

A Billingham International Folklore Festival of World Dance media item:

FROM BOLIVIA TO BORO WITH LOVE

Macmillan Academy in Middlesbrough welcomed a professional dancer from Bolivia to inspire and work with a group of young aspiring dancers.

Performer and teacher, Yuvel Soria delivered a week-long dance residency organised by the Billingham International Folklore Festival of World Dance (BIFF).

The seven young dancers aged between 11 and 15 years old were taught a fusion of Traditional South American and Contemporary dance...with stunning results!

The theme for the BIFF residency was all about 'encounters' – having people with different backgrounds and techniques all performing together in the dance space at Macmillan Academy.

Billingham International Folklore Festival of World Dance is made possible by support from Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council and Arts Council England through its National Lottery funded Grants for the Arts programme.

BIFF 16 will take place between 13-20 August.

BIFF will be welcoming performers and dance companies from Chile, Egypt, Martinique, Mexico, North Cyprus, Russia, South Korea and the United Kingdom.

Yuvel Soria, said: "it has been really exciting! The young people have responded very well. They are interested in learning new things and trying different styles. We have been working intensively on this new piece for the Festival."

Yuvel, was born and brought up in Bolivia but has been living in Tyne and Wear for the past ten-years. He has a BA (Hons) Contemporary Dance qualification from Newcastle College; and is fully trained in Ballet, Contemporary Dance, Bolivian Dance. Yuvel is an instructor of Latin Folklore and Salsa dancing. He speaks fluent English and Spanish.

Yuvel's dance skills were seen by thousands of people, when he performed in a special ceremony devised for the Great North Run, as the world's largest half marathon celebrated its millionth runner crossing the finishing line.

Yuvel added: "The young dancers have a real drive and desire. They have a lot of talent and skills. When a group is put together with all of those strong components, I personally find that interesting and challenging."

Skye Mills, aged 11 of Macmillan Academy, said: "I've really enjoyed the residency especially the warm up exercises and the breathing techniques. Yuvel is an amazing choreographer. I particularly liked the way he brought his Bolivian culture into the work.

"I'm super excited to dance at the Festival, as it's going to be my first ever time and I'm looking forward to it!"

People can see the results of the contemporary dance residency as the young ladies from Macmillan Academy will be taking part in the 'Dance Gateway' event on Monday 15th August at the Festival

Arena, which is situated in Billingham Town Centre. Tickets are priced at £5 and the show starts at 8pm.

They will be joined on the evening by dancers from Bellamy School of Ballet, Eliot Smith Dance Company, Ballet Folklorico Tupa Marka (Chile) and Ballet La Grana 'Beatriz Ramirez' de Autlan, Jalisco and Mariachi Rosales (Mexico).

Yuvel Soria will be showcasing a piece of work that tells a story about his own personal journeys and creative encounters – as different artistes have influenced him down the years.

The full line up for this year's Billingham International Folklore Festival of World Dance is available at www.billinghamfestival.co.uk

There will be dance shows, workshops, films, artwork exhibitions, sculpture, synchronised swimming ('Synchronised' by Balbir Singh Dance Company – 13th August, Billingham Forum).

Also, the UK premiere of 'Interrupted Souls' by Eliot Smith Company (19th August, Forum Theatre); and "Faces of Dance" by Connor Scott (BBC Young Dancer 2015) and Vidya Patel (Winner in the South Asian Dance Category) – 13th August, Forum Theatre.

The Festival venues include the Festival Arena (town centre), the Billingham Forum Theatre, atrium and swimming pool, Billingham Town Centre Ramp and Middlesbrough Theatre.

The website also has an online box office facility, where people can purchase tickets from www.billinghamfestival.co.uk/store You can follow the Festival on social media via Facebook facebook.com/billinghamworlddancefestival and on Twitter @BillFest

The box office telephone number is 01642 553220 and there's a walk-in box office situated in Billingham Town Centre - 5 West Precinct with the opening times of Monday to Saturday / 10.30am until 2.00pm. People can pay by cheque, postal order or cash.

The Macmillan Academy have put together a lovely video about the BIFF dance residency watch it now www.macmillan-academy.org.uk/news_item.php?id=803

Come on a journey with us as this year's theme is "Portrait of a distant land...across the seas".

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