

CAMPUS CULTURE

Multi-Cultural Council: breaking barriers at Behrend

SHANNON EHRLICH
asst. culture editor

The Multi-Cultural Council had another successful week by celebrating Martin Luther King, Jr. Through what MCC president and senior biology major Pascale Barthelemy calls the "passing of the cake," MCC was able to share information about King's impact on the African-American community while feeding hungry college students. MCC puts the focus on what Martin Luther King, Jr. did and encourages students to learn more and recognize the importance of his legacy.

Past Martin Luther King, Jr. Day events have included a reading of King's "I Have a Dream" speech and an appearance and speech from Al Sharpton.

Earl Bass, a senior Biology major and a member of MCC, is Al Sharpton's nephew and knows the significance of unity among students and MCC's role at Behrend.

MCC hosts many events throughout the year in hopes of igniting an interest in different ethnicities among college students. This past fall was the 23rd anniversary for Harambee, which is Swahili for "all put together," or, in other terms, "unity."

Considered to be the biggest event of the year for MCC, Harambee is a welcome dinner for past members and anyone looking to join MCC. Over 150 people attended this school year's

Harambee dinner, surpassing all expectations. Chancellor Jack Burke was one of the attendees joined by Behrend's fraternities and sororities. Performers or speakers entertain by pushing the message "Unity Through Diversity."

The annual Gala is another of MCC's big events. During the spring semester, usually in April, members of MCC and other cultural organizations come together for a night of recognition. Awards are given to organizations highlighting their achievements. The Keystone, Most Active Person, Best Organization, and Best President awards are only a few that are awarded.

Other events MCC has featured are organizational parties, open mic nights, a Women's History Month dinner and discussion, and perform-

ances from Flamenco and Dragon dancers. MCC also worked with Habitat for Humanity on a project in the Erie area, which Barthelemy hopes MCC will continue on doing.

Andy Herrera, Director of Educational Equity & Diversity Programs, acts as the advisor for MCC and works very closely with the members. He helps plan events such as Wednesday night's performance with Jim Donovan and Elie Kihonia in Bruno's. Mem-

bers of MCC try to go to all of the events to support and represent their organization and other organizations.

Bass says that MCC is "the mother organization," comprised of at least 100 people from various satellite organizations. MCC tries to unite students but also acts as the go-between group for other organizations or for anyone who wants to start a new club or organization. It is a support system, welcoming anyone and everyone. If

there is an issue, anyone can go to a member of MCC to talk. There is good communication within the group, and they try to "stay strong within ourselves," Bass says.

Barthelemy joined in 2006, a very popular year for MCC, but it has since grown and become more diverse. People involved in MCC come from ethnicities that include, but are not limited to, Muslim,

Latino, Asian, African, and Caribbean heritages. They now have more and better support from other organizations and are seeing new faces come out to meetings. She has also seen a development of new clubs and not just racial ones, saying that "culture is not just about race. It's dancing, music, food."

Barthelemy and Bass are hopeful of MCC's future, but feel there's still a lot of work to be done at Behrend. Barthelemy wants people to become more aware and accepting of different religions and ethnicities. She hopes to see an even greater change in the cultural community and for more people to have a greater curiosity about different ethnicities and MCC. She believes that there isn't enough unity at Behrend and wants to find more ways to make the campus more unified.

Bass would also like to see more respect for different ethnicities and cultures and for people to be more knowledgeable about them. One way, Bass says, is "by branching out to other organizations and learning about and from each other."

He wants to see social and ethnic barriers be broken and more involvement from people not already involved or familiar with MCC. "There are a lot of misconceptions and stereotypes I would like to dissolve. I don't want people to think we are the minorities. We want everyone and all are welcome. We won't bite you," says Bass.



Daniel Smith / The Behrend Beacon

The Multi-Cultural Council celebrated Martin Luther King, Jr. Day by handing out cake to students.

FILM

Hollywood Horror is history

DAN KINEM
senior reporter

How can a film genre be so loved yet so ignored at the same time?

The horror genre has been a staple of motion pictures since the silent era of films. Works like *Nosferatu* and classic Hollywood monster films like *Wolfman* and *Dracula* have unsurpassed influence in today's movies.

However, when was the last time you saw a horror film take home any Oscars (sans special effects awards)? It seems that horror-movie relevance is beyond rare.

On the other hand, how often do you see Character-Driven Drama Film Festivals or people wearing *Brokeback Mountain* shirts? Never. So while horror films may not get the critical acclaim, they certainly win the popularity contest.

