

Yeah, minister

He first came to the Carnival as a law student. And now he's Under-Secretary Of State For Health **Paul Boateng** still can't get enough

For me Carnival is people, people, people. A rich and varied mix of colours, music, dance and a beat that carries all before it. Age, race, gender – all the usual barriers are abandoned, along with the inhibitions that go with them. The venue is Notting Hill but the origins go way beyond that: Africa, via the Caribbean, with a mix of Indian, both Amerindian and the Subcontinent. After all, the melting pot of Trinidad claims carnival as its own, but it all ends up in Europe. Notting Hill may be cool, but for that weekend it's hot, hot, hot. The northern hemisphere's largest street carnival hits the road with millions of people, not just from Britain but from all over Europe.

This was not always how it was.

My earliest memories are of taking the number 12 bus from Brixton as a young law student with 'my girl' to a much more ardent affair in the Seventies. We jumped up, bumped into old friends, made some new ones and went where we wanted. The street bands didn't appear to follow the line of the route, if there even was one no one took much notice of it. Chaos reigned. Today the Carnival is very different. I still go with 'my girl', the same one as it happens, now my wife and the mother of five. She hasn't changed. I have. Gone are the Afro and the flares. (Shame about the Afro, good riddance to the flares.) I still jump up – but I seem to tire more easily.

How can this be? A quick look in the mirror makes the reason all too clear. Carnival has grown old more gracefully. You can now buy a route map. The bands follow it – and on time. Carnival has sponsors.

Some things don't change, the police are still photographed dancing with scantily clad ladies, whose invariably expansive bosoms threaten to knock off the copper's headgear with one mighty heave. These days this is the only action the copper is likely to see. These days there is less crime than at the average football match. It was not always so.

Carnival, after all, has traditionally been the reign of the Lord Of Misrule. The established order is stood on its head. This is as

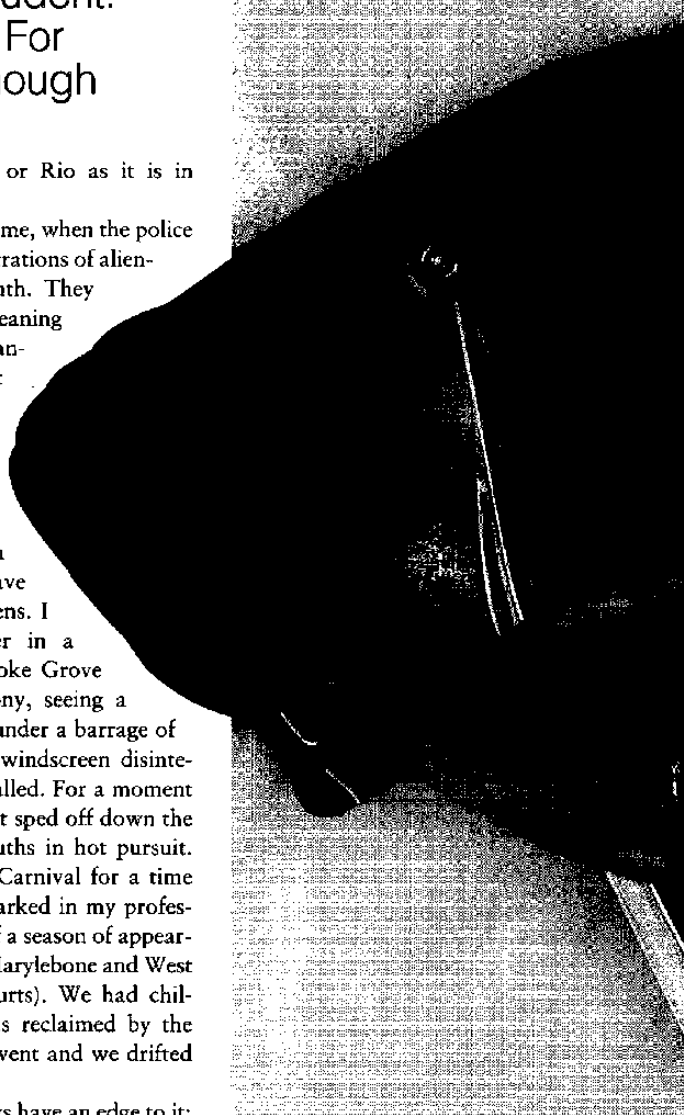
true in Seville, Munich or Rio as it is in Notting Hill.

