rich heritage and diverse cultural expressions. It aims to provide a platform for Taiwanese art, history, and traditions, engaging both local and international audiences with Taiwan's unique cultural narrative.

The collection strategy addresses the question: 'Why does Taiwan House need a permanent collection?' By exploring this question, we can understand the vital role such a collection could play in reinforcing Taiwan's cultural presence on the global stage. This strategy will outline the rationale behind the collection, its thematic focus, and its potential impact on cultural diplomacy and identity formation.

Through this initiative, I aim to create a space that not only celebrates Taiwan's distinct identity but also fosters understanding and dialogue on an international level. The permanent collection will serve as a tangible representation of Taiwan's complex history and vibrant present, navigating the delicate balance between celebrating Taiwan's uniqueness and acknowledging its multicultural influences.

To enhance the proposal further, it would be beneficial to emphasise how the collection will showcase Taiwan's democratic journey and values, which are central to modern Taiwanese identity. Additionally, incorporating perspectives from different generations can provide insight into evolving views on what it means to be Taiwanese, particularly from younger voices.

Furthermore, addressing the complex cultural landscape of Taiwan—including its indigenous heritage, colonial influences, and contemporary developments—will enrich the narrative. Highlighting Taiwan's contributions to global culture and technology will reinforce its distinct identity on the world stage. Lastly, delicately addressing cross-strait relations could offer a nuanced perspective on Taiwanese identity formation in today's geopolitical context.

By incorporating these elements into the proposal, we can more accurately reflect the evolving nature of Taiwanese identity as revealed in recent research. This comprehensive approach will strengthen the collection's potential to serve as a powerful tool for cultural diplomacy and identity reinforcement.

## 1. Why are we collecting

A permanent collection is essential for an organisation, as it establishes the core values of the institution. A major inspiration for this concept is the Design Museum's 'Designer Maker User' exhibition, which introduces visitors to the world of design. This gallery demonstrates that design results from the relationship between the designer, the user, and the manufacturer. The exhibition is divided into three main areas, each focusing on one of these key roles: designer, user, or maker. On display is a diverse array of objects, ranging from construction materials to fashion items. The collection continues to grow, reflecting the constant evolution of design in response to our changing daily needs, much like the advancement of technology. What makes this collection particularly special is its ability to inspire viewers to see ordinary objects in new ways. It encourages us to appreciate the often overlooked aspects of our lives, including good design and democratic values. This collection prompts reflection and fosters an appreciation for the elements that contribute to improving our quality of life.

Much like democracy, which is often taken for granted until it's threatened, a permanent collection can serve as a constant reminder of Taiwan's unique cultural heritage and democratic values. Given Taiwan's complex political situation, its people are frequently reminded of the importance of democracy. A permanent collection at Taiwan House would not only reinforce Taiwanese people's commitment to democratic principles but also invite global audiences who share these values to celebrate Taiwan's hard-won journey towards democracy.

We also celebrate the new generation of artists and designers who are dedicated to advancing the ongoing conversations surrounding Taiwanese cultural narratives. These creative individuals contribute significantly to the exploration of Taiwan's complex identity, confronting historical injustices and addressing current political situations through their work. Through their diverse artistic expressions, we can discern a common thread that helps weave together Taiwan's distinct identity. These artists and designers serve as cultural ambassadors, creating inspiring and beautiful works that convey powerful messages about Taiwan's essence to a global audience.

## 2. What are we collecting

The collection is divided into two distinct sections: one dedicated to archival and historical items, and another showcasing works by contemporary artists and designers who contribute to the evolving conversation surrounding Taiwanese cultural identity.

The historical section encompasses items from 1895 onwards, beginning with the Japanese colonial era. This collection includes archival photographs, and printed materials such as posters, postcards, and magazines. Serving as a visual historical archive of Taiwan, it documents the journey of the Taiwanese people as they stood up for their rights, transitioning from a colonised territory to an independent democratic nation. This collection will continue to grow alongside Taiwan's democratic development, providing a comprehensive visual narrative of Taiwan's political and social evolution.

The modern art and design section focuses on works that shape contemporary Taiwanese identity. This collection embraces the complexity and fascination of Taiwan's cultural landscape, featuring pieces that engage with the past, confront present realities, and envision future possibilities. The collection is open to all media, reflecting the diverse ways in which artists and designers express and explore Taiwanese identity.

Together, these two sections create a dynamic and comprehensive representation of Taiwan's cultural journey, bridging historical narratives with contemporary expressions. This approach ensures that the collection remains relevant and engaging, offering visitors a deep and nuanced understanding of Taiwan's past, present, and potential future.

## 3. Collection Themes

### 3.1. Historical Collect the Intangible: Democracy

This section is dedicated to collecting the intangible essence of democracy and documenting Taiwan's journey from a colonised country to a modern democratic nation. We focus on historical items from the Japanese Empire era onwards, primarily archival photographs and printed materials such as posters, postcards, and magazines. Our collection also encompasses items that represent Taiwanese people's fight for democratic rights, including influential magazines that disseminated new ideas about democracy and freedom, as well as artefacts from protests and student movements that challenged systemic injustices.

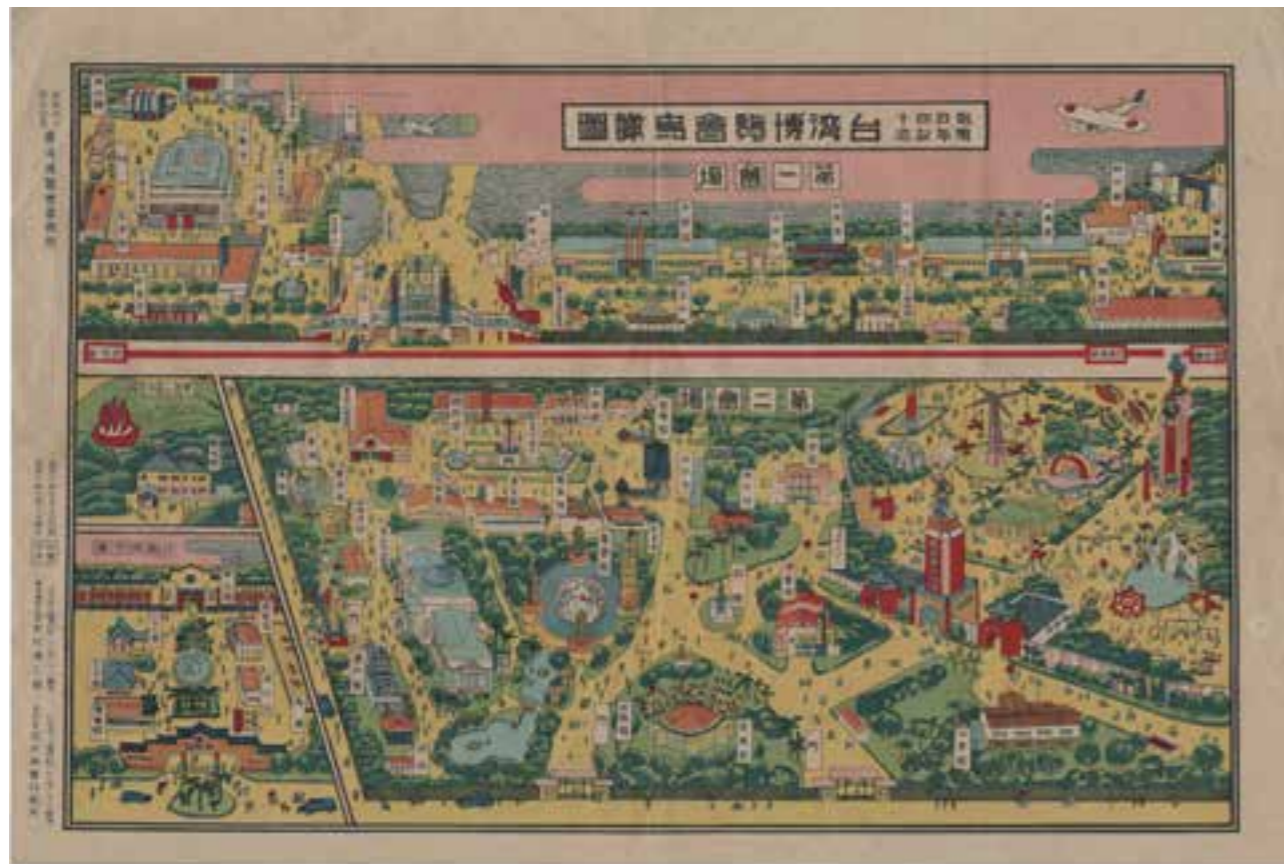
The Japanese colonial period, despite its political motivations, brought significant modernisation to Taiwan. In their effort to demonstrate capable colonial governance, the Japanese introduced modern machinery and infrastructure, alongside their art and aesthetic sensibilities. This era saw the first systematic organisation of Taiwan, influencing not only governmental and legal systems but also leaving a lasting impact on Taiwanese aesthetic development. Visual design began to flourish in Taiwan during this time, marking the beginning of a distinct artistic tradition.

