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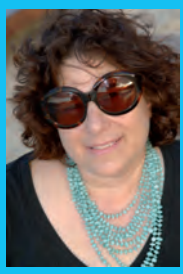
Seeking The Light

Jérémy Kraft at Les Artisans

P.04



What a month!

February has been a whirlwind, with Carnival and the burning of Vaval - dancing in the street, people on their feet, moving to the beat of Caribbean music at the annual Mardi Gras parade. Everyone takes part, locals, tourists, kids, making it an island-wide celebration. And traffic has been insane throughout the month, a popular topic of conversation at every dinner party!

February also saw a few art openings, including painter Alain Le Chatelier at Les Artisans, where jeweler Ross Coppleman has added to his collection of gold and silver pieces. The next opening reception at Les Artisans will be for painter Jeremy Kraft on Friday, March 13. A painter who grew up in St Barth, Kraft lets his imagination explore the island to create landscapes in exaggerated colors that evoke the environment in its former, undeveloped state – we can only imagine how beautiful it all once was.

The St Barth Bucket Regatta sets sail March 12-15, with a fleet of at least 38 magnificent sailboats taking to the waters around the island. It's really a one-of-a-kind regatta, with entries mostly over 100' in length, proving the expertise of the Port of Gustavia, as they shuttle the boats in and out of the harbor with ease. Small but mighty, like many things on this tiny slice of paradise.

Looks like another busy month!

Ellen Lampert-Gréaux

St Barth Bucket: New Four-Day Schedule

Archive photo

When the 2026 St Barth Bucket sets sail, it will be marked by a new schedule, including a fourth day of racing on Thursday, March 12, open to all the boats in the fleet. As noted on the regatta's website, "This Thursday race will be an optional, stand-alone race and not part of the three-day Bucket series. The trade winds have been somewhat less dependable these past few years, and with a desire for more racing, participants asked for a fourth day. The Bucket Stewards will consider a four-day Bucket series in 2027 based on feedback from participating yacht owners."

There have been Thursday races in past years, but as event manager Jeanne Kleene notes: "This is the first time that ALL participating superyachts are offered a Thursday race. It is true that the J Class had additional races on Thursday in some years. Last year the Maxi 100 class negotiated the extra race day."

This prestigious regatta for sailboats over 100' in length, plus a new 90' class, continues through Sunday, March 15. As of late February, there are 38 boats in the fleet, including three "social" entries, which do not race. The others are divided into subsets of the 100' racing class, the 90' class, and the Corinthian Spirit Class, which provides yacht owners with an alternative to conventional ORCsy racing. The emphasis is to be on fun, less-intense racing. It offers a streamlined access to a superyacht handicap, requires fewer racing crew, reduces impact on the yacht captain's resources in the lead up to regattas, and reduces overall regatta related expenses.

While many of the boats unfurl their massive, brightly colored spinnakers, the Corinthian class calls for no spinnakers, Code 0 sails, or mizzen staysails. The impact of the entire fleet is impressive as boats sail around the island or on a wiggly course determined by weather conditions.

Competition on the water, parties on the shore, a souvenir poster sold at Space Gallery with proceeds going to FEMUR (Fund for Emergency Medical Equipment) and the Saint Barth Yacht Club: it all adds up to a world-class regatta that the Port of Gustavia handles with aplomb. A highpoint on the island's nautical calendar since it's Caribbean debut in 1995, the St Barth Bucket sails with the same spirit with which it was founded: non-commercial camaraderie for superyacht owners.

Additional information: https://bucketregatta.com/

Ellen Lampert-Gréaux

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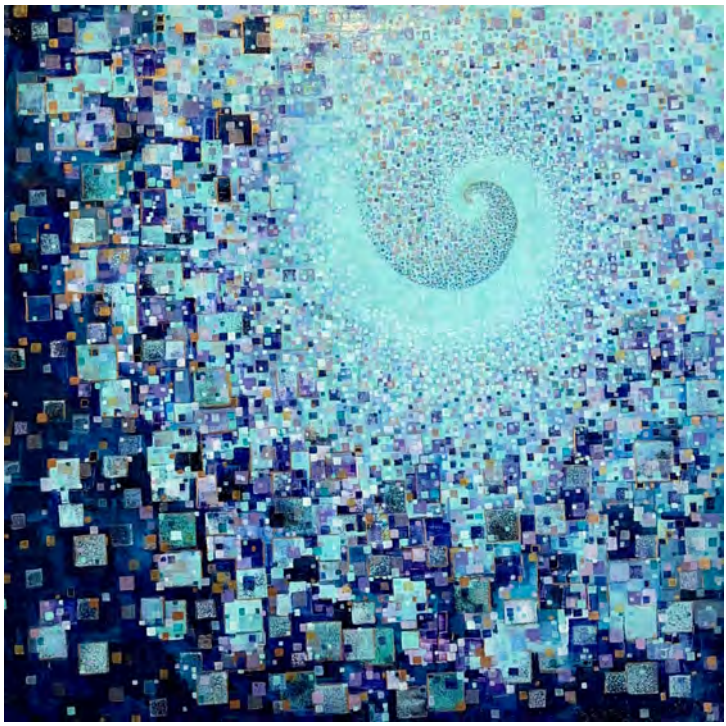
Jeremy Kraft: Seeking The Light

