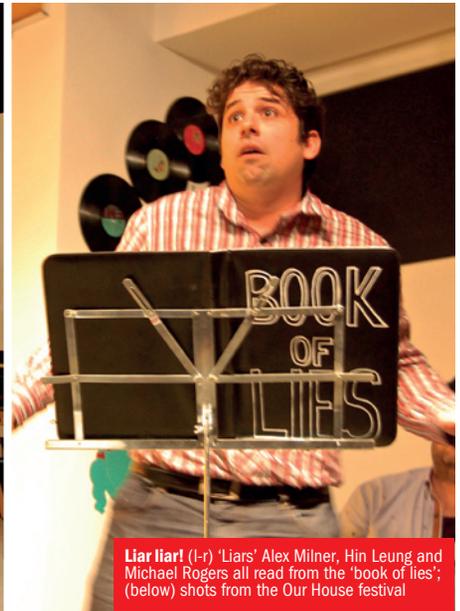


Around Town



Liar liar! (l-r) 'Liars' Alex Milner, Hin Leung and Michael Rogers all read from the 'book of lies'; (below) shots from the Our House festival



Reading between the lines

Elizabeth Choi finds out why Liars' League Hong Kong is creating a new community of writers, actors and literature lovers who just love enjoying a unique night out

Hong Kong has a writing scene and an amateur acting scene. Don't let anyone tell you otherwise. But sometimes – when it comes to stories and performances in the English language, at least – seldom do the twain meet. However, there's a new group which has been set up to bring these two communities together: Liars' League Hong Kong. And this new group is performing every month in the city, with a growing number of actors, writers and supporters.

The original Liars' League was founded in London in 2007 and has branches in New York and Leeds, UK. The new Hong Kong arm is the brainchild of writer Ysabelle Cheung, who moved to the city from the UK last year. "I was always very involved in the literature scene in London," she admits. "When I moved back to Hong Kong, there were a few places to go for that but they didn't meet regularly. So I thought I'd help create a dedicated community which brings together the writing and acting

communities for the benefit of the Hong Kong audience."

LLHK is a monthly storytelling event that revolves around a single premise: 'writers write, actors read, the audience listens and everybody wins'. Basically, talented actors – or 'liars' for the purpose of events – living in Hong Kong read short stories by local and international writers, and audience members come to listen to these performances. The group presents around eight short stories on every last Monday of the month.

Cheung was helped in setting up the LLHK group by Katy Darby, who runs Liars' League London, as well as Time Out Hong Kong's associate publisher, Matt Fleming, local actor Daniel Levia, stand-up comic Sean Hebert and publisher Marshall Moore.

At the end of January, the team participated in a week-long creative festival, Our House, at Fill in the Blank in Wan Chai. "It was a mini taster event," explains Cheung. "More than 150 people showed

up. I've been told it was the biggest night out of the whole festival. We were really overwhelmed. It shows how Hong Kong is crying out for a group like ours."

Darby explains: "Each franchise of Liars' League has a slightly different approach and different rules according to who runs it, but the

basic premise remains the same. Ysabelle wanted LLHK to focus on flash fiction – 800 to 1,200 words or about 10 minutes' reading time – because her actors are keen to learn their pieces by heart rather than simply reading them."

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We're bringing the writing and acting communities together for the benefit of Hong Kong

Auditions for actors happen every month in various venues held around Hong Kong while writing submissions are gathered on a monthly deadline. There are two panels – one for acting, the other for writing. All the judges on the acting panel have professional acting backgrounds in stand-up comedy, theatre or musical theatre. There's always a theme every month – the first event proper on February 25 was titled 'He & She'.

LLHK is growing organically. "We're not into making big bucks or achieving fame," says Cheung. "We've already developed such an amazing network of people who have similar views: we want this to be a community for people who are into writing or love acting or they just want to come along because it's a relaxing environment. I find it strange that in a city so diverse and full of talent, there's such an alcohol-driven scene and not much else. So we've introduced something new. Something different."

Liars' League Hong Kong's Fairytales and Nightmares
Mar 25, 8pm. For more details visit liarsleaguehk.blogspot.co.uk.

timeout.com.hk