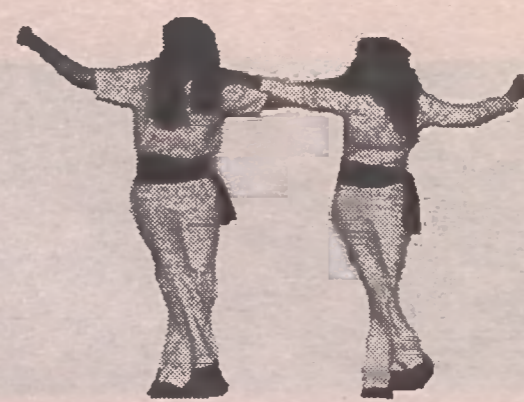
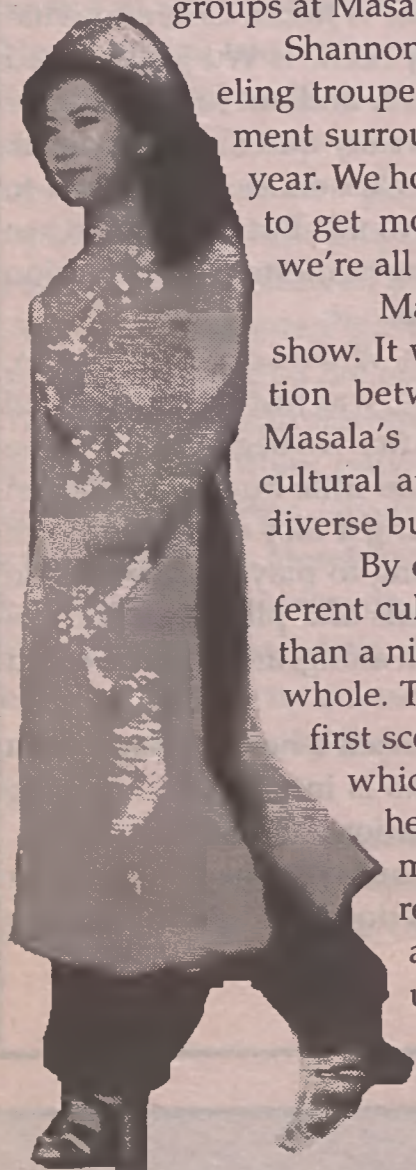


MASALA



by Ginny Yu

The third annual MASALA made their way to the Great Hall in the Union to showing off fifteen student groups in a night of fashion, dance, poetry and destruction. The destruction of stereotypes, that is. It was the annual Masala cultural fashion show. Expectations were both positive and enthusiastic before the show. ASA cultural committee chair, Michele Liu, said she looked forward to the event. "The group anticipates that when ASA teams up with other campus groups at Masala, it will be a great show," she said.



Shannon Goodrum, a member of the multicultural modeling troupe cONcEpt of Colors, also expressed the excitement surrounding the program. "This is our first show this year. We hope to have a big crowd," she said. "We also hope to get more supporters and give out our message that we're all Americans."

Masala began two years ago as a cultural fashion show. It was started as a unique way to promote interaction between different cultural groups. Neil Bagchi, Masala's co-president, described the situation on UNC's cultural atmosphere at that time. "Our campus was very diverse but there was no pluralism," he said.

By establishing pluralism and social ties among different cultural groups, the Masala event seeks to be more than a night of fashion - it's purpose is to unify UNC as a whole. This theme of unity was strongly conveyed in the first scene of Masala called the "Rainbow of Colors," in which members of every participatory student group held hands on stage. They discussed the positive meanings of what each color of the spectrum represents, concluding with the metaphor that just as all colors unite to form light, all races need to unite to achieve peace.

