



Life

ASIAN NITE 2026:

A ‘Wicked’ Good Time

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KConn performs during Asian Nite at the Jorgensen Center for the Performing Arts on Feb. 28, 2026. The talent show hosted by the Asian American Cultural Center featured multiple student groups and acts that showcased Pan-Asian cultures.

PHOTOGRAPH BY MAK BLAKE, GRAB PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

The University of Connecticut Asian American Cultural Center (AsACC) held its annual Asian Nite on Saturday, Feb. 28 at the Jorgensen Center for the Performing Arts.

Founded in 1993, AsACC is a space where Asian and Asian American students can find community and celebrate their culture. Since 1994, their annual Asian Nite showcases pan Asian culture from 11 student groups on campus. This year, acts included traditional dance, musical fusion acts and singing.

Doors opened on Friday at 7 p.m. Shortly after, emcees Eliana Chun and Sahnavi Palimar kicked off the night by welcoming viewers to the event. Dressed in green and pink, they emulated Cynthia Erivo and Ariana Grande and referenced the actresses’ “Wicked” interviews with their comedy skits.

Palimar, a sixth semester physiology and neurobiology major, has been a part of Asian Nite since her freshman year.

“I went as a performer in my freshman year, with UConn Udaan,” Palimar said. “I was a part of the audience in my sophomore year. That’s when I knew that Asian Nite is so important, seeing each of the diverse, dynamic teams performing. It’s not just singing, not just dancing, but telling a story that is weaved by those teams. Being up there with them was definitely amazing.”

UConn a capella group A Minor performed first, with renditions of “Cherry Wine” by Greentperez and “Smokin Out The Window” by Silk Sonic. G!F Studio, a Chinese dance company, followed, performing dance involving different Chinese ethnic traditions including Mongolian, Miao and Han.

Sanskriti Shakti, the dance aspect of UConn Sanskriti dedicated to promoting Indian classical arts on campus, performed next. They performed a mix of classical Indian dance, including Bharatnatyam, Odissi and Kuchipudi, to tell the powerful story of Panna Dhai, a 16th-century Rajput nursemaid who sacrificed her own son to save the crown prince.

Roshni Yousuf, a fourth semester data science and engineering major, sang and played guitar in a musical fusion between English and Bangla, through which she embraced the duality of her mixed identity.

“Growing up, I didn’t embrace both sides of my identity equally,” Yousuf said. “I used to be ashamed of my culture growing up in a society that didn’t share that with me. Coming into campus, I wanted to change that and engage with who I am. I started to engage more with cultural organizations on campus, and it empowered me to start singing in Bangla for the first time.”

Afterwards, the Nepali Student Association (NSA) danced in pairs to Nepali music, and T Huskies Taekwondo performed poomsae (taekwondo patterns), weaponry and taekwondo fight scenes, ending with a playful

dance to “Gangnam Style” by Psy.

Brett Newman, a fourth semester math major, is the demo team captain at T Huskies Taekwondo.

“We have a lot of fun with it,” Newman said. “We like to try things out. I’ve been doing taekwondo since I was 11, but the team is open to everyone.”

After Intermission, the Filipino American Student Association (FASA) performed tinikling, a dance involving two people tapping bamboo poles on the ground with another dancer jumping above. FASA ended with a performance of “Milkshake” by Kelis, paying tribute to the choreography of girl group KATSEYE’s only Filipina member, Sophia.

Husky Bhangra followed, dancing to high-energy songs in Punjabi. In their dance, they

used several traditional props, including the saap, a musical clapper and the khunda, which is a long stick.

Sanskriti Sadhana, who is the singing aspect of UConn Sanskriti, sang classical Indian music, accompanied by a violin and a tabla, a pair of hand drums that provided rhythm to the tune.

After 10 years, the Vietnamese Student Association (VSA) made their inspired comeback, dancing to both Vietnamese and American music with Vietnamese hand fans. The audience was invited to participate by chanting and clapping along with the performance.

Valerie Chu, an eighth-semester data science major, has attended Asian Nite since her freshman year, and performed in her first Asian Nite this year with the VSA.

“VSA hasn’t performed at

Asian Nite for years,” Chu said. “We decided to do Asian Nite this year so that we could showcase our fan dance and showcase our culture for the first time in a really long time.”

Husky Hungama performed an acapella medley of “Finesse” by Bruno Mars and “Badtameez Dil” by Benny Dayal. English and Hindi lyrics were sung at the same time, fusing two cultures together for a harmonious sound.

Finally, KCONN rounded out the event with a performance of “Super,” by K-pop boy group Seventeen. The audience cheered at the stunts and KCONN’s infectious energy.

Bridget Dolan, a fourth semester computer science major, has been a part of KCONN since her first semester at UConn.

