

Film offers African culture at PSH

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One class at Penn State Harrisburg got a special lesson in culture when *Against All Odds: Languages and Literatures into the 21st Century* was shown at 7 p.m. in the Gallery Lounge of the Olmsted building at PSH on Feb. 23.

The film is the first in a series of three public presentations entitled *Power and the Story*. These presentations are part of a PSH graduate class of the same title, taught by Dr. Peter Kareithi, assistant professor of Humanities and Communications.

Against All Odds: Languages and Literatures into the 21st Century was written and directed by Charles Cantalupo, professor of English, Comparative Literature and African Studies at Penn State University.

"Going to Africa changed my life," said Cantalupo.

Cantalupo first became interested in African languages because of a combination of time spent in Africa and a desire

to globally expand his scholarly work.

The documentary is a project that was derived from a conference and festival called "Against All Odds: African Languages and

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PSU Prof.

Literatures into the 21st Century," which took place in Asmara, Eritrea, 2000.

"It was the first gathering ever on African soil devoted to African languages," said Cantalupo. "The film is taken from this archive, which stands as one of the richest video and audio resources in the world of African language performance and scholarship."

According to Cantalupo, "Empowerment of African

languages is the simplest, fairest, most democratic, economic, and achievable way to improve African lives and livelihood through the application of knowledge, education, science and technology."

"What began as a conference became a movement."

Cantalupo presented his film with hopes of opening the minds of those at PSH to embrace the cultures of the world.

"The fact is that African languages and African cultures in general are woefully lacking in our curriculum, not only at PSH but statewide and nationally," said Cantalupo. "This is my message for PSH -- expand your horizon."

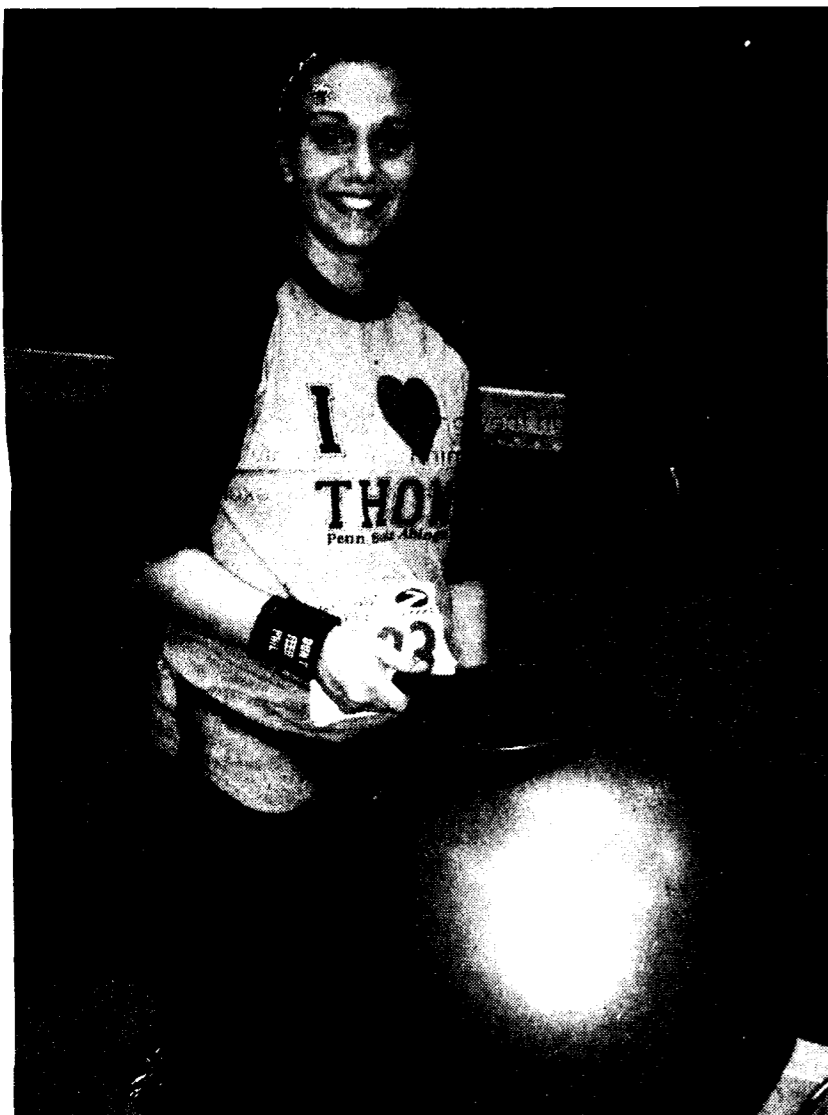
This presentation will be followed by a documentary depicting how South African blacks used song and dance to confront and resist apartheid, entitled *Amandla! A Revolution in Four-Part Harmony*, scheduled for March 30. The third presentation is a documentary on the use of stories and storytelling instruments of social healing after the 1984 Rwandan genocide, entitled *In Rwanda We Say... The Family That Does Not Speak Dies*, scheduled for April 20.



