



# COASTAL DANCE FESTIVAL

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
January 29, 2025

## **18th Annual Coastal Dance Festival Expands to Two Performance Venues, Welcoming Audiences from Across Metro Vancouver**

***Northwest Coast Indigenous performing arts festival returns to MOA's newly rebuilt Great Hall for the first time since 2018***

**Vancouver, BC – Dancers of Damelahamid** present the 18th annual **Coastal Dance Festival**, honouring Indigenous stories, song, and dance from across Canada and around the world, on stage **March 4-6, 2025**, at the **Museum of Anthropology (MOA) at UBC** in **Vancouver** and from **Mar 7-9, 2025**, at the **Anvil Centre** in **New Westminister**. Audiences of both venues will be treated to a dynamic offering of ancestral and contemporary performances from Northwest Coast and international Indigenous artists. Highlights at MOA include a youth-focused collaboration between Vancouver's **Raven Spirit Youth Dancers** and Australia's **Wagana** and a site-specific, multidisciplinary installation from New Zealand's **Charles Koronheo**, in collaboration with Montreal poet and artist **Natasha Kanapé Fontaine**. At the Anvil Centre, Vancouver-based powwow dancer **Nyla Bedard** will make her festival debut.

"This year is a time of great celebration for the Coastal Dance Festival," says **Margaret Grenier**, Festival Executive & Artistic Director. "After a six-year hiatus, we are thrilled to return to our original home venue at MOA, upon the completion of seismic upgrades to its historic Great Hall in 2024. At the same time, we treasure the relationships we've built with the communities surrounding our vibrant home at New Westminister's Anvil Centre. For 2025, our wish was to honour both places, expanding our reach to a wider audience and allowing for an even richer exchange of knowledge and culture."

The festival's program at MOA will feature a series of all-ages matinees and signature evening performances, as well as the return of an artist sharing series. Matinees on March 4 and 5 will include a short presentation from festival hosts **Dancers of Damelahamid**, as well as a special collaboration from Raven Spirit's **Starr Muranko** and Wagana's **Jo Clancy**. Introduced a decade ago, the two dancemakers have since collaborated on several exchanges focused on intergenerational sharing. Together with Clancy's daughters and Starr's niece and son, who will be drumming, the group will share a work that was first presented last summer in Slovenia at the triennial conference, dance and the Child international.

Signature evening performances on March 4 and 5 will include a family group from many First Nations: **Xwelmexw Shxwexwo:s** (Stó:lō, Musqueam, Sts:ailes, Snuneymuxw, Nuu-chah-nulth, Skwxwu7mesh); a more adult-focused program from Australia's **Wagana**; dancer and educator **Laura Grizzlypaws** (St'át'imc); Squamish-based **Spakwus Slolem** (Skwxwu7mesh), who share their canoe and cedar longhouse culture; and **Dancers of Damelahamid**, who will perform a site-specific excerpt, adapted from *Raven Mother* that features Raven sculptures, masks, regalia, and dance.

For the first time, the MOA program will include a site-specific installation, *Ko Te Ākau*, from intersectional Māori artist **Charles Koroneho**. The live digital performance installation explores the concepts of digital artifacts and Indigenous futurism, in partnership with Coastal Dance Festival, Museum of Anthropology, and the Vancouver International Dance Festival, and is in collaboration with Montreal-based multidisciplinary artist, **Natasha Kanapé Fontaine**. The installation will be on site at MOA's Haida House, located outdoors at the rear of the museum each day of the festival.

The festival's artist sharing series at MOA will run daily and feature conversations with Jo Clancy and Starr Muranko, facilitated by Margaret Grenier (March 4); Laura Grizzlypaws and Tasha Faye Evans, facilitated by Rebecca Baker-Grenier (March 5); and Charles Koroneho, Natasha Kanapé Fontaine, and Raven Grenier, facilitated by Margaret Grenier (March 6). The March 6 sharing will also feature a live performance of Raven's contemporary music/dance work, "Wolverine."

The festival's program at Anvil Centre will feature a series of daytime performances and one signature evening performance. The March 7 matinee program will feature the festival debut of local theatre artist and dancer **Nyla Bedard**, who will share her love for the popular powwow dance style, Fancy Shawl, and **Dancers of Damelahamid**. Also returning to the Anvil Centre's midday festival stage on March 8 and 9 includes dynamic dance group **Chinook Song Catchers** (Skwxwu7mesh, Nisga'a); the award-winning Inland Tlingit **Dakhá Khwáan Dancers**; mask-dancing groups **Git Hayetsk** (Nisga'a, Tsimshian) and **Git Hoan** (Tsimshian); a family group of grandmothers, mothers, and daughters, **Chesha7 iy Iha mens** (Skwxwu7mesh, Stó:lō, Tsimshian); **Yisya'winuxw** (Kwakwaka'wakw), a group representing many of the 16 tribes of the Kwakwaka'wakw people on Northern Vancouver Island; and a dance group formed in 1980 by Robert and Reg Davidson, the **Rainbow Creek Dancers** (Haida).

Anvil Centre's signature evening performance will feature **Git Hoan**, **Yisya'winuxw**, and a special excerpt from **Dancers of Damelahamid's** *Raven Mother*, showcasing a striking raven transformation mask that opens to reflect five generations of women in their family who are part of the cultural revitalization and innovation in the dance form.

**For full festival details and to buy tickets, visit [damelahamid.ca/coastal-dance-festival/](https://damelahamid.ca/coastal-dance-festival/)**

#### **About Dancers of Damelahamid ([damelahamid.ca](https://damelahamid.ca))**

Dancers of Damelahamid is an Indigenous dance company from the Northwest Coast of British Columbia. The company is founded upon over five decades of extensive work of song restoration. It is the current directive of the Dancers of Damelahamid to redefine their contemporary practice and to honour this history in order that the dances may continue to be tangible and accessible for the next generation. The company has produced the Coastal Dance Festival annually since 2008, presenting Indigenous dance artists from the B.C. coast, with guest national and international artists. The festival's predecessor, Haw Yaw Hawni Naw, was produced in Prince Rupert, B.C., from 1966-1986.

#### **LISTING INFORMATION**

#### **Dancers of Damelahamid presents 18th Annual Coastal Dance Festival**

#### **Dates & Venues:**

March 4-6, 2025  
Museum of Anthropology at UBC  
6393 NW Marine Drive  
Vancouver, BC

March 7-9, 2025  
Anvil Centre  
777 Columbia Street  
New Westminster, BC

**Ticket Prices:**

**MOA**

All-ages Matinees  
March 4 & 5, 11am & 1pm

General Public: Free, with MOA admission  
School Groups: \$10 + tax

Artist Sharing Series  
Mar 4-6, 3pm

Free, with MOA admission

Signature Evening Performances  
March 4 & 5, 7:30pm (MOA)

\$40 Adults; \$30 Students

**Anvil Centre**

All-ages Matinee  
March 7, 11am

\$22.50 for Adults/Seniors  
\$13.50 for Students/Child

Signature Evening Performance  
March 8, 7:30pm

\$31.50 for Adults  
\$26.50 for Students/Seniors

Festival Stage Performances  
March 8 & 9, 1 pm

By donation

**Website:**

[damelahamid.ca/coastal-dance-festival/](http://damelahamid.ca/coastal-dance-festival/)

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