

MOSAIC

Every grain of rice reflects virtue of hard labor along life's path

One evening in May, while spending a summer break at my in-laws' home in their village in Zhejiang province, I returned from a walk to discover a dusty brown water ox tied to a tree just outside the gate of the house. It stood perfectly parallel to the road, much like a parked vehicle, apart from grazing on the grass at its hooves, and eyeing me with a stony gaze that suggested I best keep my distance.



Jocelyn Eikenburg
Second Thoughts

The ox signaled to me, long before I entered the house, that we would be having dinner that evening with a distant relative long appointed as my husband's godfather, a man I simply referred to as "uncle". A tiger in the Chinese zodiac, this uncle had often joked of how much he embodied the sign, calling himself "fierce". You could believe it, given his thunderous voice, which even the ox minded, his ability to move beehives and the fact that he made a living slaughtering livestock. Some dubbed him the finest butcher in town.

Upon settling onto my stool at the table, I soon learned why the uncle had brought along his bovine companion. He had spent the afternoon leading the ox, pulling a plow, through my in-laws' square plot of land in the terraced fields, to prepare for growing rice. This uncle never shied away from grueling tasks, such as working the rice fields, and his face bore witness to this "fierce" side of him, weathered and tanned from years of labor outdoors in all sorts of conditions. Watching him and the ox trundle through the sunny fields, as I did later on, proved fascinating. The ox, wearing a harness fitted

with a large, metal V-shaped plow, trudged forward through the muddy plot. The uncle, barefoot with his pants rolled up above his knees, followed behind as he steered the animal back and forth, part of the slow, timeless dance of man and beast in agriculture. This scene actually represented only one of many arduous steps for cultivating rice. The process also involves irrigating the field, transplanting rice plants, fertilizing, weeding, removing pests, cutting the golden stalks in the fall, extracting and winnowing the grain, sun-drying the grain

before storage and then polishing the grains into rice at a processing station. Each stage demands a lot of time and painstaking effort. It's no wonder that the process of growing rice has become a metaphor for the hardship behind every great accomplishment, immortalized in the line from the legendary poet Li Shen. *Shui zhi pan zhong can, li li jie xinku*: How many know that every grain in a dish results from hard labor? Through observing this uncle and his water ox in the fields, I've gained greater appreciation of what it takes to supply us with some of the most common yet vital things

in our lives, such as rice. When we come to understand that much of our world has been built through intense labor, we're more willing to redouble our efforts — and won't just give up when life challenges us to "plow ahead". And if you can do that, it won't matter whether or not you're a tiger. You'll be fierce too.

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Candid camera: Inside or out?

Tourists take photos at the Heilongjiang Forest Botanical Garden in Harbin, Heilongjiang province, on Friday.

WANG JIANWEI / XINHUA



This Day, That Year



Editor's note: This year marks the 70th anniversary of the founding of New China.

On May 6, 1982, China State Shipbuilding Corp was officially established in Beijing, as the country targeted shipbuilding as a pillar industry for economic growth. It consisted of more than 150 organizations that ranged from shipyards to technical research and design institutions. An item from Feb 18, 1983, showed a ship undergoing maintenance at the Dalian Shipyard in Liaoning province.

To further streamline the sector, in July 1999, some of CSSC's companies were spun off to form a separate conglomerate, China Shipbuilding Industry Corp. And thanks to a series of measures, in 2012 China replaced South Korea as the world's top shipbuilding order holder for the first time. In the first quarter, orders for the country's shipbuilding sector ranked top in the world, followed by South Korea and Italy, according to data released by British shipbuilding and marine analysis agency Clarkson Research Services. The research found that China's cumulative order volume for the first quarter reached 2.58 million compensated gross metric tons, or 35 vessels, securing 45 percent of the global market. It means China's shipbuilding and container transportation sectors

have reached international standards. In 2017, French shipping company CMA CGM and CSSC signed a contract for the construction of nine 22,000 TEU (twenty-foot equivalent units) ships, the largest container vessels ordered so far. Last year, CSSC launched its first domestically built research icebreaker, *Xuelong 2*, and plans to officially put it into service this year. Last month, CSSC said it's building the world's largest liquefied natural gas carrier, with a capacity of 270,000



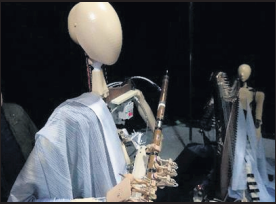
cubic meters to cope with the rising demand for clean fuel in the nation. Research and development work on the new vessel is set to be completed by the end of 2020.

