

TRADITIONAL CARNIVAL CHARACTERS

When Carnival festivities began in Trinidad & Tobago in the 1830s, masqueraders would dress in costumes to create funny characters that mimicked society. Over the years, different characters were created each with a unique costume, story and performance. These characters from long ago are known as Traditional Carnival Characters.

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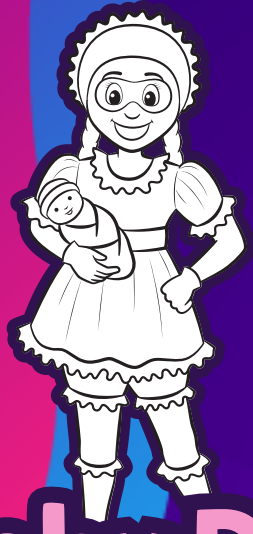
CARNIVAL CHARACTERS



The Bat is a portrayal of the animal of the same name. The character wears a costume that is either black, brown or white which includes a body suit, wings and a headpiece. The wings are made from wire or cane covered with fabric. The headpiece which looks like the bat's head, is made from wire covered in layers of paper or fabric. The masquerader performs a "Bat Dance" which includes crawling on the ground and spreading the wings to imitate the movements of a real bat.

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CARNIVAL CHARACTERS



Baby Doll



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The Baby Doll is a portrayal of a mother looking for the father of her baby. The character wears a short frilled dress, knickers, stockings, gloves and a large bonnet. Some masqueraders wear a mask over their eyes. The masquerader walks around with a doll representing her child and stops random men accusing them of being the father of her child. She would embarrass the men until they give her money to buy things for the baby.

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CARNIVAL CHARACTERS



Burrokeet



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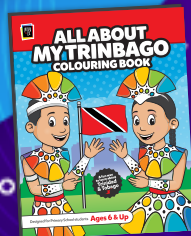
The Burrokeet is a portrayal of a person riding a donkey. Burrokeet came from the Spanish word burroquito which means little donkey. The character wears a donkey costume made from wire, paper and fabric. The costume is decorated in bright colours. The placement of the donkey's head and body give the illusion of the masquerader riding the donkey. The masquerader wears a traditional Spanish style outfit including a wide brim hat.

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**Dame
Lorraine**



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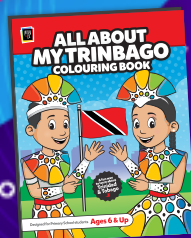
The Dame Lorraine is a portrayal of a rich planter's wife during the days of slavery. The character was created as part of a theatrical performance mocking the lifestyle of the French plantation owners. The masquerader wears a traditional French dress, wide brim hat, mask and carries a parasol and purse. The character is known for her fake over sized buttocks and chest worn under the costume.

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**Fancy
Indian**



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The Fancy Indian is a portrayal of American Indians. It is one of the different types of Indian mas. The character wears a traditional American Indian outfit that is elaborately decorated with Indian patterns and symbols. The main part of the costume is a large headpiece decorated with many feathers and beads. Masqueraders hold a shield, bow or staff as part of their costumes. Face paint is used to mimic the face markings of the American Indians.

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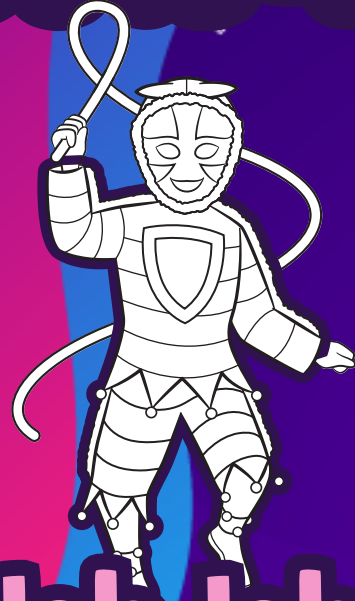
The Fancy Sailor is a portrayal of sailors from Great Britain and the United States of America. It is one of many different types of sailor mas. The character wears a sailor uniform with wide bottom pants that is colourfully decorated. The headpiece is usually very large and is decorated to look like an animal or bird. The costume may include a large decorated back piece. Some masqueraders add a walking stick and smoking pipe to their costumes. Sailors are known for their signature “sailor dance”.



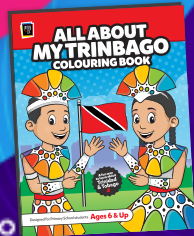
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Jab Jab



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The Jab Jab is a colourful portrayal of devil mas. It is one type of devil mas. The name Jab Jab is a patois term that translates to “Devil Devil”. The character wears a costume that resembles a Medieval jester. It is made up of a striped satin shirt and shorts, stockings, a hood with horns and a mask that covers the whole face.

