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## **20 YEARS OF RECOGNITION!**



UNESCO recognized the Carnival of Binche as Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity on the 7th of November, 2003. That day marked a turning point in Binche's folklore.

Actually, Binche was the first European carnival to earn this honorary title. Its traditional and popular character makes the Carnival human, alive, and unique. As they say in Binche: Il n'y a qu'un Binche au Monde ("Binche is an unique city")!

The Carnival and its three days of festivities fascinate. The moment everyone has been waited for is around the corner, thousands of visitors gather in the city centre, and participants in the Carnival and visitors cannot hide the smile on their lips, as they share these joyful moments together.

To celebrate the 20th anniversary of the recognition, several events were held, as exhibitions at the International Carnival and Mask Museum and a celebration in Brussels on the 27th of January.

During their visit in Brussels, musicians played the viola, participants were greeted in the town hall and performed a rondeau on one of the most beautiful main squares in the world. Hundreds of fans of the Carnival then walked to Manneken Pis statue. The famous Brussels boy wore a Gille's costume for the occasion. This year also marks the 900th anniversary of Binche. What a way to celebrate these symbolic birthdays!

Surely, the upcoming three Shrove days and the celebration of these historic birthdays will be unforgettable.



## SHROVE SUNDAY SCHEDULE

### 11 February 2024

Shrove Sunday is a wonderful day during which the children, but also their parents, don't know which way to turn as there are so many different and varied costumes.

From September, and sometimes even much earlier, the different cagnottes (pools of the different societies), met in the greatest secrecy to decide which would be THE costume.

After much discussion, laughter and bitter verbal duels, the members of the pool make their final choice. Then the seamstresses enter onto the scene and achieve the feat of ensuring that all the costumes are ready for the big day.

From the Sunday morning, these costumes move you, make you smile, fascinate you.

They bring joy and happiness to the very heart of Binche.

These Sunday costumes are a wonderful kaleidoscope that gives the measure of the enthusiasm that takes hold of the Binchois people and their friends.









### **Key Moments**

- From 8 AM: Carnival participants are "picked up" at their houses by the sound of drums, violas and accordions. They wear creative costumes.
- **During the morning**: participants in costume perform and walk around the city.
- From noon: participants go home for lunch with family and friends.
- 4 PM: the societies come back together. They leave "with music", woodwind and brass instruments accompany the drums. The procession starts from rue Wanderpepen on the corner of Parc Derbaix and breaks up to avenue Charles Deliège.
- From 6 PM: after the procession, the societies continue to wander the streets to the sound of music until late in the evening. The night will be filled by the sound of drums.

# SHROVE MONDAY SCHEDULE

### **12 February 2024**

Shrove Monday is an integral part of Binchois folklore and, brought together within A.D.L. (Association du Lundi) for a quarter of a century now, the 3 Jeunesses of Binche - the Royale Jeunesse Catholique Binchoise, the Jeune Garde Libérale and the Jeunesse Socialiste - have set themselves a goal: to defend and promote Shrove Monday.

On this day, the 3 Jeunesses are united to continue the tradition of letting children go out for free. Thanks to the generosity of the City, all the shopkeepers and the cafés, A.D.L.

Throughout the years, in the afternoon, friends have formed so-called costume groups that will brighten up the streets of Binche to the sound of violas, drums and fantasy music.



### **Key Moments**

- From 10 AM: the Jeunesses go out to the sound of the "viola" and walk around the city during the morning.
- Around 11 AM: "battle of confetti" at the Grand-Place and in the many cafés of the city.
- Between 1 PM and 2 PM: costume groups join the festivities spontaneously: the Chic Types, the Mervellouses, the Sales Djônes, the Ladies Binchoises, the Commissaires...
- At 4 PM: the costumed children who have joined the three Jeunesses gather at the Grand-Place for the "Rondeau de l'Amitié" (Rondo of Friendship).
- Around 5 PM: the Jeunesses meet at the Square Eugène Derbaix (Place de la Gare) for dancing, illuminated by Bengal lights.
- At 7 PM: fireworks on the Square Eugène Derbaix.

