

KH Style



**Explore Kaohsiung's
Vintage-Goods Shops**

- Longfong Secondhand Bookstore
- Cianjhen Secondhand Store
- Vintage Warehouse
- Yung Shing Le Shadow Puppet Troupe
- Niasong Wetlands Park

Longfong Secondhand Bookstore

©English translation: Hou Ya-ting

©Photos by Guo Chen-jhih

Wu Ming-da became addicted to reading when he was seventeen years old, studying at night school at Kaohsiung Municipal Haicing Vocational High School of Technology and Commerce. He is now Longfong Secondhand Bookstore's owner. He admits he would often skip classes to read fictitious works, such as author Jin Yong's (nom de plume of Dr. Louis Cha Leung-yung) martial arts books. Even today, he can still be found reading a variety of works as he sits at a desk near the front of the bookstore. He is also enthusiastic about sharing the knowledge he has acquired through reading such a wide range of books.

Mr. Wu had previously worked as a lathe technician for seven years before he and girlfriend Liou Yu-ci ventured into running the bookstore together. At 26, he had only been working at Longfong Secondhand Bookstore for a month when they took it over from the former proprietor. They have now managed the bookstore for over ten years. He explains that it has been a unique experience managing the bookstore and has enjoyed reading and categorizing the new stock.

Mr. Wu admits he has been greatly influenced by Jin Yong's books about the martial arts, which he believes has made him more chivalrous and given him the enthusiasm and persistence to manage the secondhand bookstore. Ms. Liou (Mr. Wu's girlfriend) has a passion for Han Chinese fashion, and together they have collected many used books on the subject. They have even used these books to design and sew traditional Han Chinese outfits that they used as the bookstore's uniform.

One of the things the bookstore did was to host interesting events based on their passions, including a traditional Han Chinese "Coming-of-age Ceremony" where they made and wore traditional Han Chinese outfits. Many customers even got involved with the sewing and clothing preparation. This is a way Mr. Wu and Ms. Liou form relationships with their



clients.

Longfong Secondhand Bookstore maintains a wide variety of books. Mr. Wu enjoys reading many of them before they are sold, widening his horizons and interests. He admits he gains a great deal of life influence from a wide range of reading. However, there was one time this great diversity actually got him into some trouble. Back in 2009, the bookstore came under investigation by the Prosecutors Office for selling adult comic books without an established adult book zone. He received a non-prosecutorial disposition, but it taught him that he should gain a greater knowledge of the law.

Aside from his passion for Han Chinese fashion, sewing and martial arts books, he is also passionate about psychology. He has read all of Carl Jung's books and has developed a rich collection of his works. The bookstore also has a large section of classical literature, including Hung-Fan Bookstore's pocketbooks, which are popular with customers.

