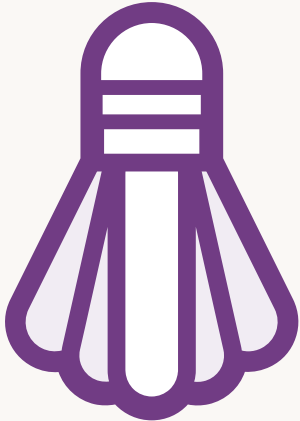




A BRIEF HISTORY OF

The 1990 Gay Games



The third Gay Games sporting competition and place of 2SLGBTQIA+ community in Vancouver, August 4-11.



What are the Gay Games?



The Gay Games are a quadrennial sporting and cultural event meant to be an inclusive space for athletes of all ages, abilities, experience, and backgrounds. The Gay Games was founded by Tom Waddell—a former Olympic decathlete—and the first Gay Games was held in San Francisco in 1982.

"It is a fundamental principle of the Federation of Gay Games that all activities conducted under its auspices shall be inclusive in nature and that no individual shall be excluded from participating on the basis of sexual orientation, gender, race, religion, nationality, ethnic origin, political belief(s), athletic/artistic ability, physical challenge, age, or health status."

—Federation of the Gay Games

Past and Future Gay Games



San Francisco (1982)

San Francisco (1986)

Vancouver (1990)

New York (1994)

Amsterdam (1998)

Sydney (2002)

Chicago (2006)

Cologne (2010)

Cleveland+Akron (2014)

Paris (2018)

Hong Kong (2022)



**Gay Games III is the
only Gay Games that
has been hosted in
Canada!**

Vancouver 1990 Gay Games III



Gay Games III (GGIII) was the largest sports and cultural event in the world in 1990. The 7250 registered athletes came from 30 different countries.

Although the Gay Games budget grew from USD \$500 000 to USD \$1.5 million for GGIII, organizers faced difficulty securing direct funding from government. There was also difficulty finding accommodating sporting arenas and facilities. The President of the University of British Columbia (UBC), David Strangeway, consistently denied booking requests, but GGIII organizers were aware that UBC's facilities were available for booking. In a memo leaked to UBC's student body, Strangeway admitted that he had denied access because he believed GGIII was 'more political than athletic or cultural and he did not want to involve the University in such a social issue.'

Despite, similar homophobic instances, media storms, and hardship getting funding, GGIII opened on August 4th, 1990 and represented a moment of growth for the Gay Games.



CELEBRATION '90
GAY GAMES III and CULTURAL FESTIVAL
VANCOUVER, CANADA
August 4 - 11, 1990



Gay Games III: Opening Ceremonies, ©Doug Cox, City of Vancouver Archives, Reference Code: 2018-020.5545.5



Gay Games III: Registration WECC, City of Vancouver Archives, Reference Code: 2018-020.5573