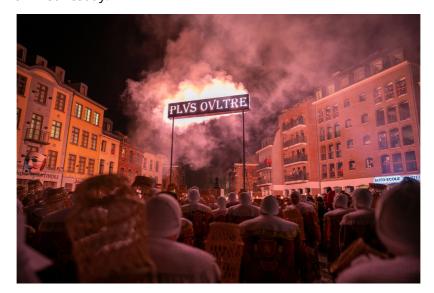


# SHROVE TUESDAY SCHEDULE

**13 February 2024** 

## **Key Moments**

- From 5 AM: "pick up" of the Gilles, Harlequins, Sailors, Peasants and Pierrots, at their houses, to the sound of the drum and fife playing "l'Aubade matinale" until the sun rises.
- Around 7 AM: the societies have gathered. On the Gilles' breakfast menu: oysters, smoked salmon and champagne.
- From 7:45 AM: the societies of the Gilles, Harlequins, Sailors, Peasants and Pierrots join at the Grand-Place. Gilles and Peasants wear their wax masks. They are all welcomed at the City Hall by the local authorities for the presentation of medals to those celebrating.
- Around 12 PM 1 PM: the Gilles go home for dinner with family or friends.
- At 3 PM: departure of the afternoon procession from Battignies. It crosses the Avenue Charles Deliège to reach the Grand-Place and form a rondeau. It is during this procession that the participants give away their oranges and that the Gilles wear their famous hats, which is a stunning sight. The societies are accompanied by drums and music.
- At 8 PM: departure of the second procession of the day from the crossroads between the Avenue Charles Deliège and the Route de Mons, towards the Grand-Place where they are joined by other societies arriving from the bottom of the Grand-Place, on the Rue St-Moustier side. The baskets are empty and the Gilles have taken off their hats. At nightfall, they dance in the light of the Bengal lights.
- At 9:30 PM: the Grand-Place is lit up by a great firework display to end the Carnival. The societies will
  continue to dance and, around midnight, each one will perform a new rondeau, in front of its premises,
  with drums and music. Afterwards, the societies will continue to brighten up the streets of Binche, to
  the sound of only drums. It should be noted that the last participants must imperatively be home
  before daybreak on Wednesday.





## CEREMONY OF MEDALS

07:45: ROYAL SOCIETY THE "MARINS"

**08:00:** SOCIETY THE "IRRÉDUCTIBLES"

**08:15:** ROYAL SOCIETY THE "MAXIM'S"

**08:30:** ROYAL SOCIETY THE "ARLEQUINS"

**08:45:** ROYAL SOCIETY THE "SUPPORTERS"

**09:15:** ROYAL SOCIETY THE "PETITS GILLES"

**09:30:** ROYAL SOCIETY THE "PIERROTS"

**09:45:** ROYAL SOCIETY THE "INCAS"

10:00 : SOCIETY THE "JEUNES INDÉPENDANTS"

**10:15:** ROYAL SOCIETY THE "RÉCALCITRANTS"

10:30: ROYAL SOCIETY THE "RÉGUÉNAIRES"

**10:45 :** ROYAL SOCIETY THE "INDÉPENDANTS"

11:00: SOCIETY "INCORRUPTIBLES"

11:15: ROYAL SOCIETY THE "PAYSANS"

11:30: SOCIETY THE "ARPEYANTS"



## HOW TO GET TO THE CARNIVAL?



## By train



The SNCB will provide extra capacity and a special train for the return journey to Brussels-South station on Tuesday the 13th of February.

Besides, the capacity of trains, that usually run on Tuesday, will be increased. The trains will be made up of two quadruple powered rail train cars instead of one and consist of 718 seats instead of 359.

A special train will depart from Binche at 7:04PM and stop in Leval, La Louvière-Sud (\*), La Louvière-Centre, Écaussines, Braine-le-Comte, Tubize, Hal, and Brussels-South.

(\*) At La Louvière-Sud station, you can find connections to Charleroi, Namur, Liège, Mons and Tournai.



### By car

Access to Binche is obviously more difficult during the three Shrove days. For all the information, see the traffic and parking map.



### On foot

For the Binchois, walking is the best way to get to the city centre.