Photo courtesy of Peter Kareithi

"This is my message for PSH -- expand your horizon," said Charles Cantalupo, PSU professor Schuylkill. Cantalupo is very active in expanding the minds of American college students.

Students cut a rug for kids with cancer



Photos by Kathryn Herr

Jackie Agitto, senior Communications major at Penn State Abington, plays with some of the toys provided for the dancers and the kids. Penn State Hazelton was the largest donating satellite campus.



Jason Schmitt, junior, Communications Sciences and Disorders major University Park, spends time with Brayden King, 6, a Four Diamonds kid. Brayden is sponsored by the Speech Language and Hearing Association and the Sign Language Organization.

THON cont'd from 1

in the stands and on the floor due to color-coordinating shirts. On Sunday night, the stands appeared to be blocks of color with the sponsors matching shirts. Most of the shirts had sayings on the back such as "Fighting for the Kids," "THON 4 Ashley" or "Embracing Dreams for Ian and Tommy." Many of the kids and their families wear the shirts as well to match their sponsors.

"Thon represents a new year for Brayden and for our family"

-Carrie Steel King

The first-hand interaction with the kids during THON keeps everyone's mind on the prize at the end of the 48th hour said Rosario.

Over 140 Four Diamonds families registered to attend THON this year, according to Patty Shertzer, office manager for Four Diamonds Fund at Hershey. For many parents it is therapeutic to see the support of Penn State for their child.

"THON represents a new year for Brayden and for our family," said King. "We wait all year for this."

"You're not only making a big impact on someone else's life," said Millard. "You're making a big impact on your own."

THON is a very emotional time for both students and families. 'Family hour' is held late in the last day to help dancers remember what they were dancing for and pull them through to the end. During 'family hour' each family is introduced to the dancers and the crowd in the stands. Two mothers spoke to the audience and told the story of their child's fight for life and a video was shown in honor of those children who had lost the battle with cancer. Tears ran down the faces of students as they learned first hand how important THON is to the kids and their families.

Students gathered together to cheer on their dancers. Fraternities, sororities, clubs, organizations, friends and Four Diamonds families rallied around their dancers to drag them through the final hours. As the countdown reached the 7 p.m. marker the dancers fell to the floor, exhausted and ecstatic.

"I'm really glad I danced this year," said Rosario. "It was a great experience."



This dancer is showing support for the kids with a catchy slogan on his dancer shirt. He actually wore a kilt during the whole 48 hour dance-a-thon. Many students chose to put something on their shirts stating why they were dancing or who they were dancing for.



Students raise their hands as part of the THON 2005 line dance. The line dance is inspiring to the crowd in the stands, Four Diamonds families, and students to see how many people have been brought together for one great cause.

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