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Special
Carnival
Edition

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT 7 DAYS A WEEK

PROFESSIONAL COMPLIMENTARY
PICTURES ON TUESDAY AND FRIDAY



SUNDAY:
MARRYBELL MADURO
SINGER
6:30 - 8:30pm

MONDAY:
ANGELA FLORES
VIOLINIST
6:30 - 8:30pm

TUESDAY:
JEAN PAUL
SAXOPHONIST
6:30 - 8:30pm

WEDNESDAY:
EDDIE KROON
SINGER 4:00 - 6:00pm

THURSDAY:
MARRYBELL MADURO
SINGER
6:30 - 8:30pm

FRIDAY:
RICKY THOMAS
GUITARIST
7:00 - 9:00pm

SATURDAY:
EDDIE KROON
SINGER
4:00 - 6:00pm

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Carnival: That was then...

Carnival lives mostly in the Caribbean and South America, but originated in Rome, Italy.

Despite the drinking and partying aspects to Carnival, there are significant religious ties to the history. The festive season always occurs immediately before lent.

Around 1650, Lent meant no parties, no good food or drinks, or any celebration of any type for that matter.

The word "Carnival" – Carna- val – is thought to mean farewell to flesh, referencing the Catholic practice of fasting red meat from Ash Wednesday until Easter. In the days leading up to Lent, all the goods, meaning all of the good including meat, dairy, fats and sugar had to be gone! So, you guessed it, the consumption of these delicious items resulted in a giant soiree. This was the beginning of a beautiful, grand, colorful, loud and bold tradition. As the popularity grew, a domino effect took full swing and countries with rich religious roots adopted the concept of the fiesta. The "Carnival of Venice" garnered the title of the most famous carnival for the longest time, but nothing lasts forever. Cue in major competition.

The Italian traditions spread to the



Catholic nations of Spain, Portugal and France. From the French, it spread to Germany and soon the Americans and Canadians also got a taste of it and took it in. From Spain and Portugal, Carnival was picked up with Catholic colonization to Latin America and of course, the Caribbean, which would later be one of the few regions where the tradition still thrives to this day.

Around the 1800s, African and Indian slaves and servants from China and India accounted for most of the labor on Caribbean islands. Therefore, their customs were eventually incorporated into the European colonists' tradition of Carnival, which is the root of what you see today.

The introduction of Carnival to the Caribbean is a bit blurred. It is tied to its colonialism, religious conversion and ultimately freedom and celebration. As mentioned above, Italian Catholics in Europe brought the pre-Lent celebration concept when they settled – and brought slaves to – Trinidad, Dominica, Haiti, Martinique and other islands.

Costumes and masks came into play at Carnival back in the day to scare off evil spirits. It was believed in order for people to be granted with good luck, they had

to get dressed up. After the grand and elaborate costumes, came music and dance, which was incorporated to petition the gods of nature to grant fertility and health to the people, plants and animals. In 1915, when the Royal Dutch Shell Oil Refinery opened on Curaçao, all three of the ABC islands joined forces to celebrate. However, the now-annual tradition was not born then.

In the 1940s, when immigrants from Trinidad came to work in Aruba's Lago Oil Refinery, not only did they bring manpower for the plant, they also brought a thirst for festive celebration in their new home. From there, more and

more activities were thought up and organized.

The festival in Aruba was at first, subtler, calmer and relatively quieter. Fast forward to today, crowds fill the streets in the vivacious parades, or are equally as thrilled to be standing on the sidelines watching them.

Every year, Carnival Queens of various age groups are selected representing the antique deities of Mother Nature. Music is integral to the Carnival parades, so a competition is held annually to see which Carnival King reigns supreme.

While Carnival traditions started to dwindle in many parts of the world, Aruba's grew enormously in the 20th and 21st centuries. An extensive amount of festivities have been added over the years, including sunset parade, Jouvert Morning and Lighting Parade.





... and this is now!