Sensitive to the world around him, French painter Jeremy Kraft enjoys working with light, finding it a healing quality and a means of combatting "all the darkness in the world today," he says. "The opposite of a black hole is creation – and a gravitational way to paint. I have known darkness," says the artist, who suffered deep grief when his wife passed away. "I prefer the light. It is easy to fall into darkness – I am not sure I would have survived the darkness without the light." He also paints with music, considering the light and music a good combination to accompany him as he works.



This self-taught artist came to Saint Barth as a young boy with his parents and his childhood memories trigger slightly abstract landscapes he creates in his imagination – imagining how the island might have looked before European settlers came sailing to its shores. Beaches without houses, lagoons and salt ponds in their natural state, yet painted in a blast of unexpected colors as he explores the various corners of the island in his mind, never working from a photograph. Intense shades of purple, blue, white, pink, orange, green… taking the viewer on an artistic journey from Flamands to Grand Fond.

"I like to exaggerate the colors," explains Kraft. He works in fluorescent acrylic paint that glows under a black light, providing different perceptions of the same painting at night and during the day. Kraft also works in a unique style: he turns his canvas as he works, creating what he calls "an unknown destination," both for

his landscapes and his more abstract paintings with geometric shapes, squares and swirls, and his bold color palette. "I start a painting, then turn it 90°, continue painting, then turn it again, until the painting tells me what to do. I trust the outcome." His abstract paintings have an air of Gustav Klimt about them — the use of shapes and colors found in the background of Klimt's golden period works.

Currently living in Vermont – which he finds a great place to work, very peaceful, as well as close to his son – Kraft is happy to escape the cold winter weather and return to the island of his childhood for an exhibit at Les Artisans in Gustavia, opening on Friday, March 13, with a collection including seven new paintings. "Exhibiting my work is really exciting. I am honored," he says. "I like to stand back and watch people interact with the art, and I have to learn not to get my feelings hurt by those who just walk by casually."

Jeremy Kraft
Les Artisans
Rue du G. De Gaulle - Gustavia
Opening reception:
Friday, March 13
6pm-8pm

Ellen Lampert-Gréaux

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The Friends of Saint Thomas Association

Having visited Saint Thomas for several years to celebrate Bastille Day, Vianney Blanchard and other residents of Saint Barthélemy created the Friends of Saint Thomas Association. Their goal is to strengthen Saint Barth's ties with the gateway to the U.S. Virgin Islands.

It all started with a few musical notes and a desire to forge closer ties with a sister island. A few years later, this idea led to the creation of an association, the Friends of Saint Thomas (U.S. Virgin Islands). It was an idea that took time to mature in the minds of Blanchard, the association's first president, and his companions.

Sitting on the terrace of a café-restaurant in Gustavia, Blanchard recounts: "I'm part of a local band called New Creation. And then in my family, there are six brothers who are musicians, six children who play together. Some of them have lived in Saint Thomas for quite a while, so I told them several times that we had to go and visit!"

Touched by the welcome from the locals

At first, the whole family couldn't make the trip. So Blanchard went to Saint Thomas for the first time with some friends. It was July 14. "They always celebrate Bastille Day," he smiles. "My friends and I put on a little concert. It was a great opportunity to share with the people of Saint Thomas. We were touched. When we got back, we talked to the local government and explained that we needed to create something between the two islands." Like a twinning arrangement, for example. "Christian (Laplace) really wanted something to be set up," says Blanchard. "He didn't think it was normal that there wasn't more interaction with Saint Thomas. Many people from Saint Barth went there. Some stayed, others came back, and there are strong ties."

