

The 2007 Rex Procession: “The Lunar Realm”

Tuesday, February 20, 2007
New Orleans, Louisiana

1. Rex, King of Carnival, Monarch of Merriment Rex’s float carries the King of Carnival 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 Lunar Realm” As long as mankind has looked into the night sky the moon has been a source of wonder and inspiration to poets, writers, artists, and storytellers. Throughout the ages each culture has developed its own interesting legends and mythologies to tell the story of the moon’s origins and to explain its changing appearance. “The Lunar Realm” explores that rich world of stories, words, and images.

6. Crescent City The city of New Orleans, cradled in a crescent of the Mississippi River, claimed this nickname in its earliest years. The Crescent City float leads the parade as a special salute to all those who have helped in the recovery and rebuilding of our city, from courageous first responders to the waves of volunteers who continue to come from all over the world to help rebuild this special place.

Wikipedia, History of New Orleans

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_New_Orleans

7. Bonsoir Lune The beloved children’s book *Goodnight Moon* was written in 1947 by Margaret Wise Brown (1910-1952), with illustrations by Clement Hurd. This gentle bedtime story could not be simpler—a small one saying goodnight to all the familiar objects around him as the room darkens, and the moon rises. It has been published in many languages, including French, chosen for this float’s title.

Wikipedia, *Good Night Moon*

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Goodnight_Moon

Margaret Wise Brown Homepage

<http://www.margaretwisebrown.com/>

8. The Cow Jumped Over the Moon The rhyme which begins “Hey Diddle Diddle...” is one of the best known of all nursery rhymes. While it is impossible to know exactly who wrote this fantasy rhyme, or when, some suggest it may have originated in Elizabethan times, and may even have been a clever political satire. The first known publication is dated 1765.

Origin of the “Hey Diddle Diddle” rhyme

http://www.rhymes.org.uk/hey_diddle_diddle.htm

Wikipedia, Nursery Rhymes

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nursery_rhyme

9. Ix Chel (e'-shell) is the Mayan Goddess of the Moon. Versions of her legend describe her turbulent relationship with the Mayan Sun God, Kinich Ahau, which ended with her fleeing to the safer night sky, so she could disappear when the sun arrived. Depicted with snakes for hair, Ix Chel was blamed for floods but also worshipped as the protector of birthing mothers. Her sacred islands were Cozumel and Isla Mujeres.

Ix Chel, Wikipedia

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ix_Chel

Godchecker, Ix Chel

<http://www.godchecker.com/pantheon/mayan-mythology.php?deity=IXCHEL>

10. Mawu is the creator Moon God of the Fon people of Dahomey (Benin) in Africa. Represented as an old mother who lives in the West, Mawu brings the night and cooler temperatures in the African world, and that coolness is also seen as an element of wisdom. Her partner in creation is the male Sun God, Liza.

Mawu: the Fon View

<http://www.mamiwata.com/mawu.html>

Mawu (Mahu) Wikipedia

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mahu>

11. Annigan is the Moon God of the Inuit people who live in Greenland. In the Inuit legend, Annigan chases his sister, Malina, the Sun Goddess across the sky. He is so intent on his chase that he becomes thinner and thinner (the crescent phases of the moon) and finally disappears to eat, returning as the full moon.

A Student Project on Annigan:

http://ecell.k12.hi.us/2003/Science/period2/SolarWinds/mythology_page.htm

Summary of Moon and Sun Gods:

<http://school.familyeducation.com/mythology/sun/37490.html>

12. Chang-O was the wife of Hou-Yi, the archer who saved the world by shooting down nine suns. He was given a magic potion to live forever, but Chang-O drank it instead, and floated into the heavens. Landing on the moon, she found a new home in the Cold Palace. The moonlight of a full moon transmits the Lady of the Moon's magical blessings, especially to those in love.

The Chang-O Story:

http://www.gio.gov.tw/info/festival_c/moon_e/html/run.htm

Godchecker: Chang-O

<http://www.godchecker.com/pantheon/chinese-mythology.php?deity=CHANG-O>

13. Tsuki-Yomi is the Japanese Moon God, brother of the Sun God, Amaterasu. According to Shinto legend these siblings had a violent falling out when Tsuki-Yomi killed Uke Mochi, the Goddess of Food. Ever since the Sun and Moon Gods have lived apart, alternating their time in the sky.

Tsuki-Yomi: Wikipedia

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tsukuyomi>

Tsuki-Yomi: A more detailed description

<http://www.uwec.edu/philrel/shimbutsudo/tsukiyomi.html>

14. The Streetcar Named Desire This permanent float honors the most famous of all of New Orleans' streetcar lines.

His Majesty's Royal Calliope The Rex procession presents a musical interlude provided by His Majesty's traditional calliope.

15. Silver Apples of the Moon This float is inspired by the lovely images in lines from William Butler Yeats' (1865-1939) poem, "The Song of Wandering Aengus." Aengus was the Irish god of youth, love, and poetry and inspired this promise to "...walk among long dappled grass/And pluck till time and times are done/The silver apples of the moon/The golden apples of the sun."

Text, "The Song of Wandering Aengus"

http://www.poetry-archive.com/y/the_song_of_wandering_aengus.html

William Butler Yeats: Wikipedia

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Butler_Yeats

The Legend of Aengus: Wikipedia

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aengus>

16. Luna Moth *Actius luna*, a large and beautiful light green moth, derives its name both from the eye spots on the wings and the fact that it only flies at night. The adult Luna Moth has no mouth and does not eat, since it only lives for one week, in the spring or summer.