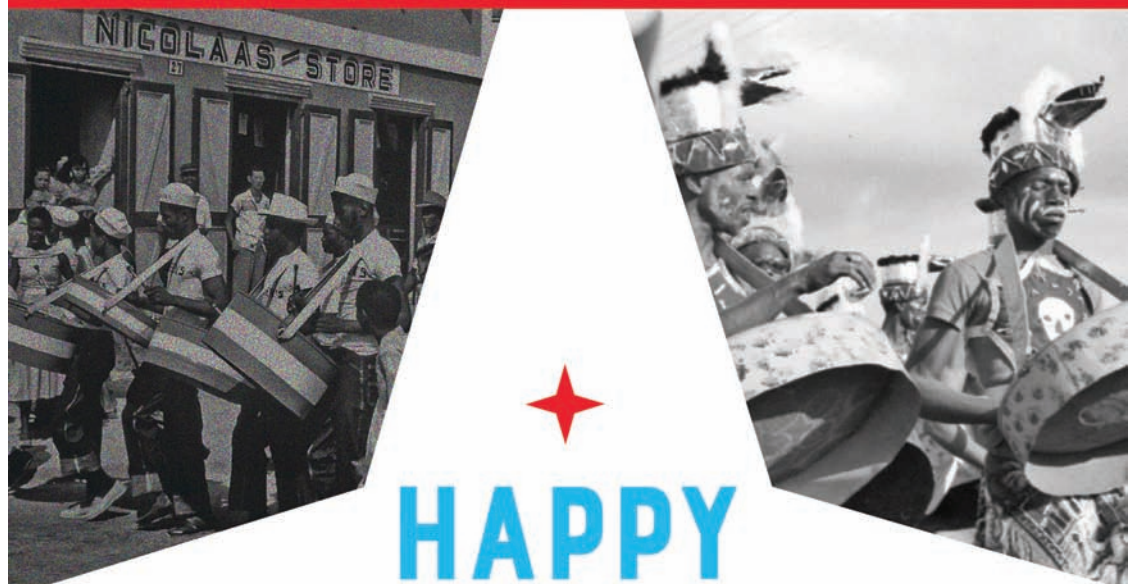
Nowadays, you will notice the music got louder, with each Carnival group bringing their own music truck with a band on the streets, to the rhythm of Caiso & Soca.

The costumes have also gotten more elaborate with a variety of

stones, sparkles and feathers decorating, as well as portable decorative lights for the night-time parades.

One thing that endures, however, is a love for this tradition which inspires everyone in its reach to let loose, dance, and enjoy!

.. 70th CARNIVAL ..



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Tecla Hernandez-Kelly: “You have to know what the people want”



ORANJESTAD – The Foundation for Aruban Carnival, SAC for its initials in Dutch, was the founding organization for Aruba's Carnival as a national celebration. Behind this powerful organization is Tecla Hernandez-Kelly, a backbone of Aruba's Carnival history.

SAC was founded on the 11th of November 1966 at 11:11am. They put together the program of all ac-

tivities and make sure that all events are carried out perfectly. They also had to make sure that the parades started and ended on time and that they were carried out safely and without major incidents, working together with the po-

lice, Red Cross and other organizations and groups. At the end of Carnival season, SAC would hand out awards for the best groups and best costumes and road pieces.

We had a conversation

with the president of SAC on occasion of the 70th edition of Aruba's Carnival. Hernandez-Kelly told us about her trajectory as a member and president of SAC, her point of view regarding changes related to Carnival, and the direction she sees Carnival taking for the future.

Tecla began her work as volunteer in SAC when she was very young, helping out when she was only 22 years old by searching for candidates for Carnival Queen for the district of Oranjestad. She was heavily involved in the youth activities for Carnival up until around the 80s. During these years, she got the opportunity to enter the group that organized the grand parades, something that she wanted because in this group she could better voice her opinions and ideas.

She says that in the beginning she started as an assistant for the late Milo Croes,

former president of SAC. In 2003, Mr. Croes took his retirement as president of SAC, and during the election for a new president, Tecla won and she began her role as a president for the foundation organizing Carnival.

