

Kaleidoscope month to celebrate Asian culture

By Lawrence Wise
Alligator Writer

Contortionists and men dressed up like a dancing lion will highlight tonight's performance of Chinese entertainment in the Reitz Union Ballroom.

Entertainment also will include performances of the Peking Opera, Chinese acrobats, music, magic acts and martial arts. The 7:30 p.m. event is part of Asian Kaleidoscope at UF, event director Lynn Li said.

The Kaleidoscope is a month devoted to celebrating Asian culture.

"It will be a great show," said Julia Akman, president of the Asian Student Union. "It's a chance to learn about different Asian performances and cultures."

The performers come from Splendid China — a theme park in Kissimmee devoted to Chinese culture — and the Flying Dragons. The Flying Dragons are performers that work with Splendid China.

The contortionists will be Wang Xue, a 14-year-old member of the Heilongjiang Acrobatic Troupe, and her partner Feing Fei.

There also will be a lion dance during the performance. The dance, which is commonly associated with the Chinese New Year, entails the "lion" leaping and rolling around in "playful frolic," Li said.

Tonight's performance of the Peking Opera will include dramatizations of a young girl who learns how to be a warrior,

joins in battle and becomes a general, Li said. Another performance will describe a girl's first love. The Peking Opera originated in China in the 19th century, Li said.

Martial artists will perform the Qi Gong technique of the "focusing of energy, showcasing of strength and endurance of the human spirit," Li said.

The event, which is free and open to the public, should last about two hours, Akman said.

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