

# MOSAIC

## Hug the trees, kiss the earth for the sake of future generations

Green is the catchword. The media constantly talks of the need to conserve the planet, its precious resources and promote sustainable development. These are words and



Ullattil Manranjith  
Second Thoughts

adjectives that would crop up during our daily encounters with stories, and one almost took them for granted. But after spending over a decade in China amid fluctuating weather patterns, encountering pollution and watching with trepidation the wanton destruction of natural resources across the globe, I have enough reason to be concerned as to whether the future is

indeed bright for my children or their children.

Most often I am torn between hope and despair. Happily, however, I am no Cassandra and there is still that lingering positive streak and two recent developments point to a silver lining.

During recent trips to Manila in the Philippines and Hong Kong I was surprised to find several restaurants opting for edible and environmentally friendly cutlery. Imagine my surprise when I was served starters on edible spoons and told that I should eat the whole thing up. "It is a small way that we can contribute to protecting the environment," said Belen Gracias, the owner of a popular eatery in Manila. My friends told me that such efforts have already made considerable progress in China and

India and many other nations.

On a more positive note I came across the report that German footwear giant Adidas has sold more than 1 million pairs of shoes made from ocean plastic. The company apparently uses a yarn that can turn ocean plastic into a polymer, which can subsequently be used to make knitted footwear. According to the company, each shoe uses an average of 11 plastic bottles and incorporates recycled plastic into the laces, heel webbing and lining and sock liner covers.

Allbirds, a San Francisco startup which makes environmentally friendly footwear, said that it will make shoes from eucalyptus tree fibers. The company said the new fiber is much more sustainable than other products. Another United States' shoe giant Nike is making

shoes from recycled leather fiber.

The word "eucalyptus" did bring back memories of an experiment gone wrong in several southern Indian states during the 1980s because of mass eucalyptus planting. The trees were everywhere and there was very little that could be done with them other than extract oil for medicinal purposes. I hope some Indian entrepreneur will soon find a way to add value by using this in shoes or some other green product.

The second interesting fact that I stumbled upon recently was an initiative by Freelancer.com, the world's largest freelancing and crowdsourcing marketplace by total number of users and jobs. The company has recently come out with a contest that runs until May 10 and urges its more than 32 mil-

lion users to clean up the world, one beach, park, garden, road, car park at a time with a \$12,500 carrot to the winning cleaner. "We wanted to help and have put up \$12,500 to the best cleanup effort on the planet," said Matt Barrie, the CEO and founder of Freelancer.com.

Efforts are also being made in China. Agriculture scientists have developed new rice varieties named "Green Super Rice" for developing Asian and African countries.

The project which has the backing of the government and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, has developed 78 GSR varieties since 2008, and its efforts are expected to benefit 30 million small farmers in Asia and Africa.

GSR varieties need fewer chemical fertilizers, pesticides and water, and are more tolerant to pests, dis-

eases, drought etc, Li Zhikang, a researcher at the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences said in a recent interview.

Ruminating over these aspects made me realize that though there have been pioneering efforts, very little is being heard about them.

"Green is still not a trend that is in sync with most of the younger generation or the older people. It is a habit that needs to be cultivated with some urgency as we are fast approaching a tipping point," said T. B. Nair, an independent analyst based in Bengaluru, India.

Munching into the edible spoons in front of me and downing a mint cocktail, I realized that somewhere one has to make a small beginning.

Contact the writer at [ullattil@chinadaily.com.cn](mailto:ullattil@chinadaily.com.cn)



LI BAIJUN / FOR CHINA DAILY

### A moment in time: Show on the road

Children try to get the best vantage point at a traditional opera in a Yishui village, Shandong province, in 1990. Cultural groups today regularly organize village performances as seen from a picture taken last year (right) in Luojiaping village in Hubei province.



YANG TAO / FOR CHINA DAILY

### The newspaper and beyond

#### On our Sina Weibo

##### Video of students launching rockets goes viral

Students at Xi'an No 1 Middle School in Shaanxi province had a special science class on Monday. A video showed how they prepared and launched water-propelled rockets from the playground. It registered more than 400,000 likes on social media. Their rockets consisted of everyday items, including plastic bottles, water and air pumps. Teachers at the school said such classes help boost student interest in physics.



##### Want this sales job? Learn to play mahjong

A woman in Chengdu, Sichuan province, who must have had job interview jitters, was surprised when she was required to play mahjong during an interview for a sales manager position. Interviewers said they can quickly learn a lot about a person's characters, strategic thinking, how they handle pressure and even the way they talk during a game of mahjong.



Online  
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##### The happy secret to better work

We believe we should work hard in order to be happy, but could we be thinking about things backward? In a TED Talk, psychologist Shawn Achor from the United States argues that, actually, happiness inspires us to be more productive.

#### On chinadaily.com.cn

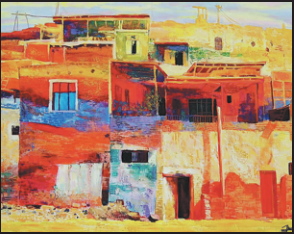
##### Culture: New design reignites old kiln

A university teacher from Chongqing has transformed an old-fashioned kiln into a tourist attraction. The kiln once produced delicate ceramic products. But its operators went bankrupt as new technologies took over. After the kiln's owner Liu Zhonghua met Tian Qi at the School of Architecture and Urban Planning of Chongqing University in 2015, things began to change. In support of traditional pottery and to revive craftsmanship, Tian came up with the idea of opening the kiln process to public viewing to showcase an ancient craft.