For the next two years, Blanchard and his New Creation band returned to Saint Thomas for Bastille Day. Each time, they received the same warm welcome. "All the arrangements to go there were made on our initiative," he emphasizes. "It started with our desire to go and play there. " Over the years, bonds inevitably formed. So much so that in 2024, on the occasion of the Saint-Louis festival on August 24, a group from Saint Thomas traveled to Saint Barthélemy. One step led to another.

"The local government decided to set up a twinning arrangement," recalls Blanchard. "The president came to see me and asked me to create an association to help maintain the ties." The association was officially launched at the end of January. "I hope it will last a long time," says Vianney. "Above all, I hope it will allow the inhabitants of the two islands to reconnect. Because we often lose track of our cousins and families. If I hadn't gone there, I would never have known the part of my family that lives in Saint Thomas."

Towards a Saint Thomas Day?

Blanchard has very vivid memories of his first trip to the U.S. island. "People would come up to me and ask me what family I was from," he smiles. "Some would tell me they were Gréaux, Brin, etc."

For the president of the Friends of Saint Thomas association, while the twinning is a "political act," the association will have its own objectives: to create cultural, linguistic, and sporting exchanges. "Saint Thomas will also have to organize itself," he emphasizes, adding: "We will also try to gather information about our shared history. To create a day that tells this story. The goal is to recreate something strong between people and families. To get them to meet in ways other than online." Because Vianney assures us that the desire to strengthen the ties that unite the two islands is just as strong on the Saint-Thomas side.

The association is now a reality. The next step will be to formalize the twinning. Who knows, this could lead to a "Saint Thomas Day," similar to Piteå Day, which marks the annual celebration of the twinning of Saint Barthélemy with the Swedish city of Piteå.

légende

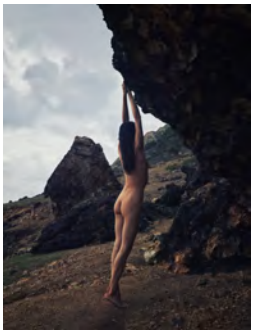
For years, Vianney Blanchard and the New Creation band have been traveling to Saint Thomas to participate in Bastille Day. These trips led to the creation of the Saint Barth Association of Friends of Saint Thomas.

T.F.

A return to Paradise by Nathan Coe

This Spring, Space Gallery unveils a luminous new chapter in the visual journey of Nathan Coe—a photography series born of salt air, seduction, and the spellbinding beauty of Saint Barthélemy. Islands have long stirred Coe's imagination, but St Barth is something else entirely. Iconic. Elusive. Cinematic by nature.

Recognized internationally for his evocative, cinematic beachscapes, Coe's imagery feels at once spontaneous and meticulously composed. Horizons stretch wide. Skies breathe. The sea glows with painterly restraint. Yet it is the presence of his recurring muse—the nude female figure—that anchors these vistas in something deeply human. Often turned away from the camera, blissfully unaware of the artist's gaze, she becomes less subject than spirit: a quiet protagonist embodying our innate, almost primordial connection to nature.



In this new series, the female form drifts across St Barth's shores and cliffs like a living sculpture—classical yet contemporary, vulnerable yet resolute. Coe weaves her into each mise en scène with his signature elegance, merging enduring beauty with elemental landscape. The result is neither voyeuristic nor performative; instead, it feels reverential. A meditation on light, solitude, and the timeless dialogue between body and earth.

There is an intoxicating stillness to these works. The viewer is invited not simply to look, but to linger—to sense the warmth of sun on skin, the hush of wind across sand, the quiet rhythm of tide against rock. Through Coe's lens, St Barth is not just a destination; it is an emotional terrain.

With this new collection launch, the gallery presents more than an exhibition. It presents a love letter—to an island, to the feminine form, and to the eternal pull of horizon lines that promise both escape and return.

Join for the opening cocktail with the artist on March 11th from 6-8pm.

For more information contact info@spacestbarth.com

Update: Hotels And Villas Association

The large influx of tourists recorded in Saint Barthélemy at the start of the season, particularly for Thanksgiving, was not necessarily seen as a flying start. "November was a bit unusual," notes Olivier Leroy, president of the island's hotel and villa association. "We all noticed that there were a lot of people on the island, but we wondered where they were." There was a slight drop in activity with no clear explanation, but this was quickly offset in the weeks that followed.

Olivier Leroy, Vanessa Panza, and Yohan Adam from the Saint Barthélemy Hotel and Villa Association.

