



1 - REX, KING OF CARNIVAL, MONARCH OF MERRIMENT

REX'S FLOAT CARRIES REX AND HIS PAGES THROUGH THE STREETS OF NEW ORLEANS ON MARDI GRAS DAY.



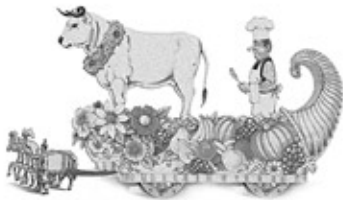
2 - HIS MAJESTY'S BANDWAGON

A BAND RIDES ON THIS PERMANENT FLOAT TO PROVIDE MUSIC FOR REX AND FOR THOSE WHO GREET HIM ON THE PARADE ROUTE.



3 - THE KING'S JESTERS

EVEN THE MONARCH OF MERRIMENT NEEDS JESTERS IN HIS COURT. REX'S JESTERS DRESS IN MARDI GRAS COLORS—PURPLE, GREEN, AND GOLD.



4 - THE BOEUF GRAS

THIS IS ONE OF THE OLDEST SYMBOLS OF MARDI GRAS, SYMBOLIZING THE GREAT FEAST ON THE DAY BEFORE LENT BEGINS.



5 - TITLE FLOAT: "THE WINGED WORLD"

THROUGHOUT TIME, IN ALL THE DIVERSE CULTURES OF THE WORLD, PEOPLE HAVE WATCHED AND MARVELED AT THE MIRACLE OF FLIGHT. WINGED FIGURES ARE PROMINENT IN THE MYTHS, LEGENDS, AND PANTHEONS OF ANCIENT CIVILIZATIONS—FROM THE GREEKS AND ROMANS TO THE ASSYRIANS AND JAPANESE. THE REX PROCESSION OF 2004 PRESENTS A PARADE FILLED WITH THESE BEAUTIFUL, POWERFUL, AND SOMETIMES TERRIFYING WINGED WONDERS.



6 - FENG HUANG

THIS COLORFUL BIRD, WITH A PHEASANT'S HEAD AND A PEACOCK'S TAIL, IS THE PHOENIX OF CHINESE MYTHOLOGY. IT REPRESENTS NOT ONLY THE GLORY OF THE EMPEROR AND EMPRESS, BUT ALSO THE PRIMORDIAL FORCE OF THE UNIVERSE, AND THE UNION OF YIN AND YANG. FENG HUANG LIVES IN THE KINGDOM OF THE WISE, AND IS KNOWN FOR ITS SONG, WHICH ENCOMPASSES ALL FIVE NOTES OF THE TRADITIONAL MUSICAL SCALE. FENG HUANG, THE PROTECTOR OF THE EMPEROR, IS PRESENTED BEFORE A MAGNIFICENT PALACE, RISING ABOVE STYLIZED MOUNTAINS AND CLOUDS.



7 - GRYPHON

THIS MAGNIFICENT CREATURE, HALF LION AND HALF EAGLE, IS CLAIMED BY MANY CULTURES. THE EARLIEST ACCOUNTS, HOWEVER, ARE FROM INDIA, WHERE THE GRYPHON DWELLS IN THE NORTHERN MOUNTAINS AND GUARDS THE GOLD AND OTHER TREASURES THERE. THE GRYPHON BUILDS ITS NEST OF GOLD, AND ITS EGGS ARE LIKE AGATES. COMBINING THE NOBLE QUALITIES OF THE LION AND THE EAGLE, THE GRYPHON IS OFTEN USED AS A SYMBOL OF ROYALTY.