##### Reading: Finnish writer examines shyness

In a comic book called *Finnish Nightmares — A Different Kind of Social Guide to Finland*, Finnish graphic designer Karoliina Korhonen shows the inner struggles of a shy man. In venues ranging from buses and

shopping malls to offices and restaurants, the social anxiety of Matti, the book's protagonist, is fully on display. Social awkwardness has struck a chord with many Chinese people on social media.



##### Photos: Exhibition's revealing landscapes

Oil paintings by Uygur artist Kurbanjan Gulam, which transmit the warmth and vibrancy of his native Kashgar in the Xinjiang Uygur autonomous region, are leaving a deep impression on visitors to an exhibition of his works. Gulam, also a middle school art teacher, uses his works to create breathtaking views of his hometown with a

vibrant palette. His exhibition at Beijing's Ici Labas gallery, *Art from West China*, which runs through to Saturday, is a celebration of the enduring charms of historic towns and people through a display of 70 works.

##### Travel: Mexico to lure more Chinese visitors

The Mexican government plans to launch its latest tourism campaign, called Knocking at the Door, to attract more Chinese tourists. Mexican tourism officials have been consulting Chinese high-end tour operators to find out what their clients want in Mexico. The latest figures from the Mexican government show 135,000 Chinese tourists visited Mexico last year, up by 35 percent from 2017.

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### What's on



**2019 Badminton Asia Championships**  
**When:** April 23-28, 10 am  
**Where:** Wuhan Sports Center Gymnasium

The championships started in 1962 and have been held annually since 1991. As the top badminton tournament in Asia, the event attracts some of the world's best players. Nearly 300 competitors are expected to participate in this year's games from more than 20 countries and regions in Asia, including China, Japan, Malaysia and Indonesia.

**Troye Sivan: The Bloom Tour Live in Shanghai 2019**  
**When:** April 22, 8 pm  
**Where:** Mercedes-Benz Arena, Shanghai

Pop prince Troye Sivan is bringing his The Bloom Tour to Shanghai and will perform at the Mercedes-Benz Arena, following the release of his critically acclaimed sophomore album *Bloom*.

Born in Johannesburg, South Africa, in 1995, Troye was a child star in his adopted hometown of Perth, Australia. Home-schooled, he began singing and acting at a young age, but his biggest break came when he appeared as a young Wolverine in 2009's *X-Men Origins: Wolverine*. Troye also showcases his acting talent in the 2018 film, *Boy Erased*, alongside award-winning stars Nicole Kidman and Russell Crowe.

His debut album, 2015's *Blue Neighbourhood*, introduced him to the pop mainstream, landing in the Billboard Top 10 with the singles *Wild* and *Youth*. Last year, he issued the single *My My My!*, which went platinum in Australia and entered the US Top 100. Additional singles *Bloom* and the Ariana Grande-assisted *Dance to This* followed.

##### That Physics Show

**When:** April 20 and 21, 7:30 pm  
**Where:** Super Theater, Beijing  
Based on hundreds of experiments that are presented at science conferences and in classrooms across the country, *That Physics Show* features segments on motion, momentum, vacuum, friction, energy, density, fluid motion, sound waves and vibration, light waves, temperature and much more from our incredible world: a world controlled by physics.

##### The Visit

**When:** April 19-21, 7:30 pm  
**Where:** National Center for the Performing Arts, Beijing  
Beijing People's Art Theater will present the classic work, which is based on Swiss dramatist Friedrich Duerrenmatt's story of revenge. The tragicomic play is about Claire, a wealthy woman, who returns to her roots and promises to offer enough money to revitalize the indebted town if the people kill Anton, the man

who jilted her years ago. The mayor refuses the conditional offer at first, but the townspeople eventually agree. Anton is the owner of the town's general store. The townspeople buy expensive products on credit in his shop, driving him to bankruptcy.

Finally, he is murdered and the doctor announces that he has died of a heart attack. Claire gives the mayor a check and leaves the town with Anton's body in the casket that she brought with her when she arrived.

**Spartacus by The National Academic Bolshoi Opera and Ballet Theater of the Republic of Belarus**

**When:** May 3-4, 7:30 pm  
**Where:** National Center for the Performing Arts, Beijing

*Spartacus* was premiered by the Kirov Ballet in St. Petersburg in 1956, and its revised form made its debut in 1968, performed by the Bolshoi Ballet in Moscow. It was derived from a book by Raffaello Giovagnoli that details events in a Roman slave revolt. Its leader, Spartacus, was a Thracian warrior captured in battle.

The rebellion's high point — literally and figuratively — was its seizure of Mount Vesuvius as a stronghold. After two years of unrest, the rebellion was finally put down by Marcus Licinius Crassus, and Spartacus fell in battle. Around 6,000 surviving rebels were crucified along the Appian Way.

The National Academic Bolshoi Opera and Ballet Theater of the Republic of Belarus was created in 1933 as the State Opera and Ballet Theater of Belarus, based on Belarusian opera and ballet. The opera *Carmen*, starring Belarusian singer Larisa Aleksandrovskaya, was the theater's first production.

Today, one of the priorities for the theater is to expand the national repertoire. Some productions have been on the theater's playbill for more than three decades because of their ongoing popularity.



**Strawberry Music Festival Shanghai 2019**

**When:** April 26-28, 1 pm  
**Where:** Shanghai Rugby Football Club

Shanghai's 2019 Music Festival season begins on April 26 with three days of the best indie, dance, rock and electro acts around. And big names from Japan and North America are taking part. The opening day sees Black Rebel Motorcycle Club in Shanghai for the first time in seven years.

This three-day event has an exciting lineup and a whole host of extra fun to discover and goodies to grab.