After a long wait in darkness, the individual

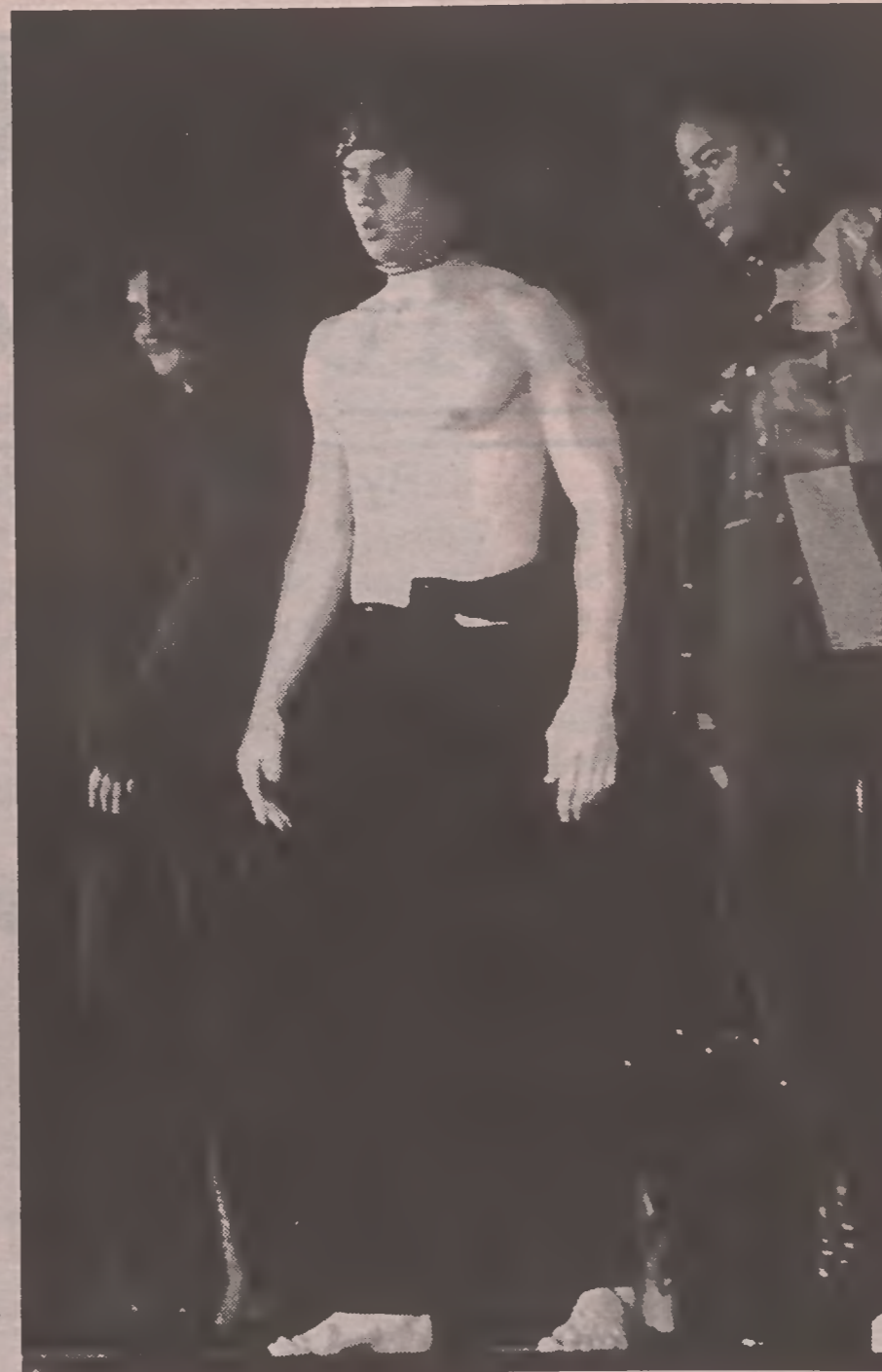
group performances began, bringing in a more light-hearted mood. This year Asian Student Association, Vietnamese Students Association, Korean Students Association and the Japan Club joined forces in a "trip to the Orient." It began with our guys in suit and tie, a dancing to that hit Usher song, followed by the entrance of the girls, who donned native costumes from China, Japan, Vietnam, the Phillipines, Korea, Laos and many other Asian lands. The last segment consisted of very "flirty" girl and guy couples - a pimp and a nice concluding "butt grab" by Chi Dang.

For a fashion show, Masala included a lot of dance and music. CHispA's, the Hispanic students association, presentation began with Carmen Mirandaeque fashions from the Carribean, and in the course of ten minutes, brought in flamenco dancers, fan-toting Madrilenas, and concluded with a sultry tango and a well-orchestrated group dance. The vivid colors of the costumes, the energy and motion of the participants combined with quick-changing slides in the background was a feast for the eyes. cONcEpt (of colors), UNC's multicultural fashion club, strolled down the runway with polish and confidence.

Perhaps the strongest statement against prejudice and stereotypes during this event was made by the Black Students' Movement. In their segment entitled "Black Is, Black Ain't," members portrayed the "big Mama," "Al Jolson," welfare mother, gangsta, hoochie, "Black American Princess" and athlete stereotypes, with the intention of dispelling such views. Instead BSM wanted to show what Black really is: a doctor, a business man, a student, a teacher and a preacher. Sangam co-chair Rachana Sura said that Masala's goals were definitely met. "Masala brings together a variety of organizations to educate the campus on the cultures of these organizations," Sura said.

KASA president, Francis An, hoped that Masala made an impact on the community and on campus. "Hopefully this event will enrich the community and help (end) racial tension," he said.

Hellenic Students Association president, Takie Hondros, had a different opinion about the purpose of Masala - that it would draw attention to the uniqueness of each cultural group. "Yes, it does promote multiculturalism, but personally I'm more into pluralism, knowing each group is different," Hondros said. "(These) differences tie us together."



cONcEpt of colors strut their model skills on the MASALA runway.

A fashion journey to the Orient shows traditional costumes.