

## DOW JONES

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## Brothel owner and alleged money launderer is Crown casino's business partner

Nick McKenzie, Nick Toscano and Grace Tobin

1,416 words

29 July 2019

13:17

The Age - Online

AGEEOL

English

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Crown Resorts paid a brothel owner and alleged money launderer to lure high rollers to its Australian casinos and then provided them with money to gamble, according to court files and officials that raise further questions about the company's business dealings.

Multiple sources with knowledge of Crown's operations have also confirmed that Asian sex workers have been flown into Australia on private jets organised by Crown "junket" operators.

Crown has partnered with brothel owner **Simon Pan** to bring high roller customers to gamble at the casino since 2011, according to Victorian County Court documents obtained by The Age, The Sydney Morning Herald and 60 Minutes.

Mr Pan owns South Melbourne brothel 39 Tope which is a few minutes drive from the casino precinct and specialises in Asian sex workers and escorts, according to its website.

39 Tope has been repeatedly raided by police and subject to sex trafficking investigations between 2008 and at least 2015, while the operations of the brothel have led to major prosecutions of mid-tier workers over breaches of Victorian prostitution laws.

Documents filed in the Victorian County Court in 2015 separately detail Mr Pan's work as "Junket Representative at Crown Casino" who "arranges people to gamble at a casino and [who] the casino pays ... a commission".

In addition to offering Mr Pan's junket business lucrative commissions and other incentives to bring high rollers from Asia to Crown, Crown has provided Mr Pan with access to its facilities and banking systems.

Who is **Simon Pan**?

The documents show that Mr Pan is the representative at Crown Melbourne for a Macau junket operator, the Kim Teng Jong junket, and has given Crown high rollers millions of dollars to gamble.

Mr Pan's partnership with Crown raises the prospect that the proceeds from his controversial brothel could be washing through the casino's high-roller rooms.

It is also possible some of Crown's big clients are being encouraged to attend 39 Tope ??? a place where federal police have rescued women they suspect of having been trafficked from Asia.

Documents obtained from South Korean police show that the AFP removed two women suspected to have been trafficked to 39 Tope in 2008, a fact that also has been reported in the media.

Well-placed sources said the investigations into 39 Tope between 2007 and 2015 had resulted in successful organised crime prosecutions of mid-tier brothel workers in the County Court in 2015 and had exposed the exploitative conditions at Mr Pan's brothel. The sources said human trafficking charges were not laid because sex workers were too scared to testify.

However, policing agencies have repeatedly filed documents in court identifying Mr Pan as owning brothels involved in serious criminal activity and suspected human trafficking and as having alleged deep ties to organised criminals.

Sources familiar with the agents used by Crown's high rollers said Asian sex workers have travelled on flights used to transport the super-rich gamblers.

The revelations of Crown's partnership with Mr Pan comes after The Age and The Herald revealed on Saturday that the casino company had dealings with junkets controlled by Asian crime syndicates, including

one of the world's biggest drug trafficking gangs, which are laundering money and importing drugs into Australia.

An ex-Crown staff member, Jenny Jiang, has also blown the whistle on the company, alleging it engineered an illegal high roller gambling promotion operation across mainland China and then sought to cover it up as Chinese authorities closed in.

Crown Resorts did not answer a detailed set of questions, including about Mr Pan, saying "Crown does not comment on its business operations with particular individuals or businesses".

However, a statement said Crown had a "comprehensive" anti-money laundering and counter-terrorism financing program in place, "which is subject to regulatory supervision by AUSTRAC".

James Packer, a major Crown shareholder, said through a lawyer that he had not been an executive at Crown Resorts since 2012 and resigned as chairman in August 2015, and as a board member in December that year. He had a "passive role" at Crown, according to the lawyer's letter.

Crown plans to open its VIP-only casino in Sydney at Barangaroo in 2021.

'The potential for exploitation'

Anti human-trafficking advocate Courtney Keefe said Crown should be held accountable for helping to finance the owner of a brothel allegedly implicated in organised crime and the exploitation of women.

"I think it's extremely disturbing that the casino would have a contractual relationship with someone [allegedly] implicated in human trafficking," she said.

Mr Pan's connections to serious organised crime are detailed in various court cases, while his brothel has been named in the media as a suspected human trafficking hub. In 1998, Mr Pan was named in a migration tribunal hearing as running a massage parlour which was raided by the Victoria Police vice squad, and hosting Asian women suspected to be working there unlawfully.

Online articles in The Age in 2011 reveal that in 2008, the federal police rescued two suspected victims of human trafficking from Mr Pan's South Melbourne brothel.

The Tope Street brothel, which remains popular with some of the Crown high-roller patrons according to sources with knowledge of its operations, was at the heart of a federal police operation between 2011 and 2015, code named Katrino, which targeted the trafficking of women from South and North Korea and China to Melbourne.

When interviewed this week, Mr Pan said allegations of his links to criminal activity were "bullshit" and that his dealings with Crown were licensed and appropriate.

But numerous court files reveal how a criminal syndicate that was supplying women to Mr Pan's brothel "enticed women to work in brothels in Australia" using dozens of mobile phones subscribed in false names.

In late 2015, County Court Judge Gavan Meredith said this syndicate was involved in the "laundering of funds generated from the work of ??? women who were placed in a situation of potential vulnerability".

"The potential for their exploitation was ripe."

The woman Judge Meredith said was "at the apex of the laundering enterprise", Mae Ja Kim, told Australian Federal Police investigators in a record of interview also aired in court that she had known **Simon Pan** since 2008 and "really got to know him in 2013" when she was running his South Melbourne brothel.

"Simon and I would regularly talk on the telephone. I am aware that the Australian Federal Police intercepted a number of telephone calls ??? when I helped organise the recruitment of females in south-east Asia to travel to Australia and provide sex work ??? with the full knowledge and permission of Simon."

Ms Kim also said that while she and others ran the daily operations of the brothel, they paid Mr Pan a "weekly cut on the basis of the number of units provided to clients by sex workers".

She also said "Simon and I discussed a similar business arrangement to what we were doing at 39 Tope by providing him with sex workers for the Cairns brothel".

Court files reveal how the trafficking syndicate "expressed a direct interest in making sure the sex workers performed as many units as possible" at Pan's brothel, and that "fines would sometimes be imposed if sex workers did not attend for work ??? or didn't perform enough units".

Because of the difficulty getting fearful brothel workers to testify, the Federal Police charged members of the suspected trafficking syndicate with breaches of the Victorian Sex Work Act. While police did not charge Mr Pan, they aired evidence in court that implicated him as having links to serious criminal activity.

In 2014, Victoria's brothel regulator launched separate action against Mr Pan in the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal. In that action, the evidence linking Mr Pan to human trafficking was aired as the brothel regulator successfully imposed conditions on his brothel licence to prevent criminal conduct.

The revelations raise serious questions about Crown's gaming licences and the failure of gaming regulators and state and federal agencies to effectively act on activities that Crown's operations have enabled criminal syndicates and may have compromised Australia's national security.

For more on this story watch 60 Minutes this Sunday at 8:40pm on Channel 9.

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Document AGEEOL0020190727ef7r001gt



## Xi Jinping's cousin a high roller as Crown comes under pressure over crime, influence

Nick McKenzie, Grace Tobin and Nick Toscano

1,592 words

29 July 2019

14:27

The Sydney Morning Herald - Online

SMHHOL

English

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A cousin of Chinese President Xi Jinping was aboard a private jet for high-roller gamblers when it was searched by federal agents on the Gold Coast in 2016 on suspicion that it was involved in international money laundering.

The initial target of the police search of the jet's passengers was an alleged criminal fugitive and business partner of Crown Resorts, Tom Zhou. But the search also revealed that one of Mr Zhou's travelling companions was Mr Xi's cousin, Ming Chai.

Multiple sources have confirmed that police and security agencies, including ASIO, have since made detailed inquiries about why Mr Chai - a Crown resorts "VVIP" (very, very important person) - was aboard the flight with Mr Zhou, who is an alleged crime figure and Communist Party influence operative.

A trove of thousands of leaked files from inside the Australian gaming giant shows how Crown and its high-roller agents have encouraged and facilitated the travel to Australia of several figures of interest to police and security agencies.

The files also appear to expose links between Asian criminal gangs known as "triads", which are involved in high-roller junket businesses, and Chinese Communist Party influence activities in Australia.

Police and security agencies are now asking questions about the movement in and out of Australia of Chinese high rollers with links to the Chinese Communist Party or organised crime syndicates or, in some cases, both.

A number of Crown's business partners and VVIPs are Australian and Chinese nationals who have led key Communist Party influence organisations in Sydney and Melbourne.

"This underbelly of Chinese Communist Party influence is something that we are only just beginning to understand," said Australian Strategic Policy Institute analyst Alex Joske.

The leaked data reveals that Crown had an "emergency channel" with Australian consular officials to fast-track the movement of Chinese nationals into Australia "where we may have hundreds of millions of dollars of turnover at stake".

"The purpose of the 'special line' is not for last minute girlfriend additions we should try to avoid using our emergency channel unless it is critical," one leaked Crown email states.

The revelations by The Age, The Sydney Morning Herald and 60 Minutes have shaken the casino giant formerly controlled by one of Australia's richest men, James Packer. They also raise serious questions about state and federal agencies, including gaming authorities.

Who is Ming Chai?

In a statement, Crown Resorts said of its relationships with junket operators and individuals: "Crown does not comment on its business operations with particular individuals or businesses."

However, it had a "comprehensive" anti-money laundering and counter-terrorism financing program in place, "which is subject to regulatory supervision by AUSTRAC".

In a statement through his lawyer, Mr Packer "adamantly" insisted that he had played a "passive" role in the company's operations. He has not been an executive at the company since 2012 and resigned as chairman of Crown Resorts in August 2015 and as a board member in December that year.

A Department of Home Affairs spokesperson said all visa applications were assessed against the law. "Our offices in China are well aware of the risks ... and they scrutinise and manage applications accordingly," the spokesperson said. The department had "no evidence" of conditions being waived for Crown.

#### A deep relationship

The leaked documents reveal how Crown Resorts formed a deep business partnership with Mr Zhou ??? an international fugitive, alleged crime boss and the subject of an Interpol red notice, according to multiple security officials with knowledge of the matter. Crown helped Mr Zhou's associates get Australian visas, according to the leaked Crown data.

The data also reveals Crown's dealings with Mr Chai, who is also a former Chinese police official and high-rolling Crown gambler.

Mr Chai has faced publicly reported corruption allegations in China, though he has never been charged, and is the business partner of Mr Zhou. Both men were aboard the New Zealand-bound jet when the passengers were interrogated by federal agents at Coolangatta airport on August 17, 2016.

Mr Zhou is a multi-millionaire Crown "junket" operator whose "Chinatown junket" specialises in luring gamblers from China to the casinos in Melbourne and Perth. The Australian passport holder also heads three organisations in Melbourne that are aligned to and backed by the Chinese Communist Party, according to material published by these same organisations.

#### Who is Tom Zhou?

One of them, the Huaxing Art Troupe, answers to the United Front Work Department, the organisation that works to influence Chinese diaspora communities and overseas political systems to advance the aims of the Communist Party.

The search of the private jet revealed the extent Mr Zhou's networks. In 2016 and 2017, Mr Zhou was paying a suspended Victoria Police Special Operations Group officer, Greg Leather, and other serving and former law enforcement officials to work for him as private security.

Mr Zhou's dealing with these officials arose after Crown arranged for a firm run by former detectives to help Mr Zhou run his business.

Mr Leather, who has returned to the force after suspension, worked as a security agent for the jet passengers and subsequently worked for Mr Zhou, including advising his associates on how to use weapons on Mr Zhou's hunting property in rural Victoria.

Serving and former officials have provided security to Crown customers, including Mr Zhou and Mr Chai, on several private jet flights, according to flight records.

Mr Zhou's alleged involvement in serious criminal activity and violence is documented in several Chinese court cases. The leaked internal Crown files reveal that, on his recommendation, Crown reassured the Australian government that several of Mr Zhou's Chinese associates were of good character and should be allowed to enter Australia.

"[He is a] friend of our VVIP Mr Zhou," states one internal email outlining why Crown should vouch for one Zhou associate to the government.

Mr Zhou and Mr Chai's activities provide a rare insight into the connections between the vast sums of money and politically connected people moving out of China to gamble at Crown, and the Chinese Communist Party's influence activities.

#### How a junket can launder money

Twelve serving and former government officials who are aware of aspects of the scandal allege that failures in Crown's corporate governance were to blame as well as a failure by state gaming regulators and police and security agencies to act on repeated warnings about Crown's operations.

"For Crown, it's all about the dollars," said one official.

Complicating efforts to act has been Crown's political reach and power.

Former Australian Border Force chief Roman Quaadvlieg has claimed that two federal ministers and one backbencher had lobbied the force, asking it to make it easier for Chinese high rollers to enter Australia on private jets despite agency warnings about some passengers.

"There were ministers that approached the agency, approached me personally, indicating that Crown, and subsequently the junket operators that worked with Crown, weren't receiving a facilitated service for private jets coming into Australia, into Perth and Melbourne," Mr Quaedvlieg said.

"[They were] seeking some arrangements which smoothed out the processes ... [so they could] land on a private jet at Melbourne airport, receive the minimal amount of clearances, put them in cars, get them into the casino and spending money."

Mr Quaedvlieg was sacked from the Border Force for assisting his girlfriend, a low-ranking part-time employee, to apply for full-time work.

The president's cousin

Mr Chai is a former Chinese police official turned Communist Party princeling with impeccable connections to President Xi. Mr Chai's father ??? the president's uncle ??? is a former high-ranking police official. Mr Chai now has an Australian passport and lists his business address at a mansion in Melbourne's bayside suburb of Brighton.

Mr Zhou, his business partner, ran a casino promotion empire - known as a junket - that was licensed and partly bankrolled by Crown. Crown relied on his "Chinatown junket" to funnel China's wealthiest people to its high-roller rooms in Perth and Melbourne and provide them with tens of millions of dollars in gambling credit.

Crown casino's connections

Mr Zhou's partnership with Crown began after he fled the justice system in China when authorities there implicated him in serious financial crime. He has also been accused in various Chinese courts of extortion, standover tactics and even arranging for acid to be thrown in a man's face.

"The facts of a crime are clear and the evidence was reliable and sufficient," according to one court filing from the Intermediate People's Court of Wuhan province. It also reveals that Chinese police allege Mr Zhou had been "misappropriating huge amounts of money". The file states that Mr Zhou "absconded abroad" and would be dealt with "separately", a likely reference to his Interpol arrest warrant for financial crime.

As well as being one of Crown Resorts' top 50 Chinese punters - he turned over at least \$27 million in 2014 and had a projected turnover of \$50 million in 2015 - Mr Chai has formed investment businesses in Australia not only with Mr Zhou but a second Crown junket operator, **Simon Pan**.

Mr Pan runs a brothel about one kilometre from Crown in Melbourne that has been implicated in the human trafficking of Asian women.

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Document SMHHOL0020190728ef7s0018i





## Crown's unsavoury business links: how Australia's casino got tied up with criminals

Nick McKenzie, Nick Toscano and Grace Tobin

3,920 words

29 July 2019

16:19

The Sydney Morning Herald - Online

SMHHOL

English

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On August 17, 2016, federal police received a security alert about a man preparing to board a luxury private jet idling on a runway at Coolangatta airport.

The jet was stationed within view of the passenger terminal, a hive of tourists in thongs and board shorts. But the police alert suggested the red-flagged passenger had not visited the Gold Coast to go to the beach.

Tom Zhou is a short man with a round, boyish face and an intense demeanour. His familiarity with luxury travel was thanks to a special arrangement he had made with a company then majority owned by one of Australia's richest men, James Packer.

Inside Crown Resorts' casino high-roller operations, Zhou was royalty. The staff who dealt with Crown's VIP gamblers had nicknamed him "Mr Chinatown". And what Mr Chinatown wanted, Mr Chinatown got.

According to an investigation by The Age, The Sydney Morning Herald and 60 Minutes aided by one of the biggest leaks of corporate data in Australia ??? tens of thousands of documents detailing Crown's high roller operation - Zhou was provided access to private jets, luxury hotel suites, lavish gifts and tickets to concerts by James Packer's then girlfriend, Mariah Carey.

When Zhou's associates wanted visas to enter Australia, Crown would vouch for them to the federal government.

And Crown paid Zhou's business empire tens of millions of dollars.

In return, Crown relied on Zhou, who lives in a mansion in Melbourne's Toorak, to circumvent Chinese laws that outlaw gambling promotion in China. These laws also ban the luring of groups of rich and powerful mainlanders to offshore casinos to punt.

In some cases it's been Asian organised crime gangs known as triads who conjured up [ways to do this](#). But Zhou had also perfected this shadowy art, funnelling gamblers from China to Australia via his "Chinatown junket" to punt billions at Crown's casinos.

Zhou's mastery had delivered him immense wealth and a privileged relationship with the Australian company.

But Zhou is no ordinary Crown partner. He is, in fact, an international criminal fugitive, the subject of an Interpol red notice for financial crime that netted him tens of millions of dollars. He is supposed to be arrested immediately if he crosses a country's border.

And from an Australian national security point of view, he is a double threat. He also heads several Chinese Communist Party-aligned organisations in Melbourne designed to project Beijing's influence in Australia.

It makes him someone of keen interest to organisations such as the Australian Federal Police and ASIO.

But the federal police airport investigators knew little of Zhou's back story as they approached him and his fellow private jet passengers at the Gold Coast terminal in 2016. The security alert warned that Zhou was suspected of involvement in money laundering, but was otherwise scant on detail.

After a brief search, they found no excessive quantities of cash, and allowed the plane to leave to New Zealand.

They missed two curious facts they would only later pick up.

The first was that Zhou was being escorted by Greg Leather, a former Victorian detective as well as a highly trained and security vetted Special Operations Group Victorian Police officer who at the time was suspended from the force.

The second fact was the identity of one of the other guests they were guarding.

This man is described in the leaked Crown data as a "VVIP" or "very, very important person". His name is Ming Chai and, while he is unknown in Australia, his family is famous in China.

Ming Chai is a blood relative of the most powerful man in China, its president Xi Jinping.

Unsurprisingly, in the months after the private plane rose over the Gold Coast's glittering shoreline, fresh questions about its occupants began to be asked by those responsible for guarding Australia's national security.

Has Australia's largest casino company effectively enabled the activities of organised criminals or those doing the bidding of the Chinese Communist Party? And, if so, has Crown been gambling not only with its casino licenses but with the nation's security?

Extortion, fraud and hunting rifles

The central Victorian shire of Murrindindi is known for its natural beauty, with steep rises emerging from farmland, providing stunning mountain views. In the late 1880s, gold miners streamed here in droves to fossick along rich gold seams.

A century and a quarter later, another man seeking great riches came to town. When he rolled into Murrindindi in a luxury car in 2016, Tom Zhou had already made a fortune. He already bought his Toorak house in 2009 for \$7.9 million and another around the corner for \$15 million in 2013.

Now a sprawling cattle property in Murrindindi had caught his eye. Even in this picturesque region, it stood out. A road from the property's dilapidated farmhouse winds past cattle gates and up steep paddocks to a ridge that offers the property's finest feature - a vista of cloud-cloaked mountain ranges. Zhou snapped it up for \$7.5 million.

Zhou's plan upon purchase, according to the property's managers, was to build a five-star hotel here for Chinese tourists.

Instead, he has turned it into a hunting lodge.

Clues about the source of Zhou's funds are scattered around a weatherboard house on the property. In a makeshift armoury, next to a reinforced safe containing hunting rifles and shotguns, are two dozen white Crown Casino hats for guests to wear.

Photos on the walls depict Zhou's wealthy Chinese guests, including those who have come to Murrindindi via Crown.

The leaked Crown data includes tax receipts showing the casino company paid tens of millions of dollars per year to "sub junkets" run by Zhou's associates and agents - their percentage cut of the gaming turnover of the VIPs from the Chinese mainland that Zhou's junket has brought to Crown's casinos in Perth and Melbourne.

But even before Crown became his plaything, Zhou was already immensely wealthy. A portion of his money comes, allegedly, from crime.

Dozens of Chinese court files obtained by The Age, the Herald and 60 Minutes reveal that by 2013, Wuhan's Bureau of Public Security had built a case that Zhou was involved in a serious criminal scheme to defraud a company of tens of millions of dollars.

It's alleged in a number of cases in China that Zhou has been involved in mafia-type extortion and standover tactics. Multiple litigants accuse him of defrauding them and, in one case, of having "directly threatened the lives of senior management." In another case, he was accused of arranging for acid to be thrown in a rival's face, an allegation he denies along with all other claims of wrongdoing.

"The facts of a crime are clear and the evidence was reliable and sufficient," one court filing reads.

Who is Tom Zhou?

Three of Zhou's accomplices were jailed for three years each in one case but, rather than face the justice system for "misappropriating huge amounts of money ??? Zhou absconded abroad" the filing states. He would be dealt with "separately".

Zhou landed in Australia, and Chinese authorities issued an international arrest warrant known as a "red notice" via Interpol, according to multiple officials with knowledge of the matter. Even so, he was not picked up at the border.

When Zhou left China, it seems he may have smuggled a fortune out with him. If this is indeed what happened, it was likely Zhou's first use of a modus operandi that underpins the junket service he provides the Crown high rollers who need to launder funds past China's borders and the country's ban on capital flight.

#### How a junket works

It is unclear just who at Crown had responsibility for checking Zhou's background.

Crown Resorts did not answer a series of questions about its junket partners, adding that it did not comment on its "business operations with particular individuals or businesses". However, it said in a statement that it had a "comprehensive" anti-money laundering and counter terrorism financing program "which is subject to regulatory supervision".

Through his lawyers, Mr Packer "adamantly" insisted he had no knowledge of the conduct of the company's operations in China.

Mr Packer has not held an executive position at the company since 2012, though he was chairman of Crown Resorts until August, 2015, and a board member until he resigned in December that year.

According to the lawyer's letter, he only played a "passive role" in the company's operations.

#### The day of the junkets

Crown's phenomenal growth as a global gambling brand has been fuelled by Chinese high roller junket operators. Australia's proximity to China, the services and perks Crown offers its biggest punters, and the fact the whole operation is legal under Australian law, have made it a magnet for billions of dollars from China.

But moving people and large amounts of money out of the mainland to gamble are both forbidden under Chinese law. Collecting gambling debts on the Chinese mainland is also illegal. So the junkets act as "middle-men" to facilitate transactions the casinos themselves find difficult.

They can smuggle money out of mainland China, or organise lines of credit in Australia; they can organise luxury tours and enticements while the gambler is in Australia; they can settle winnings or losses, in either jurisdiction; and they can collect debts, with menace if necessary, in China.

The US government has repeatedly warned that some junket operations have, at least in part, been run by the mafia-style criminal syndicates called triads. Triads are expert money launderers, have access to large pools of funds and are effective collectors of unpaid gambling debts because of their propensity to use violence and extortion.

On Saturday, The Age and the Herald [revealed](#) how a powerful and dangerous triad drug syndicate known as The Company was able to do this work with Crown despite its deep criminal links.

#### Laundering money through a casino

Zhou's stunning success as a junket operator should have been warning enough for Crown to delve a little into his past. But there is no indication it reviewed the court cases that name him as a criminal, fugitive and stand-over man.

The information is not hard to find.

Some of Crown's own former staff, who worked with high rollers, allege in confidential interviews that it was an open secret that Mr Chinatown had a colourful past and a penchant for wild parties.

A search with Australia's corporate regulator reveals Zhou is a business partner of a man called **Simon Pan**, a Melbourne brothel owner allegedly implicated in sex trafficking. Pan operates a brothel just 1km from Crown's back door and his business has been named in multiple court cases over its links to organised crime and the trafficking of sex workers from Asia to Melbourne.

Pan is also himself licensed by Crown as a junket operator.

#### Key Crown players

Despite all this, the leaked Crown files reveal that from late 2014, Crown relied increasingly heavily on Zhou's Chinatown junket.

It was named in a confidential Crown document as one of eight specially selected junkets Crown had decided to aggressively embrace because they were "large, reputable" and "deemed credit worthy in large amounts."

"Instead of having players bring cash or playing with smaller-than-ideal credit lines, we can partner with [junket] platforms to ensure the players have the full front-money they are accustomed to playing with in Macau," Crown's 2015 junket strategy memo states.

The memo also reveals that the Chinatown junket would be taught the "pain funnel" sales technique to draw more "whales" - giant gamblers - to Crown.

In the first two weeks of 2015, Crown's internal figures revealed that the "Chinatown" high rollers had gambled \$24 million at its casinos. Three months later, that figure had ballooned to \$1.452 billion.

The Crown files suggest Zhou himself was not at Crown's Perth or Melbourne casinos, but instead overseeing the work of his "sub-junkets" or "Chinatown reps". Their earnings give an insight into Zhou's profit-making machine. In the 2016 financial year, Crown records show it paid Chinatown's representative in Perth \$28 million in commissions.

Crown also vouched to the Australian government about the reliability of Chinese nationals Zhou was bringing to Australia.

Lobbied by ministers

In one leaked email, Crown staff prepare to vouch to Australian visa officials about a high roller on the basis that he was "referred by Crown VVIP Mr Zhou" and because "Crown staff ??? has known Mr Zhou [for] more than 10 years".

In another chain of emails, Crown staff arrange a visa for a "friend of our VVIP Mr Zhou" because the man "would like to attend Mr Zhou birthday party in Australia".

Correspondence from Australian visa officials in Guangzhou and Shanghai suggest Crown's vouching for high rollers led to visas being expedited via an "emergency hotline" Crown had with Australia's consulates. There were higher level interventions on Crown's behalf as well.

A Department of Home Affairs spokesperson said all visa applications were assessed against the law. "Our offices in China are well aware of the risks ... and they scrutinise and manage applications accordingly," the spokesperson said. The Department had "no evidence" of conditions being waived for Crown.

Former head of Border Force, Roman Quaedvlieg, claims that he was lobbied by two ministers and another MP to help "smooth out" the border security process for Crown's big gamblers arriving from China.

Crown wanted its high rollers "to land on a private jet at Melbourne airport, receive the minimal amount of clearances, put them in cars, get them into a casino and spending money," Quaedvlieg says.

Crown also helped arrange Zhou's personal security, linking him up with a company run by a former Victorian detective who arranged for the highly trained Leather, to work for Zhou. (Leather was suspended from the force over an unrelated integrity investigation when he went on Zhou's payroll, but has returned to the force).

Leather and the ex-detective appear to have worked for many months for Zhou. Photos obtained by The Age, the Herald and 60 Minutes show Leather giving firearms lessons to Zhou's Chinese guests at his Murrindindi farm, in potential breach of laws requiring all people handling firearms to be licensed.

It's understood that Leather did not seek approval to work for Zhou, seemingly breaching Victoria Police policy.

Wealth and influence

Hunting animals and making millions were not Zhou's only Melbourne enterprises. He was also heavily involved in three organisations aligned with the Chinese Communist Party's United Front operation - the organisation which works to influence Chinese diaspora communities and overseas political systems to advance the aims of the Communist Party.

Zhou is chairman or has a "guiding" role at the "Hubei Association of Australia (HAA), the Hubei Chamber of Commerce (HCC), and the Huaxing Arts Group of Melbourne (Huaxing)," the latter reporting directly to the United Front Work Department in China.

The same online report says Huaxing is "fostered" by the Communist Party's "Overseas Chinese Affairs Office of the State Council" and has "the strong support of the Melbourne Chinese Consulate" as it has strived to earn "the trust of the motherland" and the Chinese government.

"We shoulder the heavy responsibilities and we'll undertake such missions," the Huaxing organisation wrote in a report sent to Beijing in 2018. The report also boasts of its "database that contains contact information of important politicians, major Chinese community groups, celebrities, and artists".

Zhou's connections to politicians is not over-stated. In 2013, the Zhou-chaired Hubei Chamber of Commerce in Melbourne appointed as its executive president a former adviser to Victorian premier Daniel Andrews, Mike Yang, who knew Zhou through Yang's father.

United Front expert Alex Joske says Zhou's success in becoming Crown's key Melbourne junket operator as well as a United Front patron allowed him "to build political influence, build networks with politicians, and then quite possibly send that information back to Beijing".

"Through his junkets, he'd also be able to bring large amounts of cash over borders," says Joske.

Zhou's United Front bodies have become something of a Crown affair. Among those recruited to leadership positions of the organisations are several of Zhou's Crown junket partners and casino high rollers. In March 2015, some of them mixed at Crown's exclusive "VIP guests only" [Capital Golf Club](#) to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the Hubei Association.

"All thanks must go to Zhou ... the core leader of the Hubei Association!" commentary accompanying a video of the golf day said. "It is Mr Zhou who meticulously planned this unprecedented ??? golf tournament."

#### Unanswered questions

Among the questions the Chinese consulate failed to answer for this story is why Zhou would be an endorsed United Front aligned association leader given he is wanted by the Chinese state for serious financial crime.

The answer may lie in a presentation given by former Turnbull government foreign affairs adviser John Garnaut. Garnaut was for two years the Australian government's United Front expert, and he worked with ASIO on a still-classified project into the extent of Chinese government interference operations in Australia. The product of that work, the Garnaut Report, was one of the catalysts for Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull to introduce sweeping counter-foreign interference laws in 2017.

The report has never been released and Garnaut won't talk about it. But prior to joining government, Garnaut was a decorated China correspondent. In that capacity he examined the Chinese Communist Party's habit of forging alliances with the triad organised crime groups to achieve political outcomes.

Multiple reports have documented the use of violent criminals to suppress the democracy movement in Hong Kong, including as recently as last week. In 1993, the chief of China's domestic security agency, Tao Siju, sparked controversy by saying that: "as for organisations like the triads in Hong Kong, as long as these people are patriotic ??? we should unite with them."

In a 2011 lecture to the US China Institute, Garnaut revealed that Chinese security officials had told him the triads were also used in Australia to help the Communist Party, including by "protecting" the 2008 Olympic torch rally from pro-democracy activists.

"When I was interviewing security people in Beijing ??? some of them said to me quite openly, we have got the triads on side" to deal with protesters, says Garnaut. "And that was in Canberra."

Australian officials aware of Zhou's activities have more recently questioned whether his alleged criminal activities are being overlooked by Chinese officials because of his own patriotic activities in Melbourne.

He certainly maintains friends in some very high places.

Leaked data and multiple confidential sources reveal that Zhou is connected with a number of elite Communist Party "princelings".

Chief among them is Ming Chai.

Chai's father is a former high ranking chief of the Chinese Peoples' Armed Police service, a service for which Chai himself briefly worked before moving to Australia in the early 1990s. Chai's father is also the uncle of the Chinese president Xi Jinping.

Ming Chai is the president's cousin.

Who is Ming Chai?

President, princeling and prostitutes

As Xi Jinping's standing grew - from provincial mayor to Politburo member and, finally in 2012, President and General Secretary of the Chinese Communist Party - so did Ming Chai's.

From 2006-2012, Chai was appointed president of a subsidiary of telecommunications company ZTE, whose biggest shareholder is the Chinese government's aerospace and satellite research agency. After this, Chai headed another listed Chinese telecommunications firm.

In 2014, a report in the Hong Kong Apple newspaper alleged that Chai was operating from the five-star Four Seasons hotel in Hong Kong and trading on his connections to the Chinese president to cut business deals. The same report, along with several other sources in China, also alleged that Chai had fallen foul of anti-corruption authorities in China.

Chai certainly has some interesting connections.

In Melbourne, one of his business partners is **Simon Pan**, the brothel owner with alleged sex trafficking links. Chai's businesses in Hong Kong have included a gold bullion trading company he owned with a man who provides financial and legal advice to the Italian mafia and Hong Kong triads.

Despite the reports of his arrest, there is no easily accessible record of any charge or meaningful disruption relating to Chai's business activities in Beijing, Hong Kong or Australia.

The leaked Crown data reveals that, in 2014, Chai became one of Crown's top fifty Chinese high rollers, turning over tens of millions of dollars. The following year, Crown offered Chai free gambling cash and tickets to the Grand Prix. Flight records and his business partnerships with two Crown junkets, Tom "Chinatown" Zhou and **Simon Pan**, also suggest that Chai himself may be involved in junket activity.

But it was Chai's family connection to the Chinese president, along with his dealings with Zhou, that triggered intense interest from various Australian agencies in the months after Border Force agents boarded the private jet at Coolangatta airport in 2016.

Some of those on the plane received unexpected calls earlier this year asking what they knew about Chai and Zhou. The man asking the questions was an agent from Australia's security agency, ASIO.

The Age and Herald have also confirmed that two other men on the plane with Chai and Zhou are also of intense interest to ASIO. One is another Crown high roller with links to junket operators.

Coming soon to Sydney

During the search of the plane and its passengers on the Gold Coast, federal agents made several unusual findings. Chai, Zhou and their guests were not carrying wallets or mobile phones. One of the passengers claimed he had only decided to travel from the Gold Coast to New Zealand that morning on a whim.

The precise nature of the trip, and of Zhou's relationship with the United Front and the President's cousin, remain shrouded in secrecy, and until now, Zhou continues his life in his luxury Melbourne home, untouched by law enforcement.

There have been some hurdles. Zhou's unruly behaviour at Crown has led him to be barred from the casino (he'd earlier self-excluded to maintain a lower profile). But sources familiar with his operation say his junket is still running strong, albeit via several proxy junkets in other names.

And there may be yet more good news on the horizon for Zhou.

Crown is currently building its \$2 billion Barangaroo hotel and casino in Sydney on prime waterfront land. It's due to open in 2021.

This casino is partly aimed at Chinese high rollers.

If nothing changes, there could be more of everything for Zhou and the other men involved in the junket business: more mates fast-tracked into Australia, more hefty payments, more private jet trips, more luxury gifts, and more big houses in swanky suburbs.

For the time being at least, Mr Chinatown's lucky streak is still running hot.

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Document SMHHOL0020190728ef7s0018I



## Xi Jinping's cousin a high roller as Crown comes under pressure over crime, influence

Nick McKenzie, Grace Tobin and Nick Toscano

1,592 words

29 July 2019

14:27

WAToday.com.au

WATDAY

English

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The initial target of the police search of the jet's passengers was an alleged criminal fugitive and business partner of Crown Resorts, Tom Zhou. But the search also revealed that one of Mr Zhou's travelling companions was Mr Xi's cousin, Ming Chai.

Multiple sources have confirmed that police and security agencies, including ASIO, have since made detailed inquiries about why Mr Chai - a Crown resorts "VVIP" (very, very important person) - was aboard the flight with Mr Zhou, who is an alleged crime figure and Communist Party influence operative.

A trove of thousands of leaked files from inside the Australian gaming giant shows how Crown and its high-roller agents have encouraged and facilitated the travel to Australia of several figures of interest to police and security agencies.

The files also appear to expose links between Asian criminal gangs known as "triads", which are involved in high-roller junket businesses, and Chinese Communist Party influence activities in Australia.

Police and security agencies are now asking questions about the movement in and out of Australia of Chinese high rollers with links to the Chinese Communist Party or organised crime syndicates or, in some cases, both.

A number of Crown's business partners and VVIPs are Australian and Chinese nationals who have led key Communist Party influence organisations in Sydney and Melbourne.

"This underbelly of Chinese Communist Party influence is something that we are only just beginning to understand," said Australian Strategic Policy Institute analyst Alex Joske.

The leaked data reveals that Crown had an "emergency channel" with Australian consular officials to fast-track the movement of Chinese nationals into Australia "where we may have hundreds of millions of dollars of turnover at stake".

"The purpose of the 'special line' is not for last minute girlfriend additions we should try to avoid using our emergency channel unless it is critical," one leaked Crown email states.

The revelations by The Age, The Sydney Morning Herald and 60 Minutes have shaken the casino giant formerly controlled by one of Australia's richest men, James Packer. They also raise serious questions about state and federal agencies, including gaming authorities.

