



Year in Review 2023

Leeds West Indian Carnival



Overview

3 Carnival on the Road

4 Emancipation Service and Young Masqueraders Summer School

5 Carnival Royalty Show

6 J'ouvert Morning and Carnival Day

7 Carnival Legacy: Pop-up

8 Reflections of Carnival

9 Training and Development

This year has seen a number of successful events for Leeds West Indian Carnival. The board thought it appropriate to give you an update to celebrate some of the achievements for the carnival culture in Leeds, as a whole, in 2023.

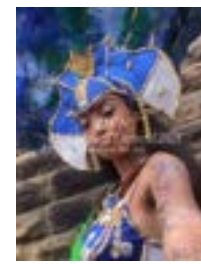


Carnival on the Road

We commenced our program 'Carnival on the Road' by participating in Huddersfield Carnival. We were joined by The New World Steel Orchestra on our first of five visits to other carnivals.

Secondly Carnival on the Road visited Derby and then onto Harrogate, as part of Harrogate International Festival at the end of July.

Leicester Carnival and Manchester Carnival were visited at the start and the middle of August.



LEEDS WEST INDIAN CARNIVAL

2023 EVENTS ON THE ROAD

- Huddersfield Saturday 8th July
- Derby Sunday 16th July
- Harrogate Sunday 30th July
- Leicester Saturday 5th August
- Manchester Saturday 12th August

Emancipation Service and Young Masqueraders Summer School



The Emancipation Service at Roscoe Methodist Church, also in early August remembered those who have contributed to carnival over the years. This service also acknowledged our forefathers who gave their yesterday for our today.

Also in mid-August, the Young Masqueraders Summer School took place for a week during the Summer school holidays. This scheme had carnival educational enrichment featuring costume making by Unity Carnival Arts, Valentina's Collective led a dance performance. They also learned about the history of the West Indies and Leeds West Indian Carnival with narration by AAA Team France and were able to link it all through Africa, the Caribbean and Leeds.

The music and steel pan tuition was provided by New World Steel Orchestra. The tutors of NWSO found the young masqueraders to be exceptional and were amazed at how quickly they learned new skills.



Carnival Royalty Show

The Leeds Playhouse hosted the first ever Carnival Royalty Show. This was a sell-out event incorporating the King, Queen, Prince and Princess costumes into one event, with various acts and artists including RJC Dance and the Soca Monarchs. The show was hosted by Richard Smith Sr. and comedian Annette Fagon.

The winners were:

Prince – Khyiro Pyke, age 9, as ‘Jaguar in the Grass’ by Pareesha Valentina (Valentina’s Collective)

Princess – Dani-Bree Edge, age 10, as ‘Princess Oya’ by Asha and Alisia France (AAA Team)

King – Elroy Condor as ‘King of Kings’ by Steph Condor (High Esteem in collaboration with Anonymas)

Queen – Gemma Lake as ‘Fountain of Love’ by Hughbon Condor (High Esteem in collaboration with Anonymas)



J'ouvert Morning and Carnival Day

J'ouvert Morning was our biggest yet and contained a collection of carnival revellers rising early to celebrate this annual tradition.



As the biggest Caribbean carnival street parade outside London, Leeds West Indian Carnival's annual procession attracts up to 150,000 visitors into the city and has become an important contributor to the Leeds cultural economy, culminating in the extravaganza of the street masquerade.

The main carnival parade and stage performances in the park were heavily supported by Leeds 2023 and Leeds Building Society. The carnival parade participants, the board and all whom assisted on the day, are all volunteers so it was a great to be supported by these two groups of volunteers to help the event run smoothly. The feedback we had from the day was mainly very positive and we have taken on board some areas of learning to enable the event to progress next year.

The Troupe winners:

Best Youth Troupe – **RJC**

Best Adult Troupe – **AnonyMas**

Best Visiting Troupe – **Phoenix**

Best Overall Troupe – **RJC**

Biggest Troupe – **AnonyMas**



Carnival Legacy: Pop-up

In collaboration with East Street Arts, Leeds West Indian Carnival made a spectacular return to Leeds City Centre on 16th September, for Heritage Open Day 2023.

Celebrating the rich Caribbean history and inclusive culture of Carnival, the Carnival Legacy: Pop-up Street Performance event saw New Briggate – a former carnival parade route – come alive with the vibrant colours and joy of Carnival, as part of East Street Arts' Hidden Histories of New Briggate Project.



Reflections of Carnival

East Street Arts, Leeds West Indian Carnival and Leeds City Council, working in partnership, unveiled a new 13m x 9m mural by artist and costume designer **Rhian Kempadoo-Millar**, in October. As part of LEEDS 2023, the artwork, which celebrates the rich, vibrant history of Leeds West Indian Carnival, features on the gable end of a two-storey house on Savile Mount in Chapeltown, at the heart of the Caribbean and Carnival communities.