Indeed, Leroy notes that December and January "went very well for everyone." He even mentions "record attendance for many accommodation providers" and explains: "We noticed that our regular customers (repeat visitors) shifted their stays to the beginning of the year. So there was a nice wave of new customers at the end of the year, who came to celebrate." However, the hotel and villa association notes that Christmas was more of a family affair.

Results were "very positive in terms of occupancy" for the first two "big months" of the season, according to Leroy, and February is already following the same trend. "We will undoubtedly see further growth compared to previous years," explains the director of Le Christopher hotel. Nevertheless, there is still room for improvement in the quality of work between tourism professionals. This includes the taxi association, with which the hotel and villa association will be meeting soon.

"Recurring problems"

Some frustrations have also been highlighted. These include "very serious problems" with certain airlines. "Flights canceled, luggage not arriving, mainly from Saint Martin," says Leroy. "These are recurring problems, but this year they have been exacerbated," he adds. And this has nothing to do with the disruption caused by the US military attack on Venezuela on January 3rd. "Customers who were due to leave stayed, and those who were due to arrive postponed their stay or did not come," summarizes Leroy. In short, this had no impact on tourism.

One of the priorities of the hotel and villa association in 2026 is to work with the Multi-Professional Economic Chamber (CEM) to recreate a restaurant association. "We need people to talk to in order to address the issues," says Leroy.
In addition, the association is pleased to have signed up several new members, including "small" independent establishments. "This affirms the diversity of our membership," says the president.

MASTHEAD

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Ross Coppelman: St Barth Rock Wall Collection

American goldsmith Ross Coppelman is based in Cape Cod, where he has been creating jewelry since 1970, and has been coming to Saint Barth for the past 25 years. "I've been watching the growing spread of rock-surfaced walls on the island, and I am fascinated by the interplay of randomness and control of surface textures and shapes," he notes.

"Inspired by the beautiful walls I found here on the island, my St Barth Rock Wall Collection holds echoes of the weathered stone walls I've admired in New England, Ireland, and around the world," Coppelman states. The materials he uses in these new pieces are sterling silver, 18k gold, and diamonds, crafted into pendants, bracelets, earrings, and rings that evoke the intriguing, craggy surface of these walls.

Perviously Coppelman's work has been entirely inspired by the natural forms and textures he finds in nature – ocean waves, shore birds, driftwood – as well as interesting precious and semi-precious stones, many in luscious colors from purple amethyst and green tourmaline to deep-red garnet and turquoise. "The Rock Wall Collection is a slightly new direction inspired by natural forms shaped by island artisans into interesting patterns, which I realized were suitable for jewelry as well," he concludes.

His collection can be seen at Les Artisans in Gustavia.

Ellen Lampert-Gréaux

Casa del Mar,

An exceptional property listed exclusively with St. Barth Sotheby's

For sale exclusively by St Barth Sotheby's International Realty, Casa del Mar is a private sanctuary perched above the sea in the heart of Domaine du Levant in Petit Cul-de-Sac.

A Sanctuary At The Summit

Located on 7.5 preserved acres, Casa del Mar sits above the cliffs, with breathtaking panoramic views of the Caribbean Sea. The landscape is intact, offering pure privacy. Here, the environment defines the experience: variations in elevation, vegetation sculpted by the elements, sweeping horizons.

The property consists of two independent villas with a total of six bedrooms and two swimming pools, organized for a lifestyle that flows effortlessly between the interior and exterior. Open terraces, generous volumes, natural circulation between the spaces: light, perspective, and discretion are of the essence.

Infinity and Phi

Each villa has its own identity. Infinity (∞) embodies openness and continuity, echoing the horizon and the unobstructed lines of the site.

Phi (Φ) refers to the golden ratio, a symbol of balance and proportion, in keeping with the relationship between architecture and nature.

Together, these two entities compose a coherent property where geometry, landscape, and habitat interact intelligently.

An Artistic Heritage

Starting in 2012, Casa del Mar hosted residencies for international artists to live and work. On-site creations include photography, installations, and sculptures that are integrated into the property and are part of the sale. An existing sculpture garden extends this identity, inscribing art into the landscape without dissociating it from the nature that surrounds it.

Today, Casa del Mar represents a rare opportunity on the island: a major property, structured, with a strong history. The art works created on the property are an integral part of the landscape, along with its exceptional orientation and preserved environment.

With its two independent villas, six bedrooms, two swimming pools, and a large piece of land, this property offers a setting that is both intimate and expansive. It allows a future buyer to preserve this artistic heritage or inscribe their own identity and vision, in keeping with the spirit of Casa del Mar.

