

# 2018

Year in Review



MACAU DAILY TIMES

PERSON OF THE YEAR

## Jorge Menezes

Lawyer

### HONORABLE MENTION

- Lei Kong | Columnist
- Pansy Ho | Business Owner
- Sérgio de Almeida Correia | Lawyer

### THE CASE I

- Sulu Sou vs Macau SAR

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- Cardinal and Taipa: a 'dismissal in disguise'

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PERSON OF THE YEAR | JORGE MENEZES

# Lawyer by conviction



**SOME** stories start at the beginning. In early January, lawyer Jorge Menezes accepted the call to defend Sulu Sou in court weeks after he participated in a demonstration of support for the young lawmaker on the eve of the vote suspending him from the Legislative Assembly. At that occasion, it became crystal clear that Menezes would be defending the pro-democracy activist for nothing but conviction: "I am here [at the rally] because I fully support the lawmaker's cause."

It was a full year for Menezes at the bar.

The task at hand was to represent Sulu Sou against the Public Prosecutor from an accusation of aggravated disobedience – see related article on these pages – a petty offense that, according to Menezes, "wouldn't even warrant a trial."

Those words sum up his strategy at the Court

of First Instance, along with fellow lawyer Pedro Leal who would join the defense of activist Scott Chiang, a co-defendant in the same lawsuit.

Jorge Menezes and Pedro Leal exposed the ridiculousness of the accusation, asking for a non-guilty verdict. In the end, both Sou and Chiang were found guilty and sentenced to fines – in what was largely seen as a 'face-saving' verdict for the public powers and a victory for the defense, because it served Sou as well.

Menezes' greatest achievement this year wasn't the case in the lower court per se. It was the incendiary actions against the AL filed to the Court of Second Instance, in which abrasive and solid arguments ignited a public discussion that reverberated through Macau's community like a thunderstorm.

"The President of the AL violated a subjecti-

ve fundamental, sacred right of the Public Law, and was inconsiderate of the public interest of the citizens represented [by Sou]... in the House where those rights should be upheld," the civil action states for posterity.

The discussion on the syndication of "political acts" was, therefore, put on the public agenda, making it difficult for the established powers to ever decide against the rule of law.

It was that courageous "David vs Goliath" struggle that changed the course of history and prevented the ultimate goal of Ho Iat Seng and most of his peers from being reached: to expel an inconvenient voice from the AL.

Menezes' appeal ended up at the highest court, which decided not to consider it further because "it had lost efficacy" the day Sou was back in the parliament doing the job he was elected for.



HONORABLE MENTION | LEI KONG

## An unlikely pen paladin

**C**OLUMNIST Lei Kong is an unlikely 'paladin' of the freedom of the press. He wrote for decades in Son Pou local newspaper until earlier this year when he was sued by Polytec for slander after 27 articles on the Pearl Horizon case, and he decided to halt his contributions.

A conservative, aligned with traditional pro-Beijing forces, Lei was fined on December 17 by the lower court with a solitary fine of MOP50,000 (with his editor, Chao

Chong Peng and the paper).

Lei Kong's more than 25 columns, which featured the Pearl Horizon incident, "damaged Polytec's image," said the court, that found the defendant(s) not guilty of slander.

"Regarding the civil offence, the first defendant [Lei Kong] used many words [...] which even derailed from the facts," said Chao.

The judge remarked that Macau's law protects both freedom of

speech and the freedom of press, and that, at the same time, Macau's law also protects individuals' dignity and reputation.

After the trial, Lei said to reporters he's appealing the decision.

"If I can't win the lawsuit once I appeal, then of course, I will not dare to write articles in the future. Thus, how can we talk about freedom of the press?"

The Journalists Association of Macau expressed concerns over the court's decision.



HONORABLE MENTION | PANSY HO

## Heir becomes HK's richest woman

**2018** was a strong year for businesswoman Pansy Ho, whose personal fortune soared as her influence grew in the arena of international tourism. That came as the legendary gaming tycoon Stanley Ho completed the division of his casino empire this year, carving up its various constituent parts among his many heirs.

Stanley's daughter, Pansy Ho, chairs Shun Tak Holdings and is the managing director of

Sociedade de Turismo e Diversões de Macau (STDM). She also owns a 29 percent stake in the MGM Grand Macau.

Pansy Ho saw her personal fortune increase by more than one-quarter in 2018, elevating her to Hong Kong's richest woman at USD5.5 billion, according to a Bloomberg ranking.

She was also recognized for her work promoting tourism in Macau and for her patronage of culture and the arts.

In June, Ho was bestowed the Chevalier de L'Ordre National de la Légion d'Honneur, the highest French order of merit, for her contribution in advancing French culture abroad.

