

Dancers compete for bid to nationals

By Hannah Rishel
FOR THE COLLEGIAN



Amanda August/Collegian

Students from University of California-Irvine compete during "Dandia on Fire" on Saturday night in Eisenhower Auditorium.

Candy cane Christmas decorations and giant lollipops might seem out of place at an Indian dance competition, but they helped one team receive a bid to a national competition Saturday night.

Hoosiers Raas, Indiana University's Garba/Raas team, got its ticket to Raas Stars: National Championship when it won the "Dandia on Fire" competition with its Candyland-themed performance.

Held in Eisenhower Auditorium and featuring 10 teams, the annual event has been hosted at Penn State for the past three years. The winner goes on to nationals to compete against other teams that have won similar regional competitions.

Garba/Raas is a combination of two Indian dances: Garba, a traditional dance where the performers move in a circular pattern while making sweeping arm motions and clapping their hands; and Raas, which uses wooden

dowel props called dandia. There are more than 50 collegiate Garba/Raas teams across the country that compete in various annual competitions like Dandia on Fire, according to dandiaonfire.com.

In addition to the dandia, teams also included various props showcasing the theme or story its dance was based around. Each team wore matching costumes in various vivid hues.

George Washington University's GW Raas team received second place for a routine that used the dance's sweeping arm motions as the hands on a clock.

Vera Mark, assistant professor of French and linguistics, said she attended Dandia on Fire last year. "I came back this year because of the quality and enthusiasm," Mark said. "I really appreciate the opportunity to see different cultures."

Stand-up comedian Rajiv Satyal hosted the event and also

performed part of his routine to a crowd that braved the winter elements to attend.

Competing were teams from New York University, University of North Carolina, Indiana University, Drexel University, University of California at Irvine, University of Pennsylvania, University of Pittsburgh, George Washington University and two-time Dandia on Fire champions University of Maryland. Penn State did not compete.

Also performing, but not competing, were two exhibition teams: three different age groups of the State College Kids group performing elementary levels of Garba/Raas and the breakdancing crew Raw Ascetic Movement (RAM) Squad, a Penn State student organization.

All ticket proceeds went to the Interfraternity Council/Panhellenic Dance Marathon (THON) and the Association of Indian Development.

Student musicians play benefit concert

By Renée Guida
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER



It was all for the kids. That's what host Tim Hartman said to kick off Friday's benefit concert — sponsored by the Penn State Songwriters Club — for the Interfraternity Council/Panhellenic Dance Marathon.

Student musicians performed for about 40 audience members in Paul Robeson Cultural Center's Heritage Hall, with all ticket sales going to THON.

"It's great," Hartman (sophomore-theatre) said. "Any excuse to get good musicians to play good music to people. But if you get to do it for a good cause, too, it's one of the best things you could probably do."

The night spanned across several genres and included keyboards, electric guitars, drums and acoustic guitars. Fans heard a melody of finger tapping and slapping from one musician in particular.

"My music is more focused on different guitar techniques," guitarist Jeremy Fretz (sophomore-supply chain and information systems) said.

Fretz played three songs, including a new untitled song well received by the audience.

Hartman, a member of Full Ammo Improv, used his improvising techniques to get the crowd excited in between performanc-

es, giving them a short autobiography at one point.

Penn State Songwriters Club President Brian Walker (junior-psychology) said the show aimed to highlight appreciation for original music and make sure it exists outside of the bar scene. The types of artists who performed Friday appeal to different types of audiences, he said.

Sam Christie-Sgro, fill-in drummer for the band In Other News, said the band has a hard, punk and edgy sound to it. He said the diversity of sounds from all the artists could be appreciated by everyone.

"I feel like anyone can come to the show and they'll find an act they like, because everyone's styles are so diverse," Christie-Sgro (junior-information sciences and technology) said.

In Other News vocalist Sean Patten started out the performance grabbing the audience's attention, saying, "And now, for something different."

"The first song was about not kissing girls, and now the second song is about not kissing girls. What's up with that?" Patten said to a chuckling crowd.

