

THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES, ST. AUGUSTINE
Faculty of Humanities and Education
Department of Creative and Festival Arts

presents

The Old Yard **(formerly Viey La Cou)**

Sunday February 27, 2011

In the Gayelle, Department of Creative and Festival Arts, UWI,
St. Augustine
12 noon

Re enactment of a Haitian Ra Ra Band & Guyanese Masquerade Band

Carnival 2011 awaits the splendour of the Guyanese traditional masquerade and an interpretation of the Haitian Ra Ra band through the Department of Creative and Festival Arts (DCFA), The University of the West Indies (UWI), St. Augustine annual showcase traditional heritage Fair *The Old Yard* (formerly Viey La Cou) on Sunday 27th February, 2011, from 12:00 noon. Situated in the Gayelle at DCFA, Agostini Street, St. Augustine - an actual yard - complete with an architectural style reminiscent of long ago, this event promises to offer a dynamic mix of a journey into cultural history and a carnival masquerade showcase within the format of a heritage fair.

A special feature of this year's installment of *The Old Yard* will be a re-enactment of a Haitian Ra Ra Band and a Guyanese Masquerade Band. The Guyanese masquerade will include traditional characters which are usually showcased at Mashramani in the Guyanese National Festival, which traditionally takes place at Christmas time. The Guyanese masquerade is based on traditional African masquerade with influences that we find popular in this type of masquerade throughout the Caribbean, such as the stilt walker and fertility figure. The music includes the kittle drum, iron, fife and base drum. The masquerade dance movements are common throughout the diaspora from Brazil to New Orleans and have influenced contemporary and popular dances.

The Guyanese masquerade band is led by Adrian Waldron who for several years has been the champion bandleader in Guyana and is also the reigning bandleader with his band *Jokers Gone Wild*. Mr Waldron is at present conducting workshops in bamboo craft with students at DCFA, where he is a guest tutor.

The re-enactment of a Haitian Ra Ra mas will be performed by students of DCFA. Ra Ra is a peasant-based masquerade that comes out of the vodun temples in Haiti - Vodun being the

popular Haitian religion. Those bands are noted for their vibrant rhythms, dancing and political commentary and perform traditionally from Ash Wednesday to Easter.

Also to be featured are our very own traditional Carnival masqueraders – the Bats, the Minstrels and Burrokeets, Midnight Robber, Dame Lorraine and many others. As in the days of old when the masquerade would be made and prepared in the old yard before spilling onto the streets of Port of Spain, The Old Yard gives patrons a slice of this cultural history. In essence, The Old Yard offers a showcase of Carnival masquerade traditions beyond their historical location while stimulating contemporary imaginations. A Mas Camp corner will be included this year, where children will be able to pay a fee to build their costume and participate in the jump up. The young and old can therefore experience the meeting of masquerade traditions in *The Old Yard*.

Tickets for *The Old Yard* priced at \$50.00 for adults and \$20.00 for children can be purchased from Department of Creative and Festival Arts. Contact numbers are 663-2222 (direct line); 662-2002 ext. 3791/2510/2376 or email Marissa.Brooks@sta.uwi.edu.