She commented that despite the fact that currently another organization, namely SMAC is in charge of Carnival, SAC is still there. She says that once already SAC was asked to organize Carnival once again, but the minister in charge back then rejected this idea.

In 2014, SAC fought to continue with their task, but in the end, SAC was destitute as the foundation organizing Carnival, and SMAC was founded and took up this role.

"I continued from 2003 until 2014, I served as president of SAC, and in a way up until today, and for as long as SAC is there I will be there.

Continued on page 5





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Tecla Hernandez-Kelly: “You have to know what the people want”



Continued from page 4

that makes its own songs. They say Roadmarch is not a genre, but who says that we go by genre? It doesn't go by genre, it goes because Aruba needs a song and we called it Roadmarch so that people can march with it on the road," she explains.

She added that as president with many years of experience organizing Carnival, she warned those who were asking for the change that on the day that they add Soca, the songs would die. "I told them you are killing them. I have nothing against any song, but the songs that we call Roadmarch from all those years... you can see that when a Roadmarch comes on, it's for everybody. It is a song that doesn't have a lot of difficult words and it comes with a dance," she added.

The Caiso & Soca, sadly, is not as popular as the events prior, from when SAC was organizing it, and that long awaited change "continues damaging us." "They came with Caiso and Soca. Dead. That's what you want, that's what you get. What you see is what you get. Aruba

already showed that we don't want that. When we were with SAC, we had a Joe Laveist Ballpark completely full. You have to know what the people want. This is what Aruba likes," she commented.

Change

Change is inevitable. Tecla says that back in Mr. Milo Croes' time, the queens always wore white with long gloves, and would walk to compete for the crown of Carnival Queen. This practice remained for many years, until someone came with something different and everyone followed with the change.

This way, little by little change was introduced, and even though some changes were for the better, others were not. Tecla explains that while nothing bad was happening, it was fine; but as soon as something happened, some things had to be stopped and changed with the objective of improving and enhancing Carnival.

As for the future, where Tecla sees Carnival going, she emphasizes that from her point of view, a lot of hard work is needed if Aruba wants to continue celebrating Carnival. She says that back when it was an option for her to stay, she couldn't count with the support of the people, and now that so much has happened, there is a dark cloud on the Carnival celebrations. "Everything was put together and it was going well. This year, see how much has happened, so much. Even though the current president, I know and I see that he tries his best, he tried but even so there are things that happen. They used to say that when they got rid of SAC all problems would be gone, but problems are never gone."

For Tecla, the current system of having a president that only stays temporarily is a problem. Back when SAC was in charge, they received criticism because they had the same president for long periods of time, but she considers that two years is not enough for a presidency. "The Carnival this year is the last one for the current president. Next year there will be someone else who has to start from scratch, bring change for better or for worse. I don't know. I see the presidents that passed, none of them did well. None of the four that came after me," she concludes.



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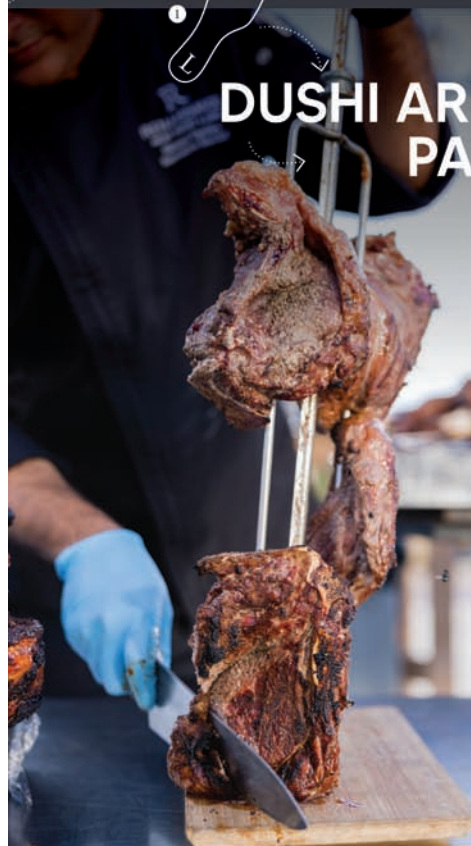
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Arnold Malmberg y Jayven Jansen

“The Prince and Pancho who most enjoy Aruba’s Carnival”



Carnival has certain fixed characters and activities: Momo (the Carnival king or Carnival spirit), Prince and Pancho (the prince and the clown), Carnival queen and princesses, the king or queen of Caiso, Soca and Tumba contest. The Prince and Pancho are chosen as the best jokers, and are awarded the keys to the island for the duration of Carnival season.