It used to be payback time, when the police bore the brunt of the frustrations of alienated and disaffected youth. They symbolised 'Babylon' meaning discrimination, disadvantage, oppression. Night fell and with it came random, opportunistic theft which became, for a few bad years, wider public disorder. The boom, boom, boom of the sound system gave way to the shriek of sirens. I remember taking shelter in a block of flats off Ladbroke Grove once and, from a balcony, seeing a passing police car come under a barrage of bricks and bottles. The windscreen disintegrated. The squad car stalled. For a moment time stood still... before it sped off down the road with a gang of youths in hot pursuit.

We stopped going to Carnival for a time (although it remained marked in my professional diary as the start of a season of appearances as a lawyer in the Marylebone and West London Magistrates Courts). We had children. Then Carnival was reclaimed by the community as a family event and we drifted back again.

But Carnival will always have an edge to it: the floats tell a story and calypso provides a contemporary commentary on the follies and foibles of the powers that be, and a wry reflection on the human condition. So, for me, it's a shame that the sound system – huge great speakers in boxes – has rather drowned out the live stage. The spirit of calypso is still to be found, however. In the islands of the Caribbean the road marches of carnival are sometimes so subversive that they are banned from state radio. This doesn't stop them becoming hits. Carnival belongs to the people. No state can, or should try to, co-opt it.

Notting Hill hasn't yet found an equivalent voice – but it may yet do. In our own country Arts Council and local-authority grants have





supported a thriving craft scene in the run-up to Carnival. All ages and all races get together in halls and classrooms across London to spin, colour and construct the sublime intricacies of masks, costumes and floats that make for the spectacle of the day. It is an art form all of its own and is now recognised as such.

The child's gasp of wonder as a float and band come into view. The proud strut of the peacock man. The fluttering wings of the butterfly lady. The drunken and meandering progress of wave upon wave of revellers. These are all very much part of Carnival. So is the wave of recognition as members of the community, who are staid and upstanding for 363 days of the year, let it all hang out for these two.

Carnival's magic lies in its rituals. Not just the collective ones – the old rivalries between steel bands, the pre-Carnival ball, the disputed judging – but the familiar family rituals of those who attend. Ours include a visit on the Monday to an elderly lady who lives just off the route. She knows that on that day all seven of us will descend on her tiny but beautifully turned-out flat, and she prepares accordingly. She will be one of many in Notting Hill expecting visitors on that day. She has lived in Notting Hill for as long as anyone can remember – she guards her privacy fiercely so I shall simply call her Vicki. She doesn't actually go to Carnival any more, although she may stand on her balcony and listen to the bands a street away. She is simply 'at home'.

This year's Carnival celebrates the 50th anniversary of the arrival at Tilbury of the *Empire Windrush*, that shipload of ex-servicemen and women answering with others the Mother Country's call for labour to swell a depleted workforce in the aftermath of the Second World War. And Vicki embodies the spirit of the Notting Hill Carnival in its journey across the sea. She had come to Britain during the war to raise funds for the Red Cross. There is a wonderful picture of her at the dockside in London with a gift of sugar from the Islands to war-torn Britain.

She stayed on to work in the Civil Service, the first black person ever to work in the Cabinet Office. She has certificates and letters that tell the story of a modest and unassuming life that survived Mosley and Rachman – both parts of the Notting Hill story – to create a home here that is now, in her late eighties, a rare oasis of style that reflects not just the Caribbean but the Paris of Josephine Baker and the London of Noël Coward.

We will be with her again this Carnival weekend. Carnival, like her, is very much part of an island story, these islands and those of the Caribbean, woven together to make something good and really rather magical.