## FREE SHUTTLES

Visitors can enjoy the festivities without worrying for parking spots. The City runs a free and safe shuttle service between the villages of the municipality and the city centre. Shuttles ride from 8AM until midnight on Sunday the 11th of February and Tuesday the 13th of February.

#### Bus N°1: Departs from Ressaix and Péronnes to Binche

- Place de Ressaix Ressaix : 10 past the hour
- Place de l'Église Ressaix : 15 past the hour
- Place Elisabeth (in front of the "friterie") Ressaix : 20 past the hour
- Intersection of Rue Wauters and Rue Albert Elisabeth Péronnes : 30 past the hour
- Place Joseph Wauters (near the church) Péronnes : 35 past the hour
- At the stop (roundabout) Péronnes : 40 past the hour
- Place Sainte-Marguerite Péronnes: 45 past the hour

#### Bus N°2: Departs from Leval and Ressaix to Binche

- Place Saint-Pierre Leval: 10 and 40 past the hour
- Place de Trahegnies Leval : 15 and 45 past the hour
- Place Bourdon Ressaix: 25 and 55 past the hour

#### Bus N°3: Departs from Péronnes and Bray to Binche

- Place du Village Bray : 15 past the hour
- Place de la Cité Bray : 20 past the hour
- Garage Centorame Bray: 25 past the hour
- Intersection Rue du Charbonnage and Route de Mons Bray : 30 past the hour
- Restaurant "Porta Nova" Bray: 40 past the hour
- Place Communale Péronnes: 50 past the hour

#### Bus N°4: Departs from Épinois and Buvrinnes to Binche

- Ancienne Maison communale Épinois : 10 and 40 past the hour
- École communale Buvrinnes (Rue des Écoles) : 15 and 45 past the hour
- Delhaize (intersection Rue Saint-Pie and G. Dehavay) Épinois : 25 and 55 past the hour

#### **Return shuttle to various municipalities:**

#### From the Place des Droits de l'Homme

- Bus n°1 et n°3 : on the hour
- Bus n°2 et n°4: at half past the hour



## LOCATIONS FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Sunday (from 3:30PM) – procession:

• Avenue Wanderpepen (near the rue de Ressaix)

Monday (from 3:30PM) – rondeau:

• Grand-Place (in front of the community Theatre)

Tuesday (from 2:45PM) - procession:

• Avenue Charles Deliège (in front of "Le Petit Mousse" and "Le Berry's")

Tuesday (from 2:45PM) - rondeau:

• Grand-Place (in front of the community Theatre)

This year, an audio description of the procession on Shrove Tuesday will be provided by the ASA foundation from the location for people with disabilities. This initiative makes the Carnival even more inclusive and accessible.

If you cannot easily access the reserved locations, please contact the City's Social Cohesion Plan on 0498/93.28.73 (from 2PM).

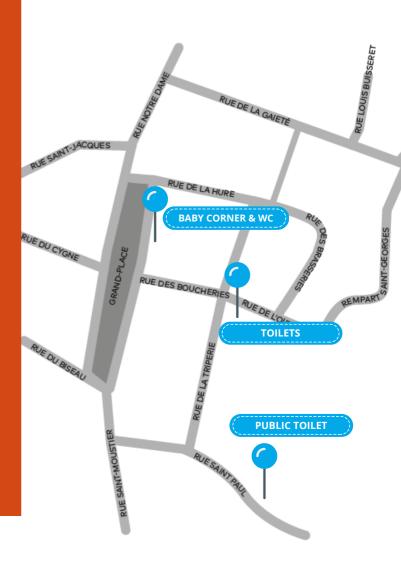
The Binche Tourist Office provides a brochure listing all the reserved locations, bars and restaurants that are more easily accessible to people with disabilities, as well as braille copies.

### "Baby Corner" and WC

Toilets will be accessible during the Carnival in the Rue de l'Oie. The Binche Tourist Office also offers a "Baby Corner" with toilets, changing table and microwave:

- Sunday: 9AM-6PM
- Monday: 10AM-6PM
- Tuesday: 8AM-6PM

Informations: 064/31.15.80 - tourisme@binche.be



## **YOUR SAFETY** IS OUR PRIORITY

The Carnival of Binche attracts each year thousands of visitors. Their safety must be guaranteed. Therefore, the police and the community services work alongside to develop strategies.