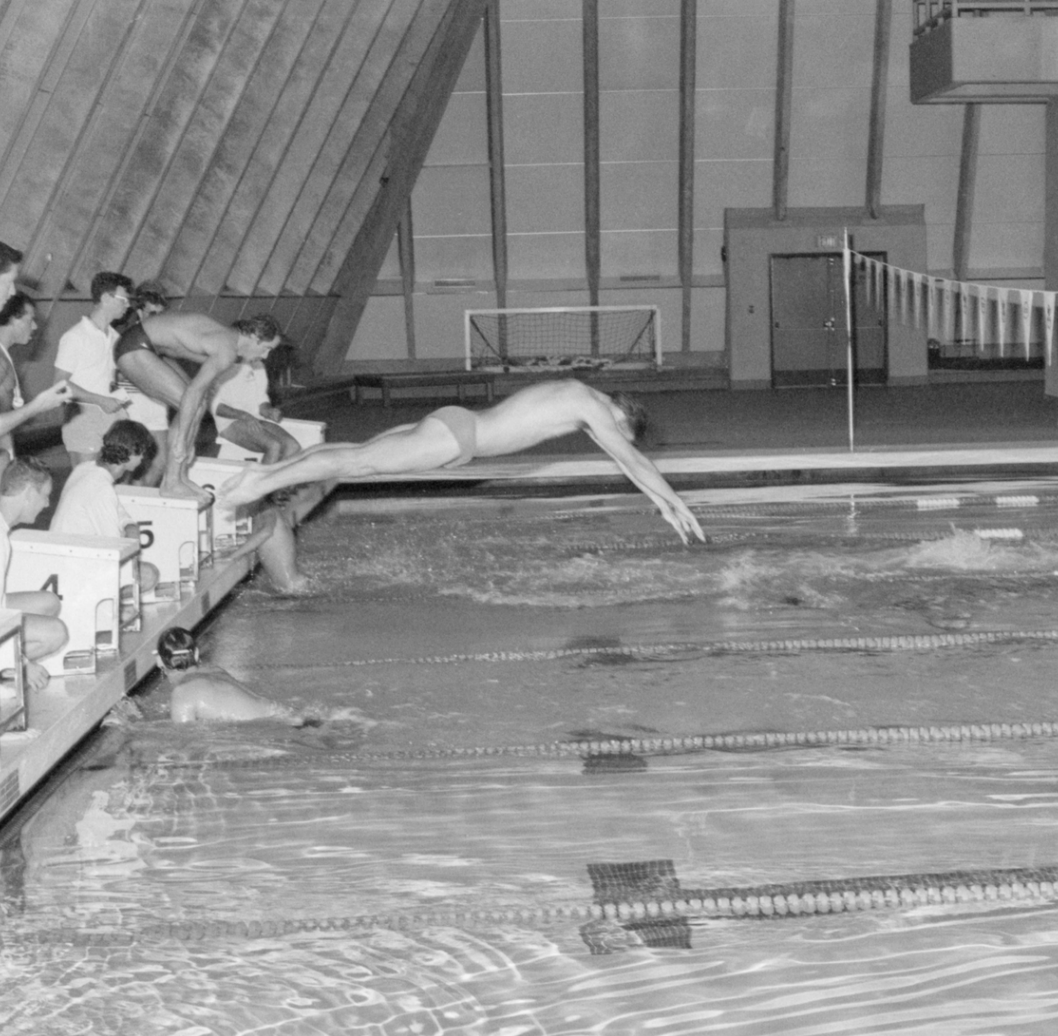
Sporting Events



Gay Games III balanced two primary goals: **friendly participation** and **giving 2SLGBTQIA+ participants the 'recognition often denied to them in traditional sport.'**

GGIII had **27 different sporting events**, and in the 1990 Gay Games, 11 new sports were added, including water polo, ice hockey, equestrian, race walking, touch football, golf, darts, martial arts, squash, badminton, and croquet.

For the first time during GGIII, swimming events were officially sanctioned by international swimming body, the Federation Internationale Natation Association (FINA).



Gay Games III: Swimming, City of Vancouver Archives, Reference Code: 2018-020.5439



Gay Games III: Billiards, City of Vancouver Archives, Reference Code: 2018-020-5633



Gay Games III: Ice Hockey, ©Colin Gerrard, City of Vancouver Archives, Reference Code: 2018-020.5623.1





Gay Games III: L.A. vs. Atlanta Soccer, ©Colin Gerrard, City of Vancouver Archives, Reference Code: 2018-020.5629.12

Celebration Centre & Cultural Festival



The accompanying Cultural Festival included music, comedy, theatre, visual arts, literature, and dance.

Actors from Canada, the United States, and Australia performed six plays centred on 2SLGBTQIA+ themes. There was a nine day film festival and visual arts exhibition that showcased 2SLGBTQIA+ artists. The Cultural Festival's *Dance Celebrations!* also featured twelve modern dance performances.

The Celebration Centre was the organizing hub of the Games, but it also housed beer and wine gardens, an artisan fair, and a discotheque where spectators, athletes, volunteers, and organizers could celebrate after the day's events.

CELEBRATION '90 GAY GAMES III AND CULTURAL FESTIVAL



CELEBRATION CENTRE

Sponsored by "Molson Canadian" and Brights Wines

WHAT IS THE CENTRE?

The Celebration Centre will act as an official home base during the celebrations.