Then in October, she was nominated as the first ambassador in Macau of the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), in addition to her long-standing roles at the MSAR's Global Tourism Economy Forum.



HONORABLE MENTION | SÉRGIO DE ALMEIDA CORREIA

## The first challenger in decades

**F**OR decades, the election for the Lawyers Association (AAM) has been uneventful. It was just a formality to reelect the undisputed incumbent, Jorge Neto Valente.

This year, on September 14, Sérgio de Almeida Correia decided to run for the top barrister position announcing his candidacy at a press conference in his office.

"I run to fill the void" left by Jorge Neto Valente, he said.

In May, Neto Valente said in an interview with Radio Macau that "the time has come for a total restructure of AAM's

board."

However, Almeida Correia's bid was not welcomed by incumbent Neto Valente.

A week after the challenge, Valente attacked Correia's bid on TDM TV as one of "confrontation" and "rupture," while labeling the challenger as "radical" and "corrosive" in his political commentary.

A week later, Correia responded to the criticism saying that Valente's words were "inadequate" and a possible violation of lawyers' ethics, which states that lawyers should be civil and avoid personally at-

tacking peers.

Some lawyers publicly expressed their support for Correia, but not enough to form a list to run successfully against Valente, who eventually was again elected unopposed on December 4 for another mandate.

Nevertheless, Almeida Correia's candidacy made "a splash," noted prominent lawyer Leonel Alves.

"There has been a lot of talk about a challenge for many years but nobody has had the courage, until now, to come forward, challenging the status quo like Mr Almeida Correia did."

THE EVENT

# A bridge too far



**A**FTER almost a decade of construction, the world's longest sea-crossing bridge linking Hong Kong to Macau and Zhuhai, opened in October. The feat of engineering carries an immense economic and political significance, as was attested by the discrete presence of Chinese president Xi Jinping at the opening, in a ceremony held in Zhuhai to which non-Chinese journalists based in Macau were not invited.

During its construction, the USD20 billion bridge incurred major delays and cost overruns. The bridge dips into an undersea tunnel for a portion of the crossing, allowing ships to pass above and up the Pearl River delta into the heart of China's crucial manufacturing sector.

One of the main advantages of the bridge is that it can cut travel time across the delta from several hours to around 45 minutes. However, the circulation of private (non-commercial) vehicles is highly restricted, with vehicle quotas allocated per city (Macau holds 600 quotas for private vehicles).

In the months following the opening of the bridge it became clear that several practical consequences resulting from its operation had not been considered. The Hong Kong port became flooded with low cost tours from the mainland.

Residents in formerly quiet areas of Hong Kong (in Lantau island) became outraged and protested. Later in the year, one-day tours were stopped. The bridge is not being used to reach the Hong Kong airport, since there is no direct connection to the bridge. Neither is the bridge being used for cargo transport.

One week before the opening of the bridge, the head of Beijing's liaison office in Macau died after a fall from his home in Macau. The 59-year-old Zheng Xiaosong was said to have been "suffering from depression," according to a statement from the Beijing-based Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office.

THE CASE I

# Sulu Sou vs Macau SAR

**T**HE December 2017 suspension of democrat lawmaker Sulu Sou from the Legislative Assembly sent legal shockwaves ringing throughout 2018, with both Sou and the constituent parts of the government accusing one another of illegalities.

The stakes were high. Sou, now ostracized from the legislature and targeted by the establishment, was called to defend himself against charges of aggravated disobedience during a 2016 protest – a crime punishable with a prison sentence of up to two years. Spending any more than 30 days in prison would have entailed possible permanent disqualification from the Legislative Assembly.

Highlighting serious irregularities in the procedure leading to his suspension, Sou called on the courts to deliberate. In January, a nervous Legislative Assembly entertained an "immunity resolution" that would bar "political acts" from being scrutinized by judicial authorities, but it was quickly retracted following a critical public reception.

The months that followed turned into a war of attrition with both Sou and the authorities filing, or threatening to file, separate



lawsuits and appeals. Few of the threats materialized.

Macau's Court of First Instance ultimately found the democrat lawmaker and co-activist Scott Chiang guilty of the crime of unlawful assembly and sentenced them to 120-day fines each. After a month-long standoff with the public prosecutions authority, Sou and Chiang opted to file a last-minute 'defensive' appeal to then re-

tract it upon hearing that the authority was not seeking a harsher sentence.

Despite narrowly evading permanent expulsion, Sou is not yet in the clear. Police authorities and the lawmaker have both confirmed that there are as many as half a dozen other pending cases, any one of which could hand this 'repeat offender' a prison sentence of more than 30 days.