The safety plan of the Carnival of Binche is rigorously conceived and requires a close collaboration between the police, the emergency services and the organizers of the event.

Visible but discrete police patrols watch central parts of the city, ensure that the carnival festivities run smoothly and guarantee the safety of all visitors.



### THE POLICE, THE FIRE BRIGADE, THE RED CROSS, THE SMUR AND THE COMMUNITY SERVICES ARE MOBILIZED.

#### **EMERGENCY NUMBERS**

Fire brigade: 112 Police: 101

Police zone Anderlues-Binche-Lermes: 064/311.660 or

064/311.661

#### **FIRE BRIGADE ON DUTY**

Rue de la Pépinière, 57A 7130 Binche Available 24/7

#### Team Backups:

- Sunday: from 7AM to midnight Monday: from 7AM to 10PM
- Tuesday: from 6AM to midnight

#### **RED CROSS ON DUTY** (064/26 59 38)

- Sunday: from 10AM to 4AM
- Monday: from 12.30PM to 8.30PM
- Tuesday: from 10AM to 4AM

### ADVANCED MEDICAL POST

Place des Droits de l'Homme

Sunday and Tuesday: from 10AM to 4AM

Night-shops are not allowed to sell alcohol and glass containers nor to display alcohol during the three Shrove days, from Sunday 5AM until Wednesday 6AM.



LOST CHILDREN (064/23 05 02)

City Hall. Grand-Place

Sunday: 2PM - 10PM

 Monday: 3PM - 7PM • Tuesday: 2PM - 11PM



## **BINCHE IN SHORT**

Binche is a small city in the province of Hainaut. The municipality, where 33 000 people live, consists of a historic centre (Binche, 10 000 habitants) and rural "villages" close to the medieval frontier. Binche is located in the Région du Centre, approximately 55 kilometres south of Brussels.

Every year, the Binchois prepare for the Carnival and experience it with passion. This event brings people together and surely is on the most important moments of the Binchois' social life. It starts six weeks before the beginning of the Carnival and Ash Wednesday.

This very intense period filled with social events ends with the Shrove days and reaches its climax with the gathering of Gilles on Shrove Tuesday. Three days long, the streets of the city are crowded with participants and visitors who frenetically dance with the Gilles on the sound of the drums and the bass bands.

Almost every Binchois participates in the event, but it costs a lot of energy and money. The recognition by UNESCO of Binche as Oral and Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity on the 7th of November, 2003 rewarded the participants for their financial contribution and dedication: Gilles, craftsmen, drums players, musicians, wives of Gilles, etc. Together, they perpetuate the tradition.

The Carnival of Binche is much more than a yearly entertainment. It is an unique ritual during which the sacredness of the event occupies a privileged position, and that is based on ancient customs. Each Binchois knows exactly his role during the three Shrove days. The Gille's wife's mission is seen as crucial. Although she does not have to, she encourages the protection of the folklore, and makes sure that the festivities run smoothly.

In conclusion, the Carnival means more to the Gille's wife than helping her husband get dressed and walking near him during the procession. She knows that the liturgy of the Carnival is firmly rooted in Binche. Thanks to her strong commitment, she perpetuates the tradition, protects it, and preserves the unity of the community.

## THE CARNIVAL IN NUMBERS

- Number of participants with costume on Shrove Tuesday: 1.200
- Number of medals for the jubilees: ± 50 medals every year
- **Number of societies:** 15 (11 Gilles, Arlequins, Marins, Paysans and Pierrots)
- Weight of the hat: ± 3kg
- Rental of the costume by the louageur: ± 120 euros
- Rental of the hat and the costume by the louageur: ± 350 euros
- Making of the costume: ± 600 euros
- Making of the hat: ± 4.500 euros
- **Feathers needed for the hat:** between 250 and 350 small feathers to make 12 bigger feathers, ± 80 hours of work
- Number of bells on the apertintaille: gemiddeld 7
- Motifs on the costume: ± 150 (crowns, lions, stars, blazons, flags)
- Ribbon for the pelerines, sleeves and trousers: 150 meters of pleated ribbon
- Golden fringes on the pelerine: 540
- Oranges thrown by a Gille: between 25 and 40 kilos
- Gilles melodies: 26

