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Introducing some of our contributors, editors & designers

Our Editor-in-chief and Music Critic, Frank Hossack, has been a radio host and producer for the past 34 years, the past 25 of which working in media in China. In the process, Frank has attended and won four New York Festivals awards for his work in the categories: Best Top 40 Format, Best Editing, Best Director and Best Culture & The Arts.

A Nanjing local, Kristen Wang has a Masters in Media and Public relations from Newcastle University (UK), has researched social media and online publishing and previously worked for different new media platforms. She is passionate about discovering new stories and helping expats involved in this city.

Matthew Stedman has spent years living and working in China. He has sold Chinese tea in the UK, and loves discussing the miraculous leaf with new (and suspicious) audiences. He however never feels happier than when researching the product here in beautiful South China.

Legal columnist Carlo D’Andrea is Chair of the Legal & Competition Working group of the European Union Chamber of Commerce in China; Shanghai Chapter, Coordinator of the Nanjing Working Group of the Italian Chamber of Commerce in China and has taught Chinese law (commercial and contractual) at Rome 3 University.

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“Magic”
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Your Travels in the Digital Realm
See yourself on this page?
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Spring has sprung, a fact reflected in our recently-introduced feature, “Nanjing Nomads”, that this months sees our community snapping sunsets, foliage and Nanjing’s 2019 rebirth of colour. See previous page.

Turning to this month’s theme, it’s one that raises a few questions.

(i) How does a young lady in Grade 8 turn in one of the most imaginative pieces of the writing The Nanjinger has ever seen?

(ii) How does much of what we outsiders see in China seem so surreal, and just what is orchestrating this attack on our sense of reason?

(iii) How does oatmeal cling stubbornly to the side of your bowl, and why is that mundane fact so fascinating anyway?

The answers, respectively; Hell is Empty (p20), Abracadabra (p14) and, Seize the Day (p10).

And because The Nanjinger is simply... magic.

Ed.

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This magazine is part of a family of English publications that together reach a large proportion of the foreign population living in Nanjing, along with a good dash of locals, comprising:

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I remember when first I saw Santa’s sleigh
Sweeping over me on a cold, crisp night as we
Were wending our way home from midnight mass.

I remember.

I remember simple Christmas lights that lit up every home,
And how every home had its open door,
Save at the dark, scary corner of our street
Where the old witch lived, with her apples that stole my tooth.

I remember.

I remember the delight of knocking for next-door neighbours—
How we would play—running through houses like corridors.
Our breaths were cloudmakers and these clouds they
Brought rain with its puddles and umbrellas and days inside;
Brought blankets of snow with their snowmen and snow days outside.

I remember.

I remember the television dial and its four channels that closed to me at nine.
I remember homemade clubhouses of blankets and pallets of pine.
I remember invisible hippos climbing visible trees
And knees that gave scabs to pick at, to taste
To the utter disgust of parents and girls.

I remember.

I remember when magic tasted of homemade coconut ice and was
Not downloaded in 3D Technicolor streams
But burst out in fully loaded six dimensional dreams.
Where we were all magic, save adults—grey that seemed to have lost their way
And our only struggle was somehow to fit all that magic
Into each too short day.

# I remember.
The mid-afternoon sun was a lemon smudge in the sky as I pushed open the heavy oak door and stepped over the threshold. A bell tinkled. A small man emerged from the dimly lit shelves. Glass jars filled with leaves of mossy green; nut brown and ochre crammed every nook and cranny. I asked for ginseng and hibiscus. Master Li smiled, and gestured towards the leather covered armchair beside the tiny tea set in the corner. The next train left in thirty minutes. *I had little time for fripperies.*

*What happened next was magic.*
When you are present, the world is vibrant. When you are not, it is as though you sleep through life. When we think of magic, we think of unicorns, witches with cauldrons, bubbling and bubbling, toiling and troubling. Maybe we think of pre-pubescent British kids larking around in the Scottish Highlands. Few of us leap straight to washing the dishes, cleaning up the rubbish juice from the bin grooves, or weeding the garden. And, in fairness, why would you?

Chores. The bane of our lives. Gobbling up valuable free time, with which we would otherwise be producing works of art, or the novel that’s been on the back burner since little Bruce was born last… decade. Or maybe we would be out flying kites in the park, or jogging (I actually snorted some coffee there.) I don’t know about you, but whenever I have a decent chunk of free time, it seems to go by faster than a Nanjing Spring; and my novel just as ephemeral as it was when I was happily grumbling about dried-on oatmeal at the kitchen sink.

But lately, lately, the oatmeal has begun to speak to me. Ok, calm down. Not literally. It speaks to me in the same way that Master Li did, softly; slowly. His words flowed like the water that splashed over the leaves as he prepared a pot of ginseng tea. A smile lit up his face as he dashed the first pot of water into the bucket at his feet.

“Wash them, first,” he said, winking. The dried ginseng spun and whirled under the delicate stream emitting from the teapot.

He showed me how to boil the water once more, just ’til the bubbles were mere suggestions of themselves on the surface.

“Watch them,” he said, his face calm now. We waited. We shared three cups of tea. We did not speak of much. The leaves fleshed out and released their elixir. Steam curled in slow tendrils over the doll-sized teacups. Hot and spicy, the ginseng glowed inside me as I made my way back outside. Dusk had fallen and the streetlamps shone with fuzzy auras in the misty evening.

What the oatmeal, and Mr. Li are pointing at is this; being present does not mean sitting in the lotus position, legs crossed and smiling benevolently at all and sundry. It also does not mean being good; the stubborn oatmeal has no intentions in its barnacle attachment to the bowl, it is simply being. And it doesn’t mean removing oneself from the everyday magic of life.

Being time-conscious creatures, we are bound by the clock. The ability to reflect on past experiences allows us to make predictions about the future, and plan accordingly. This is what makes us unique as a species, this awareness of the passing of time. It has allowed empires to rise and fall, and for a catalogue of fear and anxiety to amass in the human psyche, should the lens of perception get skewed too far outside the here and now. Such a weighty trickle, the sands of time, if they accumulate upon our shoulders.