Let's enjoy it together. ■

Gimme five

The five that bring Carnival alive: mas, pan, calypso, soca and the static sound systems are Carnival's essential musical ingredients. **Nick Bradshaw** reports

Not many people know that behind the chaotic crowds, the throbbing rhythms, the joyful dancing in the streets, the inventive costumes that have boggled the minds of the many millions who've attended Carnival over the years, the secret ingredient is discipline. In fact, five disciplines. Because the true heart of Carnival is a cluster of distinct artistic elements that those who know call the Five Disciplines Of Carnival. They are Carnival's cultural backbone: mas, pan, calypso, soca and the static sound systems.

Of course, the participants themselves know all about it and there's a healthy amount of rivalry within each discipline as groups or individuals vie to be the best. Being the best brings more than just kudos – it has financial benefits; because Carnival is more than a festival, it's a properly structured competition, complete with judging panels, nervous contestants and cash prizes.

Mas, pan and calypso started arriving in London in the hearts of the first waves of people coming from the Caribbean, who hoped the sights and sounds of the islands would bring a bit of warmth to these cold shores. Soca and the static sound systems came later: closely in touch with the ever-changing Afro-Caribbean music scene, they ensure Carnival stays relevant to as many people as possible.

Devotees of each of the five feel that without their discipline, Carnival would cease to be the major festival it is now. And, frankly, they do all have a point.

MAS

Mas is short for masquerade, meaning the costumes of Carnival. It is the celebration's visual mainstay and therefore involves the largest number of participants. This year 86 groups of masqueraders will take part, each displaying a different theme and each consisting of dozens of adults and children (plus the support teams and the many fancy dress designers and makers). Thirty years ago fewer than 50 people would dress up in costumes for Carnival. Last year there were more than 10,000 and the numbers just keep growing.

Masquerading stems from the days when black slaves were not allowed out after dark unless they were accompanied by their white masters. When these laws were repealed the wearing of masks, often grotesque and with huge white heads depicting the slave masters, became a popular mode of satirical and artistic expression during festivals.

Each mas band is made up of five separate elements: the King, the Queen, the Male Individual, the Female Individual and the Section Mas. The King and Queen are the most coveted positions and their costumes are always the most regal and elaborate. One notch down, the Female Individual is similar to the Queen's lady-in-waiting ■



FLAMINGO MAS BAND

Martha Fevrier thinks long and hard before answering. 'Yes, I really think it is worth all the effort,' she says and sighs a long sigh.

Martha, from St Lucia, has been associated with the Flamingo Carnival Club for 15 years. Of all the mas bands they have the largest children's section and she describes herself as the organiser, the chairperson and the general dogsbody.

'For us it's not a day on the road, it's a year of work. On many occasions, as Carnival gets closer, we sew through the night,' she groans. 'On the day, when you see the kids arrive to take part their faces light up. There's such a pride. If they're a King, a Queen or a Princess, then they feel like one. It's one thing in their life that they all really remember in the years that follow. Every year, when I leave Notting Hill and go

MAS

In the pink: Flamingo team members Anwar Fevrier and Tanya Simpson.



back to the workshop with my feet really hurting, I swear that that year will be my last, but pretty soon I'm thinking about what next year's theme should be.'

In 1983 Martha left the mas band that she'd been involved with for some years. It could have been the perfect moment to stop being so actively involved in Carnival and become a spectator. To Martha, the idea was quite tempting. Her children, however, convinced her to use her Carnival experience to set up her own mas band. 'Our kids put pressure on us so we went down the Kilburn High Road and bought some fairytale books to get some inspiration for costumes and made the costumes. The whole thing was really successful even though we didn't have a designer and did everything ourselves.'

By their second year, they'd recruited designer Billy Nicholas, who has worked

alongside Martha and the Flamingo team ever since. The artistic bond they've built up over the years is very strong. 'I have an idea, I suggest it to him and in no time he creates a suitable initial design,' she explains. These days, Flamingo attracts people from across the capital and far beyond. People have been known to fly in from as far as St Lucia just to take part in the procession.

Despite extensive efforts to make all the costumes as comfortable to wear as possible, by using lightweight materials such as netting and bamboo, the long route can take its toll on the many youngsters. To help overcome this, all the main masqueraders have a double who can fit inside their outer costumes. This, of course, makes more work for the costume makers, who have to produce twice the number of inner garments.