The White Terror era, characterised by strict publishing restrictions, presents a challenge in terms of graphic materials. However, we have preserved precious magazines from this period, many of which were later banned. These discreet publications played a crucial role in spreading modern and liberal thinking, offering hope and strength to people even during the darkest hours. They encouraged resistance against systemic injustices.

Our collection also captures intangible moments of democratic progress, including documentation of protests and citizens fighting for their rights. This living collection continues to grow alongside Taiwan's evolving democracy, serving as a testament to the nation's ongoing commitment to democratic values and civil liberties.

## Japanese Rule

In 1935, marking the 40th anniversary of Japanese rule in Taiwan, Taiwan was Japan's first modern overseas colony. Therefore, the results of Taiwan's management had indicative significance, representing proof of Japan's power for external expansion. As a result, the Government Taiwan, Taihoku's Office intended to hold a large-scale exposition. The 'The Taiwan Exposition: In Commemoration of the First Forty Years of Colonial Rule' was held for 50 days starting from October 10, 1935, to promote Taiwan's colonial achievements and experiences. Additionally, promoting two major policies - 'Taiwan as a base for southward expansion' and 'Taiwan tourism' - were also important objectives. The exhibition structure focused mainly on Taiwan, showcasing various Japanese constructions and developments in Taiwan, as well as Taiwan's unique products. The Taiwan Exposition was a product of colonial policy with strong political intentions, but it also comprehensively presented various aspects of Taiwanese life at that time.



The venue map of  
'The Taiwan Exposition: In Commemoration of the First Forty Years of Colonial Rule'

Photo credit: National Museum of Taiwan History

## 昭和十年 臺灣的十月十日



'The Taiwan Exposition: In Commemoration of the First Forty Years of Colonial Rule' posters

Photo credit: GJ Taiwan



**Photograph of the Farewell Gathering for Takasago Giyūtai members Before Deployment**

During World War II, in 1942, the Japanese government implemented a volunteer soldier system in its colony of Taiwan, recruiting several thousand indigenous people, then called the Takasago tribe, to fight in places like the Philippines. These indigenous soldiers were collectively known as the Takasago Giyūtai. The idea of mobilising indigenous people for the southern war effort reportedly stemmed from the Japanese military's deep appreciation of the indigenous people's abilities during the Musha Incident, as well as their familiarity with jungle climates, which was believed could contribute to Japan's cause. Besides fighting on the front lines, the Takasago Giyūtai were also responsible for penetrating jungles to build roads and supply routes. However, most of these volunteers ultimately perished on the battlefield, with very few survivors.

The man in the centre of the photograph is Tsugio Kawakami, a "Takasago tribe" member. The people around him are raising their glasses to wish him well before he departs for the battlefield

Photo credit: National Museum of Taiwan History

**Senninbari (1000-stitch belt)**



'Senninbari', or '1000-stitch belt', refers to a type of talisman-like item that was popular during the Japanese colonial period, especially during wartime. Women would take a white or yellow cotton cloth strip about one metre long and use a red thread to sew a thousand knots onto it, with each person contributing one stitch. This would then be given to soldiers about to depart for the battlefield, as a prayer for military success and protection from harm by weapons.

Photo credit: National Museum of Taiwan History

**Taiwan Conscription Guide**



In 1944, Taiwan began implementing conscription. Prior to this, most Taiwanese people had no experience of being drafted, so a special guide was compiled.

Photo credit: National Museum of Taiwan History

**Launching issue of "Tâi Oân Chheng Liân (Taiwan Youth)"**



Photo credit: GJ Taiwan



After Taiwan became a Japanese colony, the Government of Taiwan, Taihoku's Office gradually introduced Western systems. However, the Taiwanese people lacked autonomy. Education focused primarily on vocational training, with higher education requiring study in Japan. Children from gentry families with suitable backgrounds had more opportunities to pursue education in Japan, where the educational environment was more advanced and open compared to colonial Taiwan, enlightening many Taiwanese youth.

On 15 July 1920, the New Peoples' Society, formed by Taiwanese students in Tokyo, published the "The Tâi Oân Chheng Liân (Taiwan Youth)" magazine in both Japanese and Mandarin. This monthly publication served as the organisation's official voice, with Chhòa Pôe-hóe as editor and spokesperson, while Lâm Têng-lòk and Phênn Huâ-ing were among those responsible for the actual editing. This marked the beginning of modern publications created by Taiwanese people, advocating the principle that "Taiwan belongs to the Taiwanese". Initially targeting Taiwanese students in Japan, it later caused a stir among intellectuals and students when it reached Taiwan.

The cover of the inaugural issue featured prominent members of the New People's Society: President Lâm Hiàn-tông (top right), Ông Bín-tshuan (middle right), Lâm Tiōng-tshū (bottom right), editor Lâm Têng-Lòk (bottom right); Tshuà Huī-jû (top left), Phênn Huâ-ing (top left), editor Tshî Khìng-siông (bottom left), and editor Chhòa Pôe-hóe (bottom left).

