I, Mark R Talma, hereby submit this original work as part of the requirements for the degree of Master of Architecture in Architecture (Master of).

It is entitled:
The Identity of Temporal Space: Spatial Manifestation of Carnival

Student’s name: Mark R Talma

This work and its defense approved by:

Committee chair: John Eliot Hancock, MARCH

Committee member: Jeffrey Tilman, PhD
The Identity of Temporal Space: Spatial manifestation of Carnival

A thesis submitted to the
Graduate School of the University of Cincinnati
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Master of Architecture in the Department of Architecture of the School of
Architecture and Interior Design

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ABSTRACT

The festival of Carnival structures the awareness of time and memory through heightened emotional engagement with the urban fabric of Trinidad and Tobago. The elements of hybridity, competition, hierarchy and masking, affect the dynamic nature in which they allow one to experience and identify with the capital city of Port of Spain and the main event site, the Savannah. With the growth of the city, Modernism and the effects of transculturation (the complex interaction of cultures and sociopolitical practices in society) the historical context of the festival has become more imperceptible. It is, however, the temporal (temporary) nature of the celebration and urban appropriation, which acts in opposition to the everyday urban organization that creates spaces that influence people’s ability to confront and overcome the conflicting forces of society, fostering a greater sense of community and helping to reconcile and reconnect the past with the present identity of the people, creating stability.

Acknowledging this phenomenon, a narrative of temporal spatial settings; vistas, parade routes, significant landmarks, and other means, are carefully choreographed to emphasize the urban context. The temporal spatial relationships between permanent and mobile structures on the site will manipulate the dynamic elements of everyday and celebratory ritual to bring forward the complex socio-political functions and identities of the city and Carnival itself.
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Paul Ricoeur’s essay “History and Truth”, poses a question that many developing Countries ask when trying to fashion an identity:

“Thus we come to the crucial problem confronting nations just rising from underdevelopment. In order to get on the road toward modernization, is it necessary to jettison the old cultural past which has been the raison d’etre of a nation?”

Years of Colonial denigration and attempts to outlaw the traditional Trinidad Carnival has, in many ways changed the way we experience the festival today, however the citizens unwillingness to let this staple of the Trinidad calendar die is a testament to the Trinidadians need to question authority and express their individuality.

It was for this reason that in 1957 the Carnival Development Committee (now the National Carnival Committee) was founded with the goal of preserving cultural forms of Carnival identified as endangered in the name of cultural heritage and commerce. The National Government emerging from the Independence of Trinidad form the British Colonial powers recognized the undeveloped potential of Carnival as cultural festival able to express a nationalistic identity both at home and abroad.

At present Carnival exists purely in the memory of those who experience and participate in this annual celebration. However, in many ways Carnival plays a much greater role in shaping the identity of Trinidad and Tobago and the order of space, place and time by virtue of it’s temporality and liminality.

This thesis explores and discusses ways in which identity of place can be achieved through architecture, acknowledging the many permanent and temporal natures in which identity can be spatially represented and thus determine a suitable way of designing for and representing the identity of Carnival and Trinidad and Tobago.

Space, Place and Identity

Figure 1
Tropical Modernism

Architecture in Trinidad and the Caribbean is generally characterized by scenographic interpretations of the vernacular, a mainstream or populist tradition. Mark Raymond, a Trinidadian Architect who studied Caribbean Architecture and Urbanism at the Architectural Association, states in his essay “Critical Practice: The Architecture of Trinidad,” that “Such expressions at once typify and confound cultural expression in the Caribbean. The cultural histories of the different Caribbean islands raise challenging and difficult issues with regard to cultural identity and the continual importation of (unsuitable) values, ideas, and form.” As stated earlier, this identity crisis stems from the varied racial composition of these islands over many years due to their colonization by the Spanish, French, English and Dutch monarchies, and the immigration of African, Indian, Syrian, Lebanese, Chinese and a plethora of other peoples looking for a better life in the “New World”.

However, between 1900 and 1981 a new form of architecture began to develop. Mark Raymond refers to it as “Tropical Modernism” which was a form of modernism “derived from the functional, formal and programmatic tenets of mid century European modernism, modified by an interest and concern with the climatic conditions imposed by tropical climates.” This form of architecture proved successful at helping to fashion a new identity for the post-independent Trinidad and Tobago, in contrast to the imposition of neocolonial customs and concepts that already existed, and became a visible symbol of independence and development. Raymond notes that socially, during the postwar political climate of Trinidad, “Modern architecture and town planning represented a tangible, prominent and visible cultural symbol. The interconnected

2 Mark Raymond, “Modern Trinidad outlined; and the works of Colin Laird and Anthony Lewis” in Eduardo Luis Rodriguez; Gustavo Luis More, Docomomo Journal 33 (September 2005): The Modern Movement in the Caribbean Islands, (New York) pg 64.
disciplines simultaneously addressed the need to demonstrate technological advance-
ment – thus signifying participation in universal culture – whilst also offering through
iconographic representation a symbol of modernity, authenticity and identity.”
He thus argues that although this “Tropical Modernism” was arguably imported it was less of
a style and more of a “fundamental idea that originated in post Enlightened thinking
and production and continues to resonate in the evolving culture of the Caribbean.”

Tropical Modernism thus reflected the cultural, social and political identity of
Trinidad and Tobago at that point in time and history. However Tropical Modernism
represented more than the post-colonial independence and Trinidad and Tobago’s
desire towards becoming a developing nation. It also accommodated “the nuances and
particularities of specific domains expressed through the pervasive syntax of modern
architecture.” These ideas were further explored with the rise of Critical Regionalism
which furthered the discourse into an architecture that is designed to both reflect and
poetically advance the context of place.

