



Courtesy Photo

'Tarantata' offers dance as therapy

■ Three noted University-based organizations are teaming up to showcase a performance by Italian dancer Alessandra Belloni

By Jen West
Oregon Daily Emerald

Today, dance is most commonly used as a form of entertainment. But since the time of the ancient Greeks, many dances have integrated folklore for therapeutic use or worship.

The International Resource Center, the Italian program and the Office of International Programs present Italian dancer Alessandra Belloni, who will perform the "Tarantata Dance of the Ancient Spider" at 7 p.m. today in the IRC.

The Tarantella is a dance of "healing and purification for women (called Tarantatas) who have been bitten by the tarantula," Belloni said. The dances use hypnotic rhythms created by the beating of tambouric drums and castanets, she said.

The ancient Greeks believed the poison from a tarantula bite would make the victim hallucinate and go insane, Belloni said. When the women claimed to have been bitten by the spider, they would fall into a frenzied, trance-like state, she said. The dance helped eradicate the spider's poison from their bodies.

"The dance has the power to bring back balance," Belloni said.

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UO School of Music World Music Series presents

OBO ADDY and Okropong Music & Dance of Ghana

The sensational OBO ADDY, performing with OKROPONG, a traditional African ensemble that performs music and dance of Ghana's ethnic groups, using various hand and stick drums, talking drums, bells, and shakers.

Friday, April 26

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3:00-5:00 P.M.
180 PLC

This event is free and open to the public, and will be followed by a book sale and signing. For more information, or for disability accommodations, please contact the Oregon Humanities Center at (541) 346-3934.