Martha believes that whatever the judges think, Flamingo has the winning formula: 'For a lot of the mas competitors the competition is the be all and end all, but though we've grown to become a big, often successful, organisation, we tell our kids before they go out in costume that they are winners already - anything else is a bonus. The important competition for Flamingo is the competition with ourselves to try and improve each year.'

She says Flamingo would love to open a Carnival museum one day. And as they've kept all the costumes they've made over the years, they've certainly got enough to fill one. In the short term, they are looking for a new home as the industrial unit they currently use has been declared unsafe by the council. 'If anyone has a space we could use, then we'd love to hear from them,' she says hopefully.

and the Male Individual is like the King's equerry. The Section Mas consists of everyone else in costume.

Designers can choose any theme they please, so the range of costumes is immense. It could be something from Afro-Caribbean history or something from nature, such as beautiful flowers, mysterious sea creatures or demonic monsters. Previous mas themes have included 'Things With Wings', 'Fancy Sailor' and 'Zulu Warrior'.

The creations are usually so intricate that the band has spent the whole year coming up with the theme, putting the designs on paper and creating the flamboyant creations from cloth, netting, wire, bamboo, sequins, fibreglass and papier-mâché. The costumes must be both lightweight and balanced to be wearable as well as great-looking – particularly those for children. Carnival costumes can be quite staggering feats of engineering.

Competition is so fierce it is said that some mas bands deliberately leak misinformation about their theme to rivals. When the mas bands hit the streets on August Bank Holiday there are more than a few surprises.

Perhaps more than any other discipline, mas is the one that attracts children – it's a chance to dress up in bright costumes and enter a fantasy world for a day. There are now increasing numbers of Carnival clubs that combine the fun of a conventional youth club with the sense of joining in with an art form rich in cultural history. So the future of mas looks assured.

PAN

The pan is the national instrument of Trinidad and Tobago. The steelpan, which is the instrument used by steel bands, is a relatively modern invention. Empty oil drums were discarded on the golden beaches of the Caribbean by American sailors after the Second World War – and some very enterprising young men, who were aware of their distinctive sound when struck, collected them and hammered them into tune.

To turn an overgrown tin can into an instrument worthy of the highly talented panners at Carnival takes a serious amount of elbow grease and skill – cutting, burning, shaping, tuning. It's now a most versatile instrument. Early panners would probably be bemused by their Nineties counterparts' talk of fourths and fifths. Steel bands are increasingly being called steel orchestras since, by careful sectioning of the pans, they can produce the full arrangements of traditional symphony orchestras. In fact, these days most steel bands have their own musical arrangers and conductors.

The music ranges from Beethoven through Bob Marley to Boyzone and some orchestras now tour the world. Panners can be found from Portugal to Japan. Bizarrely, there are over 100 steel bands operating out of

PAN

Switzerland. Musicians such as Sting and Jean Michel Jarre have experimented with the steelpan sound on their records. But at Carnival, you're still most likely to hear the traditional sounds of calypso music as the steel bands pass by: usually 40 or 50 musicians of both sexes and all ages standing behind their instruments on decorated floats, creating beautiful harmonies together after many months of rehearsal.

CALYPSO

The musical root of the Notting Hill Carnival is calypso. Just as the French have *chanson*, the Caribbean has calypso, a form of social commentary set to music. But, since it comes from a part of the world where music is inextricably linked to dance, calypso songs always have a beat.

Calyptonians believe that the best way to get their message across to the audience is with a generous dash of humour. A song cannot be a calypso without an element of wit and satire. Even the most poignant and per-

sonal calypso that brings tears to your eyes should also, at some point, bring a smile to your lips. (Many Brits first experienced this particular mix of topicality and humour on BBC television: calypsos were sung by Grant on Cliff Michelmore's *Tonight* programme in the Fifties, and by Lance Percival on David Frost's *That Was The Week That Was* in the Sixties.)

Calyptonians are some of the real characters of Carnival. They are consummate storytellers who stand alone on stage and hold the crowd's attention. Like rap, a language and very different way of overlaying the rhythms of real language on to music (a language which has its roots in Jamaican 'Toasting'), each calypso's subject matter is entirely up to the individual singer. It can be personal, political, educational or whimsical. Past subjects have ranged from advice for children ('go to school and learn well, otherwise later on in life yer go catch real hell') to the Buckingham Palace incident in 1980 when an intruder got into the Queen's bedroom.