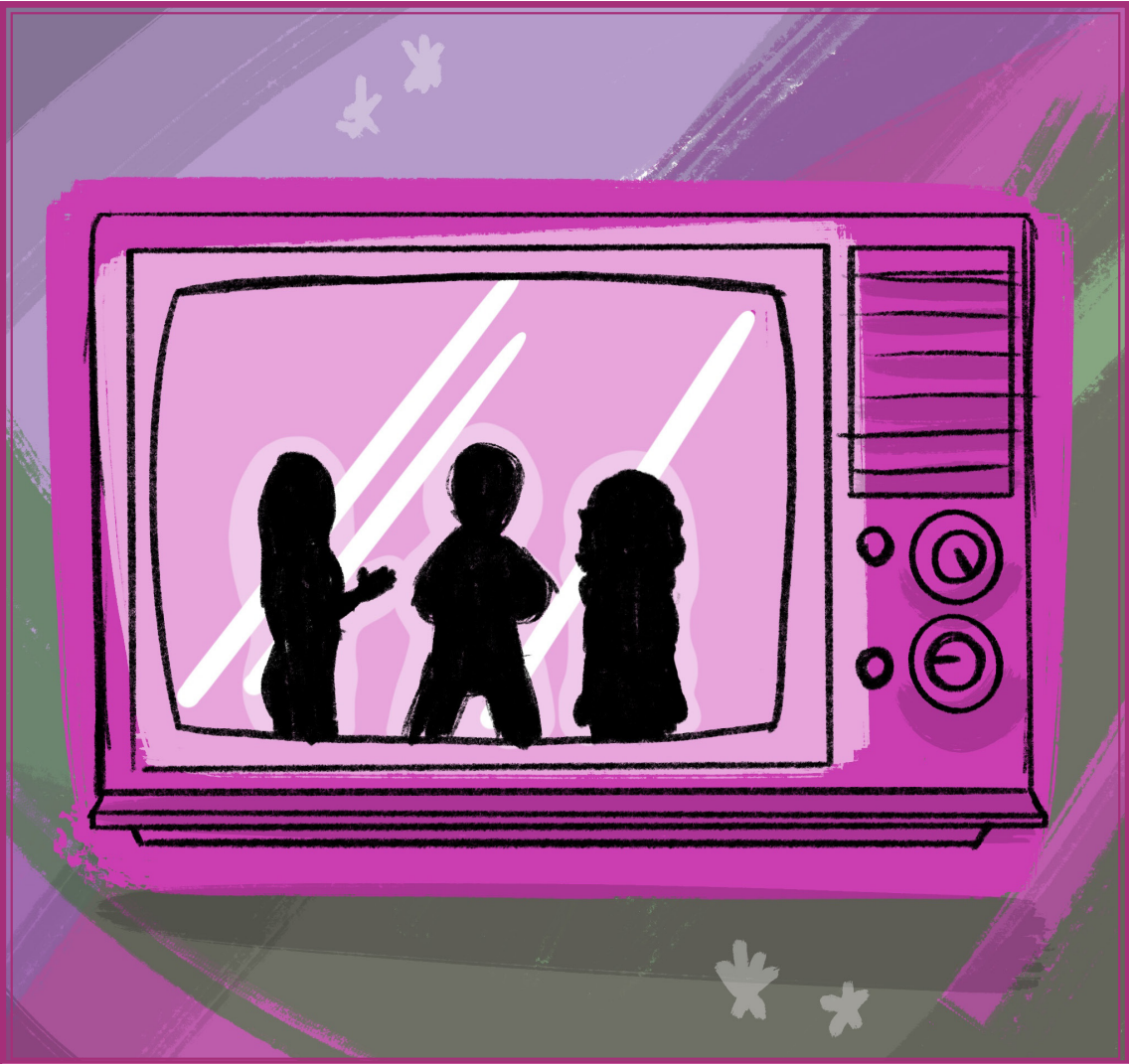
“Being a part of KCONN is great because everyone is so supportive,” Dolan said. “Even in preparing for Asian Nite, I could always go up to anyone and ask for help.”

The night ended with a thank you to AsAAC graduate assistants Tristan Moreau and Emi Yamasaki and to Pan Asian Council Coordinator Jennifer Zhang. Flowers were presented to the Asian Nite team to congratulate them on the success of the night and all their hard work.

Elena Hartley, an eighth-semester mechanical engineering major, attended the event for the first time.

“I’ve never been before,” Hartley said. “It was fun seeing everyone’s performances together, especially because many of the clubs are ones that I haven’t have interacted with before.”

“To those who’ve never attended before, you’re really missing out,” Palimar said. “This is AsACC’s biggest cultural event. When you think of UConn, you think of diversity. That’s what this event is about. Storytelling, diversity, culture. There’s something in each performance for everyone, no matter your background. It’s not just something you watch; it’s something you immerse yourself in. If you want to see UConn’s representation of culture, this is the place.”



CARTOON BY CONNOR SZREJNA, STAFF ARTIST/THE DAILY CAMPUS