

Musical carnival celebrates a fusion of speed and passion

Peng Xiaoyan and Yang Yang

THE 1st Checkered Flag Music Carnival, a three-day event coinciding with the 2024 Formula One Chinese Grand Prix race at the Shanghai International Circuit in Jiading District, triggered another wave of zest among the audience on the night of April 21, with local driver Zhou Guanyu and celebrities like singer Tengger among those present.

The F1 Chinese Grand Prix, which returned this year after a four-year hiatus, drew 200,000 motor racing fans from April 19 to 21.

China's first F1 driver

Zhou, China's first F1 driver, was invited as a special guest at the musical carnival, where he interacted with fans, many of whom adorned caps and clothes bearing his signature images and enthusiastically waved the Chinese national flag.

Zhou was later appointed "Shanghai Global Tourism Ambassador" by Fang Shizhong, director general of the Shanghai Administration of Culture and Tourism, during the night gala.

As a Shanghai-born F1 driver, Zhou showed his love for the city through designs on

his helmet, which bears the skylines of the Oriental Pearl Tower and the Lujiazui financial zone, as well as the metro lines of Shanghai with landmarks such as Yuyuan Garden and the Waibaidu Bridge.

"I am a Shanghai-born F1 driver. What I would like to see is the continuous prosperity of the Chinese Grand Prix and more young Chinese drivers able to display their stunts and skills through this arena," he said.

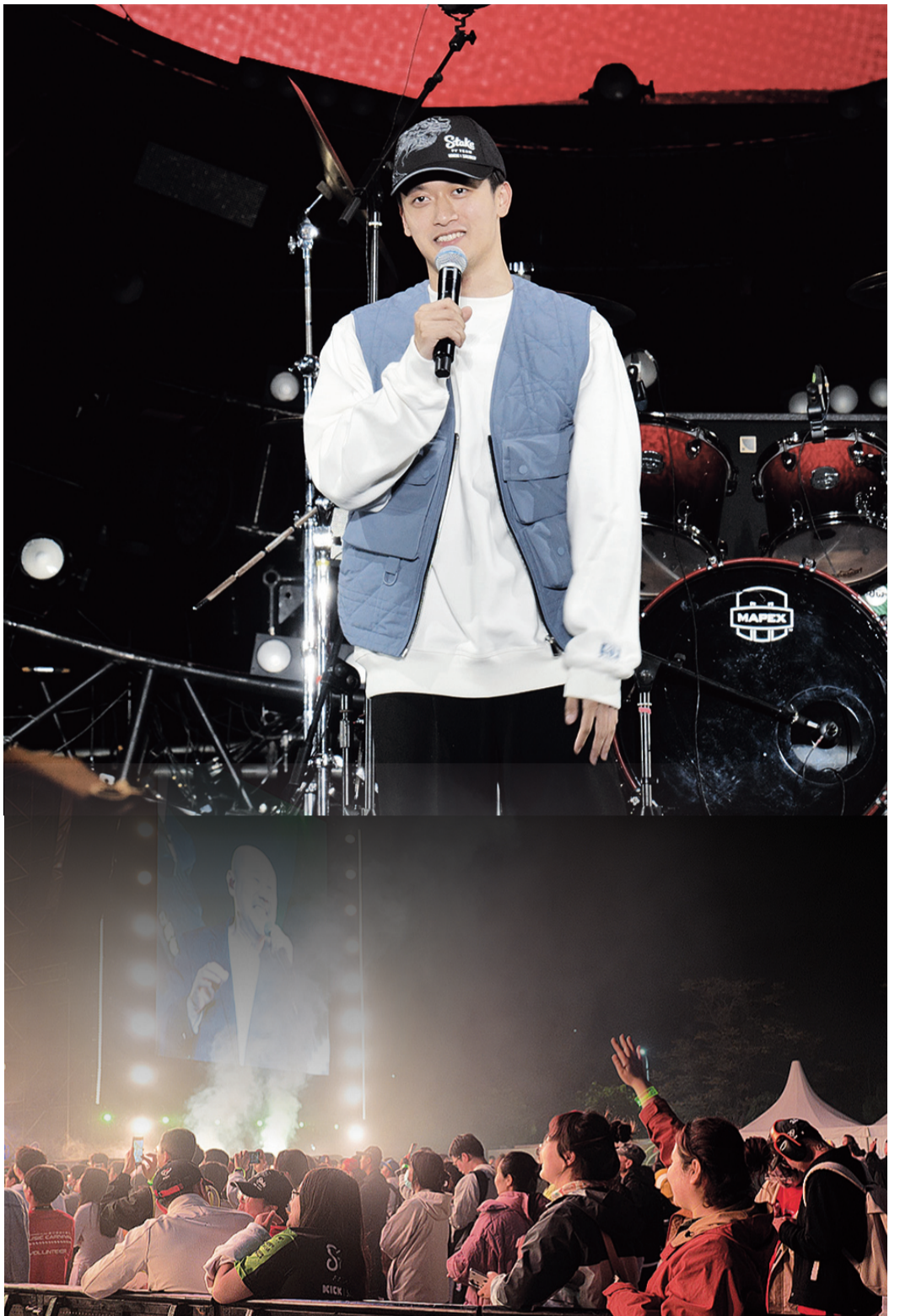
At 6pm popular rap singer Sha Yiting staged his rhythmic rap songs.

"I am crazy about F1 and Sha is my favorite music idol. I saw them both today and really feel fantastic," said a fan surnamed Yuan.

Tengger, an Inner Mongolian musician, and his band, ushered the audience into a world of the melodious morin khuur, a traditional musical instrument, and his passionate singing.

"It's the 20th anniversary of the Chinese Grand Prix, as well as the 20th anniversary since the Shanghai International Circuit was put into use," said Xia Qing with the culture and communication arm of Juss Group.

"This 1st Checkered Flag Music Carnival is a celebration of this special moment."



China's first F1 driver Zhou Guanyu interacts with the audience at the inaugural Checkered Flag Music Carnival during the F1 Chinese Grand Prix. — Peng Xiaoyan

Six couples exchange wedding vows at Chinese GP circuit



A group photo of the six couples after receiving their marriage certificates. — Si Shushu

Si Shushu and Yang Yang

SIX couples embarked on married life with a group ceremony at the Shanghai International Circuit on April 21 amid the roar of racing cars competing in the F1 Chinese Grand Prix.

"We want to get married and henceforth to shoulder duties and obligations together in our marriage," the couples said on stage before a witness, then received their wedding certificates and blessings from F1 fans worldwide.

"It was really amazing, with so many people sharing our joy," said Tang Wenpei, one of the brides.

"We put on gorgeous costumes, and throughout the journey so many people blessed us," Li Zhiling, a bridegroom, said. "Through the solemn ritual, we vowed to be together and to spend everyday with sincere attachment."

Wang Zongjie and his wife are both F1 fans and, although they failed to book tickets this time, they entered the racing arena in a more memorable way.

"We'll never forget the roaring sound of racing cars passing us as we made our vows and received our certificates," Wang said.

The event was one of the

group wedding ceremonies the civil affairs bureau of Jiading District arranged during the 2024 Shanghai Auto Culture Festival.

"We sent an invitation to enroll newlyweds for our group wedding, and received warm responses from the public," said Lu Yan, chief of the marriage registration center from Jiading District civil affairs bureau. "Today, six newlyweds tied the knot at the F1 circuit."

On May 1, or the Labor Day, the district will organize a car parade, during which the newlyweds will be invited to ride in vintage vehicles and create another treasured memory.