8 - STYMPHALIAN BIRDS

THESE HORRIBLE BIRDS HAUNTED THE DARK MARSHES AND SWAMPS OF LAKE STYMPHALOS IN ARCADIA. WITH THEIR BRONZE BEAKS AND TALONS THEY CARRIED OFF AS PREY BOTH MEN AND ANIMALS. HERCULES FINALLY DESTROYED THESE MONSTROUS BIRDS. ATHENA GAVE HIM MAGIC BRONZE NOISEMAKERS (KROTALA) TO FRIGHTEN THEM FROM THEIR ROOSTS SO THAT HE COULD SLAY THEM WITH HIS BOW AND ARROW.



9 - QUETZALCOATL

THIS FEATHERED OR PLUMED SERPENT GOD WAS A PRINCIPAL DEITY AMONG THE ANCIENT PEOPLES OF CENTRAL AMERICA, INCLUDING THE AZTECS, THE MAYANS, AND THE TOLTECS. HE WAS KNOWN AS THE GOD OF THE WIND, AND WAS ASSOCIATED WITH THE PLANETS MERCURY AND VENUS. HE WAS GIVEN CREDIT FOR EVERYTHING FROM MAKING THE SUN RISE EACH DAY TO TEACHING HIS PEOPLE TO GROW MAIZE. THE ANCIENT PEOPLES LOOKED FOR QUETZALCOATL TO RETURN FROM THE EAST, AND THEY MAY HAVE MISTAKEN THE ARRIVAL OF CORTES AND HIS SPANISH CONQUISTADORES AS QUETZALCOATL'S RETURN.



10 - HUGIN AND MUNIN

THE MIGHTY NORSE GOD ODIN, THE ALLFATHER, HAD IN HIS SERVICE TWO GREAT RAVENS NAMED HUGIN (THOUGHT) AND MUNIN (MEMORY). EACH DAY AT DAWN THEY FLEW OUT INTO THE WORLD IN SEARCH OF NEWS AND INFORMATION. ON THEIR RETURN THEY WOULD PERCH ON ODIN'S SHOULDERS AND REPORT TO THEIR MASTER ALL THAT THEY HAD SEEN AND HEARD.



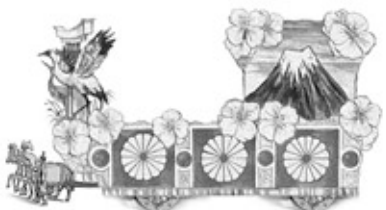
11 - AMON KNEPH

THE EGYPTIAN DEITY, AMON, WAS ORIGINALLY IDENTIFIED AS A CONCEALED OR SECRET GOD. THEN CAME A UNION BETWEEN AMON AND THE GREAT SUN GOD RA, AND THEREAFTER HE WAS WORSHIPPED AS AMON-RA OR AMON-KNEPH. AMON KNEPH WAS DEPICTED WITH WINGS, AND WITH A RAM'S HEAD WITH HORNS POINTED DOWN. AS THE SUPREME DEITY HE PRESIDED OVER THE MOST IMPORTANT EVENT IN THE ANCIENT EGYPTIAN CALENDAR, THE ANNUAL FLOOD AND OVERFLOWING OF THE NILE RIVER'S BANKS.



12 - SEA SIRENS

THE SIRENS, HALF BIRD AND HALF WOMAN, WERE THE ENCHANTRESSES OF THE SEA. WITH BEAUTIFUL MUSIC THEY LURED SEAMEN TO SAIL TOWARD THEIR ISLAND WHERE THE SHIPS WOULD CRASH UPON THE ROCKS. HEARING THEIR MUSIC, SAILORS WOULD JUMP FROM THEIR SHIPS AND DROWN TRYING TO SWIM TO SHORE. ODYSSEUS SAVED HIS SHIP BY ORDERING HIS MEN TO TIE HIM TO THE MAST SO THAT HE COULD NOT JUMP OVERBOARD, AND THEN TO FILL THEIR EARS WITH BEESWAX SO THEY COULD NOT HEAR THE SIRENS' SONG. THE SIRENS LATER LOST THEIR FEATHERS, AND BECAME PART FISH—MERMAIDS.