Stealing the thunder.
Tobe Akingboye of the
Ebony Steel Band.

GALY 1250



Calypso King: Lord Cloak the Carnival calypso Monarch.

LORD CLOAK

It's hard to talk about calypso at Carnival without talking about Lord Cloak, a man who has sung his way into Carnival history by being crowned the calypso Monarch 11 times.

A Notting Hill resident since the mid-Sixties, the 56-year-old believes he was destined to be a calypso king way before he settled in the heart of the Carnival route. 'From the days of my childhood in Trinidad I've always loved calypso,' he says. 'I'd listen to the greats of calypso, such as Lord Kitchener and the Mighty Sparrow, Lord Blakey and a lot of great, great artists, and that gave me the inspiration to start singing.'

'Now, when I go back to Trinidad, I try to speak to my heroes, I make up songs and ask them to listen to me and they help me with what to change or what not to change. Even now, Lord Kitchener is my idol. I get my inspiration from people like him who sing with meaning.' It's entirely thanks to his success at Carnival that Lord Cloak can keep returning to the country of his birth. 'Without the prize money I wouldn't be able to go home. I work in a laundry so it would

be tough to be able to go to see my mother and my family.'

Although he has no intention of abdicating just yet, he has plenty of advice for aspiring Lord Cloaks. 'A lot of calypsonians write good songs but to be the Monarch you need to be able to bring the song out on stage. You must have good diction, pronunciation and stage performance. The judges want to hear lyrics, your song must say something. That's why I sit down and take my time and choose good lyrics. If you tell other calypsonians this they will argue that they are doing it right and, as a result, year after year, I keep running away with the cake,' he shrugs, with a resigned smile.

For someone who has been so successful at Carnival, he remains modest about his achievements: 'Many believe that I'm in the Premiership and the others are second division. That's very gratifying, but I know there are calypsonians out there who are better than me. Tobago Crusoe is brilliant but never enters the competition. Why I do not know but if people like him keep away, then all the better for me.'

'You must remember that you can fall sometimes - but for now I'm definitely still standing and holding on to my crown.'

SOCA

Among the masqueraders and panners taking to the streets this weekend will be some floats that don't fit into either category. They'll be carrying the soca DJs. Soca (half Soul, half calypso) is the music played by the sound systems which started to go mobile more than 20 years ago and have since

integrated into the main Carnival procession.

Soca is calypso's more hypnotic cousin, developed in the mid-Seventies to add a new tempo to the calypso beat, a tempo that makes people want to dance. Like calypso, the lyrics of soca are packed with social commentary. But unlike traditional calypso, the songs get you moving as much as they make you want to listen to a message. In the early

days there was just one solitary soca float. This year there'll be 35.

By taking that music to the people on Carnival route, and by encouraging masses to follow behind their floats as pump out their irresistible beats from stacks of speakers, soca DJs have become Pied Pipers of Carnival. Soca has helped up the heat of Carnival, encouraging

people to jump around and let themselves get 'Hot, Hot, Hot'.

STATIC SOUND SYSTEMS

These days the many static sound systems around the side streets of Notting Hill are a fully integrated part of Carnival. But it wasn't always that way. Back in the early Seventies they were not welcomed by the more traditional musicians and masqueraders following the route. Initially they positioned themselves right on the route and the mas and pan bands felt unable to compete with the volume emanating from such mountainous banks of speakers because, instead of following the procession, the crowds were hanging around the heavy rhythms of the sound systems.

A compromise was reached when the ➔

SOCA



Soca so good: Lord Sam
Lord Sam
Soca Pioneer

static sound systems moved off the main route and down the side streets. Being on the edge of the Carnival actually suits them. They are often young mavericks playing music that appeals to the margins rather than the mainstream. They come to Carnival to have fun and are provocative, with names such as Killerwatt, Rampage, Foreplay, Rappattack.