Joyce Conroy-Aktouche
Translation : Ellen Lampert Gréaux

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Anti-Sargassum Barriers To Be Installed

Last week was marked by a large arrival of sargassum on several beaches in Saint Barthélemy, particularly in Saint Jean. This required the intervention of the company that won the contract to collect this invasive seaweed. Earlier, on January 28, the seven members of the executive council unanimously authorized the president of the Collectivité to sign a project management contract for the design and installation of anti-sargassum barriers. The contract was awarded to Egis Water and Maritime, taking preference over Corinthe Ingénierie. The executive council's deliberations, published on February 2 on the Collectivité's website, specify that the contract is worth €419,700.

In 2026, the Collectivité's goal is to install a first semi-deflecting barrier in Marigot. "Because we already have a study of the currents," explains territorial councilor Rudi Laplace, chairman of the environment committee. Additional dams are to be installed at a later date in Grand-Cul-de-Sac, Petit-Cul-de-Sac, and Anse des Cayes.

Laplace explains, as he did at the territorial council meeting on October 23, 2025, that the deployment of barriers at the three other sites will take place within two years. "The goal is that in two years, the northern part of the island will be protected from sargassum with barriers that are as effective as possible," he adds. “The goal is to keep as much sargassum as possible at sea for harvesting." This would allow it to be released further out to sea. Any sargassum that is not "blocked" will wash up on the beaches. But, the elected official hopes, in smaller quantities. Collection will therefore remain inevitable.

Two weeks ago, some of the sargassum that had been stored for many months at a site in Saint Jean was transported by barge to Saint Martin.

T.F.

Music Festival: All Eyes On 2027

The 2026 edition of the Saint Barth Music Festival, which featured primarily classical music concluded on January 19, having delighted audiences with its variety and excellence. From the dancers of the Paris Opera Ballet to the virtuosos (musicians and singers) invited by the organizing association, everyone gave their best during the ten days of the festival. The event may have come to an end, but for president Corinne Hennequin, it's not yet time to rest. Because it's already time to start planning the 2027 edition.

"The dates for the next festival have not yet been set," explains the president. "It will depend on the availability of certain artists." For musicians, singers, and dancers, schedules are sometimes filled with performance dates more than a year in advance. As a result, Hennequin is faced with a delicate balancing act when it comes to scheduling. "When you want a conductor who already has a schedule set for the year, you have to make your request well in advance if you want them to be able to come," confirms Hennequin. In addition, the festival's reputation now encourages artists to contact the president to express their desire to participate in the event. The festival's reputation for warm hospitality and enthusiastic audiences, combined with the island's appeal, means that the Music Festival's aura grows every year. And the artists performing from January 9 to 19 are unlikely to tarnish that reputation.

The return of the local audience

"Attendance was incredible," confirms Hennequin. "All the concerts at the Anglican church were sold out, and people arrived an hour before the concerts to get good seats. There was a real buzz." She was also pleased to see the return of spectators who live on the island. "We had lost some of this local attendance, but it has returned," says the president. It also gives everyone good visibility for the Festival, especially our partners," such as the local government, which is contributing €100,000 in funding. "The musicians had an incredible stay," Hennequin adds. "They were extremely happy. We pull out all the stops to welcome them, within our means. And the musicians play along too. They give their time and their talent, but they also help out with lots of little things, like clearing away the music stands, etc. They are completely committed. I don't know if there is another festival in the world that works like this." Possible, but unlikely. The event's popularity among professionals seems quite unique."

In addition, the Music Festival was able to respond to the request of the Tourism Committee, which, starting in 2025, wanted to include Saint Barthélemy in a South American year. Hennequin looked for an artist who could fit in with this spirit and found the Brazilian Will Sant. "I didn't expect there to be so many people," says the president, still surprised. For the closing concert, spectators eager to hear the talented bossa nova artist did not hesitate to wait in line to try to get a seat. This was yet another success for the organizers, who are already working hard to put together a stunning program for 2027.

T.F.

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Airport: how can the Col de la Tourmente pass be made safer?

The video quickly went viral on social media, as is often the case these days. The footage shows a Tradewind aircraft crossing the Col de la Tourmente mountain pass as it prepares to land. The maneuver appears to be performed at a lower altitude and on a lower trajectory than usual. In any case, someone filmed the scene, facing the aircraft, probably with a phone. Until the phone was clearly hit by one of the landing gear wheels.