Who is Ming Chai?

In a statement, Crown Resorts said of its relationships with junket operators and individuals: "Crown does not comment on its business operations with particular individuals or businesses."

However, it had a "comprehensive" anti-money laundering and counter-terrorism financing program in place, "which is subject to regulatory supervision by AUSTRAC".

In a statement through his lawyer, Mr Packer "adamantly" insisted that he had played a "passive" role in the company's operations. He has not been an executive at the company since 2012 and resigned as chairman of Crown Resorts in August 2015 and as a board member in December that year.

A Department of Home Affairs spokesperson said all visa applications were assessed against the law. "Our offices in China are well aware of the risks ... and they scrutinise and manage applications accordingly," the spokesperson said. The department had "no evidence" of conditions being waived for Crown.

#### A deep relationship

The leaked documents reveal how Crown Resorts formed a deep business partnership with Mr Zhou ??? an international fugitive, alleged crime boss and the subject of an Interpol red notice, according to multiple security officials with knowledge of the matter. Crown helped Mr Zhou's associates get Australian visas, according to the leaked Crown data.

The data also reveals Crown's dealings with Mr Chai, who is also a former Chinese police official and high-rolling Crown gambler.

Mr Chai has faced publicly reported corruption allegations in China, though he has never been charged, and is the business partner of Mr Zhou. Both men were aboard the New Zealand-bound jet when the passengers were interrogated by federal agents at Coolangatta airport on August 17, 2016.

Mr Zhou is a multi-millionaire Crown "junket" operator whose "Chinatown junket" specialises in luring gamblers from China to the casinos in Melbourne and Perth. The Australian passport holder also heads three organisations in Melbourne that are aligned to and backed by the Chinese Communist Party, according to material published by these same organisations.

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One of them, the Huaxing Art Troupe, answers to the United Front Work Department, the organisation that works to influence Chinese diaspora communities and overseas political systems to advance the aims of the Communist Party.

The search of the private jet revealed the extent Mr Zhou's networks. In 2016 and 2017, Mr Zhou was paying a suspended Victoria Police Special Operations Group officer, Greg Leather, and other serving and former law enforcement officials to work for him as private security.

Mr Zhou's dealing with these officials arose after Crown arranged for a firm run by former detectives to help Mr Zhou run his business.

Mr Leather, who has returned to the force after suspension, worked as a security agent for the jet passengers and subsequently worked for Mr Zhou, including advising his associates on how to use weapons on Mr Zhou's hunting property in rural Victoria.

Serving and former officials have provided security to Crown customers, including Mr Zhou and Mr Chai, on several private jet flights, according to flight records.

Mr Zhou's alleged involvement in serious criminal activity and violence is documented in several Chinese court cases. The leaked internal Crown files reveal that, on his recommendation, Crown reassured the Australian government that several of Mr Zhou's Chinese associates were of good character and should be allowed to enter Australia.

"[He is a] friend of our VVIP Mr Zhou," states one internal email outlining why Crown should vouch for one Zhou associate to the government.

Mr Zhou and Mr Chai's activities provide a rare insight into the connections between the vast sums of money and politically connected people moving out of China to gamble at Crown, and the Chinese Communist Party's influence activities.

#### How a junket can launder money

Twelve serving and former government officials who are aware of aspects of the scandal allege that failures in Crown's corporate governance were to blame as well as a failure by state gaming regulators and police and security agencies to act on repeated warnings about Crown's operations.

"For Crown, it's all about the dollars," said one official.

Complicating efforts to act has been Crown's political reach and power.

Former Australian Border Force chief Roman Quaadvlieg has claimed that two federal ministers and one backbencher had lobbied the force, asking it to make it easier for Chinese high rollers to enter Australia on private jets despite agency warnings about some passengers.



"There were ministers that approached the agency, approached me personally, indicating that Crown, and subsequently the junket operators that worked with Crown, weren't receiving a facilitated service for private jets coming into Australia, into Perth and Melbourne," Mr Quaedvlieg said.

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The president's cousin

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Mr Zhou, his business partner, ran a casino promotion empire - known as a junket - that was licensed and partly bankrolled by Crown. Crown relied on his "Chinatown junket" to funnel China's wealthiest people to its high-roller rooms in Perth and Melbourne and provide them with tens of millions of dollars in gambling credit.

Crown casino's connections

Mr Zhou's partnership with Crown began after he fled the justice system in China when authorities there implicated him in serious financial crime. He has also been accused in various Chinese courts of extortion, standover tactics and even arranging for acid to be thrown in a man's face.

"The facts of a crime are clear and the evidence was reliable and sufficient," according to one court filing from the Intermediate People's Court of Wuhan province. It also reveals that Chinese police allege Mr Zhou had been "misappropriating huge amounts of money". The file states that Mr Zhou "absconded abroad" and would be dealt with "separately", a likely reference to his Interpol arrest warrant for financial crime.

As well as being one of Crown Resorts' top 50 Chinese punters - he turned over at least \$27 million in 2014 and had a projected turnover of \$50 million in 2015 - Mr Chai has formed investment businesses in Australia not only with Mr Zhou but a second Crown junket operator, **Simon Pan**.

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BRSBTM

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Document BRSBTM0020190729ef7s00001

# The Sydney Morning Herald

News

## How Australia's casino got tied up with criminals

Nick McKenzie, Nick Toscano and Grace Tobin

3,900 words

29 July 2019

The Sydney Morning Herald

SMHH

First

8

English

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Special Investigation

In 2016 a private jet was searched by law enforcement on the tarmac of Coolangatta airport. The people in that jet were worth billions each, and each held secrets precious to Crown casino. Nick McKenzie, Nick Toscano and Grace Tobin report.

On August 17, 2016, federal police received a security alert about a man preparing to board a luxury private jet idling on a runway at Coolangatta airport.

The jet was stationed within view of the passenger terminal, a hive of tourists in thongs and board shorts. But the police alert suggested the red-flagged passenger had not visited the Gold Coast to go to the beach.

Tom Zhou is a short man with a round, boyish face and an intense demeanour. His familiarity with luxury travel was thanks to a special arrangement he had made with a company then majority owned by one of Australia's richest men, James Packer.

Inside Crown Resorts' casino high-roller operations, Zhou was royalty. The staff who dealt with Crown's VIP gamblers had nicknamed him "Mr Chinatown". And what Mr Chinatown wanted, Mr Chinatown got.

According to an investigation by the Herald, The Age and 60 Minutes aided by one of the biggest leaks of corporate data in Australia — tens of thousands of documents detailing Crown's high-roller operation - Zhou was provided access to private jets, luxury hotel suites, lavish gifts and tickets to concerts by James Packer's then girlfriend, Mariah Carey.

When Zhou's associates wanted visas to enter Australia, Crown would vouch for them to the federal government. And Crown paid Zhou's business empire tens of millions of dollars. In return, Crown relied on Zhou, who lives in a mansion in Melbourne's Toorak, to circumvent Chinese laws that outlaw gambling promotion in China. These laws also ban the luring of groups of rich and powerful mainlanders to offshore casinos to punt.

In some cases it's been Asian organised crime gangs known as triads who conjured up ways to do this. But Zhou had also perfected this shadowy art, funnelling gamblers from China to Australia via his "Chinatown junket" to punt billions at Crown's casinos.

Zhou's mastery had delivered him immense wealth and a privileged relationship with the Australian company. But Zhou is no ordinary Crown partner. He is, in fact, an international criminal fugitive, the subject of an Interpol red notice for financial crime that netted him tens of millions of dollars. He is supposed to be arrested immediately if he crosses a country's border. And from an Australian national security point of view, he is a double threat. He also heads several Chinese Communist Party-aligned organisations in Melbourne designed to project Beijing's influence in Australia.

It makes him someone of keen interest to organisations such as the Australian Federal Police and ASIO.

But the federal police airport investigators knew little of Zhou's backstory as they approached him and his fellow private jet passengers at the Gold Coast terminal in 2016. The security alert warned that Zhou was suspected of involvement in money laundering, but was otherwise scant on detail. After a brief search, they found no excessive quantities of cash, and allowed the plane to leave to New Zealand. They missed two curious facts they would only later pick up.

The first was that Zhou was being escorted by Greg Leather, a former Victorian detective as well as a highly trained and security-vetted Special Operations Group Victorian Police officer who at the time was suspended from the force.

The second fact was the identity of one of the other guests they were guarding. This man is described in the leaked Crown data as a "VVIP" or "very, very important person". His name is Ming Chai and, while he is unknown in Australia, his family is famous in China.

Ming Chai is a blood relative of the most powerful man in China, its president, Xi Jinping.

Unsurprisingly, in the months after the private plane rose over the Gold Coast's glittering shoreline, fresh questions about its occupants began to be asked by those responsible for guarding Australia's national security.

Has Australia's largest casino company effectively enabled the activities of organised criminals or those doing the bidding of the Chinese Communist Party? And, if so, has Crown been gambling not only with its casino licences but with the nation's security?

Extortion, fraud and hunting rifles

The central Victorian shire of Murrindindi is known for its natural beauty, with steep rises emerging from farmland, providing stunning mountain views. In the late 1880s, gold miners streamed here in droves to fossick along rich gold seams.

A century and a quarter later, another man seeking great riches came to town. When he rolled into Murrindindi in a luxury car in 2016, Tom Zhou had already made a fortune. He already bought his Toorak house in 2009 for \$7.9 million and another around the corner for \$15 million in 2013. Now a sprawling cattle property in Murrindindi had caught his eye. Even in this picturesque region, it stood out. A road from the property's dilapidated farmhouse winds past cattle gates and up steep paddocks to a ridge that offers the property's finest feature - a vista of cloud-cloaked mountain ranges. Zhou snapped it up for \$7.5 million. Zhou's plan upon purchase, according to the property's managers, was to build a five-star hotel here for Chinese tourists. Instead, he has turned it into a hunting lodge.

Clues about the source of Zhou's funds are scattered around a weatherboard house on the property. In a makeshift armoury, next to a reinforced safe containing hunting rifles and shotguns, are two dozen white Crown Casino hats for guests to wear. Photos on the walls depict Zhou's wealthy Chinese guests, including those who have come to Murrindindi via Crown.

The leaked Crown data includes tax receipts showing the casino company paid tens of millions of dollars per year to "sub junkets" run by Zhou's associates and agents - their percentage cut of the gaming turnover of the VIPs from the Chinese mainland that Zhou's junket has brought to Crown's casinos in Perth and Melbourne. But even before Crown became his plaything, Zhou was already immensely wealthy. A portion of his money comes, allegedly, from crime. Dozens of Chinese court files obtained by the Herald, The Age and 60 Minutes reveal that by 2013, Wuhan's Bureau of Public Security had built a case that Zhou was involved in a serious criminal scheme to defraud a company of tens of millions of dollars.

It's alleged in a number of cases in China that Zhou has been involved in mafia-type extortion and stand-over tactics. Multiple litigants accuse him of defrauding them and, in one case, of having "directly threatened the lives of senior management". In another case, he was accused of arranging for acid to be thrown in a rival's face, an allegation he denies along with all other claims of wrongdoing. "The facts of a crime are clear and the evidence was reliable and sufficient," one court filing reads.

Who is Tom Zhou?

Three of Zhou's accomplices were jailed for three years each in one case but, rather than face the justice system for "misappropriating huge amounts of money ... Zhou absconded abroad" the filing states. He would be dealt with "separately". Zhou landed in Australia, and Chinese authorities issued an international arrest warrant known as a "red notice" via Interpol, according to multiple officials with knowledge of the matter. Even so, he was not picked up at the border. When Zhou left China, it seems he may have smuggled a fortune out with him. If this is indeed what happened, it was likely Zhou's first use of a modus operandi that underpins the junket service he provides the Crown high rollers who need to launder funds past China's borders and the country's ban on capital flight.

How a junket works

It is unclear just who at Crown had responsibility for checking Zhou's background. Crown Resorts did not answer a series of questions about its junket partners, adding that it did not comment on its "business operations with particular individuals or businesses". However, it said in a statement that it had a

"comprehensive" anti-money laundering and counter terrorism financing program "which is subject to regulatory supervision".

Through his lawyers, Mr Packer "adamantly" insisted he had no knowledge of the conduct of the company's operations in China.

Mr Packer has not held an executive position at the company since 2012, though he was chairman of Crown Resorts until August, 2015, and a board member until he resigned in December that year. According to the lawyer's letter, he only played a "passive role" in the company's operations.

Crown's phenomenal growth as a global gambling brand has been fuelled by Chinese high-roller junket operators. Australia's proximity to China, the services and perks Crown offers its biggest punters, and the fact the whole operation is legal under Australian law, have made it a magnet for billions of dollars from China.

But moving people and large amounts of money out of the mainland to gamble are both forbidden under Chinese law. Collecting gambling debts on the Chinese mainland is also illegal. So the junkets act as "middle-men" to facilitate transactions the casinos themselves find difficult.

They can smuggle money out of mainland China, or organise lines of credit in Australia; they can organise luxury tours and enticements while the gambler is in Australia; they can settle winnings or losses, in either jurisdiction; and they can collect debts, with menace if necessary, in China.

The US government has repeatedly warned that some junket operations have, at least in part, been run by the mafia-style criminal syndicates called triads. Triads are expert money launderers, have access to large pools of funds and are effective collectors of unpaid gambling debts because of their propensity to use violence and extortion. On Saturday, the Herald revealed how a powerful and dangerous triad drug syndicate known as The Company was able to do this work with Crown despite its deep criminal links.

#### Laundering money

Zhou's stunning success as a junket operator should have been warning enough for Crown to delve a little into his past. But there is no indication it reviewed the court cases that name him as a criminal, fugitive and stand-over man. The information is not hard to find. Some of Crown's own former staff, who worked with high rollers, allege in confidential interviews that it was an open secret that Mr Chinatown had a colourful past and a penchant for wild parties.

A search with Australia's corporate regulator reveals Zhou is a business partner of a man called **Simon Pan**, a Melbourne brothel owner allegedly implicated in sex trafficking. Pan operates a brothel just 1km from Crown's back door and his business has been named in multiple court cases over its links to organised crime and the trafficking of sex workers from Asia to Melbourne. Pan is also licensed by Crown as a junket operator.

#### Key Crown players

Despite all this, the leaked Crown files reveal that from late 2014, Crown relied increasingly heavily on Zhou's Chinatown junket. It was named in a confidential Crown document as one of eight specially selected junkets Crown had decided to aggressively embrace because they were "large, reputable" and "deemed credit worthy in large amounts." "Instead of having players bring cash or playing with smaller-than-ideal credit lines, we can partner with [junket] platforms to ensure the players have the full front-money they are accustomed to playing with in Macau," Crown's 2015 junket strategy memo states. The memo also reveals that the Chinatown junket would be taught the "pain funnel" sales technique to draw more "whales" - giant gamblers - to Crown.

In the first two weeks of 2015, Crown's internal figures revealed that the "Chinatown" high rollers had gambled \$24 million at its casinos. Three months later, that figure had ballooned to \$1.452 billion.

The Crown files suggest Zhou was not at Crown's Perth or Melbourne casinos, but instead overseeing the work of his "sub-junkets" or "Chinatown reps". Their earnings give an insight into Zhou's profit-making machine. In the 2016 financial year, Crown records show it paid Chinatown's representative in Perth \$28 million in commissions.

Crown also vouched to the Australian government about the reliability of Chinese nationals Zhou was bringing to Australia.

#### Lobbied by ministers

In one leaked email, Crown staff prepare to vouch to Australian visa officials about a high roller on the basis that he was "referred by Crown VVIP Mr Zhou" and because "Crown staff ... has known Mr Zhou [for] more than 10 years".

In another chain of emails, Crown staff arrange a visa for a "friend of our VVIP Mr Zhou" because the man "would like to attend Mr Zhou birthday party in Australia".

Correspondence from Australian visa officials in Guangzhou and Shanghai suggest Crown's vouching for high rollers led to visas being expedited via an "emergency hotline" Crown had with Australia's consulates. There were higher level interventions on Crown's behalf as well.

A Department of Home Affairs spokesperson said all visa applications were assessed against the law. "Our offices in China are well aware of the risks ... and they scrutinise and manage applications accordingly," the spokesperson said. The Department had "no evidence" of conditions being waived for Crown.

Former head of Border Force, Roman Quaedvlieg, claims he was lobbied by two ministers and another MP to help "smooth out" the border security process for Crown's big gamblers arriving from China. Crown wanted its high rollers "to land on a private jet at Melbourne airport, receive the minimal amount of clearances, put them in cars, get them into a casino and spending money," Quaedvlieg says.

Crown also helped arrange Zhou's personal security, linking him up with a company run by a former Victorian detective who arranged for the highly trained Leather, to work for Zhou. (Leather was suspended from the force over an unrelated integrity investigation when he went on Zhou's payroll, but has returned to the force).

Leather and the ex-detective appear to have worked for many months for Zhou. Photos obtained by the Herald show Leather giving firearms lessons to Zhou's Chinese guests at his Murrindindi farm, in potential breach of laws requiring all people handling firearms to be licensed. It's understood that Leather did not seek approval to work for Zhou, seemingly breaching Victoria Police policy.

#### Wealth and influence

Hunting animals and making millions were not Zhou's only Melbourne enterprises. He was also heavily involved in three organisations aligned with the Chinese Communist Party's United Front operation - the organisation that works to influence Chinese diaspora communities and overseas political systems to advance the aims of the Communist Party.

Zhou is chairman or has a "guiding" role at the "Hubei Association of Australia (HAA), the Hubei Chamber of Commerce (HCC), and the Huaxing Arts Group of Melbourne (Huaxing)," the latter reporting directly to the United Front Work Department in China. The same online report says Huaxing is "fostered" by the Communist Party's "Overseas Chinese Affairs Office of the State Council" and has "the strong support of the Melbourne Chinese Consulate" as it has strived to earn "the trust of the motherland" and the Chinese government.

The report also boasts of its "database that contains contact information of important politicians, major Chinese community groups, celebrities, and artists".

Zhou's connections to politicians is not over-stated. In 2013, the Zhou-chaired Hubei Chamber of Commerce in Melbourne appointed as its executive president a former adviser to Victorian premier Daniel Andrews, Mike Yang, who knew Zhou through Yang's father.

United Front expert Alex Joske says Zhou's success in becoming Crown's key Melbourne junket operator as well as a United Front patron allowed him "to build political influence, build networks with politicians, and then quite possibly send that information back to Beijing".

"Through his junkets, he'd also be able to bring large amounts of cash over borders," Joske says.

Zhou's United Front bodies have become something of a Crown affair. Among those recruited to leadership positions of the organisations are several of Zhou's Crown junket partners and casino high rollers. In March 2015, some of them mixed at Crown's exclusive "VIP guests only" Capital Golf Club to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the Hubei Association.

"All thanks must go to Zhou ... the core leader of the Hubei Association!" commentary accompanying a video of the golf day said. "It is Mr Zhou who meticulously planned this unprecedented ... golf tournament."

#### Unanswered questions

Among the questions the Chinese consulate failed to answer for this story is why Zhou would be an endorsed United Front aligned association leader given he is wanted by the Chinese state for serious financial crime. The answer may lie in a presentation given by former Turnbull government foreign affairs adviser John Garnaut. Garnaut was for two years the Australian government's United Front expert, and he worked with ASIO on a still-classified project into the extent of Chinese government interference operations in Australia.



The product of that work, the Garnaut Report, was one of the catalysts for then prime minister Malcolm Turnbull to introduce sweeping counter-foreign interference laws in 2017.

The report has never been released and Garnaut won't talk about it. But prior to joining government, Garnaut was a decorated China correspondent. In that capacity he examined the Chinese Communist Party's habit of forging alliances with the triad organised crime groups to achieve political outcomes.

Multiple reports have documented the use of violent criminals to suppress the democracy movement in Hong Kong, including as recently as last week. In 1993, the chief of China's domestic security agency, Tao Siju, sparked controversy by saying that, "as for organisations like the triads in Hong Kong, as long as these people are patriotic ... we should unite with them".

In a 2011 lecture to the US China Institute, Garnaut revealed Chinese security officials had told him the triads were also used in Australia to help the Communist Party, including by "protecting" the 2008 Olympic torch rally from pro-democracy activists.

"When I was interviewing security people in Beijing ... some of them said to me quite openly, we have got the triads on side" to deal with protesters, Garnaut says. "And that was in Canberra."

Australian officials aware of Zhou's activities have more recently questioned whether his alleged criminal activities are being overlooked by Chinese officials because of his own patriotic activities in Melbourne.

He certainly maintains friends in some very high places. Leaked data and multiple confidential sources reveal that Zhou is connected with a number of elite Communist Party "princelings". Chief among them is Ming Chai. Chai's father is a former high ranking chief of the Chinese Peoples' Armed Police service, a service for which Chai briefly worked before moving to Australia in the early 1990s. Chai's father is also the uncle of the Chinese president Xi Jinping. Ming Chai is the president's cousin.

Who is Ming Chai? As Xi Jinping's standing grew - from provincial mayor to Politburo member and, finally in 2012, president and general secretary of the Chinese Communist Party - so did Ming Chai's.

From 2006-2012, Chai was appointed president of a subsidiary of telecommunications company ZTE, whose biggest shareholder is the Chinese government's aerospace and satellite research agency. After this, Chai headed another listed Chinese telecommunications firm.

In 2014, a report in the Hong Kong Apple newspaper alleged that Chai was operating from the five-star Four Seasons hotel in Hong Kong and trading on his connections to the Chinese president to cut business deals. The same report, along with several other sources in China, also alleged that Chai had fallen foul of anti-corruption authorities in China. Chai certainly has some interesting connections.

In Melbourne, one of his business partners is **Simon Pan**, the brothel owner with alleged sex trafficking links. Chai's businesses in Hong Kong have included a gold bullion trading company he owned with a man who provides financial and legal advice to the Italian mafia and Hong Kong triads.

Despite the reports of his arrest, there is no easily accessible record of any charge or meaningful disruption relating to Chai's business activities in Beijing, Hong Kong or Australia. The leaked Crown data reveals that, in 2014, Chai became one of Crown's top 50 Chinese high rollers, turning over tens of millions of dollars. The following year, Crown offered Chai free gambling cash and tickets to the grand prix. Flight records and his business partnerships with two Crown junkets, Tom "Chinatown" Zhou and Pan, also suggest that Chai may be involved in junket activity. But it was Chai's family connection to the Chinese president, along with his dealings with Zhou, that triggered intense interest from various Australian agencies in the months after Border Force agents boarded the private jet at Coolangatta airport in 2016. Some of those on the plane received unexpected calls earlier this year asking what they knew about Chai and Zhou. The man asking the questions was an agent from ASIO. The Herald has also confirmed that two other men on the plane with Chai and Zhou are also of intense interest to ASIO. One is another Crown high roller with links to junket operators.

Coming soon

During the search of the plane and its passengers on the Gold Coast, federal agents made several unusual findings. Chai, Zhou and their guests were not carrying wallets or mobile phones. One of the passengers claimed he had only decided to travel from the Gold Coast to New Zealand that morning on a whim.

The precise nature of the trip, and of Zhou's relationship with the United Front and the president's cousin, remain shrouded in secrecy, and until now, Zhou continues his life in his luxury Melbourne home, untouched by law enforcement.

There have been some hurdles. Zhou's unruly behaviour at Crown has led him to be barred from the casino (he'd earlier self-excluded to maintain a lower profile). But sources familiar with his operation say his junket is still running strong, albeit via several proxy junkets in other names.

And there may be yet more good news on the horizon for Zhou.

Crown is currently building its \$2 billion Barangaroo hotel and casino in Sydney on prime waterfront land. It's due to open in 2021. This casino is partly aimed at Chinese high rollers. If nothing changes, there could be more of everything for Zhou and the other men involved in the junket business: more mates fast-tracked into Australia, more hefty payments, more private jet trips, more luxury gifts and more big houses in swanky suburbs.

For the time being at least, Mr Chinatown's lucky streak is still running hot.

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Document SMHH000020190728ef7t0000j

# The Sydney Morning Herald

News

## Xi's family link to Crown high rollers

Nick McKenzie, Grace Tobin and Nick Toscano

1,456 words

29 July 2019

The Sydney Morning Herald

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English

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Exclusive | Special Investigation

A cousin of Chinese President Xi Jinping was aboard a private jet for high-roller gamblers when it was searched by federal agents on the Gold Coast in 2016 on suspicion that it was involved in international money laundering.

The initial target of the police search of the jet's passengers was an alleged criminal fugitive and business partner of Crown Resorts, Tom Zhou. But the search also revealed that one of Mr Zhou's travelling companions was Mr Xi's cousin, Ming Chai.

Multiple sources have confirmed that police and security agencies, including ASIO, have since made detailed inquiries about why Mr Chai - a Crown Resorts "VVIP" (very, very important person) - was aboard the flight with Mr Zhou, who is an alleged crime figure and Communist Party influence operative.

A trove of thousands of leaked files from inside the Australian gaming giant shows how Crown and its high-roller agents have encouraged and facilitated the travel to Australia of several figures of interest to police and security agencies.

The files also appear to expose links between Asian criminal gangs known as "triads", which are involved in high-roller junket businesses, and Chinese Communist Party influence activities in Australia. Police and security agencies are now asking questions about the movement in and out of Australia of Chinese high rollers with links to the Chinese Communist Party or organised crime syndicates or, in some cases, both.

A number of Crown's business partners and VVIPs are Australian and Chinese nationals who have led key Communist Party influence organisations in Sydney and Melbourne. "This underbelly of Chinese Communist Party influence is something that we are only just beginning to understand," said Australian Strategic Policy Institute analyst Alex Joske.

The leaked data reveals that Crown had an "emergency channel" with Australian consular officials to fast-track the movement of Chinese nationals into Australia "where we may have hundreds of millions of dollars of turnover at stake".

"The purpose of the 'special line' is not for last minute girlfriend additions ... we should try to avoid using our emergency channel unless it is critical," one leaked Crown email states.

The revelations by the Herald and 60 Minutes have shaken the casino giant formerly controlled by one of Australia's richest men, James Packer. They also raise serious questions about state and federal agencies, including gaming authorities.

In a statement, Crown Resorts said of its relationships with junket operators and individuals: "Crown does not comment on its business operations with particular individuals or businesses". However, it had a "comprehensive" anti-money laundering and counter-terrorism financing program in place "which is subject to regulatory supervision by AUSTRAC".

In a statement through his lawyer, Mr Packer "adamantly" insisted that he had played a "passive" role in the company's operations. He has not been an executive at the company since 2012 and resigned as chairman of Crown Resorts in August 2015 and as a board member in December that year.

A Department of Home Affairs spokesperson said all visa applications were assessed against the law. "Our offices in China are well aware of the risks ... and they scrutinise and manage applications accordingly," the spokesperson said. The department had "no evidence" of conditions being waived for Crown.

The leaked documents reveal how Crown Resorts formed a deep business partnership with Mr Zhou — an international fugitive, alleged crime boss and the subject of an Interpol red notice, according to multiple security officials with knowledge of the matter. Crown helped Mr Zhou's associates get Australian visas, according to the leaked Crown data.

The data also reveals Crown's dealings with Mr Chai, who is a former Chinese police official and high-rolling Crown gambler.

Mr Chai has faced publicly reported corruption allegations in China, though he has never been charged, and is the business partner of Mr Zhou. Both men were aboard the New Zealand-bound jet at Coolangatta airport when the passengers were interrogated by federal agents on August 17, 2016.

Mr Zhou is a multi-millionaire Crown junket operator whose "Chinatown junket" specialises in luring gamblers from China to the casinos in Melbourne and Perth. The Australian passport holder also heads three organisations in Melbourne that are aligned to and backed by the Chinese Communist Party, according to material published by these organisations.

One of them, the Huaxing Art Troupe, answers to the United Front Work Department, the organisation that seeks to influence Chinese diaspora communities and overseas political systems to advance the aims of the Communist Party.

The search of the private jet revealed the extent Mr Zhou's networks. In 2016 and 2017, Mr Zhou was paying a suspended Victoria Police Special Operations Group officer, Greg Leather, and other serving and former law enforcement officials to work for him as private security.

Mr Zhou's dealings with these officials arose after Crown arranged for a firm run by former detectives to help Mr Zhou manage his business.

Mr Leather, who has returned to the police force after suspension, worked as a security agent for the jet passengers and subsequently worked for Mr Zhou, including advising his associates on how to use weapons on Mr Zhou's hunting property in rural Victoria.

Serving and former officials have provided security to Crown customers, including Mr Zhou and Mr Chai, on several private jet flights, according to flight records.

Mr Zhou's alleged involvement in serious criminal activity and violence is documented in several Chinese court cases. The leaked internal Crown files reveal that, on his recommendation, Crown reassured the Australian government that several of Mr Zhou's Chinese associates were of good character and should be allowed to enter Australia.

"[He is a] friend of our VVIP Mr Zhou," states one internal email outlining why Crown should vouch for one Zhou associate to the government.

Mr Zhou and Mr Chai's activities provide a rare insight into the connections between the vast sums of money and politically connected people moving out of China to gamble at Crown, and the Chinese Communist Party's influence activities.

Twelve serving and former government officials who are aware of aspects of the scandal allege that failures in Crown's corporate governance were to blame as well as a failure by state gaming regulators and police and security agencies to act on repeated warnings about Crown's operations.

"For Crown, it's all about the dollars," said one official.

Complicating efforts to act has been Crown's political reach and power.

Former Australian Border Force chief Roman Quaedvlieg has claimed that two federal ministers and one backbencher had lobbied the force to make it easier for Chinese high rollers to enter Australia on private jets.

"There were ministers that approached the agency, approached me personally, indicating that Crown, and subsequently the junket operators that worked with Crown, weren't receiving a facilitated service for private jets coming into Australia, into Perth and Melbourne," Mr Quaedvlieg said.

"[They were] seeking some arrangements which smoothed out the processes ... [so they could] land on a private jet at Melbourne airport, receive the minimal amount of clearances, put them in cars, get them into the casino and spending money."

Mr Chai is a former Chinese police official turned Communist Party princeling with impeccable connections to President Xi. Mr Chai's father — the president's uncle — is a former high-ranking police official. Mr Chai now has an Australian passport and lists his business address at a mansion in the Melbourne suburb of Brighton.

Mr Zhou, his business partner, ran a casino promotion empire - known as a junket - that was licensed and partly bankrolled by Crown. Crown relied on his "Chinatown junket" to funnel China's wealthiest people to its high-roller rooms in Perth and Melbourne and provide them with tens of millions of dollars in gambling credit.

Mr Zhou's partnership with Crown began after he fled the justice system in China when authorities there implicated him in serious financial crime. He has also been accused in various Chinese courts of extortion, standover tactics and even arranging for acid to be thrown in a man's face.

"The facts of a crime are clear and the evidence was reliable and sufficient," according to one court filing from the Intermediate People's Court of Wuhan province. It also reveals that Chinese police allege Mr Zhou had been "misappropriating huge amounts of money". The file states that Mr Zhou "absconded abroad" and would be dealt with "separately", a likely reference to his Interpol arrest warrant.

Mr Chai has formed investment businesses in Australia with Mr Zhou and a second Crown junket operator, **Simon Pan**.

Document SMHH000020190728ef7t00002

News

**How 'Mr Chinatown' delivered the whales**

Nick McKenzie, Nick Toscano and Grace Tobin

2,781 words

29 July 2019

The Age

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English

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In 2016 a private jet was searched by law enforcement on the tarmac of Coolangatta airport. The people in that jet were worth billions each, and each held secrets precious to Crown casino. Nick McKenzie, Nick Toscano and Grace Tobin report.

On August 17, 2016, federal police received a security alert about a man preparing to board a luxury private jet idling on a runway at Coolangatta airport.

The jet was stationed within view of the passenger terminal, a hive of tourists in thongs and board shorts. But the police alert suggested the red-flagged passenger had not visited the Gold Coast to go to the beach.

Tom Zhou is a short man with a round, boyish face and an intense demeanour. His familiarity with luxury travel was thanks to a special arrangement he had made with a company then majority-owned by one of Australia's richest men, James Packer.

Inside Crown Resorts' casino high-roller operations, Zhou was royalty. The staff who dealt with Crown's VIP gamblers had nicknamed him "Mr Chinatown". And what Mr Chinatown wanted, Mr Chinatown got.

According to an investigation by The Age and 60 Minutes aided by one of the biggest leaks of corporate data in Australia - tens of thousands of documents detailing Crown's high-roller operation - Zhou was provided access to private jets, luxury hotel suites, lavish gifts and tickets to concerts by James Packer's then girlfriend, Mariah Carey. When Zhou's associates wanted visas to enter Australia, Crown would vouch for them to the federal government.

And Crown paid Zhou's business empire tens of millions of dollars.

In return, Crown relied on Zhou, who lives in a mansion in Toorak, to circumvent Chinese laws that outlaw gambling promotion in China. These laws also ban the luring of groups of rich and powerful mainlanders to offshore casinos to punt.

In some cases it's been Asian organised crime gangs known as triads who conjured up ways to do this. But Zhou had also perfected this shadowy art, funnelling gamblers from China to Australia via his "Chinatown junket" to punt billions at Crown's casinos.

Zhou's mastery had delivered him immense wealth and a privileged relationship with the Australian company. But Zhou is no ordinary Crown partner. He is an international criminal fugitive, the subject of an Interpol red notice for financial crime that netted him tens of millions of dollars. He is supposed to be arrested immediately if he crosses a country's border.

And from an Australian national security point of view, he is a double threat. He also heads several Chinese Communist Party-aligned organisations in Melbourne designed to project Beijing's influence in Australia.

It makes him someone of keen interest to organisations such as the Australian Federal Police and ASIO.

But the federal police airport investigators knew little of this as they approached him and his fellow private jet passengers at the Gold Coast terminal in 2016. The alert warned that Zhou was suspected of involvement in money laundering, but was otherwise scant on detail.

After a brief search, they allowed the plane to leave to New Zealand.

They missed two curious facts.

The first was that Zhou was being escorted by Greg Leather, a former Victorian detective as well as a highly trained and security vetted Special Operations Group Victorian Police officer who at the time was suspended from the force. The second fact was the identity of one of the other guests they were guarding.

This man is described in the leaked Crown data as a "VVIP" or "very, very important person". His name is Ming Chai and, while he is unknown in Australia, his family is famous in China.

Ming Chai is a blood relative of the most powerful man in China, its president Xi Jinping.

In the months after the private plane rose over the Gold Coast's glittering shoreline, fresh questions about its occupants began to be asked: Has Australia's largest casino company effectively enabled the activities of organised criminals or those doing the bidding of the Chinese Communist Party? And, if so, has Crown been gambling not only with its casino licenses but with the nation's security?

The central Victorian shire of Murrindindi is known for its natural beauty, with steep rises emerging from farmland, providing stunning mountain views. In the late 1880s, gold miners streamed here in droves to fossick along rich gold seams.

A century and a quarter later, another man seeking great riches came to town. When he rolled into Murrindindi in a luxury car in 2016, Tom Zhou had already made a fortune. He already bought his Toorak house in 2009 for \$7.9 million and another around the corner for \$15 million in 2013.

Now a sprawling cattle property in Murrindindi had caught his eye. Zhou snapped it up for \$7.5 million and turned it into a hunting lodge.

In a makeshift armoury, next to a reinforced safe containing hunting rifles and shotguns, are two dozen white Crown Casino hats for guests to wear. Photos on the walls depict Zhou's wealthy Chinese guests, including those who have come to Murrindindi via Crown.

The leaked Crown data includes tax receipts showing the casino company paid tens of millions of dollars per year to "sub junkets" run by Zhou's associates and agents - their percentage cut of the gaming turnover of the VIPs from the Chinese mainland that Zhou's junket has brought to Crown's casinos in Perth and Melbourne.