Photo credit: National Museum of Taiwan History

## The February 28 Incident

The February 28 Incident of 1947 was a pivotal moment in Taiwan's history, serving as a critical catalyst for the Taiwanese independence movement. Following Japan's defeat in World War II in 1945, Taiwan was poised to be handed over to the Republic of China (ROC) government after 50 years of Japanese colonial rule.

The incident was sparked on February 27, 1947, in Taipei, when agents from the State Monopoly Bureau confronted a Taiwanese widow suspected of selling contraband cigarettes. The situation escalated when an officer fired into a crowd of angry bystanders, killing one man. The following day, as demonstrators gathered to protest, soldiers opened fire on the crowd. In response, protesters seized a radio station and broadcast news of the uprising across the island.

In the aftermath of what became known as the February 28 Incident, the Chinese Nationalist Party (CNP) implemented a plan to suppress dissent. Beginning on March 8, just nine days after the initial incident, the KMT began systematically arresting and executing Taiwanese elites and intellectuals. This purge resulted in a devastating loss of cultural and intellectual capital for Taiwan.

Among those killed were prominent figures such as Tan Teng-Pho, a renowned artist; Ng Tiau-Jit, manager of the Taiwan Shin Sheng Daily News; and Lin Mosei, Taiwan's first Doctor of Philosophy. This targeted elimination of Taiwan's educated class, which occurred within a month of the initial uprising, is considered one of the most significant losses in Taiwanese history, effectively silencing many of those who could articulate and preserve Taiwanese culture and identity.



Portrait of Tan Teng-Pho





Tan Teng-Pho  
Street of Chiayi  
1926  
Canvas Oil painting  
64x53cm



Painting equipments of Tan Teng-Pho



Tan Teng-pho (Chinese: 陳澄波, 2 February 1895 – 25 March 1947), was a Taiwanese painter and politician. In 1926, his oil painting Street of Chiayi was featured in the seventh Imperial Art Exhibition in Japan, which was the first time a Taiwanese artist's work could be displayed at the exhibition. Tan devoted his life to education and creation, and was greatly concerned about the development of humanist culture in Taiwan. He was not only devoted to the improvement of his own painting, but also to the promotion of the aesthetic education of the Taiwanese people. He was killed as a result of the February 28 Incident.

Photo credit:National Museum of Taiwan History

The last letter Tan Teng-Pho wrote to his son while imprisoned

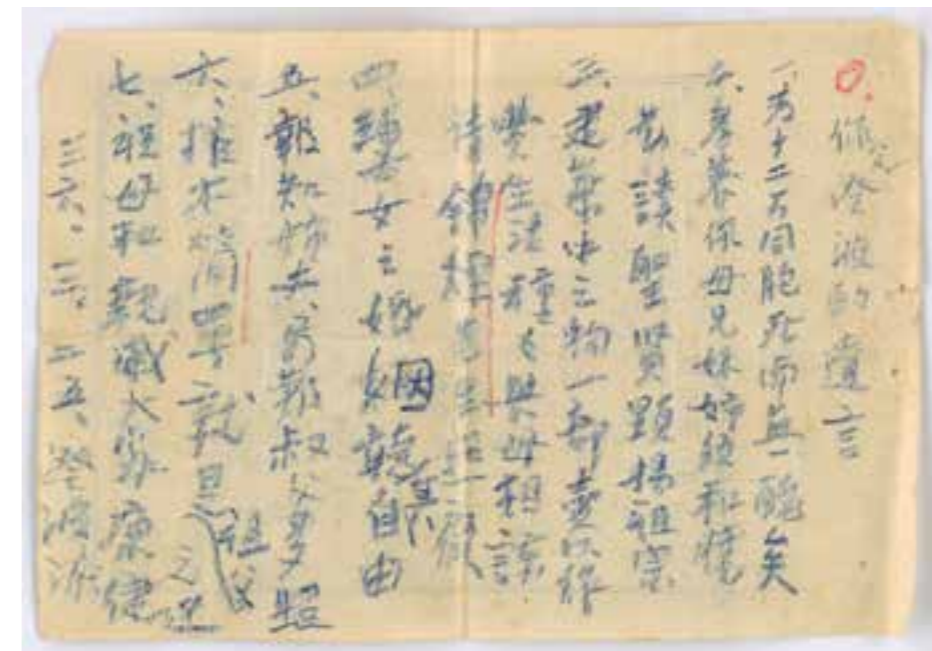


Photo credit:National Museum of Taiwan History



Zhengqi Monthly



Local newspaper that reported the February 28 Incident



The governmental record of the incident



Taiwan Police

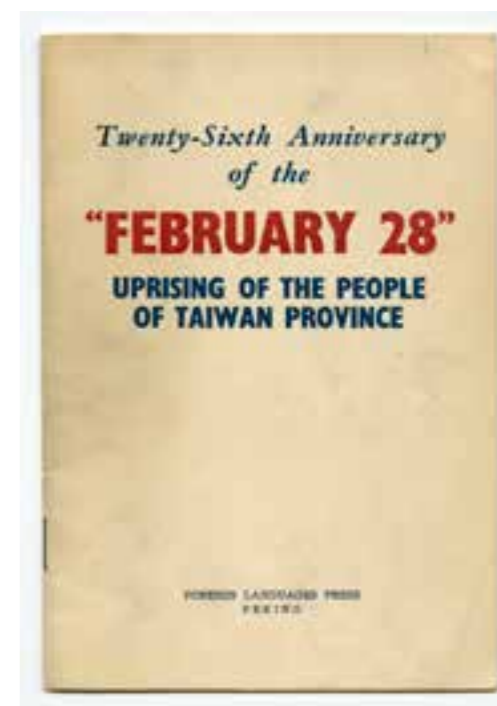
### Taiwanese Publications about February 28 Incident (Left Page)

During the martial law period, the understanding of the February 28 Incident was like two separate worlds between "Taiwan" and "overseas". In Taiwan, for a full 40 years from 1947 to 1987, the government's mismanagement before and after the February 28 Incident, as well as related cases of civilian killings, were topics that could not be openly discussed. Official documents defined the February 28 Incident as a "riot", attributing it to conspiracies and rebellions by "mobs", "Japanese colonial legacy", "communists", and "Taiwan independence" advocates.

The "Zhengqi Monthly" was a publication of the "Zhengqi Study Society", an organisation formed by Ke Yuan-fen, the Chief of Staff of the Taiwan Garrison Command. "Taiwan Police" was a publication of the "Taiwan Branch of the Chinese Police Academic Research Society". Both attributed the cause of the incident to the Taiwanese people, asserting that the main reasons were the "enslaving poison" left by Japanese rule and the instigation and manipulation by communists.