The newspaper and beyond

On our Sina Weibo

University's robot band makes debut

Tsinghua University has designed and produced a traditional Chinese music band consisting of three robots. The robots play different instruments: the bamboo flute, *konghou* (an ancient plucked stringed instrument similar to a harp) and drums. The band performed on April 25 to celebrate Tsinghua's 108th anniversary. Mi Haipeng, associate professor of the Academy of Arts and Design at Tsinghua University, told Beijing News that the robots have advantages over humans in playing instruments.



Merriam-Webster adds new words to dictionary Merriam-Webster has added 640 new words to the dictionary. Together, they're a pretty good portrait of how we talk to each other online. In the latest class of recognized words is "stan", a verb describing excessively enthusiastic and devoted fan, as in "I stan that celebrity". "Swole" is in there, too. It's a popular internet term, derived from "swollen", to refer to a muscular person. The political catchall "snowflake" has also received an update. It officially means "someone regarded or treated as unique or special" or "someone who is overly sensitive."

One-legged teen completes 1-km run

Gao Yanneng, a 17-year-old high school student, finished a 1-kilometer run using his only leg and crutches during a physical test at a school in Luoping county, Yunnan province. Previously exempted from the test, and with an assured 60 percent score, he insisted on completing the run, winning respect from both classmates and teachers. He told video-sharing platform Pear Video, "I want to prove myself and realize my dream step by step."



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Forum: Urgent pizza delivery before delivery

A pregnant woman in Baoshan, Yunnan province, put in an urgent order for a pizza, asking the restaurant to send it quickly as she was about to give birth. The customer left a message saying, "Please hurry up! I am about to have a baby, and I want to eat it first!" The restaurant owner said that to meet the pregnant customer's request, the pizza was prepared and sent to the hospital in 15 minutes.

Tech: Autonomous minibus on display

Self-driving, cockpit-free cabins and interactive robots are just some of the eye-catching features of a new smart minibus from FAW Hongqi, showcased during a recent expo in Hangzhou, Zhejiang province. Powered by a variety of advanced techniques such as fusion sensors and guided by high-precision satellites, the minibus is perfect for fixed routes. Passengers can chat about news, weather or traffic conditions with an AI robot during the ride. The bus also comes equipped with 5G technology. Visit our website to find out more about the minibus.



Images: Photographer promotes pet adoption

Zhang Tianhang, a pet photographer in Beijing, has taken pictures of more than 10,000 stray animals over the past eight years. Working with animal shelters, he is determined to raise people's awareness of the animals and find them new homes. A lucky dog was adopted by actress Gao Yuanyuan, which made Zhang believe in his cause even more. "Every dog is adorable. We want people to see that and give them a home," he said. Zhang hopes more people will consider adoption instead of buying a pet at the store. "It's a very big responsibility," he added.

Society: Taxis move toward new energy

Within two or three years, all taxis in Guangzhou, Guangdong province, will run on new energy, according to the city's taxi association. There are

more than 70 taxi companies in Guangzhou operating around 23,000 taxis. Since last year, more than 3,100 purely electric taxis have been put on the road. They are part of the transition from gasoline-powered cars to new energy vehicles under the city's green development plan. The city aims to have 200,000 NEVs by 2020 with 100,000 charging stations.

Travel: Elevators zoom people up 222 meters

Within one minute, visitors can reach the top observation deck at Wushan Mountain in Chongqing to have a good look at the river, thanks to an elevator with a vertical height of 222 meters. The elevator, located in the city's Wushan county, has become known as the "Goddess Ladder" because the mountain is famous for its goddess legends. Construction began in 2016 and the facility opened to the public in November. It contains two high-speed elevators that move at 4 meters per second. Each elevator can carry a load of 1,600 kilograms, or 21 passengers.

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What's on

Poetry and Music Night: Shuntaro Tanikawa
When: May 10, 7:30 pm
Where: 1862 Theater, Shanghai

The event invites Japanese writer Shuntaro Tanikawa and his son, musician Kensaku Tanikawa, Chinese singer Chen Bi and a children's chorus to express the beauty of music and poetry onstage for the audience. Shuntaro Tanikawa is a frequent subject of speculation over the Nobel Prize in literature. He has written more than 60 books of poetry in addition to translating Charles Schulz's *Peanuts* and the Mother Goose rhymes into Japanese.

