

Lost Tribe scores Band of the Year hat-trick



Lost Tribe members celebrate their Band of the Year victory at their Alfredo Street, Woodbrook mas camp last night. PHOTO BY VASHTI SINGH

For the third consecutive time and fourth overall, The Lost Tribe has been crowned Senior Band of the Year in the large band category, wowing judges with their portrayal *Lost In Time*. The band also secured the large Band of the Year title.

Lost Tribe earned 1,324 points, comfortably ahead of second-place winner Trinidad All Stars, which scored 1,111 points for their portrayal *Sailors Ashore in Brazil*.

Speaking to Guardian Media at the mas camp yesterday, Lost Tribe co-founder, bandleader and creative director Valmiki Maharaj expressed gratitude for the win, noting that the band is also celebrating its tenth anniversary. He said their celebrations began with prayer.

“Going into the entire year, into the Carnival, we were extremely thankful, extremely blessed. It reflected on the road— the way the masqueraders appreciated everything, the kind of conversations we had with the masqueraders, I felt was very energy-matching.

And I feel thankful for ten years of learning from those who taught us during this past time in the 10 years. And I’m really looking forward to what the next ten years look like,” he said.

Maharaj admitted that he was not expecting the victory.

“When we go outside there, I go for the intention of presenting our band on the road, not presenting for a win.”

In the Medium Band category, K2K Alliance & Partners claimed the title for their presentation *Holy Trespasses – Life’s Sweet and Savoury Sinful Indulgences*, which explored life’s bittersweet moments.

They secured 1,334 points, surpassing Image Nation, which placed second with 1,173 points.

Last year’s winner, Kinetic Mas, fell to seventh place this year.

In the Small Band category, Tribal Connection Cultural Promotions secured the top spot for the second consecutive year, scoring 1,168 points with another Authentic Indian portrayal, as they did the year before. First Citizens Original Jab Jab placed second for the second year in a row with their presentation, Whip Festival, earning 1,166 points.

In the Mini Band category, Mokow Somokow emerged victorious with 1,235 points, while Clowns 'N' Tongue moved up one spot from last year, finishing second with 1,114 points. T&T Carnival Bands' Association (TTCBA) vice president Rosalind Gabriel expressed satisfaction with the overall execution of Carnival 2025.

"2025 is the mother of all carnivals. Because everything increased ... ran well. We had more kings and queens than we ever did. We had more kings and queens, not only seniors, but juniors. The costumes were of top quality," she said.

"We had an increase in junior bands, from 64 bands in 2024 to 96 bands in 2025. And also, we had 16 new senior bands registering in 2025. So I think, all in all, we have a lot to be thankful for.

We have a lot to be happy about," she added.

Gabriel also highlighted what she saw as strong attendance at the Grand Stand, stating: "Not a chair was empty in this Grand Stand, and I've seen it in other years. And I really think (thought) at that time, where are all the people? Why don't they come out to see the children? But this year, I didn't have to say or think that. So, all these things we are very happy for. We see a great improvement in this Carnival, and we are only expecting it to grow for 2026."

However, Guardian Media observed empty seats in the Grand Stand on Carnival Tuesday. When asked about this, Gabriel clarified that she was referring to the centre of the Grand Stand, which she said was filled, while acknowledging that the wings remained empty.

"It's always that the wings are never really fully populated, but the centre of the Grand Stand, the centre here, had a lot of people because I took photos," she explained.

Gabriel added that the TTCBA and the National Carnival Commission (NCC) will be working diligently to attract more spectators to experience mas in person next year.

In the Junior Carnival competitions, the following bands took home top honours:

- Mini Band of the Year (Open Category): St Gabriel's RC School — Up, Up, and Beyond
- Small Band of the Year (Open Category): House of Jaqui — Spectrum of Life
- Medium Band of the Year (Open Category): Coco-Lily Productions — Trini Bush Medicine
- Large Band of the Year (Open Category): Zebapique Productions — Project 2025: Yuh Ever See?