

## Fasching und Karneval: Narren / Fools

(male) fool: der Narr, die Narren  
 (female) fool: die Narrin, die Närrinnen  
 fool in Cologne (dialect): der Jeck, die Jecke (Köln)



Let the good times roll: Markus Stegmann of the Schwenningen "Fool's Guild" (Narrenzunft) dusts off carnival masks (Schemen/Fastnachtmasken) on January 6, 2013 in Villingen-Schwenningen, in the southwestern German state of Baden- Württemberg.

The "Mummenschanz" tradition also has roots in other parts of Europe, including France and England. In this vein, a "mummer" is an Early Modern English term for a mime artist. And "Mummenschanz" can also be a mummer or a Mummers Play (also known as mumming), a seasonal folk play performed by troupes of actors known as mummers or guisers.

The Mummers Parade, held each New Year's Day in Philadelphia, is believed to be the oldest folk festival in the United States. The parade can be traced back to at least mid-17th century roots, blending elements from Swedish, Finnish, Irish, English, German and other European heritages, as well as African heritage. The parade is related to the Mummers Play tradition from England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, a mummer is (1) "a performer in a pantomime" (an actor) or (2) "one who goes merrymaking in disguise during festivals."