The Prince's main task is to present the Queen to her people upon her election and be her companion in all her activities. The Prime Minister opens the reign of the royal court when she hands the keys to the island to the Prince. Pancho is the personal assistant and best friend of the prince. He is more a jokester, entertaining with his wit and jokes as he accompanies the Prince in all his royal duties. The duo is chosen for their comedy, personality, and popularity.

Each Queen has her own Prince and Pancho, thus there is a pair for each of Children, Youth, Adult

and Senior.

Arnold Malmberg and Jayven Jansen were crowned Children Prince and Pancho for Aruba's 70th Carnival.

The preparations to take part in Carnival started last year, but due to various factors back then, the decision was made to spend more time preparing and come stronger to enter the Carnival vibes that are in full-swing.

They competed representing Don Flip Carnival Group, and called themselves “Prince Caya Pidi and Pancho Caya Haya”, a play on words for “the streets ask, and the streets receive.”

Dancing to every song that they listen to and participating in Carnival is what they love the most, according to Arnold's mother, Tamara Malmberg, who spoke to our reporter when the pair was receiving their prizes.

Arnold says that he loves feeling the Carnival music, which “is very nice indeed



when I dance,” and Jayven loves Carnival so much that he has already told his mother that he wants to also participate in the Tumba contest next year.

Their story is that their families got together to talk, put everything together, and agreed to support the children when they made their own decision to participate. When Carnival began they sat back, friends close to home helped prepare the kids, and here they thank Ryan Rodgers who is the “motor” and the person who prepared Arnold and Jayven for their show.

“They are well prepared, they are smart. They love these crazy things, which means it will be very easy for them. And thus we managed to let the participate

and they won the main prize of Children Prince and Pancho for Carnival 70,” Jayven's mother, Heleen Jansen commented.

Arnold goes to school at Montessori Nos Fortalesa and Jayven at Colegio San Jose Aruba. They are friends, despite the fact that they attend different schools, as their chemistry helped them seal a good deal. “That was easy, they get along well, and they play a lot together. They love acting, they are not afraid of anything. Carnival dancing is something they enjoy. Every year they go to Carnival. Last year they went also with Don Flip, and both won prizes as well. They are not afraid to show themselves, talk or get on stage so it was very easy. For sure we will continue the tradition of Carni-

val in the following years,” Heleen Jansen said.

Among the prizes that they have won in the past, last year Jayven won in the category of Luxury Bodypiece with “Speed Racer” with Don Flip Carnival Group, together with his sister Zoey Jansen who went as “Lego Princess.”

Jayven had a message for other children who want to participate in Carnival in the coming years: “Work a lot on this process because it takes a lot of work. You have to train a lot, but you will succeed!”

Arnold added: “Children, always remember to enjoy Carnival which has an enjoyable atmosphere!”



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Streets of Oranjestad illuminated with the magic of the Lighting Parade for Carnival 70

This year, for the grand 70th Edition of Aruba's Carnival, the island celebrated the Grand Lighting Parade Oranjestad in a show of color, music, dancing and of course, lights!

As Aruba is in the midst of the 70th Carnival celebrations, one of the most attractive events is the Lighting Parade, as it takes place at night in a cooler party atmosphere. This year, a total of nine Carnival groups participated, each with its unique theme and colors, but all with a festive ambience.