## PARTICIPANTS OF CARNIVAL OF BINCHE



## THE GILLE

The Gille's costume consists of a blouse and jute trousers decorated with 150 patterns (stars, lions and crowns) in black, yellow and red felt. When the Gille is dressed up, the blouse is "stuffed" with straw at the front and back, decorated with a bell. At the waist, he wears a red and yellow woollen belt, mounted on canvas, called "apertintaille" and made up of little copper bells. A collar, made of pleated ribbons, lace or golden fringes, is attached around the neck over the hump. On the head, a "barrette" (white cotton bonnet) and a neckerchief (a folded cotton square placed under the neck and tied on the head to hold the barrette in place) covers his hair.

During the Shrove Tuesday afternoon procession, the Gille wears a majestic ostrich feather hat. At his feet, the Gille wears wooden clogs. On the morning of Shrove Tuesday, the Gille wears his famous mask to go to the Town Hall. In the morning, he holds his ramon in his hand which he will trade for the basket of oranges in the afternoon and until the end.



## THE ARLEQUIN (HARLEQUIN)

Arlequins wear a blouse and trousers made of fabric printed with yellow, red and green triangles with a black belt. Their felt hat is green and decorated with a black and grey fur tail.

They wear an Arlecchino half mask with fur border. In their hand they hold a bat decorated with ribbons of different colours.









## THE PIERROT

The Pierrots wear a conical hat, adorned with lace and a white ribbon at the top. They wear a blouse and trousers of the same colour which can be pink, blue or yellow.

Their mask is a black wolf and they hold a stick, called the mirliton, decorated with ribbons of different colours.



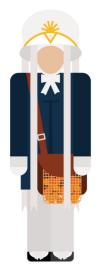
## • THE MARIN (SAILOR)

On Shrove Tuesday morning, the sailor, dressed as a... sailor, will have a black wolf mask, he will dance to the sound of the viola with a wooden anchor garnished with a sprig of mimosa.

In the afternoon, he will carry his oranges in a metal basket lined with white satin.







## THE PAYSAN (PEASANT)

The Peasant wears a simpler costume than that of the Gille: a blue smock with white sleeves, white trousers, thin shoes decorated with pleated ribbons, white gloves and a ramon a little different from that of the Gille. The Peasant also wears a hat decorated with two white ostrich feathers and long white ribbons.

He also wears a "barrette" as well as a large square white cloth folded under the chin. Finally, the Peasant wears a mask almost similar to that of the Gille but without the moustache and goatee.







## **COSTUME OF THE GILLE**

Hat: the Gille wears a ostrich feather hat during the Shrove Tuesday afternoon procession. Between 240 and 290 small feathers are bound to a metallic armature and form 8 to 12 majestic bigger feathers of 1,50 m. Weight: ± 3 Barette: white cotton bonnet that Mask of the Gille: made of wax, the covers the hair of the Gille. It also mask is only worn on Shrove Tuesday morning, when the Gilles makes the wearing of the hat more comfortable. enter the town hall. Binche has exclusive rights: the mask can only be worn in Binche, and only the carnival societies may sell it to the Gilles. Collerette: collar with pleated **Neckerchief:** white folded square ribbons attached around the neck of worn around the neck and laced on the Gille that covers the bumps. the head, so that the barette stays in position. Apertintaille: red and golden woolen belt with copper bells usually made of burlap. **Cuffs:** the same technique as for the collerette is used to make cuffs that cover the wrist and the ankle end of the trouser legs. Clogs: the Gille wears wooden clogs Wicker basket: the Gille puts blood to hit the pavement and to keep the oranges in his basket and offers cold and the winter at bay. These are them during the Shrove Tuesday decorated with renoms, pleated afternoon procession. ribbons that match the collar and the cuffs. Costume: tunic and jute trousers decorated with 150 motifs (lions, blazons, crowns, stars, flags). Made

of black, yellow and red felt, the colours refer to the Belgian flag.

