



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 4, 2024

10 days until free Indigenous festival, ʔəmi ce:p xʷiwəl (Come Toward the Fire), presented by Musqueam and the Chan Centre for the Performing Arts

Two stages, 16 performing acts, skateboarding workshops, over a dozen films, food vendors, Indigenous artisans and more complete this year's festival

Vancouver, BC — **The Chan Centre for the Performing Arts** at the University of British Columbia and **Musqueam** announced today the full slate of programming for the third annual Indigenous festival, **ʔəmi ce:p xʷiwəl (Come Toward the Fire)**. Held on **September 14, 2024 from 12PM – 7PM**, the family-friendly festival is **free with no tickets required**. The festival will activate the Chan Centre and its surrounding area, culminating in finale performances inside the venue at 5PM. Parking at the nearby Rose Garden Parkade is free from 11AM.

“For the third year in a row, Musqueam is thrilled to partner with the Chan Centre for the Performing Arts on ʔəmi ce:p xʷiwəl,” says xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam) **Chief Wayne Sparrow**. “In our culture, fire is the centre of our longhouses, where our ceremonial work takes place. Being called ‘toward the fire’ is a call to join us in this celebration of Indigenous talent and creative expression. This festival is a unique opportunity for Musqueam not only to meet, but to welcome a diverse group of Indigenous artists that we don’t often see in one lineup or in our territory. hay ce:p q̓ə, thank you to everyone at the Chan Centre for their collaboration and for their work to make this festival happen.”

xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam) is proud to invite community members **Manuel Strain** and **Christie Lee Charles** to return as hosts for the 2024 festival. Manuel Strain is a Two-Spirit artist of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Simpcw and Syilx peoples. Strain’s artwork confronts and undermines the imposed realities of colonialism while engaging in topics such as ancestral relations, labour, resource extraction, and gender. Winner of the 2022 Portfolio Prize, Strain works in various mediums including sculpture, installations, performance, and painting. The City of Vancouver’s first Indigenous poet laureate, Christie Lee Charles is a xʷməθkʷəy̓əm rapper, storyteller, Coastal hand drum singer, filmmaker, speaker for her ancestors, and a direct descendant of the great warrior Capilano.

River Grass Stage

The outdoor River Grass Stage will feature musical performances and invited speakers with previously announced artists **Tsatsu Stalqayu / Coastal Wolf Pack, Digawolf, Fawn Wood, Sister Ray, Hayley Wallis, DJ Kookum and Sierra Baker (K̓esugwilakw)**, and **MJScottS**.

Cedar Grove Stage

Nestled amongst the cedar trees outside of the Chan Centre lobby, the Cedar Grove Stage will feature poets, authors, and storytellers. **Massy Books**, a nêhiyaw-Métis woman-owned and operated bookstore, has curated a literary program that will feature three youth poets under the theme “Our Bodies A Megaphone.” **Shawnelle Blackbird Riley** is a queer Anishinaabekwe from Munsee-Delaware nation; **Valeen Jules** is a queer birth worker and wood carver from the Nuuchah-nulth and Kwakwaka'wakw nations; and **Jaz Whitford** is a Secwépemc

and mixed settler interdisciplinary artist. In sharing their poetry, they free their personal stories as well as their ancestors' into the atmosphere.

Returning this year for children's storytelling in the Cedar Grove are **Quelemia Sparrow** (x^wməθk^wəyəm) and **Kung Jaadee** (Haida). Quelemia Sparrow is a playwright and Leo Award-winning actor, and made appearances on TV shows such as *Fringe* and *Da Vinci's Inquest*. She was also playwright-in-residence for Full Circle: First Nation's Performance. Kung Jaadee is a professional storyteller, educator, and author who has been performing traditional Haida stories for the past 29 years.

