

TRADITIONAL CARNIVAL CHARACTERS

The stories behind the traditional Carnival characters lend meaning and significance to these unusual portrayals. The custom is usually passed on orally to family members or other interested persons. The masqueraders would offer entertainment in the form of humour, songs or skits in exchange for money. In some cases threats and scare tactics were used to coerce bystanders into giving them cash. Some of the best known characters are as follows: **Drag the picture to its correct description.**

BABY DOLL

The baby doll character was portrayed mainly in the 1930's, but is still seen every year at Ole Mas competitions. The masquerader portrays a gaily dressed woman, decked out in a frilled dress and bonnet. In her arms she carries a doll which symbolises an illegitimate baby. The masquerader usually stops male passers-by and accuses them of being the baby's father. She would then demand money to buy milk for the baby.

BATS

The bat costume is normally black or brown and fitted tightly over the masquerader's body. The headpiece covers the head entirely, with the player being able to see through the mouth, or lifting it up to his forehead. During performance, the masquerader crawls, flaps, dances on his toes, and folds his wings in a series of choreographed movements, imitating those of the bat.

BURROKEET

Burrokeet, derived from the Spanish word *burroquito* (little donkey), is constructed from bamboo so as to give the illusion of a dancer riding a small *burro* or donkey. This masquerade was derived from both the East Indian culture and the Venezuelans

COW BAND

The Cow Band, which dates back to the days of the Canboulay, consisted of a small group of men dressed in costumes of sacking made from rice bags. These costumes were completely covered with dried plantain leaves. Each masquerader wore a homemade papier-mâché mask representing the head of a cow surmounted by a pair of horns.

DAME LORRAINE

The Dame Lorraine or Dame Lorine was imitative of the mas played by the 18th and early 19th century French planters, who would dress up in elegant costumes of the French aristocracy and parade in groups at private homes, particularly on Carnival Sunday night. They also performed the sophisticated dances of the period. The liberated slaves recreated these costumes – complete with elaborate fans and hats

FANCY INDIANS

This mas is based on the indigenous people of North America. The wearer decides how expensive or expansive he wants this costume to be. The headpiece, in its simplest form, is worn with feathers sticking up, and more feathers making tails down the back.

BOOKMAN

The Bookman, also referred to as the Gownman or Ruler, is a feature of devil mas portrayals. The other two groups of characters in the devil band are the imps and beasts.. On his head is an oversized head mask which contains small horns and carries a demonic expression. The face of this mask is supposed to mirror the face of the devil himself. The Bookman carries a pen and a large book in which he writes the names of prospective souls for the devil.

