

# GuyFolkFest.org

*Celebrating Our Cultural Heritage*

Family Fun Day  
2008

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## FOLK FESTIVAL FAMILY FUN DAY

### Caribbean People in Harmony Through Culture

Sunday August 31, 2008

Meyer Levin School Grounds

Ralph Avenue, (Between Beverly & Tilden)  
Brooklyn, NY

Celebrating our pride in our Caribbean heritage with an

- "Exciting line-up of Caribbean Artistes"
- Carifesta-X in Guyana
- live recordings of opening and other shows
- Guyanese & Caribbean Arts & Crafts
- Tasty Guyanese cuisine
- Folk Games

10.00 a.m. - 8.00 p.m.

**ADULTS: \$10.00 KIDS: \$2.00**

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**GUYANA FOLK FESTIVAL**  
CARIBBEAN PEOPLE IN HARMONY THROUGH CULTURE

**“A Taste of Carifesta  
in New York”**

• TRINIDAD & TOBAGO • BARBADOS • ST. VINCENT  
• GUYANA • JAMAICA • NEW YORK • HAITI

**FOLK FESTIVAL  
Family Day**  
SUNDAY  
AUG. 31, '08

**MEYER LEVIN  
SCHOOL  
GROUNDS**  
5909 Beverly Rd (Corner of Ralph Ave.,)  
Brooklyn, NY 11.00 a.m. - 8.00 p.m.

• **CARIFESTA X- LIVE FROM GUYANA**  
• Special Guest - **SINGING FRANCINE**  
• **BROOKLYN JUMBIES** • **YONETTE HOOPER**  
• **TOBAGO ROXBOROUGH POLICE**  
• **YOUTH GROUP** • **KAFOU CULTURAL GRP.**  
• **CHUCK GERARD** • **SAMMY BAKSH**  
• **BHS NY CHAPTER'S "NEW YORK REVUE"**  
• **ISAIAH SPRINGER** • **HIGHLIGHT VIBES**  
• **MEYER LEVIN STEEL ORCHESTRA**  
• **JEGGAE** • **AKOYAH** • **HILTON HEMERDINE**  
• **ROSE OCTOBER** • **VERNA WALCOTT**  
• **MILDRED FORDE MODELS**  
• **BMCC MUSIC GROUP**  
• **WRICKFORD DALGETTY**  
• **E. WAYNE DeDONALD** • **TONY RICARDO**  
• **IMPRESSIONS DANCE THEATRE**  
• **FOLK GAMES** • **MAYPOLE** • **KWE-KWE**  
• **JENNY FERREIRA-DOUGALL**  
• **TAFAZOOL BAKSH**

**TEL: 718 209 5207**  
**Live Coverage - One Caribbean Radio - 620 A.M.**

## Guyanese group gives New York a taste of CARIFESTA

By *Tangerine Clarke*  
Photos: By *Tangerine Clarke*

The two Brooklynites, who were just actors, and who had never met each other before that night, were gracious in participating in the rite which was led by members of the Guyana Cultural Association (GCA), Claire Goring, Claire Patterson Monah, Juliet Emanuel, and

THE pulsating rhythm of African drums resonated across a Brooklyn, New York neighbourhood, sending Guyanese expats into a dancing frenzy, some even catching 'anta banta', as their eyes rolled and their feet stamped to the infectious beats. The occasion was a Kwe Kwe ceremony two Fridays ago to celebrate 'A Taste of CARIFESTA' in New York as part of the annual Guyana Folk Festival's Labour Day weekend of activities.

Not even the windy drizzle, and cool temperatures could keep the droves of nationals from coming to the sprawling white tent -- at the Restoration Plaza, in the downtown area -- where they were welcomed by a festoon of a colourful balloons honoring Guyana's flag, the Golden Arrowhead at the entranceway. Many who were draped in their favourite dashiki, or tie dye outfits, and who had traveled from as far away as England and Canada, and other parts of the United States, were no doubt delighted to reconnect at the Kwe Kwe night, where hugs, kisses and hand shakes were evident everywhere. And many who said they'd never experienced a Kwe Kwe ceremony and weren't knowledgeable about what the ritual meant, paid rapt attention as Kwe Kwe expert, Hilton Hemmerding, demonstrated the significance of the ceremony.

Eager now to be a part of the custom, some of the nationals raced to the floor to claim the bride, while others jumped into the melee, as did the doting parents of the groom.