THE CASE II

# Cardinal and Taipa: a 'dismissal in disguise'

**O**NE of the cases that marred the year was the dismissal of veteran legal advisers Paulo Cardinal and Paulo Taipa. In August, the board of the Legislative Assembly (AL) headed by President Ho Iat Seng decided not to renew the advisers' contracts, alluding to a probable renovation of the legal team.

The announcement that swiftly caused a generalized sense of incredulity and shock in the community, made the headlines for weeks, garnering concern from all walks of society, with the legal fraternity showing profound disagreement.

Many of the personalities who commented or wrote on the topic described the two legal advisers as men of character and strong work ethics.

For lawyer Sérgio de Almeida Correia they are "living encyclopedias on the historical and legislative developments over the last three decades of Macau."

Top lawyer Jorge Neto Valente noted that in the context of an eventual renovation of the AL's legal team, Paulo Cardinal and Paulo Taipa "should always have a place."

After the news of the dismissal letter went public, several AL lawmakers aired their concerns. Some publicly questioned the decision. Pereira Coutinho, Ng Kuok Cheong and Sulu Sou together penned a letter to the board



of the AL asking for explanations for the short and laconic letter, which besides noting "extreme gratitude for the exceptional contribution" that the advisers had given to the AL, did not state any concrete and formal reasons for the contract termination.

To the many queries from different community groups, the President of the Legislative Assembly, Ho Iat Seng, said at a later stage, that the dismissal of the two AL legal advisers, was not for political reasons, nor due to the advisers' ethnicity, but instead "to allow them to pursue other careers," in what was seen as a mockery by many.

Closing the case, Ho issued a letter of reply to the lawmakers stating that he

had "nothing further to explain."

The contracts of Paulo Cardinal and Paulo Taipa expire today.

Sulu Sou recalled the case during the last days of the legislative session to classify the non-renewal of the advisers as a "dismissal in disguise," and evoked former lawmaker Leonel Alves:

"The two advisers are and will be indispensable elements for maintaining the quality of the legislative work of the Legislative Assembly. Nobody can understand which [reason] of public interest is so relevant that does not allow the renewal of their contracts. Discretionary power should not be confused with arbitrary power."

## JANUARY

Lawmaker Sulu Sou and political activist Scott Chiang announced that Portuguese lawyer Jorge Menezes will defend them in their trial. They shared in their announcement that they asked the Court of First Instance to postpone the trial (scheduled to begin in January), to give Menezes more time to prepare.



The Court of First Instance ruled that the Beijing Imperial Palace Hotel – formerly known as New Century Hotel – would be fined MOP4.43 million and would have to make additional financial reparations worth over MOP20.7 million to its former workers.

Two facilities from the Light Rail Transit system were robbed over the weekend, causing damage of over MOP500,000, the Judiciary Police reported.



After just over a month at the head of the Cultural Affairs Bureau (IC), Cecilia Tse resigned on January 29 citing health reasons. Alexis Tam, Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture, said earlier that he was “worried” about Tse’s health as she had been on sick leave for more than two weeks, but had not provided any details of the illness.

## FEBRUARY



Casino mogul Steve Wynn was investigated after sexual misconduct allegations were leveled against him, Nevada gambling regulators announced.

The Wall Street Journal reported that a number of women said they were harassed or assaulted by Wynn, and that one case led to a USD7.5 million settlement with a manicurist.

Beijing’s municipality mulled allowing foreign professionals to bring their own do-

mestic workers to Beijing this year. Under this amendment, domestic workers holding foreign passports, including those who are working in Hong Kong and Macau would be allowed to work in China’s capital.

The Times reported that donation boxes have been placed at eight Filipino-run stores along Rua da Alfandega, as well as in Macau’s three remittance centers, to request financial aid for migrant workers in dire straits.



Even as the number of tourists in Macau swelled – boosting the economy in the process – their satisfaction with local services and amenities is declined. The Consumer Council received a total of 58 complaints and inquiries during the Chinese New Year holiday. Around two-thirds of the cases were filed by tourists, mainly regarding taxi fares and restaurant prices.

The Macau Jockey Club was granted a 24-year concession in a surprise move that appeared to catch off-guard the company’s own director.

## MARCH

The phrases “Hong Kong people governing Hong Kong” and “Macau People governing Macau” were not mentioned in this year’s Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) work report, which was delivered by Yu Zhengsheng, Chairman of CPPCC.



China’s rubber-stamp lawmakers passed a historic constitutional amendment abolishing a presidential two-term limit that will enable Xi Jinping to rule indefinitely.

The president of the Legislative Assembly, Ho Iat Seng, revealed that the mainland government has a system which allows it to closely monitor the gambling habits of mainland civil servants in Macau’s casinos.