But even before Crown became his plaything, Zhou was already immensely wealthy. A portion of his money comes, allegedly, from crime.

Chinese court files reveal that by 2013, Wuhan's Bureau of Public Security had built a case that Zhou was involved in a serious criminal scheme to defraud a company of tens of millions of dollars.

It's alleged in China that Zhou has been involved in mafia-type extortion and standover tactics. Multiple litigants accuse him of defrauding them and, in one case, of having "directly threatened the lives of senior management". In another case, he was accused of arranging for acid to be thrown in a rival's face, an allegation he denies along with all other claims of wrongdoing.

"The facts of a crime are clear and the evidence was reliable and sufficient," one court filing reads.

Three of Zhou's accomplices were jailed for three years each but, rather than face the justice system for "misappropriating huge amounts of money ... Zhou absconded abroad" the filing states. He would be dealt with "separately". Zhou landed in Australia, and Chinese authorities issued an international arrest warrant known as a "red notice" via Interpol, according to multiple officials with knowledge of the matter. Even so, he was not picked up at the border.

When Zhou left China, it seems he may have smuggled a fortune out with him. If this is indeed what happened, it was likely Zhou's first use of a modus operandi that underpins the junket service he provides the Crown high rollers who need to launder funds past China's borders and the country's ban on capital flight.

Crown Resorts did not answer a series of questions about its junket partners, adding that it did not comment on its "business operations with particular individuals or businesses". However, it said in a statement that it had a "comprehensive" anti-money laundering and counter terrorism financing program "which is subject to regulatory supervision".

Through his lawyers, Mr Packer "adamantly" insisted he had no knowledge of the conduct of the company's operations in China.

Mr Packer has not held an executive position at the company since 2012, though he was chairman of Crown Resorts until August 2015, and a board member until he resigned in December that year.

According to the lawyer's letter, he only played a "passive role".

Crown's phenomenal growth as a global gambling brand has been fuelled by Chinese high-roller junket operators. But moving people and large amounts of money out of the mainland to gamble are both forbidden under Chinese law. Collecting gambling debts on the Chinese mainland is also illegal. So the junkets act as "middle-men" to facilitate transactions the casinos themselves find difficult.

They can smuggle money out of mainland China, or organise lines of credit in Australia; they can organise luxury tours and enticements while the gambler is in Australia; they can settle winnings or losses, in either jurisdiction; and they can collect debts, with menace if necessary, in China.

The US government has repeatedly warned that some junket operations have, at least in part, been run by the mafia-style criminal syndicates called triads. Triads are expert money launderers, have access to large pools of funds and are effective collectors of gambling debts because of their propensity to use violence.

Zhou's stunning success as a junket operator should have been warning enough for Crown to delve into his past. But there is no indication it reviewed the court cases that name him as a criminal.

Despite all this, the leaked Crown files reveal that from late 2014, Crown relied increasingly heavily on Zhou's Chinatown junket.

It was named in a confidential Crown document as one of eight specially selected junkets Crown had decided to aggressively embrace because they were "large, reputable" and "deemed credit worthy in large amounts".

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Zhou is chairman or has a "guiding" role at the "Hubei Association of Australia, the Hubei Chamber of Commerce, and the Huaxing Arts Group of Melbourne", the latter reporting directly to the United Front Work Department in China.

A 2018 report boasts of Huaxing's "database that contains contact information of important politicians, major Chinese community groups, celebrities, and artists".



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"Through his junkets, he'd also be able to bring large amounts of cash over borders," says Joske.

Zhou's United Front bodies have become something of a Crown affair. Among those recruited to leadership positions of the organisations are several of Zhou's Crown junket partners and casino high rollers. In March 2015, some of them mixed at Crown's exclusive "VIP guests only" Capital Golf Club to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the Hubei Association.

Among the questions the Chinese consulate failed to answer for this story is why Zhou would be an endorsed United Front aligned association leader given he is wanted by the Chinese state for serious financial crime.

The answer may lie in a presentation given by former Turnbull government foreign affairs adviser John Garnaut who, in his old life as a journalist, examined the Chinese Communist Party's habit of forging alliances with the triads.

In a 2011 lecture, Garnaut revealed that "security people in Beijing" had told him, "we have got the triads on side".

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Leaked data and multiple confidential sources reveal Zhou is connected with a number of elite Communist Party "princelings". Among them is Ming Chai.

Chai's father is a former high ranking chief of the Chinese Peoples' Armed Police service, a service for which Chai himself briefly worked. Chai's father is also the uncle of the Chinese president Xi Jinping. Ming Chai is the president's cousin. From 2006 to 2012, Chai was appointed president of a subsidiary of telecommunications company ZTE, whose biggest shareholder is the Chinese government's aerospace and satellite research agency. After this, Chai headed another listed Chinese telecommunications firm.

In 2014, a report in the Hong Kong Apple newspaper alleged that Chai was operating from the five-star Four Seasons hotel in Hong Kong and trading on his connections to the Chinese president to cut business deals. The same report, along with several sources in China, also alleged Chai had fallen foul of anti-corruption authorities in China.

In Melbourne, one of his business partners is **Simon Pan**, a brothel owner with alleged sex trafficking links. Chai's businesses in Hong Kong have included a gold bullion trading company he owned with a man who provides financial and legal advice to the Italian mafia and Hong Kong triads.

Despite the reports of his arrest, there is no easily accessible record of any charge or meaningful disruption relating to Chai's business activities in Beijing, Hong Kong or Australia.

The leaked Crown data reveals that, in 2014, Chai became one of Crown's top 50 Chinese high rollers, turning over tens of millions of dollars. The following year, Crown offered Chai free gambling cash and tickets to the Grand Prix. But it was Chai's family connection to the Chinese president, along with his dealings with Zhou, that triggered intense interest from Australian agencies in the months after Border Force agents boarded the jet at Coolangatta airport in 2016.

During the search of the plane and its passengers on the Gold Coast, federal agents made several unusual findings. Chai, Zhou and their guests were not carrying wallets or mobile phones. But sources familiar with his operation say Zhou's junket is still running strong, albeit via proxy junkets in other names.

Crown is currently building its \$2 billion Barangaroo hotel and casino in Sydney. This casino is partly aimed at Chinese high rollers. For the time being at least, Mr Chinatown's lucky streak is still running hot.

Document AGEE000020190728ef7t00009



## **Crown's unsavoury business links: how Australia's casino got tied up with criminals**

Nick McKenzie, Nick Toscano and Grace Tobin

3,920 words

29 July 2019

01:17

The Age - Online

AGEEOL

English

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On August 17, 2016, federal police received a security alert about a man preparing to board a luxury private jet idling on a runway at Coolangatta airport.

The jet was stationed within view of the passenger terminal, a hive of tourists in thongs and board shorts. But the police alert suggested the red-flagged passenger had not visited the Gold Coast to go to the beach.

Tom Zhou is a short man with a round, boyish face and an intense demeanour. His familiarity with luxury travel was thanks to a special arrangement he had made with a company then majority owned by one of Australia's richest men, James Packer.

Inside Crown Resorts' casino high-roller operations, Zhou was royalty. The staff who dealt with Crown's VIP gamblers had nicknamed him "Mr Chinatown". And what Mr Chinatown wanted, Mr Chinatown got.

According to an investigation by The Age, The Sydney Morning Herald and 60 Minutes aided by one of the biggest leaks of corporate data in Australia ??? tens of thousands of documents detailing Crown's high roller operation - Zhou was provided access to private jets, luxury hotel suites, lavish gifts and tickets to concerts by James Packer's then girlfriend, Mariah Carey.

When Zhou's associates wanted visas to enter Australia, Crown would vouch for them to the federal government.

And Crown paid Zhou's business empire tens of millions of dollars.

In return, Crown relied on Zhou, who lives in a mansion in Melbourne's Toorak, to circumvent Chinese laws that outlaw gambling promotion in China. These laws also ban the luring of groups of rich and powerful mainlanders to offshore casinos to punt.

In some cases it's been Asian organised crime gangs known as triads who conjured up [ways to do this](#). But Zhou had also perfected this shadowy art, funnelling gamblers from China to Australia via his "Chinatown junket" to punt billions at Crown's casinos.

Zhou's mastery had delivered him immense wealth and a privileged relationship with the Australian company.

But Zhou is no ordinary Crown partner. He is, in fact, an international criminal fugitive, the subject of an Interpol red notice for financial crime that netted him tens of millions of dollars. He is supposed to be arrested immediately if he crosses a country's border.

And from an Australian national security point of view, he is a double threat. He also heads several Chinese Communist Party-aligned organisations in Melbourne designed to project Beijing's influence in Australia.

It makes him someone of keen interest to organisations such as the Australian Federal Police and ASIO.

But the federal police airport investigators knew little of Zhou's back story as they approached him and his fellow private jet passengers at the Gold Coast terminal in 2016. The security alert warned that Zhou was suspected of involvement in money laundering, but was otherwise scant on detail.

After a brief search, they found no excessive quantities of cash, and allowed the plane to leave to New Zealand.

They missed two curious facts they would only later pick up.

The first was that Zhou was being escorted by Greg Leather, a former Victorian detective as well as a highly trained and security vetted Special Operations Group Victorian Police officer who at the time was suspended from the force.

The second fact was the identity of one of the other guests they were guarding.

This man is described in the leaked Crown data as a "VVIP" or "very, very important person". His name is Ming Chai and, while he is unknown in Australia, his family is famous in China.

Ming Chai is a blood relative of the most powerful man in China, its president Xi Jinping.

Unsurprisingly, in the months after the private plane rose over the Gold Coast's glittering shoreline, fresh questions about its occupants began to be asked by those responsible for guarding Australia's national security.

Has Australia's largest casino company effectively enabled the activities of organised criminals or those doing the bidding of the Chinese Communist Party? And, if so, has Crown been gambling not only with its casino licenses but with the nation's security?

Extortion, fraud and hunting rifles

The central Victorian shire of Murrindindi is known for its natural beauty, with steep rises emerging from farmland, providing stunning mountain views. In the late 1880s, gold miners streamed here in droves to fossick along rich gold seams.

A century and a quarter later, another man seeking great riches came to town. When he rolled into Murrindindi in a luxury car in 2016, Tom Zhou had already made a fortune. He already bought his Toorak house in 2009 for \$7.9 million and another around the corner for \$15 million in 2013.

Now a sprawling cattle property in Murrindindi had caught his eye. Even in this picturesque region, it stood out. A road from the property's dilapidated farmhouse winds past cattle gates and up steep paddocks to a ridge that offers the property's finest feature - a vista of cloud-cloaked mountain ranges. Zhou snapped it up for \$7.5 million.

Zhou's plan upon purchase, according to the property's managers, was to build a five-star hotel here for Chinese tourists.

Instead, he has turned it into a hunting lodge.

Clues about the source of Zhou's funds are scattered around a weatherboard house on the property. In a makeshift armoury, next to a reinforced safe containing hunting rifles and shotguns, are two dozen white Crown Casino hats for guests to wear.

Photos on the walls depict Zhou's wealthy Chinese guests, including those who have come to Murrindindi via Crown.

The leaked Crown data includes tax receipts showing the casino company paid tens of millions of dollars per year to "sub junkets" run by Zhou's associates and agents - their percentage cut of the gaming turnover of the VIPs from the Chinese mainland that Zhou's junket has brought to Crown's casinos in Perth and Melbourne.

But even before Crown became his plaything, Zhou was already immensely wealthy. A portion of his money comes, allegedly, from crime.

Dozens of Chinese court files obtained by The Age, the Herald and 60 Minutes reveal that by 2013, Wuhan's Bureau of Public Security had built a case that Zhou was involved in a serious criminal scheme to defraud a company of tens of millions of dollars.

It's alleged in a number of cases in China that Zhou has been involved in mafia-type extortion and standover tactics. Multiple litigants accuse him of defrauding them and, in one case, of having "directly threatened the lives of senior management." In another case, he was accused of arranging for acid to be thrown in a rival's face, an allegation he denies along with all other claims of wrongdoing.

"The facts of a crime are clear and the evidence was reliable and sufficient," one court filing reads.

Who is Tom Zhou?

Three of Zhou's accomplices were jailed for three years each in one case but, rather than face the justice system for "misappropriating huge amounts of money ??? Zhou absconded abroad" the filing states. He would be dealt with "separately".

Zhou landed in Australia, and Chinese authorities issued an international arrest warrant known as a "red notice" via Interpol, according to multiple officials with knowledge of the matter. Even so, he was not picked up at the border.

When Zhou left China, it seems he may have smuggled a fortune out with him. If this is indeed what happened, it was likely Zhou's first use of a modus operandi that underpins the junket service he provides the Crown high rollers who need to launder funds past China's borders and the country's ban on capital flight.

How a junket works

It is unclear just who at Crown had responsibility for checking Zhou's background.

Crown Resorts did not answer a series of questions about its junket partners, adding that it did not comment on its "business operations with particular individuals or businesses". However, it said in a statement that it had a "comprehensive" anti-money laundering and counter terrorism financing program "which is subject to regulatory supervision".

Through his lawyers, Mr Packer "adamantly" insisted he had no knowledge of the conduct of the company's operations in China.

Mr Packer has not held an executive position at the company since 2012, though he was chairman of Crown Resorts until August, 2015, and a board member until he resigned in December that year.

According to the lawyer's letter, he only played a "passive role" in the company's operations.

The day of the junkets

Crown's phenomenal growth as a global gambling brand has been fuelled by Chinese high roller junket operators. Australia's proximity to China, the services and perks Crown offers its biggest punters, and the fact the whole operation is legal under Australian law, have made it a magnet for billions of dollars from China.

But moving people and large amounts of money out of the mainland to gamble are both forbidden under Chinese law. Collecting gambling debts on the Chinese mainland is also illegal. So the junkets act as "middle-men" to facilitate transactions the casinos themselves find difficult.

They can smuggle money out of mainland China, or organise lines of credit in Australia; they can organise luxury tours and enticements while the gambler is in Australia; they can settle winnings or losses, in either jurisdiction; and they can collect debts, with menace if necessary, in China.

The US government has repeatedly warned that some junket operations have, at least in part, been run by the mafia-style criminal syndicates called triads. Triads are expert money launderers, have access to large pools of funds and are effective collectors of unpaid gambling debts because of their propensity to use violence and extortion.

On Saturday, The Age and the Herald [revealed](#) how a powerful and dangerous triad drug syndicate known as The Company was able to do this work with Crown despite its deep criminal links.

Laundering money through a casino

Zhou's stunning success as a junket operator should have been warning enough for Crown to delve a little into his past. But there is no indication it reviewed the court cases that name him as a criminal, fugitive and stand-over man.

The information is not hard to find.

Some of Crown's own former staff, who worked with high rollers, allege in confidential interviews that it was an open secret that Mr Chinatown had a colourful past and a penchant for wild parties.

A search with Australia's corporate regulator reveals Zhou is a business partner of a man called **Simon Pan**, a Melbourne brothel owner allegedly implicated in sex trafficking. Pan operates a brothel just 1km from Crown's back door and his business has been named in multiple court cases over its links to organised crime and the trafficking of sex workers from Asia to Melbourne.

Pan is also himself licensed by Crown as a junket operator.

Key Crown players

Despite all this, the leaked Crown files reveal that from late 2014, Crown relied increasingly heavily on Zhou's Chinatown junket.

It was named in a confidential Crown document as one of eight specially selected junkets Crown had decided to aggressively embrace because they were "large, reputable" and "deemed credit worthy in large amounts."

"Instead of having players bring cash or playing with smaller-than-ideal credit lines, we can partner with [junket] platforms to ensure the players have the full front-money they are accustomed to playing with in Macau," Crown's 2015 junket strategy memo states.

The memo also reveals that the Chinatown junket would be taught the "pain funnel" sales technique to draw more "whales" - giant gamblers - to Crown.

In the first two weeks of 2015, Crown's internal figures revealed that the "Chinatown" high rollers had gambled \$24 million at its casinos. Three months later, that figure had ballooned to \$1.452 billion.

The Crown files suggest Zhou himself was not at Crown's Perth or Melbourne casinos, but instead overseeing the work of his "sub-junkets" or "Chinatown reps". Their earnings give an insight into Zhou's profit-making machine. In the 2016 financial year, Crown records show it paid Chinatown's representative in Perth \$28 million in commissions.

Crown also vouched to the Australian government about the reliability of Chinese nationals Zhou was bringing to Australia.

Lobbied by ministers

In one leaked email, Crown staff prepare to vouch to Australian visa officials about a high roller on the basis that he was "referred by Crown VVIP Mr Zhou" and because "Crown staff ??? has known Mr Zhou [for] more than 10 years".

In another chain of emails, Crown staff arrange a visa for a "friend of our VVIP Mr Zhou" because the man "would like to attend Mr Zhou birthday party in Australia".

Correspondence from Australian visa officials in Guangzhou and Shanghai suggest Crown's vouching for high rollers led to visas being expedited via an "emergency hotline" Crown had with Australia's consulates. There were higher level interventions on Crown's behalf as well.

A Department of Home Affairs spokesperson said all visa applications were assessed against the law. "Our offices in China are well aware of the risks ... and they scrutinise and manage applications accordingly," the spokesperson said. The Department had "no evidence" of conditions being waived for Crown.

Former head of Border Force, Roman Quaedvlieg, claims that he was lobbied by two ministers and another MP to help "smooth out" the border security process for Crown's big gamblers arriving from China.

Crown wanted its high rollers "to land on a private jet at Melbourne airport, receive the minimal amount of clearances, put them in cars, get them into a casino and spending money," Quaedvlieg says.

Crown also helped arrange Zhou's personal security, linking him up with a company run by a former Victorian detective who arranged for the highly trained Leather, to work for Zhou. (Leather was suspended from the force over an unrelated integrity investigation when he went on Zhou's payroll, but has returned to the force).

Leather and the ex-detective appear to have worked for many months for Zhou. Photos obtained by The Age, the Herald and 60 Minutes show Leather giving firearms lessons to Zhou's Chinese guests at his Murrindindi farm, in potential breach of laws requiring all people handling firearms to be licensed.

It's understood that Leather did not seek approval to work for Zhou, seemingly breaching Victoria Police policy.

Wealth and influence

Hunting animals and making millions were not Zhou's only Melbourne enterprises. He was also heavily involved in three organisations aligned with the Chinese Communist Party's United Front operation - the organisation which works to influence Chinese diaspora communities and overseas political systems to advance the aims of the Communist Party.

Zhou is chairman or has a "guiding" role at the "Hubei Association of Australia (HAA), the Hubei Chamber of Commerce (HCC), and the Huaxing Arts Group of Melbourne (Huaxing)," the latter reporting directly to the United Front Work Department in China.

The same online report says Huaxing is "fostered" by the Communist Party's "Overseas Chinese Affairs Office of the State Council" and has "the strong support of the Melbourne Chinese Consulate" as it has strived to earn "the trust of the motherland" and the Chinese government.

"We shoulder the heavy responsibilities and we'll undertake such missions," the Huaxing organisation wrote in a report sent to Beijing in 2018. The report also boasts of its "database that contains contact information of important politicians, major Chinese community groups, celebrities, and artists".

Zhou's connections to politicians is not over-stated. In 2013, the Zhou-chaired Hubei Chamber of Commerce in Melbourne appointed as its executive president a former adviser to Victorian premier Daniel Andrews, Mike Yang, who knew Zhou through Yang's father.

United Front expert Alex Joske says Zhou's success in becoming Crown's key Melbourne junket operator as well as a United Front patron allowed him "to build political influence, build networks with politicians, and then quite possibly send that information back to Beijing".

"Through his junkets, he'd also be able to bring large amounts of cash over borders," says Joske.

Zhou's United Front bodies have become something of a Crown affair. Among those recruited to leadership positions of the organisations are several of Zhou's Crown junket partners and casino high rollers. In March 2015, some of them mixed at Crown's exclusive "VIP guests only" [Capital Golf Club](#) to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the Hubei Association.

"All thanks must go to Zhou ... the core leader of the Hubei Association!" commentary accompanying a video of the golf day said. "It is Mr Zhou who meticulously planned this unprecedented ??? golf tournament."

#### Unanswered questions

Among the questions the Chinese consulate failed to answer for this story is why Zhou would be an endorsed United Front aligned association leader given he is wanted by the Chinese state for serious financial crime.

The answer may lie in a presentation given by former Turnbull government foreign affairs adviser John Garnaut. Garnaut was for two years the Australian government's United Front expert, and he worked with ASIO on a still-classified project into the extent of Chinese government interference operations in Australia. The product of that work, the Garnaut Report, was one of the catalysts for Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull to introduce sweeping counter-foreign interference laws in 2017.

The report has never been released and Garnaut won't talk about it. But prior to joining government, Garnaut was a decorated China correspondent. In that capacity he examined the Chinese Communist Party's habit of forging alliances with the triad organised crime groups to achieve political outcomes.

Multiple reports have documented the use of violent criminals to suppress the democracy movement in Hong Kong, including as recently as last week. In 1993, the chief of China's domestic security agency, Tao Siju, sparked controversy by saying that: "as for organisations like the triads in Hong Kong, as long as these people are patriotic ??? we should unite with them."

In a 2011 lecture to the US China Institute, Garnaut revealed that Chinese security officials had told him the triads were also used in Australia to help the Communist Party, including by "protecting" the 2008 Olympic torch rally from pro-democracy activists.

"When I was interviewing security people in Beijing ??? some of them said to me quite openly, we have got the triads on side" to deal with protesters, says Garnaut. "And that was in Canberra."

Australian officials aware of Zhou's activities have more recently questioned whether his alleged criminal activities are being overlooked by Chinese officials because of his own patriotic activities in Melbourne.

He certainly maintains friends in some very high places.

Leaked data and multiple confidential sources reveal that Zhou is connected with a number of elite Communist Party "princelings".

Chief among them is Ming Chai.

Chai's father is a former high ranking chief of the Chinese Peoples' Armed Police service, a service for which Chai himself briefly worked before moving to Australia in the early 1990s. Chai's father is also the uncle of the Chinese president Xi Jinping.

Ming Chai is the president's cousin.

Who is Ming Chai?

President, princeling and prostitutes

As Xi Jinping's standing grew - from provincial mayor to Politburo member and, finally in 2012, President and General Secretary of the Chinese Communist Party - so did Ming Chai's.

From 2006-2012, Chai was appointed president of a subsidiary of telecommunications company ZTE, whose biggest shareholder is the Chinese government's aerospace and satellite research agency. After this, Chai headed another listed Chinese telecommunications firm.

In 2014, a report in the Hong Kong Apple newspaper alleged that Chai was operating from the five-star Four Seasons hotel in Hong Kong and trading on his connections to the Chinese president to cut business deals. The same report, along with several other sources in China, also alleged that Chai had fallen foul of anti-corruption authorities in China.

Chai certainly has some interesting connections.

In Melbourne, one of his business partners is **Simon Pan**, the brothel owner with alleged sex trafficking links. Chai's businesses in Hong Kong have included a gold bullion trading company he owned with a man who provides financial and legal advice to the Italian mafia and Hong Kong triads.

Despite the reports of his arrest, there is no easily accessible record of any charge or meaningful disruption relating to Chai's business activities in Beijing, Hong Kong or Australia.

The leaked Crown data reveals that, in 2014, Chai became one of Crown's top fifty Chinese high rollers, turning over tens of millions of dollars. The following year, Crown offered Chai free gambling cash and tickets to the Grand Prix. Flight records and his business partnerships with two Crown junkets, Tom "Chinatown" Zhou and **Simon Pan**, also suggest that Chai himself may be involved in junket activity.

But it was Chai's family connection to the Chinese president, along with his dealings with Zhou, that triggered intense interest from various Australian agencies in the months after Border Force agents boarded the private jet at Coolangatta airport in 2016.

Some of those on the plane received unexpected calls earlier this year asking what they knew about Chai and Zhou. The man asking the questions was an agent from Australia's security agency, ASIO.

The Age and Herald have also confirmed that two other men on the plane with Chai and Zhou are also of intense interest to ASIO. One is another Crown high roller with links to junket operators.

Coming soon to Sydney

During the search of the plane and its passengers on the Gold Coast, federal agents made several unusual findings. Chai, Zhou and their guests were not carrying wallets or mobile phones. One of the passengers claimed he had only decided to travel from the Gold Coast to New Zealand that morning on a whim.

The precise nature of the trip, and of Zhou's relationship with the United Front and the President's cousin, remain shrouded in secrecy, and until now, Zhou continues his life in his luxury Melbourne home, untouched by law enforcement.

There have been some hurdles. Zhou's unruly behaviour at Crown has led him to be barred from the casino (he'd earlier self-excluded to maintain a lower profile). But sources familiar with his operation say his junket is still running strong, albeit via several proxy junkets in other names.

And there may be yet more good news on the horizon for Zhou.

Crown is currently building its \$2 billion Barangaroo hotel and casino in Sydney on prime waterfront land. It's due to open in 2021.

This casino is partly aimed at Chinese high rollers.

If nothing changes, there could be more of everything for Zhou and the other men involved in the junket business: more mates fast-tracked into Australia, more hefty payments, more private jet trips, more luxury gifts, and more big houses in swanky suburbs.

For the time being at least, Mr Chinatown's lucky streak is still running hot.

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Document AGEEOL0020190728ef7s000xd



## Xi Jinping's cousin a high roller as Crown comes under pressure over crime, influence

Nick McKenzie, Grace Tobin and Nick Toscano

1,592 words

29 July 2019

01:45

The Age - Online

AGEEOL

English

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A cousin of Chinese President Xi Jinping was aboard a private jet for high-roller gamblers when it was searched by federal agents on the Gold Coast in 2016 on suspicion that it was involved in international money laundering.

The initial target of the police search of the jet's passengers was an alleged criminal fugitive and business partner of Crown Resorts, Tom Zhou. But the search also revealed that one of Mr Zhou's travelling companions was Mr Xi's cousin, Ming Chai.

Multiple sources have confirmed that police and security agencies, including ASIO, have since made detailed inquiries about why Mr Chai - a Crown resorts "VVIP" (very, very important person) - was aboard the flight with Mr Zhou, who is an alleged crime figure and Communist Party influence operative.

A trove of thousands of leaked files from inside the Australian gaming giant shows how Crown and its high-roller agents have encouraged and facilitated the travel to Australia of several figures of interest to police and security agencies.

The files also appear to expose links between Asian criminal gangs known as "triads", which are involved in high-roller junket businesses, and Chinese Communist Party influence activities in Australia.

Police and security agencies are now asking questions about the movement in and out of Australia of Chinese high rollers with links to the Chinese Communist Party or organised crime syndicates or, in some cases, both.

A number of Crown's business partners and VVIPs are Australian and Chinese nationals who have led key Communist Party influence organisations in Sydney and Melbourne.

"This underbelly of Chinese Communist Party influence is something that we are only just beginning to understand," said Australian Strategic Policy Institute analyst Alex Joske.

The leaked data reveals that Crown had an "emergency channel" with Australian consular officials to fast-track the movement of Chinese nationals into Australia "where we may have hundreds of millions of dollars of turnover at stake".

"The purpose of the 'special line' is not for last minute girlfriend additions we should try to avoid using our emergency channel unless it is critical," one leaked Crown email states.

The revelations by The Age, The Sydney Morning Herald and 60 Minutes have shaken the casino giant formerly controlled by one of Australia's richest men, James Packer. They also raise serious questions about state and federal agencies, including gaming authorities.

Who is Ming Chai?

In a statement, Crown Resorts said of its relationships with junket operators and individuals: "Crown does not comment on its business operations with particular individuals or businesses."

However, it had a "comprehensive" anti-money laundering and counter-terrorism financing program in place, "which is subject to regulatory supervision by AUSTRAC".

In a statement through his lawyer, Mr Packer "adamantly" insisted that he had played a "passive" role in the company's operations. He has not been an executive at the company since 2012 and resigned as chairman of Crown Resorts in August 2015 and as a board member in December that year.



A Department of Home Affairs spokesperson said all visa applications were assessed against the law. "Our offices in China are well aware of the risks ... and they scrutinise and manage applications accordingly," the spokesperson said. The department had "no evidence" of conditions being waived for Crown.

#### A deep relationship

The leaked documents reveal how Crown Resorts formed a deep business partnership with Mr Zhou ??? an international fugitive, alleged crime boss and the subject of an Interpol red notice, according to multiple security officials with knowledge of the matter. Crown helped Mr Zhou's associates get Australian visas, according to the leaked Crown data.

The data also reveals Crown's dealings with Mr Chai, who is also a former Chinese police official and high-rolling Crown gambler.

Mr Chai has faced publicly reported corruption allegations in China, though he has never been charged, and is the business partner of Mr Zhou. Both men were aboard the New Zealand-bound jet when the passengers were interrogated by federal agents at Coolangatta airport on August 17, 2016.

Mr Zhou is a multi-millionaire Crown "junket" operator whose "Chinatown junket" specialises in luring gamblers from China to the casinos in Melbourne and Perth. The Australian passport holder also heads three organisations in Melbourne that are aligned to and backed by the Chinese Communist Party, according to material published by these same organisations.

#### Who is Tom Zhou?

One of them, the Huaxing Art Troupe, answers to the United Front Work Department, the organisation that works to influence Chinese diaspora communities and overseas political systems to advance the aims of the Communist Party.

The search of the private jet revealed the extent Mr Zhou's networks. In 2016 and 2017, Mr Zhou was paying a suspended Victoria Police Special Operations Group officer, Greg Leather, and other serving and former law enforcement officials to work for him as private security.

Mr Zhou's dealing with these officials arose after Crown arranged for a firm run by former detectives to help Mr Zhou run his business.

Mr Leather, who has returned to the force after suspension, worked as a security agent for the jet passengers and subsequently worked for Mr Zhou, including advising his associates on how to use weapons on Mr Zhou's hunting property in rural Victoria.

Serving and former officials have provided security to Crown customers, including Mr Zhou and Mr Chai, on several private jet flights, according to flight records.

Mr Zhou's alleged involvement in serious criminal activity and violence is documented in several Chinese court cases. The leaked internal Crown files reveal that, on his recommendation, Crown reassured the Australian government that several of Mr Zhou's Chinese associates were of good character and should be allowed to enter Australia.

"[He is a] friend of our VVIP Mr Zhou," states one internal email outlining why Crown should vouch for one Zhou associate to the government.

Mr Zhou and Mr Chai's activities provide a rare insight into the connections between the vast sums of money and politically connected people moving out of China to gamble at Crown, and the Chinese Communist Party's influence activities.

#### How a junket can launder money

Twelve serving and former government officials who are aware of aspects of the scandal allege that failures in Crown's corporate governance were to blame as well as a failure by state gaming regulators and police and security agencies to act on repeated warnings about Crown's operations.

"For Crown, it's all about the dollars," said one official.

Complicating efforts to act has been Crown's political reach and power.

Former Australian Border Force chief Roman Quaadvlieg has claimed that two federal ministers and one backbencher had lobbied the force, asking it to make it easier for Chinese high rollers to enter Australia on private jets despite agency warnings about some passengers.

"There were ministers that approached the agency, approached me personally, indicating that Crown, and subsequently the junket operators that worked with Crown, weren't receiving a facilitated service for private jets coming into Australia, into Perth and Melbourne," Mr Quaadvlieg said.

"[They were] seeking some arrangements which smoothed out the processes ... [so they could] land on a private jet at Melbourne airport, receive the minimal amount of clearances, put them in cars, get them into the casino and spending money."

Mr Quaadvlieg was sacked from the Border Force for assisting his girlfriend, a low-ranking part-time employee, to apply for full-time work.

The president's cousin

Mr Chai is a former Chinese police official turned Communist Party princeling with impeccable connections to President Xi. Mr Chai's father ??? the president's uncle ??? is a former high-ranking police official. Mr Chai now has an Australian passport and lists his business address at a mansion in Melbourne's bayside suburb of Brighton.

Mr Zhou, his business partner, ran a casino promotion empire - known as a junket - that was licensed and partly bankrolled by Crown. Crown relied on his "Chinatown junket" to funnel China's wealthiest people to its high-roller rooms in Perth and Melbourne and provide them with tens of millions of dollars in gambling credit.

Crown casino's connections

Mr Zhou's partnership with Crown began after he fled the justice system in China when authorities there implicated him in serious financial crime. He has also been accused in various Chinese courts of extortion, standover tactics and even arranging for acid to be thrown in a man's face.

"The facts of a crime are clear and the evidence was reliable and sufficient," according to one court filing from the Intermediate People's Court of Wuhan province. It also reveals that Chinese police allege Mr Zhou had been "misappropriating huge amounts of money". The file states that Mr Zhou "absconded abroad" and would be dealt with "separately", a likely reference to his Interpol arrest warrant for financial crime.

As well as being one of Crown Resorts' top 50 Chinese punters - he turned over at least \$27 million in 2014 and had a projected turnover of \$50 million in 2015 - Mr Chai has formed investment businesses in Australia not only with Mr Zhou but a second Crown junket operator, **Simon Pan**.

Mr Pan runs a brothel about one kilometre from Crown in Melbourne that has been implicated in the human trafficking of Asian women.

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Document AGEEOL0020190728ef7s00105



## Brothel owner and alleged money launderer is Crown casino's business partner

Nick McKenzie, Nick Toscano and Grace Tobin

1,416 words

28 July 2019

21:23

The Sydney Morning Herald - Online

SMHHOL

English

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Crown Resorts paid a brothel owner and alleged money launderer to lure high rollers to its Australian casinos and then provided them with money to gamble, according to court files and officials that raise further questions about the company's business dealings.

Multiple sources with knowledge of Crown's operations have also confirmed that Asian sex workers have been flown into Australia on private jets organised by Crown "junket" operators.

Crown has partnered with brothel owner **Simon Pan** to bring high roller customers to gamble at the casino since 2011, according to Victorian County Court documents obtained by The Age, The Sydney Morning Herald and 60 Minutes.

Mr Pan owns South Melbourne brothel 39 Tope which is a few minutes drive from the casino precinct and specialises in Asian sex workers and escorts, according to its website.

39 Tope has been repeatedly raided by police and subject to sex trafficking investigations between 2008 and at least 2015, while the operations of the brothel have led to major prosecutions of mid-tier workers over breaches of Victorian prostitution laws.

Documents filed in the Victorian County Court in 2015 separately detail Mr Pan's work as "Junket Representative at Crown Casino" who "arranges people to gamble at a casino and [who] the casino pays ... a commission".

In addition to offering Mr Pan's junket business lucrative commissions and other incentives to bring high rollers from Asia to Crown, Crown has provided Mr Pan with access to its facilities and banking systems.

Who is **Simon Pan**?

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Document SMHHOL0020190728ef7s0002w



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Nick McKenzie, Nick Toscano and Grace Tobin

1,416 words

28 July 2019

10:13

BrisbaneTimes.com.au

BRSBTM

English

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Document BRSBTM0020190728ef7s000e2



# The Sydney Morning Herald

News

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Nick McKenzie, Nick Toscano and Grace Tobin

1,432 words

28 July 2019

Sun Herald

SHD

First

1

English

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EXCLUSIVE | SPECIAL INVESTIGATION

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WHO IS **SIMON PAN**?

Operates within the casino.

1998: Suspected illegal Melbourne brothel raised by vice squad. South Melbourne brothel owned by Pan.

2008-15: AFP investigate 39 TOPE for human trafficking

2008: AFP rescue two women from Tope Street brothel

2012-13: AFP prosecute Pan's business partners for organised crime linked to human trafficking

Document SHD0000020190727ef7s00006

News

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Nick McKenzie, Nick Toscano and Grace Tobin

1,356 words

28 July 2019

Sunday Age

SAGE

First

1

English

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Exclusive

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When interviewed this week, Mr Pan said allegations of his links to criminal activity were "bullshit" and that his dealings with Crown were licensed and appropriate.

