

Masdevallia harlequina Luer, sp. nov.

Ety.: Named for Harlequin, the clownish character of Italian comedy noted for a mask and spangled tights.

Inter species *Masdevalliae* subsect. *Caudatae* synsepalo ad medium concavo, sepalorum caudis longissimis recurvis, petalorum dente crassissimo, et labello fimbriato distinguitur.

Plant small, epiphytic, caespitose; roots slender. Ramicauls black, stout, erect, 1 cm long, enclosed by 2-3 tubular sheaths. **Leaf** erect, coriaceous, 4.5-5.5 cm long including the petiole ca. 2 cm long, the blade elliptical, obtuse, 1.5-2 cm wide, cuneate below into the petiole. **Inflorescence** a single flower, borne by a suberect to horizontal peduncle ca. 4 cm long, with a bract at the base, from near the base of a ramicaul; floral bract tubular, 8-9 mm long; pedicel 17-18 mm long; ovary 4 mm long; **sepals** light yellow-orange, with numerous, small, diffuse patches of short, red-purple hairs, the dorsal sepal erect, concave above the middle, 16 mm long, 11 mm wide, connate basally to the lateral sepals for 4 mm to form a shallow, gaping, sepaline cup, the apex rounded, contracted abruptly into a slender, acutely reflexed tail ca. 4 cm long, the lateral sepals subquadrate, oblique, connate 10 mm into transverse lamina that is deeply concave centrally, with the apices obtuse, contracted into slender, recurving tails ca. 4.5 cm long; **petals** white, cartilaginous, triangular, 5 mm long, 3 mm wide, the apex subtruncate, minutely tridentate, the labellar margin with a thick, incurved process extending beyond the base; **lip** green, dotted with purple, ovate, erect, 6 mm long, 2.75 mm wide, thickened toward the rounded base, with the margins thin, long-denticulate to fimbriate above the middle, the apex black, minutely trilobed, the base hinged beneath to the column-foot; **column** light yellow, semiterete, 4 mm long, the foot equally long with an incurved extension.

PERU: Dept. of Huánuco: without specific data, obtained from M. Arias, cultivated at J & L Orchids, 1297-547, *C. Luer 18669* (Holotype: MO).

Among the species of section *Masdevallia* subsection *Caudatae*, this species is distinguished by at least two characters found in no other species in the subsection. In common with the others, the erect dorsal sepal is shortly connate to the laterals to form a gaping flower with a short sepaline cup. The sepals are diffusely studded with small patches of short, purple hairs that appear as numerous dots. The lateral

sepals are deeply connate to form a conspicuous, well-demarcated, central depression. The long, slender tails are reflexed. The callus of the petals is thick with square edges as it protrudes beyond the base. The lip stands erect in the center of the flower, hinged to a long, incurved column-foot. The lip is ovate with thin, long-fringed margins, unique in the subsection.

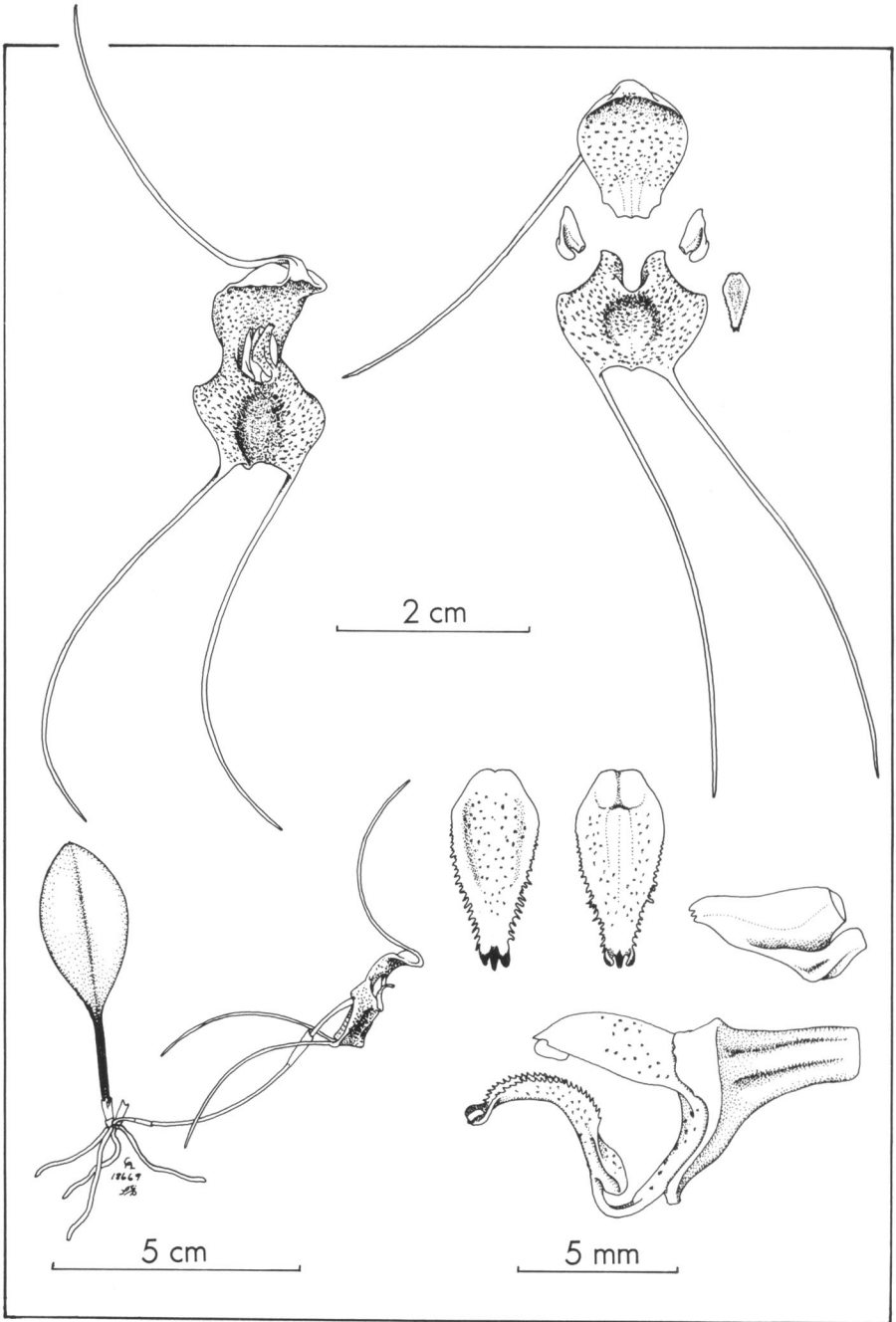


Plate 31. *Masdevallia harlequina* Luer