At first glance, it may seem that the images of this incident were created using artificial intelligence. This is not the case. The director of Saint Barthélemy Airport, Fabrice Danet, explains: "The incident took place on January 19. It is not a 'fake'. The FAA (Federal Aviation Administration) and the BEA (Bureau of Investigation and Analysis for Civil Aviation Safety) have already been notified. An investigation is underway."

The person who filmed the scene and whose phone was hit by the plane's landing gear was thrown to the ground but was not injured. Although the day on which the incident occurred was marked by strong winds, the airport director points out that the main problem was the pedestrian's position in a highly dangerous area.

"This type of incident has happened before," Fabrice Danet recalls. "People should not be there when planes are landing. They are putting themselves and others in danger. It should come as no surprise if the DGAC (French Civil Aviation Authority, ed.) finally puts a stop to this and requires the installation of lights with height limits at the pass, loudspeakers, etc. The same problem exists at Juliana (Sint Maarten airport, ed.). During the festivities, we even saw a stroller get blown away on the beach."

The incident has reignited the debate on safety issues surrounding the landing phase over La Tourmente. Measures have been taken in recent years to discourage tourists from waiting for planes to pass on the roundabout. A viewing platform was built at great expense by the Collectivité on the hill overlooking the intersection and the runway, and more recently, parking spaces were added along Route de l'Œuf. However, these two measures have not been enough to deter visitors from their main goal: taking spectacular photographs. Therefore, in order to prevent a potentially serious accident, the airport director has submitted a series of recommendations to the president of the Collectivité.

Firstly, a decree prohibiting pedestrians from walking or parking on the runway axis at the Col de la Tourmente and on the beach during airport operating hours, with fines for violations.

Second, the deterrent effect of the sensitive area should be reinforced by installing a road safety barrier, as well as ground markings and enhanced signage, including information in English.

Fabrice Danet also suggests building a sidewalk on the side opposite the airport, along the rocky hill where the 180-degree viewpoint is located, as well as creating a suitable parking area. He also proposes removing the pedestrian crossing that allows visitors to cross the road to stand in the path of approaching aircraft.

On the technical side, he mentions installing two cameras at the pass to provide video surveillance of aircraft approaching, flying over the pass, and landing. He also suggests installing a loudspeaker to deter people (similar to the one installed at the end of the runway on the beach side).

T.F.

Carnival: Mardi Gras Parade: an extravaganza of color and joy

The parade on Tuesday, February 17, was a festival of color and creativity. Not only from the groups themselves, but also from the spectators who joyfully accompanied the dancers along the route through the streets of Gustavia.

The sun was still shining brightly when the first float left the port of Commerce and headed towards Rue de la République. Strapped to the back of a pickup truck, a very sober King Vaval led the parade. He was followed throughout the afternoon of Tuesday, February 17, by a wave of color and creativity.

From the Youngz to the Ascco, via Ti Ouana Salsa, the Golden Team, the Caribbean Girls, the Pineapple Girls, then Nib and the Wake Up Girls, each group enthusiastically spread its energy throughout the entire Mardi Gras parade route through the streets of Gustavia. The costumes, floats, and choreography were all worthy of the event.

As for the spectators, they also contributed greatly to the success of the event with their costumes, their good humor, and, quite simply, their desire to participate in the festivities. It is also worth noting the presence of a few small groups that, interspersed between the floats, displayed their originality.

From the gang of macrelles hanging out of their windows to the eccentric penguins and the little rolling hut denouncing certain rental practices on the island, the transgressive spirit of the carnival was very much in evidence. All in all, it was a beautiful parade, with a new feature introduced by the Territorial Collectivity: a competition.

This year, the floats did not pass in front of the Bar de l'Oubli and the Sélect. They turned onto the Quai du Général de Gaulle. There, on a red carpet, groups of dancers performed their choreography in front of a jury of four people. The prize for the most successful float was awarded to Ti Ouana Salsa, the prize for the most beautiful costumes to the Pineapple Girls, and the prize for the best choreography to the Golden Team (whose flamboyant costumes, it should be noted, were made entirely on the island). Finally, the Caribbean Girls were honored in the "overall atmosphere" category. These choices are obviously very suggestive, as the efforts made by each group were noted.

Thanks to the Carnival Committee's insistence with the Collectivité, the groups were able to make a round trip to Gustavia. To prolong the party a little longer. The next day, Wednesday, at nightfall, Vaval was reduced to ashes. The king is dead, long live the king.

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