But numerous court files reveal how a criminal syndicate that was supplying women to Mr Pan's brothel "enticed women to work in brothels in Australia" using dozens of mobile phones subscribed in false names.

In late 2015, County Court Judge Gavan Meredith said this syndicate was involved in the "laundering of funds generated from the work of ??? women who were placed in a situation of potential vulnerability".

"The potential for their exploitation was ripe."

The woman Judge Meredith said was "at the apex of the laundering enterprise", Mae Ja Kim, told Australian Federal Police investigators in a record of interview also aired in court that she had known **Simon Pan** since 2008 and "really got to know him in 2013" when she was running his South Melbourne brothel.

"Simon and I would regularly talk on the telephone. I am aware that the Australian Federal Police intercepted a number of telephone calls ??? when I helped organise the recruitment of females in south-east Asia to travel to Australia and provide sex work ??? with the full knowledge and permission of Simon."

Ms Kim also said that while she and others ran the daily operations of the brothel, they paid Mr Pan a "weekly cut on the basis of the number of units provided to clients by sex workers".

She also said "Simon and I discussed a similar business arrangement to what we were doing at 39 Tope by providing him with sex workers for the Cairns brothel".

Court files reveal how the trafficking syndicate "expressed a direct interest in making sure the sex workers performed as many units as possible" at Pan's brothel, and that "fines would sometimes be imposed if sex workers did not attend for work ??? or didn't perform enough units".



Because of the difficulty getting fearful brothel workers to testify, the Federal Police charged members of the suspected trafficking syndicate with breaches of the Victorian Sex Work Act. While police did not charge Mr Pan, they aired evidence in court that implicated him as having links to serious criminal activity.

In 2014, Victoria's brothel regulator launched separate action against Mr Pan in the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal. In that action, the evidence linking Mr Pan to human trafficking was aired as the brothel regulator successfully imposed conditions on his brothel licence to prevent criminal conduct.

The revelations raise serious questions about Crown's gaming licences and the failure of gaming regulators and state and federal agencies to effectively act on activities that Crown's operations have enabled criminal syndicates and may have compromised Australia's national security.

For more on this story watch 60 Minutes this Sunday at 8:40pm on Channel 9.

Know more? Send us a confidential and encrypted message on [JournoTips](#)

Document WATDAY0020190728ef7s0005I

## The Official Board

### **PDM International - The organizational chart displays its 7 executives, including Dennis Lim and Elizabeth Reid**

177 words

25 March 2019

TheOfficialBoard

OFBOAR

English

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In the Engineering & Design industry, there are 1,328 large companies in 69 countries, with a total of 13,778 top executives. Within those companies, 6,229 executive movements have been recorded in the last 12 months.

Company: PDM International

URL: pdmdesign.com

Industry: Engineering & Design

PDM International is a subsidiary of JLL.

\*\*\*

Name: Dennis Lim

Title: Managing Director

Biography: <http://www.theofficialboard.com/biography/dennis-lim-638e5>

\*\*\*

Name: Elizabeth Reid

Title: Director of Design

Biography: <http://www.theofficialboard.com/biography/elizabeth-reid-d9e19>

\*\*\*

Name: Vincent Wong

Title: Project Director

Biography: <http://www.theofficialboard.com/biography/vincent-wong-292d9>

\*\*\*

Name: Sean Moran

Title: Account Manager

Biography: <http://www.theofficialboard.com/biography/sean-moran-g3g13>

\*\*\*

Name: Gonzalo Portellano

Title: Regional Account Director

Biography: <http://www.theofficialboard.com/biography/gonzalo-portellano-82d62>

\*\*\*

Name: Gary Murphy

Title: Regional Head Talent Management

Biography: <http://www.theofficialboard.com/biography/gary-murphy-d9069>

\*\*\*

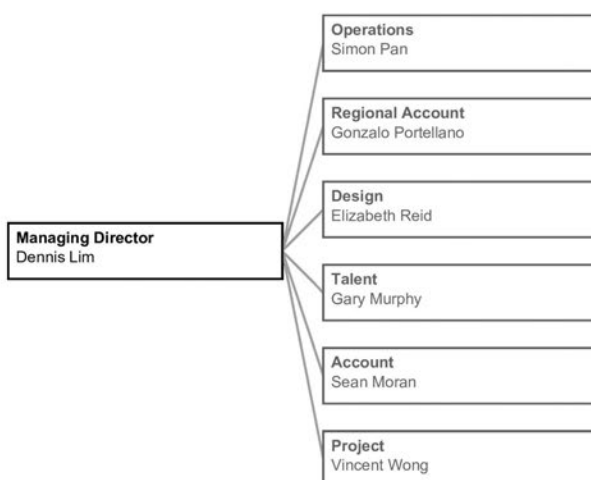
Name: **Simon Pan**

Title: Operations Director

Biography: <http://www.theofficialboard.com/biography/simon-pan-94e74>

\*\*\*

# Organizational Chart PDM International



*Printed from TheOfficialBoard as of Apr 1, 2019 6:10:58 AM - Report a change contact@theofficialboard.com -*

Document OFBOAR0020190401ef3p01ocj

Review

**Regulation and dysregulation of axon infrastructure by myelinating glia**

**Simon Pan**; Jonah R Chan

132 words

1 December 2017

Journal of Cell Biology

IJCB

3903

Volume 216; Issue 12; ISSN:00219525

English

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Axon loss and neurodegeneration constitute clinically debilitating sequelae in demyelinating diseases such as multiple sclerosis, but the underlying mechanisms of secondary degeneration are not well understood. Myelinating glia play a fundamental role in promoting the maturation of the axon cytoskeleton, regulating axon trafficking parameters, and imposing architectural rearrangements such as the nodes of Ranvier and their associated molecular domains. In the setting of demyelination, these changes may be reversed or persist as maladaptive features, leading to axon degeneration. In this review, we consider recent insights into axon-glial interactions during development and disease to propose that disruption of the cytoskeleton, nodal architecture, and other components of axon infrastructure is a potential mediator of pathophysiological damage after demyelination.

Document IJCB000020171230edc100008

METRO NEWS | NEWS | TORONTO

## 70th high school reunion a testament to unwavering friendship

Torstar News Service

516 words

5 October 2017

Metro Canada

MOTTA

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English

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For 70 consecutive years alumni of RH King Academy have organized reunions, but this year went a step further: a group of fresh-faced students welcomed them back to the very place they all came to know one another, to commemorate the values of friendship instilled in them years before.

With ginger ale in hand and tiaras donned the remaining class of 1947 - all in their late eighties - paid tribute to the legacy of a woman they credit as the glue that kept them together long after she died: their teacher, Alice Carnaghan.

"She taught us how to do shorthand and how to use a typewriter," said Norma Hardy, 87. "These gifts might have gone out-of-fashion, but Miss Carnaghan also taught us that friendship will never be obsolete."

The class originally had a count of 22 students; there were 10 at the gathering.

"Through the years we have stayed friends, and we sincerely hope you have the same privilege we have enjoyed to make good friends while you're at this place who will stay with you for a long, long time," continued Hardy, addressing the current students.

Carnaghan co-ordinated the first reunion - over the years, this eventually switched to Hardy, who planned the event Wednesday morning at the Scarborough high school, one of the oldest in the area, with a student body of 1,250. The school was formerly called Scarborough Collegiate.

Students assisted the all-female party as they made their way to the school's grounds, where a fresh plaque made out to the adored teacher hung from a newly planted tree.

**Simon Pan**, 15, walked arm-in-arm with Mary Jean Zissoff, who inquired if he had a girlfriend.

"I just wanted to see what it would be like to see 70 years of friendship," he said. "The quality of it is really high, and compared to kids our age, there's a huge contrast. It's not quite the same," adding that advances in technology can mean a decline in genuine social connection.

Morgan Harris said some were "shocked" by the school's transformation since graduation - particularly the number of computers in one of its labs.

"After 70 years, you change a lot," she said. "The school, technology. It's pretty cool that they've all stayed in touch this long and are so committed."

Local school trustee Parthi Kandavel said the visit is a testament to the profound, lifelong impact teachers can have on their pupils.

"In this day of the number of followers you have, it's more about the quality of friendships that last the test of time," he said. "A brilliant message to our, perhaps, newer students."

The school's principal, David Rowan, called the students ambassadors for their maturity and inclination to help facilitate the event.

"We have visitors quite frequently, so it's one of the things I like to do: open up the school, showcase the students and the work teachers are doing," he said.

Document MOTTA00020171005eda5000b6



Greater Toronto

**Forever; For 70 years, alumni of R.H. King Academy have held reunions - a tribute to a great teacher's legacy**

Julien Gignac Toronto Star

591 words

5 October 2017

The Toronto Star

TOR

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English

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Former students credit a beloved teacher with instilling in them a deep appreciation for longevity in friendship. They spoke to current high school students about their experiences. Former students of Scarborough Collegiate, now R.H. King Academy, reunited for the 70th consecutive year, paying tribute to teacher Alice Carnaghan, left, and sharing memories with students such as Morgan Harris, right. Julien Gignac/Toronto Star Julien Gignac photos/Toronto Star

Document TOR0000020171005eda5000is





News

## 70th high school reunion a testament to unwavering friendship

Julien Gignac

558 words

4 October 2017

The Toronto Star

TOR

English

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Alumni of RH King Academy reunited for the 70th consecutive year, gathering in the place where they all became friends. Jahin Kashfi walks with Edna Tilley, an RH King Academy alumna. **Simon Pan**, middle, walks with Mary Jane Zissoff, right, an alumni of RH King Academy.

Document TOR000020171023eda400106

Gusto  
**Movies**

3,539 words  
 12 November 2015  
 Buffalo News  
 BFNW  
 GU.10  
 English

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**Ant-Man.** Starring Paul Rudd, Michael Douglas, Corey Stoll and Evangeline Lilly. Directed by Peyton Reed. Armed with a super-suit with the astonishing ability to shrink in scale but increase in strength, con-man Scott Lang must embrace his inner hero and help his mentor, Dr. Hank Pym, save the world. "What is found here makes it one of the cleverest of Marvel movies - fast reflexes, wit and humor both (not the same thing), and enormous creativity in inventing a character who can instantly shrink from a full-size man to ant-size and then back again in a second." 117 minutes. \*\*\*o (Jeff Simon)

**Black Mass.** Starring Johnny Depp, Benedict Cumberbatch, Dakota Johnson and Joel Edgerton. Directed by Scott Cooper. The true story of Whitey Bulger, the brother of a state senator and the most infamous violent criminal in the history of South Boston, who became an FBI informant to take down a Mafia family invading his turf. "Johnny Depp owns this movie. His performance as murdering psychopath Whitey Bulger - South Boston's '80's answer to Chicago's Al Capone during prohibition - is the reason to see this. All the actors do nicely, in truth, which is fortunate because the movie otherwise concentrates so much on how Bulger hoodwinked the FBI (for whom he was a confidential informant) that it misses almost everything else that would have made it important. It's Scorsese- lite." 122 minutes. (Rated R for brutal violence, language throughout, some sexual references and brief drug use.) \*\*\* (Jeff Simon)

**Bridge of Spies.** Starring Tom Hanks, Mark Rylance and Alan Alda. An American lawyer is recruited by the CIA during the Cold War to help rescue a pilot detained in the Soviet Union. "Just about everything you expect a Steven Spielberg spy movie to be in 2015. It's consummately professional. If it's not thrilling, it's certainly exciting; and if it's not performed with brilliance, it's performed exceedingly well - especially by Mark Rylance as Soviet Spy Rudolf Abel who, with only a fraction of Tom Hanks' lines, completely steals the picture. As with so many Spielberg movies, it's about virtue more than anything else. Somehow Spielberg seems to think of guys like Tom Hanks' Cold War negotiator here and Oskar Schindler as self-portraits." 142 minutes. (Rated PG-13 for some violence and brief strong language.) \*\*\*o (Jeff Simon)

**Burnt.** Starring Bradley Cooper, Sienna Miller, Daniel Bruhl and Riccardo Scamarcio. Directed by John Wells. Adam Jones is a chef who destroyed his career with drugs and diva behavior. He cleans up and returns to London, determined to redeem himself by spearheading a top restaurant that can gain three Michelin stars. This chef wants his diners to be 'sick with longing' for the food at his restaurant before it's served. In order to give his customers culinary orgasms, though, he treats his kitchen employees like raw recruits at Parris Island. Watching him slowly discover the humanity of others is very traditional comfort food at the movies. In this case, it turns out to be entertaining, tasty and thoroughly forgettable." 100 minutes. (Rated R for language throughout.) \*\*\* (Jeff Simon)

**Crimson Peak.** Starring Mia Wasikowska, Jessica Chastain and Tom Hiddleston. Directed by Guillermo del Toro. In the aftermath of a family tragedy, an aspiring author is torn between love for her childhood friend and the temptation of a mysterious outsider. "Like Coppola's "Dracula," "Crimson Peak" is not the terrifying creation some anticipated, but certainly a wildly pleasurable experience." 119 minutes. (Rated R for bloody violence, some sexual content and brief strong language.) \*\*\* (Christopher Schobert)

**Everest.** Starring Jason Clarke, Josh Brolin, John Hawkes, Jake Gyllenhaal, Sam Worthington and Robin Wright. Directed by Baltasar Kormakur. The true story of the 1996 Mount Everest disaster, focusing on the survival attempts of two expedition groups. "Everest" is utterly ideal for IMAX. The new action-disaster epic doesn't just justify the large screen -- it makes it almost essential. It is hard, in fact, to recall a recent man vs. the elements flick with such an epic scope. There are moments in 'Everest' that will leave audiences breathless. And despite some notable flaws, it is a satisfying, well-mounted production. The cast and the visuals combine for an action spectacle that truly delivers. While it will likely prove effective on any size screen, plunk down the extra money for IMAX and you'll likely find 'Everest' an impressively immersive experience." 121 minutes. (Rated PG-13 for intense peril and disturbing images.) \*\*\*o (Christopher Schobert)

**Freeheld.** Starring Julianne Moore, Ellen Page, Steve Carell and Michael Shannon. Directed by Peter Sollett. A New Jersey police lieutenant and her registered domestic partner both battle to secure her pension benefits when she is diagnosed with terminal cancer. "Freeheld" is, well, fine. The hot-button drama based on the true

story of New Jersey police lieutenant Laurel Hester, who in 2005 fought to secure pension benefits for her registered domestic partner, Stacie Andree, while battling terminal cancer, is reasonably well acted and occasionally moving." 103 minutes. (Rated PG-13 for some thematic elements, language and sexuality.) \*\*o (Christopher Schobert)

Goosebumps. Starring Jack Black, Dylan Minnette and Odeya Rush. A teenager teams up with the daughter of young adult horror author R.L. Stine after the writer's imaginary demons are set free. "Actual goosebumps aren't plentiful but, mild horror comic pleasures for one and all are. The littlest ones may find it all a bit unsettling but don't let anyone talk you out of taking anyone seven or older to this. They'll almost certainly be able to handle it and it's a surprising amount of fun once it gets going." 103 minutes. (Rated PG for scary and intense creature action and images, and for some rude humor.) \*\*\* (Jeff Simon)

Grandma. Starring Lily Tomlin, Julia Garner, Marcia Gay Harden and Judy Greer. Directed by Paul Weitz. Elle has just gotten through breaking up with her girlfriend when her granddaughter, Sage, unexpectedly shows up needing \$600 before sundown. Temporarily broke, Grandma Elle and Sage spend the day trying to get the the cash as their unannounced visits to old friends and flames end up rattling skeletons and digging up secrets. "What a pleasure it is to have Lily Tomlin back in a movie - especially in a movie like this one that almost could have been written for her specifically. She gives it every bit of snarling braininess in her arsenal. The result is a movie that is often terribly funny but because it's about some essentially serious things, is a triumph. Tomlin and Sam Elliott have a heartwrenching scene together toward the end of the film that is as good as anything they're both ever likely to do in a movie." 79 minutes. (Rated R for language and some drug use. \*\*o (Jeff Simon)

Hotel Transylvania 2. With the voices of Adam Sandler, Kevin James, Steve Buscemi, Selena Gomez, Keegan-Michael Key and Andy Samberg. Directed by Genndy Tartakovsky. When the old-old-old- fashioned vampire Vlad arrives at the hotel for an impromptu family get-together, Hotel Transylvania is in for a collision of supernatural old-school and modern day cool. 89 minutes. (Rated PG for some scary images, action and rude humor.)

Inside out. The voices of Amy Poehler, Phyllis Smith, Lewis Black, Bill Hader, Mindy Kaling and Richard Kind star in Pete Docter's unanimously praised animated film depicting personified emotions inside the head of young girl whose parents move the family from Minnesota to San Francisco. "Can an animated feature be too good for its audience? The new Pixar fantasy is exquisite, one of the greatest animated films ever and certainly one of the most imaginative ever intended for a mass family audience. It's not as emotionally powerful a film as the sublime 'Up' or 'Wall-E' but it is, to be sure, even more inventive than those two modern animation masterpieces. It may lose some little ones though, as well as recalcitrant older viewers too. But those who have always treasured animated films as the place where cinematic creativity can life fully and with no apology will careen from delight to delight for the full 94 minutes of this film." 94 minutes. (Rated PG for intensity.) \*\*\*\* (Jeff Simon)

the Intern. Starring Anne Hathaway, Robert De Niro, Rene Russo and Directed by Nancy Meyers. A 70-year-old widower has discovered that retirement isn't all it's cracked up to be and becomes a senior intern at an online fashion site. "How many ways are there for an actor to purse his lips to convey that he's being silent about things he really ought to talk about? Robert DeNiro finds every last one of them during the course of this comedy which thinks it's about two people who find friendship with each other at a perfect time of life for them both. What it's really about are these things: Daddy issues, late-life wisdom and the complicated pleasures of being very prosperous in contemporary America where a lot of people aren't so lucky. DeNiro does the best he can, Anne Hathaway is adorable and the movie is clumsy but diabolically clever in its ingratiating way. Younger and downscale viewers are on their own." 121 minutes. (Rated PG-13 for some suggestive content and brief strong language.) \*\*\* (Jeff Simon).

Jurassic World. Starring Chris Pratt, Bryce Dallas Howard, Ty Simpkins and Vincent D'Onofrio. Directed by Colin Trevorrow. Twenty- two years after the events of Jurassic Park, Isla Nublar now features a fully functioning dinosaur theme park, Jurassic World, where things go horribly wrong again. "Indominus rex is the name of the new gene-spliced dinosaur they're about to put up at Jurassic World, to increase the 'wow factor' and sell more tickets. As everyone knows going in, things go very wrong. And that's the fun of this movie in which there is no originality whatsoever but enough movie know-how to get audience applause at the climax. It might be scary for the littlest ones but there shouldn't be anything in it that sensitive parenting can't smooth over afterward." 124 minutes. (Rated PG-13 for intense sequences of science-fiction violence and peril.) \*\*\* (Jeff Simon)

The Last Witch Hunter. Starring Vin Diesel, Rose Leslie, Elijah Wood and Rena Owen. Directed by Breck Eisner. The last witch hunter is all that stands between humanity and the combined forces of the most horrifying witches in history. 106 minutes. (Rated PG-13 for sequences of fantasy violence and frightening images.)

the man in 3B. Starring Lamman Rucker, Christian Keyes, Anthony Montgomery and Brely Evans. Directed by Trey Haley. Darryl Graham, the Man in 3B, moves into a Queens apartment building and his neighbors - male and female alike - can't stop talking about him. He becomes involved in the tenants' lives, but when a murder happens in their building, everyone becomes a suspect. 93 minutes. (Rated R for language and sexuality.)

The Martian. Starring Matt Damon, Jessica Chastain, Kristen Wiig and Jeff Daniels. Directed by Ridley Scott. During a manned mission to Mars, Astronaut Mark Watney is presumed dead after a fierce storm and left behind by his crew. But Watney has survived and finds himself stranded and alone on the hostile planet. With only meager supplies, he must draw upon his ingenuity, wit and spirit to subsist and find a way to signal to Earth that he is alive. "Probably the coolest movie ever made about outer space. Others have been scarier, to be sure. And more visionary. But this is the one that has it all - wit, brains, visual, magnificence, and wonderful suspense throughout. Leave it to Sir Ridley Scott at 77 to give us a movie that's a veritable celebration of what movies are now capable of." 141 minutes. (Rated PG-13 for some strong language, injury images, and brief nudity.) \*\*\*o (Jeff Simon)

Maze runner: The Scorch Trials. Starring Dylan O'Brien, Kaya Scodelario, Thomas Brodie-Sangster and Ki Hong Lee. Directed by Wes Ball. After having escaped the Maze, the Gladers now face a new set of challenges on the open roads of a desolate landscape filled with unimaginable obstacles. 131 minutes. (Rated PG-13 for extended sequences of violence and action, some thematic elements, substance use and language.)

Minions. With the voices of Sandra Bullock, Jon Hamm, Michael Keaton and Allison Janney. Minions are recruited by super villain Scarlet Overkill who hatches a plot to take over the world. "The script by Kevin Lynch is a lot funnier than people are giving it credit for. This third in the 'Despicable Me' series is a prequel that goes all the way back to the Tyrannosaurus Rex and then stops at 1968 when Scarlet Overkill wants Queen Elizabeth's crown and the Queen herself likes to knock back pints at the local pub and snorts when he laughs. Reasonably good fun with a great soundtrack of '60's hits." 91 minutes. (Rated PG for action and rude humor.) \*\*\* (Jeff Simon)

Miss you already. Starring Drew Barrymore, Toni Collette, Dominic Cooper and Paddy Considine. Directed by Catherine Hardwicke. The friendship between two life-long girlfriends is put to the test when one starts a family and the other falls ill. "This is a beautiful, beautifully made film starring beautiful people. And, it beautifully serves the purpose of helping us to identify and be okay with what has become a common trajectory these days, namely, the diagnosis of cancer for someone close to you - and the consequences to the patient, their family and friends." 112 minutes. (Rated PG-13 for thematic content, sexual material and some language.) \*\*o (Jana Eisenberg)

Our Brand is crisis. Starring Sandra Bullock, Billy Bob Thornton, Anthony Mackie and Joaquim de Almeida. Directed by David Gordon Green. An American woman, well-versed in political campaigns, is sent to the war-torn lands of South America to help install a new leader but is threatened to be thwarted by a long-term rival. "Sandra Bullock as a hard-case political cynic? We know better. We moviegoers know she's warm and toasty and sweet inside no matter what she's pretending to be in her current movie. It's fun for a while watching her try to be cynical and fail. But it's based on a true story and the ending of that one wasn't very sweet at all. If you bother to think about it, it's enough to turn an audience into hard-case cynics." 107 minutes. (Rated R for language including some sexual references.) \*\*\* (Jeff **Simon**)

**Pan**. Starring Levi Miller, Hugh Jackman, Garrett Hedlund and Rooney Mara. Directed by Joe Wright. An orphan is spirited away to the magical world of Neverland, where he discovers his destiny to become the hero who will be forever known as Peter Pan. "The film is drenched in CGI, features at least two wildly over-the-top performances, feels a bit too dark at times, and - let's be honest - is entirely unnecessary. Yet the film also has momentary bursts of real imagination, a wonderful lead performance, and some nicely effective set-pieces. It's a modest success, and one that children will find quite pleasurable. The Neverland-set journey is rather exhausting, but it is one with some nice surprises. However many its flaws, children will undoubtedly be entertained." 111 minutes. (Rated PG for fantasy action violence, language and some thematic material.) \*\*\* (Christopher Schobert).

The Peanuts Movie. Voices of Bill Melendez, Noah Johnston, Francesca Capaldi and Rebecca Bloom. Directed by Steve Martino. Snoopy embarks upon his greatest mission as he and his team take to the skies to pursue their arch-nemesis, while his best pal Charlie Brown begins his own epic quest back home. 93 minutes. (Rated G.)

THE PERFECT GUY. Starring Sanaa Lathan, Michael Ealy and Morris Chestnut. Directed by David M. Rosenthal. After breaking up with her boyfriend, a professional woman gets involved with a man who seems almost too good to be true. 100 minutes. (Rated PG-13 for violence, menace, sexuality and brief strong language.)

**Pixels.** Starring Adam Sandler, Kevin James, Michelle Monaghan and Peter Dinklage. Directed by Chris Columbus. When aliens misinterpret video feeds of classic arcade games as a declaration of war, they attack the Earth in the form of the video games. 105 minutes. (Rated PG-13 for some language and suggestive comments.)

**Sicario.** Starring Emily Blunt, Josh Brolin, Benicio Del Toro, Jon Bernthal and Victor Garber. Directed by Denis Villeneuve. An idealistic FBI agent is enlisted by an elected government task force to aid in the escalating war against drugs at the border area between the U.S. and Mexico. "In one gun battle in a dark drug tunnel between the U.S. and Mexico, the feds wear night-vision goggles. The entire movie was filmed in the moral equivalent of night vision goggles. Neither the movies or TV have ever given us a vision of the drug wars on our Southern border as violent or as powerful as this one. It's brutal but it's one of the year's best." 121 minutes. (Rated R for strong violence, grisly images, and language.) \*\*\*o (Jeff Simon)

**Spectre.** Starring Daniel Craig, Christoph Waltz, Ralph Fiennes and Naomie Harris. Directed by Sam Mendes. A cryptic message from Bond's past sends him on a trail to uncover a sinister organization. While M battles political forces to keep the secret service alive, Bond peels back the layers of deceit to reveal the terrible truth behind SPECTRE. "It's a good thing that there is a level beneath which James Bond films simply cannot sink. That's because this may be the least entertaining Bond film I've ever seen despite the \$300- 350 million they supposedly sank into the bloody thing. There's a lot of big gaudy action, true. But everyone in it looks as if they might prefer to go home and watch a ball game." 148 minutes. (Rated PG-13 for intense sequences of action and violence, some disturbing images, sensuality and language.) \*\*\* (Jeff Simon)

**Trainwreck.** Starring Amy Schumer, Bill Hader, Brie Larson and Marisa Tomei. Directed by Judd Apatow. Having thought that monogamy was never possible, a commitment-phobic career woman may have to face her fears when she meets a good guy. "You can get off your high horse now. Believe me, I understand why you're there. But for us skeptics who spend much of our lives on hype patrol in the precincts of American celebrity, one thing is obvious relatively early on about "Trainwreck:" Amy Schumer is as good as advertised (i.e. hyped everywhere for the past month)." 125 minutes. (Rated R for strong sexual content, nudity, language and some drug use.) \*\*\*o (Jeff Simon)

**Truth.** Starring Cate Blanchett, Robert Redford, Dennis Quaid and Topher Grace. Directed by James Vanderbilt. Newsroom drama detailing the 2004 CBS 60 Minutes report investigating then-President George W. Bush's military service, and the subsequent firestorm of criticism that cost anchor Dan Rather and producer Mary Mapes their careers. "Truth is exactly what's in short supply in this film--not least because Robert Redford plays Dan Rather as if he were an older incarnation of the Bob Woodward he played in 'All the President's Men.' What a load of hooley that is. But Redford's good at doing it and, as disgraced CBS newswoman Mary Mapes, Cate Blanchett is riveting. There's no actress better in American movies these days." 121 minutes. (Rated R for language and a brief nude photo.) \*\*\* (Jeff Simon)

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Document BFNW000020151116ebbc00007

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**Movies hed here**

3,502 words  
 5 November 2015  
 Buffalo News  
 BFNW  
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Ant-Man. Starring Paul Rudd, Michael Douglas, Corey Stoll and Evangeline Lilly. Directed by Peyton Reed. Armed with a super-suit with the astonishing ability to shrink in scale but increase in strength, con-man Scott Lang must embrace his inner hero and help his mentor, Dr. Hank Pym, save the world. "What is found here makes it one of the cleverest of Marvel movies - fast reflexes, wit and humor both (not the same thing), and enormous creativity in inventing a character who can instantly shrink from a full-size man to ant-size and then back again in a second." 117 minutes. \*\*\*o (Jeff Simon)

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he named me malala. Starring Malala Yousafzai, Ziauddin Yousafzai, Toor Pekai and Khushal Yousafzai. Directed by Davis Guggenheim. Documentary on Malala Yousafzai, a Pakistani teen attacked by the Taliban for speaking out on girls' education and the aftermath, including her speech to the United Nations. "If you are not just a little flabbergasted by Malala Yousafzai, your capacity for awe is probably about a quart low. The youngest woman ever to win a Nobel Peace Prize is the focus of a documentary by Oscar- winner Davis Guggenheim ('An Inconvenient Truth') that allows us to spend 87 minutes of our lives unavoidably awestruck at a woman who's been fighting the Taliban since she was 11 and survived being shot in the head three times only to redouble her efforts for universal education, regardless of gender. It may make you glad to be alive in the same era that she is." 87 minutes. (Rated PG-13 for thematic elements involving disturbing images and threats.) \*\*\*o (Jeff Simon).

Hotel Transylvania 2. With the voices of Adam Sandler, Kevin James, Steve Buscemi, Selena Gomez, Keegan-Michael Key and Andy Samberg. Directed by Genndy Tartakovsky. When the old-old-old- fashioned vampire Vlad arrives at the hotel for an impromptu family get-together, Hotel Transylvania is in for a collision of supernatural old-school and modern day cool. 89 minutes. (Rated PG for some scary images, action and rude humor.)

Inside out. The voices of Amy Poehler, Phyllis Smith, Lewis Black, Bill Hader, Mindy Kaling and Richard Kind star in Pete Docter's unanimously praised animated film depicting personified emotions inside the head of young girl whose parents move the family from Minnesota to San Francisco. "The new Pixar fantasy is exquisite, one of the greatest animated films ever and certainly one of the most imaginative ever intended for a mass family audience. It's not as emotionally powerful a film as the sublime 'Up' or 'Wall- E' but it is, to be sure, even more inventive than those two modern animation masterpieces." 94 minutes. (Rated PG for intensity.) \*\*\*\* (Jeff Simon)

the Intern. Starring Anne Hathaway, Robert De Niro, Rene Russo and Directed by Nancy Meyers. A 70-year-old widower has discovered that retirement isn't all it's cracked up to be and becomes a senior intern at an online fashion site. "How many ways are there for an actor to purse his lips to convey that he's being silent about things he really ought to talk about? Robert DeNiro finds every last one of them during the course of this comedy which thinks it's about two people who find friendship with each other at a perfect time of life for them both. What it's really about are these things: Daddy issues, late-life wisdom and the complicated pleasures of being very prosperous in contemporary America where a lot of people aren't so lucky. DeNiro does the best he can, Anne Hathaway is adorable and the movie is clumsy but diabolically clever in its ingratiating way. Younger and downscale viewers are on their own." 121 minutes. (Rated PG-13 for some suggestive content and brief strong language.) \*\*\* (Jeff Simon).

jurassic world. Starring Chris Pratt, Bryce Dallas Howard, Ty Simpkins and Vincent D'Onofrio. Directed by Colin Trevorrow. Twenty- two years after the events of Jurassic Park, Isla Nublar now features a fully functioning dinosaur theme park, Jurassic World, where things go horribly wrong again. "Indominus rex is the name of the new gene-spliced dinosaur they're about to put up at Jurassic World, to increase the 'wow factor' and sell more tickets. As everyone knows going in, things go very wrong. And that's the fun of this movie in which there is no originality whatsoever but enough movie know-how to get audience applause at the climax. It might be scary for the littlest ones but there shouldn't be anything in it that sensitive parenting can't smooth over afterward." 124 minutes. (Rated PG-13 for intense sequences of science-fiction violence and peril.) \*\*\* (Jeff Simon)

Kahlil Gibran's The Prophet. With the voices of Liam Neeson, Salma Hayek, John Krasinski, Frank Langella, Alfred Molina, and Quvenzhané Wallis. An exiled artist and poet embarks on a journey home with his housekeeper and her daughter in this animated adaptation of the beloved text. "A beautifully animated

feature based on Gibran's volume of 26 poetic essays. 'Lion King' director Roger Allers put together a team of acclaimed animators, a diverse group of actors and a roster of musical heavyweights like Damien Rice, Glen Hansard, Yo-Yo Ma and Gabriel Yared. The resulting work is visually resplendent and appropriately respectful. It is a sweet, gentle film, yet one that feels a tad undercooked. This is, perhaps, due to the film's structure, which involves a basic skeleton of a story, and periodic visual vignettes, all accompanied by lovely poetry. While the words, sights, and sounds are often glorious, this journey becomes rather rote." 84 minutes. (Rated PG for thematic elements including some violence and sensual images.) \*\*o (Christopher Schobert

Labyrinth of lies. Starring Andre Szymanski, Alexander Fehling, Friederike Becht and Johannes Krisch. Directed by Giulio Ricciarelli. A story that exposes the conspiracy of prominent German institutions and government branches to cover up the crimes of Nazis during World War II. "The movie is beautifully filmed and the storyline is a compelling one, but the film suffers from Fehling's unconvincing performance. Some subplots are also unrealized or unnecessary, including the pursuit of the notorious Josef Mengele, which brings a couple of cheesy dream sequences. Still, the subject of how the German people came to learn of its past is a powerful one, and the film, despite its faults, mostly delivers." 124 minutes. (Rated R for a scene of sexuality.) In German with English subtitles. \*\*\* (Mark Sommer)

The Last Witch Hunter. Starring Vin Diesel, Rose Leslie, Elijah Wood and Rena Owen. Directed by Breck Eisner. The last witch hunter is all that stands between humanity and the combined forces of the most horrifying witches in history. 106 minutes. (Rated PG-13 for sequences of fantasy violence and frightening images.)

The Martian. Starring Matt Damon, Jessica Chastain, Kristen Wiig and Jeff Daniels. Directed by Ridley Scott. During a manned mission to Mars, Astronaut Mark Watney is presumed dead after a fierce storm and left behind by his crew. But Watney has survived and finds himself stranded and alone on the hostile planet. With only meager supplies, he must draw upon his ingenuity, wit and spirit to subsist and find a way to signal to Earth that he is alive. "Probably the coolest movie ever made about outer space. Others have been scarier, to be sure. And more visionary. But this is the one that has it all - wit, brains, visual, magnificence, and wonderful suspense throughout. Leave it to Sir Ridley Scott at 77 to give us a movie that's a veritable celebration of what movies are now capable of." 141 minutes. (Rated PG-13 for some strong language, injury images, and brief nudity.) \*\*o (Jeff Simon)

Maze runner: The Scorch Trials. Starring Dylan O'Brien, Kaya Scodelario, Thomas Brodie-Sangster and Ki Hong Lee. Directed by Wes Ball. After having escaped the Maze, the Gladers now face a new set of challenges on the open roads of a desolate landscape filled with unimaginable obstacles. 131 minutes. (Rated PG-13 for extended sequences of violence and action, some thematic elements, substance use and language.)