13 - IMPERIAL CRANES OF JAPAN

IN JAPANESE TRADITION THE CRANE IS CONSIDERED A SIGN OF HAPPINESS AND LONGEVITY, AND, ALONG WITH THE CHRYSANTHEMUM FLOWER, IS A RECURRING EMBLEM ASSOCIATED WITH JAPAN'S EMPERORS. IN THE 11TH CENTURY A BUDDHIST LEADER RELEASED CRANES IN CELEBRATION FOLLOWING A CRUCIAL BATTLE. SINCE THAT TIME THE CRANE HAS BEEN A SYMBOL OF HOPE FOR PEACE AND HEALING. IN JAPAN, FOLDED PAPER ORIGAMI CRANES ARE OFTEN GIVEN AS GIFTS TO PEOPLE WHO ARE SICK.



14 - THE STREETCAR NAMED DESIRE

THIS PERMANENT FLOAT HONORS THE MOST FAMOUS OF ALL OF NEW ORLEANS' STREETCAR LINES.



THE ROYAL BARGE

THE ROYAL BARGE IS A PERMANENT FLOAT, COMPLETE WITH ROYAL GRYPHON, APPROPRIATE TO THIS YEAR'S THEME, "THE WINGED WORLD."



15 - HALCYONE

HALCYONE WAS THE WIFE OF KING CEYX, WHOM SHE LOVED DEEPLY. ON A VOYAGE TO CONSULT THE ORACLE OF APOLLO HIS SHIP WAS CAUGHT IN A STORM AND SANK. UNAWARE OF HER HUSBAND'S DEATH, HALCYONE PRAYED INCESSANTLY FOR HIS RETURN, UNTIL FINALLY THE SEA CARRIED HIS BODY BACK TO THE SHORE WHERE SHE WAITED. IN HER GRIEF, SHE THREW HERSELF INTO THE SEA, AND EMBRACED HER DEAD HUSBAND. THE GODS TOOK PITY, AND TRANSFORMED BOTH CEYX AND HALCYONE INTO KINGFISHERS (HALCYONS), AND DECREED THAT DURING THE MATING WEEKS OF SPRING THE ELEMENTS SHOULD BE CALM—HALCYON DAYS.



16 - GARUDA

GARUDA, HALF MAN AND HALF EAGLE, IS AN ANCIENT INDIAN MYTHOLOGICAL CREATURE OFTEN ASSOCIATED WITH THE RAYS OF THE SUN. BORN AT THE BEGINNING OF TIME, HIS FATHER WAS ONE OF THE RISHIS, THE SEVEN GREAT SAGES. GARUDA IS THE KING OF THE BIRDS, THE DEVOURER OF SERPENTS, AND OFTEN IS DEPICTED FLYING ACROSS THE SKY CARRYING THE SUPREME GOD VISHNU ON HIS BACK.



17 - THE BIRTH OF PEGASUS

WHEN PERSEUS KILLED MEDUSA, THE EVIL-EYED GORGON, THE WINGED HORSE PEGASUS SPRANG FROM MEDUSA'S BLOOD. SOME OF MEDUSA'S BLOOD ALSO FLOWED INTO THE SEA, WHERE IT BECAME CORAL. EVEN NOW MEDITERRANEAN WOMEN WEAR CORAL TO WARD OFF THE "EVIL EYE." PEGASUS ALSO HELPED ZEUS BY CARRYING THUNDERBOLTS TO MOUNT OLYMPUS. HE WAS REWARDED WHEN ZEUS GAVE HIM A PLACE IN THE HEAVENS AS THE CONSTELLATION PEGASUS.