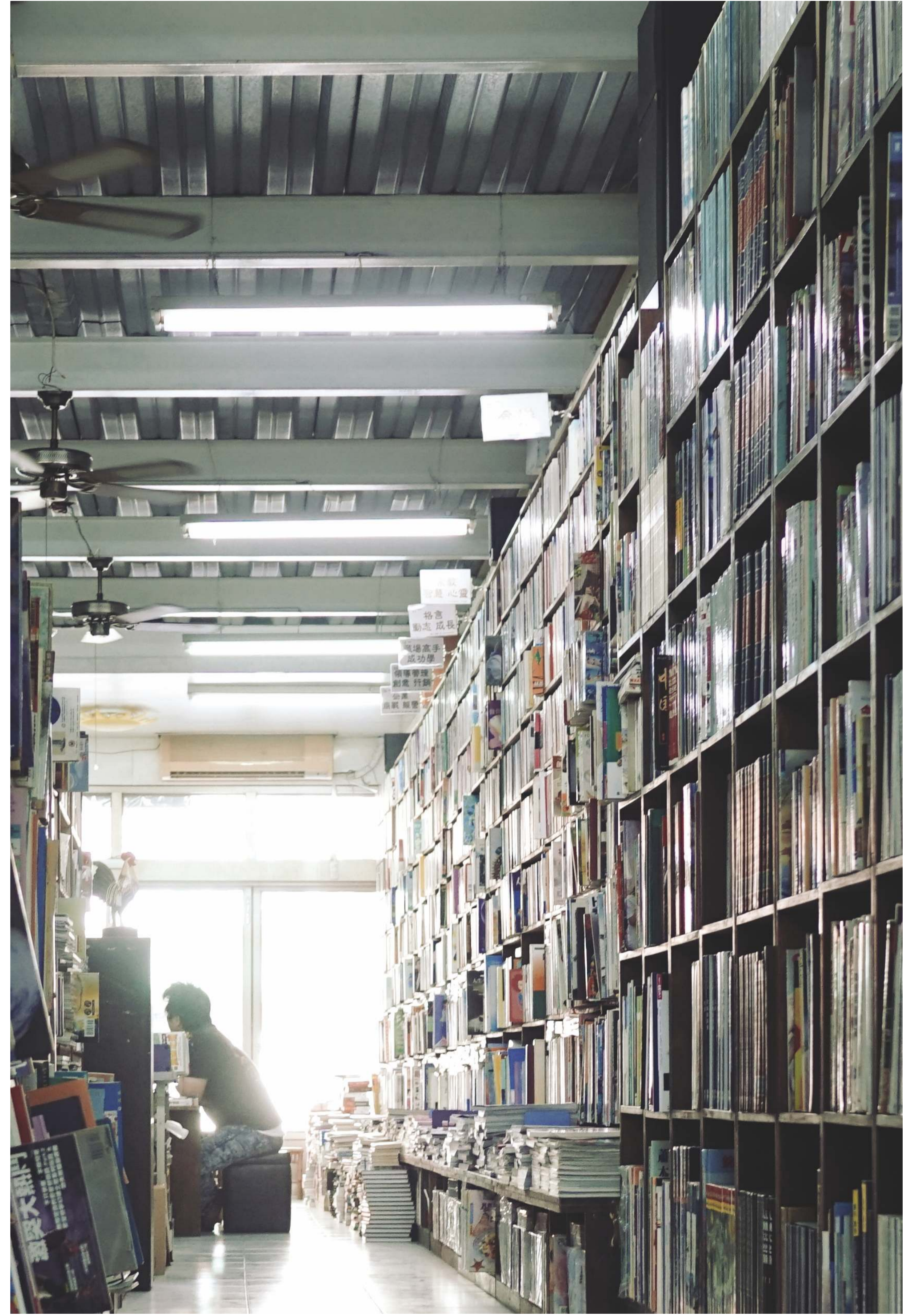
"Books have long been reliable resources to acquire knowledge, yet it is inevitable that most books will eventually vanish or become outdated," says Mr. Wu. He is not particularly worried about the increasing trend of electronic-books. He has often watched discarded books processed in paper-recycling processing plants. He laments the disappearance of books, yet Mr. Wu is confident that readers will discover books on his shelves that will inspire and delight them. "I see clients visit the bookstore to read the same books time and again and leave the bookstore satisfied," he explains. Everyone is welcome to read the books at Longfong Secondhand Bookstore and believes quintessential success comes from customers taking away great memories and knowledge from the books that they get to read.

Longfong Secondhand Bookstore

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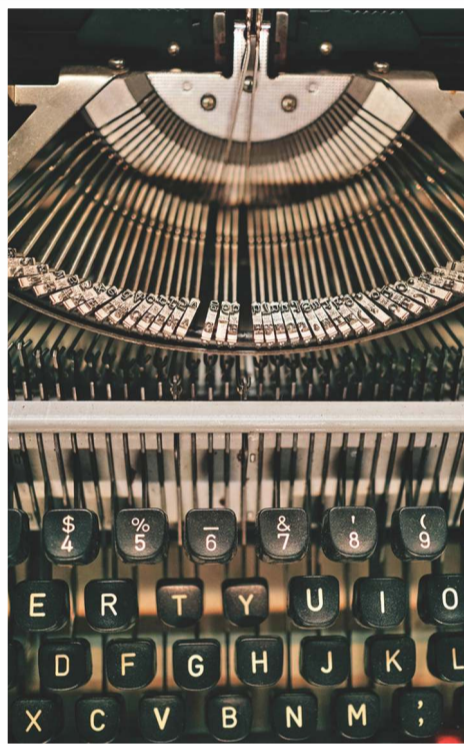


