

## **A complex puzzle**

### **Steps: How does an intercity festival come about?**

The Migros Culture Percentage Dance Festival Steps

Steps is an intercity festival with over 35 event partners.

Companies from around the globe are selected.

The festival lasts three and a half weeks, encompassing between 80 and 90 performances.

The planning for the invited companies' tours begins at a desk and takes around a year.

From countless telephone calls, negotiations, postponements and explanations, the programme on offer for the festival eventually emerges.

Agreements on performance dates, fees, transport costs, equipment, artists and material are negotiated. Before the contracts are in place, work permits, visas, withholding tax etc. all have to be sorted out.

The programme on offer is then discussed with the local organisers. They choose various companies to supplement their own programmes for the season.

This is when allocation begins. Which troupe appears when and where, in which town and on which stage? A real puzzle, much like Tetris... until everything fits.

Next, the technical requirements have to be coordinated, while tour attendants, transport, hotel rooms, training studios, catering, setup and rehearsal times must also be organised.

But Steps includes more than just performances. The special fringe events also have to be initiated and arranged: workshops held by dancers for dancers, workshops for school classes and a dance symposium.

One thing is clear: Everything must be communicated clearly and precisely, so that audiences will come. A website is created, a programme booklet is printed and advance ticket sales are organised. Every text is proofread, each date is checked multiple times, then everything is translated into three of Switzerland's national languages, as well as English.

The festival is set up, the advance sales have begun, promotional work is underway, on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Instagram, along with interviews in the press, on radio and on television.

Now, the public can look on, with pleasure and amazement, as the artists come to the fore. And then... Goodbye! Until the year after next.