I am not just who I am right now at this moment, they whisper. I am a culmination of all events that have led to this precise moment in time embodied in me, myself, and I. In this world view, personality is cumulative, and all happenings are interrelated, informed by the past, conditioned by events outside of our control. This personality is also limited in what it can be or do, operating within such a narrowly defined parameter. I am what I eat, and say and do. Or rather, what I ate, and said and did. How dreadfully restricting.

Carrying the weight of this baggage, as well as fending off wild and unruly attacks from the barbarous universe is enough to make anyone feel worn out, the exact opposite of OK. Incidentally, that would be K.O., Knocked Out, flattened, defeated. And even these words are only pointers towards a deeper sensation of hopelessness, abstractions reaching in vain for a concept; a state of being (Alan Watts, “In My Own Way”). Living in the past or future frequently results in this overload of negative emotions. We cannot see the woods for the trees, so to speak. It all seems so complicated, so heavy.
Worldwide, suicide rates are rising. According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), almost 800,000 people die due to suicide every year, which is one person every 40 seconds. They also estimate that for every one suicide, there are 20 attempts at such. Suicide rates increased by 25 percent across the United States over nearly 2 decades ending in 2016, according to research published in June, 2018, by the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Lead researcher for the CDC, Dr. Deborah Stone, says that while there is no overall cause to explain the drastic rise in self harm, relationship issues and financial troubles seem to crop up regularly as main causes of suicide.

Last year alone, suicide knocked on the door of three of this correspondent’s close friends, their lost ones all male, all in the highest risk category which is males between the ages of 15 and 44. Suicide is now the second leading cause of death for males in this age group.

Depression and mental illness are also on the rise. As GDP and standards of living rise, so too does the Black Dog, and its shadow is hard to cast off. Anyone who has lived with depression, or watched a loved one in its clutches, knows the devastation it can wreak on a person, a home, a family. The Black Dog that walks in the shadow growls at those who would help. It is a vicious circle of isolation, loneliness and misery.

The Greater Good Science Centre emails this correspondent once a month to remind as to the courses it has on offer on The Science of Happiness. Is it now necessary to study kindness, compassion and resilience in the 21st century? Is happiness becoming a new skill to be learned and mastered? I consider taking a module on the science of happiness and well-being. I have a vague understanding of how serotonin makes us feel all warm and fuzzy. But then I stop, and ask myself, if I need to look so abstractly, through the veil of words and teachings? Isn’t it all supposed to be simpler? I look at the rows of eager faces in my classroom on this dull Friday afternoon, and a part of me hopes so, sincerely.

Harry, our Hogwartsian jock, grapples with this very dilemma in his struggle to resist the temptation of the Mirror of Erised in The Philosophers Stone. I show not your face but your heart’s desire, reads the inscription on the mirror. Finding himself drawn to the mirror night after night, he reluctantly follows Dumbledore’s advice; “It does not do to dwell on dreams and forget to live”.

Harry, despite his overwhelming desire to be with his parents, to live in the past, succeeds in dominating the urges of his mind, and living in the moment. And it is there that he finds true fulfilment, the lures of the past, nostalgia, regret... The oatmeal clings on, worrying not.

Similarly, the future is an irresistible bauble, almost in reach, forever just out of grasp. Yet no matter how hard we work, how much we sacrifice, how hard we strive, we never find contentment. Like the donkey chasing the carrot, we run until there is no breath left, never catching the moment of pride, of pleasure, in achieving our goals. If we are forever hunting down the future, the warm and fuzzy of the present is lost. What a great loss that is.

As with so many things in life, The Bard nailed it on the head in the simplest of terms; “There is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so.”

And that is what my oatmeal started to articulate, as it clung to the side of the breakfast bowls, day, after day, after day. Just be here, it said, like me. There is a peace in just being. Let the future take care of itself, let the past rest in peace. The ordinary magic of life is everywhere. Be oatmeal. Cling stubbornly to the moment.
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China’s Reawakening Interest in Magic No Illusion

By Molly Wright

Up on the stage, the “fish” first played in the court and then all at once jumped into the pool, immediately turning into a large flounder, spraying water and vomiting fog. Suddenly, in the mist, it became an eight-foot long yellow dragon, jumping to the ground and shaking his head.

Performed as an indication of the Han Dynasty emperors’ extravagant lifestyles, the “Fish Dragon” play illustrates that the tradition of magic in China has a long and complicated history.
Although there is speculation as to the origins of magic in Chinese society, many sources agree that magic first made its appearance in the “Hundred Plays” of the Han Dynasty, very possibly making China the birthplace of magic. Some plays included performances of sword swallowing, acrobatics and of course, sleight of hand illusions; the combination of which was called “huanshu” (幻术) which translates as “illusions”.

Overall, the traditional focus of Chinese magic has always been on acrobatics, with sleight of hand tricks being thrown into for extra entertainment value. The combination of illusion and acrobatics eventually trickled down to street level where sleight of hand was introduced into performances as a way to bring in extra income. These performances were also used to dazzle and entertain audiences during times of celebration. Tricks from these performances were skillfully developed and handed down from generation to generation. However, during the Cultural Revolution, this art form almost completely disintegrated, since magic was considered deceitful and anticommunist.

This being said, the history of magic in China runs much deeper than just the origin of sleight of hand tricks. The idea of magic is present in many traditional Chinese beliefs, and the fascination with the practical application of magic and superstition has always been present in Chinese society. This is seen in the ancient practice of alchemy, in many traditional folk stories and myths, as well as the religions on Taoism, Daoism and the Chinese zodiac. This kind of magic provides means to an end and is more closely aligned with witchcraft in western society, usually harnessed through vehicles such as talismans and amulets, as well as through the likes of spells and potions.

Ideas of evil or good spirits and good or bad omens have always been present in Chinese teachings and society and were often warded off in large spectacles or demonstrations by a trained shaman. Since these “mystical” beliefs were so commonplace in Chinese society, magic would go on to find its way into the pop culture of the times, eventually evolving into the sleight of hand tricks seen today and in the Hundred Plays of the Han Dynasty. Under these conditions, it makes sense as to why magic became a spectacle of public fascination in ancient times, as well as latterly a danger to the rising of Communist Party.

During the Sui and Tang Dynasties, magic exchanges with Japan and India became more frequent. In the Southern Song, Ming and Qing Dynasties, ancient colour tricks, such as "Tibetan coercion", and magic monographs such as "Immortal Magic" and "Goose Magic Collection" played a positive role in the development of magic in Japan and the West.