Cianjhen Secondhand Store

©English translation: Hou Ya-ting ©Photos by Guo Chen-jih

Situated near Cianjhen Fishing Port, Cianjhen Secondhand Store lies in a small alley just off Dechang Road in Kaohsiung's Cianjhen District. Even if one has never previously visited the store, it is not hard to find. The store's next-door neighbor loudly broadcasts a radio program in Holo (the local language also known as Taiwanese or Minnanhua), causing quite a buzz that can be heard before setting foot in the alley. What is more, the store's facade is flamboyantly adorned with a fishing float, a pile of planks, and a rusty Vespa scooter. All of these hint at the potential inside for a real treasure hunt.

Proprietor Siao-ting is a twenty-something young lady, notable for her short, dyed lavender hair. She manages the secondhand store with her mother. Siao-ting says they started as roadside vendors, and also sold goods online. They had just a few square feet of space in which to heap their goods. Soon, the proliferation of merchandise compelled them to relocate to the property opposite. A two-story metal hut, built to display merchandise, is the store's current location.



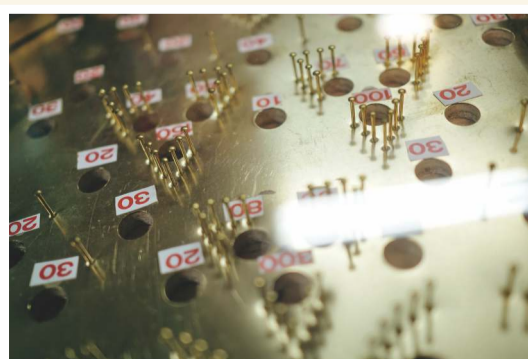
When one steps into Cianjhen Secondhand Store, the ample stacks of furniture, appliances, household goods and even items retrieved from scrapped ships and boats are overwhelming. Yet everything is arranged neatly, in harmony with the space available, and waiting to be discovered. Cianjhen Secondhand Store creates a thoughtful atmosphere of nostalgia. Siao-ting points out a wooden wall made from

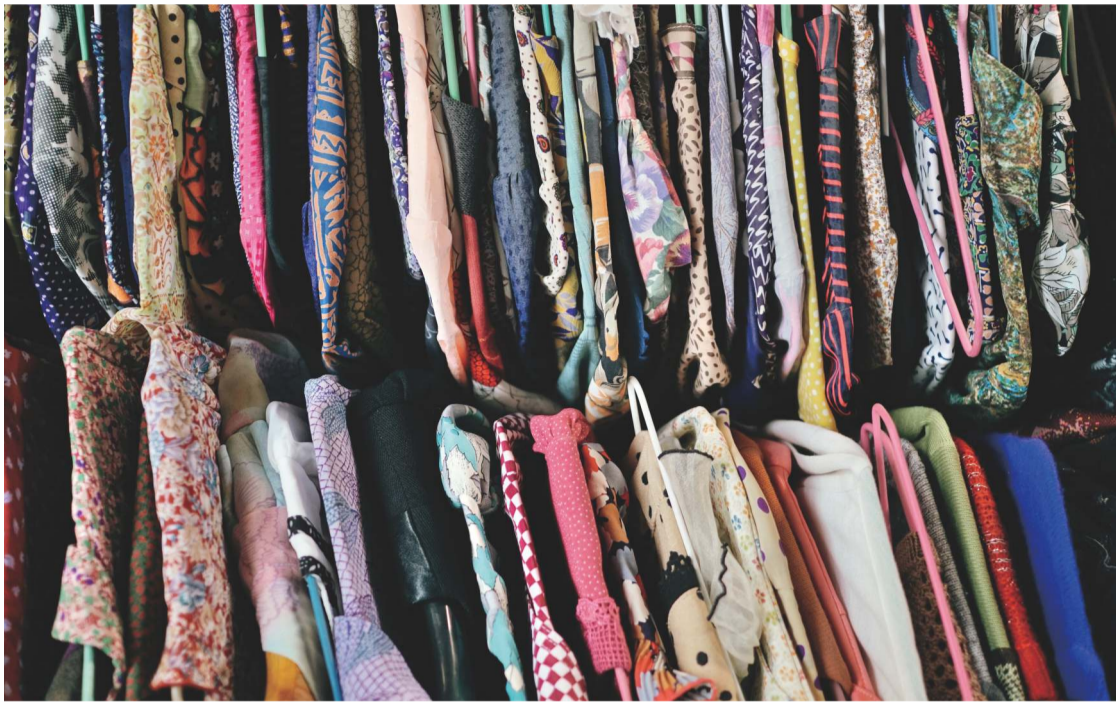
material recycled from over a hundred demolished wooden doors. On that wall she displays several vintage movie posters and doorplates. The latter have been collected while visiting households and conversing with customers. They are a record of her journey as she collects vintage goods.

