



MAS: Costumes from Hartford's West Indian Community

DATE: Thursday, August 25, 2011

TIME: 5-7 PM

LOCATION: The Institute for Community Research; 2 Hartford Square West, Suite 100; 146 Wyllys St. (corner of Charter Oak Ave. and Columbus Blvd.); Hartford CT 06106

This event is free and open to the public.

DETAILS: This exhibit displays Trinidad-style carnival costumes (Mas) made by Hartford teens during a summer 2011 Mas Camp. Also on display will be spectacular Trinidad costumes owned by Michael Charles. These colorful and elaborate costumes are similar to those worn in West Indian celebrations around the world, and have been displayed in Hartford's Taste of the Caribbean Festival and the West Indian Parade this summer.

The event will mark the graduation of the teens who spent six weeks learning how to design and make the costumes under the guidance of Mas maker Tynsley Charles and experienced assistants Grace Wright and Keimei "Q" Delpeche, as well as volunteer section leader Cassie Harper. Each teen has designed and built a complete costume, including headpiece, arm and foot bands, girdles, collars, backpacks, and all frames and attachments needed for wearing the elaborate structures. The teens also have been trained by Harold Springer in parading the costumes. They have formed a Carnival "Band" called the Exotic Ones, with three sections of masqueraders in different color schemes. Some of the teens will be "masquerading" their costumes in person, accompanied by the Hartford Steel Symphony led by master steel pan maker and player Kelvin Griffith. Visitors to the exhibit will be able to try on a costume!

The project is supported by a City of Hartford Jobs Grant for 2011, the Hartford City Council, and the Greater Hartford Arts Council through contributors to its United Arts Campaign and the United Way Community Campaign. CHAP's Participation is funded by the National Endowment for the Arts, the Connecticut Commission on Culture and Tourism, and the Institute for Community Research.

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