Each sound system has a different style, reflecting the different music heard in the clubs of the capital – rap, reggae, jungle, zouk and so on. And each of the 39 static sound

systems can expect to attract well over 2,000 energetic followers, all of whom will be dancing. It's impossible not to – even the Tarmac shudders in time to the music.

Static sound systems are certainly popular with the crowds, and over the years they have gained a degree of acceptance from supporters of the other disciplines. Local residents, however, are not always happy to see a sound

system outside their front door and often under siege by the crowds. Sound system supporters are rarely phased by such opposition. They see Carnival as a festival of arts on streets and, as such, they have every right to be where they are and to do what they do.

STATIC SOUND SYSTEMS

MELLOTONE

Some might say that running a sound system is an unsuitable job for a woman. Lady Benton, Night Nurse and Lady Yonika, collectively known as Mellotone, would beg to differ.

However, the three women who make up the only all-woman static sound system at Carnival do admit that – initially at least – their decision to set up a sound stage five years ago was one which raised more than a few eyebrows.

'When you go into a male-only environment, your arrival on the scene is bound to be met with some caution. I think we had to prove ourselves that bit more. In a way we used the situation to our advantage, because, by being that bit different, we always got support and help from the Carnival committee,' says Lady Benton, who last year proved that it's possible to juggle DJ-ing and motherhood when she brought her three-week-old baby daughter to Carnival.

Just like their male counterparts, Mellotone choose the music they play very carefully. For them, Carnival is the biggest music event of the year and they need to start planning weeks, even months in advance. This includes Night Nurse trawling the record shops in search of hardcore, upfront sounds, while Lady Benton spends her spare time

seeking out smooth vocal-led tracks and Lady Yonika is busy hunting down forgotten tracks from the Seventies and Eighties. 'We all love revival music but, beyond that, what we play is really varied,' explains Lady Yonika, who performs dressed like she's just stepped out of a Blaxploitation movie.

Last year, the girls felt that their stage could be used to benefit people from their home borough of Haringey, so they sought out young local talent to join them. The experiment worked and will be repeated this year. 'On Sunday we're using the stage as a platform for youngsters from our local borough to do some singing and dancing. If kids have talent it's important that they get chances to express themselves,' says Night Nurse. 'At the moment there's quite a wide gap between the sound systems and the mas bands. By getting the local kids involved with what we do we're trying to bridge that gap, both musically and visually.'

Lady Benton continues: 'Many of the sound systems are moving on and developing their sites. They've come a long way since they first got involved in Carnival.'

Other all-woman sound systems have set up at Carnival before, but have only ever lasted for one year. Only Mellotone have managed to keep going. 'It's been hard but for the love of the music we keep plugging away. It gives you a great buzz watching the crowds jump up and down in the streets when you put a record on,' says Night Nurse.

Mellotone is on Telford Road (see listings).



The Spirit of

CARNIVAL

So, just what does Carnival mean to the people of Notting Hill?

DOREEN:

We really, really enjoy Carnival. There is a great atmosphere. It brings people out of their houses, everyone enjoying themselves. It is a thing we have been doing for years and years. It is a chance for the whole family to get together. Our family members from the north of England come down for Carnival. We party in the evening, enjoying food and drink. I always make a costume for Jason. I get old shirts and jeans and slash them with scissors to make strips. It is a cultural thing for us.

JASON:

I like Carnival 'cause I get to wear costumes and dance and eat food.



RICHARD:

Anything that gives people the chance to have a good time is good in my books.



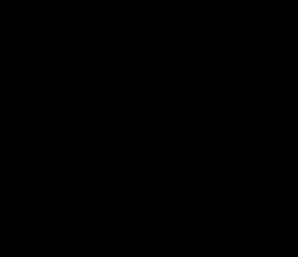
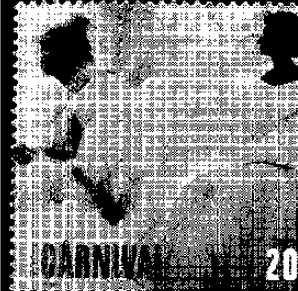
CHIARA:

I am really looking forward to Carnival. I have never taken part in the Notting Hill Carnival before, but I know the feeling of carnival because I am from Trieste in Italy and we have many carnivals there. I am really looking forward to relaxing.