"I like vintage goods, and that's why I manage my own secondhand store," says Siao-ting. She has traveled through military dependents' villages and communities throughout Kaohsiung, searching for memories and stories of eras that have passed.

Siao-ting's enthusiasm for preserving and collecting vintage goods means she sells only to customers who will appreciate and treasure them. Cianjhen Secondhand Store does not accept bargaining; if a customer is only willing to purchase a bargain vintage good, she feels such a person is likely to underestimate the value of the item, and not properly care for it. This is her humble way of ensuring that the treasures she uncovers end up in good hands.

While seeking out precious vintage





goods, she has felt blessed to hear local residents passionately share their stories with her. She casually mentions that what is now Fongshan Huangpu Veterans Quarter was created for servicemen and their families during the rule of President Chiang Kai-shek and his son, President Chiang Ching-kuo, a period which lasted from 1949 to 1987. Siao-ting laments that so much history has been eliminated, without preservation in any form.

Cianjhen Secondhand Store displays several vintage motorcycles, all of which are still well maintained and used by Siao-ting's family. However, factories no longer produce components for these scooters, and Siao-ting remarks that if one of these vintage motorcycles is damaged, there is a risk it cannot be repaired due to a lack of replacement parts.

The store's first floor mainly displays household goods as well as some appliances and items from scrapped vessels. When asked to show us around the first floor, Siao-ting walks toward a cabinet, filled with glass cups bearing the logos of well-known Taiwanese

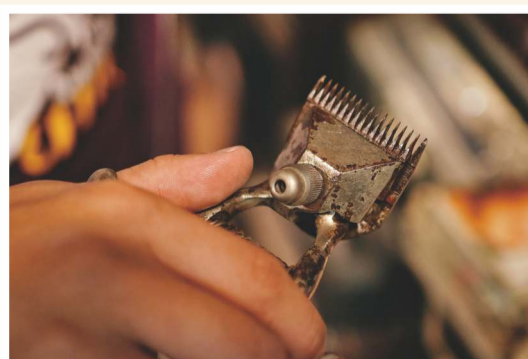
corporations. Local glassware can be traced back to the Japanese colonial period (1895 to 1945) and was popular in the 1960s. Many companies promoted themselves by printing their logos on glassware and giving out sets as gifts. Scrutinizing each glass's simple design, one can see a beauty ingrained with the past. Such glassware reflects local culture, and is embedded in the memories of local residents. "Glassware is ubiquitous, but it's difficult to preserve," says Siao-ting. From her tone, it is obvious she cherishes these fragile items.