## HOW WELL DO YOU KNOW BINCHE?

ADF: Association de Défense du Folklore. Created in Binche to protect the folklore.

ADL: Association du Lundi Gras.

**Arlequin ("Harlequin"):** visible on Shrove Tuesday. This "new" participant (1966) was inspired by the commedia dell'arte and is part of the Athénée Royal in Binche.

**Batterie ("drums"):** six drums players and one bass drum player (accompanied by a brass band from the beginning of the afternoon procession until 11PM approximatively).

**Bourrer ("filling"):** the tunic of the Gille is filled with straw in the front and in the back to form two bumps. Men who do not participate in the Carnival usually fill the tunic, but women often accomplish this task.

**Cagnotte** ("kitty"): the Gille and his family spend a lot of money to participate in the Carnival: subscription, rental of the Shrove Tuesday costume, purchase of the Shrove Sunday costume, other expenses as champagne, food and drinks, etc. Therefore, each society organizes a "kitty".

**Commissaires ("commissioners"):** they represent the A.D.F. and wear a black satin dress (called domino). They take charge of the cohesion of the society and ensure that the schedule is respected. Each society has three or four assigned commissioners.

**Domino:** traditional black satin dress with a hood. In the past, Binchois without disguise (spectators, women, elderly, etc.) wore a domino during the Carnival. Nowadays, officials and commissioners wear this distinctive dress.

Fifre ("fife"): small flute with six holes with which the melody "Aubade matinale" is played on Tuesday until the sun rises.

**Louageur:** the louageur is specialized in the making and rental of the Gille's hat and costume. As the Gille does not own his costume, he rents it.

**Nuit des Trouilles de Nouilles ("Night of the Trouilles de Nouilles"):** also called "Night of Monday of Sexagesima", it takes place on the Monday before Shrove Sunday. Around 8PM, groups of people in simple and scruffy costumes go to a café or the city centre. They try to find someone who is not wearing a costume (preferably someone famous) and tells jokes to him or her.

## HOW WELL DO YOU KNOW BINCHE?

**Paysan ("Peasant"):** visible on Shrove Tuesday. The Peasant wears a blue smock and a small hat decorated with one ostrich feather and long white ribbons. The society stems from the Collège Notre-Dame de Bon Secours in Binche.

**Pierrot:** visible on Shrove Tuesday. The society is inspired by the commedia dell'arte and stems from the Petit Collège in Binche, which was called École des frères in the past.

**Plus Oultre ("Always more beyond"):** in Binche, it is carnival all year round! The Binchois pretend that the city lives for the Carnival. That is why the motto (Plus Oultre) is lighted up at the end of the fireworks. Plus ultra in Latin was the motto of Charles V and means "Always more beyond".

**Ramassage ("pick up"):** "pick up" of the participants on Shrove Monday and Shrove Tuesday at dawn. The first Gille leaves home and heads to a specific neighbourhood to pick up the other Gilles from his society. Once they have gathered, they go to their society's meeting point. The Gilles are accompanied by drums and, sometimes, a bass drum. Most of the time, this ritual is accompanied by a fife or a clarinet playing the "Aubade matinale".

**Société de Gilles ("society of Gilles"):** the society recruits a batterie (six drums and one bass drum players) and musicians (brass band) in the name of the Gilles. The society also plans the schedule for the "pick up" of the Gilles.

**Soumonces:** the soumonces begin on the Sunday six weeks before the Carnival. First, the drum rehearsals take place. The societies listen to their own drums in their meeting rooms. Then, during the "soumonces with drums", the societies gather in the city centre after 3PM and dance to the sound of drums and bass drums. Finally, a bass brand accompanies the drums during the "soumonces with music". Participants usually wear a Shrove Sunday costume, which they worn at a previous Carnival. Societies are split into two groups, that gather every two weeks.

**Souper aux harengs ("supper with herring"):** each society invites its members to supper. The tradition in Binche requires that the supper takes place on Ash Wednesday, that marks the beginning of the Lent (participants must therefore not eat meat). The owner of the bar, where the society gathers, offers herring to the Gilles. According to a well-know saying in Binche, it is a good remedy for hungover!