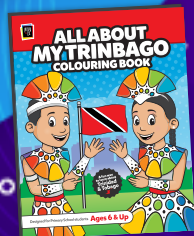
The costume is decorated with rhinestones, mirrors, bells and swansdown. The masquerader uses a long whip to make loud cracking sounds and whip Jab Jabs from rival bands.

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Midnight Robber

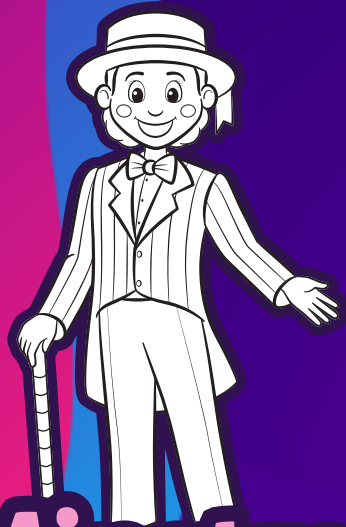


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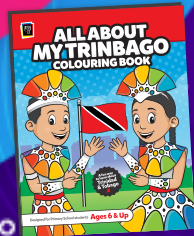
The Midnight Robber is a portrayal of a menacing cowboy. The character wears a costume based on an old American cowboy. This includes an oversized hat, shirt, baggy pants, boots and cape all decorated with images of death such as coffins, tombstones, skulls and cross bones. The masquerader blows the signature whistle before he/she performs unique speeches known as “Robber Talk”. The speech is a creative use of rhyming words that boasts about why they should be feared.

T R A D I T I O N A L

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Minstrel

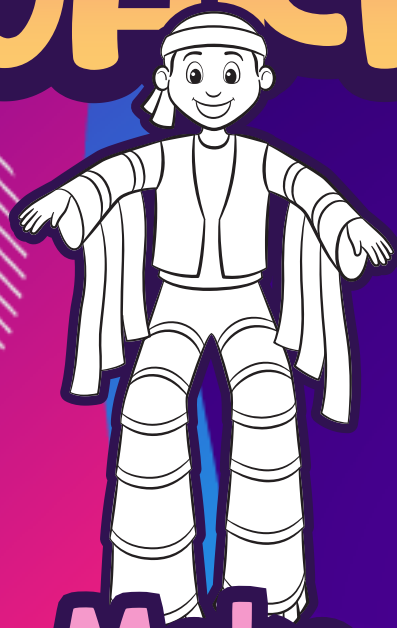


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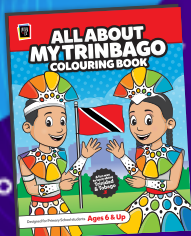
The Minstrel is a portrayal of old African American performer of the early 20th century. The character wears white gloves, top hat and tuxedo made up of a red and white striped tailcoat, black trousers and red cummerbund. The Minstrel paints his/her face white, to mock the Caucasian Americans who would paint their faces black to mock African American performers. Minstrels perform together as part of a musical band. They play instruments such as the banjo, guitar and chac chac and sing old songs from the American south.

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**Moko
Jumbie**

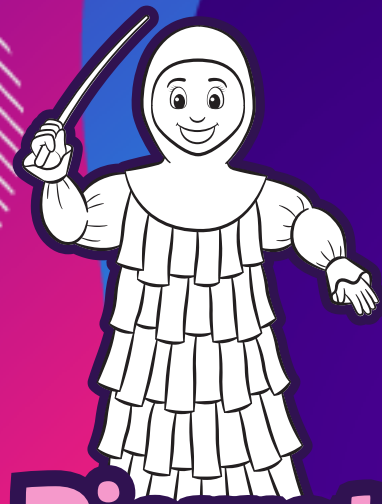


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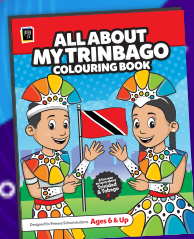
The Moko Jumbie is a portrayal of an African god. A Moko or god is a very tall spiritual being that watches over a village. His towering height helps the Moko to see evil approaching a village before anyone else which allows the god to protect the villagers. The masquerader dances through the streets on stilts made of wood. The stilts can be as tall as a two storey building. The costume includes brightly decorated long pants (that hide the stilts), a shirt and a hat.

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Pierrot Grenade



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The Pierrot Grenade is a portrayal of a Pierrot which is a clown or jester of French origin. The character wears an oversized gown covered in colourful strips of cloth, a head covering and a mask or face paint. The masquerader dances around with a whip made from a tree branch boasting about his/her ability to spell and pronounce big words. Many times the masquerader would challenge the knowledge of people in the audience on a certain topic.