Siao-ting says that, compared with glassware, furniture is easily preserved. She mentions some closets more than half a century old. The wood is mottled and distorted. She points out that slightly imperfect furniture can be fixed through furniture restoration, then shows off a hand-powered sewing machine almost a century old. Siao-ting says she has noticed that the collection of goods nowadays is different to a decade ago, so it is inevitable that valuable but ancient are scarce in secondhand markets.

Cianjhen Secondhand Store is best known for the vintage clothing which occupies the entire second floor. Most of the garments are for women. Siao-ting says collecting vintage clothing is a labor of love and extremely time consuming. Couture vintage attire was fashionable among affluent residents, but is now scarce, she explains. She says she can only collect fewer than 10 garments out of 100. Some garments may be damaged by bugs. "Despite fashion constantly changing and evolving," says Siao-ting, "wearing vintage attire is undeniably quite fashionable." Even though certain fabrics used in vintage clothing may not suit Taiwan's climate, such attire has gained a market online due to its appearance and low price.

When she spots our interest in pinball, Siao-ting takes out the balls so we can play. She even treats us to boiled chrysanthemum tea. Sipping the tea and listening to her stories, the warmth behind her hospitality shines through each story she tells.

Cianjhen Secondhand Store
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Vintage Warehouse

©English translation: Hou Ya-ting

©Photos by Hung Min-hao

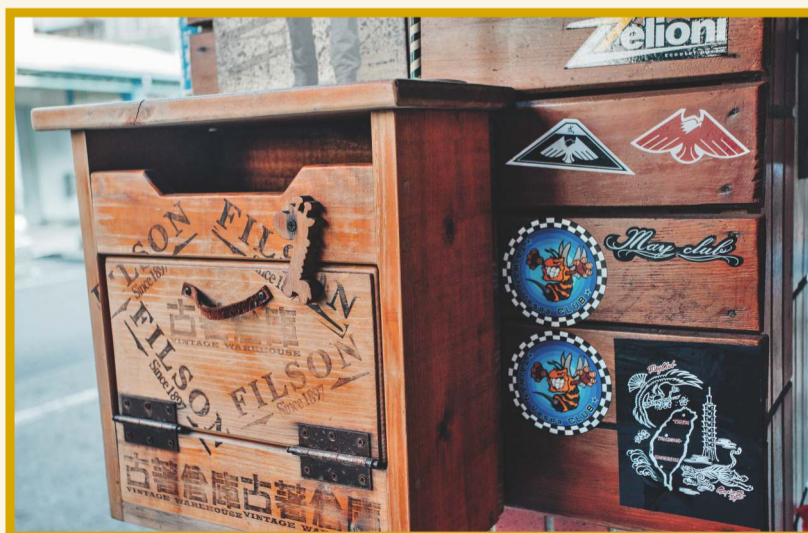
Fashion often transforms itself, and a buzz surrounds the latest trends. While followers of fashion embrace the latest spring dress, last year's fall dress goes into the wardrobe for good. Mr. Jheng Jhih-long, however, adores classic American outfits. He runs and oversees Vintage Warehouse, a vintage clothing shop. The shop is filled with wooden shelves, brown canvas, and genuine leather. The smell of leather and heavy texture of denim perfectly interpret how Mr. Jheng envisions a torn denim coat with a unique washed color that has been left under a fierce sun. The same is true for fading colored boots and canvas bags. Mr. Jheng elaborates how each pair of jeans accompanies the person who wears it, and so encounters extraordinary journeys and stories.

Customers who visit Vintage Warehouse will discover the stories behind each collection by communicating with Mr. Jheng. As one touches the fabric and scrutinizes tailoring or sewing details, one contends with the distinct aesthetic of vintage fashion. To lovers of vintage clothing, this beats the tides of fashion.

