



Returning Royalty XXII  
Robin Guidry & Shawn Carter



Captain Blaine Guidry - Willy Wonka



Bryan Mouton - Skittles



John Abshire - Cracker Jack



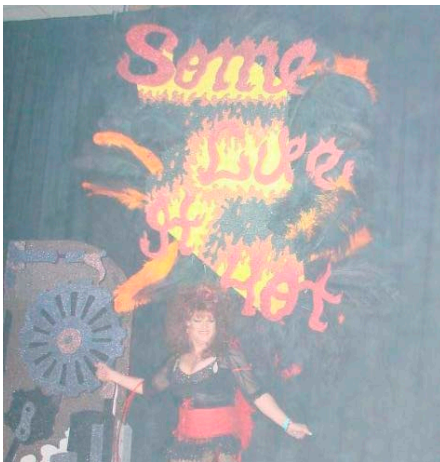
Fred Acosta - Candy Cane



Clyde Schroeder III - Sugar Daddy



Pamalia Mosa - Sugar Mama



Stephanie Stephens - Hot Tamale



Biscuit - Raisinets



Angie Clause - Astro Pop



T-Paul Babineaux - Sweet Tooth Fairy



Jeremy Louviere - Candy Corn



Heather Smith - Chick-O-Stick



Lucy Theriot - Ring Pop



Sound Factory - Lollipops



Christina Rodgers - Gummy Worms



Nick Allemand - Trident



Linda Huval - Baby Bottle Pop



Kenny Hebert - Treasure Coin



King & Queen ROU XXIII  
Ken Pontiff & Chad "Chelsea" Touchet

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## IN THE SPOTLIGHT

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### R.O.U. & The Candy Factory

**B**al Masque XXIII for the Lafayette Royal Order of Unicorn was held on Saturday, February 3, 2007 at the Martin Luther King Center, and it was one of the most spectacular balls I've ever experienced. This krewe has always honored me with a front row seat so I have an excellent view of the stage for taking pictures and really seeing the costumes up close and personal. I have always appreciated their thoughtfulness in this respect and unlike other balls I attend, I don't have to fight my way up to the runway to take pictures. Their regular photographer also has a space in the main entrance for taking all pictures of individuals, but he works the end of the runway which gives him access to all these costumes too.

Originality is the key to making any ball presentation a success, and no group does this better than the Royal Order of Unicorn. They haven't always had the expertise to come off with great costumes, but this year they outdid themselves. Everything they did was really great, and just the fact that it moved along in such orderly fashion was a plus that other krewes should adopt. I was also pleased to see Kofi again as emcee for the evening, and she did it better this year than she ever did before - no "bring me some chicken" and on and on and on for 300 times. She actually did it up right and in a most pleasurable way showing that more is sometimes best when offered in moderation.

Now let me carry you through this ball in all its magnificence, and here is the way it went. R.O.U. always has the lighting of the crest and the presentation of its members along the walkway of fame and followed by the national anthem. This is a wonderful way to meet all the members, their families and friends, before the costumes begin. Following the president's welcome, three special people made their way down the runway - Mr., Ms., and Miss R.O.U. 2006-2007 were introduced to the audience. Then it was time for the return of King and Queen R.O.U. XXII - Shawn Carter and Robin Guidry.

The first major costume of the evening was Willy Wonka, and only Blaine Guidry could have carried this off so well. The huge backpiece was interesting and unique in that it was actually made up of all the themes for the costumes of the ball. I thought this was a magnificent and original way to open a ball. Besides, I met Blaine before the ball, and this is one nice and cordial individual. He made it a point to come before the ball to his table where I was seated to welcome me and thank me for attending. He made sure all through the tableau that everyone was a most welcome guest at this event. As the ball captain, he was very, very good, and you could tell he enjoyed what he was doing and what he had accomplished.

Things started rolling along when Bryan Mouton took center stage as Skittles, and he also did a find job with a backpiece that made you want to grab a pack of those

treats, many of which were on the tables and then some thrown from the stage. This Cajun bear is a sweet one anyway, and he did this candy treat quite well in the way that he chose to represent it.

You know also very well after all these years that I have to say nice things about John Abshire, and he was the best Cracker Jack I've ever seen - or tasted. He wiggled his way down that runway and invited everyone to enjoy the treat with that huge box of goodies. From the time when he was Mr. R.O.U. to the time he reigned as King R.O.U., I have followed this young man and can attest to the fact that his beauty is from within. He has a charm and wonderful way about him that draws you to him. I have liked him since the first time we met - many years ago. And now I think he has finally found the love of his life. I hope so. I rather like Jeremy even though I didn't get to meet him personally. They just look like they belong together.

No Candy Cane was as good as presented by Fred Acosta, the founder of the Lafayette Royal Order of Unicorn krewe. After twenty three years, he can still keep up with the best of all the rest, and he knows how to enjoy himself and help others enjoy themselves too. He is a gentleman and a scholar, and I admire him for his continued efforts to make this krewe what it has become today.

The next major costume Sugar Daddy was one which was presented by a good friend and noble gentleman, Clyde Schroeder III. Oh, my, but we have seen lots of water go under those bridges, haven't we, sweetie? From the time he won that first title in Lafayette to the one he won at the old Mirror Lounge to the time he reigned as King R.O.U., this is one man who has done a fabulous job with costumes, but it is his personality and strength of character that has made him stand tall among men. By doing so, he has brought to this krewe a kind of respect that will stand the test of time. He is a very special human being.

His counterpart and his queen of years past Pamalia Mosa was Sugar Mama, and she did an exceptional job showing that putting a little energy into the steps along the runway can bring the audience to their feet. She is another one of those individuals who has a personality that causes you to sit up and take notice. She is a lovely woman and a good friend.