Photo credit: National Museum of Taiwan History

### Overseas Publications about February 28 Incident

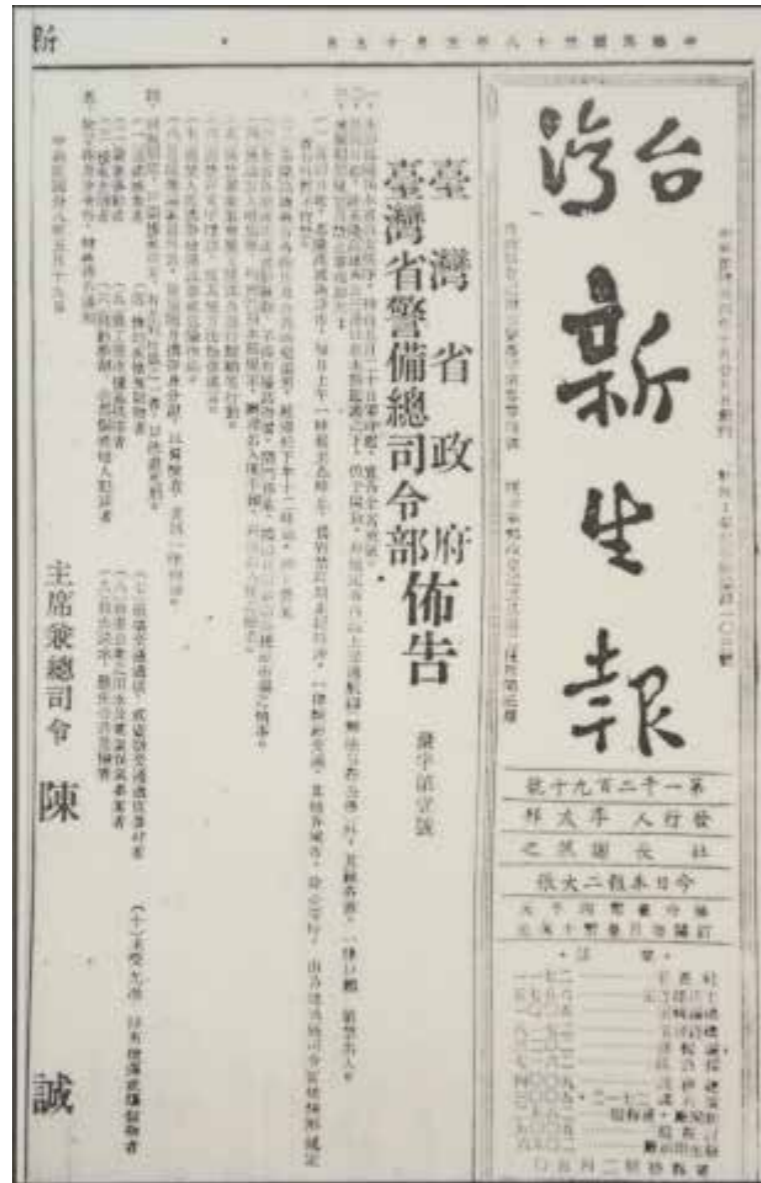


Overseas, starting from the 1950s, Taiwan independence movement groups in Japan and the United States held annual commemorative events and parades, and published periodicals. Every year at the beginning of the year, there were reports and analyses of the February 28 Incident. China also published commemorative special editions, using the February 28 Incident for political propaganda.

As a result, the truth and significance of the February 28 Incident became the most severe challenge to the legitimacy of the Chinese Nationalist Party (CNP)'s rule in Taiwan.

## White Terror Era

### Taiwan Shin Sheng Daily News Announced the Martial Law



In April 1949, the Communist forces crossed the Yangtze River and occupied Shanghai, effectively deciding the outcome of the Chinese Civil War. Faced with this threat, Chen Cheng, the Chairman of Taiwan Provincial Government and Commander-in-Chief of the Taiwan Garrison Command, declared martial law on May 20th. Major media outlets such as Taiwan Shin Sheng Daily News and Central Daily News widely announced this decision. This martial law included curfews and strict border controls. Although it was not later ratified by the President or the Legislative Yuan, the Taiwan Garrison Command subsequently issued "measures" to control public gatherings, demonstrations, and newspaper publications, effectively implementing military control. Simultaneously, the "national martial law" issued by the Presidential Office was also implemented in Taiwan, which was not lifted until 1987 when the Presidential Office announced its termination.

Photo credit: National Museum of Taiwan History

### Wedding Cards with Anti-communist Slogans

The appearance of wedding cards with anti-communist slogans was due to the "Temporary Measures for Printing Anti-Communist and Anti-Russian Propaganda Slogans on Printed Materials" implemented in 1952 by the Taiwan Garrison Command, the highest military authority in Taiwan at the time. This policy covered a wide range of items including wedding invitations, advertisements, workbooks, instruction manuals, admission tickets, matchboxes, record packaging, and cigarette paper bags. Even wedding invitations for joyous family occasions bore slogans such as "Eliminate Zhu and Mao, Expel the Russian Invaders". As a result, anti-communist and anti-Russian slogans were printed on everyday items and permeated daily life.

Photo credit: National Museum of Taiwan History



### First Issue of Formosa Magazine

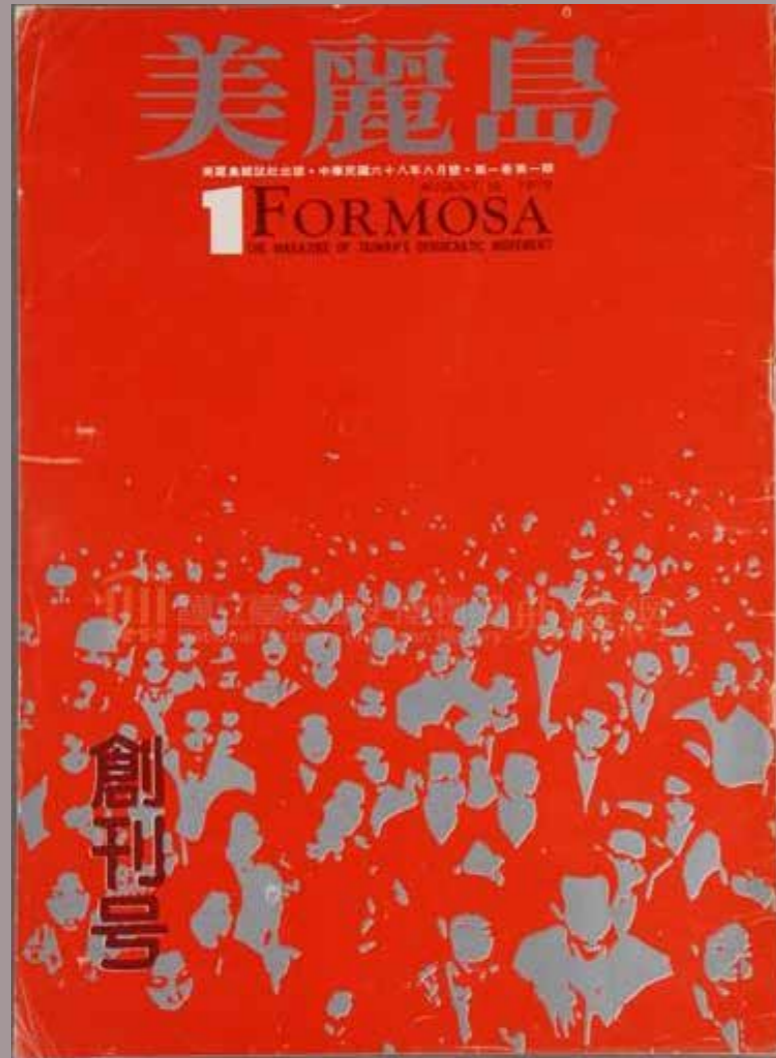


Photo credit: National Museum of Taiwan History

### Tangwai Movement & Formosa Incident

Tangwai, meaning "outside the party", refers to individuals and groups not affiliated with the ruling Chinese Nationalist Party (CNP). The Formosa Incident, also known as the Kaohsiung Incident, was one of the most significant Tangwai movements during the White Terror period in Taiwan.

