

BELIEVE IN THE ISLAND VIBE

Award-winning Caribbean singer, Julien Believe, brings Bahamian beats to Beijing with the world-debut of his new single at the Meet in Beijing Arts Festival. **Cheng Yuezhu** reports.



“Two to the left. Two to the right. Jump and wine.” Bahamian singer Julien Believe livens up the ballroom by teaching the audience his unique dance moves, turning his solo performance into a live music extravaganza.

Julien Thompson, known professionally as Julien Believe, is an award-winning Bahamian singer, songwriter and producer who recently

made his Beijing debut. Believe performed at the Caribbean Music Festival, part of the Meet in Beijing Arts Festival, on May 2, and at a Bahamian-themed cocktail party at the Rosewood Beijing hotel on April 27.

“My goal is to show China a little bit more of what the Bahamas has to offer musically,” Believe says. “I’m just enabling the audience to get immersed in the Bahamian



PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

culture and showcasing who I really am.”

The music he performs is “Junkanoo Pop” which originated from the regional Caribbean Junkanoo and Soca forms of music. Believe has infused the traditional music style with pop music to create what he refers to as “international Junkanoo music.”

At the Rosewood Beijing, Believe debuted his new single *Jump and Wine* alongside Angelique Sabrina, also a Caribbean singer and performer.

Having grown up in the Bahamas together, Sabrina sees Believe as a big brother, as well as a writing partner and mentor. “We have had a really collaborative relationship. His voice is super soulful and he has a lot of emotion.”

A remix of his single *Caribbean Slide*, which won him the Bahamian Icon Award for most popular song in 2014, *Jump and Wine* is a track off Believe’s new album.

“It took me about two years to come up with my album,” he explains. “Now that it is ready, I came back here so China could be the first place to hear this music before the rest of the world.”

The original song, *Caribbean Slide*, was also performed during Believe’s first visit to China two years ago, at the 2015 Miss World Pageant held in Sanya, Hainan province, where he introduced his Junkanoo Pop to a thousands-strong live audience and millions of viewers on TV.

Believe found many similarities between the Bahamas and the city of Sanya, which share a similar tropical environment and idyllic lifestyle. “Sanya almost felt like home, with the same food and the coconuts. I just had a grand time and I loved it,” Believe says.

Believe also identifies similarities between the music of his native Bahamas and that of China. “Caribbean music is very happy, very free. Chinese music has that same vibe. In Chinese music, you hear the sentiments of Caribbean culture.”

Inspired by this, Believe says that he wants to collaborate with talented Chinese musicians on future projects. “My goal is to take the Junkanoo music and fuse it with Chinese music and create something even cooler to share with the rest of the world.”

Believe’s visit is supported by the Embassy of the Bahamas in China.

“Music transcends many traditional barriers to communication and friendship, therefore it is an excellent medium to conduct cultural diplomacy,” counselor of the embassy, Julie Campbell, says.

Believe also sees this visit as a valuable opportunity for cultural exchange. “The Bahamas and China have a really great relationship right now, so to be one of the first to be able to collaborate on that level means a whole lot to me.”

Right now, though, Believe is concentrating on providing an entertaining experience for his Beijing audiences. “Music is the universal language. If you love music, and you want to enjoy yourself, you will appreciate what I do.”

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Video app Douyin denies Peppa Pig ban

By CHENG YUEZHU chengyuezhu@chinadaily.com.cn

Representatives from video sharing app Douyin says the company has not banned the British animation *Peppa Pig*, according to the National Business Daily and China National Radio.

A form allegedly posted by Douyin’s community regulations that is circulating on the internet lists British children’s TV animation character Peppa Pig as a “banned element”, along with “banned songs”, “pornographic and vulgar behaviors”, “illegal or regulation-violating behaviors” and “discomforting behaviors”.

A Douyin user then posted a message from the Douyin app, which said that a video posted on April 21 containing Peppa Pig was banned from playing, because it “violates the community regulations and has not passed censorship”.

On May 2, the National Business Daily released a report, saying that a Douyin insider denied there was a ban on the animation and said the alleged community regulations form was false.

According to the insider, “Douyin has made community regulations according to the relevant laws and regulations, and hopes that everybody will

maintain and follow the benign community regulations. However, the specific regulations cannot be disclosed.”

A China National Radio report on May 5 also said that the app had not banned *Peppa Pig*.

The negative implications of *Peppa Pig* come from its association with “*shehui ren*”, which literally means “society people”, but has become a buzzword on Chinese social media for riffraff or hooligans. This association was reinforced by a viral meme that rhymed “Tattoos on Peppa, claps for society fella”.

The expression was first

used in a derogatory context, teasing a group of users on video sharing apps, including Kuaishou and Douyin, who showed off their tattoos and dance moves as a symbol of rebellion and gangsterism.

Later, as celebrities began to wear fashion items inspired by Peppa Pig, an increasing number of people began to wear clothes and tattoo stickers themed on the animation — while referring to themselves as “society people” in a self-deprecating way.

Although the number of videos featuring Peppa Pig has been drastically reduced, Douyin search results on May 7 showed that it was more

likely that the term “society people” has been banned rather than the animated series itself. The app provided 2,169 results in a search for *Xiaozhu Peiqi* (Peppa Pig), and zero results in a search for *shehui ren*.

“*Peppa Pig* as a cartoon does not have any problem in its content”, says He Tianping, the executive editor-in-chief of Review, a magazine published by the State Administration of Radio and Television.

“The values, family values and emotions it conveys are all positive.”

The banning incident is centered around derivative videos of Peppa Pig, which echoes



Images from the British animation *Peppa Pig* decorate a car shown at an auto expo in Nanjing, Jiangsu province, in April.

WANG LUXIAN / FOR CHINA DAILY

with the administration document about regulating online programs released in March. The document stipulated that it is prohibited to re-edit,

re-dub or re-subtitle classic works, radio and video programs and online original video programs without permission.

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