The Forum for Economic and Trade Co-operation between China and the Portuguese-speaking Countries – Macao (Forum Macau) is, “after 15

years and in resemblance to humans, in maturing stage,” said the organization’s Secretary-General Xu Yingzhen.



Macau is no exception with respect to phone scams, the chief executive officer of Companhia de Telecomunicações de Macau said at a press conference. Vandy Poon was replying to reporters’ questions about what the Judiciary Police (PJ) deemed “a new wave of phone scams” targeting Macau phone users.

## APRIL

Alarm bells sounded over the apparent drift of a large quantity of concrete structures intended to protect the edges of two artificial islands that form an undersea link along the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macau Bridge.



Former Meteorological and Geophysical Bureau director Fong Soi Kun and former deputy director Florence Leong were found accountable for failing to exercise their managerial responsibilities during Typhoon Hato, according to the results of the special investigation commissioned by the Chief Executive.



Stanley Ho became the latest Hong Kong billionaire to step away from the empire he built, passing along the top roles at casino operator SJM Holdings Ltd. to his heirs. A statement to the Hong Kong stock exchange indicated that the 96-year-old Macau casino tycoon would retire as chairman and executive director of SJM after a June 12 shareholders meeting.

After lengthy debates, a significant increase in bus fares was introduced. At a press conference, the director of the Transport Bureau, Lam Hin San, announced that every trip on public buses would cost MOP6. The adjusted fares do not include a discriminatory fare for non-residents, an idea previously thought likely.

## MAY

The White House has pushed back against China’s efforts to control how U.S. airlines refer to Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macau in promotional materials, calling the push to make them comply with Chinese standards “Orwellian nonsense.”

Royal Flight Airlines started offering a regular weekly service between Macau and Moscow. A re-launch ceremony of the Macau-Moscow route was held at the Macau International Airport.



A local billionaire was sentenced to four years in prison for bribing United Nations officials to buy their support for a proposed UN center in Macau that was never built. Ng Lap Seng, one of China’s richest men, had no visible reaction to the sentence imposed in federal court in Manhattan.



The Judiciary Police was criticized over the investigation methods employed during the ongoing investigation of sexual abuse allegedly committed by a staff member against several children at D. Jose da Costa Nunes Kindergarten. During a press conference, lawmaker Agnes Lam and parents of reportedly abused children, criticized the PJ for the staff’s lack of knowledge in questioning children regarding this matter, as too many repetitive questions were posed to the children.

The Court of First Instance found suspended lawmaker Sulu Sou and activist Scott Chiang guilty of a co-authored act of unlawful assembly, which was charged under the framework of aggravated disobedience. The two defendants were sentenced with a 120-day fine each. That amounted to a fine of MOP40,800 for Sou and MOP27,600 for Chiang.

## JUNE

Lawmaker Sulu Sou declared his conviction to be unlawful, arguing that his prosecutorial immunity protects him from standing trial for any crimes other than the one

for which he was suspended. Sou says that his lawyer, Jorge Menezes, has described the judgment as both “null and void.”

The government has pledged the absolute security of Macau’s public money that will be allocated to the Guangdong-Macau Cooperation and Development Fund.



Thousands of residents joined a protest criticizing the government’s proposal to amend road traffic rules, particularly on the surge in parking fees. Although the government suspended public consultation on the proposed amendment, the rally went on with many demonstrators calling for some government officials to step down while they marched from Vasco Da Gama Square to Nam Van.



The Civic and Municipal Affairs Bureau (IACM), has decided to suspend the arrangements currently being made regarding the establishment of a crematorium at Taipa’s Sa Kong Municipal Cemetery. “We asked the DSSOPT to suspend the project as the government needs to hear the population,” IACM president José Tavares said.

The government launched a Public Consultation on the new rules that aim to shape the “Civil Protection Basic Law.” The proposal, which the authorities submitted for public scrutiny, includes the establishment of a new crime of “false social alarm.”

## JULY

The Commission Against Corruption has released an investigation report into investment immigration and technical immigration requirements, as managed by the Macau Trade and Investment Promotion Institute. The report noted that the process has lacked stringent vetting for years.

The Gaming Inspection and Coordination Bureau (DICJ) refused the request made by the Macau (Yat Yuen) Canidrome Company to extend its

concession contract in order to continue exploring the facilities for another five years, even if greyhound racing has ceased. Last year, the Canidrome asked the government for permission to continue using the facilities to host the greyhounds.



Wanted businessman Low Taek Jho, also known as Jho Low, was reportedly able to enter Hong Kong and Macau despite an Interpol notice, because neither Malaysia nor Singapore requested his arrest from the two SARs.



It was announced that the Macau International Airport's passenger volume in the first half-year of 2018 reached 4 million, an increase of 20 percent compared with that of the same period last year.

