

# Expanding the Tribe



Constructing the elaborate multi-level stage, this technician works on special effects piping.



A construction team works on the Bliss entrance for Tribe's multi-band event, The Launch.



Tribe staff sit for makeup as the event's preparations get underway.



Models walk the runway in a final rehearsal for the launch of Tribe and Bliss.

Photographs and story by Mark Lyndersay

Some might think it brazen, this appropriation of the title of a famous 1999 Minshall Carnival band, **The Lost Tribe**. Some might consider it appropriate. It certainly seemed that Tribe bandleader Dean Ackin thought so, as he told the assembled media that he had heard the concerns about the loss of art and craft in the annual festival and decided to do something about it.

What he did was to assign one of his senior designers, Valmiki Maharaj, to work with a new team of artists and designers to create a new suite of costumes, which were the first thing unveiled on Saturday night's all encompassing "The Launch," event, which also saw the unveiling of the costumes and concepts for Bliss and Tribe.

The Lost Tribe is a side project for the massive Tribe production engine, Ackin promised to keep it small, holding it to around 1,200 masqueraders, while totally eschewing the lifeblood of the brand for the last 12 years, the costumes were designed without a single feather.

The new designers produced a mix of shaky new concepts, designs inspired by ideas introduced by Peter Minshall and Cito Velasquez, among others in a presentation that won't go far enough for traditional mas aficionados and may be a stretch too far for the traditional Tribe masquerader.

But Ackin has done something that others have talked about but never put into production. He's dared to do a band that, while supported by his considerable brand, will rise or fall based on what the market makes of this hybrid of traditional concepts adapted to a faster, more athletic Carnival customer.

Win or lose, this is a Tribe band that will challenge the status quo that Ackin and his team have done so much to cement.



Dwayne Nobrega, an executive on the Tribe management team, discusses arrangements with vendor representatives.



Leah-Marie Guevara coaches a model on the staging of the event during a final rehearsal before the show.



Model Soowan Bramble sits while dressers work out the intricate folding for her headpiece, part of the costume designed by Anya Ayoung-Chee for The Lost Tribe.



Arvey-Ann Thomas waits while dressers strap on her costume backstage in the preparation for the launch performance.



Final headpiece fitting before gathering for the launch.



Costumed masqueraders wearing prototypes gather backstage under the Grandstand before taking the stage at Tribe's The Launch.



At a special preview, costumes from the experimental new band, The Lost Tribe, were presented to the media before the main show. The costumes were not presented to the public at the main launch event.



A masquerader opens Tribe's presentation of it's costumes for the 2016 presentations by Tribe and Bliss.