

GO EXPLORE

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Want to dance? Free lessons could be first step



PERFORMING ARTS

Learn a new dance, watch new works by independent dance companies or participate in discussions at Dance Days, Friday

to Jan. 28 at various venues around Victoria.

This is the ninth year for the community event, hosted by Dance Victoria. Enjoy 10 days of free dance classes as local studios throw open their doors for instruction in all kinds of styles — from ballet to ballroom, belly dance to break dance and everything in between.

If you would rather watch than kick up your heels, Dance Days kicks off with a performance of Flicker, performed by members of Dancers of Damelahamid, a

First Nations contemporary dance company.

Flicker combines West Coast graphic design with projected environments, live-action shadow dance and traditional dance regalia.

The evening is an opportunity to learn about Gitksan dance and First Nations history.

From 1885 to 1951, First Nations communities were not allowed to hold potlaches. Native lineage stories, religious practices and dance traditions had to be passed down in secret.

Dancers of Damelahamid started in the 1960s to revive the ancient art forms as a healing space for Indigenous people — and all Canadians — to advance the process of reconciliation.

Activities planned around the performance include a pre-show discussion and a free dance workshop on Saturday.

Admission to Flicker is \$38. It runs 7:30 to 9 p.m. Friday at the McPherson Playhouse, 3 Centennial Square. The pre-show talk begins 45 minutes prior to curtain. Admission to the Exploring

Contemporary Coastal Dance Workshop is free. The 90-minute dance workshop runs 10 to 11:30 a.m. Saturday at the Songhees Wellness Centre, 1100 Admirals Rd. Participants 16 or older will engage in the shared experience of dance. Space is limited to 40 participants. You must have some experience. To register, email rsvp@dancevictoria.com with the subject line Coastal Dance.

For an online calendar of free classes offered and for more information, go to dancevictoria.com.



Ken Winchester, master distiller for De Vine Vineyards Winery and Distillery, apprenticed in Scotland. DARREN STONE, TIMES COLONIST

Whisky Festival to be savoured



FESTIVALS

Sample new and limited edition whiskies made in Saanich or sip a dram of an old favourite from around the world at the Victoria Whisky Festival, today to Sunday at the Hotel Grand Pacific.

This is the 13th year of the event, an opportunity for whisky enthusiasts to keep abreast of the latest developments in their world — especially offerings from Canada. "It's an exciting time to be in

the industry," said Ken Winchester, master distiller for De Vine Vineyards Winery and Distillery, who served his apprenticeship in Scotland. "There has been an explosion of whisky micro-distilleries in North America — and Canada in particular — in recent years. I see parallels to the craft-brewing industry 20 years ago."

He says there are now about 100 distilleries in Canada, half of them in British Columbia, including up to nine on Vancouver Island.

The local distilleries will have plenty of company at the festival, which will see representatives of more than 50 distilleries travelling to Victoria from Scotland, Ireland, England, United States, Japan, Taiwan, India and France.

Visitors will be able to savour more than 250 whiskies

from a broad range of styles and flavour profiles.

The festival includes the eighth annual Canadian Whisky Awards gala to recognize the best whiskies in the country.

"We are seeing new distillery releases each year as well as a greater range of whisky styles from the distillers," said Davin de Kergommeaux, chairman of the judges. "The quality of microdistilled whisky is also increasing as they have time to mature. The result is more robust and flavourful whiskies and a corresponding demand for them, especially south of the border."

In 2017, for the first time, distilleries from British Columbia were among the winners. De Vine Vineyards received a silver medal for its Glen Saanich single malt. Campbell River's Shelter Point was awarded a

bronze medal for its artisanal single malt.

Last year saw the oldest-ever Canadian whiskies released, including a 40-year-old Canadian Club, a 35-year-old Wiser's and a 25-year-old Crown Royal called Entrapment.

The three-day festival includes tastings and master classes. Net proceeds of the volunteer-run event are donated to charity.

While all tickets for this year's festival events have been sold, tickets are still available for the Canadian Whisky Awards and can be purchased from the Hotel Grand Pacific. Reserve by calling James Burrough at 250-380-4455.

The Victoria Whisky Festival is held at the Hotel Grand Pacific, 463 Belleville St. For more information, go to victoriawhiskyfestival.com.

Performance of The Planets is latest in Masterworks

Take a musical journey through ideas and emotions inspired by the planets at a performance of Gustav Holst's *The Planets*, Saturday and Sunday at the Royal Theatre.

The Greater Victoria Youth Orchestra joins the Victoria Symphony in performing the seven-movement orchestral suite, written by the English composer between 1914 and 1916. The concerts are part of the symphony's Masterworks series.

