

Heritage

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evening, changed the pace with beats and bass. Thai said he was spreading the "Portland love" while accompanied by two back-up rappers and a handful of "homies." Appearing slightly aggravated with the reluctance of a seated audience who refused to swarm the stage and dance, Thai made his performance more interesting by spraying the first five rows of the crowd with water from a bottle.

APASU co-director Jeanice Chieng said Thai was "slightly unprofessional," and his unexpectedly large group of "homies" only added to a slew of last-minute changes and surprises concerning the event.

"It's definitely hard for us as coordinators," Chieng said. "But it still went very well."

During a brief intermission following Thai's performance, the hereandnow players mingled among audience members, introducing themselves and giving out Asian candies.

"We want to inspire conversations," said Kat Nakano, graduate student and member of the hereandnow crew for more than three years. Having performed at colleges across the nation for the past 12 years, hereandnow changes its performances, and even its players, on a regular basis. Nakano first heard about hereandnow through a friend and joined the group after entering a large audition in Los Angeles. She said she plans on staying with the group until she feels the need to move on.

"I've received a lot of root support from other members," she said. "I have found my grounding through them as close, genuine friends."

After the intermission, the group

involved the audience with random skits, activities and ice-breakers like the game Red Light/Green Light. Toward the end of the event, performers became more serious, telling personal experiences, folk stories and traditions. The group also peppered the performance with simple morals and lessons for life, such as "never make fun of people who are different than you."

Nakano said the group aims at "getting the juice flowing" in the minds of audience members and allowing each person to take away a unique experience and refreshed perspective.

"Hereandnow gives a good message and has a different format of breaking down stereotypes and educating people," said senior international studies major Hai Thanh Do.

Do has been a member of APASU for five years and is the current outreach coordinator for the Multicultural Center, which was one of the event's sponsors. Other sponsors included the Ethnic Studies department and the University Counseling Center.

In light of the numerous cultural events that have been recently held on campus, Do said this year's efforts have created "a strong foundation in building for the future" of APASU, and that its numbers have grown conspicuously.

With so many things going on during spring term, Chieng said she wasn't surprised by the small group that turned out for the event. And despite so many last-minute changes and unplanned mishaps, she said the number of audience members who stayed to talk to the hereandnow players at the end of the event showed how hard work can overcome all obstacles.

"It was still a success," she said.

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