The incident originated with the founding of Formosa Magazine in 1979 by Huang Hsin-Chieh and other Tangwai members. On 10 December 1979, International Human Rights Day, the magazine's supporters gathered to protest, demanding the lifting of martial law and advocating for freedom and democracy. The police used tear gas to disperse the crowd, and following the protest, the Taiwan Garrison Command arrested eight core members of Formosa Magazine, including Huang Hsin-Chieh, Shih Ming-Teh, Lin Hung-Hsuan, Lin Yi-Hsiung, Yao Chia-Wen, Lu Hsiu-Lien, Chang Chun-Hung, and Chen Chu.

These eight individuals were subjected to court-martial and initially faced potential death sentences. The trial garnered significant international attention, with many Taiwanese people lobbying in the United States to pressure the KMT government to conduct the trial publicly. As a result, Shih Ming-Teh, the leader of the protest, received a life sentence, while the others received fixed-term sentences. The public nature of the trial led many to realise that the defendants were not insurgents, but ordinary citizens fighting for their rights.

The eight core members and their defence lawyers later became key figures in the formation of the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), Taiwan's first opposition party. This incident marked a crucial moment in Taiwan's democratisation process, highlighting the growing demand for political reform and human rights in the country.



## Road to Democracy

On 14 July 1987, President Chiang Ching-Kuo of the Republic of China (ROC) announced the end of martial law, officially concluding the White Terror era. This led to a proliferation of newspapers and publications, allowing diverse opinions to be expressed and heard.

On 13 March 1990, the National Assembly representatives, who had not faced re-election for 43 years since 1947, passed an amendment extending their terms to 9 years and increasing their attendance fees from 52,000 to 220,000 yuan. These elderly representatives of the "ten-thousand-year parliament" could serve until death, unable to be replaced. Their self-serving actions to expand their power sparked widespread societal and student backlash.

The Wild Lily student movement began on 16 March 1990 with a sit-in protest. The wild lily, an indigenous Taiwanese species growing from mountains to the seaside, symbolised the resilience of Taiwanese people thriving in harsh conditions. Within days, the student movement evolved into a nationwide social movement, advocating for four main goals: dissolving the National Assembly, abolishing the Temporary Provisions, convening a National Affairs Conference, and establishing a timetable for political and economic reforms.

This peaceful protest, the first student movement since the ROC government's relocation to Taiwan, marked a significant milestone in Taiwanese history. President Lee Teng-Hui met with student representatives and promised to implement changes, which were gradually realised over subsequent years. The six-day movement heralded the dawn of Taiwan's democracy, sowing the seeds of democratic values and freedom of expression among the Taiwanese people.



Election Bulletin of the 10th Presidential Election

Photo credit: National Museum of Taiwan History

The 10th presidential election in 2000 was Taiwan's second direct presidential and vice-presidential election by popular vote since 1996. In this election, the presidential and vice-presidential candidates were Lien Chan and Vincent Siew representing the Chinese Nationalist Party (CNP), Chen Shui-Bian and Annette Lu representing the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), and independent candidates James Soong and Chang Chau-Hsiung. The election was held on March 18, 2000, and the DPP candidates Chen Shui-Bian and Annette Lu were elected as the 10th President and Vice President. This election result marked the first transfer of power between political parties in Taiwan's political history.

Photography of the wild lily movement



Photo credit: National Museum of Taiwan History

## Sunflower Movement



On the evening of 18 March 2014, over 200 protesters opposing the Legislative Yuan's passage of the Cross-Strait Service Trade Agreement (CSSTA) successfully occupied the main chamber of Taiwan's parliament. This marked the beginning of a 24-day sit-in, known as the Sunflower Student Movement. The protesters demanded the withdrawal of the CSSTA, which they believed would leave Taiwan vulnerable to political pressure from Beijing.

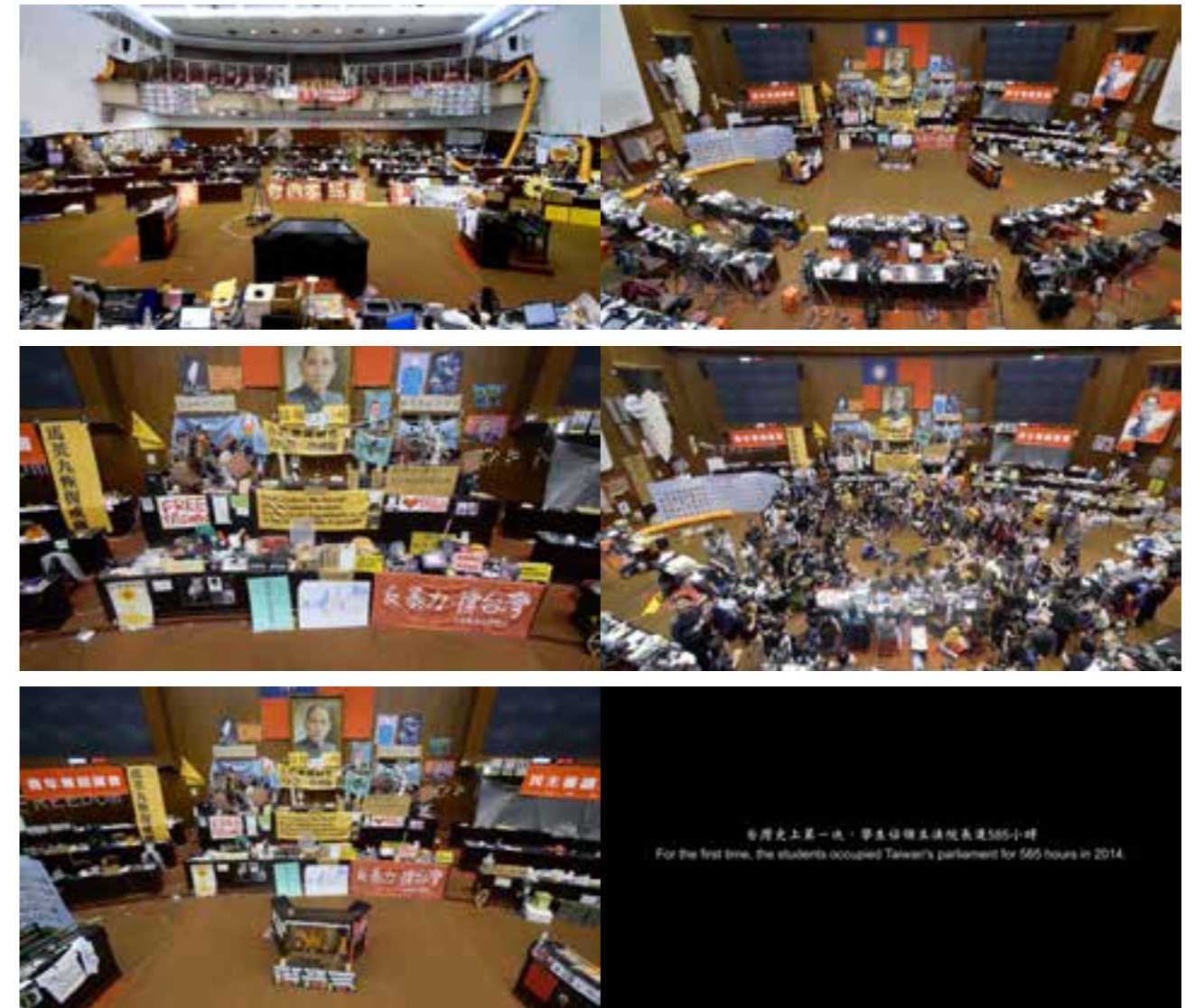
The movement was sparked by the ruling Chinese Nationalist Party (CNP)'s attempt to expedite the CSSTA's ratification without the agreed-upon clause-by-clause review. This action galvanised public opposition, culminating in a massive protest that saw tens of thousands of people surrounding the Legislative Yuan at its peak.