18 - THE PHOENIX

THIS MIRACULOUS BIRD, WITH SPLENDID GOLD AND RED PLUMAGE, WAS KNOWN TO THE EGYPTIANS AND ASSYRIANS. AFTER LIVING FOR 500 YEARS OR MORE THE PHOENIX RETURNED TO SYRIA, WHERE HE BUILT A NEST IN A PALM TREE OF FRAGRANT WOOD, FRANKINCENSE, AND MYRRH, WHICH PROMPTLY IGNITED. FROM THE PHOENIX'S ASHES ROSE A NEW PHOENIX, DESTINED TO LIVE AS LONG AS HIS PARENT. MANY YOUNG READERS OF HARRY POTTER ARE FAMILIAR WITH PROFESSOR DUMBLEDORE'S PET PHOENIX, FAWKES, WHO GOES THROUGH THE CYCLE OF "RISING FROM HIS ASHES" MUCH MORE FREQUENTLY.



19 - NIGHTINGALES OF LIBETHRA

ORPHEUS, THE SON OF APOLLO AND CALLIOPE, WAS KNOWN FOR THE BEAUTIFUL MUSIC HE MADE ON HIS LYRE. HAVING LOST HIS WIFE, EURYDICE, HE WANDERED ACROSS THRACE, LONELY AND UNINTERESTED IN OTHER WOMEN. INDIGNANT, THE SPURNED THRACIAN MAIDENS KILLED HIM, TEARING HIS BODY LIMB FROM LIMB. HIS HEAD AND LYRE WERE THROWN INTO THE RIVER. THE MUSES GATHERED UP THE REMAINING FRAGMENTS OF HIS BODY, AND BURIED THEM AT LIBETHRA, ON THE BANKS OF THE RIVER HEBRUS, WHERE THE NIGHTINGALES SING MORE SWEETLY OVER HIS GRAVE THAN ANYWHERE ELSE IN GREECE.



20 - CYGNUS

PHAETON, SON OF HELIOS, STOLE HIS FATHER'S SUN-CHARIOT AND, AFTER A WILD RIDE ACROSS THE HEAVENS, WAS KILLED BY ONE OF ZEUS'S THUNDERBOLTS AND THROWN BY THE GODS INTO THE RIVER ERIDANUS. HIS GRIEF-STRICKEN FRIEND CYGNUS DOVE AND DOVE AGAIN INTO THE RIVER, SEEKING HIS LOST COMRADE. FOR HIS DEVOTION THE GODS TURNED HIM INTO A CELESTIAL SWAN, THE CONSTELLATION CYGNUS. WATCH HOW SWANS SWIM ON THE SURFACE OF THE RIVER, FREQUENTLY THRUSTING THEIR HEADS UNDER WATER, SEARCHING.



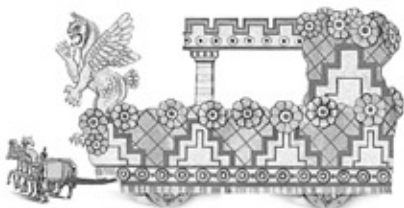
21 - ASSUN, THE CHINESE WARRIOR

THE ASSURI ARE THE FALLEN SPIRITS OF BUDDHISM. THEY DWELL IN A STATE OF INFERIOR HAPPINESS, ISOLATED FROM THE OTHER HEAVENS. IN CHINESE MYTHOLOGY THIS WORLD IS FOUND JUST BELOW MOUNT MIENMO AND IS THE LOWEST OF THE 26 HEAVENS.



22 - SIMURGH

IN PERSIAN MYTHOLOGY THIS MAGNIFICENT BIRD WITH GLORIOUS PLUMAGE AND IMMENSE WINGS IS SAID TO HAVE LIVED LONG ENOUGH TO HAVE SEEN THE WORLD DESTROYED THREE TIMES, AND THUS TO POSSESS THE WISDOM OF ALL AGES. HIS NEST WAS BUILT IN THE TREE OF KNOWLEDGE, AND HIS COLORFUL FEATHERS WERE BELIEVED TO INSTANTLY HEAL THE MOST TERRIBLE WOUNDS. ZAL, THE GREATEST PERSIAN WARRIOR, WAS SAVED AS AN INFANT BY THE SIMURGH, AND RAISED IN THE SIMURGH NEST.