Luna Moth:

http://www.fcps.edu/StratfordLandingES/Ecology/mpages/luna_moth.htm

Luna Moth: Wikipedia

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Actias_luna

17. Khons was the Moon God, son of Amon and Mut. His name meant “pathfinder” and he was worshipped as a healer. He competed with Thoth, another Moon God, and is usually portrayed as a man with a falcon’s head and a headdress of a crescent moon cradling the sun.

Khons: Egyptian Gods

<http://www.nemo.nu/ibisportal/0egyptintro/1egypt/index.htm>

Khons and Thoth

<http://nefertiti.iwebland.com/religion/amen1.html>

18. Nokomis was the name of Hiawatha’s grandmother in Longfellow’s (1807-1882) epic poem, “The Song of Hiawatha.” This float recalls those familiar lines, “By the shores of Gitchie Gumees/By the shining Big-Sea-Water/Stood the wigwam of Nokomis/Daughter of the Moon, Nokomis/Dark beyond it rose the forest.”

Nokomis: Wikipedia

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nokomis>

Song of Hiawatha: full text

<http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/etcbin/toccer-new2?id=LonHiaw.sgm&images=images/modeng&data=/texts/english/modeng/parsed&tag=public&part=all>

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow: Wikipedia

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Henry_Wadsworth_Longfellow

19. Werewolf Legends of men transformed into menacing wolves by moonlight go back to the middle ages—“wer” is an old saxon word for man—and such stories are told in nearly every culture. Shapeshifting man-wolves even appear in children’s stories such as Little Red Riding Hood, or, more recently, the Harry Potter novels.

Werewolf: Wikipedia

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Werewolf>

Extensive Tripod Werewolf Website:

<http://joteel.com/werewolf/index.htm>

20. Soma is one of the Indian Gods of the Moon, but in Hindu mythology Soma is also the name of the magical drink of the Gods. The moon was considered to be the cup holding this drink, and when the moon was only a crescent it meant the Gods were drinking fully. Soma is sometimes portrayed riding through the sky in a chariot pulled by white horses.

Soma: Encyclopedia Mythica

<http://www.pantheon.org/articles/s/soma.html>

Soma: Wikipedia

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Soma>

21. Sin The Babylonians and Assyrians worshipped Sin, the Moon God. Ur was his holy city, and his chief sanctuary there was called "The House of the Great Light." He is often portrayed with a colorful beard of lapis lazuli and the body of a bull.

Sin: answers.com

<http://www.answers.com/topic/sin-babylonian-god-of-the-moon>

Sin: Wikipedia

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sin_\(mythology\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sin_(mythology))

22. Independent Order of the Moon This float recalls a long-ago Carnival organization which presented parades and balls between 1881 and 1888, during the Golden Age of Carnival. Only a few artifacts survive, one a ball invitation which has been in the Rex collection, and was damaged when the den was flooded. The artwork on that invitation inspires this float.

23. Diana was the Roman Goddess of the Moon (Artemis was her Greek counterpart). Her twin, Apollo, was the God of the Sun. As the Goddess of hunting she is often portrayed with bow and arrow. She was also worshipped as the Goddess who protected mothers and their babies in childbirth.

Artemis: Wikipedia

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Artemis>

Diana: Encyclopedia Mythica

<http://www.pantheon.org/articles/d/diana.html>

24. Man in the Moon In every age men have studied the patterns created by the lunar seas and seen a man's face. Each culture has developed a story to explain how he got there, and what he is doing. An old English tradition is that he is fond of drink, as in this old rhyme, with original spelling: "Our man in the moon drinks clarret/ With powder-beef, turnep, and carret..."

The Man in the Moon: Wikipedia

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Man_in_the_Moon

The Man in the Moon and Other Weird Things

<http://wfmh.org.pl/thorgal/Moon/>

25. Coyolxauhqui (coh-yohl-shau'-kee) is the Aztec Moon Goddess. Her legend includes her death in a violent battle with her mother and brother. Her brother threw her head into the heavens, where it became the moon. This float depicts an eight-ton carving of the dead Moon Goddess found in 1978 at the site of an ancient Aztec Temple in what is now Mexico City.

Coyolxauhqui: Wikipedia

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coyolxauhqui>

Museum of Templo Mayor (Tenochtitlan)

<http://www.delange.org/TemMayor/TemMayor.htm>

26. “May the Moon Be Turned into Green Cheese... If ever I cease to love.”

This phrase from the Rex Anthem, “If Ever I Cease To Love” actually has a very long history, with the first recorded reference to this nonsense possibility attributed to John Heywood in 1546. In his book, “Proverbes,” he asserted that “the moon is made of greene cheese.” In those days “greene” cheese referred not to the color, but to newly pressed cheese.

Cheese: Wikipedia

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cheese>

The Rex Anthem

<http://www.rexorganization.com/Tradition/>

27. The Royal Barge The Royal Barge is a permanent float, complete with Royal Gryphon, and brings this year’s Rex Procession to a close.

General Links:

Discussion of Moon Gods:

<http://www.chevroncars.com/learn/arts-culture/moon-gods>