



Photo by Anthony Forney

Throughout the International Night program, dancing was the main medium of cultural expression.

## ISA Night showcases cultures

By Beth Hege  
Oregon Daily Emerald

International Night, the capstone of a week of activities sponsored by the International Students Association, began with a tantalizing spread of ethnic foods from 19 countries and ended with a showcase of singing, dance and pageantry by nearly 300 performers.

The ISA chose for its 30th annual International Festival the theme of "Diversity," a motif that was played out in films, information booths, lectures and performances. The association is an umbrella organization of 13 groups.

"We are united because we are international students, but we have different cultures and beliefs," said Chia Wei Shing, ISA co-director. "Within our diversity we work together."

Working together to put on the student-sponsored festival meant everything from arranging speakers to peeling 80 pounds of potatoes for the buffet. Students worked in teams to create a meal for nearly

1,000 people, and most spent at least a day in the EMU Fishbowl kitchen.

Other preparations took longer. John Trinh of Saigon said he and other Vietnamese students rehearsed a ribbon dance for a month. He said the effort was worth it to show the beauty of his country.

"Most Americans think of the war, but this dance shows the innocence of romance, and the innocence of our country," Trinh said.

The program began with a welcome from Native Americans who performed an eagle feather dance. Throughout the program, dance was the primary medium of cultural expression.

Parisa Salehi of Tehran, Iran, said international students are anxious to share their cultures with others, particularly during the festival. "Everyone puts so much work into it, and at the end it all comes together," she said.

International students represent about 10 percent of the University's total population, with 1,469 students from 79 countries.

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