Minions. With the voices of Sandra Bullock, Jon Hamm, Michael Keaton and Allison Janney. Minions are recruited by super villain Scarlet Overkill who hatches a plot to take over the world. "The script by Kevin Lynch is a lot funnier than people are giving it credit for. This third in the 'Despicable Me' series is a prequel that goes all the way back to the Tyrannosaurus Rex and then stops at 1968 when Scarlet Overkill wants Queen Elizabeth's crown and the Queen herself likes to knock back pints at the local pub and snorts when he laughs. Reasonably good fun with a great soundtrack of '60's hits." 91 minutes. (Rated PG for action and rude humor.) \*\*\* (Jeff Simon)

Our Brand is crisis. Starring Sandra Bullock, Billy Bob Thornton, Anthony Mackie and Joaquim de Almeida. Directed by David Gordon Green. An American woman, well-versed in political campaigns, is sent to the war-torn lands of South America to help install a new leader but is threatened to be thwarted by a long-term rival. "Sandra Bullock as a hard-case political cynic? We know better. We moviegoers know she's warm and toasty and sweet inside no matter what she's pretending to be in her current movie. It's fun for a while watching her try to be cynical and fail. But it's based on a true story and the ending of that one wasn't very sweet at all. If you bother to think about it, it's enough to turn an audience into hard-case cynics." 107 minutes. (Rated R for language including some sexual references.) \*\*\* (Jeff **Simon**)

**Pan.** Starring Levi Miller, Hugh Jackman, Garrett Hedlund and Rooney Mara. Directed by Joe Wright. An orphan is spirited away to the magical world of Neverland, where he discovers his destiny to become the hero who will be forever known as Peter Pan. "The film is drenched in CGI, features at least two wildly over-the-top performances, feels a bit too dark at times, and - let's be honest - is entirely unnecessary. Yet the film also has momentary bursts of real imagination, a wonderful lead performance, and some nicely effective set-pieces. It's a modest success, and one that children will find quite pleasurable. The Neverland-set journey is rather exhausting, but it is one with some nice surprises. However many its flaws, children will undoubtedly be entertained." 111 minutes. (Rated PG for fantasy action violence, language and some thematic material.) \*\*\* (Christopher Schobert).



paranormal activity: The Ghost dimension. Starring Chris J. Murray, Brit Shaw, Ivy George and Dan Gill. Directed by Gregory Plotkin, Using a special camera that can see spirits, a family must protect their daughter from an evil entity with a sinister plan. 88 minutes. (Rated R for language and some horror violence.)

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scouts guide to the zombie apocalypse. Starring Tye Sheridan, Logan Miller, Joey Morgan and Sarah Dumont. Directed by Christopher Landon. Three scouts, on the eve of their last camp-out, discover the true meaning of friendship when they attempt to save their town from a zombie outbreak. 93 minutes. (Rated R for zombie violence and gore, sexual material, graphic nudity, and language throughout.)

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STRAIGHT OUTTA COMPTON. Starring O'Shea Jackson Jr., Corey Hawkins, Jason Mitchell and Neil Brown Jr. Directed by F. Gary Gray. The story of the band NWA and its emergence from the streets of Compton, Calif., that revolutionized hip-hop culture. 157 minutes. (Rated R for language throughout, strong sexuality/nudity, violence, and drug use.)

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Document BFNW000020151106ebb500005

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Inside out. The voices of Amy Poehler, Phyllis Smith, Lewis Black, Bill Hader, Mindy Kaling and Richard Kind star in Pete Docter's unanimously praised animated film depicting personified emotions inside the head of young girl whose parents move the family from Minnesota to San Francisco. "The new Pixar fantasy is exquisite, one of the greatest animated films ever and certainly one of the most imaginative ever intended for a mass family audience. It's not as emotionally powerful a film as the sublime 'Up' or 'Wall- E' but it is, to be sure, even more inventive than those two modern animation masterpieces." 94 minutes. (Rated PG for intensity.) \*\*\*\* (Jeff Simon)

the Intern. Starring Anne Hathaway, Robert De Niro, Rene Russo and Directed by Nancy Meyers. A 70-year-old widower has discovered that retirement isn't all it's cracked up to be and becomes a senior intern at an online fashion site. "How many ways are there for an actor to purse his lips to convey that he's being silent about things he really ought to talk about? Robert DeNiro finds every last one of them during the course of this comedy which thinks it's about two people who find friendship with each other at a perfect time of life for them both. What it's really about are these things: Daddy issues, late-life wisdom and the complicated pleasures of being very prosperous in contemporary America where a lot of people aren't so lucky. DeNiro does the best he can, Anne Hathaway is adorable and the movie is clumsy but diabolically clever in its ingratiating way. Younger and downscale viewers are on their own." 121 minutes. (Rated PG-13 for some suggestive content and brief strong language.) \*\*\* (Jeff Simon).

jurassic world. Starring Chris Pratt, Bryce Dallas Howard, Ty Simpkins and Vincent D'Onofrio. Directed by Colin Trevorrow. Twenty- two years after the events of Jurassic Park, Isla Nublar now features a fully functioning dinosaur theme park, Jurassic World, where things go horribly wrong again. "Indominus rex is the name of the new gene-spliced dinosaur they're about to put up at Jurassic World, to increase the 'wow factor' and sell more tickets. As everyone knows going in, things go very wrong. And that's the fun of this movie in which there is no originality whatsoever but enough movie know-how to get audience applause at the climax. It might be scary for the littlest ones but there shouldn't be anything in it that sensitive parenting can't smooth over afterward." 124 minutes. (Rated PG-13 for intense sequences of science-fiction violence and peril.) \*\*\* (Jeff Simon)

Kahlil Gibran's The Prophet. With the voices of Liam Neeson, Salma Hayek, John Krasinski, Frank Langella, Alfred Molina, and Quvenzhané Wallis. An exiled artist and poet embarks on a journey home with his housekeeper and her daughter in this animated adaptation of the beloved text. "A beautifully animated

feature based on Gibran's volume of 26 poetic essays. 'Lion King' director Roger Allers put together a team of acclaimed animators, a diverse group of actors and a roster of musical heavyweights like Damien Rice, Glen Hansard, Yo-Yo Ma and Gabriel Yared. The resulting work is visually resplendent and appropriately respectful. It is a sweet, gentle film, yet one that feels a tad undercooked. This is, perhaps, due to the film's structure, which involves a basic skeleton of a story, and periodic visual vignettes, all accompanied by lovely poetry. While the words, sights, and sounds are often glorious, this journey becomes rather rote." 84 minutes. (Rated PG for thematic elements including some violence and sensual images.) \*\*o (Christopher Schobert

Labyrinth of lies. Starring Andre Szymanski, Alexander Fehling, Friederike Becht and Johannes Krisch. Directed by Giulio Ricciarelli. A story that exposes the conspiracy of prominent German institutions and government branches to cover up the crimes of Nazis during World War II. "The movie is beautifully filmed and the storyline is a compelling one, but the film suffers from Fehling's unconvincing performance. Some subplots are also unrealized or unnecessary, including the pursuit of the notorious Josef Mengele, which brings a couple of cheesy dream sequences. Still, the subject of how the German people came to learn of its past is a powerful one, and the film, despite its faults, mostly delivers." 124 minutes. (Rated R for a scene of sexuality.) In German with English subtitles. \*\*\* (Mark Sommer)

The Last Witch Hunter. Starring Vin Diesel, Rose Leslie, Elijah Wood and Rena Owen. Directed by Breck Eisner. The last witch hunter is all that stands between humanity and the combined forces of the most horrifying witches in history. 106 minutes. (Rated PG-13 for sequences of fantasy violence and frightening images.)

The Martian. Starring Matt Damon, Jessica Chastain, Kristen Wiig and Jeff Daniels. Directed by Ridley Scott. During a manned mission to Mars, Astronaut Mark Watney is presumed dead after a fierce storm and left behind by his crew. But Watney has survived and finds himself stranded and alone on the hostile planet. With only meager supplies, he must draw upon his ingenuity, wit and spirit to subsist and find a way to signal to Earth that he is alive. "Probably the coolest movie ever made about outer space. Others have been scarier, to be sure. And more visionary. But this is the one that has it all - wit, brains, visual, magnificence, and wonderful suspense throughout. Leave it to Sir Ridley Scott at 77 to give us a movie that's a veritable celebration of what movies are now capable of." 141 minutes. (Rated PG-13 for some strong language, injury images, and brief nudity.) \*\*o (Jeff Simon)

Maze runner: The Scorch Trials. Starring Dylan O'Brien, Kaya Scodelario, Thomas Brodie-Sangster and Ki Hong Lee. Directed by Wes Ball. After having escaped the Maze, the Gladers now face a new set of challenges on the open roads of a desolate landscape filled with unimaginable obstacles. 131 minutes. (Rated PG-13 for extended sequences of violence and action, some thematic elements, substance use and language.)

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Our Brand is crisis. Starring Sandra Bullock, Billy Bob Thornton, Anthony Mackie and Joaquim de Almeida. Directed by David Gordon Green. An American woman, well-versed in political campaigns, is sent to the war-torn lands of South America to help install a new leader but is threatened to be thwarted by a long-term rival. "Sandra Bullock as a hard-case political cynic? We know better. We moviegoers know she's warm and toasty and sweet inside no matter what she's pretending to be in her current movie. It's fun for a while watching her try to be cynical and fail. But it's based on a true story and the ending of that one wasn't very sweet at all. If you bother to think about it, it's enough to turn an audience into hard-case cynics." 107 minutes. (Rated R for language including some sexual references.) \*\*\* (Jeff **Simon**)

**Pan.** Starring Levi Miller, Hugh Jackman, Garrett Hedlund and Rooney Mara. Directed by Joe Wright. An orphan is spirited away to the magical world of Neverland, where he discovers his destiny to become the hero who will be forever known as Peter Pan. "The film is drenched in CGI, features at least two wildly over-the-top performances, feels a bit too dark at times, and - let's be honest - is entirely unnecessary. Yet the film also has momentary bursts of real imagination, a wonderful lead performance, and some nicely effective set-pieces. It's a modest success, and one that children will find quite pleasurable. The Neverland-set journey is rather exhausting, but it is one with some nice surprises. However many its flaws, children will undoubtedly be entertained." 111 minutes. (Rated PG for fantasy action violence, language and some thematic material.) \*\*\* (Christopher Schobert).

paranormal activity: The Ghost dimension. Starring Chris J. Murray, Brit Shaw, Ivy George and Dan Gill. Directed by Gregory Plotkin, Using a special camera that can see spirits, a family must protect their daughter from an evil entity with a sinister plan. 88 minutes. (Rated R for language and some horror violence.)

Pixels. Starring Adam Sandler, Kevin James, Michelle Monaghan and Peter Dinklage. Directed by Chris Columbus. When aliens misinterpret video feeds of classic arcade games as a declaration of war, they attack the Earth in the form of the video games. 105 minutes. (Rated PG-13 for some language and suggestive comments.)

scouts guide to the zombie apocalypse. Starring Tye Sheridan, Logan Miller, Joey Morgan and Sarah Dumont. Directed by Christopher Landon. Three scouts, on the eve of their last camp-out, discover the true meaning of friendship when they attempt to save their town from a zombie outbreak. 93 minutes. (Rated R for zombie violence and gore, sexual material, graphic nudity, and language throughout.)

Sicario. Starring Emily Blunt, Josh Brolin, Benicio Del Toro, Jon Bernthal and Victor Garber. Directed by Denis Villeneuve. An idealistic FBI agent is enlisted by an elected government task force to aid in the escalating war against drugs at the border area between the U.S. and Mexico. "In one gun battle in a dark drug tunnel between the U.S. and Mexico, the feds wear night-vision goggles. The entire movie was filmed in the moral equivalent of night vision goggles. Neither the movies or TV have ever given us a vision of the drug wars on our Southern border as violent or as powerful as this one. It's brutal but it's one of the year's best." 121 minutes. (Rated R for strong violence, grisly images, and language.) \*\*\*o (Jeff Simon)

STRAIGHT OUTTA COMPTON. Starring O'Shea Jackson Jr., Corey Hawkins, Jason Mitchell and Neil Brown Jr. Directed by F. Gary Gray. The story of the band NWA and its emergence from the streets of Compton, Calif., that revolutionized hip-hop culture. 157 minutes. (Rated R for language throughout, strong sexuality/nudity, violence, and drug use.)

Trainwreck. Starring Amy Schumer, Bill Hader, Brie Larson and Marisa Tomei. Directed by Judd Apatow. Having thought that monogamy was never possible, a commitment-phobic career woman may have to face her fears when she meets a good guy. "You can get off your high horse now. Believe me, I understand why you're there. But for us skeptics who spend much of our lives on hype patrol in the precincts of American celebrity, one thing is obvious relatively early on about "Trainwreck:" Amy Schumer is as good as advertised (i.e. hyped everywhere for the past month)." 125 minutes. (Rated R for strong sexual content, nudity, language and some drug use.) \*\*\*o (Jeff Simon)

Truth. Starring Cate Blanchett, Robert Redford, Dennis Quaid and Topher Grace. Directed by James Vanderbilt. Newsroom drama detailing the 2004 CBS 60 Minutes report investigating then-President George W. Bush's military service, and the subsequent firestorm of criticism that cost anchor Dan Rather and producer Mary Mapes their careers. "Truth is exactly what's in short supply in this film--not least because Robert Redford plays Dan Rather as if he were an older incarnation of the Bob Woodward he played in 'All the President's Men.' What a load of hoey that is. But Redford's good at doing it and, as disgraced CBS newswoman Mary Mapes, Cate Blanchett is riveting. There's no actress better in American movies these days." 121 minutes. (Rated R for language and a brief nude photo.) \*\*\* (Jeff Simon)

The Visit. Starring Olivia DeJonge, Ed Oxenbould, Deanna Dunagan and Peter McRobbie. Directed by M. Night Shyamalan. A single mother finds that things in her family's life go very wrong after her two young children visit their grandparents. 94 minutes. (Rated PG-13 for disturbing thematic material including terror, violence and some nudity, and for brief language.)

A Walk in the Woods. Starring Robert Redford, Nick Nolte, Emma Thompson and Mary Steenburgen. After spending two decades in England, a man returns to the U.S., where he decides to connect with his homeland by hiking the Appalachian Trail with one of his oldest friends. "It's a pretty lame comedy, in truth, but the scenery is often magnificent and just the sight of Redford and 74-year old Hollywood reprobate Nick Nolte sharing a screen together is delightful even when nothing remotely interesting is happening onscreen." 104 minutes. (Rated R for language and some sexual references.) \*\*o(Jeff Simon)

Woodlawn. Starring Caleb Castille, Sean Astin and Jon Voight. A gifted high school football player must learn to embrace his talent and his faith as he battles racial tensions on and off the field. 123 minutes. (Rated PG for thematic elements including some racial tension/violence.)

Document BFNW000020151106ebb500001

# THE AUSTRALIAN

National Affairs

## **EXCLUSIVE; Loophole aids key Lacrosse players**

620 words

1 November 2015

The Australian - Online

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English

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The wealthy key players behind the Lacrosse cladding scandal could walk away from the potentially deadly debacle without sanction, despite leaving more 300 apartment owners with a \$20 million rectification bill.

### Loophole aids key Lacrosse players

Under a legal loophole, Peter Devitt, the multi-millionaire head of the construction company that built the 23-storey complex with cheaply imported and highly flammable cladding, is not under investigation by Victoria's building regulator over the issue. Nor is the building company, LU **Simon.**

**Pan** Urban, the development company owned by the project's co-developer, publisher Morry Schwartz, and the architectural firm which designed the building, Elenberg Fraser, set up by Mr Schwartz's high-profile architect daughter Zahava Elenberg, are also not being investigated.

Under current regulations, the Victorian Building Authority, which regulates and investigates builders, can only investigate the individual building practitioner named on the project's building permit, not the people or companies that constructed, developed or designed it.

The Australian understands LU Simon construction director Jim Moschoyiannis is the registered builder on the building permit and, along with registered surveyor Stasi Galanos from Gardner Group, is the focus of the investigation by the VBA over the use of non-compliant and flammable cladding installed on the complex.

A spokesman for the VBA refused to confirm that Mr Moschoyiannis was the builder under investigation over the scandal, but did confirm that the body could only investigate the individual registered builder and the registered surveyor named on permits attached to the development.

Under Victorian regulations, a builder can be deregistered by the Building Practitioners Board after an investigation by the VBA.

The VBA told Lacrosse owners last week the investigation will be completed by Christmas: The Australian has learned it is expected to be wrapped up next month.

Apartment owners at Lacrosse, in Melbourne's high-density inner-city Docklands precinct, are furious LU Simon will not be held to account for using the cheap and highly dangerous non-complaint material on their building or be forced to pay to have it fixed.

Melbourne City Council's municipal building surveyor, Joseph Genco, told a meeting of apartment owners last week that, under the Victorian Building Act, there was no ability to force builder LU Simon to pay for the cost of rectification and that it was not possible to force any individual other than the owners to bring the building into compliance with the law.

One owner, who does not want to be named, said it was "disgraceful" that LU Simon would not be held accountable for "leaving us in this mess". "Nobody is telling us anything," she said. "We don't know who is being investigated, what is being investigated or why it has taken 12 months to finish an investigation.

"This is absolute betrayal by everybody, including the people we trusted to look after our interests and handle the situation. They are treating us like absolute bloody fools."

A spokeswoman for Victorian Planning Minister Richard Wynne said the government could not consider any changes to the law until the VBA had completed its investigation.

The council has given owners 350 days to bring Lacrosse into compliance with Australia's building, fire and safety laws at an expected cost to the owners of at least \$40,000 each.

The scandal came to light after a fire at the Lacrosse complex in November last year was found to have been fuelled by the combustible imported cladding.

A spokeswoman for LU Simon said: “LU Simon Builders P/L employs five building practitioners amongst whom the project registrations are shared — all of which are indemnified and insured by the company.”

Document AUSTOL0020151101ebb1000fn

Features  
**Movie Reviews**

2,950 words  
 29 October 2015  
 Buffalo News  
 BFNW  
 GU.6  
 English

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**Ant-Man.** Starring Paul Rudd, Michael Douglas, Corey Stoll and Evangeline Lilly. Directed by Peyton Reed. Armed with a super-suit with the astonishing ability to shrink in scale but increase in strength, con-man Scott Lang must embrace his inner hero and help his mentor, Dr. Hank Pym, save the world. "What is found here make it one of the cleverest of Marvel movies - fast reflexes, wit and humor both (not the same thing), and enormous creativity in inventing a character who can instantly shrink from a full-size man to ant-size and then back again in a second." 117 minutes.

**Black Mass.** Starring Johnny Depp, Benedict Cumberbatch, Dakota Johnson and Joel Edgerton. Directed by Scott Cooper. The true story of Whitey Bulger, the brother of a state senator and the most infamous violent criminal in the history of South Boston, who became an FBI informant to take down a Mafia family invading his turf. "Johnny Depp owns this movie. His performance as murdering psychopath Whitey Bulger - South Boston's '80's answer to Chicago's Al Capone during prohibition--is the reason to see this. All the actors do nicely, in truth, which is fortunate because the movie otherwise concentrates so much on how Bulger hoodwinked the FBI (for whom he was a confidential informant) that it misses almost everything else that would have made it important. It's Scorsese- lite." 122 minutes. (Rated R for brutal violence, language throughout, some sexual references and brief drug use.) \*\*\* (Jeff Simon)

**Bridge of Spies.** Starring Tom Hanks, Mark Rylance and Alan Alda. An American lawyer is recruited by the CIA during the Cold War to help rescue a pilot detained in the Soviet Union. "Just about everything you expect a Steven Spielberg spy movie to be in 2015. It's consummately professional. If it's not thrilling, it's certainly exciting; and if it's not performed with brilliance, it's performed exceedingly well - especially by Mark Rylance as Soviet Spy Rudolf Abel who, with only a fraction of Tom Hanks' lines, completely steals the picture. As with so many Spielberg movies, it's about virtue more than anything else. Somehow Spielberg seems to think of guys like Tom Hanks' Cold War negotiator here and Oskar Schindler as self-portraits." 142 minutes. (Rated PG-13 for some violence and brief strong language.) \*\*\*o (Jeff Simon)

**Crimson Peak.** Starring Mia Wasikowska, Jessica Chastain and Tom Hiddleston. Directed by Guillermo del Toro. In the aftermath of a family tragedy, an aspiring author is torn between love for her childhood friend and the temptation of a mysterious outsider. "Like Coppola's "Dracula," "Crimson Peak" is not the terrifying creation some anticipated, but certainly a wildly pleasurable experience." 119 minutes. (Rated R for bloody violence, some sexual content and brief strong language.) \*\*\* (Christopher Schobert)

**Everest.** Starring Jason Clarke, Josh Brolin, John Hawkes, Jake Gyllenhaal, Sam Worthington and Robin Wright. Directed by Baltasar Kormakur. The true story of the 1996 Mount Everest disaster, focusing on the survival attempts of two expedition groups. "Everest" is utterly ideal for IMAX. The new action-disaster epic doesn't just justify the large screen -- it makes it almost essential. It is hard, in fact, to recall a recent man vs. the elements flick with such an epic scope. There are moments in 'Everest' that will leave audiences breathless. And despite some notable flaws, it is a satisfying, well-mounted production. The cast and the visuals combine for an action spectacle that truly delivers. While it will likely prove effective on any size screen, plunk down the extra money for IMAX and you'll likely find 'Everest' an impressively immersive experience." 121 minutes. (Rated PG-13 for intense peril and disturbing images.) \*\*\*o (Christopher Schobert)

**The Gift.** Starring Jason Bateman, Rebecca Hall, Joel Edgerton and David Denman. Directed by Edgerton. A young married couple's lives are thrown into a harrowing tailspin when an acquaintance from the husband's past brings mysterious gifts and a horrifying secret to light after more than 20 years. 108 minutes. (Rated R for language.)

**Goodnight mommy.** Starring Susanne Wuest, Lukas Schwarz, Elias Schwarz and Hans Escher. Directed by Severin Fiala and Veronika Franz. Twin boys move to a new home with their mother after she has face changing cosmetic surgery, but under her bandages is someone the children don't recognize. "This Austrian horror-thriller is one of the most chilling films in recent memory, a fiercely compelling story of creepy, blonde-haired twins and the woman who may (or may not) be their mother. It repels and intrigues in equal measure, and there are moments in the film that make you gasp in astonishment. It all leads to a knockout finale, one that may make you desperate to watch the film again. While some may see it coming, these last



few minutes are marvelously structured and deeply moving. Featuring fascinating performances from its three leads, 'Goodnight Mommy' is an off-kilter nightmare that dares you to not look away." 99 minutes. (Rated R for disturbing violent content and some nudity. In German with English subtitles.) \*\*\*\*(Christopher Schobert)

Goosebumps. Starring Jack Black, Dylan Minnette and Odeya Rush. A teenager teams up with the daughter of young adult horror author R.L. Stine after the writer's imaginary demons are set free. "Actual goosebumps aren't plentiful but, mild horror comic pleasures for one and all are. The littlest ones may find it all a bit unsettling but don't let anyone talk you out of taking anyone seven or older to this. They'll almost certainly be able to handle it and it's a surprising amount of fun once it gets going." 103 minutes. (Rated PG for scary and intense creature action and images, and for some rude humor.) \*\*\* (Jeff Simon)

he named me malala. Starring Malala Yousafzai, Ziauddin Yousafzai, Toor Pekai and Khushal Yousafzai. Directed by Davis Guggenheim. Documentary on Malala Yousafzai, a Pakistani teen attacked by the Taliban for speaking out on girls' education and the aftermath, including her speech to the United Nations. "The point of the film is to give you the opportunity to spend 87 minutes of your life almost unavoidably awestruck. You're in the company of a young woman who seems, after some thought, one worthy illustration of why our species was invented in the first place." 87 minutes. (Rated PG- 13 for thematic elements involving disturbing images and threats.) Opens Friday at Dipson Amherst and Eastern Hills. \*\*\*o (Jeff Simon).

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the Intern. Starring Anne Hathaway, Robert De Niro, Rene Russo and Directed by Nancy Meyers. A 70-year-old widower has discovered that retirement isn't all it's cracked up to be and becomes a senior intern at an online fashion site. "How many ways are there for an actor to purse his lips to convey that he's being silent about things he really ought to talk about? Robert DeNiro finds every last one of them during the course of this comedy which thinks it's about two people who find friendship with each other at a perfect time of life for them both. What it's really about are these things: Daddy issues, late-life wisdom and the complicated pleasures of being very prosperous in contemporary America where a lot of people aren't so lucky. DeNiro does the best he can, Anne Hathaway is adorable and the movie is clumsy but diabolically clever in its ingratiating way. Younger and downscale viewers are on their own." 121 minutes. (Rated PG-13 for some suggestive content and brief strong language.) \*\*\* (Jeff Simon).

Jem and the holograms. Starring Aubrey Peeples, Stefanie Scott, Aurora Perrineau and Hayley Kiyoko. Directed by Jon M. Chu. As a small-town girl catapults from underground video sensation to global superstar, she and her three sisters begin a journey of discovering that some talents are too special to keep hidden. 118 minutes (Rated PG for thematic material including reckless behavior, brief suggestive content and some language.)

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THE PERFECT GUY. Starring Sanaa Lathan, Michael Ealy and Morris Chestnut. Directed by David M. Rosenthal. After breaking up with her boyfriend, a professional woman gets involved with a man who seems almost too good to be true. 100 minutes. (Rated PG-13 for violence, menace, sexuality and brief strong language.)

Pixels. Starring Adam Sandler, Kevin James, Michelle Monaghan and Peter Dinklage. Directed by Chris Columbus. When aliens misinterpret video feeds of classic arcade games as a declaration of war, they attack the Earth in the form of the video games. 105 minutes. (Rated PG-13 for some language and suggestive comments.)

Ricki and the flash. Meryl Streep, Mamie Gummer, Sebastian Stan and Rick Springfield. Directed by Jonathan Demme. A musician who gave up everything for her dream of rock 'n' roll stardom returns home, looking to make things right with her family. 102 minutes. (Rated PG-13 for thematic material, brief drug content, sexuality and language.)

rock the Kasbah. Starring Bill Murray, Leem Lubany, Zooey Deschanel and Bruce Willis. Directed by Barry Levinson. A down-on- his-luck music manager discovers a teenage girl with an extraordinary voice while on a music tour in Afghanistan and takes her to Kabul to compete on the popular television show, Afghan Star. 100 minutes. (Rated R for language including sexual references, some drug use and brief violence.)

Shandaar. Starring Alia Bhatt, Shahid Kapoor and Kumud Pant. Directed by Vikas Bahl. A young boy finds his love in a mysterious way. 144 minutes. (Not rated.)

Sicario. Starring Emily Blunt, Josh Brolin, Benicio Del Toro, Jon Bernthal and Victor Garber. Directed by Denis Villeneuve. An idealistic FBI agent is enlisted by an elected government task force to aid in the escalating war against drugs at the border area between the U.S. and Mexico. 121 minutes. (Rated R for strong violence, grisly images, and language.) \*\*\*o (Jeff Simon)

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Document BFNW000020151030ebate00009

## Features

**Movies jump here**

2,951 words

29 October 2015

Buffalo News

BFNW

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English

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**Bridge of Spies.** Starring Tom Hanks, Mark Rylance and Alan Alda. An American lawyer is recruited by the CIA during the Cold War to help rescue a pilot detained in the Soviet Union. "Just about everything you expect a Steven Spielberg spy movie to be in 2015. It's consummately professional. If it's not thrilling, it's certainly exciting; and if it's not performed with brilliance, it's performed exceedingly well - especially by Mark Rylance as Soviet Spy Rudolf Abel who, with only a fraction of Tom Hanks' lines, completely steals the picture. As with so many Spielberg movies, it's about virtue more than anything else. Somehow Spielberg seems to think of guys like Tom Hanks' Cold War negotiator here and Oskar Schindler as self-portraits." 142 minutes. (Rated PG-13 for some violence and brief strong language.) \*\*\*o (Jeff Simon)

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**The Gift.** Starring Jason Bateman, Rebecca Hall, Joel Edgerton and David Denman. Directed by Edgerton. A young married couple's lives are thrown into a harrowing tailspin when an acquaintance from the husbands's past brings mysterious gifts and a horrifying secret to light after more than 20 years. 108 minutes. (Rated R for language.)

**Goodnight mommy.** Starring Susanne Wuest, Lukas Schwarz, Elias Schwarz and Hans Escher. Directed by Severin Fiala and Veronika Franz. Twin boys move to a new home with their mother after she has face changing cosmetic surgery, but under her bandages is someone the children don't recognize. "This Austrian horror-thriller is one of the most chilling films in recent memory, a fiercely compelling story of creepy, blonde-haired twins and the woman who may (or may not) be their mother. It repels and intrigues in equal measure, and there are moments in the film that make you gasp in astonishment. It all leads to a knockout finale, one that may make you desperate to watch the film again. While some may see it coming, these last

few minutes are marvelously structured and deeply moving. Featuring fascinating performances from its three leads, 'Goodnight Mommy' is an off-kilter nightmare that dares you to not look away." 99 minutes. (Rated R for disturbing violent content and some nudity. In German with English subtitles.) \*\*\*\*(Christopher Schobert)

Goosebumps. Starring Jack Black, Dylan Minnette and Odeya Rush. A teenager teams up with the daughter of young adult horror author R.L. Stine after the writer's imaginary demons are set free. "Actual goosebumps aren't plentiful but, mild horror comic pleasures for one and all are. The littlest ones may find it all a bit unsettling but don't let anyone talk you out of taking anyone seven or older to this. They'll almost certainly be able to handle it and it's a surprising amount of fun once it gets going." 103 minutes. (Rated PG for scary and intense creature action and images, and for some rude humor.) \*\*\* (Jeff Simon)

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Inside out. The voices of Amy Poehler, Phyllis Smith, Lewis Black, Bill Hader, Mindy Kaling and Richard Kind star in Pete Docter's unanimously praised animated film depicting personified emotions inside the head of young girl whose parents move the family from Minnesota to San Francisco. "Can an animated feature be too good for its audience? The new Pixar fantasy is exquisite, one of the greatest animated films ever and certainly one of the most imaginative ever intended for a mass family audience. It's not as emotionally powerful a film as the sublime 'Up' or 'Wall-E' but it is, to be sure, even more inventive than those two modern animation masterpieces. It may lose some little ones though, as well as recalcitrant older viewers too. But those who have always treasured animated films as the place where cinematic creativity can life fully and with no apology will careen from delight to delight for the full 94 minutes of this film." 94 minutes. (Rated PG for intensity.) \*\*\*\* (Jeff Simon)

the Intern. Starring Anne Hathaway, Robert De Niro, Rene Russo and Directed by Nancy Meyers. A 70-year-old widower has discovered that retirement isn't all it's cracked up to be and becomes a senior intern at an online fashion site. "How many ways are there for an actor to purse his lips to convey that he's being silent about things he really ought to talk about? Robert DeNiro finds every last one of them during the course of this comedy which thinks it's about two people who find friendship with each other at a perfect time of life for them both. What it's really about are these things: Daddy issues, late-life wisdom and the complicated pleasures of being very prosperous in contemporary America where a lot of people aren't so lucky. DeNiro does the best he can, Anne Hathaway is adorable and the movie is clumsy but diabolically clever in its ingratiating way. Younger and downscale viewers are on their own." 121 minutes. (Rated PG-13 for some suggestive content and brief strong language.) \*\*\* (Jeff Simon).

Jem and the holograms. Starring Aubrey Peeples, Stefanie Scott, Aurora Perrineau and Hayley Kiyoko. Directed by Jon M. Chu. As a small-town girl catapults from underground video sensation to global superstar, she and her three sisters begin a journey of discovering that some talents are too special to keep hidden. 118 minutes (Rated PG for thematic material including reckless behavior, brief suggestive content and some language.)

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The Last Witch Hunter. Starring Vin Diesel, Rose Leslie, Elijah Wood and Rena Owen. Directed by Breck Eisner. The last witch hunter is all that stands between humanity and the combined forces of the most horrifying witches in history. 106 minutes. (Rated PG-13 for sequences of fantasy violence and frightening images.)

The Martian. Starring Matt Damon, Jessica Chastain, Kristen Wiig and Jeff Daniels. Directed by Ridley Scott. During a manned mission to Mars, Astronaut Mark Watney is presumed dead after a fierce storm and left behind by his crew. But Watney has survived and finds himself stranded and alone on the hostile planet. With only meager supplies, he must draw upon his ingenuity, wit and spirit to subsist and find a way to signal to Earth that he is alive. 141 minutes. (Rated PG-13 for some strong language, injury images, and brief nudity.) \*\*\*o (Jeff Simon)

Maze runner: The Scorch Trials. Starring Dylan O'Brien, Kaya Scodelario, Thomas Brodie-Sangster and Ki Hong Lee. Directed by Wes Ball. After having escaped the Maze, the Gladers now face a new set of challenges on the open roads of a desolate landscape filled with unimaginable obstacles. 131 minutes. (Rated PG-13 for extended sequences of violence and action, some thematic elements, substance use and language.)

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**Pan**. Starring Levi Miller, Hugh Jackman, Garrett Hedlund and Rooney Mara. Directed by Joe Wright. An orphan is spirited away to the magical world of Neverland, where he discovers his destiny to become the hero who will be forever known as Peter Pan. "The film is drenched in CGI, features at least two wildly over-the-top performances, feels a bit too dark at times, and - let's be honest - is entirely unnecessary. Yet the film also has momentary bursts of real imagination, a wonderful lead performance, and some nicely effective set-pieces. It's a modest success, and one that children will find quite pleasurable. The Neverland-set journey is rather exhausting, but it is one with some nice surprises. However many its flaws, children will undoubtedly be entertained." 111 minutes. (Rated PG for fantasy action violence, language and some thematic material.) \*\*\* (Christopher Schobert).

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Pixels. Starring Adam Sandler, Kevin James, Michelle Monaghan and Peter Dinklage. Directed by Chris Columbus. When aliens misinterpret video feeds of classic arcade games as a declaration of war, they attack the Earth in the form of the video games. 105 minutes. (Rated PG-13 for some language and suggestive comments.)

Ricki and the flash. Meryl Streep, Mamie Gummer, Sebastian Stan and Rick Springfield. Directed by Jonathan Demme. A musician who gave up everything for her dream of rock 'n' roll stardom returns home, looking to make things right with her family. 102 minutes. (Rated PG-13 for thematic material, brief drug content, sexuality and language.)

rock the Kasbah. Starring Bill Murray, Leem Lubany, Zooey Deschanel and Bruce Willis. Directed by Barry Levinson. A down-on- his-luck music manager discovers a teenage girl with an extraordinary voice while on a music tour in Afghanistan and takes her to Kabul to compete on the popular television show, Afghan Star. 100 minutes. (Rated R for language including sexual references, some drug use and brief violence.)

Shandaar. Starring Alia Bhatt, Shahid Kapoor and Kumud Pant. Directed by Vikas Bahl. A young boy finds his love in a mysterious way. 144 minutes. (Not rated.)

Sicario. Starring Emily Blunt, Josh Brolin, Benicio Del Toro, Jon Bernthal and Victor Garber. Directed by Denis Villeneuve. An idealistic FBI agent is enlisted by an elected government task force to aid in the escalating war against drugs at the border area between the U.S. and Mexico. 121 minutes. (Rated R for strong violence, grisly images, and language.) \*\*\*o (Jeff Simon)

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Document BFNW000020151030ebate00004

Gusto  
**Movies**

2,664 words  
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 BFNW  
 GU.8  
 English

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**Freeheld.** Starring Julianne Moore, Ellen Page, Steve Carell and Michael Shannon. Directed by Peter Sollett. A New Jersey police lieutenant and her registered domestic partner both battle to secure her pension benefits when she is diagnosed with terminal cancer. "Freeheld" is, well, fine. The hot-button drama based on the true story of New Jersey police lieutenant Laurel Hester, who in 2005 fought to secure pension benefits for her registered domestic partner, Stacie Andree, while battling terminal cancer, is reasonably well acted and occasionally moving." 103 minutes. (Rated PG-13 for some thematic elements, language and sexuality.) \*\*o (Christopher Schobert)

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Meet the Patels. Starring Champa V. Patel, Geeta Patel and Ravi Patel. An Indian-American man who is about to turn 30 gets help from his parents and extended family to look for a wife in the traditional Indian way. 88 minutes. (Rated PG for thematic elements, brief suggestive images and incidental smoking.)

