1er Encuentro Internacional de Carnavales

MÉRIDA
YUCATÁN, MÉXICO

del 12 al 15 de octubre del 2022
The committee for the Carnival in Merida is in charge of carrying out the most important festival of Yucatan's capital city.

After canceling the Carnival for two years due to Covid-19, we are relaunching our festival and organizing the First International Carnival Meeting from October 12–15 2022. We look forward to opening a common space for dialogue, recognition of successes, knowledge exchange, and collaboration.
With 480 years of history, Merida is an artistic and cultural treasure in Mexico. The city’s Mayan and colonial heritage make its food and architecture distinctive, and nearby archeological wonders draw tourists from around the world. The warm and friendly people of Merida help make the quiet city one of the most popular destinations in Mexico.

The Mérida carnival is nationally recognized as one of the five most important in Mexico since each year it receives almost a million visitors. It is the largest traditional festival in the city and one of the oldest with approximately 200 years since its inception.

MÉRIDA AND THE CARNIVAL

It stands out for being the only one among the great carnivals of Mexico that dedicates one of its five days to folklore and its regional identity.

The evolution and consolidation of the Mérida carnival requires, as in any other industry or productive and cultural sector, to stay connected with what is happening in the world, the trends and avant-garde trends that are transformed into best practices applied for the growth of projects.

That is why Mérida welcomes the carnivals of the world with open arms; The White City will be dressed in colors, music for fun and celebration (algarabia) in October 2022.
WHAT IS THE INTERNATIONAL MEETING OF CARNIVALs?

It is the opportunity to bring together carnivals from Latin America and other countries for the first time to exchange experiences, share knowledge, address issues of mutual interest, explore alternative solutions to common problems, create alliances and develop joint initiatives that strengthen our capacities and scope for the benefit of our festivals. It is the chance to learn current trends and their economic and cultural impact, beyond tradition and entertainment. Exchanging experiences with other carnivals and key organizations from different parts of the world means expanding our vision inward, learning from other examples and proven formulas to diversify and continuously improve entertainment offerings. It also means improving our sustainability, economic profitability and cultural exchange. It is looking outside to grow inside.
The First International Carnival Meeting aims to share experiences and establish a meeting point to expose ideas, problems and best practices among the best carnivals in Mexico and the world. It will highlight carnival’s importance as a traditional festival, a development engine for creative industries, a cultural product that generates economic benefits, innovation, and tourism.
The meeting is directed mainly to the organizations, committees and institutions in charge of organizing carnivals. However, it is also a space that is open to all the actors involved in them. Due to the diversity, breadth and relevance of the issues raised, the First International Carnival Meeting opens as a space for all those with an interest in knowing more about the orchestration of these celebrations, in learning about possible alternative solutions to common problems, or simply in training and staying at the forefront of the cultural sector and the entertainment industry.

- Organizations, committees and organizing institutions of the carnivals.
- Representatives of folk groups and comparsas.
- Kings and ex-kings of carnival.
- Illustrious representative personalities (local celebrities).
- Public workers.
- Ambassadors
- Media.
- Social and academic researchers.
- Sponsors.
- Event organizers.
- Cultural managers.
- Public relations.
- Marketing agencies.
- Suppliers.

ON LINE:
Students • General Public
It will address various issues of common interest divided into three areas of work:

1ST. AREA
CULTURE
Identity, Tradition and Heritage

2ND. AREA
INNOVATION
Production of shows, New Audiences and Trends in Massive Events.

3RD. AREA
ECONOMY
Tourism, Creative Industries, Economic benefits, Sustainability, Government and People
The Carnival is like a container of socio-cultural elements. From an artistic-cultural perspective, it is a mixture of musical rhythms, dance, rituals and shows in which satire and farce are always present, and the representation of characters through masks or costume. It is also history and tradition because it maintains and strengthens living expressions inherited from ancestors and makes room for cultural diversity and interaction between social classes. Plurality is the common denominator in the festival, therefore, Carnival contributes to social cohesion.