The reason there is such a large underground fanbase for horror films is quite simple: people love being scared. People love seeing what goes bump in the night; they want to see their nightmares visualized. There is definitely a psychological curiosity involved for most people. People want to know how scared they can be, how far on the edge of their seat they can get before they can't take it. There is no feeling like being genuinely terrified. Even the casual "Boo!" scare is enough to get people off or to give them that adrenaline

rush. Kevin Roche, sophomore psychology major, said "I've liked horror movies ever since I was a little kid. I think that part of my fascination with horror is that I have always been fascinated by the bizarre."

For the more than casual horror fans, there might be another reason for watching, and that lies in the blood and guts: the gore. As sick as it may sound, people want to see blood. Viewers enjoy watching people being killed. It doesn't even stop there, either. They continually want those boundaries pushed and pushed.

Freshman Psychology major Bryan Sharp said, "the more gore the better."

They want the effects to become more realistic and for the creativity to be boosted. In what new ways is Jason Voorhees going to tear apart his victims? What tortuous games are these people going to have to play next?

Some of the cheapest, dirtiest, most poorly-written and poorly-acted films can be heralded as masterpieces by horrorhounds. There is a different reason for watching than most critics seem to realize. People revel in the constant looking around the corner and yelling at the screens. Some people live for that thrill.

"Most of the films I like have more of a cerebral aspect to them," Roche said, "where things are more implied

than out rightly shown. I really enjoy films that leave me thinking afterwards, but on the flipside, I have always enjoyed the sheer entertainment value of cheap gore and even cheaper productions."

Many people have an urge to have actors live out their nightmares on screen.

Horror fans are also some of the most loving people on the planet. What other fans would pay exuberant amounts of money for an autograph from an actor that wore a hockey mask and walked around in the third sequel to a film over 20 years ago? Horror fans, that's who! People really live for this and get their joy from this. And in this respect there is nothing else like it.

The horror genre is a limitless one. Anything that can be imagined can be done, from witty pogo-stick-killing leprechauns, sadistic torture-fest or zombies getting pied in the face at a shopping mall. As long as people have that primal urge to be scared, horror films will be there to quench that need. Whether Ebert neglected *Dawn of the Dead* from his top films list of 1978 or whether an Oscar ever goes to anything horror-related it doesn't matter. It is in people's nature to like horror films, so there will always be an audience and an appreciation for them worldwide.

PLAYLIST

Indie fringe surfaces

JEFF KRAMER
copy editor

I Come To Shanghai's premier self-titled album is written, played, recorded and produced by two complete newcomers to the music industry, Sam Frigard and Robert Ashley. They are both talented musicians, and it shows.

I Come To Shanghai's gentle, rhythmic, and sometimes even ambient music sounds just like a culture clash (from the group's appropriately named Texachusetts records). It's what happens when you mix a synthesizer medium with melodies that are very subtly reminiscent of cowboys; so much so that you wouldn't pick up on it if you only listened to one or two songs.

I Come To Shanghai is a very apparently contemporary project, and the use of walking piano parts and modernist-era sounding guitar chords contrarily flatter this sound. The album definitely isn't for everybody to listen to, but if you're into more experimental music you should give *I Come To Shanghai* a listen.

God is a major theme throughout, though *I Come To Shanghai's* lyrics don't come off as stale. Some songs' metaphors will beat you over the head (*Salvation is a Country Club*), but the vibes they achieve through their mixing mostly make up for it (like the single, twangy guitar and dual-layered vocals during the chorus in the previously mentioned song). The disappointment



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found in some songs is where others find their strength, such as *Another Sunday Morning*, which paints the portrait of a man stuck in routine.

Frigard and Ashley are both noticeably amateur singers, but this doesn't come close to detracting from the experience of listening to the album. The two achieve some impressive harmonies on several tracks (for instance, *Call Off the Dogs*). The lyrics (and the solo guitar parts particularly) greatly contribute to a general feeling of outlandishness throughout the album. Some songs even lightly evoke the 80s. If you enjoy listening to experimental music, there's no reason you shouldn't go to the band's webpage (Google it) and throw the band a few bucks for this download (it's pay what you want).

THE BEHREND SHOWCASE

a presentation of the culture page featuring the works of students

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submissions can include the following:

- flash fiction, short stories (in segments)
- prose and short, dramatic scripts
- poetry
- photography, paintings, and sketches (must be submitted with brief description of intent)
- cinematography (must be submitted as a short exposé detailing film)
- chess or instrumental composition or exposé

*Some say the world will end in fire,
Some say in ice.
From what I've tasted of desire
I hold with those who favor fire.
But if I had to perish twice,
I think I know enough of hate
To say that for destruction ice
is also great
And would suffice.*

All entries are to be sent to emk5110@psu.edu or submitted online through The Behrend Showcase's Facebook fanpage of the same title. Documents with text must be sent already proofread TO THE AUTHOR'S DISCRETION. Image files must be sent in .jpg or .tiff and will print black and white. All content will be displayed online; images in color will retain color online.