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Showcase brings cultures together

By MILEYDI GUILARTE
Contributing Writer

Asian culture filled the Ballroom at the Reitz Union on Wednesday.

In commemoration of the 1997 Asian Kaleidoscope, the Asian Showcase was held to promote Asian culture and awareness.

Sophomore Rosalyn Ayson, co-director of Kaleidoscope, said the focus of this year's activities is to promote cultural entertainment.

"We wanted the event to be a night of entertainment," Ayson said. "Not just another night of long speeches about racial issues."

Just like a kaleidoscope, the Asian Showcase reflected an endless variety of the different Asian cultures — all under one roof.

One of the various presentations, "Traditional Korean Fan Dance" performed by the Korean Undergraduate Student Association, portrayed a midsummer day where girls — dressed in gossamer dresses with embroidered decorations — played in the harvest fields instead of doing their work.

"We wanted as much diversity as possible," said Marilyn Fong Yee, co-director of Kaleidoscope. "The key is to have fun while learning something."

Asian Showcase is dedicated to recognizing and celebrating the beauty and talents of Asian cultures, Yee said.

Although differences are found throughout the Asian cultures, they have one thing in common.

"One thing we share is that we all have very strong family honor," Yee said. "We are similar but yet different in our costumes, food and language."

Kavitha Pasem, a member of the Indian Student Organization, said she was honored to be a part of the event. For the first time, ISO was part of the Asian Showcase.

"I wanted the Indian culture to shine through with my performance," Pasem said.

The Filipino Student Association performed a hula dance.

Bora-Bora, a performance done by the FSA, had a group of girls with flowered skirts and flower necklaces move to the beat of the music while guys with bamboo-string skirts danced around them.

"This year we wanted to perform something different that people wouldn't think is the traditional 'mad-hula dance,'" said sophomore Noelle Moore, UF student and dance director of FSA.