The initial occupiers, primarily university students and civic group members put forward three demands: withdrawal of the CSSTA, an apology from President Ma Ying-Jeou, and the resignation of Premier Jiang Yi-Huah. The government's refusal to meet these demands led to an escalation of the protest.

On 23 March, a group of protesters attempted to occupy the Executive Yuan, prompting a forceful police response ordered by Premier Jiang. This resulted in over 200 injuries, marking one of the most significant clashes between police and civilians in Taiwan since the lifting of martial law.

The standoff continued until 6 April, when Legislative Speaker Wang Jin-Pyng promised to enact the Cross-Strait Supervisory Act and suspend the CSSTA review until its completion. This concession led the protesters to announce the end of their occupation on 10 April, concluding 585 hours of protest.

The Sunflower Student Movement represented a pivotal moment in Taiwan's democratic process, highlighting the public's concerns over closer economic ties with China and their potential impact on Taiwan's sovereignty.



The Sunflower Movement was successful, in that it forced the government to table the agreement, and gave rise to further significant changes that have helped preserve Taiwan's independence, sovereignty, and open political system in the intervening years. As its title suggests, Yuan Goang-Ming's work was filmed during The 561st Hour of Occupation. The work pays homage to the bravery of the students, whose action helped retain Taiwan's status as the last remaining beacon for democracy in the Chinese-speaking world.

Yuan Goang-Ming  
"THE 561ST HOUR OF OCCUPATION"  
2014  
Single-channel video  
5'56"



## **3.2. Contemporary Artists and Designers that Shaped Modern Taiwan Cultural Identity**

This section is dedicated to the artists and designers who contribute to the ever-evolving dialogue surrounding Taiwanese cultural identity. In recent years, there has been a growing urgency to define a distinct cultural identity for Taiwan, prompting many creative individuals to address this issue through their work.

In this collection, visitors will witness how contemporary artists and designers are shaping modern Taiwanese cultural identity through various media. These works create unique Taiwanese narratives and provoke thought and conversation about current geopolitical issues. The collection embraces all forms of artistic expression, reflecting the diverse ways in which Taiwanese identity is explored and articulated.

The featured works demonstrate a complex engagement with Taiwan's past, present, and future. Many artists draw inspiration from Taiwan's rich history and traditions, reinterpreting them in contemporary contexts. Others confront present-day challenges, addressing issues such as cross-strait relations, environmental concerns, and social inequalities. Some works look to the future, envisioning potential paths for Taiwan's cultural and societal development.

This diverse collection includes but is not limited to, paintings, sculptures, installations, digital art, performance art, fashion design, and multimedia works. By showcasing such a wide range of artistic expressions, we aim to present a comprehensive and nuanced representation of contemporary Taiwanese identity.

Through these works, visitors can engage with the complexities of Taiwanese identity, gaining insights into the nation's unique position at the intersection of various cultural influences. The collection serves not only as a celebration of Taiwanese creativity but also as a platform for dialogue about Taiwan's place in the global community.

## Eatopia - 2016 London Design Biennale Taiwan Pavilion

Taiwan's installation at the 2016 London Design Biennale, titled "Eatopia", offered a unique exploration of Taiwanese cultural identity through a culinary experience. Architect Rain Wu and designer Shikai Tseng reimaged the utopian dining concept from Thomas More's "Utopia", creating a tranquil forest-like setting that celebrated Taiwan's diverse cultural influences.

The installation's Mandarin title "修龍" (pronounced "sio-lòng") cleverly plays on the Taiwanese Hokkien homophone for "collide", representing the constant cultural collisions and ethnic integration that shape Taiwan's evolving cultural landscape.

Through a constructivist menu, the designers crafted dishes that symbolised various aspects of Taiwan's complex identity. For instance, "Order on the Island" paired Biluochun green tea with agar, reflecting the Japanese colonial period's influence on Taiwanese culture and the systematic organisation of cultural knowledge during that time. Another dish, "Mutualism", used pineapple and beetroot juice to represent the interdependent relationship between Southeast Asian migrant workers and Taiwanese society.

This multisensory installation not only engaged visitors' taste buds but also provided "food for thought", encouraging reflection on Taiwan's unique position at the intersection of various cultural influences. By reimagining utopian dining, "Eatopia" offered a fresh perspective on Taiwan's cultural diversity and its ongoing process of identity formation.



Crossing the Strait



Order on the Island



Liberation



Mutualism



The Melting Pot





## Detention

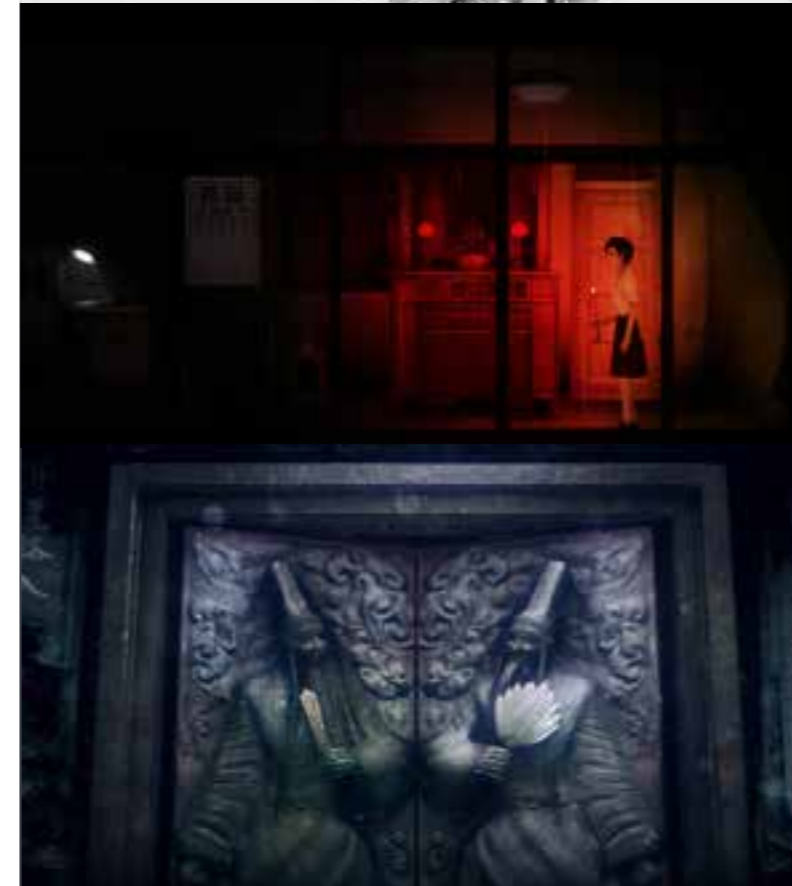
Detention, a critically acclaimed horror adventure game developed by Taiwanese studio Red Candle Games, has made a significant cultural impact since its 2017 release. Set in 1960s Taiwan during the White Terror period of martial law, the game follows two students trapped in a nightmarish version of their school, haunted by supernatural entities and dark secrets from Taiwan's past.