23 - TIAMAT

IN BABYLONIAN MYTHOLOGY TIAMAT EMBODIED THE PRIMORDIAL CHAOS OF CREATION. THE MOTHER OF CREATION, SHE BECAME ENRAGED AT HER DESCENDANTS AND LED A MONSTROUS ARMY AGAINST THEM. ONLY MARDUK, AMONG ALL THE GODS, WAS ABLE TO SUBDUE HER, THUS BECOMING THE GREATEST GOD OF THE BABYLONIAN PANTHEON. MARDUK CUT TIAMAT'S BODY IN HALF; THE UPPER HALF BECAME THE SKY, AND THE LOWER HALF BECAME THE EARTH. FROM HER TEARS FLOWED THE TIGRIS AND EUHRATES RIVERS. TIAMAT IS REPRESENTED HERE AS A FANTASTIC, SNARLING, WINGED DEMON.



24 - THE OLYMPIAN EAGLE OF ZEUS

ZEUS, THE SUPREME DEITY OF CLASSICAL ANTIQUITY, WAS THE FATHER OF BOTH GODS AND MEN. ALONG WITH THE THUNDERBOLT, HE IS MOST OFTEN ASSOCIATED WITH HIS GREAT EAGLE. IT WAS THE EAGLE OF ZEUS WHO CARRIED THUNDERBOLTS TO MOUNT OLYMPUS, AND RETRIEVED THEM AFTER THEY WERE THROWN. ZEUS SENT HIS EAGLE TO GNAW ON PROMETHEUS' LIVER WHEN PROMETHEUS WAS PUNISHED FOR GIVING MANKIND THE GIFT OF FIRE. AND IT WAS THE OLYMPIAN EAGLE THAT BROUGHT GANYMEDE TO MOUNT OLYMPUS TO BE ZEUS' CUPBEARER. THE OLYMPIAN EAGLE OF ZEUS IS SEEN IN THE HEAVENS AS THE CONSTELLATION AQUILA, THE EAGLE.



25 - JUNO AND THE PEACOCK

JUPITER, THOUGH MARRIED TO JUNO, WAS AN UNFAITHFUL HUSBAND, AND WAS FLIRTING WITH IO. WHEN JUNO BECAME SUSPICIOUS, JUPITER TURNED IO INTO A WHITE HEIFER. JUNO, KNOWING THAT JUPITER COULD JUST AS EASILY TURN HIMSELF INTO A BULL, SENT ARGUS, HER MANY-EYED WATCHDOG, TO GUARD IO. JUPITER SENT MERCURY TO KILL ARGUS, INFURIATING JUNO, WHO WAS VERY FOND OF ARGUS. SHE GATHERED UP HIS MANY EYES AND PLACED THEM ON THE FEATHERS OF THE MOST BEAUTIFUL BIRD IN HER GARDEN. WHEN THE PEACOCK SPREADS ITS TAIL, YOU CAN STILL SEE THE EYES OF ARGUS.

26 - BABYLONIAN GENIE

THE RULERS OF BABYLON LIVED AND RULED UNDER THE PROTECTION OF BENEVOLENT GENIES. THESE WINGED MYTHOLOGICAL DIVINITIES SOMETIMES HAD THE HEAD OF A LION OR OF A HUMAN, AND OFTEN HELD SYMBOLIC OBJECTS IN THEIR CLAWS, SUCH AS A VASE OF PURIFYING WATER AND A CONE-SHAPED SYMBOL OF PROTECTION. ONE OF THE BEST KNOWN IMAGES OF THE BABYLONIAN GENIE COMES FROM A MASSIVE SCULPTURE EXCAVATED FROM THE TOMB OF SARGON II, WHO RULED BABYLON ABOUT 700 B.C.