Each movement of the suite is named after a planet and its astrological character. Earth was not included because, in astrology, it was deemed the reference point for mapping.

Performers this weekend include Christian Kluxen conducting and violinist Caroline Goulding, who returns to play Brahms' Violin Concerto in D. Bass trombone Bob Fraser will give a talk in the west lobby one hour before the concert.

The performance is sponsored, in part, by the Times Colonist.

Tickets are \$35 to \$85 for adults, \$32 to \$72 for seniors and \$20 to \$35 for students.

The concerts run 8 to 10 p.m. Saturday and 2:30 to 4:30 p.m. Sunday at the Royal Theatre, 805 Broughton St. For information, go to victoriasymphony.ca.

Get healthy and help find epilepsy cure

Fitness plays a critical role in helping those suffering from epilepsy manage their symptoms. Challenge yourself and help raise money to find a cure for epilepsy at Seize the Day — Breaking a Sweat for Epilepsy, at Pearkes Recreation Centre in Saanich on Saturday.

Exercise improves fitness, gives people energy and helps relieve stress. Improving health can help reduce the impact of epilepsy for some sufferers.

Spend the day with personal and physical trainers, and participate in powerlifting, kettlebell classes and other challenges.

Each participant will receive a welcome package, including a sports duffle bag. There will be a raffle and a 50/50 draw.

Tickets for the day-long event are \$99 each. The event runs from 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Pearkes Recreation Centre is at 3100 Tillicum Rd. For details, go to epilepsy.ca/seize-the-day.html or Facebook.

Mystery Creatures walk convenes at Coles Bay park



EXCURSIONS

Prepare to discover a hidden gem in the regional parks system as CRD Parks hosts the Mystery Creatures guided walk at Coles Bay Regional Park in North Saanich on Saturday.

At the event, visitors five years and older are asked to solve riddles to find clues hidden while walking along a trail.

Once they solve the riddles, they can then piece the puzzle together and discover the identity of the mystery creature.

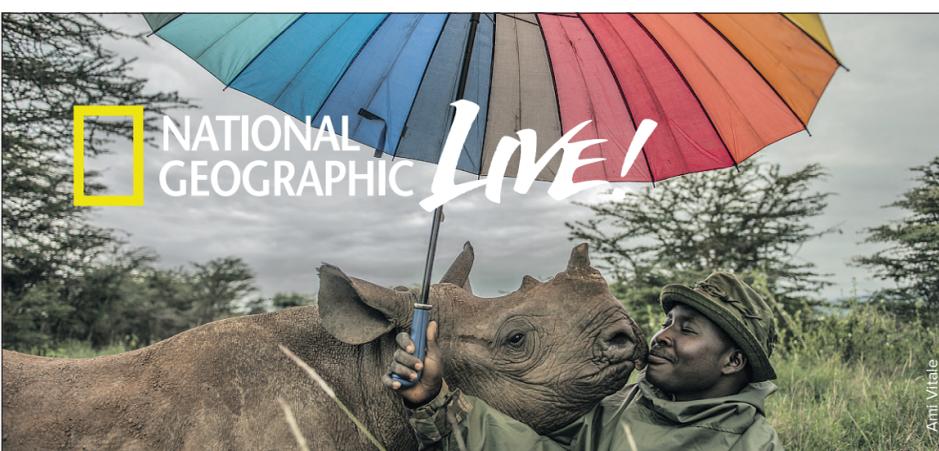
Activities will take place at the 3.63-hectare park on the western side of the Saanich Peninsula. Established in 1966, the park features an easy, winding woodland trail suitable for the whole family, a secluded bay rich in tidal lagoon life and ample space for picnicking, bird watching and walking along the beach.

Saturday's event is free to join. It runs from 1 to 2:30 p.m. Visitors are asked to meet at the information

kiosk in the parking lot off Inverness Road, North Saanich. The tide will be at its lowest level, at 2.5 metres, just after 2 p.m. for those interested in doing some beachcombing on Saturday.

Wear sturdy footwear and dress for the weather, as programs take place rain or shine.

Try to arrive 10 minutes before the start of the program. Please leave pets at home. For more information, go to crd.bc.ca/parks.



Storytelling at its best, up close and live at the Royal Theatre

Ami Vitale: Rhinos, Rickshaws and Revolutions
Wednesday, January 24, 2018

Experience our world through the eyes of an award-winning photojournalist whose work has taken her to more than 90 countries. She's lived in mud huts and war zones, contracted malaria, and donned a panda suit — all in keeping with her philosophy of "living the story."



McPherson Box Office
(250) 386-6121
rmts.bc.ca

Royal OnStage
presents