The Education and Youth Affairs Bureau concluded the investigation of the D. José da Costa Nunes kindergarten case of alleged pedophilia, in which seven complaints were made by parents to the police. The school has been fined and asked to submit a plan to prevent sexual abuse from reoccurring.

AUGUST



Representatives of Seac Pai Van residents, along with few lawmakers, have delivered a petition with some 7,426 signatures requesting that the draft plan of building two warehouses storing hazardous materials near the Cotai residential area be withdrawn.

Over 70 local residents were involved in an alleged cryptocurrency scam, where they invested a total of over HKD20.1 million, following promises they would receive a monthly return of 25 percent.

The government said it would not abide by a ruling of the Court of Final Appeal that a construction tender be recalculated after officials committed a mathematical error.

The Court of Final Appeal ruled that the tender for the construction of a depot for the Light Rail Transit system needed to be reassessed, after one of the interested parties claimed that there had been an incorrect assessment of the company's points performance in the bid.

A new regulation will allow residents of Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan to apply for residence permits in the Chinese mainland. According to Xinhua, the document said residents from Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan who hold a China residence permit will enjoy more rights, basic public services and other conveniences related to study, work, business operations and life on the mainland.



Veteran legal advisers of the Legislative Assembly Paulo Cardinal and Paulo Taipa were dismissed by the board of the AL. Their contracts expire at year-end. The revelation caused a generalized sense of incredulity and shock in the community, particularly within the legal fraternity.

SEPTEMBER



Many flights between Macau International Airport and western Japan's Kansai International Airport were canceled due to the impact and damage caused by super typhoon Jebi.

The President of the Legislative Assembly, Ho Iat Seng, has said that the dismissal of two AL legal advisers, Paulo Cardinal and Paulo Taipa, was not due to political reasons, nor due to the advisers' ethnicity, but instead to allow them to pursue other careers.



The government undertook several preventive measures in response to this year's

Typhoon Manghkut to avoid casualties similar to the scale seen during Typhoon Hato last year. Government authorities said that they were satisfied with the response of civil protection teams and that pre-disaster preparation had been improved.

Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe was re-elected as head of his ruling Liberal Democratic Party in a landslide election, paving the way for up to three more years as the nation's leader and a push for his long-awaited plan to bring recently-approved integrated resorts to Japan.



The Macau Civil Aviation Authority probed a decision made by a control tower at Macau International Airport on August 28, when it authorized an EVA Air flight to land on the runway after a Capital Airlines performed a "hard landing" maneuver, leaving wreckage before diverting to Shenzhen. The flight from Taiwan was carrying 180 people on board and landed five minutes after the Capital Airlines' "serious incident" occurred.

OCTOBER

The previous president of the New Macau Association, Scott Chiang, and association member Alin Lam were fined after they were found guilty of trespassing the Hotel Estoril, the Court of First Instance ruled.

New offshore regulations are raising concerns in an industry that employs around 1,700 workers in 360 companies. The Executive Council concluded their analysis of the new regime which will abolish existing regulations for offshore companies. The new rules will follow guidelines issued by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development.



The head of Beijing's liaison office in Macau died after a fall in his home, in what central authorities implied was a depression-related suicide. The 59-year-old Zheng Xiaosong was said to have

been "suffering from depression," according to a statement from the Beijing-based Hong Kong and Macau Affairs Office.

A U.S. Congress annual report highlighted that the region's electoral system is not developing according to recommendations made by the UN Human Rights Committee. The report also expressed concerns over the denial of entry of political figures and writers.



President Xi Jinping opened the world's longest sea-crossing bridge linking Hong Kong to Macau and Zhuhai. The USD20 billion bridge took almost a decade to build while incurring major delays and cost overruns. It includes an undersea tunnel allowing ships to pass through the Pearl River delta, the heart of China's crucial manufacturing sector.

NOVEMBER

The United Nations Human Rights Council has submitted a report on the human rights situation in the People's Republic of China, including a section on Macau where it criticizes "widespread discrimination" against migrants, people with disabilities and the LGBTQ community.



The PLA Macau Garrison took part in a counter-terrorism drill code-named "Bright Dog" held at the East Asian Games Dome. The drill, which lasted around two-and-a-half hours, involved a simulation relating to a group of six 'gunmen' seeking to enter a concert hall when a 5,000-strong 'audience' was inside.



Teenage driver Sophia Flörsch suffered spinal fractures during a Macau Grand Prix F3

race, after her mono-seat collided at high speed with Japanese driver Sho Tsuboi's car, going through a catch fence at the Lisboa bend. The car then hit a structure on the perimeter and dropped to the ground with race marshals immediately on the scene. The race was won by the British driver Daniel Ticktum.