What sets Detention apart is its unique blend of Taiwanese and East Asian cultural elements, including Taoist and Buddhist imagery and folklore, with psychological horror and stealth gameplay. More importantly, the game explores the real historical trauma of Taiwan's authoritarian past, addressing sensitive topics like government oppression, censorship, and political dissidence.

Detention received widespread praise for its atmospheric art style, unsettling sound design, and compelling narrative that sheds light on a dark chapter of Taiwanese history. Its success helped elevate Taiwan's indie game scene to global recognition and sparked discussions about the country's past.

The game's impact extended beyond the gaming world when it was adapted into a film in 2019. Directed by John Hsu, the movie retained the essence of the original story while offering a fresh perspective on the struggles of youth under authoritarian rule. While the film diverges from the game's narrative in some aspects, it successfully translates the game's chilling atmosphere and themes to the big screen.

Both the game and its film adaptation demonstrate the power of interactive media and cinema in addressing complex historical issues. Detention offers players and viewers not only an engaging experience but also a window into Taiwanese history and culture, exemplifying how creative media can serve as a powerful tool for exploring and understanding the past.



## Liao Xiao-Zi / Godkidlla

Liao Xiao-Zi, known professionally as Godkidlla, has gained recognition for his distinctive Taiwanese aesthetic in graphic design. He believes that the essence of Taiwanese aesthetics lies in its 'chaos' and 'complexity', reflecting the island's intricate historical background. Liao argues that Taiwanese people should embrace this complexity rather than shy away from it.

While minimalist and clean aesthetics are currently trendy, Liao contends that such simplicity does not accurately represent Taiwan's nature. As an island that houses a multitude of diverse cultures, Taiwan's true aesthetic should reflect this rich tapestry. He encourages designers to showcase this unique Taiwanese aesthetic to the world, unafraid of its inherent complexity.

Liao is careful to note that his work does not represent the entirety of Taiwanese aesthetics. Instead, he sees his designs as personal translations of the everyday life he observes around him in Taiwan. Through his work, he aims to capture and express the vibrant, multifaceted nature of Taiwanese culture and society.



Decode Magazine, founded by Godkidlla, tackles topics often overlooked by mainstream media. In its fourth volume, the magazine explores the three stages of death: ageing, dying, and the state of being deceased. The cover, also designed by him, draws inspiration from the Taoist talismanic script known as Fulu. These mystical symbols and incantations are traditionally written or painted on talismans.

The cover also features white cranes, which hold significant symbolism in Chinese mythology. Cranes are often associated with longevity and are believed to be divine birds that traverse between the celestial and mortal realms. In Taoist tradition, the death of a priest is poetically described as "yuhua" (羽化), literally meaning "turning into a feathered (crane)". This design beautifully intertwines traditional Taoist symbolism with contemporary graphic art, creating a visually striking and culturally rich cover that reflects the magazine's exploration of life, death, and spirituality.



### Visual design for Daxi Daxi Revival

The "Reception of June 24" in Daxi is a significant cultural event celebrating the birthday of Guan Yu, a revered historical figure worshipped as a deity. This century-old tradition mobilises the entire town, offering insight into the religious beliefs and life experiences of Daxi residents. The festival features a grand pilgrimage around the town, involving temple officials, volunteers, business representatives, and local community clubs known as Shetou.

This annual celebration, held on the 24th day of the sixth lunar month, is a testament to the townspeople's gratitude for Guan Yu's perceived protection. The event has become so integral to local culture that it is often referred to as the "second lunar New Year celebration" for Daxi residents.

To preserve and promote this unique folk tradition, the Daxi Wood Art Ecomuseum has developed a museum-based festive brand. The event's name, "Daxi Daxi", cleverly uses homonyms to emphasise both the location and the deity's birthday. The English tagline includes the word "Revival", acknowledging the reimagining of this festive culture in contemporary life.

For the visual design, designer Godkidlla sought to blend traditional elements with a contemporary aesthetic. He retained essential temple fair imagery such as temples, deity statues, and gradient colours, but presented them in a modern way. Godkidlla's approach was deeply influenced by his interactions with local people and their profound respect for their traditions. This led him to create visuals that aimed to deliver a "straight punch", presenting the inherent beauty of the long-standing cultural context.

Over two years of designing for "Daxi Daxi", Godkidlla strived to follow the logic of the locals while creating visuals with a contemporary feel. His depiction of Guan Yu was so well-received that locals believed it could provide them with strength, affirming for Godkidlla the meaningful impact of his design work.

The album cover design for Taiwanese indie rock band Sorry Youth's "Brothers Shouldn't Live Without Dreams" offers a unique perspective on Taiwan's visual identity. Designed by Godkidlla, the artwork challenges conventional representations of Taiwan by embracing a monochromatic palette.

Godkidlla's inspiration came from a revelation after travelling abroad. He realised that Taiwan's distinctive character lies not in vibrant colours, as commonly assumed, but in its deep, dark tones. He observed that the prevalence of fluorescent elements in Taiwan's visual culture is a response to the abundance of darker hues in the environment.

This insight led Godkidlla to boldly employ a black-and-white colour scheme for the album cover. By doing so, he aimed to capture a more subtle and reserved aspect of Taiwan's identity. The design uses these contrasting tones to outline waves, islands, and elements of life, presenting a nuanced portrayal of the country's landscape and culture.

The designer's unconventional approach paid off, as the album cover was awarded the 2018 Golden Melody Award for Best Album Design. This recognition underscores the impact of Godkidlla's innovative interpretation of Taiwan's visual identity in the realm of music packaging design.



Engraving texture of the album cover and the copper mould



## Nymphia Wind

Taiwan has firmly established itself as a paragon of democracy in Asia, featuring a robust political system characterised by free and fair elections. In a groundbreaking move, Taiwan became the first country in Asia to legalise same-sex marriage in 2019, further solidifying its position as a progressive force in the region. This commitment to LGBTQ+ rights has not only shaped domestic policy but has also influenced Taiwan's cultural exports.