ANGELINA:

Nice Cuts, 253 Portobello Road, W11
Tel 0171 221 4421

Carnival is great because it brings people together, people of all different nationalities. It gets everyone out and about. I have been to about 10 Carnivals now. When I lived outside London, I always used to come down to London for the Carnival. The hair style that I am creating now is very popular for Carnival time. The swirl designs on the face are very effective and the style will stay in place for the whole weekend. You don't want your hair to unravel when you are dancing and having a good time.



The Spirit of

CARNIVAL

Carnival means different things to different people.



To some it's a chance to see old friends, dance and enjoy some of the world's best entertainment. Others will visit for the costumes and variety of delicious foods on offer from around the world. The one thing, however, that unites everyone that visits this year's Carnival in London or any of the many carnivals around the world from Rio to Trinidad, will be the sense of community that is brought about from celebrating life and liberty through dance and music.

The Notting Hill Carnival is the largest arts festival in Europe, second only in the world to Rio. As such, it is rooted in the hearts of all those involved including 7,500 dedicated men, women and children who prepare the intricate costumes that light up the streets of West London with 'Carnival fever'.

I feel really strongly about the Carnival. It started with just a few people wanting to bring a taste of home on to the streets of London and from that small thing it has just grown and grown and grown

Benjamin Zephaniah

This year's event offers a chance to party to the latest Soca music, enjoy the variety of sound systems on offer as well as the three live music stages.

Started over 30 years ago, the Carnival is a Caribbean population eager to unite the local community in Notting Hill. It has grown from humble beginnings into an event that is enjoyed by over 1 million visitors each year. To mark the Notting Hill Carnival is a truly multicultural event, attracting participants and spectators from all over the world.

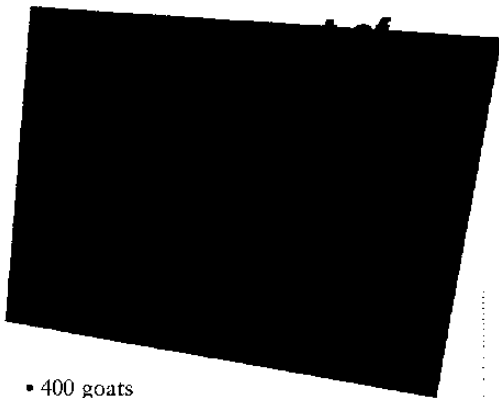
To recognise the enormous contribution of the Notting Hill Carnival, Royal Mail has created a special issue of Caribbean-themed stamps. Designed by Tim Hazael, the presentation pack features an exclusive poem by Benjamin Zephaniah.



Is that a fact?

John Hind finds out that at the last count this year's number-crunching Carnival will involve:

- **Up to 1 million visitors at Carnival's height**
- **50,000-plus active participants**
- **150 mas bands**
- **20 steel bands**
- **15 calypso singers**
- **39 static sound systems**
- **30 soca sound systems**
- 300 pre-carnival band/group parties
- 16,000 records played
- **300 food stalls**
- 1 ton of curry chicken
- **1 ton of Jamaican patties**
- 15,000 deep-fried plantains
- 30,000 corn on the cob
- 10,000 litres of Jamaican stout
- **1 ton of rice and peas**



- 400 goats
- **12,000 mangoes**
- **16,000 coconuts**
- 5 million hot and cold drinks
- **25,000 bottles of rum**
- 800,000 cans and bottles of drink
- 70,000 litres of carrot juice
- 40 flavours of juice
- 15,000 costumes
- **1 million man-hours making and decorating costumes**
- **15,000 feather plumes**
- **30 million sequins**
- **30 litres of decorative body paint**
- 12 First Aid points
- 12 official toilet sites
- 3 information points
- **120 floats, one solar-powered**
- 200 moving sound trucks and support trucks
- 125 St John's Ambulance crew
- 4 on-site doctors
- **30 London Ambulance Service paramedics**
- 10 senior house officers at St Mary's Hospital
- **10 environmental health officers**
- 12 trade enforcement officers
- 37 hours of roads closed off to traffic

- **3,400 local residents who 'retire to the country'**
- 130 to 170 stewards
- **11 buses go to the edge of Carnival, seven of the routes have been re-routed**