During a meeting with Hong Kong and Macau delegations in Beijing, Chinese President Xi Jinping said that the SARs still have outstanding positions and outstanding advantages in the new era of China's reform and opening up to the world.

DECEMBER



Chinese President Xi Jinping was in Portugal for a two-day state visit. His visit raised the Portuguese government's hopes that Beijing will invest heavily in Sines, the country's biggest Atlantic port, and help expand national energy company Energias de Portugal overseas. During his stay in Lisbon, Xi said several times that Sino-Luso relations were 'stronger than ever'.

The government canceled the holiday change proposal in the latest Labor Law amendment. The proposal stated that three days out of four; the New Year's Day, Ching Ming Festival, the day following Chong Chao, and the Chong Yeung Festival, could be moved, meaning that these days could be normal working days for some workers.

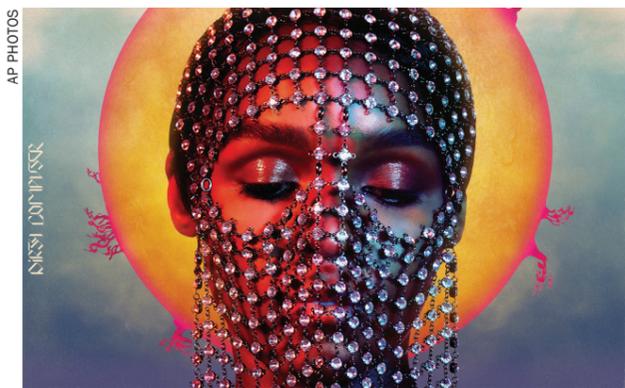
Local authorities signed an agreement with the National Development and Reform Commission. The deal aimed to advance Macau's participation in the Belt and Road initiative.



The Border Gate underground bus terminal reopened partially for public use, fulfilling a pledge made earlier by the Secretary for Transport and Public Works. The terminal was closed after sustaining severe damage during the passage of Typhoon Hato in August 2017.

## MDT/AP TOP 10 ALBUMS

# Janelle Monae, Kacey Musgraves, J Cole on the move



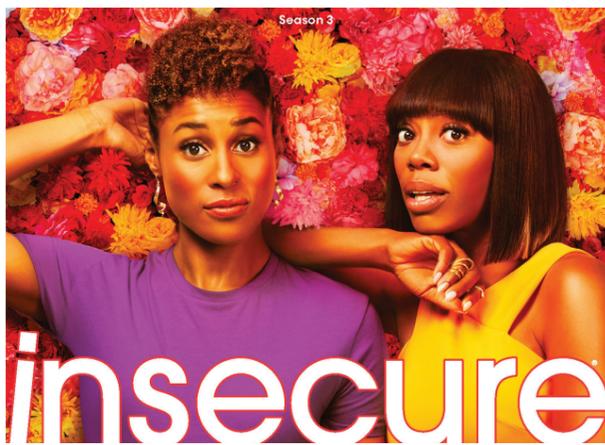
**1. Janelle Monae, "Dirty Computer":** When Janelle Monae released the masterfully brilliant "The ArchAndroid" in 2010, it was hard to imagine how this futuristic, already-seasoned artist could grow, and where that growth would take her. Enter "Dirty Computer," her third full-length album and another work of genius from one of contemporary music's best entertainers. There are so many ways to describe this stunning album: Honest. Fun. Sexual. Political. Thought-provoking. Empowering. Liberating. And simply put — it's just damn good. Songs like "Crazy, Classic, Life," "Take a Byte," "Screwed," "I Got the Juice" and "Pynk" inject into your bloodstreams and spread a carefree confidence throughout your body, causing you to dance, and dance, and dance some more. It feels like freedom.



**2. Kacey Musgraves, "Golden Hour":** At its base, Kacey Musgraves' fourth album is a country record. And woven into it are sounds like dance, pop, R&B and other genres. The result is a piercing, soulful album where Musgraves' gliding vocals treat each song like a mini masterpiece. The lyrics are strong and sharp throughout the 13-track album, and each song is touching and beautiful. "Golden Hour" will put a smile on your face, and live inside of your heart.



**3. J. Cole, "KOD":** At a time when the entertainment world is questioning the relevance of the Grammys, it's hard to take the organization seriously when J. Cole's "KOD" didn't garner a nomination for best rap album. His fifth release, which he mainly produced on his own, is powerful, striking and remarkable, and easily the year's best hip-hop album, and we don't need a Grammy co-sign to confirm that.



**4. Various artists, "Insecure: Music from the HBO Original Series, Season 3":** There's not much that can hold you over during the months and months of waiting in between seasons of "Insecure," except for the TV show's epic soundtrack. This compilation is a breezy effort that plays smoother than most of the albums released this year. Every song is outstanding — no skipping going on here — and the track list will give a chance to discover some artists you may have never heard before.



