



Photo by **BILL STARLING**

Mobile artist Jim Wainwright is such a legacy creator, having been handed the mantle of Mobile artistry from his parents, writer Marynelle Dumas Wainwright and master clarinetist Marion Wainwright,

who helped brand Mobile's Mardi Gras sound with legendary bandleader Bill Lagman. In fact, it was Jim's father who literally laid him at the steps of Carnival art, at the impressionable age of 14.

"After I finished my paper route," Wainwright said, "it was time to figure out what I wanted to do with my life."

Instead of sending him to the docks to learn hard knocks and the like, Marion

Wainwright recognized the artist emerging in his son and took him to the studio of, arguably, Mardi Gras' greatest designer – Edmond de Celle.

"Dad took me to Edmond's big house, knocked on the door and said 'Here we are!' Wainwright recalled. "Edmond must have seen something in me, he invited me to come back and really see how he worked."

It wasn't long before Wainwright was completely absorbed in the de Celle lexicon, mentored by a man whose art and reverence for Mardi Gras, like his own, was unquenchable.

De Celle was integral in the development of Wainwright's style, which the artist says is the key distinguishing factor between the myriad of Mardi Gras artists creating today.

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