Magic in China now, is less of a public fascination, with even sleight of hand tricks falling out of favour, partly because magic lost a lot of its allure and prestige during the Cultural Revolution, and because it is very hard to make a sustainable living off of magic. The later often discourages young Chinese generation from taking up magic as a possible career path and/or hobby. On account of this lack of interest, the Chinese magicians of today tend to rely on outdated or uncreative tricks that do not amaze audiences as they once did, or when compared to the performances of western magicians, such as the legendary David Copperfield. This in turn fails to generate youthful interest in the art form.
This being said, there are some Chinese magicians in recent years who have gathered attention for the industry. In 2009, Liu Xian, a famous Taiwanese magician performed at the Spring Festival Gala, which became a turning point for Chinese interest in magic: creating exposure for the previously underexposed industry. Since then, some popular magic-themed TV shows and other media have emerged.

However, the aforementioned obstacles do not deter everyone. Nanjing local magician, Mario, was first introduced to magic by his father when he was 3 years old. The trick Mario’s father performed consisted of his father holding up one finger and then covering it with a handkerchief which was then pulled away to reveal two fingers. Mario credits this experience with igniting his lifelong interest in close-up magic. Speaking with The Nanjinger, he stated, “It sounds really stupid but actually that experience means a lot to me. Because at that time I realised that something really common in our daily life, if you make it into another kind of expression, then that can become magic”.

Magic might be his passion, but Mario is not a professional magician, opting instead to study Tourism Management at a local university since it has a steady income. Finding jobs related to magic in Nanjing is also not easy, with the options being limited to selling magic products or teaching magic at the only magic store in Nanjing, and holding shows.

Even magicians who hold regular shows “will not have a fixed salary. ... unless they are a celebrity”, says Mario. Magicians in China are falling behind due to a perceived lack of interest by the general public, causing the shows that are held to be poorly advertised and of a smaller caliber, further inhibiting the spread of the art form.

However, the interest in magic does exist in the right circles, where it appears to be going nowhere anytime soon. The magic scene in Nanjing is of decent size, for a relatively niche interest in both Chinese and Western cultures, with Mario describing it as a “large circle...for those lovers of magic. But it is a small circle for people from different jobs”.

While the circle of practicing magicians is relatively small, there are still some members of the Nanjing public with an interest in witnessing magic with their own eyes. For them, there are places such as North Magic Bar, located on Changfu Jie. A safe haven for those lovers of magic, its entrance is even an illusion; cleverly concealed in an inconspicuous fruit stand which only opens to those individuals whom grab the correct shelf.

North holds stand up and close up magic performances every night and has become one of the hottest bars in Nanjing: a hopeful sign for the rekindling of interest in Chinese magic.
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And all the Devils are Here

Thunder roared as the rain had poured down on our heads. We dashed to our destination. The patter of rain hit the concrete. Dripping wet, we entered one of the theatre world’s most spectacular gems, the Nanjing Poly Theatre. We had come to watch Shakespeare’s *The Tempest*.
After the play, there would be no time to interview the actors, so making my way backstage, I had hoped to find someone free to answer my questions. Goosebumps covered my arms as my feet began to feel heavy. I shouldn't be there, I knew we weren't allowed. If anyone caught me, I would be in huge trouble. What I saw next made me wish I had never seen the advertisement for my favorite play, and beg my parents to take me to the opening night. On the ground before me was a young man with a knife through his heart. In the shadows, looking at the body with his head held up high, was a shadowy figure. Holding my breath, I closed my eyes and told myself, “This can’t be real. This sort of thing simply doesn’t happen to normal people like me.” But he was still there when I peeped through my eyelashes. I blinked. I could have sworn the shadowy form walked through the wall and disappeared.

Ignoring any sense of logic, I walked through the wall after him. Instead of a sharp pain in my skull, I was in a village, or at least I thought so. Glancing around me I saw huge houses, each with two stone lions outside the gate. My view of the house was blocked by a wooden screen, decorated with images of dragons and temples. Paying little attention to the scenery, I approached the nearest house. Hitting the copper door knocker, I waited. An old man opened the door and looked at me strangely. Pointing towards the red lanterns decorating his gate and house I said, “What are the decorations for?”

“We celebrate the start of a new emperor’s reign. Hongzhi Emperor’s son, Zhengde, was made Emperor yesterday,” said the old man, eyeing my Nike’s suspiciously. Meeting my eyes, he reached towards his sword.

“Many strangers do not come at this time. What is your business here?”

Sweat covered my brow as I tried to think of an excuse. Stuttering somewhat, I added, “I was told the beauty of China is there every day, so I chose to come now.”

Although his hand hadn’t left the hilt of his sword, I could see as it loosened its hold. Letting out a sigh, I thanked him for his help and left.

His words echoed in my head. Emperor Zhengde had been a famous emperor in Chinese history. In history. How had I come here? Glancing around I had tried to find a clue, but the wall had disappeared. After what felt like hours, my eyes fell on the same figure that had melted through the brick wall in Nanjing, where I should be settling down to watch Shakespeare’s most thrilling tale. Picking up my pace, I shouted, “Stop! Who are you? Where are we? I demand that you send me back.”

What I saw next made me wish I had never seen the advertisement for my favourite play, and beg my parents to take me to the opening night.
Turning to face me, I watched as he looked at my hoody, my jeans, my dangling earphones, and realisation dawned on him. Slowly his mouth turned into a smirk and the words he spoke paralyzed me.

“I am Prospero, the greatest sorcerer ever, boy! If you wish to return home, I demand payment. Kill the Zhengde Emperor and I will send you home unharmed. You have until tonight. Meet me here when you have finished the task.”

Just like that he disappeared once more. Prospero, the sorcerer from the Tempest. What was going on?

I couldn’t kill someone, but I also needed to go home. I sat down on the dusty roadside and put my head in my hands. Finally, an idea struck me. I spent the next few hours searching the field and gardens until I found a small plant covered in small pink flowers. I also found another plant; it was a purple flower with strings of dark blue coming out of the center and surrounding it. Both these plants used together could make a sleeping drug. This way, Emperor Zhengde would seem dead when he was actually alive.