Nêhiyaw/Cree, Nahkawiniw/Saulteaux artist and storyteller **Renae Morriseau** from Treaty 1 territory will also share stories at the Cedar Grove stage. She has worked across Canada and internationally with her singing group, M'Girl. She currently instructs Indigenous film studies at Capilano University and continues to create her own work in music and film with a community-first approach.

Flag Pole Plaza

Indigenous-led collective **Nations Skate Youth** will offer free skateboarding demos and youth workshops at Flag Pole Plaza. Founded in December of 2020 by Rose Archie, Joe Buffalo, and brothers Dustin and Tristan Henry, Nations Skate Youth's mission is to empower Indigenous youth through skateboarding, which they champion as a way to create community, celebrate Indigenous culture, and inspire confidence in Indigenous youth. The workshops are free and open to all attendees.

RBC Cinema

Inside the RBC Cinema, 17 films will be screened throughout the day. The **imagineNATIVE Film + Media Arts Festival**, the world's largest presenter of Indigenous screen content, brings Indigenous-made film works to communities across Turtle Island through their Tour Program. ʔəmi ce:p x^wiwal is proud to showcase five short films from their *Youth* program and six films from their *Elders* program. *časnaʔəm, the city before the city* (2017) from "Stories from Musqueam" will also be shown, which commemorates Musqueam's successful resistance to a condo development that was planned at an important ancestral site without prior consultation or consent. Joe Buffalo, one of Nation Skate Youth's founders, is the subject of the short documentary film, "Joe Buffalo," directed by Amar Chebib and executive produced by Tony Hawk. The film reveals how skateboarding helped Buffalo to overcome addictions and the trauma of the Indian Residential School system. "The Bannock Brotherhood" follows Paul Natrall, known locally as 'Mr Bannock', through his home territory in the Squamish Nation. The short documentary explores the significance of community leadership and the importance of local ingredients in the creation of his Indigenous food truck and catering company.

Finale concert inside the Chan Centre

The festival will conclude with a finale concert from 5PM inside the Chan Shun Concert Hall. Previously announced headliners **Celeigh Cardinal** and **Sebastian Gaskin** will each perform, capping off the festival with an energetic mix of folk, blues, pop and R&B-infused musical stylings.

For the full festival schedule, please [click here](#).

Listing Information

Event:	ʔəmi ce:p x ^w iwal (Come Toward the Fire)
Location:	Chan Centre for the Performing Arts University of British Columbia 6265 Crescent Road Vancouver, BC V6T 1Z1
Date:	September 14, 2024
Admission:	Free, un-ticketed

Website:

cometowardthefire.com

About ʔəmi ce:p x^wiwəl (Come Toward the Fire)

ʔəmi ce:p x^wiwəl (Come Toward the Fire) began in 2022, and is an Indigenous-led festival and gathering that celebrates Indigenous creativity, culture and community. The festival is presented by the Chan Centre for the Performing Arts and Musqueam in advance of the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. The hə́ŋqəmiḥə́ name for this event was provided by Musqueam and elder Larry Grant with special thanks to Musqueam artist Miss Christie Lee Charles for suggesting the name “move toward the fire.” This phrase supports a movement to return Indigenous voices to the forefront and bring them back to the centre, the fire, and the heart of the community, following generations of removal due to Residential Schools.

About the Chan Centre for Performing Arts

Since 1997, the Chan Centre for the Performing Arts has earned an international reputation for its striking design, stellar acoustics, and exceptional programming. Artists, critics, and patrons alike are unanimous in their praise of the facility, winning it a place among North America's top-rated performing arts spaces. Featuring three unique venues—the Chan Shun Concert Hall, the Telus Studio Theatre, and the Royal Bank Cinema—the Chan Centre is a vital part of UBC campus and community life where artistic and academic disciplines merge to inspire new perspectives on the world around us. Past performers and speakers include Wynton Marsalis, Renée Fleming, Dan Savage, Jane Goodall, Herbie Hancock, Lila Downs, and Anoushka Shankar.

Link to artist photos

chancentre.com/press-downloads

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For further media information:

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