**5. Chloe x Halle, "The Kids Are Alright":** The sister duo Chloe x Halle have beautifully mastered harmonization, and they sound like angels throughout "The Kids Are Alright." The album intro, "Hello Friend," brilliantly transitions into the title track and the rest of the next-level songs, from "Fake" to "Everywhere" to "Happy Without Me," prove there's more to come from the talented Beyonce mentees.



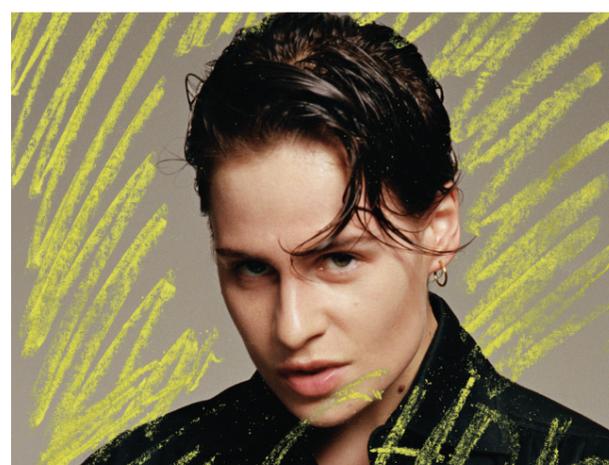
**6. The Carters, "Everything Is Love":** Beyonce's debut rap album was an adventure and further shows that there is probably little she can't do. She shines, alongside Jay-Z, on their first collaborative album that is a mix of Soundcloud rap, alternative R&B and overall amazingsness.



**7. Robyn, "Honey":** Robyn's album is like a tasty dessert, with just the right amount of sweetness.



**8. Ariana Grande, "Sweetener":** With all her successful singles, Ariana Grande may not come across as an album artist, but that's not accurate. "Sweetener" is her fourth album and her fourth laudable effort, which is a great blend of upbeat jams and pop-R&B ballads.



**9. Christine and the Queens, "Chris":** French singer Christine and the Queens' sophomore album is a pop escapade, with addictive songs like "Comme si," "Girlfriend," "Goya Soda" and "Feels so good" worth listening again, again and again.



**10. Madisen Ward & the Mama Bear, "The Radio Winners":** Harmonizing with family members — done correctly — can feel like an out-of-body experience. The mother-and-son duo Madisen Ward & the Mama Bear know how to do just that, and their latest EP, "The Radio Winners," proves it.

MDT/AP TOP 10 FILMS

# An extraordinary movie year



**1. "Burning":** It was, for sure, an extraordinary movie year. Little to nothing separates my favorite 10 films, or, for that matter, my top 20 or 30. Many of the year's best were found overseas, and none haunted me more than Lee Chang-dong's smoldering slow-burn thriller. An adaptation of a Haruki Murakami short story, "Burning" is about a triangle of young Koreans (Yoo Ah-in, Jeon Jong-seo, Steven Yeun — all astonishing) divided by class but united in heartache and rage. At sunset, with Miles Davis playing, it reaches an aching crescendo.



**2. "Cold War":** Romantic, passionate, tragic and perfectly unsentimental, filmmaker Pawel Pawlikowski's "Cold War" is an intoxicating portrait of an impossible, cruel and undeniable love between a musician, Wiktor (Tomasz Kot) and a singer with an "it factor," Zula (Joanna Kulig). Shot in stunningly crisp black and white, Pawlikowski's film is a triumph in an 85-minute package.



**3. "Roma":** Alfonso Cuarón's deeply personal ode to women who raised him, "Roma" is a film going experience like few others — tranquil but urgent, meditative but exciting, and told with pure love and humanity. Like "Cold War," "Roma" is also shot in black and white, but it rarely feels like it. His images are so vivid and full of life you can almost feel the prism of colors peeking through.



**4. "Private Life":** Tamara Jenkins' comic and compassionate fertility drama is like "Waiting for Godot" with two of the best actors around: Kathryn Hahn and Paul Giamatti. In a movie year where love that lasts was hard to find, the searching couple in "Private Life" made for an affectionate and indelible portrait of middle-aged marriage.



**5. "First Reformed":** Chiseled out of a lifetime of doubt, Paul Schrader's late-in-life masterpiece throbs with an existential despair that has hardened into a taut and tormented religious drama. It's a culmination for Schrader — an anguished bookend to "Taxi Driver," which he wrote — about a priest (a never-better Ethan Hawke) in desperate search for grace.