Mr. Jheng says his involvement in vintage clothing began when he was a junior college student. He often walked through Kaohsiung's Shinkuchan Shopping Area, a neighborhood where fashionable young people gather. However, it was not new attire that caught his attention, but rather he was fascinated by secondhand denim jeans. He then realized that, even though they were not new, they were not cheap. He later discovered those jeans had been manufactured in and imported from the United States. Impressed by the utmost comfort he felt when wearing them, as well as the unique wash patterns on each pair, he became a fan of American-style denim garments. He began collecting vintage clothing and learned about vintage fashion by reading magazines. At first, he says, he had only a few sources of information, mainly Japanese magazines. Despite

being far from fluent in Japanese, he studied Japanese vintage-fashion magazines, and built up his vintage clothing knowledge.

As he acquired more knowledge, his addiction to this subject deepened. It seems entirely natural that he has expended his collection from denim clothing to canvas, boots, belts, and other items. After he graduated from junior college, Mr. Jheng did his military service, and then he brought himself a pair of boots with his first salary. Since





completing his military service and getting married, around eight or nine years, the boots have stayed with him. During this period, he gravitated toward e-commerce, selling vintage clothing and accessories online. After a while, he refurbished his garage into today's Vintage Warehouse.

Mr. Jheng points out some popular items at Vintage Warehouse like Levi's Selvedge denim Red Line, vintage flight jackets, and Filson's small field bags. Mr. Jheng says people trust these brands as they are over a century old, commenting that these brands survived World War I and World War II as well as periods of hardship, so it is worthwhile exploring their characteristics. Mr. Jheng says that even secondhand goods with some slight imperfections can draw the attention of vintage collectors. Mr. Jheng embraces these brands because they have long histories behind them. He is confident that these old brands will march into the next century.

Customers expect to find fabulous clothing at Vintage Warehouse, and every item may lead customers to an unexpected yet intriguing story. Mr. Jheng mentions that one day a student pointed to a



Schott leather jacket hanging on a rack in the store, and said his grandfather had one which strongly resembled it. Mr. Jheng expressed doubt, as he thought a decade ago people did not wear such jackets. However, the student came back with his grandfather's Schott leather jacket. For Mr. Jheng this was both a pleasant surprise and a wonderful connection to his customer. "Older vintage clothing appears to be even more captivating," he says, expressing pride in the wide variety of vintage clothing Vintage Warehouse offers its customers. Mr. Jheng points out that such garments present their appearance through their former owners and their era. When passing a vintage garment to a new owner, the clothing may take on a brand new look. Mr. Jheng thinks the accumulated looks and marks loaded upon such vintage goods create a special kind of beauty, and presents an exclusive style that fast-changing fashion cannot compete with.

Vintage Warehouse

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Yung Shing Le Shadow Puppet Troupe

©English translation: Hou Ya-ting

©Photos courtesy of Yung Shing Le Shadow Puppet Troupe

Established in 1890, Mituo District's Yung Shing Le Shadow Puppet Troupe is a prestigious local troupe. Mr. Jhang Li is the founder of Yung Shing Le Shadow Puppet Troupe; however, it wasn't until second generation, Managing Director Jhang Wan that it got the name it has today. Puppetry was once an iconic artistic form that was revered by Taiwan's agricultural society, and today it continues to attract new audiences. Yung Shing Le Shadow Puppet Troupe is now managed by a fifth generation of puppeteers, who strive to preserve the traditional art form, while infusing modern techniques. The troupe ultimately hopes shadow puppetry can gain widespread appreciation domestically and abroad.

Although there are often challenges, several generations continue to passionately work together to maintain the tradition. Third generation, Mr. Jhang Zuo and Mr. Jhang Suei, and fourth generation, Mr. Jhang Singuo and Ms. Jhang Ying-jiao, continue to take on important roles in running the troupe. The troupe is



currently managed by fifth generation Director Jhang Singhong. Yung Shing Le Shadow Puppet Troupe was banned during the Japanese colonial rule, but when it was allowed to resume, the family was unrelenting in its devotion to preserving the distinct Taiwanese cultural heritage. Today, the main challenges the troupe faces is a lack of interest in the traditional arts and recruiting new and professional performers.

Ms. Jhang Ying-jiao points out that mainstream entertainment is dominated by television, cinema and





electronic games. This has limited the troupe's performance opportunities. Traditionally, Yung Shing Le Shadow Puppet Troupe only performed at temple celebrations, but Mr. Jhang Sin-guo and Ms. Jhang Ying-jiao have been working to grow the business and have been seeking out other performance opportunities. The troupe has recently been performing at cultural events and department stores, which have led to opportunities to perform at various festivals abroad and the chance to share Taiwanese culture with the world.

The puppet troupe incorporates new technologies into every performance. The troupe developed the show *Legendary Banpingshan*, a shadow puppet drama about Lotus Lake and Banpingshan. The troupe hired performers, wrote the eloquent script, integrated film and computer animation, created specialized stage lighting and designed the set. It was a great success in drawing larger and newer audiences and in cultivating a greater appreciation for the traditional art. Another of Yung Shing Le's successful shows includes *Momotaro the Peach Boy*, which is a Japanese folk legend.

"Creating traditional shadow puppet performances is a daunting task. It is a huge responsibility to produce professional shadow puppet shows," says Ms. Jhang Ying-jiao. The family takes great pride in working

together and are devoted to shadow puppet performance. "No matter how advanced technology has become or how much society changes, Yung Shing Le will preserve this important cultural asset," says Ms. Jhang Ying-jiao.



Niaosong Wetlands Park

©English translation: Hou Ya-ting

©Photos by Wang Jing-fei

Niaosong Wetlands Park, originally a settling basin belonging to Taiwan Water Corporation, is located adjacent to Chengcing Lake, a popular sightseeing spot in Kaohsiung's Niaosong District. The wetlands park, an example of sustainable water usage, processes effluent water from The Grand Hotel Kaohsiung through circulation pools. The water then flows into a spillway gate at Kaohsiung Chang Gung Memorial Hospital.

Kaohsiung Wild Bird Society manages and preserves Niaosong Wetlands Park. To raise public awareness of the wetlands, Kaohsiung Wild Bird Society organizes educational lectures and provides tour guides. Individual visitors are welcome to join free tours held on the second, third and fourth Sunday of each month. These start at 3:30 p.m. at the park's front entrance. Booking a spot in advance



is advised; call Kaohsiung Wild Bird Society at (07)236-1086.

While visitors amble through the wetlands park, the tour guides draw on their knowledge of nature and wetland ecosystems. Over the years, participants have been able to appreciate Niaosong Wetlands Park by birdwatching, taking nighttime





tours, experiencing paddy-field cultivation, watching documentary films, and creating works of art. Nature lovers have expressed and recorded the ecology of this landscape. Various species in the wetlands park remain active through the winter, but sometimes nature is disguised in a pile of moist soil or beneath decaying leaves. Insects are a vibrant presence in every corner of the wetlands. The Brown-

headed thrush is a typical winter visitor, and can be seen hunting insects. Meanwhile, beetle larvae play a key role in soil ecosystems. Moorhens feed on the water snowflakes which float in the ponds. Niaosong Wetlands Park witnesses a continuous cycle of living species, as decaying foliage fertilizes the environment for the next generation of insects and plants.

The beauty of Niaosong Wetlands Park lies not only in its diverse ecology, but also in the unexpected and unlimited impressions it leaves upon visitors. Dibu Village, which is near the wetlands park, actually got its name from the area's soft, wet soil. In the days of old, residents often got their feet stuck in the ground when plowing their fields. However, Dibu's inhabitants never thought about abandoning the land; rather, they cultivated it, and it developed into today's agricultural community. Some of today's residents have no idea about this local history.

These wetlands underscore the fact that human beings, animals and insects are all part of the food chain. The natural wonders we can glimpse at Niaosong Wetlands Park comprise a unique aesthetic that has come together over a long period of time.

Website of Kaohsiung Wild Bird Society:
<http://www.kwbs.org.tw>





Illustration by Momo Jeff



KH Style

Published by Information Bureau, Kaohsiung City Government

Publisher: Ting Yun-kung

Planned by UNITAS Literary Monthly, Linking Publishing Company

English editors: Johanne Murray, Steven Crook

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