



PRESS RELEASE

JULY 2015

Caption - .

FESTIVAL ORGANISERS DELIGHTED WITH RESPONSE

HUNDREDS of people have descended on Teesside for the annual Billingham International Folklore Festival of World Dance.

Three days into the event, organisers say that almost 1,000 people have witnessed the talent on display from around the world.

Today, Monday, August 10, saw crowds enjoying the highly-anticipated international concert held at the festival's main arena in Billingham Town Centre from 2.30pm.

Dancers and musicians from Serbia, China, Italy, and the USA, put on dazzling display for the Teesside audience, who which gave a rapturous applause at each interval.

There was a brief pause following a short downpour which soaked the stage, but the audience was not perturbed and waited around for more.

Artistic director of the festival Olga Maloney said: "The response to the festival so far has been excellent.

"The crowd today showed great support after we were rained off for a short time due to the downpours. We had to obviously dry the stage off before the dancers could come back out.

“But, we kept the music playing and dancers went out into the crowd to help keep them entertained. As they say in show business, ‘the show must go on’, and it certainly did!”

The cultural extravaganza is seeing talented performers from across the world entertain audiences for a weeklong programme of events until August 15.

The sports halls of Northfield School, in Billingham, have been transformed into a hub of multi-cultural colourful activity for performers to eat, sleep and rehearse.

The event has become a highlight of the region's arts and culture calendar.

Core funding for this year's festival, which takes place until August 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.

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 or call 01642 553220.

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