This is the place for everyone to celebrate the spirit of the games together.

Come celebrate with friends and athletes from around the world!

WHERE IS IT?

760 Pacific Boulevard

The centre is located at the Plaza of Nations and BC Enterprise Centre (Located behind the Nations and BC Stadium Dome on False Creek). It's within easy walking distance from all downtown locations, and accessible from the "Stadium" skytrain station. For further information on public transit routes contact the transit information line at 261-5100.

ADMISSION?

Before 4pm: FREE
After 4pm: Registered Athletes - \$2
Everyone else - \$3

The Artisan Market is Free all day!

WHAT'S ON? ARTISAN MARKET

Whether it's pen and ink or a tattoo, you're likely to find it here. The Artisan Market provides an opportunity to view and purchase creations that reflect unique and vivid lesbian and gay artistic imaginations: August 8 - 11, 11 am to 6 pm

TRADE FAIR

With products and information from various businesses including Celebration'90 products and the Joe Average Lithographs created especially for the games. Enterprise Centre, August 8 to 11, 11 am to 6 pm

BEER & WINE GARDEN

Outside on the Plaza, August 8 to 11, noon until 10 pm

PLAZA GRILL

For more elaborate meals in a friendly, comfortable atmosphere: Reasonable prices and fully licensed. Enterprise Hall, August 5 to 11, noon until midnight.

FOOD FAIR

Delectable, affordable offerings to please any palate: Outside the Plaza - August 8 to 11, 11 am to 10 pm

CELEBRATION '90 NIGHT CLUB

Celebrity DJ's and the city's most spectacular dance floor. Located in the glass enclosed Enterprise Centre overlooking False Creek. Licensed: August 6 to 11, 8:00pm to 2:00 am

PLAZA STAGE

Comedy, music, dance and theatre. Come see and hear some of the best the world has to offer.

Guest MC's include: Janet Wright, actor, director, Bill Monroe, Vancouver's very own Royalty, Don Crowe, improviser, comedian, Jackie Hegadorn (Love Sizzle) comedian, satirist.

Wednesday, August 8

- 12:00 3-45 Street, Classical & Impromptu performances
- 3:45 Buren's Kannah Performance artist from San Francisco and Israel
- 4:00 Light From a New Torch Modern dance on tour from Boston
- 6:00 Suz Ogden Singer/songwriter from San Diego California
- 6:30 Beverly Elliott Actor, singer, comedian - all in one.
- 6:45 Sheryl Lee Singer, actor - someone to watch out for!
- 7:00 Linda Lagan A Jennifer novel
- 7:30 Rae Amour A special singer and friend of the community
- 8:00 Monica Grant Bluesian singer/songwriter from Oakland California
- 8:15 K.C. Frogge Romantic singer/songwriter from San Francisco
- 8:30 Vancouver Theatre Sports League Improvisational comedians
- 9:00 Amanda Hughes Dynamic, sophisticated Vancouver singer
- 9:30 MelloLoyds Uplight 50's & 40's a cappella

Thursday, August 9

- 1:00 Light From a New Torch Modern dance on tour from Boston
- 2:00 6:45 Street, Classical & Impromptu performances
- WOW! ALL NIGHT LONG
- 6:45 Venus Envy Band Comely, theatrical from Seattle
- 7:30 Robin Tyler Canadian, activist, MC for opening ceremonies
- 8:30 Lana & Kim Direct from Virginia
- 9:15 Faith Nolan Inspiring singer and Artist from Toronto

MEMORIAL PROJECT

An exciting trek through mementos and memorabilia of Gay Games past. Collected from participants the world over. A must see!