He was nominated for the 2008 Hans Christian Andersen Award for his contributions to children's literature.

Les Aimants
When: May 10-11, 7:30 pm
Where: Shanghai International Dance Center Experimental Theater

Sara Mangano and Pierre-Yves Massip have worked as a duo to shape a gestural and visual theater where the body is both the tool and the goal. The silent duet tells the story of a couple having a relationship, becoming sclerotic with silence and a lack of communication. Dense and almost palpable, this feeling sweeps into the space and makes it tangible. The air virtually vibrates to the slightest movement of each character. Like tightrope walkers, they dance with destiny, fluctuating between desire and cowardice. Sentimental breakups reveal the characters' hidden personalities.

2019 Run To The Beat
When: May 19, 6:30 am
Where: Ming Tombs Reservoir, Beijing

The Run To The Beat music half-marathon will take place in Ming Tombs Reservoir Scenic Area in Beijing's Changping district. Bands will play along the course to encourage the runners. The event was established by IMG in London in 2008. The first event attracted 12,000 runners. Later, the event developed popularity worldwide and has since attracted more than 100,000 runners.

Wine and the City: Australia's Best Appellations

When: May 10, 7:30 pm
Where: Feast by East, Beijing

Australia has long been at the forefront of the New World wine renaissance, producing complex and aromatic wines. The country has developed a comprehensive naming system, which complements its high standards and the reputation of its wines. Wine and the City organizers will discover some of the best's Australian appellations: McLaren Valley, Barossa Valley, Eden Valley and more.

Ally Kerr Acoustic Tour 2019

When: May 18, 7 pm
Where: Valley Children Music Space, Beijing

Scottish folk-pop singer-songwriter Ally Kerr returns with new album *Upgrade Me*. This year and next will also see Kerr embark on live shows in Europe and Asia — including his second major headline tour of China, having been the first Scottish singer-songwriter to

tour the country in 2015 following two successful festival appearances in Shanghai and Beijing in 2013. It was the critically acclaimed, wide-eyed, innocent, indie pop of debut *Calling Out To You* that shot Kerr to stardom from Scotland to Japan. The album's inclusion in a major Japanese music magazine's Top 20 Albums Ever To Come Out Of Scotland list was testament to the melodic strength of the songs, and the album sat alongside the seminal works of familiar names such as Orange Juice, Teenage Fanclub and Belle and Sebastian.

The Pearl Fishers
When: May 15-19, 7 pm
Where: National Center for the Performing Arts, Beijing

As a production of the NCPA and Staatsoper Berlin, *The Pearl Fishers* is directed by the renowned German movie director Wim Wenders, winner of the Honorary Golden Berlin Bear Awards at the 65th Berlin International Film Festival. A rarely performed gem of the opera world, *The Pearl Fishers* is noted for its extraordinary musical beauty. It tells the story of two best friends and their bond, which is interrupted by the arrival of a priestess to bless the pearl harvest. The romantic love triangle between the best friends and the priestess leads to dramatic consequences.

Lisa Ono jazz concert

When: May 18, 7:30 pm
Where: National Center for the Performing Arts, Beijing

Born in Sao Paulo, Brazil, Lisa Ono spent her childhood in Brazil. She started singing and playing guitar at 15, and in 1989 made her debut as a professional Bossa Nova singer. Her natural voice, rhythmic guitar playing and charming smile led her to a huge success and helped popularize Bossa Nova in Japan. She has performed with many top musicians, including the legendary Antonio Carlos Jobim and the Jazz Samba giant Joao Donato, and has been performing in New York, Brazil and Asian countries. The album *Dream*, which was released in 1999, sold more than 200,000 copies in Japan.

Brigham Young University China Spectacular

When: May 24 and 25, 7:30 pm
Where: Beijing Tianqiao Performing Arts Center Grand Theater

On May 17, a cast of more than 200 Brigham Young University students will travel to China for China Spectacular 2019, the biggest show to date, combining eight groups from BYU to make one grand production that showcases the best the university has to offer. With other venues in Shanghai and Xi'an, Shaanxi province, the show will include performances from Living Legends, the International Folk Dance Ensemble, the Ballroom Dance Company, Young Ambassadors, Vocal Point, Chamber Orchestra, Cougarettes cheerleaders, and the Dunk Team with Cosmo, the school mascot. Each group was carefully chosen to bring China Spectacular 2019 to life and help celebrate 40 years of friendship between BYU and China.