The group sequence for the parade was

1. TOB Carnival Group
2. Infinity Carnival Group
3. Royal Carnival Group
4. Empire Carnival Group
5. Champagne Carnival Group
6. Dushi Carnival Group
7. Los Laga Bai Carnival Group
8. OPC Carnival Group
9. Carnival Group

The parade started at the Aruba Entertainment Center in Dakota, passing through Avenida Milio Croes, Vondellaan, LG Smith Boulevard, and ended on the Turbo Roundabout on the Boulevard.



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Meet Aruba's Carnival 70th Queen, Gedís Jansen

"My inspiration and motivation was seeing how many people believe in me and my potential"



ORANJESTAD – On the 14th of January, Aruba crowned its 70th Carnival Queen, who became Gedís Jansen, representing TOB Carnival Group. In an interview with Gedís, she told us about herself and her participation in the Carnival Queen Election.

Gedís Jansen is a 24 year old who currently works as a nail technician and make-up artist. "I come from a humble family as the only daughter in the middle of two sons," she told us. Her hobbies include modeling, creating make-up looks on herself, and socializing with her close friends and family. She completed secondary school – MAVO and HAVO in the Dutch system – and currently wishes to continue studying here at the University of Aruba in the faculty of Economics.

For Gedís, this was her first time participating in a carnival election, and she told us what inspired her to take part in this traditional celebration. "My inspiration and motivation was seeing how many people believe in me and my potential, and certainly the desire that I always had hidden ever since I was a child, to see a representation of a girl like me on stage as a queen here in Aruba."

Preparation for the competition can be grueling, consisting of long hours preparing choreography, speeches and shows. "[The preparation] was something very fun but certainly with

stress and a lot of nerves," Gedís says. "It was a challenge for me in every aspect, but primarily mentally. Presenting a show and a speech where I am the focal point was not something that I enjoy doing, so I had to prepare a lot for these moments."

However, Gedís never doubted herself and believed she was in it to win it. Answering if she expected that she would win the top title of Carnival Queen, and her reaction and feelings when she was crowned, Gedís says: "My entire preparation period I got it in my head 'when I am crowned Queen 70' and not 'if I am crowned Queen 70'. But the moment they were choosing the 1st Runner Up, I was ready for that as well. The moment when I realized that I am Queen 70, is one where I am really super proud of myself, that I showed up for so many people, that I just started jumping on stage, fighting the tears of happiness that I had to hold in in that moment."

Gedís is an inspiration for many, a testament to what can be achieved through will and determination. "Always believe in yourself! You have the ability to achieve everything you set your mind to. The moment you decide to go after what you want, no matter how many people tell you to not do it, you are going to be so proud that you did it, no matter the results."



ORANJESTAD – On the streets of San Nicolas, children jumped to the beat of carnival music and enjoyed the last Children's Parade of Carnival 70. Carnival mood, luxury and creativity were on display and the people of Aruba enjoyed a wonderful Children's Parade.

A total of six groups took part in the parade. Centro di Bario Noord opened the parade together with Aruba's Children Carnival Queen, Xena Dijkhof. There were also a few schools who joined Centro di Bario Noord to celebrate Carnival.

The second group was Champagne Kids Carnival Group with the theme of Universal Studios. Fantasy and luxury stood out with the children dressed as different characters from Universal movies.

The third group was Don Flip Carnival Group, with the theme of Amazonia. Paying homage to nature, the children presented costumes full of color and fantasy.

TOB Kids Group was fourth, showing off their theme from the movie Coco. Sparkling costumes with luxurious road pieces stood out and represented various aspects of the movie in a beautiful way.

Fifth group was Little Groovers Carnival Group, which this year had as a theme the children's movie Inside Out. The

Children's Parade in San Nicolas filled with luxury and fun



group displayed beautiful costumes expressing different motifs in the movie and the carnival spirit was in full-swing.

Empire Kids closed off the parade with their theme Sapate. A group that for the first time participated in the Children's Parade and really stood out on the road. Luxurious and creative road pieces stood out and the happy children were dressed as different kinds of shoes.

As is traditional, after the Children's Parade in San Nicolas the burning of the Momito took place in order to bid farewell to the children's parades in Carnival. Aruba as a whole enjoyed a gorgeous parade full of happiness, fantasy and creativity.

