

Exhibition
"The fabulous Rio Carnival"

*A unique collection in Europe of authentic costumes
from the great samba schools of Rio de Janeiro, photos and
videos, designed by Alain Taillard*

Presentation of the scenographer "Alain Taillard"

Alain Taillard is passionate about carnival. Since his childhood, he has been rocked by his parents in the carnival atmosphere of the Euregio (cross-border cooperation between the provinces of Belgium, the Netherlands and Germany).

His passion for carnival led him to the four corners of Europe to finally land in Rio de Janeiro in Brazil. Since 1992, he has been going there every year at carnival time. First as a spectator then, a few years later, he marched through samba schools in the famous Sambodrome !

In 2001, he was fortunate to meet a Destaque (main character of a float). This will allow him, from 2004, to parade on a float as one of the largest samba schools: "Mangureira".

In 2008, Alain paraded on the 4th float of the "Beija-Flor" samba school as *Destaque* ! Belgian French-speaking Radio-Television decided to send a team to Rio to follow Alain in the realization of this dream that he believed was inaccessible and to share his emotions with the viewers.

Since 2010, Alain has been registered on the official Destaque list of the great samba school of "Mangureira", the most popular in Brazil and he parades there every year.

In 2016, Alain was chosen by Carnavalesco to be one of the 7 central Destaques of the "Mangureira" school. He will therefore parade on the highest step of a float. True recognition of the whole school and a unique privilege for a non-Brazilian. The television crew of the show "C'est du belge" broadcast on RTBF and TV5 Monde followed Alain in this extraordinary adventure !

From 2017, Alain becomes one of the Destaque affiliated to the most prestigious carnival in Rio, Rosa Magalhaes. He will parade in the schools "São Clemente", "Portela" and "Estação de Sã" as a central Destaque.

Thanks to this passion, the exhibition presents a collection unique in Europe which is the fruit of several years of participation within the most prestigious Samba schools including Vila Isabel, Grande Rio, Porto da Pedra, Mocidade, São Clemente, Estação de Sã as well as Beija-Flor (winner 2015 & 2018), Mangureira (winner 2016 & 2019) and Portela (winner 2017).





Presentation of the exhibition

All the costumes on display are authentic and were created in the sewing workshops of the great samba schools in Rio.

These costumes are presented on mannequins (male and female).

There are different categories of costumes:

1. Fantasies (group of 100 to 150 people wearing the same costume and dancing in front of a float)
2. The compositions (group of 10 to 20 people positioned on the float during the parade).
3. Passistas (they are talented samba dancers)
4. The Bahianaises (fundamental imposed figures of the parade. They are mothers, at least 60 years old who wear this traditional dress, they turn around throughout the course. The Bahianaises advance according to a synchronized choreography, and their group can be integrated into the theme of the samba school).
5. Destaques (schools put forward certain people called "destaques". They allow them to parade with their luxury costumes, comparable to haute couture, richly adorned with stones and feathers. This costume is unique, it is created for the occasion in accordance with the school theme).

The making of costumes (fantasies) can be compared to ready-to-wear clothes. You have to respect the rules: fidelity of the costumes to the samba theme, originality, creativity, style, impact of colors, finish, materials used, embroidery, uniformity of details...

The parade of the samba schools is in fact the biggest competition organized in Brazil. Everything is taken into account: the beauty of the floats, the enthusiasm of the participants, the richness of the parade, its cohesion, its colors, its details, and the general harmony between the participants, the originality of the samba theme and his music, the quality of the songs, the mastery of the percussions, the professionalism while joy which must put the public in a state of general madness.

All the costumes presented in this exhibition paraded at least once in the largest parade of samba schools of the special group of Rio de Janeiro (equivalent to the 1st division of football). These fantasies (costumes) are therefore very ephemeral and the exhibition allows them to have a second life.

The visitor of the exhibition approaches the costumes very closely, which allows him to realize the custom work carried out by hand on each costume, the wealth of fabrics and accessories that compose it (embroidery, stone, ostrich feather, pheasant, rhinestones, ...).

The approach of these costumes, the play of lights, the staging as well as the audio-visual and cultural atmosphere immerse the visitor in the magic of the great parades of the samba schools.

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Main achievements – references

-  Fonds Château de Beloeil ASBL - *First floor of the Château de Beloeil*
-  Château de Modave ASBL - *Château de Modave*
-  City of Arlon – *Arlon Palace*
-  Embassy of Brazil, Avenue Louise from Bruxelles (Brazil) - *Casa do Brasil*
-  City of Stavelot - *Capuchin Chapel*
-  City of Berg en Dal (Netherlands) - *Afrika Museum*
-  City of Malmedy - *Malmundarium*
-  City of Marseille (France) - *Museum of European and Mediterranean Civilizations (MuCEM)*
-  City of Binche - *International Carnival and Mask Museum (MUM)*
as part of the Europalia.Brasil exhibition
-  City of Liège - *Former meat hall*
-  City of Tournai - *Cloth hall*
-  City of Visé - *Chapel of the Sepulchers*
-  City of Verviers - *Wool and Fashion Tourist Center (CTLM)*
-  City of Herve – *Tourism House of Herve country & Marie-Thérèse Administrative Center*

Alain Taillard's biography: "The Carnival Man from Rio" narrated by Régis Lemaire was published by Editions Luc Pire in November 2012.