With only 2 hours to go, I stood at the servants’ entrance of the palace. I had exchanged my clothes for a Changshan I had borrowed from a washing line. I would have preferred to wear my clothes but it would have drawn too much attention; attention I couldn’t afford. Taking a deep breath, I pushed the door open and stepped inside. I almost laughed out loud with relief. I had entered the kitchen, one that was clean even though it was so big. There were red lanterns hanging on the walls and Chinese symbols on the doors.

It must have been nearly dinner time as everyone was bustling around with not a second to spare, or to notice me. As I wove my way through the rows of thick oak tables, I spotted a cart filled with trays of food. All the food was the same except one plate. It contained white rice with fried noodles. Chunks of seafood sat on the side of the dish, covered in sauce. Curiosity getting the better of me, I turned to my right and asked the young serving girl, “Whose food is this?”

Sighing with disbelief, she had looked at me as if I had lost my mind.

“Emperor Zhengde’s of course; he always has this…”

Before I could question her further, she rushed off, her cheongsam flapping behind her. I approached the cart. Slowly slipping my hands in my pocket, I took out the folded paper. The satiny blue powder inside was my only hope of getting back home. Putting it behind my back I unfolded two of the four folds, and waited.

I thought of my mum and dad waiting for me, worrying now, crying even. Doubt left me. I poured the powdered drug into his food, just enough, not too much. I didn’t want to hurt him; all this would do was put him to sleep.

The moment I was out of the palace walls, I broke off into a sprint, not slowing down until I was far away, and the hill where it all began became a dark smudge on the horizon. I saw Prospero, with his back to me. As I neared, he turned to face me.

“Well done! It seems like you carried out your half of the bargain. I might as well fulfill mine.”

He raised his hands in the air and began to chant, so quietly I could barely make it out. Gradually a portal had begun to form, my way home. His voice faded and he gestured me to walk through. Cautiously, I walked to the portal. One foot in front of the other, I walked forwards, hoping against hope that he would not notice my trembling. In the far-off night, alarm bells broke out. I turned and blew the rest of the powder into his face. “Sleep!” I yelled, and then I sprinted away with the last of my energy. He would not wake from that indigo cloud for a lifetime of Sundays.

All of this, just for a school paper. 📚
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Ordinarily, it’s no contest that I’d choose culture and cuisine over a nice beach and agreeable climate. Yet, with direct flights to Sanya from Lukou at around ¥500 each way promising pastures greener in just over 3 hours, it wasn’t exactly a hard sell to someone who has spent the last 6 years living a stone’s throw from the perpetual downpour that is Wales. And to my surprise, the island of Hainan was so much more than just a pretty face with a nice tan.
With vibrant colours on display from almost every plant species, immediately as you leave the airport and head towards the centre, you develop a sense of just how well kept Sanya is and how much effort has been put in to maintain its beauty. Though small by Chinese standards, Sanya in its high season (around October to April) is a busy mishmash of full-time locals, northern pensioners seeking sunnier climes and holidaymakers, principally those from all over China but also a good handful from Russia. It can seem a tad touristic at first glance, but keep an open mind and you'll be combing tranquil beaches and eating only the freshest seafood at local hideouts in no time.

Although the city is better known these days for its lush resorts, I kept costs down with a week at Sanya Backpackers, a well-located, leafy hostel with friendly management and a superb clientele forever passing through its doors. Dorms come in at around ¥50 and private doubles ¥150 a night; the rooms are clean and cozy, but you'd be spending most of your time outside anyway. If you're looking for something a bit more upmarket or family-friendly you can easily find double rooms in 3-star hotels from ¥200 a night.

With the ISA World Longboarding Championships having taken place in Riyue Bay in the east last year, Hainan's beach scene has found itself in an interesting transition from little hidden gems to full-scale surf resorts, making it an emerging player in the surfing world. A 45-minute bus ride will take you to Houhaijiao, a gorgeous peninsula with great views from either side, mostly populated by a handful of locals who don't take life all too seriously. Certainly a great spot for beginners, but more seasoned surfers may wish to move further afield to Wanning, where the waves offer more of a challenge. If instead you'd rather just swim and relax, you can avoid the crowds and loud music at Dadonghai and head towards the Coconut Dream Corridor (Yemengchanglang), a long stretch of beach that reaches the airport were you to go far enough. Jump off the bus anywhere along the way to find a palm tree-lined shore and just a handful of people with whom to rub elbows. It also offers unspoilt views of the picturesque Sanya sunset.

Perhaps the most striking of the many sights to see and excursions to be made is Nanshan Temple, complete with Tang Dynasty revival architecture and the Guanyin Sea Statue, standing at a dizzying 108 metres. Its three faces, two of which face the sea with the other overlooking the park, are said to be symbols of blessing and protection for the people of Sanya.

Once the heat of the day has simmered away, there's nothing better than taking a walk around the lush greenery in one of Sanya's many idyllic scenic areas. A trip to Luhuitou park will take you up a gently winding path to a colossal monument of a deer looking over its shoulder (the rough translation of Luhuitou) set in a tastefully-decorated area. There's a shuttle service included in the ticket price, but definitely do the half-hour walk if you feel up to it. Keep your eyes peeled and you might see families of wild macaques expertly manoeuvring the trees; maintain a safe distance though as they can just as professionally pinch your belongings! Luhuitou is perhaps most popular at sunset and into the evening, where it gives stunning views out onto the sprawl below. It's really a special sight, with the towers on the manmade Phoenix Island giving an unforgettable display as their lights dance off the water.

Sanya's life-giver, however, is its fruit. At every turn of the head you'll find the freshest pineapples, the juiciest mangoes and grapes almost the size of table tennis balls. Had a few shandies at the Dolphin bar the night before? A fresh coconut should set you right for the day and shouldn't cost more than ¥8. Prices can vary a lot in Sanya, so it's a good idea to use an app, such as Dianping, to find the best restaurants and avoid the tourist traps; a good rule of thumb would be to steer clear of any neon Cyrillic signage.

Hainan can be accessed visa-free for 30 days for citizens of 59 countries, which makes Sanya an ideal spot to reconnect with friends or family who wish to avoid China's painstaking visa application process. It is also recommended to plan a Sanya trip well in advance because of how much there is on offer. Not that organised? Your accommodation should provide a full list of tours.
It’s easy to overlook the importance of material in an age defined by the virtual, yet the permanence of bronze outlives any historical boundaries. For a different perspective on art in Nanjing this month, herein three bronzes from radically different areas and eras, yet equally worth celebrating.

