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Comedy, music and dance light up Diwali festival

Monday, November, 1, 2010; 9:52 PM | [17](#) | [ShareThis](#) | [Print](#)

by [Majoni Harnal](#), features reporter

The Indian Student Association rang in Diwali, the Festival of Lights, with a night of lively music and dancing.

Diwali celebrates the victory of good over evil — in Hindu mythology, Lord Ram returned from exile after defeating the demon king Ravan. In more recent times, Diwali is celebrated as a harvest festival, occurring in either October or November of each year, marked by lighting candles, eating sweets and spending time with family.

Virginia Tech's ISA chose to celebrate this holiday with a mixture of music and dance. Indian food and a bright display of fireworks.

Comedian Rajiv Satyal emceed for the night, opening the show and providing entertainment between student performances. Satyal's jokes touched upon many themes familiar to Indian-Americans, such as miscommunication with parents and the difficulties of balancing being Indian and American at the same time.

Although some of his material was typical, addressing the issues of immigrant families in America and cultural mismatches, Satyal earned laughter from his audience by touching upon these issues with his own voice.

As Satyal wound down his initial material, he introduced the musical ensemble Dhobi Ghaat Blues. This student group made of up eight students played instruments and sang three classic songs from the previous decades. Their song choices reflected their audience — an infamous song from a 1972 Bollywood movie and another from 2006. The lead male's vocals were the perfect choice for the genre and received loud cheers from the audience.

Following the Dhobi Ghaat Blues were the children from Balvihar. A small group of Blacksburg children performed the traditional dance, Bharata Natyam, and a larger group performed to a mix of old and new songs. The children of Balvihar also acted out a skit explaining the festival for those who didn't know its significance.

The rest of the night consisted of a series of dances. First up was Dhingana, a group of animated performers demonstrating a folk dance from the state of Maharashtra.

Up next was another folk dance display by Tech's Bhangra. This time hailing from the north, Bhangra dancers brought to light the extremely enthusiastic and upbeat dance and music from Punjab. Their colorful outfits, accompanying props and lively Bhangra songs resonated with the crowd.

Following Bhangra was Filmi Rog, a Bollywood dance group. Hindi movies and the corresponding music are integral parts of life in India, and any cultural show would be incomplete without a Filmi number. The dance included a quick costume change, reminiscent of a Hindi movie, and a mix of fusion dance moves.

Contrasting the modern moves of Filmi Rog was Indian Classical Fusion, a group of seven girls performing in the styles of Bharata Natyam and Kuchipudi. Both dances are classical types from South India and require years of training and dedication to master. ICF performed a mix of the two styles in combination with modern attire and music to entertain the younger generation.

Rounding off the night was Dancilla, a recently formed dance group at Tech. Performing a variety of styles of Indian and western dance to a variety of music, Dancilla lit the stage, depicting the meaning of the holiday.



Diwali, also known as the Festival of Lights, was brought to life last week on Tech's campus through a variety of colorful performances

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A fireworks display on the Drillfield followed the show along with an authentic Indian meal.

17 COMMENTS

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Anonymous | # November 2, 2010 @ 5:47 PM – [Flag Comment](#)

YESSSSSSSSSS! VT BHANGRA! BRUUAHHH! amazing show, props to ISA

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Anonymous | # November 2, 2010 @ 5:55 PM – [Flag Comment](#)

VT Bhangra Represent!!

Rajiv Satyal was AMAZING! Good job ISA!!

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:) | # November 2, 2010 @ 5:57 PM – [Flag Comment](#)

AMAZING JOB ISA!
wonderful performance by everyone!
specially enjoyed VT Bhangra! Your team's energy was phenomenal!

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Anonymous | # November 2, 2010 @ 6:05 PM – [Flag Comment](#)

VT BHANGRA KILLED IT AT THE PERFORMANCE!!

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Anonymous | # November 2, 2010 @ 7:29 PM – [Flag Comment](#)

Loved Dhingana!

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pq | # November 2, 2010 @ 7:30 PM – [Flag Comment](#)

Yea I loved their costumesssss! Bright and colorful

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Oliver | # November 2, 2010 @ 7:50 PM – [Flag Comment](#)

I loved the finale dance and Dancilla girls. There were awesome, especially the girls in Red Costume. They danced so well.

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Anonymous | # November 2, 2010 @ 7:51 PM – [Flag Comment](#)

Dhobighaat Blues were awesome ! I wanna hear more from them!

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Anonymous | # November 2, 2010 @ 7:55 PM – [Flag Comment](#)

VT BHANGRA was just MIND BLOWING! I'm so glad that Tech has such an enthusiastic and vibrant Indian dance team!! Good job guys! :)

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Anonymous | # November 2, 2010 @ 8:09 PM – [Flag Comment](#)

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ICF were probably the best of the show. They were more coordinated than any others :).

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Anonymous | # November 2, 2010 @ 9:58 PM — [Flag Comment](#)

Yea but they just exited without giving a chance to clap for them! That was disappointing.

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Anonymous | # November 2, 2010 @ 10:12 PM — [Flag Comment](#)

Liked the Dhingana guys and girls! Really different from what Ive seen so far at Diwali. Hope to see them next year as well.
VT Bhangra great energy as always.

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girl in red top (Dancilla) | # November 2, 2010 @ 10:26 PM — [Flag Comment](#)

@anonymous- hey, thnx for ur appreciation..we're a recently formed group..and hopefully will continue to perform in future and entertain VT crowds :-)

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Anonymous | # November 2, 2010 @ 10:25 PM — [Flag Comment](#)

Dancilla girls were awesome and they rocked. Best of the lot...great sync and awesome choreography!

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Anonymous | # November 2, 2010 @ 10:26 PM — [Flag Comment](#)

Superliked Dancilla girls

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Anonymous | # November 2, 2010 @ 10:48 PM — [Flag Comment](#)

Loved the entire show, came to be entertained and that's exactly what I got plus the awesome dinner and fireworks was extra special. Great job ISA.

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Anonymous | # November 3, 2010 @ 1:46 PM — [Flag Comment](#)

The essence of the show were the musical group at the start, the indian classical fusion act and the VT Bhangra performance. This was my first time at any Indian Cultural Show and it was the above three acts that I actually liked much more than the other.

Others were good too, (the one in which girls were dressed up in pink and blue sarees almost made it to the top three :D)

The show got a bit boring towards the end (just a bit, my own opinion). But all in all it was a very well organised show cheers to the Indian Student Association.

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