

ABOUT CARNIVAL & TRINIDAD

Camps Notion of Carnival as Process and Product

Carnival Theatre is an umbrella term for an empowerment and transformative process that includes the techniques of ritual, carnival, and theatre as well as the insights of transpersonal psychology, restorative justice and mediation.

It is culturally-based, drawing on Trinidad's J'ouvert Carnival traditions as possible role models for agency and self-determination. Through engagement with traditional moves and speeches which both acknowledge and mock the social order and the status quo of the day, performers/workshop participants explore and evaluate notions of justice, identity, empowerment and transformation.

The transpersonal psychology, restorative justice/mediation strands facilitate functional intra- and interpersonal relationships. Together the strands become part of a journey towards authenticity and individuation.

The process is about assertion, competition, enjoyment, humour and celebration as well as inclusion, discipline and integrity in an attempt to remove all half-heartedness, mediocrity and mechanical patterns of mind and body.

Camps **Carnival Theatre Process** evolved from a Carnival ethos of liminality and communitas; from a deployment of the insights of Humanistic psychology; from the techniques of theatre and the rituals of Trinidad's J'ouvert Carnival.

The intertwining of these processes she believes touch the core life/creative energy of a person allowing freedom, release and artistic expression in the body, voice, imagination and emotions, rooting everything always in the physical; In Carnival a person is allowed to show off, to take centre and to proclaim, "I am here, look at me!"

She believes that the process work employed while engaging, rehearsing and performing "ole mas" (J'ouvert traditional characters) is a culturally appropriate and practical training for individual and group empowerment and transformation.

The process engages the ironic and satirical stance of these local archetypes or "projections" to deal with local and global concerns.

Her **Theatre of Carnival** is the by-product of the **Carnival Theatre Process**.

SAMPLES OF SPEECHES FROM CAMPS JOUVERT PRODUCTION IN THE '80s

Midnight Robber Sample Speech from Camps Theatre of Carnival production J'ouvert

"I am the dreaded Midnight Robber and I have come to instil horror, plague and devastation into the mind of every mortal animal be he man, woman, child or beast. I come from the direction of the rising sun heralding nothing but darkness, death and destruction. I fear no one but all fear me. I am more venomous than the Cobra, more vicious than the Panther, fiercer than the Tiger and faster than the Toyota!!! I have laid waste cities from Bombassa to Constantinople, from Timbuktu to Chimborazo Cotopaxi. My purpose here in this abysmal desert is to meet in conspiracy.....to plot the ruin and demise of my arch enemy Pierrot Grenade"

Pierrot Grenade Sample Speech from Camps Theatre of Carnival production J'ouvert

Pierrot: "I am Pierrot Grenade the peaceful one who has come from the land of the setting sun. I believe in freedom and justice and abhor slavery and malice. If long ago I indulged in slavery, please forgive me. I have repented sincerely. If my weapons are on the increase, its because I have to fight for peace. I believe in free enterprise though it may cause many a demise. For men will kill in search of money but at least they'll die free and happy. So its my duty as the people's leader to ensure that no alien power is greater.to plot the ruin and demise of my arch enemy the Midnight Robber"

Sample of an exchange between the Pierrot Grenade and Midnight Robber from Camps Theatre of Carnival production J'ouvert

Midnight Robber: "Empty senseless words, just elongated preposterous language. I'll show you big words. I come from the lands of the biggest words - Antanarine, Kualalumper, Constantinople, Ree-Kee-awick and Mesopotamia"

Pierrot Grenade: "Yuh know, ah man shouldn't be allowed to use a word so freely unless he can spell it correctly. Take that word Mesopotamia, for instance. Yuh tink this Robberman could spell it by chance?"

Midnight Robber: "Oh, the Pierrot the Pierrot at his ancient guile and trickery once more. I'll reduce you to shame and ignominy. I'll spell Mesopotamia. M-E-S-A-O....(gives up in fury) I'll not spell it. I'm just wasting my time with this senseless array of tatters"

Pierrot Grenade: "Well I'll spell it for you Mr. Robberman. Now I want everyone to listen and hear, do I make myself clear?

I'll go up to my bedroom and take out a po"

Midnight Robber: "Oh! Ho!"

Pierrot Grenade: "You know, a chamber pot, a posie what everyone know and since I want to ensure my success, I'm going to fill it up with all kind ah mess. I'll load in mess from bottom to top until my po is all mess up.

Then I'll take this po, Mr. Dread and scatter it on top yuh head. And regardless of how wild yuh wild, that mess up po bound to make yuh docile. And since you now have a calmer demeanour, I'll say my mess-up-po-tame-yuh. You get it? You put mess in a po and the po tame yuh - That's the way to spell Mesopotamia!!!"

Midnight Robber: "Trickery! trickery! a low dodge....."

Pierrot Grenade: "You have asked for it Mr. Robberman! I'll destroy you and your entire land. On the dawning of a new day, that henceforth shall be called J'ouvert"

Midnight Robber: "Your empty threats do not scare me Pierrot. I'll meet you man to man and weapon to weapon and J'ouvert morning shall see the holocaust. My victory, your loss!"