**Bronze Ox Lamp**

In the left-hand gallery as you walk into the Nanjing Museum is a bronze ox-shaped lamp that epitomises the expert craftsmanship of the ancient Chinese. Head bowed with its horns facing upwards engaged for battle, the curvaceous creature is accentuated by meandering patterns inlaid in silver. The oil lamp which sits on the ox’s back has a pipe from the top which connects it to the beast’s head, gathering soot and dust down into its belly filled with water. It’s environmentally friendly before that was even a thing. Non-polluting lamps of this kind would not appear in the West for over a millennium to come.

The lamp was excavated from a Han tomb. Death, it was believed, simply meant leaving the earthly world but the soul would go on to live in the tomb. As well as valuable and sentimental possessions, the deceased needed practical objects too. We can tell the occupant of this tomb was wealthy and important from the expensive materials used in this bronze lamp.

**Bronze Statue of Sun Yatsen**

Perhaps the most iconic statue in Nanjing is the bronze Sun Yat-sen, “Father of the Nation”, who stands high on a plinth at the crossroads of Xinjiekou. In his left hand a long cane reaches to the floor while his right arm pulls back his coat to reveal a waistcoat with a tall-buttoned neck and folding collar. This style was introduced by Dr Sun as a kind of national dress in a marked departure from the preceding Manchu attire.

Originally known as the “Zhongshan Suit”, after the president’s Chinese name, Sun Zhongshan, it ironically morphed into the iconic and ubiquitous “Mao Suit”, worn much like a uniform during the Cultural Revolution as a symbol of proletarian unity.

Despite being surrounded by skyscrapers, the statue is by no means engulfed. Its pride of place in the centre of Nanjing is both physical and in spirit.

**Salvador Dali’s Bronze Poseidon**

Arms stretched backwards as if beginning an exaggerated sun salutation, Dali’s sculpture of Poseidon greets and gazes at the students of Nanjing University of the Arts. It is the only Dali sculpture owned by a university in China and was donated by the collector Huang Jianhua for the university’s centenary in 2012.

Perhaps better known for his melting clocks and lobster telephones, the sculpture is testament to the versatility of the great 20th century Spanish artist who dabbled in everything from fashion to theatre, industrial design and film.

Poseidon, the Greek god of the sea, is but one of the mythological creatures found in the works of Dali, a man constructed his artistic identity drawing on Greek mythology. The statue is a familiar companion to art students and a rare bronze treasure in Nanjing.
Health focused businesses that centre around prodigy foods christened “super” is most definitely in vogue. Recently, trendy trailblazers or “people brands” have magicked up fresh interest in the otherwise forgotten fungi; the **Shroom Boom** is putting mushrooms back on the map.

**Sales of mushrooms in America reached US$5bn in revenue in 2017, while according to Grand View Research, that number was expected to rise to $7.4bn in the following 3 years.** Mushrooms have been employed for food, medicine and “recreation” all around the world for hundreds of years, and they are most certainly having a moment right now.

All of this trendy talk of fungi might make the great Chinese physician of the Jin Dynasty, Liu Wansu, turn in his grave and roll his eyes, for there is no doubt that he was working with the magical power of shrooms as far back as the 12th century, when the now god-like Shiitake variety began in cultivation. These days, according to the Pacific College of Oriental Medicine, it is estimated that China is responsible for 70 percent of the world’s mushroom production.

Research online seems unable to pin point exactly when the Chinese understanding of the power of mushrooms really came about, but founder of Finish brand Four Sigmatic, Taro Isokauppila, was convinced anyway. **On his list of best performing fungi that which may save you from disease and or insanity include many Chinese varieties; Reishi, aiding in sleep quality, stress and allergies; Cha sa, helping with common colds, skin and inflammatory problems; Cordyceps, assists performance, energy and asthma; Lion’s Mane, good for memory, concentration and the nervous system; and last, but certainly not least; Turkey Tail, cooling digestion and infections.** It is worth noting there is nothing new or shocking about what Four Sigmatic offers; it’s just mushroom powder.

Mushrooms in modern Chinese dishes include the Tea Tree Mushroom (茶树菇), found in soups and fried dishes and containing 17 types of amino acids such as aspartic and glutamic acid, and more than ten kinds of trace minerals. Tea Tree mushrooms are also touted for their anti-cancer polysaccharides that are required by the human body; **no wonder the Chinese also call it the God of Mushrooms.** Many readers will recognise the Wood Ear Mushroom (黑木耳), a black fungus usually served cold with garlic and red chillies. It is cheap, abundant, known locally to clean the blood, is rich in protein and vitamin E, while its iron content is 20 times that of spinach.

**Then there is the Supernatural Mushroom, the Reishi Mushroom (灵芝) capable of nourishing the heart, lung, liver and spleen. Soothing the nerves and improve “qi”, the Chinese are known to brew Reishi and serve as a tea with Goji berries. Equal in medicinal weight to the Reishi is the aforementioned Lion’s Mane (猴头菇) and Shiitake (香菇), packing punches that fight against gastrointestinal ailments, immunity and obesity.**

So while you’re here in China and have easy abundant access to these super mushrooms at a low cost, get as many of them into you as possible, whether eaten with food, drunk as tea or soup, or in medicinal concoctions. One can even buy mushroom powder for around ¥50 on Taobao, so you can add it to your shake or morning coffee too!

**Mushrooms in China and their healing properties:**
- **cha shu gu (茶树菇):** improves immunity
- **he mi ei (黑木耳):** cleans the blood
- **zhu dui gu (猪肚菇):** an anti-inflammatory
- **jiu gui (鸡腿菇):** rich in copper
- **ju jin gu (金针菇):** helps with high cholesterol
- **ling zhi (灵芝):** possibly helps with every ailment!
- **hong tou gu (猴头菇):** an all around powerhouse; in China, it’s called “Monkey Head”
- **xiao zhu gu (香菇):** another powerhouse
- **jiu rou gu (鸡肉丝菇):** said to be an aphrodisiac
- **zi hua shi (竹荪菇):** eaten by royalty; great for the brain and liver
- **xing bao gu (杏鲍菇):** weight loss, cholesterol and immunity
- **yin er (银耳):** helpful for the lungs, nourishes Yin
- **song long (松茸):** known locally as the “King of Bacteria” and is said to be the only surviving plant from the atomic bombing of Hiroshima. **Great for the kidneys, brain and fighting cancer, ironically.**

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**Chomping Thru China**
*With Renée Gray Beaumont*
The bad news is that you’re possibly going to be confused at some point here.