Continued on Next Page

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Children's Parade in San Nicolas filled with luxury and fun

Continued from Page 10...



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Galloway, EK and Rocco Flava became the big winners of the Caiso & Soca Monarch 2024!



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ORANJESTAD – After a musical celebration spanning two nights, Stichting Musica crowned the winners of the fabulous Aruba Caiso & Soca Monarch 2024.

The Aruba Caiso & Soca Monarch event attracts thousands of spectators and is one of the most exciting and popular music events on the island. A favorite of the locals, this event presents a musical extravaganza which sets the tone for the upcoming carnival parades.

The singers compete with original music compositions and lyrics. For Calypso, social commentary is presented with witty and comical lyrics, while the Soca presents a dancing beat and easy lyrics to get the party started on the road!

The most popular songs are featured in the parades and Carnival events.

For Carnival 70, the winners are:

Winner ACSM Power Soca
Singer: Galloway
Title: Mash Up
Band: Tsunami
Composer: Carl Roosberg
Arrangement: Rod Benjamin & Michael Odor

2nd Place Power Soca Monarch

Singer: M.I.K.E.Y.
Title: Unity
Band: Youth Xtreme Band (YX3M)
Composer: Harvey "Toolz" Agunbero
Arrangement: Harvey "Toolz" Agunbero

3rd Place Power Soca Monarch

Singer: Easy B
Title: Another One
Band: Tsunami
Composer: Shirlan George & Bradley Vesprey
Arrangement: Hendry Tromp

Rookie of the Year

Singer: Big Reckless
Title: Big Help
Band: Tsunami
Composer: Claudius Philips Jr.
Arrangement: Claudius Philips Jr.

Best dressed band:

Tsunami
Best Costume: Mitch

Winner ACSM Caiso

Singer: EK
Title: Falta Pottasium
Band: Youth Xtreme Band

(YX3M)

Composer: Eugene Kemp
Arrangement: Harvey "Toolz" Agunbero & Eugene Kemo

2nd Place Caiso

Singer: Queen Sashah
Title: Worries
Band: Tsunami
Composer: Martha Figueroa
Arrangement: Michael Odor

3rd Place Caiso

Singer: Mighty Tattoo
Title: Let It Go
Band: Zeta Band Aruba
Composer: Richard Quant
Arrangement: Hubert Thiel

Winner ACSM Groovy Soca

Singer: Rocco Flava
Title: Come Together
Band: Buleria
Composer: Claudius Philips
Arrangement: Claudius Philips

2nd Place Groovy Soca

Singer: Easy B
Title: Togetherness

Band: Tsunami

Composer: Brendon Shalol Joseph
Arrangement: Rod Benjamin

3rd Place Groovy Soca

Singer: Noush
Title: Wreckin' The Place
Band: Noush & The Band
Composer: Randolph Berry
Arrangement: Claudius Philips Jr.

Continued on Next Page



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Galloway, EK and Rocco Flava became the big winners of the Caiso & Soca Monarch 2024!

Continued from Page 12





Who is “King Momo/Momito”?



(Oranjestad)—This past weekend, to mark the end of the children’s parade that took place Sunday in San Nicolas, locals gathered once more in the evening hours for Kimamento di Momito (burning of Momito). You may wonder who this Momito character is, why he plays a role during the carnival season, and why it’s tradition to set him on fire. Here is a quick folklore lesson explaining the burning of Momo/Momito on Aruba.

The Momo was first introduced on Aruba in 1954 by Henry Bethencourt (alias Heroudini), three years after its introduction on Curacao. According to Heroudini, the story of the king Momo refers back to the biblical time of Jonah and the Whale, during a time where sins plagued humans. God made it clear to the people that he would destroy the city unless they repented and stopped sinning. And so before the people began fasting, it was decided that there should be a kind of parade to bring closure to that era. In that parade, a masked king was seen walking along the spectators, a figure representing human sins. At the end of the parade, this

masked king was burned, symbolizing the end of a sinful era.

