

# International Night 2002 appeals to sold-out crowd

Members of the community flocked to the University event to get a glimpse of various cultures from around the world

By Robin Weber  
Oregon Daily Emerald

More than 700 students, staff and community members packed the sold-out EMU Ballroom on Sunday, celebrating diversity at the International Student Association's International Night 2002 "Patches: Threading our Cultures."

The crowd began filing into the EMU Skylight at 5 p.m. for dinner. They indulged in a smorgasbord of international cuisine from more than 20 countries as they herded down the buffet line.

As the spectators waited in line for dinner, their whetted appetites were tempered by upbeat tunes played live by a Hawaiian band.

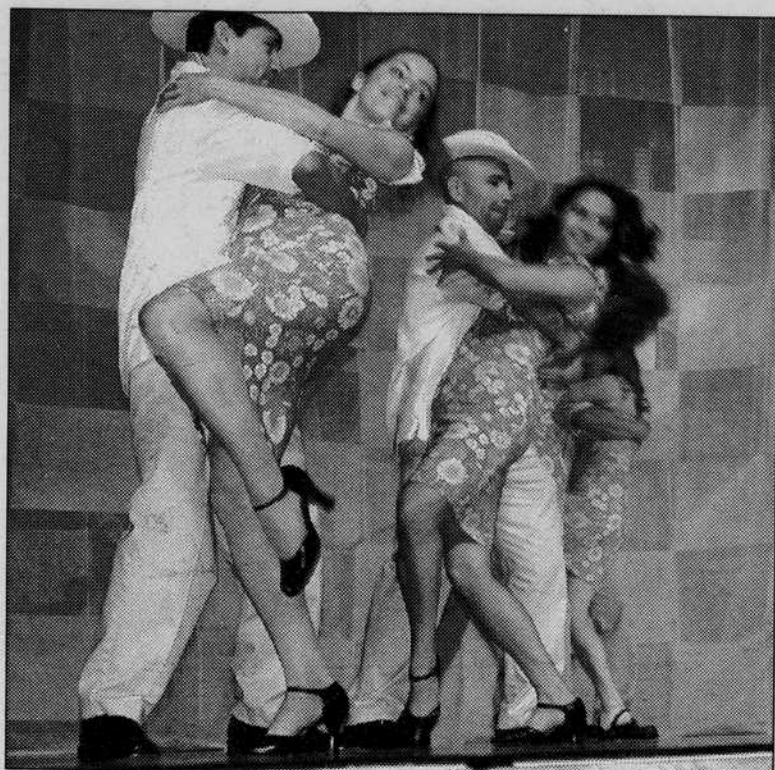
"It's sold out!" program Yuri Akahara said with excitement at this year's turnout. She and other ISA students marveled at the success of the event.

"It was our goal to make this the best International Night ever and to be creative, have teamwork, stay motivated and have patience," she said.

Although the University hosts a litany of cultural happenings, International Night is one of the few that brings together so many groups rather than highlighting a single nationality. Its aim — of unification — makes the evening a standout.

"It's a chance to realize cultural differences and kind of a melting pot for University students" guest Azra Khaldi said. Khaldi said she attends International Night yearly to learn more about cultures that don't host a festival of their own.

The stage show opened just after 8 p.m. with ISA trivia as the audience's cultural knowledge was challenged — "How many languages are in India?" Answer: 387. After slide shows introduced this year's ISA of-



Jonathan House Emerald

International Night dancers perform the 'Sabor Latino,' a Cuban salsa number. The dance was one of 10 performances Sunday as a culmination to International Week.

ficers, the first of the 11 performing groups brought cultural dance to the stage, with the Peafowl Dance from China presented by the Chinese Student and Scholars Association. The Peafowl Dance is traditionally done to express love.

Short skits linked the patches of the show together with facts about each country and the significance of the performances.

One addition to this year's showcase was Tarachama, an Azerbaijan dance. Performers Kamil Valiyev and Mila Ioussiofova, clad in colorful clothes, left the crowd clapping to the beat of their rhythmic footwork. Their performance paved the way for the tale of Africa's Hope and Victory, expressed with songs and stories. The performances wound to

a close with a fashion show of international apparel.

Why were so many people willing to wait in line and vie for a good view? Some guests came out to support the international programs on campus.

"It's interesting to try food, see shows and support my friends," student Beth Bienek said.

Others sought to enrich their cultural knowledge through their stomachs. Simply put, they were in it for the food.

"This year the food was really worth the money," Eugene resident Nathan Fendrih said. "Considering the number of people to feed, they do an amazing job," he said.

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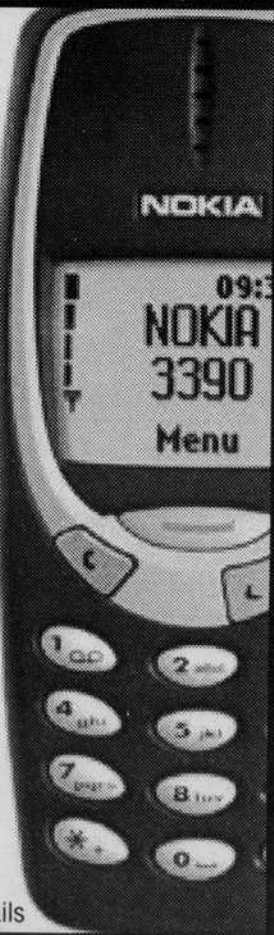
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