The good news is that, at the end of this Strainer, you’re going to know about a really cheap, great Chinese tea.

Ask anyone around here (in Jiangnan, I mean) about White Tea and they will talk about Anji Baicha [安吉白茶]. Fair enough. That’s a great one, a must for anyone slightly interested. And Anji’s claim to the “white” name is somewhat legitimate; the relative lack of chlorophyll in the leaves results in a liquor much paler than most greens.

The problem with this nomenclature is that there’s another set of teas, from Fuding [福鼎], Fujian, that are also called White tea.

It’s the Fuding tea that has gained the international recognition as “White Tea”, largely for its “even-more-antioxidants-than-green tea” claim. The liquor of this tea is also pale. Even the leaves almost white, like beautiful velveteen grey-white rabbits’ ears!

It’s confusing. It’s confusing in the same way that “football” is confusing. Deep in their hearts, of course, even the owners of the NFL know that their sport should be called “Full-Contact-Hot-Potato-Freeze Dance” or “Militarised-Pass-the-Parcel-Musical Statues”, but they insist on using the ‘football’ name anyway. Divided by a common language.

Likewise, there’s no sign of the white flag appearing with these teas. Each type has quite a following in China. I even met a woman in Yunnan, ostensibly a pu er seller, crazy about the Fuding Tea. But you rarely hear the same person discuss the two in conjunction.

One reason for this could be that the “白茶” umbrella itself is hardly used for the Fuding Teas, where the different grades are arguably are different varieties, and named as such. Those “rabbits’ ears” I have just described are the ‘silver needle’ [白毫银针] leaves, which command the highest prices (and the international fame).

But in tea markets here, sellers can often be seen sifting these downy tips from a rag tag of darker leaves (some green, some black) fragments of leaves and (let’s be honest) twigs.

Most popular in China (in cake and loose form) is the ‘white peony’ [白牡丹] grade, which we can call a ‘curation’ of both. It’s a real mongrel mix, like having Corn Flakes AND Cheerios in your breakfast bowl. But it’s a mix I’ve got used to. Though cheaper, I’ve usually found it more flavoursome and interesting.

What I had never seen before last month was a bag of tea containing ONLY the cheap bits. But that’s what I’m drinking these days. And it’s not just me; colleagues (coffee people, mostly) have been raiding this big bag, too.

It’s the only Fuding tea I’ve seen that says ‘White Tea’ on the bag. And it’s the only tea that’s mostly black.

It’s a bag that always welcomes you with a chocolately smell. Thin, papery black leaves give immediate pleasure, with vanilla and cinnamon to be dug from successive infusions. Even in their dotage, at Kenny G hour, these leaves improve hot water substantially.

The 250g bag costs just 50 yuan.

Last month, I laid into a pretty famous tea. This month, I’m delighting in a great—but-humble one. It’s comforting to know that such things exist. 

By Matthew Stedman
GASTRONOMY  By Renée Gray Beaumont

Reality Check; Bread, Check; Sourdough, Check; Café, Check

Born in Scotland and raised in England, Isabelle Ma, owner and head chef at Real Bread Cafe in downtown Xinjiekou, speaks with conviction and passion when it comes to her life; cafe and bread. “Being a chef in Europe is something that one can be proud of, to say you’re studying at a culinary school garners respect”, Isabel told The Nanjinger.

However, having spent the earlier half of her career as a high flying solicitor in Hong Kong, she admits her transition into the world of cooking was not easy. “In Hong Kong I needed to prove who I was, my true self. There were depressing and isolating moments, because everyone I knew didn’t understand [my transition]”, she said.

Upstairs features a window allowing for customers to interact with and watch the seven bakers at work. “We do everything from scratch here. We wanted an open kitchen because they are the stars. In the beginning, our bakers started with zero knowledge; we teach them to bake with basics and try to instill a less rigid method. They need to understand that bread is a living organism and they need to know how to treat it properly. I want to sell artisan bread”, said Ma. Fostering a European approach to teaching and managing staff, Ma aims to not only teach her staff the most authentic ways in which to prepare Western bread, cakes, pastry and coffee, but to also instill a sense of purpose in her employees. “I’m constantly asking them if they’re happy with what they’ve made. I want them to become aware of the thought process that goes into making bread, I want to train them to be independent thinkers.”

Perhaps the factor which sets this cafe aside from the rest (along with its friendly family attitude not only with its staff but with customers too), is its sourdough focus. As someone who has long awaited sourdough in Nanjing I was overjoyed.
when I heard that not only does the cafe produce sourdough loaf and sandwich options but pizzas too. But what about the locals, I wondered. “With local people it takes some time. Here, I believe the locals are pretty cautious… We find ourselves explaining sourdough to people a lot! It’s just something they’re not used to”, Ma said.

Real Bread Cafe truly is a one-stop-shop for bread and pastry lovers; it does not come more authentic than this. Small loaves go for around ¥35; croissants, pastries, cookies, soups, salads, bagels and sandwiches for around ¥20; pizza is ¥68-88. The Nanjinger has sampled most of what they have to offer and our top picks have to be the pizza (for sourdough lovers), the flat white (for Aussies) and the carrot cake (for anyone). Hands down best in Nanjing.

Real Bread Cafe is located at 47 Guanjiaqiao (Behind the Jinling hotel) 家桥47号. Tel: 17714330275

The Invincible cheese family hot dog is Rockin Bar’s most popular dish. Hereby a unique combination of different kinds of melted cheese smothers the warmed hot dog bun and goes surprisingly well with the perfectly cooked and spiced dog.

One of The Nanjinger’s favourite dishes is the crispy sweet potato chips as a side, while the Squid Curry Triangle remains the best snack to go with beer: crispy outside and chewy inside.

Of the many different hot dog combinations available only at Rockin’, be sure to try their ‘Brothers Hot Dog’, inside of which a lively, unique hot dog mixture comprising tuna, mustard and curry samosas to satisfy your cravings.