The atmosphere became decidedly euphoric as drummer Akoya Rudder and the Carl Fraser ensemble from New Jersey, broke into 'Leh we guh and fin' um'. The families then greeted each other with 'Good night aye, good night aye', before the bride was hoisted into the air. The spirited dancers then surrounded the bride as Hemmerding sprinkled Guyanese-made 'High Wine' from a calabash, and later invited the bride and groom to put their 'fine wine' into motion.

In fact, the spiritual draw of the 'Kwe-Kwe' ceremony was so strong that it beckoned GCA president, Malcolm Hall who'd just gotten off a flight from

choreographers Verna Walcott-White and Rose October-Edun, who gave the two a session in hip gyration to show off their 'science'.

Both adults and children participated in Guyanese games like Lime and Spoon, Three Legged Race, Hop-Scotch and the plaiting of the Maypole.

Staying true to its theme, Caribbean People in Harmony Through Culture, GCA put on a pageant in a kaleidoscope of colour to highlight the camaraderie and diversity of Caribbean peoples who wore their national flags with pride, and waved them with conviction. Reminding the immigrants how great it was to be in New York, the Bishops High School old students lit up the air with their 'standing ovation' performance that depicted life in The Big Apple.

The 'old girls' sure did show off their high kicks. The ladies were dressed in colourful mini dresses accented with feathered headpieces to imitate the Famous Radio City Rockets. The Drifters, on the other hand, highlighted the Broadway stage, and the street scene actors vividly brought New York City to Brooklyn. And to top it off, Lady Liberty held her torch high to delight the crowd.

But it was Trinidad and Tobago's lady of Calypso, Singing Francine, who wooed the crowd with her suggestive lyrics and wicked body movement, singing: "Ah Want Somebody to Rock Meh". Her second piece, 'Iron Man', warned the GT girls about stealing Berbician men.

Caribbean Arts Theatre director, Mr Wayne McDonald, with his thick Jamaican accent, rocked the crowd with his comedic quips as he teamed up with Rose October-Edun to emcee the packed programme that included the Brooklyn Jumbies -- youngsters who skillfully paraded on stilts from high up in the sky.

The afternoon truly belonged to youths, like Cherayna Rulow, the little Soca singer from Grenada; Impressions Dance Theater of Queens; the Roxborough Police Youth Club of Tobago; Ethnic Moves; Sensa Konsa Les Enrages of

CARIFESTA in Georgetown, and raced to 'de tent' to show off his 'Kwe-Kwe' steps. This inspired other men to join the groom to finish up an energetic evening of cultural awakening. From an Awards Presentation to a Literary Hang, to a Performance Arts Stage Festival, and a 'Kwe-Kwe' ceremony, GCA celebrating its seventh year of festivities, was at its best, following up with a spectacular Festival Family Fun Day that paid tribute to the Caribbean Festival of the Creative Arts – CASRIFESTA.

First, it was the smell of spicy Guyanese fare that lured the hundreds of spectators to the Meyer Levin Schools ground in Brooklyn, and then the colourful blend of the Caribbean cultures that kept them transfixed for the more that nine hours of thrilling entertainment.

Haiti; Latin Hip Hop stars, Soul Cartagena; steel-pan duo, Hightlite Vibes; Ethnic Moves folk dancers, and the Meyer Levin Performing Arts Steelband, who were all dynamic.

Popular folk singer Wrickford Dalgetty; crooner of 'To Be Lonely' fame, Sammy Baksh; Chuck Gerard, Yonette Hooper, Jennifer Ferreira, and Sweet Tony Ricardo were all impressive in their performances. Tafazool Baskh also added his haunting mandolin solo, while Janelle Brathwaite jazzed up the crowd with her smooth vocals.

And when the darkness cloaked the atmosphere and the drumbeats of Winston 'Jeggae' Hoppie and Akoya Rudder were silenced, it was evident that the patrons who had lingered long after were not ready to close out yet another magnetic season of folk festival events.

### **GUYANA FOLK FEST**

**GUYANA CULTURAL ASSOCIATION OF NEW YORK**

**1368 E. 89 STREET SUITE 2, BROOKLYN**

**NEW YORK 11236, U.S.A.**

**TEL: 718.209.5207 FAX: 718.209.6157**

**WEBSITE: [www.guyfolkfest.org](http://www.guyfolkfest.org)**

**E-MAIL: [info@guyfolkfest.org](mailto:info@guyfolkfest.org)**



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