Often it is reduced to "party and music," but Carnival is a tool for social impact and cultural and tourism promotion. It transmits values and customs to new generations who learn to appreciate their roots and the ways of expressing them. Carnival emerged as celebrations for everyone. As times change, they need to keep pace, not only to ensure their existence, but to find other ways to benefit the communities they serve and to engage a larger audience. In this sense, in some cities Carnival is valued beyond entertainment, as a subject of anthropological and sociological studies because of its origins, its behavioral expressions, and its contributions to regional culture and identity. Today there are remarkable examples of museums dedicated exclusively to Carnival in different parts of the world and in other cases actions have been taken to safeguard their traditions that have earned them the distinction as Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity by UNESCO [UNESCO has safeguarded several as examples of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.]

- Creative and cultural DNA of Carnival: an opportunity to generate social transformation.
- Carnival as Cultural Heritage
- Patrimonial preservation of the carnivals through the Museums and Infrastructure
- The Carnivals: Identity, Tradition and Folklore.
Carnivals can be seen as an opportunity for community development based on actions that have an impact on social issues such as training, social work, entrepreneurship, and community work, adding value throughout the year and helping to preserve tradition and preserve the trades involved in carnivals. We can stop seeing the Carnival not only as a party that happens once a year and glimpse it as a living entity, dynamic and in constant movement, promoting the development of skills and talents, the revitalization and appropriation of public space, the improvement of the image urban and citizen participation generating community, social fabric and evolving by being nourished by it.

OBJECTIVES

• Expose about the social impact of carnivals beyond the party.

• Expand the panorama in terms of the scope and repercussions that the carnival can have in society.

• Propose ideas on how carnivals can contribute to the cohesion and social transformation of communities.

• Know how carnivals can have an impact on topics such as training, social work, entrepreneurship and community work.

• Provide useful tools for the socialization of the carnival in the community.
The Intangible Cultural Heritage of UNESCO recognizes the practices, expressions, knowledge or techniques transmitted by communities from generation to generation, which provides them with a sense of identity and continuity, favors creativity and social well-being, contributes to the management of natural and social environment and generates economic income.

The 2003 UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage aims to conserve this fragile heritage; it also aims to ensure its viability and optimize its potential for sustainable development. UNESCO provides its support in this area to Member States by promoting international cooperation for safeguarding, and establishing institutional and professional frameworks favorable to the sustainable preservation of this living heritage.

Carnivals, much more than a popular festival, are content and history, a set of expressions of popular art and traditions preserved and transmitted over several generations and embodied in costumes, dances, oral expressions and many other artistic and cultural manifestations.

OBJECTIVES

• Knowing live the experience of carnivals that are Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

• Analyze carnivals from a broader cultural perspective than they are generally approached.

• Measure the relevance of this distinction and that UNESCO endorse these carnivals.

• Provide useful information for other carnivals on the path to follow to aspire to obtain this distinction.

• Motivate actions to preserve and safeguard the distinctive traditions of each carnival.
El Carnaval es una industria, es arte popular, es vida, es cultura, son tradiciones, es alma y esencia de un pueblo. Es tradición y a la vez representa la propia evolución de las ciudades donde se realiza, y es la manifestación de las diferentes formas de expresión popular a través de la música, la danza, el folklore, el disfraz y la sátira.

Existen hoy notables ejemplos de museos destinados exclusivamente al carnaval en distintas ciudades del mundo y otros más están en construcción. Los museos preservan y valorizan esta fiesta promoviendo su arraigo como parte de la cultura popular en cada ciudad además de generar acervo histórico a través de la recreación de objetos, accesorios, vestuarios, material bibliográfico, fotográfico y audiovisual de momentos que han sido parte de la historia de esta celebración y de las regiones donde se realiza.