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Queen Elizabeth's crown and the Queen herself likes to knock back pints at the local pub and snorts when he laughs. Reasonably good fun with a great soundtrack of '60's hits." 91 minutes. (Rated PG for action and rude humor.) \*\*\* (Jeff Simon)

Mission Impossible Rogue Nation. Starring Tom Cruise, Rebecca Ferguson, Jeremy Renner and Simon Pegg. Directed by Christopher McQuarrie. Ethan and team take on their most impossible mission yet, eradicating the Syndicate - an International rogue organization as highly skilled as they are, committed to destroying the Impossible Mission Force. "We can just sit back, watch and enjoy the bargain basement Bond and Hitchcock shenanigans." 131 minutes. (Rated PG-13 for sequences of action and violence, and brief partial nudity.) \*\*\* (Jeff **Simon**)

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Document BFNW000020151023ebam00007

Gusto  
**Movie Reviews**

2,665 words  
 22 October 2015  
 Buffalo News  
 BFNW  
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**Ant-Man.** Starring Paul Rudd, Michael Douglas, Corey Stoll and Evangeline Lilly. Directed by Peyton Reed. Armed with a super-suit with the astonishing ability to shrink in scale but increase in strength, con-man Scott Lang must embrace his inner hero and help his mentor, Dr. Hank Pym, save the world. "What is found here make it one of the cleverest of Marvel movies - fast reflexes, wit and humor both (not the same thing), and enormous creativity in inventing a character who can instantly shrink from a full-size man to ant-size and then back again in a second." 117 minutes.

**Black Mass.** Starring Johnny Depp, Benedict Cumberbatch, Dakota Johnson and Joel Edgerton. Directed by Scott Cooper. The true story of Whitey Bulger, the brother of a state senator and the most infamous violent criminal in the history of South Boston, who became an FBI informant to take down a Mafia family invading his turf. "Johnny Depp owns this movie. His performance as murdering psychopath Whitey Bulger - South Boston's '80s answer to Chicago's Al Capone during prohibition--is the reason to see this." 122 minutes. (Rated R for brutal violence, language throughout, some sexual references and brief drug use.) \*\*\* (Jeff Simon)

**Bridge of Spies.** Starring Tom Hanks, Mark Rylance and Alan Alda. An American lawyer is recruited by the CIA during the Cold War to help rescue a pilot detained in the Soviet Union. "Just about everything you expect a Steven Spielberg spy movie to be in 2015. It's consummately professional. If it's not thrilling, it's certainly exciting; and if it's not performed with brilliance, it's performed exceedingly well - especially by Mark Rylance as Soviet Spy Rudolf Abel who, with only a fraction of Tom Hanks' lines, completely steals the picture. As with so many Spielberg movies, it's about virtue more than anything else. Somehow Spielberg seems to think of guys like Tom Hanks' Cold War negotiator here and Oskar Schindler as self-portraits." 142 minutes. (Rated PG-13 for some violence and brief strong language.) \*\*\*o (Jeff Simon)

**Crimson Peak.** Starring Mia Wasikowska, Jessica Chastain and Tom Hiddleston. Directed by Guillermo del Toro. In the aftermath of a family tragedy, an aspiring author is torn between love for her childhood friend and the temptation of a mysterious outsider. "Like Coppola's "Dracula," "Crimson Peak" is not the terrifying creation some anticipated, but certainly a wildly pleasurable experience." 119 minutes. (Rated R for bloody violence, some sexual content and brief strong language.) \*\*\* (Christopher Schobert)

**Everest.** Starring Jason Clarke, Josh Brolin, John Hawkes, Jake Gyllenhaal, Sam Worthington and Robin Wright. Directed by Baltasar Kormakur. The true story of the 1996 Mount Everest disaster, focusing on the survival attempts of two expedition groups. "'Everest' is utterly ideal for IMAX. The new action-disaster epic doesn't just justify the large screen -- it makes it almost essential. It is hard, in fact, to recall a recent man vs. the elements flick with such an epic scope. There are moments in 'Everest' that will leave audiences breathless. And despite some notable flaws, it is a satisfying, well-mounted production. The cast and the visuals combine for an action spectacle that truly delivers. While it will likely prove effective on any size screen, plunk down the extra money for IMAX and you'll likely find 'Everest' an impressively immersive experience." 121 minutes. (Rated PG-13 for intense peril and disturbing images.) \*\*\*o (Christopher Schobert)

**Freeheld.** Starring Julianne Moore, Ellen Page, Steve Carell and Michael Shannon. Directed by Peter Sollett. A New Jersey police lieutenant and her registered domestic partner both battle to secure her pension benefits when she is diagnosed with terminal cancer. "Freeheld" is, well, fine. The hot-button drama based on the true story of New Jersey police lieutenant Laurel Hester, who in 2005 fought to secure pension benefits for her registered domestic partner, Stacie Andree, while battling terminal cancer, is reasonably well acted and occasionally moving." 103 minutes. (Rated PG-13 for some thematic elements, language and sexuality.) \*\*o (Christopher Schobert)

**The Gift.** Starring Jason Bateman, Rebecca Hall, Joel Edgerton and David Denman. Directed by Edgerton. A young married couple's lives are thrown into a harrowing tailspin when an acquaintance from the husband's past brings mysterious gifts and a horrifying secret to light after more than 20 years. 108 minutes. (Rated R for language.)

Goosebumps. Starring Jack Black, Dylan Minnette and Odeya Rush. A teenager teams up with the daughter of young adult horror author R.L. Stine after the writer's imaginary demons are set free. "Actual goosebumps aren't plentiful but, mild horror comic pleasures for one and all are. The littlest ones may find it all a bit unsettling but don't let anyone talk you out of taking anyone seven or older to this. They'll almost certainly be able to handle it and it's a surprising amount of fun once it gets going." 103 minutes. (Rated PG for scary and intense creature action and images, and for some rude humor.) \*\*\* (Jeff Simon)

he named me malala. Starring Malala Yousafzai, Ziauddin Yousafzai, Toor Pekai and Khushal Yousafzai. Directed by Davis Guggenheim. Documentary on Malala Yousafzai, a Pakistani teen attacked by the Taliban for speaking out on girls' education and the aftermath, including her speech to the United Nations. "The point of the film is to give you the opportunity to spend 87 minutes of your life almost unavoidably awestruck. You're in the company of a young woman who seems, after some thought, one worthy illustration of why our species was invented in the first place." 87 minutes. (Rated PG- 13 for thematic elements involving disturbing images and threats.) Opens Friday at Dipson Amherst and Eastern Hills. \*\*\*o (Jeff Simon).

Hotel Transylvania 2. With the voices of Adam Sandler, Kevin James, Steve Buscemi, Selena Gomez, Keegan-Michael Key and Andy Samberg. Directed by Genndy Tartakovsky. When the old-old-old- fashioned vampire Vlad arrives at the hotel for an impromptu family get-together, Hotel Transylvania is in for a collision of supernatural old-school and modern day cool. 89 minutes. (Rated PG for some scary images, action and rude humor.)

Inside out. The voices of Amy Poehler, Phyllis Smith, Lewis Black, Bill Hader, Mindy Kaling and Richard Kind star in Pete Docter's unanimously praised animated film depicting personified emotions inside the head of young girl whose parents move the family from Minnesota to San Francisco. "The new Pixar fantasy is exquisite, one of the greatest animated films ever and certainly one of the most imaginative ever intended for a mass family audience. " 94 minutes. (Rated PG for intensity.) \*\*\*\* (Jeff Simon)

the Intern. Starring Anne Hathaway, Robert De Niro, Rene Russo and Directed by Nancy Meyers. A 70-year-old widower has discovered that retirement isn't all it's cracked up to be and becomes a senior intern at an online fashion site. "How many ways are there for an actor to purse his lips to convey that he's being silent about things he really ought to talk about? Robert DeNiro finds every last one of them during the course of this comedy which thinks it's about two people who find friendship with each other at a perfect time of life for them both. What it's really about are these things: Daddy issues, late-life wisdom and the complicated pleasures of being very prosperous in contemporary America where a lot of people aren't so lucky. DeNiro does the best he can, Anne Hathaway is adorable and the movie is clumsy but diabolically clever in its ingratiating way. Younger and downscale viewers are on their own." 121 minutes. (Rated PG-13 for some suggestive content and brief strong language.) \*\*\* (Jeff Simon).

jurassic world. Starring Chris Pratt, Bryce Dallas Howard, Ty Simpkins and Vincent D'Onofrio. Directed by Colin Trevorrow. Twenty- two years after the events of Jurassic Park, Isla Nublar now features a fully functioning dinosaur theme park, Jurassic World, where things go horribly wrong again. "Indominus rex is the name of the new gene-spliced dinosaur they're about to put up at Jurassic World, to increase the 'wow factor' and sell more tickets. As everyone knows going in, things go very wrong. And that's the fun of this movie in which there is no originality whatsoever but enough movie know-how to get audience applause at the climax. " 124 minutes. (Rated PG-13 for intense sequences of science-fiction violence and peril.) \*\*\* (Jeff Simon)

The Martian. Starring Matt Damon, Jessica Chastain, Kristen Wiig and Jeff Daniels. Directed by Ridley Scott. During a manned mission to Mars, Astronaut Mark Watney is presumed dead after a fierce storm and left behind by his crew. But Watney has survived and finds himself stranded and alone on the hostile planet. With only meager supplies, he must draw upon his ingenuity, wit and spirit to subsist and find a way to signal to Earth that he is alive. 141 minutes. (Rated PG-13 for some strong language, injury images, and brief nudity.) \*\*\*o (Jeff Simon)

Maze runner: The Scorch Trials. Starring Dylan O'Brien, Kaya Scodelario, Thomas Brodie-Sangster and Ki Hong Lee. Directed by Wes Ball. After having escaped the Maze, the Gladers now face a new set of challenges on the open roads of a desolate landscape filled with unimaginable obstacles. 131 minutes. (Rated PG-13 for extended sequences of violence and action, some thematic elements, substance use and language.)

Meet the Patels. Starring Champa V. Patel, Geeta Patel and Ravi Patel. An Indian-American man who is about to turn 30 gets help from his parents and extended family to look for a wife in the traditional Indian way. 88 minutes. (Rated PG for thematic elements, brief suggestive images and incidental smoking.)

Minions. With the voices of Sandra Bullock, Jon Hamm, Michael Keaton and Allison Janney. Minions are recruited by super villain Scarlet Overkill who hatches a plot to take over the world. "The script by Kevin Lynch is a lot funnier than people are giving it credit for. This third in the 'Despicable Me' series is a prequel that goes all the way back to the Tyrannosaurus Rex and then stops at 1968 when Scarlet Overkill wants

Queen Elizabeth's crown and the Queen herself likes to knock back pints at the local pub and snorts when he laughs. Reasonably good fun with a great soundtrack of '60's hits." 91 minutes. (Rated PG for action and rude humor.) \*\*\* (Jeff Simon)

Mission Impossible Rogue Nation. Starring Tom Cruise, Rebecca Ferguson, Jeremy Renner and Simon Pegg. Directed by Christopher McQuarrie. Ethan and team take on their most impossible mission yet, eradicating the Syndicate - an International rogue organization as highly skilled as they are, committed to destroying the Impossible Mission Force. "We can just sit back, watch and enjoy the bargain basement Bond and Hitchcock shenanigans." 131 minutes. (Rated PG-13 for sequences of action and violence, and brief partial nudity.) \*\*\* (Jeff **Simon**)

**Pan.** Starring Levi Miller, Hugh Jackman, Garrett Hedlund and Rooney Mara. Directed by Joe Wright. An orphan is spirited away to the magical world of Neverland, where he discovers his destiny to become the hero who will be forever known as Peter Pan. "It's a modest success, and one that children will find quite pleasurable. The Neverland-set journey is rather exhausting, but it is one with some nice surprises. However many its flaws, children will undoubtedly be entertained." 111 minutes. (Rated PG for fantasy action violence, language and some thematic material.) \*\*\* (Christopher Schobert).

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Document BFNW000020151023ebam00006



Magazine

**UNFORGETTABLE IN EVERY WAY**

SCOTT SIMON

1,405 words

29 March 2015

Sunday Telegraph Style Magazine

NLSTEM

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26

English

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TWEETING FROM HIS MOTHER'S DEATHBED, SCOTT SIMON PONDERES LIFE, DEATH AND A SON'S DEVOTION

Mother called: "I can't talk. I'm surrounded by handsome men." Emergency surgery. If you can hold a thought for her now ...

I have covered a lot of wars [as a reporter], and try to be careful about comparing combat to anything else. But wars and final illnesses both have moments of panic spaced between hours of tedium. There can be a lot of waiting and staring off into space.

It was in these times, during what turned out to be the last days of my mother's life, that I began to post messages on Twitter. I think I wrote these 140-character lines for distraction, for companionship, and because although my world had pretty much shrunk to the confines of a single room in an intensive-care unit, what I heard, saw, and felt there touched on the universal experience of life and death.

My mother was also just so funny and interesting. I wanted to share what she said, to make people laugh and think, especially as I began to feel that my mother was giving a last great performance - it certainly was one for our small family. She was an old showgirl who had been married to a comedian and had a son who is a broadcaster. My mother was not a shrinking violet. She knew she was giving us great material. I don't believe anything I wrote, then or now, violates her privacy. I hope it reveals my mother's humour, spirit, wisdom, and the pleasure of her company.

I am one of those people who really does walk around with a notebook. But when I joined her in the hospital, I did not know my mother would die there; in fact, I hoped my arrival might help spring her from the ICU. I did not know I would write my book, *Unforgettable*. I did not take reportorial notes, and often a few scrawled words would represent a conversation of many minutes. I rely on the intensity of those days, a practised memory, and a son's love to reconstruct what my mother said.

Our children want to know if you're dead forever. I tell them yes. But I wonder about that, too.

Death makes life worthwhile. It gives each moment meaning. I hope I live to 150, and that our daughters can make it to at least 200. But death drives life. It frightens and inspires us. Do away with death, and we'd have no reason to get out of bed (or into it), grow, work or love. Why would we do much of anything if we had the time for everything? It's the certainty of death that moves us to sing and write poems, find friends and sail across oceans and skies. It's because we know we don't have all the time in the world that we try to use the uncertain and unknowable time we have to do something that endures. It's why we have children.

I don't know what becomes of us when we die. But I believe I will go on to a place where I'll find my mother and my father, my stepfather, and all our beloved cats, dogs, horses, turtles and fish who predecease me. I'll get to take a walk with Gandhi, have a glass of D'Yquem with Mr Jefferson, and a glass of just about anything with Sir Winston.

I believe that I'll get to look out over the world and behold my daughters. They'll feel my love, hearten to hear my gentle instruction, and miss me; but not so much that they won't spend most of their time giggling and enjoying life in full measure.

In time, I believe I'll be reunited with my kind and beautiful wife, even if she runs away with a Hollywood star or an Italian race-car driver as soon as my ashes cool. I will count on heavenly powers of understanding to look down at her happiness and nobly smile, and if he expects to be with her, too, I rely on God to work that out.



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But when I spent the last days of my mother's life alongside her in the intensive-care unit, our talk about death and whatever follows grew real. The hereafter was no longer hypothetical. It was the stop just ahead, and the next place I knew my mother would be.

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I am getting a life's lesson about grace from my mother in the ICU. We never stop learning from our mothers, do we?

No one had told my mother she would soon die. But she had once been the mother of a teenager, after all, and saw how the young residents who came to her bed now spoke in a rushed, tense jumble of jargon and would not meet her eyes.

Most of all, my mother could feel that her lungs were beginning to wear out, like a set of bald tyres. She fought for breath, but her lungs couldn't hold it. A doctor told me later that when you're sick like my mother was, you feel that you're in a bed in a hospital surrounded by nurses and trussed up in wires and tubes that are threaded into the most sensitive machines, but you're drowning. Everyone sees it, and no one can help you. As your lungs begin to deflate, it feels as if a heavy band is being tightened inside your chest, and the more you gasp, the less you breathe. You begin to tell yourself, more in certainty than panic: this must be how I'm going to die.

I squeezed her hand and my mother squeezed her eyes shut.

She said, "Help me, Mother ... "

She kept her eyes closed and I crept onto her bed.

"Can you see your mother?" I asked, and a long moment went by.

"Maybe," said my mother. "Maybe."

"I can," I told her, and in that moment, I could. "I see Granny. I see Frances. Her dazzling silver hair. Her gorgeous smile. Those brown-green eyes. She's smiling."

"Is she stretching her hand?"

"Yes."

"Yes."

We were mother and son, looking up into the stars again, in cahoots to see the same unicorn.

I suggested, "Why don't we both reach out for her hand?"

"You've got to stay here."

"I'll see you through the door. I'll hold on to you," I said, and slid next to my mother on the top of her bed and put an arm around her.

"You taught me a gentleman always sees a lady to the door."

My mother shuddered to close her eyes tighter. I felt the squeeze in her neck and saw water trickle from her eyes as she tried to will herself through the door we had connived to see, where her mother offered her hand. I said to whoever hears such messages, "We're ready. Now. Please. We're ready. Now."

But after another long moment, my mother opened her eyes and let her head sink back into a pillow.

"Oh hell," she said. "My mother never helped me anyway."

This is an extract from Unforgettable by Scott **Simon (Pan)** Macmillan, \$29.99) out on April 1.

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Document NLSTEM0020150329eb3t0000e

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1,415 words

29 March 2015

Sunday Herald Sun Sunday Style

NLSHSM

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English

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Tweeting from his mother's deathbed, SCOTT SIMON ponders life, death and a son's devotion

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I am getting a life's lesson about grace from my mother in the ICU. We never stop learning from our mothers, do we?

No one had told my mother she would soon die. But she had once been the mother of a teenager, after all, and saw how the young residents who came to her bed now spoke in a rushed, tense jumble of jargon and would not meet her eyes.

Most of all, my mother could feel that her lungs were beginning to wear out, like a set of bald tyres. She fought for breath, but her lungs couldn't hold it. A doctor told me later that when you're sick like my mother was, you feel that you're in a bed in a hospital surrounded by nurses and trussed up in wires and tubes that are threaded into the most sensitive machines, but you're drowning. Everyone sees it, and no one can help you. As your lungs begin to deflate, it feels as if a heavy band is being tightened inside your chest, and the more you gasp, the less you breathe. You begin to tell yourself, more in certainty than panic: this must be how I'm going to die.

I squeezed her hand and my mother squeezed her eyes shut.

She said, "Help me, Mother ... " She kept her eyes closed and I crept onto her bed.

"Can you see your mother?" I asked, and a long moment went by.

"Maybe," said my mother. "Maybe."

"I can," I told her, and in that moment, I could. "I see Granny."

I see Frances. Her dazzling silver hair. Her gorgeous smile. Those brown-green eyes. She's smiling."

"Is she stretching her hand?" "Yes."

"Yes."

We were mother and son, looking up into the stars again, in cahoots to see the same unicorn.

I suggested, "Why don't we both reach out for her hand?" "You've got to stay here."

"I'll see you through the door. I'll hold on to you," I said, and slid next to my mother on the top of her bed and put an arm around her.

"You taught me a gentleman always sees a lady to the door."

My mother shuddered to close her eyes tighter. I felt the squeeze in her neck and saw water trickle from her eyes as she tried to will herself through the door we had connived to see, where her mother offered her hand. I said to whoever hears such messages, "We're ready. Now.

Please. We're ready. Now."

But after another long moment, my mother opened her eyes and let her head sink back into a pillow.

"Oh hell," she said. "My mother never helped me anyway."

This is an extract from Unforgettable by Scott **Simon (Pan)** Macmillan, \$29.99) out on April 1.

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PHOTOGRAPHY: COURTESY OF SCOTT SIMON, THINKSTOCK, BILL O'LEARY

Document NLSHSM0020150329eb3t0000e

**“Between Conversations” at Yavuz Fine Art**

198 words

29 August 2013

AMA (Art Media Agency)

AMAEN

English

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Singapore, 30 August 2013, Art Media Agency (AMA).

Yavuz Fine Art is to present a group exhibition entitled “Between Conversations”, to take place at the Singapore-based gallery from 31 August to 22 September 2013.

The show is to examine the relationship between artists and the process of being artists, exploring the meeting points between artists and curators, exploring the nature of these conversations. It is to feature new works by Singaporean artists realised in a variety of media including painting and sculpture. Artists participating in the project include: Chloe Cheng, Cecily Cheo, Cheo Chai Hiang, Heleston Chew, Ching Chor Leng, Mithun Jayaram, Leroy Sofyan John, Kim Whye Kee, Kng Min Tze, Stellah Lim, Jennifer Ng, Alan Oei, **Simon Pan**, Ezzam Rahman, Regina de Rozario, Vincent Twardzik Ching, Wong Lip Chin, Mark Wong, Green Zeng, and Robert Zhao.

Before this exhibition opens, until the 28 August, Yavuz Fine Art is to function as an artist workshop, allowing artists and curators to engage in discussions and propose collaborative projects. The gallery is also to host a series of round table discussions.

“Between Conversations” is curated by art historian, critic and curator Louis Ho.

Document AMAEN00020150621e98t0025e

## Full Year 2012 Klepierre SA Earnings Conference Call - Final

7,672 words

31 January 2013

CQ FD Disclosure

FNDW

English

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Presentation

OPERATOR: Welcome to Klepierre conference call. Will be present during the presentation, Laurent Morel, Chief Executive Officer, Jean-Michel Gault, Deputy CEO, Jean-Marc Jestin, Chief Operating Officer. Mr. Morel, please go ahead.

LAURENT MOREL, CEO, KLEPIERRE SA: Good evening, everybody. So, we will now present the 2012 earnings conference call for Klepierre. So, let me first give you a brief overview of our figures and facts, and then we will be happy to answer your questions together with Jean-Michel and Jean-Marc.

So, we are happy to say that we have reached our 2012 guidance, both in terms of growth and rents and in terms of cash flow generation as well. We have been, as you know, very active in managing our portfolio of assets with successful openings of three new or extended malls, significant asset disposals and we are well ahead of our schedule in this respect.

We have significantly improved our financial structure and we have created a new operational focus.

So, let's start first our 2012 overview by commenting on our shopping center activity. The Klepierre's consolidated rents reached EUR983 million for the full year of 2012. This is up 4%. The shopping center segment represented 93.5% of total rents. Shopping center rents posted a strong increase of 4.9% and on a like-for-like basis, the shopping center rents were up 2.2%.

This increase was driven by France, Belgium, Scandinavia, Italy, the regions which all together contribute more than 80% of our shopping center rents. Klepierre continues to reap the benefits of its good locations and the intrinsic quality of its shopping malls.

The retail tenants' sales have shown good resilience during the year. They have remained at the same level as last year, our tenants have enjoyed stability in France, good growth in Scandinavia and in Central Europe, which has compensated for weaknesses in Southern Europe, namely Spain.

We have continued to welcome in our centers some prominent brands and promising newcomers, which are willing to pursue their expansion across Europe in our shopping centers and we have the same usual suspects, Apple, H&M, and newcomers like Hema and Kiko, further strengthening the merchandising mix of our centers.

We have signed nearly 2,400 new leases in 2012. So, this is -- this represents close to EUR14 million additional annualized rents. The level of reversion has been high, especially in France, where we have achieved more than 15% reversion. At 11.5% the occupancy cost ratio remains stable and sustainable for our tenants.

The net current cash flow went up 2.6% to EUR381 million in group share. On a per share basis, the net current cash flow has reached EUR2.04, that is to say a 2.5% increase and that is excluding the impact of the scrip dividend paid -- of the scrip dividend for 2011.

After taking into account the impact of the 2011 scrip dividend, the net current cash flow per share stands up EUR1.99, not to say EUR2 stable compared to the level reached last year.

We have continued to refine our asset portfolio, focusing always on shopping centers, on the one hand we have delivered three very significant shopping center projects in 2012, the first openings -- the first opening was in March, the new retail space inside the Paris St. Lazare Train Station, I remind you the St. Lazare station is the second busiest station -- train station in Europe.

It has been an immediate success, transforming more than 100 million passengers going through the hub each year into happy customers. For the first nine months of operations, the revenues sales posted by retailers exceeded their expectations and have reached on average EUR14,000 per square meter on an annualized basis.

This is clearly setting sort of new standard for the industry in France.

The second opening was in October in Malmo in Sweden. So, we have opened this Emporia shopping center, a new shopping center, covering close to 70,000 square meter at the center of the Oresund region in southern Scandinavia. Emporia has immediately taken a dominant position. It has already attracted close to 2 million visitors since opening and indeed its innovative retail mix is a key strength. Its location is great, and it benefits from very effective transportation infrastructure, which makes it clearly a key asset for Klepierre in Scandinavia.

The third opening is a bit more classical, we're talking about Les Sentiers de Claye-Souilly, which is giving us the opportunity to reinforce again, to further reinforce our strong market position in the east of Paris. Thanks to 13,000 square meter of extension and the full refurbishment of the gallery, we have been able to modernize the retail offering and the center has attracted 40% additional foot hold compared with the period before the works began.

On the other hand, on disposals, we have completed almost EUR700 million in 2012 with offices representing one third and stabilized shopping centers representing two thirds of our disposals. It means that our target of EUR1 billion in asset sales for the period 2012-2013 is already 70% met.

At the end of 2012, the value of the property portfolio excluding transfer duties stands at EUR16.4 billion with the shopping centers accounting for more than 94% of the total.

On the constant portfolio and exchange rate basis, the value was up 1.6% total share and 1.2% in a group share. The consolidated net -- sorry, the consolidated net debt went down by EUR265 million, compared to the end of 2011. This translates into an improvement of the loan to value, which stands now for Klepierre at 43.6%, this is a decrease of 220 basis points compared to the end of 2011 and this is exceeding Klepierre's initial targets to do minus 200 basis points over the full year.

The group has reached an exceptional level of liquidity with EUR2 billion thanks to the satisfactory completion of its disposal program and thanks to -- thanks also to very active work on the raising of bonds during the year.

As far as development is concerned, the priority continues to be given to the projects with high visibility and that creates a significant value.

Our pipeline is very strong, it's fully made of shopping centers projects and focused in Europe's most dynamic regions, France and Scandinavia for Klepierre. It's totaling EUR2.7 billion and supposed to be unwinded over the next five years.

Following the two previous years, which were very busy in terms of openings, our committed pipeline now stands at EUR340 million, 55% of those EUR340 million have already been outlaid. It is mainly composed of extension, renovation projects and represent EUR25 million of additional rents on an annual basis.

The new spaces due to open in 2013 already enjoy very high preleasing rates between 85% and 100%.

On our prospects, the Klepierre Board, Supervisory Board -- the Klepierre Supervisory Board will propose the payments of a cash dividend of EUR1.5 per share. This is an increase of 3.4% compared to last year.

Klepierre is positioned as a pure player of shopping centers in continental Europe. The focus on retail will be all the more effective for Klepierre as it now operates with the strong support of Simon Property Group, our new reference shareholder, which as an industrial partner is bringing us its very strong expertise coming from the highly sophisticated US market.

We have set clear priorities. First of all, insure the success of our shopping centers and support the future of new goals. That is to say renew the commercial offer strengths and customer relationship enhance the mall's attractiveness and attract prominent brands and promising newcomers which are willing to invest in new spaces for their expansion.

On the operating level, new initiatives will be taken with a view to optimize costs for Klepierre. On the financial front, we have the potential to further reduce the cost of our debt and as far as the LTV ratio is concerned, our target is to still to lower it down to around 40% in the medium term.

At the same time, the ongoing strategy of asset rotation should enable Klepierre to eventually seize targeted acquisition opportunities.

Let's conclude this short review with our short term guidance for 2013. So, in the next year, we expect the total rents to grow by around 2% on a like-for-like basis. On a current basis, depending on the timing of disposals, the rents' growth should nevertheless be of the same magnitude, and as for the net current cash



flow per share, Klepierre expects an increase of around 2% to 2.5%. And this takes into account the slightly dilutive effect of the 2011 dividend being paid in shares.

This was just to summarize our presentation and we will be very happy to answer your questions now.

#### Questions and Answers

OPERATOR: (Operator Instructions).

We have a question from Martijn van den Eijnden from Rabobank. Please, go ahead.

MARTIJN VAN DEN EIJDEN, ANALYST, RABOBANK: Yes, good evening gentlemen. It's Martijn from Rabobank. Actually, one question from my side, of course you have already delivered three projects in 2012, and as such, I was wondering if you've already identified some new projects as your developed pipeline is shrinking. So do you already see some new growth potential in your developed pipeline?

LAURENT MOREL: Well, yes. You're right to say that 2012 has been very active. On the committed pipeline, we still have EUR340 million of assets under construction as I said with a significant level of financing and quite decent initial yield expected at close to 7.5%.

Going further, we still have very important control pipeline of EUR1.4 billion of assets, in Italy, in Sweden, in France, mainly due to extensions of existing centers with a few greenfield developments. So, this control pipeline will be triggered every time we are in the good conditions. That is to say every time we have the sufficient level of preleasing before starting the construction works.

So, the pipeline has not decreased, it's just that we are very cautious in our way to launch the new projects. We enjoy a very strong controlled pipeline that we can trigger as soon as we are in the proper conditions. No doubt that we will continue to gain a number of new opportunities, but it's a growing concern.

MARTIJN VAN DEN EIJDEN: Okay, thanks. Maybe one final question?

LAURENT MOREL: Yes, please do.

MARTIJN VAN DEN EIJDEN: If you look at your financing, your LTV has decreased a lot of course, do you expect the upcoming review or S&P that you can expect a rating upgrade to A minus, for example. Is that likely situation for you?

JEAN-MICHEL GAULT, DEPUTY CEO, KLEPIERRE SA: Well, definitely we are running after that. We had the last meeting with S&P in December and are reconfirm the rating at BBB+ even if they have appreciate the improvement in Klepierre financial situation.

I think we are on the right track, but clearly it will still take a couple of months if not years that we see, but the sooner the better, and we work on that.

MARTIJN VAN DEN EIJDEN: Okay, okay thanks for that.

OPERATOR: We have a question from Bernd Stahl from Merrill Lynch. Please, go ahead.

BERND STAHLI, ANALYST, MERRILL LYNCH: Hi, there. Good afternoon, guys.

LAURENT MOREL: Good afternoon.

BERND STAHLI: A few questions. You're going to delist Klemurs. Is that correct?

LAURENT MOREL: Yes.

BERND STAHLI: Are you going to then sell it?

LAURENT MOREL: Well, first of all, it could be -- it could be. We will look at this opportunity among others. I have to say that the Klemurs portfolio is of good quality, we enjoy good rents on French retail through that, but it's true that Klepierre -- Klemurs is no longer a growing history -- I mean we have observed that externalization of retail from retailers was on hold and that we could no longer tell a story on Klemurs.

So we have decided to stop Klemurs as a listed entity, but we still hold the full portfolio. So, of course, we will review our strategic options on Klemurs, either we keep it, either we share it, either we sell it, partly or totally. This is under review. But for sure, we believe that there's no longer an opportunity to have a second listed company for this purpose.

BERND STAHLI: Understood. You indicated that you are ahead of schedule for your 2013 -- I see, for your sales program for 2012/13. I may have missed it during the call, but have you upped your expectations for 2013 in terms of sales?

LAURENT MOREL: No, we stick to our target of selling EUR1 billion over the two years, 2012/2013. So, for the time being, we stick to that target. We have already EUR60 million of additional sales underway through promissory agreements.

So, we feel quite comfortable that we will -- we will make it, I mean this EUR1 billion disposal program. This disposal program has achieved most of what we expected it to achieve, that is to say an enhancement of the balance sheet, a strong improvement in LTV. It has helped bring liquidity to a highest for Klepierre ever. So, I think for the time being, we stick to that target.

BERND STAHLI: Understood. Just to be clear, can you remind me exactly the dates when the lock up expires for Simon and BNP?

JEAN-MICHEL GAULT: The deal was on 7 of March.

BERND STAHLI: Okay.

LAURENT MOREL: But maybe -- I think it's -- isn't it in April, after the -- didn't they committed after the AGM or something? No? We check that, we tell you.

Yes, there's -- yes, that's it. So, lock up isn't till March and there's no possibility for a major offer before April. But we could check that precisely.

BERND STAHLI: Final question. When you conferred it, what was the exact day that you conferred day that you conferred it to read? Was it on January 1st, 2004?

LAURENT MOREL: Sorry, I didn't get your question.

BERND STAHLI: Your -- when you -- the day that you conferred it to become a SIIC, was that on January 1st, 2004?

JEAN-MICHEL GAULT: No, on January 1st, 2003. (Inaudible).

BERND STAHLI: (Inaudible)

JEAN-MICHEL GAULT: SIIC regime in 2003 --.

LAURENT MOREL: Okay.

JEAN-MICHEL GAULT: So, if your question is when the 10 years are over --

LAURENT MOREL: Good question.

JEAN-MICHEL GAULT: It's done.

BERND STAHLI: It's done, okay. Good, that was the question. Thanks very much.

LAURENT MOREL: Okay.

OPERATOR: We have a question from Serge Demirdjian from Natixis. Please go ahead.

SERGE DEMIRDJIAN, ANALYST, NATIXIS: Yes, good evening. Serge Demirdjian, Natixis. Just a few questions. You're mentioning in your prospects cost optimization initiatives. Can you precise, maybe give figures?

JEAN-MARC JESTIN, COO, KLEPIERRE SA: So, Jean-Marc speaking. So, I think the comment that Laurent did was concerning two aspects, so the first one, we are working on is reducing occupancy costs for the benefit of our retailers. And for that purpose, we have created a pan-European procurement department that will be in charge to make sure that we can optimize everywhere the costs and make the relevant cost savings for the benefit of our retailers to decrease occupancy costs and this is something we are working on since now a months and this will be worked out in 2013.

In addition to that, like each and every company, we are also looking at the organization and wherever we can streamline the teams, we will look at it carefully and we will do it.

SERGE DEMIRDJIAN: Okay, no idea in terms of saving? In terms of million Euros?

JEAN-MARC JESTIN: No -- we are starting the process, we are doing it and the outcome will be known when it is done.

SERGE DEMIRDJIAN: Okay, I have a second question on your guidance. What is the average cost of debt you have in your business plan for 2013? Can you communicate that?

JEAN-MICHEL GAULT: Well, what we have said is that the cost debt for now is about -- it's slightly below 4%, 3.95%. As you know that we have cancelled part of our hedging during year 2012. This fits with the fact that we have raised fixed debt, as you know, bond issues and that we have deleveraged also thanks to disposal proceeds. So, this will continue in 2013, that is to say that we still expect an improvement in the cost of debt. Difficult to say by how much, but a couple of basis points, definitely and we will see. But clearly, we are still at room to bring the cost of the debt closer to interest rates plus spreads. But I mean current market interest rates.

SERGE DEMIRDJIAN: Okay, we are talking about couple of basis points or at least 10 basis points? You should have this figure -- in fact, I'm a bit disappointed by the guidance there was a bit more optimistic and I'm just trying to understand why is it because you're cautious?

JEAN-MICHEL GAULT: Well, in the guidance -- well, of course we are cautious, but in the guidance, as we have said, it's also after scrip dividend, that is to say the impact of the scrip dividend of 2011 paid in 2012. If you make the calculation, you will see that before it's like increasing the cash flow roughly by 4%, which is probably more in line with your expectation, but we still have the slight dilutive impact of the scrip dividend. Then, after -- in accordance with the disposal program also, we could be more aggressive regarding hedging than all that thing and we will see, but we prefer to start the reasonably a good sale.

SERGE DEMIRDJIAN: Okay, I was integrating the scrip dividend. Just maybe a last one on the disposals. Can you give the average yield on the assets disposed just to calculate how much rent we have to decrease?

LAURENT MOREL: Let me try to do that.

JEAN-MICHEL GAULT: Well, you notice, it's in the 6% area.

LAURENT MOREL: We check -- we check that, maybe we can give you the information.

SERGE DEMIRDJIAN: Okay, okay. Thank you very much.

OPERATOR: We have a question from Bart Gysens from Morgan Stanley. Please, go ahead.

BART GYSENS, ANALYST, MORGAN STANLEY: Hi, good evening. Can you hear me?

LAURENT MOREL: Yes, good evening.

