Dance festival throws a party

By Katelyn Ferral
Staff Writer

DURHAM — The sun was high, the music was loud and the paint was bright at the American Dance Festival’s third annual community block party Sunday.

About 100 people attended the downtown Durham event, which kicks off the 2011 ADF season: “Something New, Something Treasured.”

The festival, which officially begins June 9, will showcase 20 companies throughout 6 ½ weeks of performances at the Durham Performing Arts Center and Duke University. It will also offer dance classes and workshops this summer.

This year’s season includes dance troupes from all over the world performing eight world premieres and five U.S. premieres.

At the block party families and neighbors ate from food trucks, danced, hula-hooped and watched footage from last year’s festival.

“You really get a chance as a dancer to indulge for six weeks, living nothing but dance, experiencing nothing but dance,” said dancer Christiana Barnet-Murphy, 20, who lives in Durham and has been participating in ADF as a student for the past four summers. “... It’s a little bit of heaven.”

The centerpiece of Sunday’s event was the ADF bus, decorated and painted by eight local artists at the event.

The colorful shuttle will

SEE ADF, PAGE 3B
transport about 400 ADF students to and from classes and performances throughout the summer.

Students will learn dance techniques and collaborate with professional dancers and choreographers to create new pieces during ADF.

"It facilitates each individual dancer to become their own artist," Barnett-Murphy said.

ADF also collaborates with community groups throughout the summer, including the Food Bank of Central and Eastern North Carolina and Casbah, a downtown music venue and bar, which hosted an ADF dance party after the block party and will host dance nights on Tuesdays and Saturdays throughout the ADF season.

"ADF is one of the best parts about Durham and the summer," said Jana Bradley, owner of Casbah.

"We're really excited to be a part of it. ... We're hoping to show everyone what a great place Durham is."

Curtis Eller plays with his daughter Daisy, 4, at the ADF party in Durham.

TAKAAKI IWABU
tiwabu@newsobserver.com

ADF also collaborates with community groups throughout the summer, including the Food Bank of Central and Eastern North Carolina and Casbah, a downtown music venue and bar, which hosted an ADF dance party after the block party and will host dance nights on Tuesdays and Saturdays throughout the ADF season.

"ADF is one of the best parts about Durham and the summer," said Jana Bradley, owner of Casbah.

"We're really excited to be a part of it. ... We're hoping to show everyone what a great place Durham is."

katelyn.ferral@newsobserver.com or 919-932-8746