**OBJETIVOS**

- Dimensionar la importancia de los carnavales desde la experiencia de ciudades que cuentan con museos e infraestructura destinados al Carnaval.
- Revalorizar el Carnaval como fenómeno social y cultural digno de esfuerzos para preservar su tradición.
- Conocer cómo un museo y los espacios dedicados al Carnaval pueden ser un atractivo adicional como parte de las oferta turística de una ciudad.
- Aprender cómo a partir de la creación de un museo del Carnaval puede contribuir a cambiar el discurso y entablar un nuevo diálogo sobre esta tradicional celebración.
- La importancia de generar espacios de infraestructura que permitan mejorar y profesionalizar las actividades involucradas en la producción de los carnavales.
In all the towns where Carnival is celebrated, it is a great party that integrates all possible ways of celebrating and manifesting festive behavior. These expressions of joy, some are taken up from previous traditions and represented during the celebration and others, which have arisen during the Festival, have been reinforced until they are perpetuated. These manifestations of popular culture, in which satire, masks and folklore are always present, are part of the identity of the people, therefore, Carnival has a direct impact on musical culture, literature, artistic creation and development and in the consolidation of the differences between neighborhoods, guilds and communities to distinguish themselves from each other. Many of them also function as an escape valve for social tensions or behavior license; an ode to freedom with room for resistance in a gregarious environment that at the same time strengthens the social fabric and revitalizes regional culture.

OBJECTIVES

• Know the origin and evolution of carnivals in Latin America, particularly in the Caribbean.

• Dimension the importance of carnivals maintaining their essence and roots in the local population.

• Understand Carnival as a cultural manifestation that provides regional identity.

• Recognize the presence of folklore as an essential element for Carnival to maintain its essence.
Throughout their existence, carnivals have adapted to the growth and evolution of the cities where they take place. However, in recent years they have faced great challenges that defy their ability to innovate and even reinvent themselves. Moving into the digital age requires understanding the impact of digital tools for their optimal use in the design and application of innovative and effective promotion strategies that allow us to connect with our audiences and generate new followers. It also requires understanding technology’s potential as a sales tool for sponsors and all our interest groups.

To this we must add understanding changes in consumption habits in the entertainment sector in general, which has also migrated towards the digital world. In this sense, it is important to diversify the activities and experiences according to new trends in the production of massive events. This leads us to ask ourselves if we are being innovative enough in the production of carnivals.

With the emergence of the first pandemic of the 21st century, the challenge became even more pressing. The confinement and the impossibility of holding face-to-face events forced many carnivals to develop new formats in order not to interrupt the tradition, from hybrid versions to completely digital carnivals. Today, with the exponential growth of social networks and after two years of the pandemic, we cannot help but consider a digital version of our carnivals. The challenge is not only to bring music, color, dance and fun to technological devices, but also to understand how social networks work and create attractive content. Simultaneously, it involves implementing new measures, protocols and formats based on trends and best practices allowed for holding massive events with biosafety and sanitary controls that provide certainty to investors, governments, and the general public.

- Connecting audiences.
- Carnival Production: From design to experience
- Carnival as an Industry into the Future
- Creativity, Innovation and Trends in the production of massive events.
CARNIVALS AS A TOURIST PRODUCT

The carnivals are an excellent opportunity to exhibit the cultural, artisanal and gastronomic wealth of their communities before national and foreign tourists. The numbers show a significant hotel occupancy in the cities that hold a carnival that generates a very positive impact on the different sectors of the economy. Some carnivals are not only part of the tourist and cultural offer of their squares, they are enormous magnets for attracting visitors and triggering their economic activity to the point of marking their cities with seals of quality and guarantee that makes them more sought-after destinations. An effective and timely promotion strategy in conjunction with the secretariats or ministries of Tourism is vital for the growth and positioning of carnivals, consolidating their relevance and value as a tourist product that generates economic benefits.

OBJECTIVES

• Recognize the contribution of carnivals to the tourist offer and to the economic benefit of the cities where it takes place.

• Learn about trends and innovative strategies to attract tourism to carnivals.

• Project and develop possible schemes for joint promotion and tourist exchange.