I recall those Hot Tamale candies so well, and who could better represent this special candy but the one and only Stephanie Stephens. This is another one of those exceptional individuals who can put you at ease, make you feel welcome wherever you might be, and then make you want to dance for joy just for being in her company. Stephanie is one of those lovely, lovely individuals who can make you feel young and gay and delightfully young at heart. And she is a sexy and hot babe too!

Biscuit was Mr. R.O.U. 2006-2007, and his costume was Raisinets. Even though there was no back piece, his was

truly a unique way to display this tasty treat. I do not know this young man. I usually judge the Mr., Ms., and Miss R.O.U. contests, but I missed this last year, so I can't tell you that much about him except that he has entered a long list of talented and wonderful young men who have garnered this title.

Angie Clause took on Astro Pop, and this was another very nice costume. Here again, I don't know Angie personally, but I can tell by the way that she performed on stage that she fits in quite well with this group. R.O.U. is not only a Mardi Gras krewe, but it is a family of individuals who work together to bring forth an annual ball, and Angie definitely fits right in.

The Sweet Tooth Fairy was a beauty, and she can make anyone want to part with a tooth just for an introduction. Without knowing this one too, I can only say that the costume was great, and the enthusiasm displayed on stage puts T-Paul Babineaux right up there with the best of all the others. This was a lovely costume, but I couldn't really get a good picture because of all the smoke used upon her entrance. Once it cleared away, the beauty came through.

Next came my sweet John's other half, Jeremy Louviere as Candy Corn. I don't ever recall Jeremy doing a costume before, but if this is any indication of what is in store in the future, I'd have to say that this is one to watch. The detail and work that went into this costume was really exceptional, and once he entered the stage you could immediately tell that this was a masterpiece of backpieces.

Heather Smith was Chick-O-Stick, and her entrance was unique. Have you ever wondered what came first, the chicken or the egg? Well, in this case, the egg was rolled out on stage, and out emerged a wonderful chicken. This was a cute and different approach at costuming, and Heather even took off at the end of the runway to dance around in the crowd before the returning royal couple.

Ring Pop was perhaps one of the two pretty presentations. Lucy Theriot always comes forth with great costumes, but this Tiffany link and all the pink feathers really made this one stand out. Of course, Lucy always has a knack for making her presentations fabulous.

Now the next costume had me with my tongue hanging out. Sound Factory was presented as Lollipops, and what better way to enjoy a lollipop than to have Back Side Mark take off the wrapper to show off this beauty in all his wonder. I watched the ladies (real ones) on the opposite side of the runway, and they just had their mouths open, not saying anything, just staring in wonder as this heavy duty, splendidly hung, young buck made his way up and down to everyone's delight. My goodness! My goodness! I can see now that I need to talk with Mark. This was almost more than I could handle. My hand is still shaking, and I can barely ready my notes. What a treat this was! And who was this magnificent stud? I can see now that I need to pay Mark and John Gilland of Sound Factory a visit now and then just to keep up with what is going on over there.

Well, we all came back to earth with another excellent presentation - Gummi Worms and a very pretty one. Christina Rodgers came up out of that pot of red roses in all her beauty and thrilled the audience with a spectacular and beautiful

dress and headpiece. This was one of the really pretty ones of the evening.

The next costume was also one of the more sexy ones of the evening, not like that lollipop, but pretty close to it. Nick Allemand was Trident, and this handsome young man did a fine job with his huge backpiece, but it was that beautiful smile that grabbed my attention. I had seen him in his tuxedo earlier, but when he came out on stage with that brief outer wear and huge costume, I realized that R.O.U. had another talented artist within its membership.

Linda Huval, R.O.U.'s president, can always be counted on for outstanding costumes, and Baby Bottle Pop was definitely another great creation. Besides the backpiece, I loved the complete costume. It was just simply a good way to show off this sweet treat.

Miss R.O.U. 2006-2007 Shelby Stevens was lovely in an entertainment number. Here again, I don't know her, but her presentation was nice and the gown she wore was quite nice. She is definitely an asset to the krewe.

I have to say that the best is coming up last (before the announcement of the new royalty), and in this case, what better way to round out a perfect night of performances than to have my good buddy Kenny Hebert arrive on stage as the Treasure Coin. This was his best yet, and I've seen him master some great costumes over the years. He really came through as the pirate of pirates, and everything about his backpiece represented what you have always come to associate with pirates. Even the black wig matched the natural facial hair perfectly, and the makeup gave him a weird and unusual evil look. Kenny is a gem - a fabulous treasure coin among men in my opinion. He always has been and always will be a beautiful treasure and a wonderful friend. I love him dearly.

Now the time arrived for the introduction of the new royalty, King and Queen R.O.U. XXIII, Ken Pontiff and Chad "Chelsea" Touchet. Their costumes were elegant and authentic and represented that period of time perfectly. The colors too were great. Brown and gold has never been displayed better, and they both carried off their new titles with grace and dignity. They make a great royal couple.

That's about it for another year of R.O.U. greatness. I will have to say one thing. When another krewe scheduled their ball on the same night, I think I would have to say they made an error in judgment. R.O.U. had a packed house, and if anyone was hurt by the scheduling on the same night, it definitely wasn't apparent at this ball. R.O.U. is a great krewe because of one major thing - they enjoy each other. When you have this quality within a group, you know that success is sure to follow.

R.O.U. is a success, and their Bal Masque XXIII was their most successful to date. They are to be congratulated for their hard work and their excellent ball presentation. What more could you expect from a loving and caring family?

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