



## **PRESS RELEASE**

**JUNE 2015**

**Caption - the picture shows performers from last year's Billingham International Folklore Festival of World Dance.**

### **DANCERS DESCEND ON REGION FOR INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL**

HUNDREDS of dancers and thousands of visitors will descend on the North East for an international dance festival.

The Billingham International Folklore Festival of World Dance takes place next month and will see talented performers from across the world entertain audiences for a weeklong programme of events.

Troupes from Brazil, Chile, China, Mexico, the Philippines, Serbia, USA and Sicily are set to arrive in the coming weeks ahead of the festival, which has become a highlight of the region's arts and culture calendar.

Around 10,000 people attended last year's festival and organisers are confident this year's packed programme of events will attract even more.

Artistic Director Olga Maloney said: "The festival is a spectacular display and celebration of dance from performers around the world and we hope this year will be our most successful yet.

"Over 200 dancers from around the world will arrive in the coming weeks and we're already seeing tickets for the various shows selling well.

"It's great for Tees Valley and the North East as a whole to continue to host such a prestigious international festival and we're really looking forward to it starting next month."

Core funding for this year's festival, which takes place from August 8 - 15, has come from Stockton Borough Council, while Arts Council England is funding the contemporary elements of the festival and Awards for All funding a programme to take dancers into care homes in the area.

Cllr Bob Cook, Leader of Stockton Borough Council, said: "The festival is one of the highlights of the area's events programme and we're delighted to once again be funding it. It really puts Tees Valley on the map and brings performers and visitors from all corners of the world, which puts us in the international spotlight for all the right reasons."

Most of the festival concerts and events will be held at the Festival Arena, which this year will be right in the middle of Billingham Town Centre, with other events being held in Middlesbrough Town Hall Crypt, Middlesbrough Theatre and Billingham Forum.

To find out more visit [www.billinghamfestival.co.uk](http://www.billinghamfestival.co.uk) or call 01642 553220.

**ENDS**

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