• Share successful cases of promoting Carnival as a tourist product.
CARNIVAL PRODUCTION: FROM DESIGN TO EXPERIENCE

From the outside the Carnival is perceived only as a great event. From the inside, inside your organization, it is actually a set of great events happening in a delimited time and space, a “multi-ring circus” working at the same time under the same baton. Its success does not depend solely on the number of people who attend and the impacts generated in the media, but also on its ability to generate unforgettable experiences among its attendees who come with the illusion of being moved and carried away by the hubbub. To meet or even exceed these expectations, the Carnival begins a year before with the design, planning and development of concepts that are captured in sketches, plans, or prototypes that later materialize in costumes, shows, floats and spectacular sets that return dreams come true by adjusting details so that, in their execution, they result in a unique and complete experience. Carnivals are an explosion of creativity and talent with complex logistical programming. In correspondence with the new times, in which the offer of live entertainment and via streaming has diversified, the experience of enjoying the spectacular nature of carnivals is not limited to the space where it takes place but is also taken to the homes of the public through production for television and even digital platforms.

OBJECTIVES

• Know the work that is done behind the production of the great carnivals.

• Dimension the size of organization and logistical capacity involved in carrying out a carnival.

• Learn creativity, technology and innovation in the production of stages, shows and floats for carnivals.

ENRIQUE CAMACHO
Director Artístico del Carnavales de Tenerife (España)

ISRAEL REYES
Director Artístico del Carnaval de Las Palmas, Gran Canaria (España)

DIANA ACOSTA
Secretaria de Cultura y Patrimonio del Atlántico (Colombia)

OSCAR CAMBRANES
Secretario Ejecutivo del Comité Permanente del Carnaval de Mérida, (México)
CARNIVAL AS AN INDUSTRY INTO THE FUTURE

BARRY KERN
CEO de Kern Studios y Mardi Gras World
(Estados Unidos)

In the creative industries, one of the most complete and complex due to the volume of artistic disciplines and economic activities involved for its organization and the diversity of its entertainment offer is Carnival. It impacts different sectors, from micro to macro levels: entire families, small and medium-sized entrepreneurs, businesses of all kinds, companies, artisans, artists and all popular creativity. It is common to consider the artistic part related to the shows, dancers, musicians, costumes, etc., however there is an entire alternate industry such as the production of set elements, setting, allegorical cars, props, costumes and a long list of elements that are produced for Carnival and that by their nature generate jobs and boost the economy from a greater professionalization of their processes and their participation in parallel industries. In New Orleans and in the big cities of Brazil, the carnival is used as a cultural industry, which generates benefits beyond the party and those who enjoy it, but also people linked to it by the force of work and the commercialization that is derives from an activity that moves so many people. Following these examples, Carnival can be an industry in the future that generates permanent profits for a whole year.

OBJECTIVES

• Know the scope and possibilities of Carnival as a creative industries.

• Present ideas for the development of more aspects of creative industries in line with current trends.

• Consider essential for the survival of the carnivals the development of industries and innovation.

• Present an overview of the future of Carnival as an industry.

• Learn about success stories and new challenges.
Recent events worldwide, coupled with the consolidation of the digital age, the diversification of the entertainment offer and the financing difficulties they face, threaten the continuity of carnivals and force us to quickly be more creative and explore new formats for performing shows and massive events, generating experiences that are different and unforgettable. Given this situation, perhaps it is time to rethink their path. Reinvent yourself or die trying, part of rethinking the future of carnivals is to innovate in the shows that are produced to be presented during the Festival. Are we being creative enough by innovating in the production of carnivals? of comfort? This is an opportunity to learn first-hand how top-level shows are produced in terms of creativity, professionalization of talent and technical personnel, application of technological tools, among other characteristics.

OBJECTIVES

• Reflect on the sufficiency of the current entertainment offer in carnivals.

• Motivate the exploration of new entertainment alternatives.

• Give a tour of some technological solutions implemented in the production of shows.

• Learn about the professional work behind the production of artistic shows of the stature of Cirque du Soleil, Cirque Éloize and Franco Dragone.