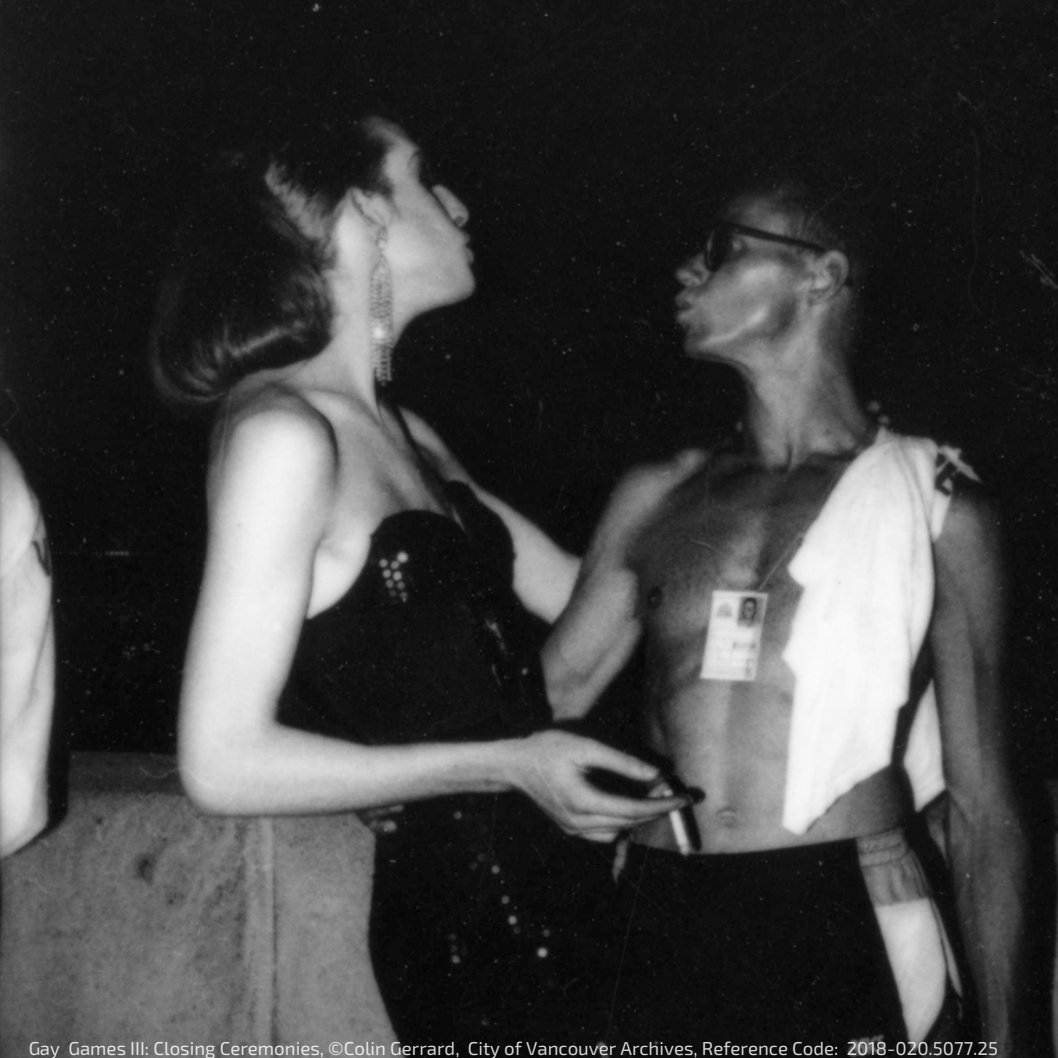
... and, of course, a chance to meet friends and athletes from around the world!

Friday, August 10

- 12:00 3:35 Street, Classical & Impromptu performances
- 3:45 Troup D
- 4:00 Lorena Fog Award winning Singer from Vancouver
- 4:30 Willie Taylor Vancouver's own Empire with a Mike - sans regalia
- 4:45 Dennis Simpson Award winning Broadway Singer from Toronto
- 5:00 Sibel Thrasher Gifted international singer
- 5:30 Marcia Moody Singer/songwriter and actor with roots in Oregon
- 6:00 Restful Chorus Collection of singers from all over the World
- 6:45 Sleeping Sonata Dances by John Goodwin & James Bedford from New York
- 7:00 Collette Wise Country & Western Singer extraordinaire
- 7:30 Randall Scott Webb Singer and Dancer from NY to Ohio
- 7:45 Line Dancers The best in Country & Western dancing
- 8:00 My Tum to Dance Rock/R&B by Collette Millit and Diana Grant - Seattle
- 8:30 Joelle Rabou Canada's own Pop, world renowned French and English singer
- 9:00 Elaine Townsend A special singer, a special voice: from San Francisco
- 9:30 Split Britches from New York Two women perform their unique cabaret

Saturday, August 11

- 12:00 3:15 Street, Classical & Impromptu performances
- THE BEFORE CLOSING CEREMONIES PARTY
- 3:15 Check to Check Ballroom and latin dancing
- 3:45 Lovie & Cheek Lovie's fabulous after ego
- 4:30 Lovie Eli talented singer from Vancouver
- 5:00 Kirby Howard A voice to lend it by any other
- 6:45 Gail Bowen Sex like you've never heard it, from Vancouver
- 6:00 Beverly Elliott A second chance to see this gifted performer
- (7:30-11:00 Closing Ceremonies: BC Place, Stadium)
- 11:00 Post-Closing Extravaganza You're in the Party Everyone Invited.



Gay Games III: Closing Ceremonies. ©Colin Gerrard, City of Vancouver Archives, Reference Code: 2018-020.5077.25



Gay Games III: The Big Wigs perform at the Fantasy Ball, Commodore Ballroom, Kent Kallberg, City of Vancouver Archives, Reference Code: 2018-020.5672.26



Gay Games III: Danccelebration at the Commodore Ballroom, ©Kent Kallberg, City of Vancouver Archives, Reference Code: 2018-020.5673.6



Group of Men at Gay Games III Closing Party, ©James Loewen, City of Vancouver Archives, Reference Code: 2018-020.5542



Gay Games III: Attendees, ©Doug Cox, City of Vancouver Archives, Reference Code: 2018-020.5551.4

Closing Ceremonies



Despite initial challenges, **Gay Games III** represented an important turning point for the Gay Games. The Gay Games had been an amateur, local sporting event specific to San Francisco, but GGIII developed it into an international sporting competition.

GGIII also brought together different parts of Vancouver's local 2SLGBTQIA+ community. GGIII's Consulting Executive Director, Shawn Kelly, remembers a moment in the GGIII office when millionaire business man, Bill Amundson, well-known drag queen, Miss Vancouver, and the GGIII's office manager and 'leather dyke,' Mary Brookes, were all working together. Historian of the Gay Games, Caroline Symons, also explains that **many GGIII participants remembered fondly "the way that Vancouver was 'taken over'—transformed into a gay city—throughout this event."**



Celebration '90 Games: Closing Ceremonies, © Kent Kallberg, City of Vancouver Archives, Reference Code: 2018-020.5698.10



Celebration 90 Games: Closing Ceremonies, ©Kent Kallberg, City of Vancouver Archives, Reference Code: 2018-020.5698.15



Celebration '90 Games: Closing Ceremonies, ©Kent Kallberg, City of Vancouver Archives, Reference Code: 2018-020.5699.9



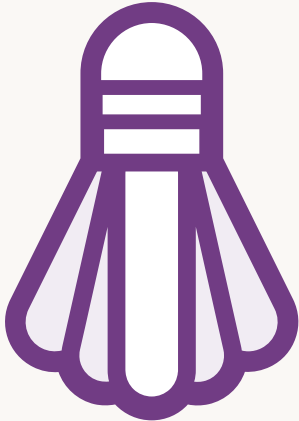
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Photographs sourced from the [BC Gay and Lesbian Archives' Collections](https://searcharchives.vancouver.ca/bc-gay-and-lesbian-archives) held at the City of Vancouver Archives (<https://searcharchives.vancouver.ca/bc-gay-and-lesbian-archives>).



Photographs in this booklet are held in the [BC Gay and Lesbian Archives' Collections](#), accessible digitally via the City of Vancouver Archives. The collection features textual ephemera, including periodicals, photos, and posters. It also includes audiovisual sources about 2SLGBTQIA+ communities in British Columbia.

All photos used in this booklet feature the photographer's name and year the photo was taken (if known), as well as the reference code for easy referral back to original at the BC Gay and Lesbian Archives.

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THE CANADIAN CENTRE FOR
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DIVERSITY

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