

Press Release – 16th July 2012

**NATIONAL DANCE PREMIERE AT BILLINGHAM FESTIVAL
AS KENEISH DANCE PERFORM 'VIGOUR'**



Billingham International Folklore Festival of World Dance is to host the international premiere performance of an innovative triple bill of contemporary dance at Stockton's ARC, giving audiences in the North East the first glimpse of the new production by one of the country's most exciting new dance companies.

Birmingham's Keneish Dance will showcase VIGOUR at ARC on Monday 13th August, performing three, captivating pieces of African contemporary dance before touring to other towns and cities later in the year. Performed by a fierce cast of female dancers, the production draws from vibrant African cultures and experiences of womanhood to create a modern, accessible dance experience that's suitable for all.

Keisha Grant, VIGOUR's Choreographer, said: "Having enjoyed performing in the North East before, I'm pleased to be bringing the first performance of VIGOUR to Stockton and sharing our love of dance in these workshops. The region and ARC in particular, is so supportive of new, innovative performing arts so it's a great place to start our tour. We've rehearsed hard to make sure that people in Stockton feel the same excitement for modern dance that we do and are looking forward to performing all three dances together for the first time."

Entwining dance with Keisha's interests in the visual arts having studied Fine Art at university, VIGOUR includes a unique sculptural installation, created in collaboration with artist Heidi Luker. The cast of four dancers will use expressive movement to integrate the sculptural work into the performance, creating a fusion between the static object and the energy of their bodies. VIGOUR has been created to ensure anyone with an interest in contemporary and street dance, theatre, the visual arts and African culture goes away feeling exhilarated.

Olga Maloney, Artistic Director of Billingham Festival said: "Hosting the premiere of a new piece of contemporary dance from an exciting, new choreographer is very exciting. Audiences in Stockton and visitors coming to us as part of the festival can see a new piece of work performed for the first time, and VIGOUR is a particularly modern, energetic form of dance that's suitable for all audiences."

The one-night only performance follows a series of dance workshops involving local children and aspiring performers, taking place in ARCs dance studio. Following the premiere in Stockton, Keneish Dance will go on to perform VIGOUR at venues in London, Birmingham, Leeds, Shrewsbury and Corsham in Wiltshire. Both VIGOUR and the Billingham Festival have been made possible with support from the Arts Council England.

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Keneish Dance presents VIGOUR

Monday 13th August at 8pm

ARC, Stockton Arts Centre

66 Dovecot Street,

Stockton-On-Tees

TS18 1LL

Tickets: www.arconline.co.uk - 01642 525 199

Further information about Keneish Dance, including video excerpts:

<http://www.keneishdance.com/performance.html>

For further information, interviews and review tickets contact:

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