The downside at Rockin’ is that, for those more traditional in their convictions, the menu lacks a plain, traditional hotdog without toppings. Although the classic ketchup and mustard hotdog would be possible, it need be ordered specially.

With the weather becoming nicer (or should that be “hotter”, so the outdoor patio will be a really enjoyable space in which to have some drinks with friends, while enjoying the brief breeze of spring. On a budget too; about ¥90 for a beer (or cocktail) and a hotdog.

Lu Long, the shop owner told The Nanjinger, “I had been working in finance for more than 10 years; this time I want to do...
something different.’ He discovered there to be few hot dog places in Nanjing; Rockin’ Bar is his way of embracing different pop cultures to create a hub for young people.

Rockin’ Bar is located at 36 Huaihai Lu 淮海路36号 Tel 18652938585

GASTRONOMY By Sophie Kirkby

Old Fish Need Not Learn New Trick

On the arduous quest for a decent espresso in Nanjing, I stumbled upon the Fish Tank Cafe, an already well-established set up which began in 2012. As we are all aware, first impressions can often be deceiving in China, constantly faced with dodgy western facades or unusual claims of exceptional quality, but this little gem really does strike me as an outlier.

The main draw initially is that all too enticing smell of coffee. On glancing inside, your senses are matched by the sight of hipster caffeinated baristas huddling round their (rather professional!) coffee machines. Very exciting.

The options in the coffee department are far greater than your average cafe; they offer espresso based, French press and cold brew, with a great variety of single origin beans to ponder over. Teas are also on offer, and a small selection of rather delicious looking cheesecakes and sweet treats too. Most of the menu has English translations, however, on the black board, the characteristics of the beans are in Chinese. Luckily a few of the numerous baristas can speak English and they certainly put in the effort to ensure your beverage is chosen wisely, rather than just opting for a bog-standard Americano. All this makes The Fish Tank an ‘experience’, rather than simply a frantic need for coffee. Though, the pricing accounts for this, with espressos starting at ¥22, the single origin drinks going into the 40s and milky drinks in the high 20s/low 30s. On my student budget I went for the cheapest espresso, which did infact take a long time to arrive (although they did apologise for the wait) but was presented beautifully, had a great crema and was certainly not burnt like the majority. Weirdly, though, when delivering my order, the barista did describe the espresso as having a ‘salty taste’. Unusual.

Inside, The Fish Tank is definitely home to a bustling base of locals meeting up, studying or just enjoying their coffee. Hipster vibes galore, the décor adopts an industrial kind of warehouse-y look, with black pipes lighting fixtures on the ceiling, almost reminiscent of those quirky cafes in Manchester’s coffee scene. If you sat there long enough, as you get more and more caffeinated, you could definitely trick yourself into thinking you were infact there, a world apart from the surrounding hectic streets of the outskirts of the Confucius temple. Sitting out the back away from the crowds is also an option, inside has a lot going on with background music aswell.

I’ve definitely found in The Fish Tank a place to go when seeking some coffee snobbery, but also just an attractive place to relax and rewind. Whether on your way to visit the Confucius temple or just happening to find yourself that side of town, this successful cafe will likely live up to all your coffee fantasies.

Fish Tank Cafe is located at 400 Zhongshan Nan Lu 中山南路400号 Tel 52204469
Holi, the ancient Hindu festival that originated in India, also known as "Festival of Colours", was celebrated at Masala Kitchen in Xianlin. A unique festival on account of the spirit with which it is celebrated across the globe, and marked on the full moon of March, those in attendance had much fun spraying each other different colours, eating traditional Indian food and dancing to Bollywood music.
TEDx brings the spirit of TED's mission of ideas worth spreading to local communities around the globe. TEDxYouth@NIS is an event organised under license from TED, providing a platform for ideas worth spreading, where the passions and talents of people who make Nanjing their home are showcased. The third iteration of the annual event, always held in March, presented nine speakers; their TEDxTalks are now available online. Visit tedxyouthnis.com for photos and videos.

If you would like to see photos from your event on these pages, contact us via thenanjinger@sinoconnexion.com. Conditions apply.
The second Nanjing Primary School Games saw The British School of Nanjing compete with seven other schools across three disciplines: swimming, athletics and football. Many happy little athletes had a great time in the event with the goal to foster individual and team development in a cooperative, friendly and enjoyable environment for all participating students.

All Together Now
25–26 March, 2019

If you would like to see photos from your event on these pages, contact us via thenanjinger@sinoconnexion.com. Conditions apply.
EtonHouse International School Nanjing celebrated Book Week with a variety of activities that had students thinking about reading and the many genres available to enjoy. Activities included a visit from a well-known children’s author, book fair, costume parade, a performance by teachers of famous children’s tales and a special activity to celebrate the birthday of Dr. Seuss.
BSH China’s brand new innovation program, Land Your Idea, was introduced to attendees of the "fireside chat" that was the fifth Startup Grind Nanjing event, in partnership with Google for Startups at Innospace Xuanwu. Startup Grind is the world’s largest independent startup community, whereby volunteers provide education, inspiration, and social services and platforms to 2 million entrepreneurs in more than 115 countries and more than 500 cities around the world.
The Talent Show is always an eagerly awaited event at Nanjing International School, organised and hosted by the MS/US student council, and showcasing an ocean of hidden talent among students. All the performers shone on stage, while the unsung heroes of the night, the tech and backstage crews, also did a great job to ensure excellent support and transitions.

If I Was a Rich Man
20 March, 2019
Nanjing’s inaugural Foreign Affairs Day was held at the Xianlin Gaochuang Centre whereby 200 plus attended the opening of the Nanjing Foreign Affairs Association plus the Nanjing Latest Policy Briefing Conference and Foreign Chamber of Commerce Symposium, together with the sixth official Nanjing International Car Boot Sale. Vendors at the latter proudly donated a portion of their proceeds to the Pfrang Association.
INTERNET RUMOURS NEVER CEASE TO GAIN VIRAL ATTENTION BUT NONE AS STRANGE AS EATING LITCHI LEADING TO THE RISK OF BEING MISJUDGED AS A DRUNK DRIVER, WHICH HAS ATTRADED THE DILIGENCE OF MOTORISTS AS THE REVELATION HAS SPREAD QUICKLY AMONG THE DRIVING COMMUNITY.