Here in Aruba, this biblical story was also adapted into the folklore of King Momo/Momito during the carnival season. Although not as religiously charged, the burning of the king does represent an end to the two-month long festivities, and the beginning of a new spiritual cycle on the island. The burning of Momo takes place right after the final Grand Parade on the island, right before Lent.

To say goodbye to the carnival season, locals attend two different burnings of the king; First, the “Momito”, which happened this past Sunday after the children’s parade. Momito represents the end to the children’s carnival festivities (the “-ito” refers to something small, a.k.a, children). Momo is the adult version of the momito, and its burning takes place the same day after the final Grand Parade in Oranjestad.

This week will be the “last hurrah” of the carnival season, with the two Grand Pa-



rades left on the itinerary. If you want to say goodbye to this year’s carnival season with the locals, join us this coming weekend in San Nicolas and Oranjestad to celebrate the biggest parades yet!

Source: National Archeological Anthropological Memory Management.

A quick history of the Jouvert Morning Parade



(Oranjestad)—Last Saturday around 3am, while most people were probably sound asleep, the streets of San Nicolas came alive for its annual Jouvert Morning Parade, an essential and highly anticipated parade in every annual carnival season, and one that holds a special place in the hearts of locals, especially those living in San Nicolas.

The Jouvert Morning Parade, or just “Jouvay”, starts in the middle of the night, usually around 3am, and goes on until the break of dawn. Over the years, Jouvay has not only become a staple in the carnival season, but it has also become one of the few parades that hold a significant cultural meaning for the locals, especially those living in San Nicolas. Here is a quick history lesson on the origins of Jouvay and why it is beloved by many on the island.

The tradition of Jouvay, much like the tradition of carnival in general, has its roots in immigration. Immigrants from other Caribbean islands like Trinidad and Tobago brought this tradition to the streets of San Nicolas, where the community living there—mostly comprised of Afro-Caribbean immigrants due to the industrial boom in the district during the early 20th century—held these “jump-up” parties, complete with steel pan and calypso music.

As the story goes, Jouvay was started on St. Maarten street in San Nicolas, with people bringing home-made instruments like pans, buckets, milk tins etc. to play and dance on the street. Nowadays, people also refer to Jouvay as the pajama-party parade, as people can just come and join wearing comfortable, regular clothes. Jouvay is the only parade in the carnival season where everyone is welcome to join the march and dance, accompanied by either one or two bands performing Soca music.

Picture credits: Aruba.com



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Giliane Wester crowned Queen of Tumba Aruba 52

In the grand celebration for Aruba's 70th Carnival, Giliane Wester was crowned the 52nd Queen of Tumba of Aruba's Carnival.

Tumba is a style of danceable music typically played in Aruba, Bonaire and Curaçao. Tumba can be considered as the most original music of the ABC islands. However, the origin of Tumba is clearly African – the name itself comes from the Bantu culture of Africa.

Nowadays, Tumba is very popular during the Carnival season, and on Aruba we celebrate a grand Tumba festival.

Queen of Aruba Tumba 52:

Giliane Wester
Baranca
Composer: Ronwayne Kock
Arrangement: Denny Loefstop

1st Finalist Festival di Tumba Aruba 52:

Richard Quant
Tras di e baricada
Composer: Richard Quant y Gibi Doran
Arrangement: Xemio Jacobs

2nd Finalist Festival di Tumba Aruba 52:

Jerwin Hernandez
Dr. Tumba
Composer: Ronwayne Kock

Arrangement: Denny Loefstop

Winner Crazy Tumba:

Tyson Croes
Pat'i Camel
Composer and Arrangement: Janiro Eisdén y
Rygel Isabella

Best Costume:

Jerwin Hernandez

Rookie of the Year:

Sendy Loefstop

Most popular artist:

Giliane Wester

Best uniformed band:

Bomboshi Band

Best composition:

Giliane Wester
Baranca
Composer: Ronwayne Kock

Miho Areglo:

Giliane Wester
Baranca
Arrangement: Denny Loefstop



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