MUSIC

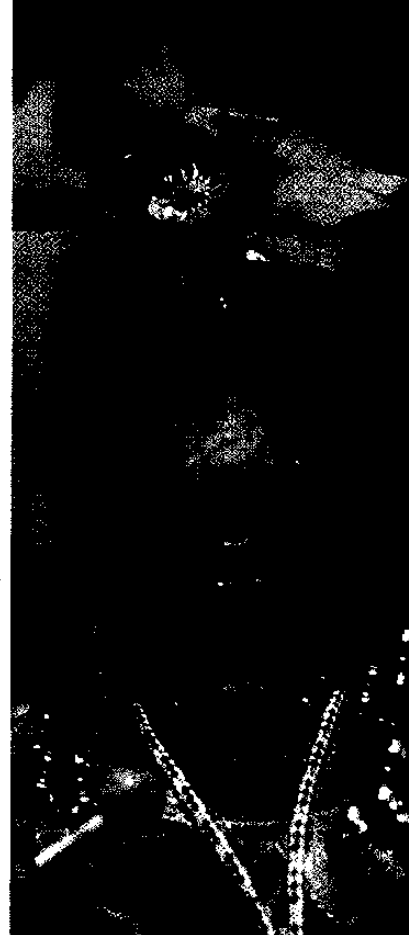
- **Yaa Asantewaa Arts & Community Centre's team**, who chose a theme of Genesis last year, were voted best mas band on the road. They typically have 25 children on a youth-workshop programme developing ideas for costumes.
- **Love T.K.O.**, one of the larger static sound systems, will arrive in a seven-and-a-half ton truck with a tower lift on Sunday morning and set up (plus frame for weather-resistant tarpaulin) in two hours. It will pack up in the evening and – standard practice – set up again Monday morning at 9.30am.
- The time **Carnival DJs** judge that it is 'swinging' on Monday is between 3pm and 4pm. The event is peaking at 7pm but almost all static music is off by 7.10pm.
- **A typical mas band arranges for its crew:** 12 cases of beer, three cases of hard liquor, six two-litre cases of soft drinks and two 50-litre water containers.
- The average DJ arrives with **800 records**.

COSTUME

- The heaviest Carnival head dresses weigh **25lb** and cause neck strain for several weeks afterwards.
- The tallest costume this year is expected to be **16ft**.

The cost of creative expenditure by participants is £10 million.

- **Dragon's Carnival Band** used 50 boxes of glue (20 bottles per box) making its 220 costumes this year, with 15 to 20 people having a 'lime' (production gathering) nightly until 4.30am for the past month.
- **The London School Of Samba**, which has 120 costumed drummers and 60 dancers (dancing in eight styles) at this year's Carnival, has classes to prepare for Carnival all year round, with a typical attendance of 35 drummers and 25



dancers. The youngest is ten, the oldest over 70. The theme this year is 'Burnin' Up'. Costumes will emit water and smoke. Each costume has taken approximately two weeks to sew.

- Khasheem Thomas, aged two, and Jade Gardner, aged six, of the **Perpetual Beauty Carnival Club**, won £5,000 from the Japan Festival Fund for Japanese costumes they wore at Carnival in 1994.
- At some Carnival parties it's **'tradition'** for girls to remove their tops at midnight.

MONEY

- £175,000 in grants is distributed to performers, bands and dance troupes.
- The average annual expenses of a steel band is £8,000.
- **The cost of a finely tuned steel drum between £350 and £800.**
- Police spend £4 million and visitors spend £30 million.
- There is £167,000 of expenditure by Kensington & Chelsea Council.
- **To plumb and maintain 50 portable toilets costs £89,000.**
- In 1990 police first hired an airship from Esso for £15,000 and loaded it with officers and cameras – but were not allowed below 500 feet.
- 'Don't Jam When You're Jamming' was the Met Police's £25,000 publicity campaign in 1992, to highlight the danger of overcrowding at Carnival.
- **The first ever black Sindy doll was launched at Carnival in 1995, costing £3 more than the lighter, non-dreadlocked one.**
- The council spent £50,000 boarding up