• Encourage creativity to carry out the shows that take place in carnivals.
With the arrival of the digital age we have within our reach new and varied ways of reaching our different audiences with the message we want to convey. However, changes in consumption patterns and in the entertainment offer force us to look not only for the channels to use to communicate, but also to take actions to connect with our audiences, understanding that our viewers today are followers who interact, demand and they express it. This also leads us to consider the importance of training ourselves and knowing the necessary tools to develop applicable strategies that are effective in making our audiences feel integrated and connected with our offer.

Carnival, as a traditional festival of popular culture, maintains its roots in adults who value its legacy, but in many cases it does not permeate the youngest who show disinterest in participating, therefore, this Festival calls for evolution and generation of new experiences that they also entail new ways of communicating them and questioning what we are doing and what we are not doing to reach and attract our stakeholders.

OBJECTIVES

• Explore alternative strategies to connect with our audiences.

• Learn about the application of studies and measurement instruments of our current audiences and how to attract new audiences.

• Question ourselves about what is not being done to attract new audiences to carnivals.

• Motivate the generation of useful data and statistics for decision-making in relation to our current and potential audiences.
Carnivals around the world have always been considered great parties, and it is in recent years that their importance as generators of economic income has begun to be recognized. From the emergence of the concept "Orange Economy" to refer to the contribution and development of creative industries, carnivals are now analyzed from another perspective, trying to measure their value as a cultural and tourist product and as an economic agent that generates thousands of temporary and permanent jobs to hundreds of local musicians, costume makers and choreographers and other artisans.

Despite the persuasive data regarding the income they generate and their other positive economic and social impacts, the question often remains at the center of discussions: Is the Carnival an expense or an investment? In most cases it is not in question whether the carnival encourages tourism and the mobilization of resources that are oxygen-firing many municipalities’ economies at the beginning of the year. The questions regard the extent to which governments must contribute to their carnivals when private investment is insufficient, and the possibilities for implementing new economic models to achieve not only the sustainability of carnivals but also their growth. The collaboration of local and national governments with the business sector is key for maximizing their economic impact, their development of creative industries, and their benefit to local communities.

• Carnivals as a tourist product

• Carnivals as a commercial showcase.

• Orange economy and the incidence of Carnival in the development of creative industries

• The role of the government, private markets and the society in the Carnival.

• The Carnivals: An expense or an investment?
The biggest challenge that carnivals currently face is to finance the costs of their production, which rise to the extent that they bet on the quality of the shows they present and on the innovation in the experiences they create to surprise their different audiences. Carnivals are great showcases for the commercial promotion of brands, but their contribution has been declining, which is why it is important to start with how to sell our carnival in a more attractive way until we explore what other applicable solutions exist for generating income and what alternatives of financing we have within reach. Beyond the commercial showcase that they represent, carnivals are also the opportunity for brands to establish direct contact with their current and potential customers, communicating their messages to a captive audience in a pleasant and relaxed environment and projecting a friendly and responsible image with the environment and generating roots and fidelity through its commitment to the traditions and values of the community.

OBJECTIVES

- Present an overview of the problems faced by the organizers of the carnivals for their financing.
- Present innovative solutions that have been implemented to enter resources.
- Put into context the importance of carnivals for sponsoring brands.
- Explain how and why the sponsorship strategies of the sponsoring brands have changed.
- From the point of view of brands, what can we do as carnival organizers to become attractive to them again?
- What is the social commitment of the sponsoring brands towards the carnivals?
The emergence of the concept "orange economy" to refer to creative economies has been useful to represent the specific set of professional and craft activities based on creativity, design and manufacturing while strengthening its attribute as a thriving, growing and sustainable economic sector which has innovation as its hallmark. The terms "orange economy" more than a trend in Latin America are a new way of understanding and dimensioning the importance of creative economic activities whose goods and services impact other sectors. Carnivals have been an important actor in the development of these industries and it is important to put their contributions to the economy into perspective. Numerous studies support carnivals as sources of employment generation, economic reactivation, tourism and even new styles of developing arts and crafts identified with the spirit and meaning of the carnival festivities.

OBJECTIVES

• Know a broad overview of the contribution of creative industries to the economic sector.