BART GYSENS: Hi, yes I have two questions actually. Firstly, on your asset sales and apologies if you've included this in the presentation, but I haven't gone through it entirely yet. But can you split out of the EUR700 million you've already sold, how much of that has been in France and how much of that has been in other countries? And of the EUR300 million you're targeting to sell in 2013, can you give us an idea where you're planning to sell -- in what markets you're planning to sell as well?

LAURENT MOREL: On the EUR700 million sold in 2012, it was mostly in France. We don't communicate yet on where would be the EUR300 million we want to sell for the -- for this year.

JEAN-MICHEL GAULT: Fully France in 2012, we have also EUR60 million under contract -- under promissory agreement for this year and in this part, which is rather small, there is --

LAURENT MOREL: a Norwegian one.

JEAN-MICHEL GAULT: One in Norway. But well, now in most of the divestment program is in France I have to say.

BART GYSENS: Okay, great. And then my other question is on relettings and renewals. You've got some good numbers in France again, 15% up. In Scandinavia up 6%. What's been the overall number for your portfolio?

LAURENT MOREL: We have some potential -- average reversionary potential.

BART GYSENS: No sorry. Not the reversionary potential, on page three of the presentation at the top, you say that renewed leases in change in tenant mix led to a strong --.

LAURENT MOREL: Yes, but it's the number.

BART GYSENS: Okay.

Because I think in the first half --.

LAURENT MOREL: (Inaudible).

BART GYSENS: You unfortunately had some --.

LAURENT MOREL: Yes, yes. It's 15% in France, 6% in Scandinavia. It's stable in Italy minus 5% in Iberia and minus 2% in central Europe.

BART GYSENS: Okay, so that's a big improvement in the second half compared to the first half then?

LAURENT MOREL: Yes, especially, I would say in central Europe, where we have probably seen the worse in the first half.

BART GYSENS: Great.

LAURENT MOREL: Because of one off issues we had specially Poland.

BART GYSENS: And the overall number then? I guess I can work it out.

LAURENT MOREL: Well -- we haven't -- to be honest, we haven't made an average because we post -- I mean we see that in the presentation. We post the number for France 15%, Scandinavia 6%, Italy minus 0.5%, Iberia minus 5% and central Europe minus 2%.

BART GYSENS: Okay.

LAURENT MOREL: And you remember this is also -- is also posted, so you can make the -- an average calculation if you wish.

BART GYSENS: Okay, thank you very much.

LAURENT MOREL: You're welcome.

OPERATOR: You have question --

JEAN-MICHEL GAULT: Sorry can I give answer to Serge's previous question regarding the average yield on disposal, it's 5.8%, all combined.

LAURENT MOREL: Okay.

OPERATOR: We have a question from Kristian Bandy from UBS. Please, go ahead.

KRISTIAN BANDY, ANALYST, UBS: Hi, gentlemen, just one question please, from me. You have increased the payout ratio of your dividend again this year and this is for -- you've done this for the last couple of years. I just wanted to know, are you intending it increase this so that it comes in line with your peers? Or is that the last increase we've seen for a while?

JEAN-MICHEL GAULT: Well, maybe not the last one, but I have to say that most of the increase in the payout ratio of this year is related to the scrip dividend and that this is -- of course we have increased -- we proposed to increase the dividend by 3.4%, but in the other hand, we have created EUR900 million something of new shares and this impact the payout ratio. So, I would say that at 80% for now we are fine.

KRISTIAN BANDY: Great. Thanks very much.

LAURENT MOREL: Thank you.

OPERATOR: We have a question from Stephan van Weeren from Petercam. Please, go ahead.

STEPHAN VAN WEEREN, ANALYST, PETERCAM: Yes, good evening gentlemen. I hope you're well.

LAURENT MOREL: We're well, thank you.

STEPHAN VAN WEEREN: A few questions from our side. With regard to Spain, I mean retail sales have dropped for nearly 10% year on year. And your two biggest centers seem to be pretty resilient, but nevertheless have you taken any clear measures to deal with the ongoing sluggish situation in Spain?

JEAN-MARC JESTIN: Okay, so Jean-Marc speaking. So Spain, as you all know, it's a challenging market and as you also indicated, we have three categories of assets. The first one, which represent approximately 40% of our portfolio in terms of value is very resilient in terms of sales and rental increase its okay.

And the small galleries, the approximately 70 small galleries we have in Spain, they have sales per square meter for the shops in the range between EUR3,000 and EUR5,000 per square meter, so they are, I would say, quite good smaller galleries. I think the -- to be honest, the portion where we have the most troubles is the intermediate shopping malls, it's only four of them

And we have -- we have taken some -- and we are paying a lot of attention on Spain and especially on leasing the -- and we have -- we have increased our efforts in Spain to release the vacant units and we will take measures to release it as soon as we can in the coming two years. So, I would say Spain it's -- we have to look at it very - in very differentiating way. From the big assets, the small ones, and the medium ones.

STEPHAN VAN WEEREN: But for the medium ones, is there any certain kind of retail form which you have detected as a savior in this respect? One that really works well? Getting more food on board and cheap fashion and an Apple store or --

JEAN-MARC JESTIN: Well, on the medium size shopping malls, the sales decrease that we are showing, it's mainly due to vacant premises. Okay? So the -- and that's the reason why you see a minus 8% or 9% of sales, as this is due -- due to vacant premises. So the effort we have to do is to find new tenants to fill the vacancies and then sales, by definition will go up because by doing the math, we compare tenant sales what the tenant was in with tenant sales when the tenant is not in the shop. So, that's one of the main reasons I explained the decrease.

So, the effort it is releasing and we are doing it by -- on fashion DIYs and all types of tenant, there is no specific focus on the -- on some tenants.

STEPHAN VAN WEEREN: Okay, clear. Thanks. Another question, with regard to the valuation, can you give me any picture on how the valuation of first time includes centers look like throughout your portfolio? So, for instance, the major centers in France, to what extent could you write a yield reduction there?

JEAN-MICHEL GAULT: Yes. Well, we are not used to disclose on that asset basis, so what I can say that is that for St. Lazare we have benefitted from a very good improvement. It was the first external valuation.

For Emporia, we are -- we'll have the first valuation of Emporia externally at the end of June, even if we have restated partly this asset but definitely there is more to come on this front. Claye-Souilly is also under process. I mean the process of evaluation, but not everything is in the figures of the year end.

STEPHAN VAN WEEREN: On average you can say that 100 basis point yield drop after inclusion is good target for instance?

JEAN-MICHEL GAULT: Well, it's a little bit quick to 100 basis points at opening, you know, but it's over three years, probably a good shift if not more.

LAURENT MOREL: This is what we have experienced in our previous developments, like in Odysseum, in Blagnac, some places like that where we did the big development and it took two or three years for the yield to come down, approximately 100 basis points.

STEPHAN VAN WEEREN: Okay, okay, okay. And then the last question, as you know, I'm a very lazy analyst, so after the sales program of EUR1 billion and including the scrip dividend that you expect for 2013, where do you expect the LTV to arrive more or less?

LAURENT MOREL: No, no. First of all, we don't propose a scrip dividend for 2013, we will pay the dividend of -- we propose the shareholders meeting to pay the dividend in cash, not -- and we'll not propose a scrip dividend this year.

STEPHAN VAN WEEREN: Okay, but then on the -- just looking at the sales program of another say EUR300 million, where do you expect the LTV to be at?

JEAN-MICHEL GAULT: Well, we haven't given any specific guidance on this this year, because we consider this is none of the issue, at two years ago people were a little bit concerned about financing, financing costs and other thing. We have announced last year that we were entered into a more rapid deleveraging process through the announcement of the EUR1 billion disposals, this is well underway.

The scrip dividend has helped. So we are now in the 43% area. If I have no precise idea on where valuation will go over the year 2013, but if we improve cash flows by 2% if not more, this will help for valuation. Then

LTV has to further decrease. Will it be 100 basis points, 150 basis points or 200 basis points. We still don't know.

LAURENT MOREL: If you are very lazy, you can do this short calculation, every EUR100 million of disposals produce 25 basis points of decrease in LTV, roughly.

STEPHAN VAN WEEREN: I'm lazy enough to do that math.

LAURENT MOREL: Yes, so and that works, and that works. So --

STEPHAN VAN WEEREN: Okay, wonderful.

LAURENT MOREL: You know, everything being equal, of course we will rely also on what we believe will have significant -- well decent growth in rent and thus decent growth in gross value. At the same time, yes, altogether, we expect a minimum of 100 basis points -- well --

Once again, everything being equal, it's very difficult in January 2013 to say where the values will stand at the end of the year.

STEPHAN VAN WEEREN: Yes, I understand, but it's a clearer guidance. Okay, thanks so much.

LAURENT MOREL: Thanks very much.

STEPHAN VAN WEEREN: Have a nice evening.

LAURENT MOREL: Bye, bye.

OPERATOR: We have a question from Boudewijn Schoon. Please, go ahead.

BOUDEWIJN SCHOON, ANALYST, KEMPEN & CO.: Thank you, good evening. This is Boudewijn. I just had -- you already talked about Spain and Portugal on the lettings, I'm not sure if you commented on this as well. If you look at the valuations, you -- it seems to be bottoming out, although half year doesn't really mean that much. But there is a less aggressive write down on Spain and Portugal at the last six months versus the first six months of this year, yields have remained roughly stable over the last six months. I mean, could you say that that is indeed the case with respect to values?

LAURENT MOREL: Have we made this calculation?

JEAN-MICHEL GAULT: Yes, well for Spain --.

BOUDEWIJN SCHOON: Change over six months, valuation, group share, Spain.

LAURENT MOREL: Yes, yes, yes, we check that, we check that.

BOUDEWIJN SCHOON: Gave yields at the next page.

JEAN-MICHEL GAULT: Well, other six months, the decrease in valuation in Spain is minus 5.5%, so that you have to look at the figures that we were at the end of June last year and this was driven by two things, some decrease in revenues and also, a slight increase in yields by 10 bps.

BOUDEWIJN SCHOON: Okay, okay, I'm sorry, I was looking at the valuation of property portfolio group share, the change over six months. And then it says, minus 1.7% for Spain, it was, I think, minus 3.6% at the half year, June this year. So, it was a bit of a deceleration. I don't know if that means anything, or am I looking at the wrong number? My apologies if I am.

JEAN-MICHEL GAULT: No, but -- yes, you are on Spain, because we are on Iberia, that is to say Portugal include and this is what I'm thinking also. So, your figures with more or less, I have 3% -- minus 3.9% for the end of June, but including Portugal. So, it's consistent -- what you say? It's consistent.

BOUDEWIJN SCHOON: Okay, there's a bit of a slowdown.

LAURENT MOREL: Yes.

BOUDEWIJN SCHOON: And I mean -- is -- I mean as always talk about these private equity companies, investors looking at the bottom of the -- well, there isn't really a recovery to speak from, but looking at the market, is anything like that happening in Spain? Are people trying to get -- buy things on the cheap?

LAURENT MOREL: We have not experienced so much of that recently. But there might be things going on we -- yes, there might be things going on.

BOUDEWIJN SCHOON: Okay.

LAURENT MOREL: But nothing concluded yet, difficult to say.

BOUDEWIJN SCHOON: Okay, okay. All right, thank you.

LAURENT MOREL: Thank you very much.

OPERATOR: We have no more questions. (Operator instructions).

We have a question from Jan Willem Van Kranenburg. Please go ahead.

JAN WILLEM VAN KRANENBURG, ANALYST, RBS: Yes. Good evening gents, this is Yan William. Just a final question with regard to dividend. Can you help me out on the 3% tax? Is this dividend fully taxed at 3% for your guys, or is this like a part of a tax?

JEAN-MICHEL GAULT: Well, actually, in the EUR1.5 per share, EUR1.37 are SIIC, that is to say non subject to 3% tax and the rest, EUR0.13 -- 1-3, is taxable over 3%.

JAN WILLEM VAN KRANENBURG: All right, thank you very much.

OPERATOR: We have a question from Michel Varaldo. Please go ahead.

MICHEL VARALDO, ANALYST, SOCIETE GENERALE: Hello good evening.

LAURENT MOREL: Good evening, Michel.

MICHEL VARALDO: Only one question, but it may be a general question, what chance since the arrival of Simon Property as shareholder for Klepierre, if you have to give the two or three main points for you, could you summarize the big change, please?

LAURENT MOREL: Well, first of all, it has been a change in -- for the very first move change for Klepierre has been positive because the uncertainty on Klepierre's shareholder base has been definitively driven out and we now benefit from two very strong shareholder, Simon Property Group, number one REIT in the world specialize in shopping centers. BNP Paribas, first bank in the ozone. So, that's good for the Klepierre's organization.

Of course, first of all, Simon Property Group has changed the governance of Klepierre and David Simon is president of the Supervisory Board so he has accelerated a lot -- the refocus of Klepierre as a pure shopping center company with the accelerating of sales of the office portfolio and the -- taking private of Klemurs so that's the first major move.

Of course, there also has been a new focus put on operations through the incoming of Jean-Marc Jestin as Chief Operating Officer and with two main effects of that, strengthening of the transatlantic leasing corporation, we haven't yet seen and demonstrated so much results of that, but it's taking time to be efficient.

I can tell you still that when we now talk to the major retailers in Europe, they look at us in a very different way, and we were already, as you know, a major landlord for -- if not the major landlord for H&M, Sephora, McDonalds', people like this, but being part of a large group it enables us to leverage this strong partnership and that they do not regard Klepierre in the same way, very clearly, so its setting leverage in our talks with the big relevant retailers in Europe.

And the second -- and in addition, there will be surely some American retailers willing to enter the European market, not hundreds, but surely a number of them, but clearly with the support of Simon Property, we expect to be in priority the partners of those American retailers willing to enter the European market.

Maybe the second part, I will leave Jean-Marc Jestin explain is about marketing and what we can -- what we can expect from the support of Simon Property when it comes to importing in Europe. The best practices are the very mature, skilled American market when it comes to marketing in the mall.

JEAN-MARC JESTIN: So, maybe if I can add a few words to what Laurent just said. I think first, to repeat the first benefit we have with Simon which is clearly the undisputed leader in the industry is on leasing and I think the key for us is to accelerate refinancing and I think that Simon has proven in the US it's capacity and proactiveness to accelerate retentanting and this is something we will import from them. The -- and this is also for us the chance and the momentum to create vision, asset by asset and to be that vision on a five year or 10 year basis.

So leasing will be key and I would not repeat what Laurent said. I think the two other aspects that where we can really profit from the Simon expertise is to deploy the very customer centric approach which will be first to

as we say, the retail is going mobile and the DNA of the retailer then customers it's changing and then we need to adapt our technology and communication and marketing tools to the digital world. And then there is a lot to do in improving the websites, the apps, the indoor localization, the gift cards, and they are definitively -- Simon is the leading player in the industry.

The -- and the customer centric approach will be also to improve what we've said in our company. As you have read, we have changed the logo of the company and we have said to the -- I would say more demanding standards to the team to what we have called to make it better every day. So the- the customer centric approach is to make sure that we are the team on the field focusing on the details.

And one good example that for instance for Emporia, which is one of our new openings, we have hired someone from the hospitality business to be the mall manager, because we believe and I think this is what we learn from Simon, the paying attention to the details, the way we welcome the clients and the shoppers, it's key. And the customer centric approach is also important in the way we manage shopping malls on an everyday basis by creating an enhancing shopping experience.

And the last one, and I think we're -- also we are going to work closely with Simon is to connect the brands and the shoppers in our malls. We have 1.5 billion visitors all over Europe in our malls and this is a fantastic media for us to connect shoppers and brands. And to -- for -- and ultimately to create more traffic but also more revenues for Klepierre connecting brands and shoppers.

This is currently underway and we are pleased to announce that we have signed working together with **Simon, pan**-European exclusive marketing partnership with the Coca Cola company that will deploy vending machines with interesting innovations and with also a promote new events in our malls and they will work closely with us to first propose to us the new events when they are issuing a new product. So, this is typically some examples of what we can do with Simon. So, to repeat, leasing a customer centric approach and at the end of the day, better improving the connection between brands and shoppers in our malls.

MICHEL VARALDO: Okay, thank you very much.

LAURENT MOREL: Thank you, Michel.

OPERATOR: We have a question from Serge Demirdjian. Please, go ahead.

SERGE DEMIRDJIAN: Yes, a follow up question on Klemurs, if at the end we decide to dispose the whole assets or if we're talking about EUR600 million, I suppose, something like that?

LAURENT MOREL: [600 million] (Company corrected after the conference call).

SERGE DEMIRDJIAN: Okay, and what would be the use of the proceed if you dispose?

LAURENT MOREL: The use will be relevant. The -- as I've said, the disposal program has helped Klepierre deleverage and raised liquidity. This is two key assets of Klepierre at the end of 2012 to be with a better balance sheet at the one end and also with very strong liquidity. It allows Klepierre to both take advantage of its portfolio of its pipeline of future development. That is to say to trigger in opportunistic way the developments that are on hold that we keep in our controlled pipeline.

Also, get ready to seize some opportunity that may occur on the European market. Everything that we're going to do to improve our assets and to differentiate Klepierre in the day to day management will offer opportunities to -- maybe to acquire assets on the market and expect, with a better management, to take profit of the -- to do accretive acquisitions. But we will do all those things in a very disciplined way and we know what it takes to maintain the balance sheet. So, there's many ways to use capital properly.

SERGE DEMIRDJIAN: Okay, thank you very much.

OPERATOR: We have a question from Bruno Duclos. Please go ahead.

BRUNO DUCLOS, ANALYST, CHEUVREUX: Good evening.

LAURENT MOREL: Good evening, Bruno.

BRUNO DUCLOS: I have a question on your disposal strategy, could you remind us what are the key elements that you use to define the list of the assets you would sell? And the second question is, for the EUR300 million remaining, do you have a list matching the EUR300 million? Or is it a larger list? How do you proceed exactly?

LAURENT MOREL: No, it's a larger list, clearly and there's already the full portfolio of offices, which is already EUR300 million and there are additional shopping centers in the retail matter that we could put forth. So I think the way we look at disposals is to compare the capital we can raise through those disposals through any



other use of the capital into development or acquisition. Is very simple, the skills of Klepierre are those of major shopping center, developer and manager, and we believe that in these fields, we have a competitive advantage.

So, every time we sell an asset with a stable revenue, even if it's a good yield, the stable revenue, there's an opportunity for Klepierre, to reallocate this capital into a development with a better yield, and that's the way we arbitrage the disposal against investments. So, it's always looked that way, we looked at the assets where we believe that there is not sufficient growth or development potential and we would better put our capital and our human efforts into more growing assets.

BRUNO DUCLOS: Okay, and maybe you have slightly answered before, but do you think it is possible in the coming months to sell some assets outside France so you say you want assets in Norway, but a small one. Do you think that the market has slightly changed and that some disposals in more difficult countries such as Spain or central Europe are possible right now? Or is there no change at all?

LAURENT MOREL: We are constantly looking at opportunities in every country. It's true that it will be more difficult in Spain at least, but central Europe could be -- could provide opportunities probably. And clearly, also Scandinavia, in the Steen & Strom portfolio there are assets that are very good and could attract investors. Yes, France is not the only place where we can sell asset probably.

BRUNO DUCLOS: Okay, okay thank you.

LAURENT MOREL: You're welcome.

OPERATOR: We have no more questions.

LAURENT MOREL: So, if you have no more questions, I will thank all of you for attending the -- this call. I hope we answered most of your questions. For those who still have curiosity about Klepierre, they will be tomorrow in London, a conference held at Hotel Andaz, it will take place at 8.30. For the French speaking people, and then I would skip in French il y a donc une reunion d'analystes qui est prevue a 8h30 a l'auditorium Etoile Saint-Honore, rue Balzac, et Ãsa c'est lundi..

For all of you, the slides are available on the website tonight at 8.00 Paris time, and so we wish you all a very nice evening, and meet you hopefully in London or in Paris. Good evening.

OPERATOR: Ladies and gentlemen, this conclude the conference call. Thank you all for attending, you may now disconnect.

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Document FNDW000020130215e91v0002x



News feed for website 20120602  
**DÔME Steak & Wine Restaurant**

Globaltimes.cn

947 words

1 June 2012

Global Times

GLOTWE

Global Times website news feed

English

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"From the 14th April - 31st of May, enjoy the best cuisine that was served aboard history's most famous vessel."

From the 14th of April until the 31st of May, prepare yourself for a step back in time to experience the exact menu that was prepared for the original passengers aboard history's most famous vessel - the Titanic!

At first, I was not sure what to expect. When we imagine what it must have been like to be aboard this most elegant vessel, we envision that surely its elegance and beauty must have been apparent in the presentation and quality of its food as well. After experiencing the re-creation dinner offered by the staff at the Shanghai Marriot Hotel Changfeng Park's DÔME Steak & Wine Restaurant, I can honestly say that they had truly out did themselves in every way!

Executive Chef Albert Thony spared no detail in bringing back to life the actual menu that was offered by those first-class passengers sailing on this iconic ship. Every morsel of food right down to the gorgeous atmosphere of the restaurant itself made for a very unforgettable experience. Although at first glance, 688 RMB/person might seem to some of us a little pricey, by the end of the meal I had truly found that it was honestly worth every Yuan.

Where do I begin to describe this truly stylish evening? To begin with, the restaurant itself is covered in a dimly-lit elegance that brings to our vision a unique and tranquil fantasy. It is posh, comfortable and entirely eye-catching. The lighting itself shuts off the outside world into a tranquil getaway that is truly your own. In addition, it encloses one of the most extensive wine collections that I had ever seen.

Joining me for this memorable trip back in time was BFIC President **Simon Pan** and Shanghai Marriott Hotel Changfeng Park's Marketing Communications Manager Aurora Wang.

Beginning with the first dish, we were introduced to the Cold Asparagus Vinaigrette. This starter dish presented us with several stems of green and white asparagus topped with a number of lightly poached quail eggs. The entire appetizer sits on a drizzle of the chef's specially prepared vinaigrette. With this absolutely delicious hors d'oeuvre, we enjoyed a freshly-baked baguette with a selection of toppings that included creamery butter and a delectably prepared one-of-a-kind smoked sundried tomato paste; another original creation by Chef Thony himself.

The dish that followed this one (as part of DÔME's Titanic menu set) is their Consommé Olga soup. The soup is presented as a very clear broth with two or three sections of newly cut parsley resembling that of petit tree-like formations. The beef-flavored broth has just the right amount of flavor without being too overpowering. I felt as if it was a refreshing sip of the delicate texture that was consumed by those elite passengers over 100 years ago.

We were now ready for the main course. While waiting for this treat, we were generously welcomed with a hefty bonus. It was at this point that I can honestly say that I was then introduced to the best steak in Shanghai that I had ever tasted thus far. It was not offered on the Titanic set menu, but it definitely deserves an honorable mention! It is available off of DÔME's a la carte menu and is a Certified Australian Premium 12 oz "Wagyu" rib eye steak. We had our meat cooked medium. Mouthwateringly juicy and cooked completely to your liking, this signature dish is specially grilled in a béarnaise sauce and cooked to a tender excellence. All of the steaks offered at DÔME are flawlessly prepared this way.

For the main course for the set menu, we were served an English Lamb with Mint Sauce, Green Peas and Parmentier New Potatoes. The lamb is served on a bed of peas with slices of carrot; and is offered with your choice of a wide selection of homemade sauces. I highly recommend the truffle mustard. Ask your server for a sampling of the ones offered that evening. The lamb was overflowing with taste and like its steak

counterpart, it was especially tender. It went extremely well with its homemade mint sauce. The potatoes were soft and steamy. They dissolved almost with that of a cream texture when put into the mouth. After sampling this main dish, along with the steak previously, I was convinced that precision is absolutely attainable in the art of grilled cuisine.

As a finishing touch, the Waldorf Pudding was served for dessert (again as part of the set menu). This temptation is prepared with raisins and fresh mint surrounded by a delectable caramelized topping. The Waldorf Pudding is far from appearing lonely because it is also served with a scoop of vanilla ice cream and a miniature glass of peach jelly. Also neighboring this truly picturesque platter is an assortment of lightly sugar-coated strawberries and blueberries to finish off an extremely memorable occasion.

At 688 RMB/person for the Titanic Set Dinner Menu, one can surely experience the true elegance and best in food quality that was available to the first class passengers aboard the immortal ship. It is definitely perfect for those romantic patrons who want an intimate conversational piece that can last them the rest of their lives.

Service quality: excellent Food quality: excellent Price per head (RMB): 500+ Environment: excellent Location No. 158 Da Du He Road, Pu Tuo District./?????????158?? Shanghai Marriott Hotel Changfeng Park  
?????????????021 2215-6698Shanghai China

Document GLOTWE0020120602e86100007

**Physics; Reports Outline Physics Study Results from Beijing Normal University**

276 words

18 January 2011

Physics Week

PHYWK

230

English

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2011 JAN 18 - (VerticalNews.com) -- According to a study from Beijing, People's Republic of China, "We present a one-step deterministic entanglement purification protocol with linear optics and postselection. Compared with the **Simon-Pan** protocol [C. Simon and J. W. Pan, Phys. Rev. Lett. 89, 257901 (2002)], this one-step protocol has some advantages."

"First, it can obtain a maximally entangled pair from each photon pair with only one step, instead of improving the fidelity of less-entangled photon pairs by performing the entanglement purification process repeatedly in other protocols. Second, it works in a deterministic way, not a probabilistic one, which greatly reduces the number of entanglement resources needed. Third, it does not require the polarization state be entangled; only spatial entanglement is needed. Moreover, it is feasible with current techniques [J. W. Pan, S. Gasparoni, R. Ursin, G. Weihs, and A. Zeilinger, Nature (London) 423, 417 (2003)]," wrote Y.B. Sheng and colleagues, Beijing Normal University.

The researchers concluded: "All these advantages make this one-step protocol more convenient than others in quantum-communication applications."

Sheng and colleagues published their study in Physical Review a (One-step deterministic polarization-entanglement purification using spatial entanglement. Physical Review a, 2010;82(4):4305).

For more information, contact Y.B. Sheng, Beijing Normal University, Dept. of Physics, Beijing 100875, People's Republic of China.

Publisher contact information for the journal Physical Review a is: American Physical Society, One Physics Ellipse, College Pk, MD 20740-3844, USA.

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Document PHYWK00020110114e71i00088

News

**Big Apple Outlets to close in February; Tough economy killed the once bustling Port Richmond fixture**

STEPHANIE SLEPIAN; STATEN ISLAND ADVANCE

548 words

13 December 2010

The Staten Island Advance

SIA

A01

English

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There was a time when every stall at the Big Apple Outlets was occupied. A far different scene exists today: Rows of empty spaces, resembling vacant storefronts, amid the few vendors who remain.

"It's sad," said jeweler **Simon Pan**, co-owner of the flea market with Milt Adams and Pat Spinoso. "The economy is getting worse and worse. The [media] says it is better and better, but we don't see it."

The partners sent a letter to their vendors last month informing them of the inevitable: Big Apple Outlets, a fixture at 1399 Forest Avenue in Port Richmond for 16 years, will close its doors in February.

"Due to rising costs and expenses, we can no longer afford to stay in business," the letter read. "Our last day of business is going to be Sunday, Feb. 15. All merchandise and furniture must be cleaned out by Feb. 23. All booths must be left empty."

Adams, who sells clothing, socks and pajamas at the front entrance, blamed skyrocketing real estate taxes and utility bills, and the inability to retain vendors in a tough economy, for the outlet's demise.

"Our landlord has been very good, giving us rent deductions here and there, but when our lease option came up, we decided it was time to close," he said.

The news has left vendors worried about their own survival.

"I am still looking for a new location," said Sean Darvish, a Queens resident who relocated his jewelry business to Big Apple Outlets from Manhattan six years ago when the lease expired on his own store. "I'd like to stay on Staten Island, but all my options are open."

For Suzy Ishmael, the closure has presented a chance: She will rent a storefront down the road in the shopping center that houses Blockbuster.

"I am nervous, but things happen for a reason," said Ms. Ishmael, who owns the Avon Shop and also works full-time at A Very Special Place. "This may be a blessing in disguise and a chance to take an opportunity. Otherwise, I might have never left the nest."

Big Apple Outlets opened in May 1994 after the Big Apple Bazaar, its predecessor on Forest Avenue in Mariners Harbor - now home to Kohl's - closed a year earlier. Pan, Adams and Spinoso, longtime vendors there, partnered to find a new location.

Many of the original vendors, who sold clothing, crafts, electronics, auto parts, jewelry and other goods from 200 stalls followed them. A handful still remain.

Throughout the flea market, steep discounts are advertised, up to 70 percent off, to entice shoppers for one last holiday season.

Grant City resident George Guzman took advantage of those deals last week.

"I like to come into one place," he said. "Everything is here for you and the people are so friendly. I am very sorry to see it go."

Stephanie Slepian is a news reporter for the Advance. She may be reached at [slepian@siadvance.com](mailto:slepian@siadvance.com).

There are plenty of empty booths in the Big Apple Outlets, which has announced it is going out of business on Feb. 15.; Staten Island Advance/ Irving Silverstein

Document SIA0000020101214e6cd0001f

# US Fed News

## WIPO ASSIGNS PATENT TO COLGATE-PALMOLIVE FOR "COLOR CHANGING CONSUMER PRODUCTS" (AMERICAN INVENTORS)

161 words

10 October 2010

US Fed News

INDFED

English

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GENEVA, Oct. 10 -- Publication No. WO/2010/114551 was published on Oct. 07.

Title of the invention: "COLOR CHANGING CONSUMER PRODUCTS."

Applicants: COLGATE-PALMOLIVE COMPANY (US).

Inventors: Thomas Boyd (US), Harsh M. Trivedi (US), Guisheng Pan (US), Wei Wang (US), **Simon Pan** (US) and Nora Lin (US).

According to the abstract posted by the World Intellectual Property Organization: "The invention relates to personal care products containing multilayer films with decorative layers and may impart a noticeable color change. The invention is applicable in products including type toothpaste, soaps, and other products until diluted with water (or saliva)."

The patent was filed on April 2, 2009 under Application No. PCT/US2009/039324.

For further information please visit: <http://www.wipo.int/pctdb/en/ia.jsp?ia=US2009/039324>

Document INDFED0020101010e6aa0007t

# THE STRAITS TIMES

Life! - Life Events  
**what's up this week**

3,298 words  
 24 September 2010  
 Straits Times  
 STIMES  
 English  
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art

## ART BEYOND LIMITS

The draw is works by modern masters such as Pablo Picasso, Andy Warhol and Marc Quinn.

Where: Opera Gallery, Ion Orchard, 03-05, 2 Orchard Turn MRT: Orchard When: Last day (outdoor exhibition), Today - Oct 24 (gallery exhibition), mall hours Admission: Free Tel: 6735-2618

## NON-DOMINANT DISCOURSE

Four Singaporean artists - Rachel Zeng, Sha Najak, Ezzam Rahman & Seelan Palay - trace discourse in society through visual presentations of consciousness, personal backgrounds and creative inquiries.

Where: Post-Museum, 107 & 109 Rowell Road MRT: Little India When: Tomorrow - Next Fri, 6 - 10pm (Tue - Fri), 2 - 10pm (Sat & Sun) Admission: Free Info: <http://post-museum.org>

## LIJIANG SPLENDOUR - A PORTRAIT OF CHINA'S WORLD HERITAGE TREASURE

Brush up your knowledge of Shangri-La via Chinese artist Fang Xiang's works, which depict the ancient city of Lijiang in Yunnan. Touted to be the lost city of Shangri-La which was featured in the 1973 movie Lost Horizon, based on English author James Hilton's novel.

Where: HaKaren Art Gallery, Tanglin Shopping Centre, 02-43, 19 Tanglin Road MRT: Orchard When: Tomorrow - Oct 3, 10.30am - 6.30pm (Mon - Sat), noon - 6pm (Sun & public holidays) Admission: Free Tel: 6733-3382

## ENCHANTING WOODS

Wake up to artist December Pang's rendition of memories of her dreams.

Where: Art-2 Gallery, Mica Building, 01-03, 140 Hill Street MRT: City Hall/Clarke Quay When: Till tomorrow, 11am - 7pm (Mon - Sat), closed on Sun & public holidays Admission: Free Tel: 6338-8713

## COLOURS WITH PASSION

The works by five women artists, such as Dominique Savage, Ong Hwee Yen and Sangeeta Charan, feature different themes but are linked with a common passion for colours.

Where: Tembusu Art Gallery, Mica Building, 140 Hill Street MRT: Clarke Quay/City Hall When: Till Thu, 11am - 7pm Admission: Free Tel: 9733-1027 Info: [www.tembusu-art.com.sg](http://www.tembusu-art.com.sg)

## HARMONY

Malaysian artist and Venice Biennale alumnus Zulkifli Yusoff canvasses for harmony amid a changing backdrop of politics, religion and race in Malaysia. Held to celebrate the country's 53th year of independence and the first Malaysia Day.

Where: Utterly Art Exhibition Space, 229A South Bridge Road MRT: Chinatown When: Till Sun, noon - 8pm (Mon - Sat), noon - 5.30pm (Sun) Tel: 6226-2605

## READING ROOM

Inspired by French philosopher Gaston Bachelard's theory on spatial experience, three artists - Asanul Nazryn, **Simon Pan** and Yang Jie - create a physical adventure into random space through their installation artwork.

Where: Nafa Campus 1, Galleries 1 & 2, Bencoolen Street MRT: Bencoolen When: Till Sun, 11am - 7pm daily Admission: Free Tel: 6512-6141 Info: [cekoh@nafa.edu.sg](mailto:cekoh@nafa.edu.sg)

#### LAN FANG CHRONICLES: A PROJECT BY CHOY KA FAI

This project, presented through visual arts, theatre, film and lecture, is inspired by the history of the 18th-century Lan Fang Republic, a state founded by Hakka Chinese in West Borneo. By artist Choy Ka Fai and a group of multidisciplinary artists.

Where: Singapore Art Museum, 8Q, Level 4, 8 Queen Street MRT: Bras Basah/City Hall When: Till Sun, 10am - 7pm, till 9pm (Fri), free on Friday night Admission: Pay usual museum entry fee Tel: 6332-3222

#### DIGITAL NIGHTS @ SAM/DIGITAL NIGHTS @ ORCHARD

European and local artists and collectives present interactive works that respond to the pulse of the city. Part of the first edition of Digital Nights and Rev Up @ Orchard and the Grand Prix Season.

Where: Singapore Art Museum, 71 Bras Basah Road MRT: Bras Basah When: Till Sun, 10am - 9pm (Sun - Thu), 10am - 11pm (Fri & Sat) Admission: Free entry for Digital Nights @ SAM installations and free entry to galleries from 7pm, usual museum entry fee applies at other times, free entry every Fri from 6 - 9pm Tel: 6332-3222 Where: Along Orchard Road MRT: Orchard/Somerset When: Till Sun, 7.30 - 11pm Admission: Free

#### NATEE UTARIT - RECENT WORKS

The landscape and still life paintings by Thai artist Natee Utarit complement his exhibition at the Singapore Art Museum which is on from Thursday till February next year.

Where: Art Forum Gallery, 82 Cairnhill Road MRT: Newton When: Tue - Oct 30, 10am - 6pm (Mon - Sat), closed on Sun & public holidays Admission: Free Tel: 6737-3448 Info: [www.artforum.com.sg](http://www.artforum.com.sg)

#### ASIAN ART

On the palette are contemporary works by South-east Asian artists such as Cultural Medallion recipient Thomas Yeo and award-winning collage artist Tan Chin Ching.

Where: Artfolio Gallery, Raffles Hotel Arcade, 02-25, 328 North Bridge Road MRT: City Hall When: Till Thu, 11am - 7pm (Mon - Sat), noon - 5pm (Sun), closed on public holidays Admission: Free Tel: 6334-4677

#### INTRUDER BY VIBHA GALHOTRA AND ASIA O.K! BY KETNA PATEL

Vibha Galhotra's digital prints recreate the aftermath of a terror strike while Ketna Patel's Asia O.K! juxtaposes cultures and historical events.