THE QUESTION REMAINS, CAN EATING LITCHI REALLY CAUSE A DRIVER TO FAIL A BREATHALYZER EXAM? SHOCKINGLY, THIS SEEMS TO BE TRUE! HOWEVER, THERE'S NO NEED TO PANIC, AS THE ALCOHOL CONCENTRATION INCREASES IN SUCH A SHORT TIME AFTER EATING THE FRUITS, YOU CAN ASK TO WAIT 5-10 MINUTES FOR A SECOND TEST AND THE RESULTS SHOULD DIFFER.

DEFINITIONS OF DRUNK DRIVING

IN ORDER TO BETTER UNDERSTAND THE PARAMETERS OF DRIVING UNDER THE INFLUENCE IN THE PEOPLES REPUBLIC OF CHINA IT’S IMPORTANT TO EXAMINE THE LEGISLATION, ACCORDING TO THE LAW OF THE PEOPLE’S REPUBLIC OF CHINA ON ROAD TRAFFIC SAFETY (REVISED IN 2011), IN WHICH ARTICLE 91 STIPULATES THAT, “WHOEVER DRIVES A VEHICLE AFTER DRINKING MAY BE TEMPORARILY DEPRIVED OF THE VEHICLE DRIVING LICENSE FOR A PERIOD OF SIX MONTHS AND IMPOSED ON A FINE OF BETWEEN ¥1,000 AND ¥2,000.

ACCORDING TO THRESHOLD AND TEST OF BLOOD AND EXHALATION ALCOHOL CONTENT IN VEHICLE DRIVERS (GB/T 19522-2010), DRIVERS WHOSE BLOOD ALCOHOL CONTENT IS OVER OR EQUAL TO 20 mg/100ml AND LESS THAN 80 mg/100ml SHALL BE DEEMED AS DRIVING AFTER DRINKING, WHILE DRIVERS WHOSE BLOOD ALCOHOL CONTENT IS EQUAL TO OR OVER 80 mg/100ml SHALL BE DEEMED AS DRIVING IN DRUNKEN STATE.

MEDIA EXPERIMENTS WITH LITCHI

FOR THE WUHAN EVENING NEWS, THREE SUBJECTS ATE THREE LITCHIS VERY QUICKLY, AND THEN THEY WERE IMMEDIATELY TESTED VIA A BREATHALYZER. THE RESULTS SHOWED THAT THE ALCOHOL CONTENT OF THE THREE SUBJECTS REACHED 89.7mg/100ml, 100.5mg/100ml, AND 84.4mg/100ml RESPECTIVELY. HOWEVER, 5 MINUTES LATER, ONLY ONE OF THE THREE SUBJECTS HAD AN ALCOHOL CONCENTRATION OF OVER 6.1 mg/100ml, WHILE THE OTHER TWO SHOWED ALCOHOL CONCENTRATION LOWER THAN 5 mg/100ml.

FOR THE LEGAL EVENING NEWS, THE ALCOHOL CONCENTRATION OF THE SUBJECTS WAS AGAIN MEASURED BY A BREATHALYZER AFTER THE CONSUMPTION OF FRESH LITCHI; THE SUBJECT HAD AN ALCOHOL TEST RESULTS OF 18.4mg/100ml BUT THE SCENT OF ALCOHOL WAS NOT PARTICULARLY STRONG FROM THE PARTICIPANT. HOWEVER, IN CASES WHERE TWO OR THREE LITCHIS WHICH ARE LEFT TO RIPEN FOR THREE DAYS AND THEN CONSUMED BEFORE SUCH TESTS, THE SCENT OF ALCOHOL BECOMES OBVIOUS.

CAUSE & COUNSEL

NUTRITIONISTS HAVE EXPLAINED THAT FRUITS SUCH AS LITCHI AND GRAPES WHICH CONTAIN A HIGH SUGAR CONTENT AND ARE WRAPPED WITH PEEL OUTSIDE THE SHARP DECREASE OF PHOTOSYNTHESIS SOON AFTER THEY ARE PICKED FROM THE TREES LEADS TO THE CELLS INSIDE THE FRUIT TO BECOME HYPOXIC AND BEGIN TO INCREASE THE RATE OF ANAEROBIC RESPIRATION, RESULTING IN ETHANOL, COMMONLY KNOWN AS ALCOHOL.

ADDITIONALLY, AS FRUIT IS PICKED AND STACKED AND AS TIME GOES ON, IT IS EASIER FOR IT TO PRODUCE ETHANOL. LITCHI WINE IS ALSO BREWED USING THIS METHOD. IN ADDITION, FRUIT ROTTS AND FERMENTS, PRODUCING ETHANOL. ALERT READERS WILL FIND THAT AFTER A LONG TIME, LITCHI PEEL CRACKS AND DETERIORATES GRADUALLY, EMITTING THE ODOUR OF ALCOHOL.

TRAFFIC POLICE USUALLY TAKE THE ALCOHOL CONTENT IN THE DRIVER’S BREATH AS THE INITIAL JUDGMENT CRITERION WHEN DECIDING IF THERE’S THE NEED TO CONDUCT A BLOOD ALCOHOL TEST. AFTER EATING LITCHI, THE WAY TO DEAL WITH THIS SCENARIO IS TO REQUEST A SECOND BREATHALYZER TEST 5-10 MINUTES LATER. IF THE ALCOHOL CONCENTRATION HAS DROPPED BELOW 20mg/100ml AT THIS TIME, THE DRIVER WILL BE RELEASED.

THEY COULD PAY TO EXPLAIN THE SITUATION CLEARLY TO THE TRAFFIC POLICE AND THEN CONDUCT A SECOND TEST. FOR EATING FRUITS HARDLY DESERVES TO BE CONFUSED WITH DRUNK DRIVING.

DISCLAIMER

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To assist with journey planning, The Nanjinger’s Metro Map includes first and last train times for every station.

Download this map to your smartphone by scanning the QR code above.
You want the best for your child.

So do we.

At The British School of Nanjing, we nurture every child to develop a love of learning, enabling them to achieve more than they ever thought possible. Our forest-side location means students can interact with nature, encouraging curiosity and hands-on learning.

Visit us to see how our engaging learning environments ensure that your child will love coming to school.