# ACTIVITIES OF THE INTERNATIONAL CARNIVAL AND MASK MUSEUM

While in Binche, visit one of the temporary or permanent exhibitions of the Carnival and Mask Museum.

"Intimate Binche": the folklore attracts thousands of visitors, who gather in the historic centre of the city, making the Carnival a worldclass event. However, the Carnival of Binche is lived within the intimacy of the families of Binche. The temporary exhibition "Intimate Binche", organized for the occasion, puts this particular character under the spotlights.

**"Festum":** Paulin Groise's five portraits take visitors on an original journey through the Carnival of Binche. His photographs and still lifes associate religious iconography with his hometown's folkloric tradition.

**Interpretation Centre on the Carnival of Binche:** the renowned permanent gallery of the Museum displays two new immersive installations on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the recognition of the Carnival of Binche by UNESCO. With "Let's dance with the Gilles" and "The throwing of the oranges", visitors can be the heroes of the Carnival.

See also: Masks from all over the world and Folklore and Carnival of Wallonia.



"The Carnival of Binche in the style of..." (27/01 > 07/04)



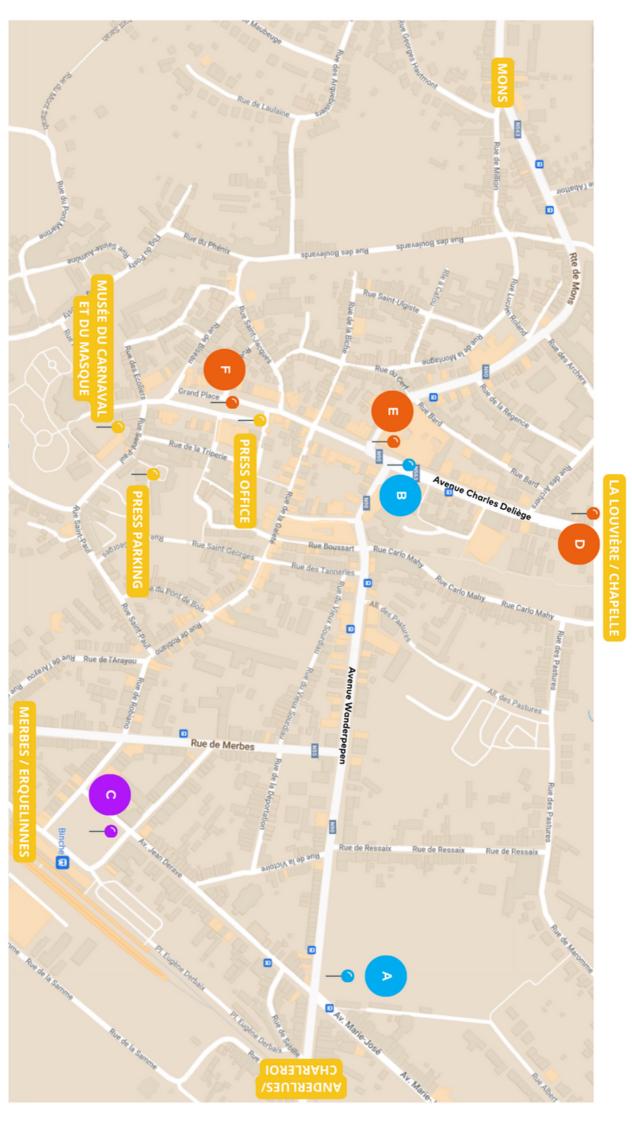
Workshop: "The Carnival of Binche in the style of Keith Haring" (11/02)



Workshop: "The Carnival of Binche in the style of Niki de Saint-Phalle" (12/02)

#### More informations:

- 064/33.57.41
- info@museedumasque.be
- www.museedumasque.be





Arrival of the procession

procession

Departure of the



Fireworks -Shrove Monday



Shrove Tuesday afternoon Departure of the procession -



Departure of the procession -

Shrove Tuesday in the evening



Shrove Tuesday Arrival of the processions -

