

REFLECTIONS OF CARNIVAL: MURAL BRIEF

LEAD ARTIST



Photography: Mike Betteny

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Who Are We Looking For?

East Street Arts, Leeds West Indian Carnival and Leeds City Council are working in partnership to recruit a **lead artist** for a mural project that preserves the history and richness of [Leeds West Indian Carnival](#). You will be supported by lead producer, Shazia Bibi and artistic director, Jon Wakeman.

Lead Artist (Design and complete a mural artwork)

Fee: £6,000 plus material and travel expenses budget.

Applicant criteria:

- Artists from the African and Caribbean Diasporas with connections to Caribbean Carnival culture.
- Artist with connections to Chapeltown (desirable).
- Artist who wants to explore the themes of carnival.
- Experience and skills producing large-scale public art pieces.

Where Will The Mural Live?

End wall space, 33 Savile Mount, Chapeltown, LS7 3HZ

See image below.



About Leeds West Indian Carnival

Leeds West Indian Carnival (LWIC) is the oldest authentic Caribbean Carnival in Europe. It was the first to incorporate all three essential elements that define Caribbean Carnival: the spectacle of a street parade, the music of kaiso, calypso, soca accompanied by steel pan and a masquerade of colourful costumes.

LWIC was founded in 1967 by three Caribbean men living in Leeds as a remedy for their community's collective homesickness and need for connection to their cultural identity. LWIC remains committed to the true roots of Caribbean Carnival, a vision championed by co-founder and Chair, Arthur France:

"Carnival is steeped in a history and culture that goes far beyond the costume spectacle ...Rooted in slavery, born from Emancipation, and championed by Caribbean communities, it is a journey of resilience, struggles and triumphs that has universal appeal."

The biggest Caribbean carnival street parade outside London, LWIC's annual procession attracts up to 150,000 visitors into the city and has become an important contributor to the Leeds cultural economy.

Celebrated in August, the annual programme features a children's costume show, The King & Queen Show, The Soca Monarch, J'ouvert Morning celebrations, culminating in the extravaganza of the street masquerade.



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The Brief

Design and complete a public art mural that represents Leeds West Indian Carnival, its rich historical heritage, and the local community that resides in Chapeltown. Important themes to consider are:

- Memories of carnival
- The 55+ years history of Caribbean carnival in Leeds
- Celebrating the value of community and sense of belonging.

The lead artist will need to familiarise themselves with the history, mission and purpose of Leeds West Indian Carnival which prides itself on celebrating and promoting the origins of Caribbean Carnival rooted in emancipation from slavery, rebellion and resistance against colonialism, politico-cultural identity and independence. They will also be familiar with the dynamic iconography of Carnival's artistic expressions, music, language, folklore, visual designs and pageantry.

The artistic process will involve engagement with the local community, Carnival designers, organisers and young people.

The lead artist will be shadowed by an Associate Artist (early stage creative), who will also be mentored by East Street Arts, and will get the opportunity to work on a smaller scale wall. The Associate Artist will be selected by the Carnival Mural panel.

Community Engagement Process

Community is embedded throughout this project. Key stakeholders from the carnival and Chapeltown communities, including artists, revellers and organisers will come together to share memories, learning and celebrate the creation of the mural as a symbol of Carnival's importance to the community.

The lead artist will have the opportunity to meet and engage with the Carnival designers based in the community and can use this process and experience to influence their artistic vision. The Carnival designers have huge influence creating the overall visual aesthetics of the parade, and will come together to exchange ideas with the lead artist on their design processes, costumes and creative outputs.

The project will have creative community engagement activities throughout and will engage with carnival designers, elders, children and young people from the local primary schools and/or community groups via creative visual arts activities related to Carnival. The **associate artist** will support this engagement work, helping to deliver the workshops. Some examples may be: costume design, mask-making, drawing, student mural designs, or character designs from Carnival Ole Mas like Sailor Boy or Midnight Robber.

Mural Unveiling!

A public event to unveil the mural, once completed, will celebrate the work of the artist and longevity of Leeds West Indian Carnival. Invitations will extend to: carnival artists, community and city stakeholders, the press, local residents including school and community group children, and representatives from the relevant organisations.



Photography: LWIC Archives

How To Apply

To apply, submit your application (including the below information) via the [Lead Artist Application Form](#) by 5pm on 27 April 2023. We recommend drafting your responses first and copying and pasting them into the form.

- a proposal for the mural artwork, including responses to the 'applicant questions' (see questions below).
- attachments or links to your existing work

If you would prefer, you can also apply by uploading video or audio formats (up to 5 minutes only).

ALL applicants must complete the equal opportunities questionnaire via this [Google Forms link](#).

Applicant Questions:

- Your name and contact details (phone number, email and preferred methods of contact)
- Where you are based
- How do you best work?
- Tell us about your current practice
- Tell us about the project you want to explore with us and what would you create with us

- Please tell us about your connection to Carnival and Caribbean culture
- How would you balance the historical origins of Caribbean Carnival, which are embodied in Ole and Traditional Mas alongside the modern expressions of Pretty Mas, in your approach to the mural?
- Please tell us if you have any connections with Chapeltown or with Leeds
- Is there anything particular that you may need support with?
- Do you have any specific access needs?
- What one thing would you like to bring with you for this project to make it feel like home?

Application deadline: 5pm on 27 April 2023. Artist selection will take place in mid-April. The aim is for delivery of the mural to take place in spring/summer. A timeline will be discussed and agreed with the successful artist.

For any questions, enquiries or support, please email Shazia.bibi@esamail.org.uk with the subject line 'Carnival Mural'.

For more information on the history and activities of Leeds West Indian Carnival, please visit their website at: <https://leedscarnival.co.uk/>



Photography: LWIC Archives

Project Funders



Project Sponsors



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