



DECEMBER 11, 2017 •  3 (#COMMENTS)

# Cosplay + Carnival



Josette James (center) poses with her models for the 2018 presentation of *The Mythical Realm*

The folks at Alias are doing things different for Carnival 2018

Monday 6<sup>th</sup> November found me at City Hall in Port of Spain for the launch of their presentation for carnival 2018. Make no mistake, this was no ordinary monotonous “beads and feathers” presentation that resembles an image from shutter stock. Nope! These are actual costumes. Now for those of you who are familiar with the brand Alias and their annual cosplay convention may have an idea of what you can expect. If you are not acquainted with the Alias brand their 2018 presentation ***The Mythical Realm*** is one hell of an introduction!

Alias Entertainment is a brand that spans two enterprises. The first being Alias Entertainment Expo (AEX) which is a multi – genre pop culture convention. The expo’s main focus is on comics, cosplay, gaming, anime, sci-fi movies as well as water sports and pool activities. Currently, this expo is the only one of its kind in the Caribbean region. It is held annually at the Center of Excellence, at the end of July. The second division of Alias Mas 2018.





This model displays her costume from the section Fairies

Callaloo Culture had the opportunity to speak with the lady at the helm of Alias Ms. Josette James concerning her first carnival production The **Mythical Realm**.

CC: *Introduce us to the sections of the Mythical Realm*

**JJ:** *Our 2018 presentation The Mythical Realm contains five sections which are The Knights of Camelot, Dragons, Fairies, The Dark Horde and Consul of Magic*

CC: *What inspired you to go forward with the idea for the band?*

**JJ:** *The Alias brand is very linked to the concept and culture of cosplay, which is the act of dressing up as fictional characters. For a number of years people have asked us why we are not involved with carnival because people essential associate costuming in Trinidad and Tobago with carnival. They did not really understand the concept of cosplay. For a number of years we toyed around with the idea of doing it, so we finally decided to jump into the foray of carnival with the band by prodding a number of people. Because we see cosplay and carnival being very similar and linked in a number of ways.*



Standing tall and fierce as she displays the costume for The Knights of Camelot

*CC: Are you targeting traditional mas players or is your focus mainly on cosplay clients?*

***JJ: We are targeting any and everybody who wants to play with the band. Whether that be traditional mas players or cosplay people it does not really matter to us. So far we have specifically targeted cosplayers but we have other marketing initiatives, targeted the mass population of Trinidad and Tobago. We have ads that are playing at cinemas across the nation we also do a lot of flyers and talk shows. While the band is a cosplay band and of course there is going to be a target on cosplayers specifically it's not limited to cosplayers and its basically open to anybody who see the costumes and like the story, the concept and where we are going with this and you want to play.***



The Dark Horde is on display as this model strikes her best pose

*CC: How many designers did you collaborate with on this project?*

***JJ: Only two designers are working on this project at the moment, myself and Natalia Henry***

*CC: From your point of view is the element of creativity missing from T&T Carnival?*

***JJ: No I don't think creativity is missing from anything in T&T I would not say that. Are we bringing creativity or something different with what we are doing? Yes but I would not say it was something that was necessary lacking***



The Dragon on display

*CC: Would you consider doing this on a larger scale or do you prefer to keep the band small?*

***JJ: I prefer to keep the band small***

***End of interview.***

Don't get me wrong I have absolutely no problem with beads and feather costumes. It is my opinion that during the years we have deviated from what I remember carnival costumes to be. Yes I understand that we have to keep up with the current trends etc, but not to the point where we lose our uniqueness and become monotonous. Which is why I applaud mas makers such as Josette who are attempting to do something different. Yes one can argue that the cosplay costumes are not our traditional mas characters, but by the same token, the costumes that we see today aren't either.

The Mythical Realm is a refreshing change from the norm. I wish Josette and her team all the best and I look forward to seeing them on the road for 2018

What are your thoughts?

Make sure to comment below

Blessings

Callaloo Culture