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Pulse *Excite*

On Tuesday
Acupuncture —
pricking away pain

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Overwhelming war information results in serious introspection

Mason West
Movies/Music/TV Columnist

I'm frazzled, still clinging to the blur of spring break. But my stupor comes from long discussions with friends and family that stressed my noggin so much that I felt the ineffectiveness of a dance Cancun reveler.

It's this damn war thing. It makes me pause and think about the beliefs that govern my existence — and that's *hard* thinking. I'm not so happy with the things I found: I am consumed by consuming, and I am generally more entertained than informed. Example: When the Emerald staff watched President Bush's deadline for Saddam Hussein's exile approach, I complained about not being able to play our advance copy of the new *Zelda* on the same television.

Am I going to change? Not in any fundamental ways. But the need to act has finally caught up with me. The question is: How? I can't take a stand because I have spent my time focusing on the Oscars and not Saddam-a-rama. So I need the info.

TV news doesn't help much in that department. It's just more entertainment. The ceaseless spew can report things as they happen — which is good — but most of the time is filled with babbling, speculation and repetition.

The paradox is needing many sources to cover news and not being able to process all the information generated by these sources. The super-saturation of information makes my head spin — and ultimately, shut down.

The pervasive sense that there is more than I will ever be able to take in leaves me feeling helpless — a sentiment I assume many share. What can I, just one guy in Eugene, do? So I am helpless, but I still have the need to contribute something. This is why the Oscars made the superficial, almost insulting, gesture of removing the red carpet and why I'm writing this rambling column. These small gestures seem absurd when compared to the enormous scope of the war, but it's all we can do.

I have too many questions and no answers. This war is bigger than just getting the bad guy. The statement issued by Hussein on Tuesday calling on Muslims to wage holy war against the United States cements the weight our actions carry. Holy war?!? Holy crap!

In a San Francisco Chronicle column Tuesday, Tom Plate wrote that although American intervention to remove Hussein is not an act against Islam, some Muslims may see it that way. There are core differences between Muslim and Christian (which I consider to be the dominant religion in America) religious beliefs — not that I fully understand them. But knowing that we are potentially condemning a people's way of life makes me wonder when they are going to decide to blow up the imperialist infidels regardless of the consequences.

We are a proud nation — proud of our power and freedom. The idea of abandoning this pride is unthinkable. How then do we expect the Iraqi people to abandon their pride? We can subdue pride with power, but we can't crush it.

I wish we were not in a war that I have nothing to do with. I am afraid of people being dehumanized because they are members of a country or a religion. I'm afraid of people who believe in things so much that they abandon reason. I'm afraid that nothing good will come of this war.

I have a lot more thinking to do and I hope others are taking the same opportunity. I'm up for a good discussion anytime.

But for now, I'm going to play *Zelda*.

Contact the Pulse columnist
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His views do not necessarily represent those of the Emerald.



Mason West
Selling out



Courtesy photo

Rhythmic grooves

Dance Africa, a nonprofit troupe promoting African culture through performances for school children will perform Monday night

Aaron Shakra
Pulse Reporter

International Week kicks off in the form of drumming, dancing, rhythmic form on Monday night, with Dance Africa performing at 8 p.m. at the M. Frances Dougherty Dance Theatre in Gerlinger Annex.

The troupe is a nonprofit organization, largely funded by private donations. Most of the group's performances bring African culture to grade school children, but Dance Africa has also performed at Lane Community College and in famine relief benefits. Monday's show is a fundraising event for the troupe as well as the Universi-

ty dance department.

Dance Africa director Rita Honka, a University adjunct dance instructor, also performs with the troupe. She began studying African dance in 1989. She said the troupe formed in 1993 for fun.

Next week's show will mark Dance Africa's second campus performance this academic year. In November, the group performed with guest artist Yousouf Koumbassa, who worked with the company for three days on the piece "Soli."

"We always perform the piece they have set on us," Honka said. "It becomes a collaborative performance between Dance Africa and guest artists."

The troupe consists of 10 dancers and six drummers. Musical director Brian West, who teaches African drum classes, is the lead drummer of the group. This involves extensive soloing

and the calling of the "break" during the individual dances. A break is deviation from the standard rhythmic pattern of the piece. It can signal a change or solo for the dancers and drummers.

"Now that I'm the lead drummer, that gives me chance to interact with the dancers," West said. "If I see a rhythm in a dancer's body, especially the feet, I accent that part."

West said it is difficult to describe African rhythmic concepts without using some generalization.

"How the dance influences the music — it's hard to put that in a paragraph," he said. "It's hard to find some of the origins of the music. It's hard to guess what came first — the rhythm or the drum."

Dance major Beatrice Woods, in her

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Musical talent, emotions abound in 'Chasing'

CD review

Aaron Shakra
Pulse Reporter

There are times when songs don't require singers, and the music just demands to be heard. "Man Chasing Woman Around Table," from Enion Pelta and David Tiller, is one such album. More than anything, it exudes unhindered feelings in each of the 12 tracks.

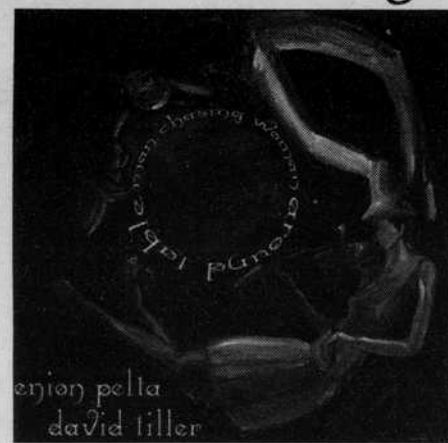
These two are relatively unknown (read: not mainstream) musicians, and that's a shame. Violinist Pelta and mandolinist Tiller have played music for most of their lives, and both play their instruments with world-class skill. The couple is also one half of Taarka, a Portland-based group formed early last year. Taarka's music is officially described as "seismic hypno Gypsy jazz."

The compositions on "Man Chasing Woman" — both collaborated, and individually written between the two — show

cultural influences aplenty: from Celtic, Middle Eastern and Indian to jazz and bluegrass. They are as beautiful, daring and strange as should be expected from such immense talent. It only takes listening to the first few measures of "Camille's Last Jump" to get a sense of this. Here is a piece that swoons delicately, with the possibility of eliciting far forgotten feelings from the listener — maybe even ones they never knew they had.

And that's the secret to the album; it's epic, but in a devastatingly intimate way. This keeps it accessible and also danceable. Thanks to their musical interests, Tiller and Pelta have acquired a keen sense of rhythm — one with a disposition toward the full body movement of a given listener.

The record has great replay value, because even listening to it once or twice won't be enough to hear everything. This is music that lasts, with depth and subtlety, that if followed, can be climatic and devastating.



Courtesy photo

"The Tants of Toyt" is a reminder that it's possible for music that isn't rock to still be rocking. It's an all-out romp of insane rhythm — with the musicianship to back it up. Tye North, one of the many guest musicians, dials it in on the

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