**6. "Shoplifters":** The films of Hirokazu Kore-eda unfold so nimbly and breezily that their profundity (and your tears) can come as a surprise. In this, a high-point for Kore-eda and the winner of Cannes' Palme d'Or, the Japanese master depicts the ragtag life of a makeshift, impoverished family that slowly, heartbreaking gnaws at the question: What makes a family? The answer is more than DNA.



**7. "The Rider":** Chloe Zhao's second feature, starring real-life rider Brady Jandreau as an injured South Dakota cowboy forced to give up the only life he knows, is so richly filled with the beauty and struggle of the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation where it's set. Blending fiction with real life, Zhao achieves something spiritual.



**8. "Paddington 2":** In an endlessly dispiriting year, Paul King's charm overload was the go-to antidote, a salve of confectionary delight: marmalade for your maladies.



**9. "The Favourite":** It's just such an irresistible acting spectacle. Olivia Colman, Rachel Weisz and Emma Stone set a torch to the traditional historical drama in Yorgos Lanthimos' wild and caustic period romp.



**10. "The Ballad of Buster Scruggs":** Take the Coen brothers for granted at your peril. In this, an anthology of six Western tales of death and storytelling, life is a Poker game where everyone's holding — like the two pair of black aces and eights that Scruggs (Tim Blake Nelson) refuses to play in the film's first chapter — a dead man's hand.



France's **Kylian Mbappe** runs with the ball during the semifinal match between France and Belgium at the 2018 football World Cup in St. Petersburg



Czech Republic's **Krystof Kryzl** crashes during the first run of an alpine ski, men's World Cup giant slalom, in Garmisch Partenkirchen, Germany



Alexia Paganini of Switzerland competes in the Ladies Short Program during the ISU figure skating France's Trophy, in Grenoble, French Alps



**Rafael Nadal** jumps in a corridor before his men's final match of the French Open tennis tournament against Austria's **Dominic Thiem**



Wrestlers **Nelson Fernandes**, **Alex Legrand**, **Ace Angel**, and **Zach**, bottom, headlock wrestlers **Lord Steven Crowley**, **Darkmundo**, **Maeven**, and **PV Red**, fight during a **wrestling charity gala** in Ivry-sur-Seine



McLaren driver **Fernando Alonso** of Spain goes over the top of Sauber driver **Charles Leclerc** of Monaco at the start of the Belgian **Formula One Grand Prix**



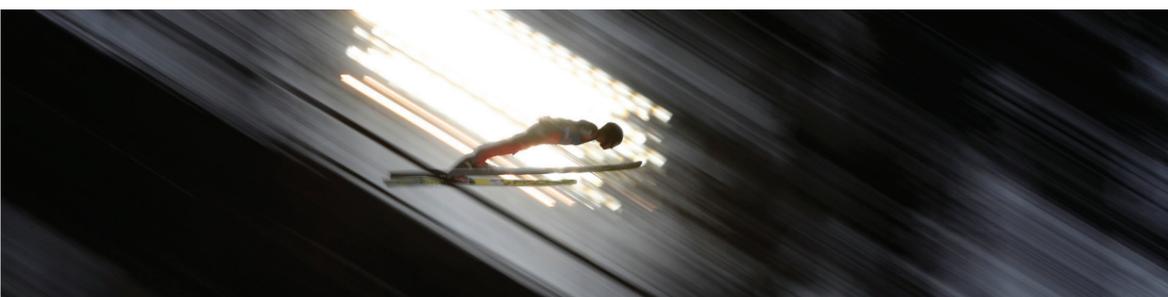
A competitor takes part at the 2nd annual **Belgrade Underpants Run** on the banks of the Danube in Belgrade, Serbia



England's **Anthony Watson** (left) and Ireland's **Rob Kearney** try to catch the ball during the **Six Nations rugby union** match between England and Ireland at Twickenham stadium in London



England's **Jonny Bairstow** and England's **James Anderson** run off the pitch as sudden heavy rain starts during the second day of the second test match between England and India at **Lord's cricket ground** in London



An unidentified athlete makes his trial jump at the **ski jump** in Bischofshofen, Austria

AP SPORTS PHOTOS IN 2018

Sun, snow and shirtless

SIXTY years after Pele, Kylian Mbappe became only the second teenager to score a goal in a World Cup final — and Associated Press photographers were on hand to document that moment and hundreds of others across the sporting landscape.

Mbappe helped his France team win the final, but he also showed his speed and skill throughout the tournament in Russia.

Pictures from the World Cup feature prominently in the list of AP sports photos from around

Europe and Africa in 2018, but others also made their mark. There is Formula One, tennis, cricket and rugby, as well as a picture of American gymnast Simone Biles awaiting yet another world championship gold medal.



**Tiger Woods** of the US chips on to the 6th green during a fourball match on the opening day of the 42nd **Ryder Cup** at Le Golf National in Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines