FACT SHEET

NUŁ<u>A</u>MAŁ "FOOL DANCER"

1. Messengers and assistants to the Hamaṫsa.

2. In earlier times, the Fool Dancer enforced the strict rules of the Potlatch, hitting guests with clubs or axes if they did not behave properly. The most recognizable feature of the Nuł<u>a</u>mał is his huge nose which he is very self–conscious about. When the Nuł<u>a</u>mał is seen in potlatches today, he pretends to throw the mucus that is constantly flowing from his large nose, on guests.

3. During the Ṫse<u>k</u>a, two Nuł<u>a</u>mał dancers stand at both sides of the front door.

4. Nuł<u>a</u>mał enter first to make sure people are respectful to the winter ceremonies.

5. They have enormous noses and their bodies are covered in snot.

6. An old Nuł<u>a</u>mał will throw mucus from his nose onto a new initiate to symbolize throwing the spirit of the Winter Ceremonies into him.

7. Runs about like a madman screaming, "Wi! Wi! Wi!"

8. Distinguishing feature of the Nuł<u>a</u>mał is an exaggerated nose, long eye brows, with wide mouths and a foolish grin.

9. The Nuł<u>a</u>mał mask is carved in red cedar and painted in natural pigment.

10. The Nuł<u>a</u>mał originates from Ławiṫsis – Turnour Island Tribe.

The distinguishing feature of the Nuł<u>a</u>mał mask is the exaggerated nose from which it is said that mucus constantly flows. Nuł<u>a</u>mał society ensure that proper etiquette (behavior) is observed during the winter ceremonial. Along with the Grizzly Bear dancers, they distribute food and make sure guests are eating properly. They occupy certain stations near the doorway of the ceremonial house where they stand watch over the audience for any transgression and prevent guests from leaving. They may brandish meter–long clubs or even axes in this role and have been known to beat offenders rather severely in times past.

Audience members have been known to taunt a member of the Nuł<u>a</u>mał Society, such as when the Nuł<u>a</u>mał dancer attempted to give a speech, upsetting the Nuł<u>a</u>mał greatly. The dancer would become very excited if any person should touch his nose or make fun of it.

The Nuł<u>a</u>mał dancer is one of many who dance, sing and utter their cries at the beginning of the first ceremonial.

In some potlatches, the costume of the dancer wearing the Nuł<u>a</u>mał mask will have a pocket concealed under the undecorated blanket that he wears on his shoulders. In this pocket are strands of green, lettuce–like marine algae, which blossoms in the summer months along the beach. Strips of this will be removed from the hiding place, swept across the nose of the dance mask and then hurled into the audience as he shouts, "Wi! Wi! Wi!."

Look for more background information on Nuł<u>a</u>mał in the Virtual Tour.