Nymphia Wind, a talented Taiwanese drag queen, recently made history by becoming the first contestant from Taiwan to win RuPaul's Drag Race in its 16th season. Wind's victory is particularly noteworthy as she is not only the first Taiwanese winner but also the third Asian Pacific Islander to secure the title. Throughout the competition, Wind proudly showcased her Taiwanese heritage, often incorporating cultural elements into her performances and attire.

In one of her photoshoots, Wind masterfully blended Taiwanese temple culture and traditional sleeve dance. The striking headpiece, created by artist Li Yu-Shen, was inspired by the Swinhoe's pheasant (*Lophura swinhoii*), an endemic species to Taiwan also known as the Taiwan blue pheasant. Wind eloquently expressed the significance of this photoshoot, stating, "Embodying the Swinhoe's pheasant, flying to a strange land. Spread my wings, showing my feathers to the unfamiliar. I am Taiwanese, this is a gift to my beloved land. Without land I cannot grow wings." This powerful statement underscores Wind's deep connection to her Taiwanese roots and her desire to share her cultural heritage with a global audience.



## Megaport Music Festival

Politics is an integral part of daily life for Taiwanese people, with younger generations boldly expressing their political thoughts and dissatisfaction with the government through music. The Megaport Music Festival (大港開唱), held annually in Kaohsiung since 2006, has become a significant platform for this expression, growing into one of Taiwan's largest and most influential music events.

The festival showcases a diverse range of local and international artists across various genres, with a particular emphasis on rock and independent music. Its political connections are deeply rooted, exemplified by co-founder Freddy Lim, who is both the frontman of the metal band Chthonic and a former Taiwanese legislator. This unique combination has inevitably intertwined the festival with political discourse and activism.

Megaport often serves as a platform for expressing political views and promoting Taiwanese identity. Many featured artists, including Chthonic, are known for their pro-independence stances and use their music to address political and social issues. The festival's commitment to showcasing Taiwanese talent and culture aligns with broader discussions about Taiwan's identity and its relationship with China.

One of the festival's distinctive features is its ability to bring together diverse figures from Taiwanese society. It's not uncommon to see politicians, TV show hosts, and veteran singers performing alongside indie bands on the same stage, creating a unique blend of entertainment and political expression.

Megaport's continued growth and popularity demonstrate the strong connection between music and political expression in Taiwan. The festival not only entertains but also serves as a powerful symbol of Taiwan's vibrant democracy and cultural independence, reflecting the country's complex political landscape and its people's desire for self-expression.



Poster of the first edition of Megaport Festival



Megaport Festival featuring metal band Chthonic and new generation indie band Collage



Megaport Festival featuring Audrey Tang, a politician and former Minister of Digital Affairs of Taiwan, the first ever transgender minister globally



Megaport Festival featuring politician and legislator Wang Shih-Chien



Megaport Festival featuring veteran singer Luo Shih-feng



Megaport Festival featuring national treasure Chen Hsi-huang, a Taiwanese glove puppeteer based in Taipei

## ABAO

Abao, also known by her full name Aljenljeng Tjaluvie, is a prominent Taiwanese indigenous singer who has made significant contributions to the revival and popularisation of Indigenous music in Taiwan. Born into the Paiwan tribe, one of Taiwan's 16 officially recognised Indigenous groups, Abao has become a powerful voice for cultural preservation and linguistic revitalisation through her music.

In 2020, Abao achieved widespread recognition when her Paiwan-language album 'Kinakaian MOTHER TONGUE' won multiple major awards at the 31st Golden Melody Awards, including 'Album of the Year' and 'Song of the Year'. This marked a historic moment as it was the first time an Indigenous-language singer had won both categories simultaneously, breaking the usual dominance of Mandarin popular music in these cross-language categories.

Abao's music not only showcases the beauty of the Paiwan language but also serves as a platform for cultural education and preservation. Emphasising the importance of keeping indigenous culture vibrant and relevant, Abao has stated, "We can't just let indigenous culture stay in the museum". This philosophy is evident in her approach to music-making, which brings traditional elements into contemporary settings. Abao's contributions to preserving and promoting Taiwanese indigenous culture have garnered international attention. Her talent and cultural significance have been recognised on a global stage, as evidenced by her recent invitation to participate in the 2024 Olympiade Culturelle in Paris.

Beyond her personal artistic endeavours, Abao has taken on a role as a cultural ambassador and advocate for indigenous youth. She frequently involves young people from her community in her performances and has established Nanguaq (那屋瓦環島部落收音計畫), a record label dedicated to promoting talented amateur indigenous Taiwanese musicians. Through these efforts, Abao continues to play a crucial role in empowering indigenous communities and bringing their voices to the forefront of Taiwan's music scene.



Abao and young creators from Nanguaq project



Kinakaian MOTHER TONGUE Album visual created by Paiwan artist Reretan Pavavaljung

## 4. Collections Management

Taiwan House, initially planned as a small-scale cultural institution, could potentially be housed within the Ministry of Culture at the Taipei Representative Office in the UK. In its early stages, it would not be open to the public continuously, but rather host periodic physical exhibitions. The project would require a modest yet dedicated staff, including a senior and junior archive manager, a senior and junior curator, two event managers/coordinators working in tandem with existing staff at the Taipei Representative Office, and an IT specialist to develop and maintain the archive's web presence.

Funding for Taiwan House would be provided by Taiwan's Ministry of Culture, covering staffing, operational costs, and a budget for new acquisitions. The coordinators would handle public enquiries and loan requests, collaborating closely with the Taipei Representative Office staff. As the institution grows, there may be a need to expand the team to include a public programme manager. Potential curators or consultants for Taiwan House could include Wu Shi-Kai and Rain Wu, curators of Eatopia and the Taiwan Pavilion at the 2016 London Design Biennale, both of whom have experience in showcasing Taiwanese culture internationally.

## 5. Future Development

Taiwan House envisions a dynamic future for its collection, with a long-term goal of becoming a comprehensive repository of Taiwan's cultural identity. The collection's growth will focus on expanding its representation of Taiwan's diverse population, including immigrants and aboriginal peoples, to provide a more inclusive narrative of Taiwanese identity formation. This expansion will enrich the collection's significance as a cultural resource both within Taiwan and internationally.

The collection will be made accessible to the public through a dual approach. An online archive will provide global access to digitised items, while physical exhibitions curated at Taiwan House will offer in-person engagement opportunities. The inaugural exhibition will showcase the permanent collection, establishing Taiwan House's core mission. Subsequent exhibitions, curated with full creative freedom, will explore various aspects of Taiwanese identity, always aligning with the institution's fundamental values.

To promote the collection both in the UK and internationally, Taiwan House plans to collaborate with major London cultural events such as the Open House Festival and London Design Biennale. These partnerships will increase visibility and attract diverse audiences. Additionally, Taiwan House will organise workshops and talks to foster deeper engagement with the collection's themes. Subject to budget availability, a residency programme could be established, inviting artists and scholars to interact with the collection and create new works or research, further enhancing its cultural impact and relevance.



