

Weeklong festival celebrates multiculturalism

By Travis Langdon
Arts and Entertainment Editor

In an attempt to raise multicultural awareness and promote international student experiences, several departments and organizations on and off campus sponsored the second annual International Festival Series, which is taking place throughout the week.

The idea to create such an event took root last spring as part of the Year of Globalization and Diversity, although the scope of the festival has increased substantially since then. Last year, the festival took place entirely in one day, which, according to Joanna Iwata, director of the Benson University Center, limited the amount of activities that could be offered.

"Last year I was appropriated funding to organize the event for the theme year, and what we put together was a full day of food, entertainment and music. Paul Escott (a dean of the college) came to the festival, and he was so impressed that he decided it should continue," Iwata said.

"Once we started organizing this year, we decided to expand upon the format. We added a film series, information sessions for international career opportunities and study abroad programs, more performers and other multicultural opportunities."

These new attractions were made possible by the cooperative efforts of the different groups that sponsored the event. Iwata said the majority of the funding for the festival came from the Center for International Studies and the Office of the Dean of the College but that the contributions of the Office of Multicultural Affairs, Career Services, Student Union and Benson were integral in putting the program together. Each of these groups was able to generate new ideas for the festival and improve upon old ones.

One of the highlights of the week is the continued effort to provide a tasty array of regionally diverse cuisine all over campus. In addition to food prepared specifically for festival-goers, the Pit has featured Chinese, Caribbean and Greek food so far this week, with European food on today's menu. March 31 will end the school week with a chance for students to try Filipino dishes at the Pit throughout the day.

Another new event in this year's festival was the International Film Series, which took place March 27-29. The first feature was *Shall We Dance?*, a comic love story from award-winning filmmaker, Masayuki Suo. Receiving rave reviews at the 1996 Cannes

Film Festival, the work tells the story of ordinary Japanese people whose stories come to life through their ballroom dance lessons.

The series continued March 28 with a presentation of *Run Lola Run*, a hip new German film about a woman who battles the clock to find money that would save her lover's life.

The final movie of the series, Brazilian film *Central Station*, tells the story of a boy's search for his father after his mother is killed front of Rio de Janeiro's Central Station and the people he meets on his journey. Like all of the other events in the festival, the films in the series were shown for free. Iwata said that this is made possible by the fact that so many groups helped sponsor the festival.

Although the film series ended March 29, the bulk of the week's festivities have yet to come. Benson 401 will be the setting for the remainder of the festival's events, which are scattered throughout the weekend.

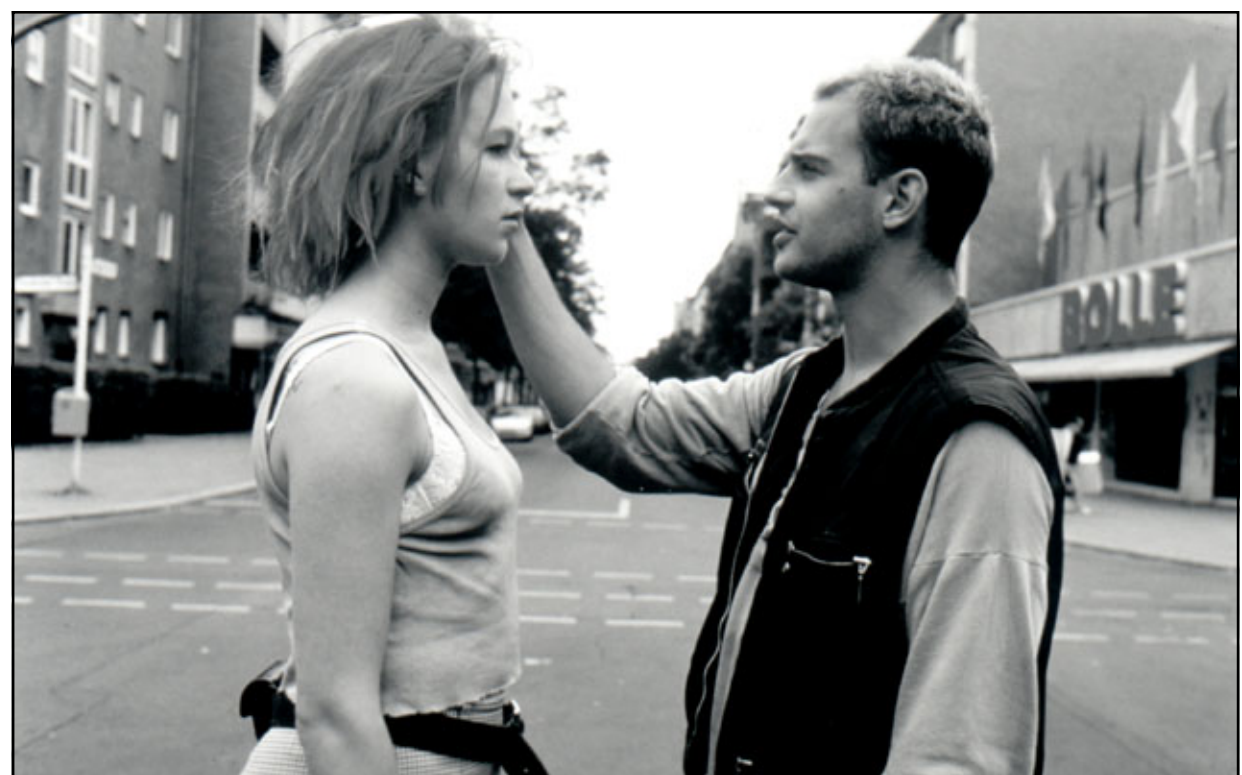
Sponsored by Career Services, today's activities are centered around international employment. Three panels of speakers will meet from 3 - 6 p.m. to present information about international organizations and describe their experiences with them. The panels will also answer questions about studying abroad.

