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Wukup Time: Two Eyes Not Enough For Adults Parade as St. Thomas Puts on a Show For the Ages

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A collage of St. Thomas Carnival 2023 Adults Parade participants. By. V.I. CONSORTIUM

The excitement that consumed Post Office Square during the St. Thomas Carnival Adults Parade on Saturday was reminiscent of an electrifying event happening for the first time. But the annual street parade was the island's 71st, yet onlookers and participants alike were enamored by it all, and by all accounts, the Dept. of Tourism's Division of Festivals once more has proven itself [a worthy successor to the carnival committees of old.](#)

With twenty-two troupes participating, Charlotte Amalie was brought to life with vibrant colors and euphoria as revelers let go of their cares and honed in on the unbothered spirit that carnival

seems to encourage. The event may have started slow, but as momentum grew, any annoyances about parade gaps were replaced with glee as the troupes — from Prodigy Mas to the massive Remedy Carnival Troupe, the latter with over 1,000 members — turned Post Office Square into the greatest party in the U.S. Virgin Islands, scorching heat during the day be damned.

It was as if revelers were cognizant that Saturday's massive street party was the last lap of what has been deemed by many a memorable carnival season. The entertainment lineup boasted the greatest Soca artist of all time, Machel Montano, it also featured the hottest female dancehall artist, now a global sensation, Shenseea, and also touching down in the U.S. Virgin Islands was Trinidad 2023 Roach March king, Bunji Garlin.

James Lewis Jr., this year's Grand Marshall, opened up the feting on Saturday and set the tone for event, which went into the night.

The Grand Marshall was followed by royalties, among them 2023 St. Thomas Carnival Queen LaMonee Morris. "My experience so far with carnival this year is one word, lit!" Ms. Morris exclaimed, echoing a sentiment of many.

Among participants this year was the Huga Bunch Carnival Troupe whose members took over the streets of St. Thomas with a salvo of dancing, bright and inviting colors, and beauty. The group, which was established 38 years ago, made their way to Post Office Square with the legendary Jam Band, and team lead Daphne Gums has no plans of slowing down. "It's a joy to be back and continue the legacy," Ms. Gums told the Consortium over loud music as she partied with other troupe members.

But the troupe to rule them all was Remedy with its over 1,000 participants. When they arrived at Post Office Square, it was hard to keep focus on one section of the group, as the infectiousness of beautiful women clothed with a mesmerizing array of colored feathers all while "wuking up", as dancing to Soca music is called, was simply too much for two eyes. They held on to railings, danced with each other and put on a performance befitting of the spirit of carnival.

Rochelle Johnson, who moved to St. Thomas six months ago participated in the Adults Parade for the first time on Saturday. "...I was very excited when my coworkers told me about carnival," Ms. Johnson said as she embraced the moment.

For others, carnival is a chance to reconnect with old friends and celebrate the community and culture. "I'm with the Jesters Carnival Troupe and have been a part for 20 years. For me, carnival is a celebration of the community and culture. It's a day where we get together and have a good time. Out of the whole carnival season, I always look forward to the parade," she said.