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'Wizard of Oz', Pink Floyd combine

By Kristen Karas
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

Rachel Friedman stood outside the State Theatre on Friday night dressed head to toe as the Wicked Witch of the West.

Despite the snow, Friedman (junior-kinesiology) wanted to see the midnight showing of "Dark Side of Oz," a "Wizard of Oz" and Pink Floyd remix.

Friedman said "The Dark Side of the Moon" is one of her favorite albums, and "The Wizard of Oz" always made her emotional as a child. Before the show, she attempted to make "yellow brick road pasta" and "dark side of the moon cakes."

"I wanted to get the biggest pic-

ture," she said. "I wanted to see how it all came together."

Before Friedman queued up outside, an almost-full theater caught the 9:30 p.m. showing of "Dark Side of Oz" — an experimental film that plays a muted "Wizard of Oz" dubbed over with Pink Floyd's album "The Dark Side of the Moon," played two and a half times.

The film and album are said to sync up perfectly at many points, such as the movements of the Lollipop Guild in time to the song "Us and Them," and Dorothy stepping out into color as the song "Money" begins.

Hannah Morris decided to see the film after attempting to sync it up herself in high school.

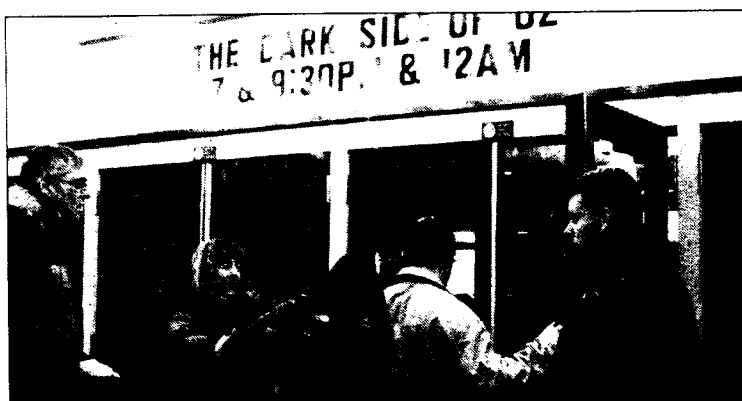
"We didn't have it exactly right," Morris (senior-public relations) said. "I wanted to see it officially done."

Before the film began, Tony Ricciardi, program director for 93.7 The Bus — which sponsored the event — asked the crowd how many people were seeing the film for the first time. Almost the entire audience raised its hands.

The audience stayed vocal throughout the film, and comments such as "that was nuts" or "it's just so weird" could be heard among laughter.

Fans were generally excited by how well the film and album matched up.

"It worked every single time perfectly," Zach Balton (sopho-



Christine Reckner/Collegian

Despite the snowfall, moviegoers braved the storm to watch "The Dark Side of Oz" at the State Theatre on Friday night.

more-information sciences and technology) said.

Aside from the film itself, the music was the biggest draw for some fans.

"It's something you can really feel — something you can relate to," Morris said. "It's timeless."

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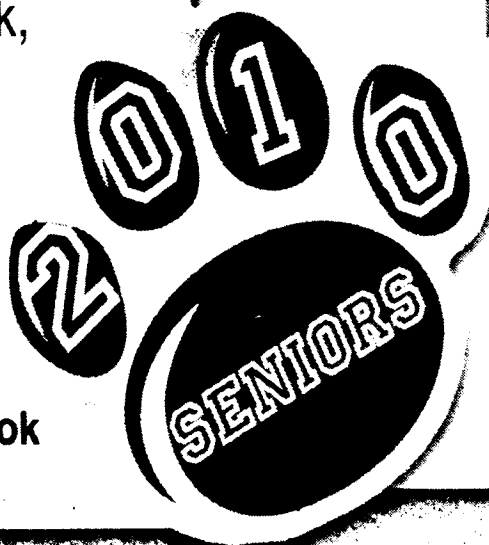
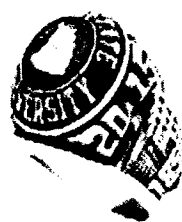
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