• Understand the value of carnivals based on their contributions to the development of creative industries and their impact on different economic activities.

• Support the importance of carnivals in the development of creative industries and local economies.

• Motivate the implementation of more studies and analyzes on the impact of carnivals.
Carnivals as drivers of the economy and pillars that help generate community and in turn require the involvement of public, private and citizen bodies to remain as such. They are an expression of the enormous potential of the creative industries, betting on their growth and strengthening from the government, with the creation of public policies that value, promote and preserve them; from the private initiative with actions that promote and support them; and from civil society respecting and injecting vitality into tradition is turning on one of the engines of the ecosystem of creativity and innovation that translates into economic, social and cultural benefits of belonging.

OBJECTIVES:

• Be clear about the role that local and national governments must assume in the organization, promotion and preservation of carnivals within their sphere of responsibility.

• Know what can be the contributions of the private initiative to the Carnival, beyond the investment and sponsorships and publicity, and their level of involvement.

• Envision greater citizen participation by forming a community based on actions that generate identity and roots.

• Encourage actions of reappropriation of its carnival as a traditional festival and identity of the community.

• Outline the scope and benefits that the carnival can have as a product that generates impact and value.
The contribution of the so-called Orange Economy to the Gross Domestic Product of the countries is increasing and is counted in millions of dollars. With the analysis of the data that we currently have available, we know that the events and shows sector generates millions of jobs in the world and drives the economy of other sectors such as commerce and tourism. In the specific case of carnivals, an almost endless list of economic activities such as seamstresses, sculptors, plastic artists, composers, musicians, carpenters, shoemakers, illustrators, set designers, lighting technicians, sound designers, participate and benefit from their organization and production. among many others, generating an economic benefit that exceeds ten times the investment made. In Mexico and in the world, the carnivals represent pure oxygen for the municipalities where they are held, activating and boosting their economy at the beginning of the year and their authorities see in the carnivals an excellent opportunity to exhibit the cultural, artisanal and gastronomic offer of their communities before domestic and foreign tourists. In addition to being an emblem or hallmark for many cities, Carnival is the largest traditional event in terms of scope and impact in any municipality and therefore also the most profitable in terms of image, projection and positioning for the benefit of citizens. There are plenty of arguments to transform the discourse derived from the perception of carnivals as a “public expense” because in addition to their economic importance they are also a powerful instrument for social integration and cohesion, tourism promotion, cultural development and many other intangibles whose value it is immaterial and therefore impossible to measure.

OBJECTIVES

• Open the conversation about the controversy generated by the financing of the Carnival with public resources.

• Know the different visions and motivations that support the existence and realization of the Carnival from the perspective of the authorities in cities from different parts of the world.

• Comparatively analyze economic indicators impacted by Carnival Dimension the economic relevance of holding a carnival

• Understand the importance of a carnival happening in the city at a social and cultural level, beyond the economic factor
WORK TABLE PROPOSAL

With the celebration of the First International Carnival Meeting, we intend to carry out two important events that we hope will mark a before and after in their history. As part of its evolution, carnivals, like many other social and cultural phenomena, require alliances and linking actions that consolidate their efforts to remain current and at the forefront of the new times without losing their distinctive elements that generate roots in their local communities. It is through the creation of networks that foster and encourage exchange, dialogue and reflection with a plural and contemporary approach that significant advances in opportunities and scope of common projects are achieved.

Carnival Network

Signing of the Letter of Intent for the formation of a collaborative work organization that grants recognition and revalues carnivals at an international level as a popular festival full of traditions and identity, creating a creative exchange HUB that helps establish links in view of the artistic and cultural enrichment of carnivals, turning them into a vehicle for integration and social cohesion.
MAYORES INFORMES
COMITÉ PERMANENTE DEL CARNIVAL DE MÉRIDA
Calle 15 No. 121-A entre 26 y 28 Col. Itzimná
C.P. 97100, Mérida Yucatán, México
Tel. +52 (999) 926.04.47
E-mail: encuentrocarnaval@merida.gob.mx