



Billingham International *Folklore Festival of World Dance*



Billingham Festival Granted the Inspire mark, the badge of the London 2012 Inspire programme

Billingham International Folklore Festival of World Dance, which will take place from 11th to 18th August 2012, has been granted the Inspire mark by the London 2012 Inspire programme. The London 2012 Inspire programme recognises innovative and exceptional projects that are directly inspired by the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games.



Billingham International Folklore Festival, inspired by 2012 Games, is extending its programme beyond its 48 year history to encompass contemporary dance in addition to its established traditional focus, as well as extending the scope of the Festival beyond Billingham to region-wide and including Dance & Games participation programme with schools prior to the festival, culminating in a dance performance at the Opening Ceremony.

Billingham International Folklore Festival, which is now in its 48th year, is the largest festival of its kind in the UK and one of the oldest festivals in Europe. This annual 8-day long festival, celebrates the diversity and richness of traditional cultures from across the world by bringing together over 300 dancers, musicians, singers and craftsmen from Chile, Colombia, Guadeloupe, Hawaii, Indonesia, North Cyprus, Romania, Russia and UK to promote and demonstrate their artistic work. The Festival concerts will take place at the specially constructed Arena in Billingham Town Centre, Forum Theatre, Billingham, Middlesbrough Theatre and Arc Arts Centre, Stockton, with special events scheduled at Middlesbrough Institute of Modern Arts and Dance City, Newcastle. Outside the main concert programme there will be street performances, dance and music workshops and Uncle BIFF Children's Club.

Seb Coe, Chair of the London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games and Paralympic Games said: 'We want to use the power of the Games to inspire change. The Inspire programme is recognising the work our partners all round the UK are doing to help us achieve this vision. I congratulate everyone involved in *Billingham International Folklore Festival of World Dance* for securing the Inspire mark and wish you every success with your work.'

"We are delighted to have been awarded the Inspire Mark and for the Festival to be recognised and associated with London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, all of the changes we are making to the festival would not be possible without the help and cooperation of the small band of volunteers, who work for the festival year round." -said Joe Maloney, Festival Director.

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(In co-operation with Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council)

Notes to editors

Billingham International Folklore Festival is a registered Charity in England and Wales

About the Inspire programme: The Inspire programme is run by the London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games and Paralympic Games. It is an opportunity for everyone to be a part of the London 2012 Games – a broad participation programme spanning sport participation, education, sustainability, volunteering, and business opportunities & culture. New opportunities are being created to inspire young people and encourage the whole of the UK to join in. The Inspire programme has awarded over 1,400 different projects the Inspire mark.

About London 2012: The London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games are delivered by two key organisations – the London 2012 Organising Committee (LOCOG) and the Olympic Delivery Authority (ODA). LOCOG is responsible for staging a memorable Games in 2012. They will deliver the best possible Olympic and Paralympic Games experience for everyone involved, enabling a lasting legacy and inspiring people to join in. The Olympic Delivery Authority (ODA) is the public body responsible for developing and building the new venues and infrastructure for the Games and converting the Olympic Park for long-term use after the Games. In the summer of 2012, the UK will come alive with the Olympic and Paralympic Games. Find out the latest from the London 2012 blog – london2012.com/blog