This theme will carry over to March 31 when representatives from the university's study abroad programs will offer information to interested students. This portion of the afternoon will include information from members of student organizations that offer volunteer service programs out of the country. The groups will gather from 2 - 4 p.m.

The weekend also marks the beginning of the live entertainment that will be offered in the festival. Winston-Salem's Otesha Creative Arts Ensemble will offer free instruction of basic African Dance from 5:30 - 6:45 p.m. and the West End Mambo band will perform Latin music from 9:00 p.m. to midnight March 31.

The International Festival culminates April 1 with an all-day celebration of diversity that encompasses a little bit of everything. To tickle your ears, the festival will present the music of a Caribbean steel drum band called Shadz and a mariachi band called Los Viajeros. Traditional dance of China, India and Native America will accompany a performance by the Triad Irish Dancers and a repeat appearance of the Otesha Creative Arts Ensemble.

Demonstrations of different cultural traditions will also be available on April 1. Among the attrac-



Courtesy of www.movies.yahoo.com

Lola (Franka Potenta) runs through the city trying to collect enough money to save the life of her boyfriend, Manni (Maritz Bleibtren) in *Run, Lola, Run*. This German movie was just one of many internationally-themed offerings during the International Festival.

Still to come ...

Friday, March 31

Campus Study Abroad & International Volunteer Service Opportunities. Benson 401, from 2-4 p.m.

African Dance Workshop with the Otesha Creative Arts Ensemble. Benson, 401, from 5:30-6:45 p.m.

West End Mambo will perform a dazzling array of Latin-influenced music. Benson 401, from 9 p.m. to midnight.

Saturday, April 1

The Festival continues in Benson 401 from 1:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. with food, exhibits, music and other performances from campus groups, community members and faculty.

'WWF SmackDown!' goes hardcore on Playstation

By Justin Kendall
U-Wire

The World Wrestling Federation has come back to Playstation, and it's bringing more than just an updated roster of characters. THQ's first WWF game for the Playstation, "WWF SmackDown!", brings to life the soap opera story lines, backstage brawls and in ring madness that fuels the WWF's weekly television shows.

"SmackDown!" features 36 WWF superstars including the Rock and Stone Cold Steve Austin. Each superstar is superbly detailed with all of the taunts, mannerisms, motions and finishing moves. The Rock's "People's Elbow" even features the character removing his

elbow pad and throwing it to the crowd before bouncing off the ropes and dropping the crushing elbow.

The game features an arcade style of play that is fast and easy, so anyone can pick up a controller and play. Twelve match styles are available including the innovative "Special Referee" match, which allows the player to assume the role of the referee and either play fair or cheat enemies out of the win.

THQ also borrowed a page from EA Sports' "WCW Mayhem," allowing players to take the battle backstage in "Anywhere Falls" and "Hardcore" matches.

"SmackDown!" improves upon the concept, allowing gamers to continuously move through the backstage areas such as the kitchen

and the boiler room, pummeling each other with a variety of weapons including shopping carts and steel chairs.

"SmackDown!" also allows you to "Create-A-Superstar." You choose all the attributes of your character including appearance, personality, fighting style and moves. You can even play Dr. Frankenstein and combine body parts from different WWF superstars to make the ultimate ringmaster.

The excitement intensifies following the creation of your own superstar. Before your superstar can battle for the WWF Championship in the "Season," you must prove you are worthy to WWF impresario Vince McMahon in the "Pre-Season." Throughout the "Pre-Sea-

son," your superstar will be given advice by other wrestlers and have the option to either thank them and become allies or tell them to shut up and become the target of their aggression.

The lack of an announcer in favor of generic music detracts from the overall game, becoming stale and insanely tiresome after about the tenth match.

"SmackDown" overcomes its faults, however, and goes where no other wrestling game has gone before, offering story lines and the opportunity to form alliances and make enemies.

Justin Kendall writes for the Iowa State Daily, the student newspaper at Iowa State University



Courtesy of www.flecktones.com

Ban Jovi

Bela Fleck, an expert banjo player, will appear with the Flecktones at 7:30 p.m. April 10 in Wait Chapel. Tickets are still on sale from Student Union for \$18.

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