Where: Indigo Blue Art, 33 Neil Road MRT: Tanjong Pagar When: Till Thu, 11am - 6pm (Mon - Sat), closed on Sun & public holidays Admission: Free Tel: 6372-1719

#### 1ST Ngee ANN DISTINGUISHED SCULPTURE AWARDS

Winning and selected entries of the 1st Ngee Ann Distinguished Sculpture Awards, billed as the nation's second-largest sculpture competition, are showcased.

Where: Teochew Building, Ngee Ann Exhibition Hall, 97 Tank Road MRT: Dhoby Ghaut When: Till Thu, 11am - 7pm daily Admission: Free Info: E-mail [nacc@ngeeann.com.sg](mailto:nacc@ngeeann.com.sg)

#### WHAT ABOUT US?

Hong Kong-born Singapore artist Francis Poon Ping Him and China-born artist Zhou Quan focus on the relationship between man and habitat.

Where: Dahlia Gallery, 69A Pagoda Street, Level 2 MRT: Chinatown When: Till Oct 3, noon - 7pm (Tue - Sat), noon - 5pm (Sun), closed on Mon & public holidays Admission: Free Tel: 6222-7809

#### A CELEBRATION OF CONTEMPORARY ASIAN ART



View works from places such as Japan, Korea, Indonesia, the Philippines, Vietnam, Canada and Singapore, including those by renowned artists such as Fernando Botero, Yasushi Yamada, Jensen Lee, South Korean artist Lee Jae Hyo and Indonesian artist Saftari. Proceeds from the sale of five works by the Very Special Arts (VSA) (Singapore) artists will go to the international VSA.

Where: Ion Gallery, Level 4, Ion Orchard, Orchard Turn MRT: Orchard When: Till Oct 4, 10am - 10pm daily  
Admission: Free Info: <http://artsingapore.net/index.php>

#### RED MAN, GREEN GIRL

China-born emerging artist Ava Tan Lei showcases her perspective of women who work, struggle and survive in the city's nightlife.

Where: One East Artspace, Thong Sia Building, 03-02, 30 Bideford Road MRT: Somerset When: Till Oct 8, 11am - 6pm (Mon - Fri), 10am - 3pm (Sat), closed on Sun & public holidays Admission: Free Tel: 6737-1819

#### 2ND FRANCE-SINGAPORE NEW GENERATION ARTISTS

Lap up works by 10 finalists from the visual art competition, including Fanis Clara and Fabienne Tsaoussis from France and Ashley Yeo, Simond Chew and Dina Razak from Singapore.

Where: Alliance Francaise, 1 Sarkies Road MRT: Newton When: Till Oct 23, 11am - 7pm (Mon - Fri), 11am - 5pm (Sat), closed on Sun & public holidays Admission: Free Tel: 6833-9314 Info: One finalist will be selected as the winner and sponsored a solo exhibition at Alliance Francaise next year.

#### SOLO EXHIBITION BY FRENCH SCULPTOR

View life-sized sculptures by French artist Val, who depicts the human form as fragile and unsteady.

Where: Red Sea Gallery, Block 9, 01-10, Dempsey Hill, MRT: Orchard When: Till Oct 31, 9.30am - 9pm daily  
Admission: Free Tel: 6732-6711 Info: [www.redseagallery.com](http://www.redseagallery.com)

#### GLITZ, GLAMOUR & ROMANCE

The 28 works by Russian artist Tatiana Alieva frame her vision of the world.

Where: Gallery Nawei, Marina Mandarin Hotel, Level 4 & 5, 6 Raffles Boulevard MRT: Esplanade/City Hall  
When: Till Oct 31, 10am - 7.30pm Admission: Free Tel: 6338-0076 Info: [www.gallerynawei.com](http://www.gallerynawei.com)

#### audition

#### SINGAPORE RAFFLES MUSIC COLLEGE CHILDREN'S CHOIR AUDITION

Those aged five to 17 are invited to audition for Singapore Raffles Music College's Saturday children's choir programme starting on Oct 25, and its concert next year.

Where: Singapore Raffles Music College, 02-280, 6A Woodlands Centre Road, opposite Woodlands Checkpoint MRT: Woodlands/Marsiling When: Tomorrow, Sun & Oct 6 (Primary 6 students only), 2 - 6pm  
Admission: Free Tel: 6362-5759 Info: The music college has a training programme providing young people with a foundation in physical and vocal techniques, musicianship and appreciation. E-mail [wong.susan@srmc.edu.sg](mailto:wong.susan@srmc.edu.sg)

#### SSO PRESIDENT'S YOUNG PERFORMERS CONCERT 2011

This could be your gig as the Singapore Symphony Orchestra is looking for home-grown musicians for its event.

Info: Applicants should be no older than 35 on July 1 next year. Submit applications by Nov 10. For details, go to <http://sso.org.sg>

#### books

#### A LIFE OF CRIME WITH SHAMINI FLINT

Lawyer-turned-author Shamini Flint will discuss her new book, Inspector Singh Investigates: The Singapore School Of Villainy. The facilitator is Dr David Fedo, executive director and visiting scholar at the Singapore branch of the Wheelock College Centre for International Education, Leadership and Innovation.

Where: National Library Building, Visitors' Briefing Room, Level 1, Victoria Street MRT: City Hall/Bugis When: Today, 7 - 8.30pm Admission: Free Info: Go to <http://golibrary.gov.sg/Event.aspx?EventID=34285> or e-mail your name and contact number to Athena\_Aziz@nlb.gov.sg

#### CHOI! TOUCHWOOD!: A WALK THROUGH SINGAPORE'S CHINATOWN

Launch of an illustrated book that dwells on superstitions in Chinatown, including myths and taboos. By designers Jesvin Yeo, Liew Jie Ni and Alvin Ng, it is supported by the National Heritage Board and Chinatown Business Association.

Where: Kinokuniya Singapore Main Store, Crossroads, 03-09/10/15 Takashimaya Shopping Centre, Ngee Ann City, Orchard Road MRT: Somerset/Orchard When: Tomorrow, 2 - 3pm Admission: Free Tel: 6737-5021

charity

#### OPERATION BROKEN WING (CROSSFIT SINGAPORE)

Cheer on the participants at this workout project by Crossfit Singapore, a gym for strengthening and conditioning, to raise funds for the Chen Su Lan Methodist Children's Home.

Where: Crossfit Singapore, Block 1, 174 Kallang Avenue MRT: Kallang When: Tomorrow, 9 - 10.30am Admission: Free (registration has closed but spectators are welcome) Tel: 9623-3219 Info: Go to [www.crossfitsingapore.com.sg](http://www.crossfitsingapore.com.sg) for details. To make a donation, go to [www.sggives.org](http://www.sggives.org)

#### A TRIBUTE TO THE SOURCE (FINGER PAINTING CHARITY ART EXHIBITION)

This exhibition of masterpieces by Wu Tsai Yen, the late master finger artist, is in aid of the Singapore Buddhist Lodge's Welfare and Education foundations. Held to commemorate Wu's 100th birth anniversary.

Where: Singapore Buddhist Lodge, Auditorium, 17 - 19 Kim Yam Road, off River Valley Road MRT: Clarke Quay When: Sun - Tue, 10.30am - 7.30pm Admission: Free Tel: 6737-2630

#### LET'S TAKE A WALK

Sweat it out for a good cause to help raise \$80,000 for the Boys' Town and the Raleigh Society, a non-profit body which develops youth through adventure-based activities. Sign up for the 10km JalanWalk, 50km PowerWalk or 100km ExtremeWalk.

Where: Spanning the centre and eastern parts of the island When: Dec 18 - 19 Admission: \$25 (JalanWalk), \$60 (PowerWalk or ExtremeWalk) Info: Register by next Fri for the PowerWalk or ExtremeWalk and pay an early-bird fee of \$50. Go to [www.letstakeawalk.sg](http://www.letstakeawalk.sg)

class

#### YOUNG AUTHOR CLUB

This free workshop aims to discover and inspire Singapore's next generation of writers and storytellers. An initiative of Janis Education, it is facilitated by an experienced writer.

Where: Woodlands Regional Library, Everest Room, Woodlands Civic Centre, 01-03, 900 South Woodlands Drive MRT: Woodlands When: Today, 4 - 5.30pm Admission: Free Tel: 6336-8985 Info: To register and for details, e-mail [books@catherinekhoo.sg](mailto:books@catherinekhoo.sg)

#### SWEETS FOR MY SWEETS

Carl Bertka, executive pastry chef at The Fullerton Hotel, teaches how to top off a meal with desserts such as sesame macarons and passion fruit marshmallows.

Where: Bukit Timah CC, Block 20, Toh Yi Drive, off Jalan Jurong Kechil MRT: Bukit Batok When: Tomorrow, 2.30 - 5.30pm Admission: \$25 (non-member), \$20 (Passion Card member) Tel: 6466-2912

#### ST701 WORKSHOPS (HOW TO BE A BETTER SALES LEADER)

Get tips at two workshops: Sales Coaching Fundamentals - 5 Pillars Of Sales Force Management by Mr Tom Abbott, and Sales Force Development by Mr Ray Bigger.

Where: SPH News Centre Auditorium, 1000 Toa Payoh North MRT: Braddell When: Tue, 9am - 5.30pm Admission: \$259 - \$489 Tel: 6319-5979 Info: Go to [jobs.st701.com](http://jobs.st701.com) to register as a ST701 member for free. For details, e-mail [st701@sph.com.sg](mailto:st701@sph.com.sg)

## UNDERSTANDING CONTEMPORARY ASIAN ART

Embrace the diversity of Asian art and find out about recent developments at this free workshop, which includes a talk and gallery tour. Part of ArtSingapore, The Contemporary Asian Art Fair.

Where: Ion Art Gallery, Level 4, Ion Orchard, Orchard Turn MRT: Orchard When: Wed, 7 - 9.30pm  
Admission: Free Tel: 6238-8228 Info: Registration is required. Go to [www.artsingapore.net](http://www.artsingapore.net)

classical

## SSO @ REPUBLIC POLYTECHNIC

Under the baton of Shui Lan, the Singapore Symphony Orchestra will perform works such as Zhou Long's The Rhyme Of Taigu, Debussy's La Mer, Bach's Air from Suite No. 3 In D Major and John Adam's Short Ride In A Fast Machine.

Where: The Republic Cultural Centre, Theatre, Republic Polytechnic, Woodlands MRT: Woodlands When: Today, 7pm Admission: Free Info: [www.sso.org.sg](http://www.sso.org.sg)

## SOLO RECITAL BY JIN TA

Jin Ta, Singapore Symphony Orchestra's principal flautist and faculty member of the Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music, will perform works such as Telemann's 12 Fantasies for flute and Carl Reinecke's Sonata 'Undine' based on the Gemran romantic tale about a water spirit.

Where: Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music, Conservatory Concert Hall, National University of Singapore, Kent Ridge MRT: Clementi/Buona Vista When: Tomorrow, 5.30 - 6.30pm Admission: \$10 Tel: 6489-4669  
Info: The event is part of Flute Festival 2010. For more details, go to [www.musicgear.com.sg](http://www.musicgear.com.sg)

## FLUTE ENSEMBLE CONCERT

The flute takes centre stage at this concert performed by the Flute Quartet led by Jin Ta, Singapore Symphony Orchestra's principal flautist, the Conservatory Flute Choir and the Kreutzer Wind Ensemble formed by wind-instrument enthusiasts here.

Where: Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music, Conservatory Concert Hall, National University of Singapore, Kent Ridge MRT: Clementi/Buona Vista When: Sun, 7.30 - 10pm Admission: \$10 Tel: 6489-4669  
Info: The concert is part of Flute Festival 2010. Go to [www.musicgear.com.sg](http://www.musicgear.com.sg)

contest

## EAT & WIN CONTEST

Spend at least \$20 at participating restaurants in the Cats Classified Food Fest 2010 from now till Nov 6 to win tours to Taiwan and Yunnan, China in a fortnightly draw. You can also win a Zoyte Trex car worth \$36,388 in the grand draw. Organised by Cats Classified.

Info: The names of the eateries will be featured in Lianhe Zaobao (Tue), The New Paper (Wed), Lianhe Wanbao (Thu) and Shin Min Daily News (Sat) during the festival

## SHAW LIDO WALL MURAL CONTEST

This could be your passport to winning a four-day trip for two to Hong Kong Disneyland. Join this online contest to identify the movies featured on the Shaw Lido Wall Mural. Held by Shaw to mark the closure of Lido Cineplex next Friday for upgrading. It will reopen in April with digital Imax technology.

Info: Submit entries by Thu to [www.shaw.sg](http://www.shaw.sg)

## DESIGN OUR EARTHKEEPERS TEE CONTEST

Join Timberland and its spokesman, Taiwanese singer Wang Lee Hom, in the label's conservation efforts. Design a T-shirt based on what it means to be eco-friendly to win a trip to watch Wang live in concert in Beijing. The winning design will be produced as part of the Timberland Earth Day Spring and Summer 2011 collections. Proceeds from the sale of T-shirts will go to a project to plant two million trees in Inner Mongolia, China.

Info: Go to [www.earthkeepers2010.com](http://www.earthkeepers2010.com) to create and submit your T-shirt design by Oct 15

film

## SINEMA SHOWOFF! THE BALIK KAMPUNG COLLECTION 2

View five short films on Malay-Muslim culture to commemorate Hari Raya Puasa, including the Singapore premiere of Ameen by Sanif Olek (Curator's Pick), a Malay film about a man infatuated with two girls from an Islamic school, and the world premiere of Death For A Living by Sulaiman Salamon, Khairul Amin and Anant Siva, a film in English exploring the life of a female Muslim embalmer.

Where: Sinema Old School, B1-12, 11B Mount Sophia MRT: Dhoby Ghaut When: Tue, 7.30pm Admission: Free Tel: 6336-9707 Info: The film-makers will be present for a question-and-answer session and photo-taking Info: Go to [tix.sinema.sg](http://tix.sinema.sg) to book tickets or buy them at the door

## CHHEVAN DARIYA (THE SIXTH RIVER)

A film about a wedding in Punjab written, produced and directed by Ish Amitoj Kaur, it stars Lakhwinder Wadali, Christa Cannon and Manpreet Singh. In Punjabi with English subtitles.

Where: The Arts House, Old Parliament House, 1 Old Parliament Lane MRT: Raffles Place When: Till Sun, 7.45pm, also 3pm on Sat Admission: \$12 Tel: 6332-6919 Info: [www.sixthriverfilm.com](http://www.sixthriverfilm.com)

food

## SUPERNATURE'S SUPER SUNDAY (ORGANIC OFFERS)

Yummy. This organic outlet is giving away selected Seeds Of Change organic pasta sauce (usual: \$8.95 a bottle) from 10am to noon. Carrots are going for \$5 a bag (usual: \$9) and potatoes for \$2 a bag (usual: \$9.50).

Where: SuperNature, Park House 01-21/23/27, 21 Orchard Boulevard MRT: Orchard When: Sun, 10am - 6pm Admission: Free (pay for purchases) Tel: 6304-1338 Info: Sample classic bacon, lettuce and tomato sandwiches made with organic vegetables and healthy bacon. E-mail [sales@supernature.com.sg](mailto:sales@supernature.com.sg)

## EAT PERANAKAN AND ENJOY PERANAKAN TUNES

This buffet lunch at Concorde Hotel's Spices Cafe comes with a 'side dish' of Peranakan tunes sung by Rosalind Leong, accompanied by Cheok Cheng Ann on keyboard.

Where: Concorde Hotel, Spices Cafe, 100 Orchard Road MRT: Somerset When: Wed & every last Wed of the month till the end of the year, noon - 2.30pm Admission: \$25 (adults) & \$20.50 (senior citizens aged 55 and above) Tel: 6739-8370

formula one

## 2010 FORMULA ONE SINGTEL SINGAPORE GRAND PRIX, MUSIC PERFORMANCES

Race over here for fast cars and entertainment by American singers Mariah Carey and Missy Elliott, American Idol runner-up Adam Lambert and the Daughtry band. Women can go gaga over the Chippendales all-male revue.

Where: Marina Bay Street Circuit MRT: Raffles Place/ Marina Bay When: Today - Sun, from 3pm onwards, Admission: From \$41 Tel: 6738-6738 Info: [www.singaporegp.sg](http://www.singaporegp.sg), [www.sistic.com.sg](http://www.sistic.com.sg)

## LOTUS - A UNIQUE PLACE IN F1 HISTORY/ WIN COFFEETABLE BOOK

Park here to gawk at Lotus supercars and browse Lotus F1 paraphernalia and merchandise. Guess the number of flags at the Canopy of Waving Flags display to be among 10 winners of a limited-edition Glow-In-The-Dark Grand Prix Season Singapore coffeetable book.

Where: Millenia Walk, The Great Hall MRT: Promenade/ Esplanade When: Till Sun, 10am - 10pm Tel: 6883-1122

## FORMULA ART IN MOTION EXHIBIT

Russian artist Tatiana Alieva and Indonesian artist Lin Sakri get you up to speed by capturing moments from the Formula One race.

Where: Royal Plaza on Scotts, Lobby, Level 1, Scotts Road MRT: Orchard When: Till next Fri, open 24 hours Admission: Free Tel: 6338-0076

## SINGAPORE GRAND PRIX

The Ferrari has made its stamp not just on race tracks but also on postage stamps and collectibles such as apparel and scale models.

Where: Singapore Philatelic Museum, 23B Coleman Street MRT: City Hall/Clarke Quay When: Till Thu, 1 - 7pm (Mon), 9am - 7pm (Tue - Sun) Admission: \$5, \$4 (foreign children & senior citizens), free for local children below 12 & senior citizens Tel: 6337-3888 Info: [www.spm.org.sg](http://www.spm.org.sg)

Document STIMES0020100923e69o0002g

# The Daily Telegraph

Features

## FOOD FOR THOUGHT

JEFF COLLERSON

596 words

2 August 2008

Daily Telegraph

DAITEL

1

75

English

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EASTWOOD GARDEN PEKING . 167 Rowe St, Eastwood, 9804 1289

### THE VERDICT

\* Food: Chinese

\* Drink: BYO (corkage \$2 per person)

\* Dress: Casual

\* Expect to pay: \$33 for two courses

\* Value for money:

\* Overall rating:

Eastwood shopping centre, straddling each side of the railway station, has 20 Chinese restaurants - excluding takeaways.

Living in the area I have eaten at many of them but this, opened six years ago, is the best I have tried.

After a six-month break I made two recent visits to check if partners Tom Chan, **Simon Pan** and Danny Kwan had maintained the standard. I was relieved to discover nothing had changed.

A warm greeting on arrival doesn't make food taste better but puts people in the right frame of mind. And no matter how busy, Eastwood Garden Peking's staff never fail to deliver a friendly welcome.

### DUCK ON IN

As the name implies the Eastwood Garden Peking specialty is Peking duck. Ducks around Eastwood must have a similar life expectancy as American turkeys come late November, as this restaurant dishes up 100 birds weekly. A far cry from a decade ago in Sydney when Peking duck was so exotic that, even when on a menu, it had to be ordered 24 hours in advance.

Eastwood Garden's other specialties are live fish and "dry" frying. Peking cuisine tends to be salty, not too spicy and never greasy, as little oil is used in cooking. Accordingly, two of us sampled dry-fried king prawns (\$20.80) and steamed fresh (live) fish (\$21.80).

A generous heap of mediumsized prawns had been lightly battered and cooked with spring onions, chilli and salt to a crunchy, springy and juicy consistency. The fish tank was full of plate-sized barramundi, with Chan estimating they sell 70 live fish each week.

Most Chinese eateries offer live seafood at "market price" or "cost per 100 grams", which can result in a hefty bill. But here the barras, simply steamed with ginger and spring onions, were listed at \$21.80 each.

Getting fish right tests the best chefs but ours arrived spot on, neither dried out or under-cooked. Our waiter partly de-boned it at the table with my partner and I declaring it unbeatable for fish enthusiasts.

### SEA THE VALUE

On another visit we chose deep-fried seafood options.

Exemplary were a huge plate of whitebait (\$14.80, left) and a whole flounder (\$15.80, far left). The only disappointment was deep-fried fish fillet with sweet corn sauce (\$15.80). Lashings of sauce rendered the batter soggy and swamped the fish's delicate flavour. The sauce would have been better served on the side.

The most expensive dish is Peking duck (\$40.80), presented whole and suitably lacquered, before the crunchy skin and breast meat are served with pancakes and hoi sin sauce. Diners can choose the second course meat as san chow bow (four pieces) or shredded with fried noodles. Eastwood Garden also offers a budget version, with deep fried duck, hoi sin sauce and six pancakes at \$17.80.

The only blip in service came when dishes we wanted served separately, arrived together. So, if seeking a traditional entree/main course meal, explain carefully.

Eastwood Garden opens daily, with a la carte at lunch and dinner ("too small for yum cha" says Chan). They don't stint on staff numbers with seven waiters and 10 chefs. It's comforting that in the hurly burly restaurant world some goodies last the distance.

DTM-20080802-1-075-344064

Document DAITEL0020080801e4820002t



## Peking perfection

287 words

18 May 2005

Northern District Times

NORDIS

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36

English

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THE Eastwood Peking Restaurant is true to its name in offering many of the best northern Chinese dishes in the renowned Peking style.

Owners **Simon Pan** and Danny Kwan have been operating this vibrant Chinese restaurant in the heart of Eastwood for more than two years.

"We have always attracted a loyal crowd of local diners," he said.

Pan said the restaurant was often busy seven days a week right from when it opens at 11am.

"But even busier on the weekends for both dining in and for take away," he said.

The attraction that Eastwood diners keep returning to is the lure of the restaurant's Peking-style cuisine.

It is a style said to have originated in the kitchens of the Emperor himself as his Peking chefs enjoyed access to the best of all the food on offer in China.

Overall, Peking cuisine is generally richer and more salty than southern Chinese cuisine.

Mr Tan said the most famous Peking dish, the renowned Peking duck, is a speciality at his restaurant.

"The Peking duck is a dish many diners want to experience," he said.

The word experience is apt as the Peking duck is usually prepared for a minimum of six people.

The crisp skin is the most prized part, with the duck's pieces sliced clean allowing them to be wrapped in thin pancakes with onions or leeks, cucumber, turnip and plum sauce.

Mr Tan said among the other recommendations at the Peking Garden Restaurant is the Peking boneless chicken with special garlic sauce and the king prawn in sweet chilli sauce.

"The Peking shredded beef is also very popular as are our dumplings," he said.

[NDG\_T-20050518-1-036-973817 ]

Document NORDIS0020050518e15i00019



## BUSINESS

**State posts sizable jobs loss**

BY NORM HEIKENS NORM.HEIKENS@INDYSTAR.COM

547 words

16 November 2004

The Indianapolis News/Indianapolis Star

INDY

FINAL EDITION

C01

English

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Indiana employment plummeted in October, a month when national jobs numbers shot up, new government figures show.

The loss of 5,600 positions, to 2,910,700, from September amounted to nearly a 0.2 percent decline, according to an Indiana Department of Revenue report released Monday.

"That's a sizeable drop," said Jerry Conover, director of the Indiana Business Research Center.

However, Conover emphasized, the state gained 9,900 positions from October 2003. It was the 10th straight month of year-over-year increases, suggesting the state is slowly pulling out of the funk that afflicted it through much of 2001-2003.

National employment that jumped 337,000 earlier this month surprised experts. Even considering temporary new jobs created by hurricane damage, the figure was strong, they said.

In Indiana last month, construction added 900 jobs -- work, Conover said, that was driven by pockets of residential and commercial projects. Virtually every other category was down. Manufacturing was off 300 jobs.

The Indianapolis area had another rough month. Marion and surrounding counties along with Madison County were down 4,900 jobs from October 2003.

The 892,200 jobs were the fewest for the month since 1999.

Manufacturing and service jobs both shrank, especially in administrative and employment services. Leisure and hospitality was another big loser.

Indianapolis-area employment is struggling to recover from peak months of 2000 and 2001.

George Hayes faces this jobs headwind as he searches for work.

Having moved to Indianapolis in July, the former Bristol-Myers Squibb territory manager said the Midwest economy has been hit harder than the East Coast.

Hayes has applied to 10 or 15 companies since arriving. Some offers came with pay cuts, others said they were in a hiring freeze.

But he isn't giving up.

Late last week, he attended Beacons of Opportunity, a diversity career fair organized by the National Black MBA Association, the Asian Alliance and the National Society of Hispanic MBAs. "I am still optimistic," Hayes said.

Job seekers felt that of the 23 companies recruiting at the jobs fair, only a few were really hiring.

"I am optimistic I will find work," said **Simon Pan**, who's finishing off his MBA at Purdue University's Krannert Business School. "The only thing which worries me is whether I will find the ideal job."

For Vinita Gajria, an international student at Krannert, a cautious jobs market is doubly challenging. Most employers shy away from hiring foreign nationals, Gajria said. At the jobs fair, Walgreens declined to even accept her resume. "It's very hard," Gajria said. "But I know I have to be positive and persevere."

John L. Krauss, director of the Center for Urban Policy and the Environment at IUPUI, said he hopes Indianapolis-area companies make bold moves when the city catches the national economic wave.

"The sense of optimism may push us into understanding that risk is not a bad word," Krauss said. "But we're not there yet."

Jobs performance was mixed among other metro areas.

Bloomington, Fort Wayne, Lafayette, South Bend, Terre Haute saw job gains.

Elkhart-Goshen, Evansville, Gary-Hammond, Muncie had losses.

Kokomo was unchanged.

Call Star reporter Norm Heikens at (317) 444-6532.

Document INDY000020041118e0bg0001y



News

## HERE COME SIMON AND DYLAN TO COMPLETE A CLASSIC NIGHT

Bill Ellis The Commercial Appeal

710 words

12 September 1999

The Commercial Appeal Memphis, TN

MMPH

Final

A11

English

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Double bills can be an attempt to consolidate dwindling fan bases. The first-ever pairing of Paul Simon and Bob Dylan was instead a lesson of sorts. And the 8,000 folks who came to hear the two legends Saturday at The Pyramid were exposed to opposite, if equally satisfying, approaches to the craft of writing and relaying a song.

For **Simon, pan**-continental sound has transformed his highly personal catalog into a world hootenanny. For Dylan, music has been stripped bare to the point that he has joined his archetypically American mentors. Where the young Dylan sounded like a Woody Guthrie wannabe, 35 years of wrestling with his muse has made his songs as old, craggy and essential as any folk music this century.

Simon came out first - the artists have been alternating the tour's opening and closing slots - and gave the audience lushly delivered, passport-stamped vistas that seemed to say our globe is as intimate and small as a three-minute song, and just as frail; the current problems in East Timor echoed even more.

Backed by nearly a dozen international musicians, Simon opened with a version of Bridge Over Troubled Water full of Asian atmosphere. And a conjunto-meets-Zulu jive version of Mrs. Robinson could have been an outtake from the album "Graceland," the groundbreaking 1986 Grammy-winner that, along with exotic efforts by Peter Gabriel and David Byrne, first brought world music to many Western ears.

Simon's set also included a number of tunes from his acclaimed Brazil-inspired 1990 album, "The Rhythm of the Saints," arguably Rock En Espanol before that genre ever had a name.

Naturally, he performed the song Graceland, which received robust applause in our land of Elvis. "Yahoo! I've been waiting so long to sing that song right here," he said.

Instead of closing the night with the obligatory collaboration, Simon and Dylan chose to duet between each other's sets. They shouldn't have bothered. Accompanied by Simon's band, they played oddly perfunctory versions of The Boxer, Dion's The Wanderer and Knockin' on Heaven's Door.

Only a cover of Johnny Cash's Sun classic, I Walk the Line, had any spark, though why they didn't perform Presley's version of Blue Moon of Kentucky - also a staple of their tour - was the evening's mystery.

Alas, there was no surprise visit from Simon's old partner, Art Garfunkel, who played Bartlett the night before.

When it was Dylan's turn, choreographing a load of musicians was his last worry. With his reliable four-piece band (featuring guitarist Charlie Sexton), Dylan delivered well-rehearsed spontaneity, which can be thrilling or disastrous. Saturday night was largely the former.

Memphis clearly inspires the songwriting giant: He has made videos here, has recorded with Jim Dickinson, and has given memorable performances at the Beale Street Music Festival and the New Daisy Theatre.

His set, half-acoustic and half-electric, was knotty and honest, a bumpy backwoods ride that opened with the Stanley Brothers' bluegrass number I Am the Man, Thomas and included the seminal originals Mr. Tambourine Man, It's Alright, Ma (I'm Only Bleeding) and a reading of Tangled Up in Blue so ragtimey loose one could almost imagine the Band with him on stage.

Switching to electric guitar, Dylan hadn't aged a day since he shocked his polite folkie followers in the '60s. Forget Prince's "1999"; All Along the Watchtower - with its warning "Let's not talk falsely now/you know the hour's getting late" - is the millennium theme song. And, of course, Dylan offered a rollicking Stuck Inside of Mobile (With the Memphis Blues Again). "We just couldn't get out of here without playing this one," he said.

Dylan and Simon may be unlikely partners, yet they both understand how rock music is inherently folk music, and that folk music, from the most naked acoustic solo to the biggest African beat, belongs to everyone.

It was a lesson worth taking home.

To reach music writer Bill Ellis, call 529-2517 or send E-mail to [ellis@gomemphis.com](mailto:ellis@gomemphis.com)

concert review

Document mmph000020010828dv9c00oqx

**Electric Machine and Control Device Seeking Partner**

69 words

20 August 1998

AsiaPort Daily News: Guangdong Economic News

APRT

Page 1

English

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GUANGZHOU, August 20, AsiaPort -- Project name: Frequency control electric machine and its control device

Chinese partner: China Association for Science and Technological Guangzhou Sciencetech. Park Unit Development Co Ltd

Address; Chuangye Road North, GETDD, Guangzhou

Person: **Simon Pan**

Tel: (8620) 82213767

Fax: (8620) 82219427

E-mail: gzsctepa@publicl.guangzhou.gd.cn

Total investment: US\$ 1.2 million

Cooperation form: Joint venture

Document aprt000020010915du8k0057r



## Shiprepair world - Going gets tough at China yards.

609 words

19 August 1998

Lloyd's List International

LL

English

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Chinese shiprepair yards are beginning to 'feel the pinch' as the recession in the shipping industry and the Asian currency crisis takes its toll.

The revaluation of the Korean won, the problems facing the Japanese yen and other Far East currencies, has resulted in many other Far East countries becoming more competitive with the Chinese yards.

It has also resulted in many owners reverting back to dry-docking in domestic yards. In the past they would have placed the work with yards in China. With trade in the Far East and Pacific Rim area also on a downturn, many ships have transferred operations to the Atlantic area.

In this area, many owners use repair facilities in Poland, the Baltic States, and the Black Sea yards, where shiprepair prices which, although not as cheap as those in China, are low enough to make it uneconomical to deviate to the Far East for anything other than the major steel renewals or blasting and painting.

As a result, many Chinese yards, particularly those which wish to increase international business levels, are carrying out a number of measures to improve their efficiency, productivity and cost-effectiveness.

Lifeng Shipyard has invested in a plasma arc steel cutting machine, reducing the time and cost of cutting steel plates.

Shiprepair director, Chen Xiong is also carrying out a programme of office facility and workshop refurbishment.

In other yards, internal reorganisation of senior management has seen personnel being moved within a trading house group from one shipyard to another to improve efficiency.

One such move has seen Hu Shu Guang move from Lifeng to deputy director at Lixin Shipyard, with a brief to improve the yard's productivity.

A new commercial director, **Simon Pan**, has been appointed at Guangzhou Wenchong Shipyard, and is leading a drive to improve the shipyard's production, especially with regard to safety and fire prevention procedures.

In addition, some of the trading house groups have changed, resulting in shipyards now being under different ownership.

The objective is to allow the exchange of ideas and views on shiprepair yard practice, which may result in efficiency improvements. Such a move has resulted in the demise of the Shanghai Shipping United Dock Group, which comprised the Lifeng, Lixin, Hongxiangxin and Ocean Shipping Repair shipyards.

The new grouping of China Shipping Industry Co, headquartered in Shanghai, brings together Lifeng, Lixin, Shanghai United, Digang, Chenganwei, all in Shanghai and BLM in Guangzhou, as well as some large sub-contracting companies.

The reasoning behind such a move is to take advantage of a more beneficial corporate tax regime for organisations based in developing areas of Shanghai.

All yards are generally looking at increasing use of sub-contractors to bring costs down and reduce overall wage bills. This has resulted in a number of specialist companies i.e. thickness gauging, electronics, etc, being formed by entrepreneurial individuals with a view to taking over these specialists skills in shipyards.

Project teams are now being used to organise repairs. These will consist of senior managers liaising at least twice daily with the owners' representatives and shiprepair managers involved in the different parts of the ship, i.e. hull, machinery, steel, etc, supported by the department foremen.

Chinese yards are also eyeing the conversion market, keen to impress that they are more than just a suitable location for 'haircut & shave', cheap steel renewal and grit blasting and coating.

A worldwide recession in the shipping industry combined with the Asian currency crisis is beginning to hit Chinese repairers such as Guangzhou Wenchong Shipyard By Kris Thorpe.

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# The Moscow Times

## Taiwan Celebrates Perfection.

372 words

15 October 1997

The Moscow Times

MOSTIM

English

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**Simon Pan**, an administrator for the Taiwanese Foreign Ministry, is far from being homesick for his native Taiwan; rather he is sick from having been home. That's why he relishes the continental Russian climate.

"I get this rash in Taiwan from the wetness of the air," Pan said, showing a red blotch over his left eyebrow, the result of a recent trip home. "My posting will be up next year, and I don't know where I'll end up. I just hope it's not in Taiwan."

Pan is just one in the 200-strong Taiwanese community in Moscow who, along with well-wishers, celebrated Taiwan's Double 10th national day Friday night at the Renaissance Hotel. The day commemorates the Oct. 10, 1911 overthrow, led by the revolutionary leader Sun Yat-sen, of China's last dynasty, the Chin. The date contains two 10s, "a really lucky number for Taiwanese," said Lee Chienli, information officer at Taipei's representative office in Moscow. The Chinese word for 10 is synonymous with the word for perfection.

As they have in other countries, the Taiwanese have sought to adapt in Russia, and Lee, "my Russian name is Anton", explained that although Moscow doesn't recognize Taiwan out of deference to mainland China, the economic and cultural office has helped serve as a bridge between Taiwanese students and businesses and the Russian market.

About half the Taiwanese community in Moscow is composed of students, and many were on hand Friday. Kuo Naichia and Huang Mingyi, both 19, recently arrived in Moscow and were taking time out from wrestling with Russian grammar to sample the Oriental seafood and vegetable offerings at the buffet, "because food's the most serious thing we're already missing."

But Moscow State Conservatory graduate Yen Artemis, 27, is far from being a chainik, or rookie, in Russia. The pianist claimed to have been the first Taiwanese student ever to study in Russia when she arrived in 1993, but felt immediately welcome at the conservatory, "where they treated us not as nationalities, but as musicians."

What does she long for the most after having been away from Taiwan for so many years?

"I miss efficiency," she said.

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**Pan Kino looking towards second commercial for Skittles.**

92 words

11 January 1989

Televisual

TLVL

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English

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Pan Kino, the promos-turned-commercials house hopes to follow up its ad debt for WH Smith's Sound division with the latest Skittles commercial.

Using a distinctive mix of animation and live-action with video prints of live-action xeroxed onto cell to be worked on by resident animator Christopher **Simon, Pan** Kino hopes to continue a style already proven to be a success for promo credits including The Mission's Tower of Strength and Out Come The Freaks for Was Not Was.

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**Search Summary**

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