Taking inspiration from 'ole mas' characters – such as masqueraders, blue devils, and moko jumbies – and the theatrical creations of Leeds' infamous costume designers, Rhian blended elements of traditional Caribbean carnival with contemporary visuals for the mural, **Reflections of Carnival**. With input from Carnival and Chapeltown communities, including local school children, older people and costume designers, this important artwork brings a piece of the legendary celebration to the neighbourhood as a permanent tribute.

A launch party to celebrate the official unveiling of the mural took place at the Leeds Caribbean and African Centre, next to the mural, on Saturday 28 October.

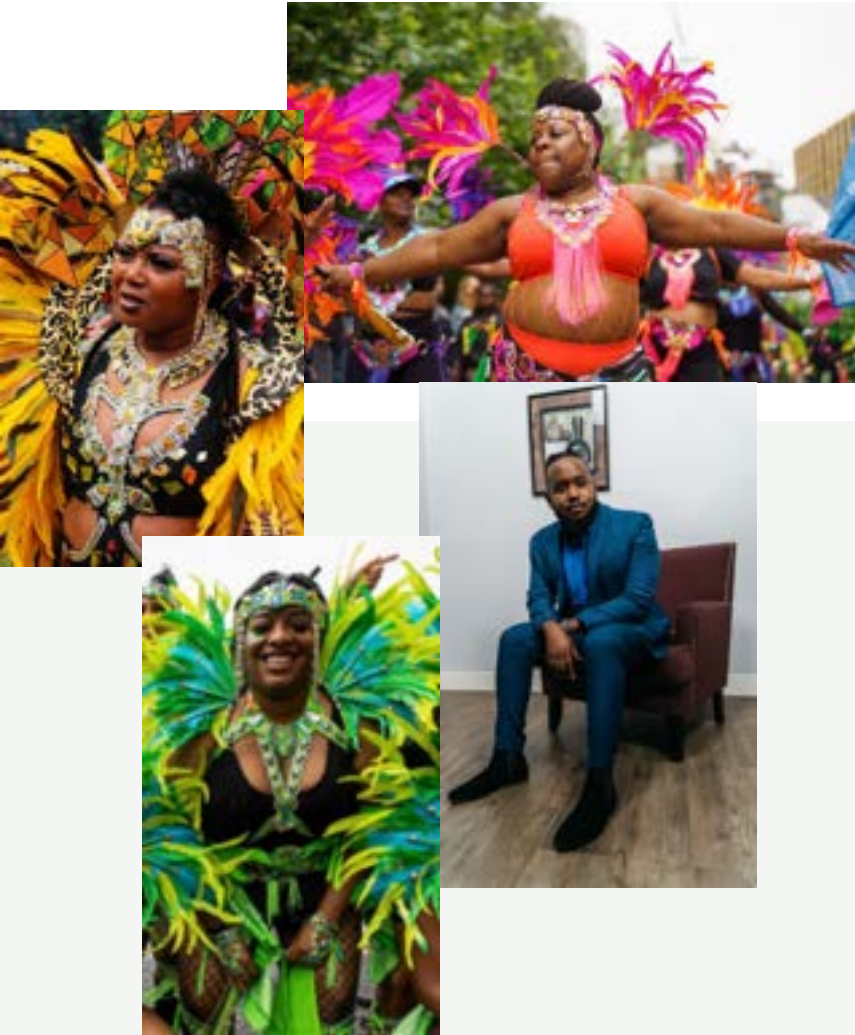


Involved in the production of 'Reflections of Carnival' were:

Rhian Kempadoo - Millar / lead artist
Alan Pergusey / assistant artist
Reggie Challenger / assistant artist
Kyrone James / assistant artist
and a great team of helpers and volunteers



Training and Development



This year has been a year of progress for the organisation of Leeds West Indian Carnival as it has grown in size. We welcomed four new members to the board of trustees. Karen Mills, Kearn Williams, Simone Berkeley and Lorina Gumbs. We will be continuing to strengthen our board in 2024.

Part of our process as an organisation is learning. We, together with the representatives from each of our troupes along with members of Soca Village, undertook first aid training in September. Everyone who took part found this to be a valuable learning experience and will look to reinvest their qualifications back into the community should the need arise.

All that remains of this year is to wish you all joys of the festive season and a progressive and prosperous 2024.

The Board of Leeds West Indian Carnival



Leeds West Indian Carnival Ltd

Registered Charity No: 1107881

Registered Company number: 05118504 (England and Wales)

82 Sheepscar Street North

Leeds

LS7 3AF

Website: www.leedscarnival.co.uk

FACEBOOK: <https://www.facebook.com/leedswestindiancarnival/>

INSTAGRAM: @leedswestindiancarnival

X: @CarnivalLeeds

