

FUNGI KINGDOM DANCE:

A CULTURAL AND SCIENTIFIC TRIBUTE TO FUNGI

Overview

The Fungi Kingdom Dance is a ceremonial inspiration created by Rande Cook (Kwakwaka'wakw), a Ma'amtagila hereditary chief and artist, to honour fungi and their deep connections to land and people. The dance is also inspired by a growing body of research—including Dr. Suzanne Simard's work on mycorrhizal networks—that reveals how fungi connect trees and sustain forest health, resilience, and interdependence.

Image Credit: Abigail Millson



All masked performers dancing together in the Tree of Life Fungal Kingdom Dance 2025.

Image Credit: Abigail Millson



Mark Worthing performing in mask in the Tree of Life Fungal Kingdom Dance 2025.

Ceremonial and Scientific Foundations

This dance blends Kwakwaka'wakw storytelling with contemporary artistry, carrying forward Ma'amtagila cultural traditions while resonating with modern ecological science. Dr. Simard's findings on underground fungal networks reinforce the ceremonial message that fungi are vital connectors and healers in forest ecosystems.

Image Credit: Steph Troughton



Up Close of a mask at the 2025 Awi'nakola Spring Equinox Fungal Kingdom Dance performance.

Land Restoration

The Ma'amtagila people have not consented to clear-cutting, fish farms, or other forms of environmental destruction. They believe that healing the land, restoring value systems, and protecting fungi are essential. Through this dance, the Ma'amtagila affirm their resistance to resource extraction and their commitment to reclaiming and healing their traditional lands.

Showcase and Visibility

The Fungi Kingdom Dance has been presented in high-profile cultural venues, including performances supported by orchestral collaborations—such as the Pacific Baroque Orchestra. These showcases have broadened its reach and affirmed its rightfully revered place within both artistic and ecological conversations.

Connection to the Fungi Relations Campaign

The performance is also part of the Awi'nakola Foundation's Fungi Relations Campaign, which calls on governments to work with Indigenous knowledge keepers to establish protections for fungi and implement adaptive management practices. By combining Indigenous ceremony, contemporary art, and ecological science, the dance amplifies this advocacy in a powerful, thought-evoking, and reflective form.

Learn more:

- [Awi'nakola - Tree of Life](#)
- [Ma'amtagila Nation](#)
- [Fungi Relations Campaign - Awi'nakola Foundation](#)

Image Credit: Abigail Millson



The dancers preparing to perform backstage in the Hiladi forest before starting the Fungal Kingdom dance.