Figure 3: “Twin Towers”, Financial
Center on the waterfront in the capital
city of Trinidad, Port of Spain.

3 Ibid.
4 Ibid.
5 Mark Raymond, “Critical Practice: the architecture of Trinidad”, in Gustavo Luis Moré, AAA; Barry Bergdoll, MoMA, Caribbean
pg 200.
Critical Regionalism

Figures 4, 5, 6: Modern Bungalow
designed by Trinidadian Architect
Anthony C. Lewis; est. 1950’s–1960’s
The term “Critical Regionalism” was coined by Alexander Tzonis and Liane Lefaivre to make a case for the relevance of an architecture committed to the idea of “place”. In their essay “Why Critical Regionalism Today”, Tzonis and Lefaivre chart out the history of regionalism noting Lewis Mumford, the architectural historian, who heavily criticized the Modern Movement’s International Style for deviating from the original objectives of the Modern Movement. Mumford believed the ability to make regional adaptations makes architecture a truly universal style. It was from this point of departure that Tzonis and Lefaivre argue that Critical Regionalism is thus a secondary strand of Modernism. They state, “the operations of identifying, decomposing, recomposing regional elements in a “defamiliarizing” way is part of the universal set of skills of architects.”

It was Kenneth Frampton, in his essay, “Towards a Critical Regionalism: Six Points for an Architecture of Resistance,” who went further to outline the tenets of Critical Regionalism. The text calls for a resistance against universal standards, cultural homogenization and placeless Modernism, building upon Tzonis and Lefaivre. Frampton makes particular reference to using Topography, Context, Climate, Light and Tectonic Form to compose architect-

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ture. Consistent with the writings of Heidegger, Frampton also believes that the revealing of form is brought into being by the site. Mario Botta is cited as using the phrase, “building the site.” This refers to not only how his buildings rest on or into the ground but how it reconstructs the site in its various forms; historical, vernacular, geologic, etc.

He also refers to light and climate and their unique effects based on location and region as well as resistance to the scenographic in favor of the tectonic. Frampton states “this autonomy is embodied in the revealed ligaments of the construction and in the way in which the syntactical form of the structure explicitly resists the action of gravity.”7 Lastly he refers to the tactile resilience to the place and form and the capacity of the body to read the environment in terms other than those of sight. “This refers to the tactile quality of surface or materiality and the importance of its ability to be “decoded in terms of experience itself.”8 All these aspects play upon one’s senses, heightening the experience and understanding of space rather than what Heidegger refers to as a “loss of nearness.”

8 Ibid.
Figures 7: Queens Hall, designed by local architect Colin Laird. An example of the Critical Regionalist concepts already prevalent in the Tropical Modernist Movement of the Caribbean. Queens Hall is a concert hall located just north of Port of Spain and is designed to be completely open to allow cross ventilation in the ideal tropical climate of Trinidad and Tobago.
Tectonics and an Architecture of Identity

Figure 8: Brazilian National Congress, Brasilia. A symbol of Brazilian modernism and nationalism.
In the 1950s many countries freshly out of colonial rule pushed forward to fashion national identities that represented their goals of modernization and independence. Brazil emerges as an interesting case study, since the Brazilian context of regional identity that emerged from the influence of the modern movement in a way that reflected the many methods and theories of architecture discussed thus far in this paper.

Steffen Lehmann in his essay, “Regional Identity and Modern Architecture in the Post Colonial Brazilian Context,” begins to touch on the subtle differences of Brazilian Modernism to that of the International Modernism. The critical attention to climate and topography seemed at odds with the Modernist idea of universalism, yet connected this tropical form of Modernism more closely to the eventual emergence of Critical Regionalism. He states:

“[A]t first glance, it would appear that International Modernism was always the counterpart to Critical Regionalism, ultimately replacing it. But isn’t regionalism versus modernism a limited view, the false paradigm? Frampton himself had mentioned in 1983 that a regional infected, yet critical form of modern architecture had been in existence the entire time, evolving parallel to the avant-guard movement (Frampton, 1983). It seems that what is being presented as a single idea, Critical Regionalism, is in fact an oversimplification of a complex conflict of different simultaneous tendencies.”

Lehmann’s description of the dominance of concrete construction in Brazil during post colonial modernization attributes this phenomenon to that material’s “rapidity in construction, and low cost labor”, which led to it becoming “the typical, characteristic material in all Brazilian regions.”

Lehmann begins to make a link between the concrete process and it’s affinity with the idea of regionalism, as the formwork cast becomes a local “tectonic.” He cites Frampton’s idea that Critical Regionalism is closely related in a specific way to the issue of tectonic and to the ‘poetics of construction’.... The use of Concrete ‘in-situ’ is a ‘one-off’ structural invention built into a unique site, using the locally available know how and methods for assembling the formwork.”

It is thus the use of concrete to appropriate space within a particular place that allowed the Brazilians to create an identity for the Brazilian region. Adrain Forty, architectural history professor at the Bartlett in London, takes up where Lehmann leaves off in his essay “Cement and Multiculturalism” and goes deeper to distinguish what it was about concrete, the material, that allowed the Brazilians to fashion a unique identity from a material and architecture thought to be universal.

Forty points out three strategies developed by Brazilian architects and designers to represent their national identity. The first was the substitution of concrete for what other countries used steel to build, which he believes was not a very successful means of representing Brazilian identity because it represents scenographic mimicry rather than a contextual tectonic. The second was what he defines as the “Carioca School’s” use of thin sheets and curved shapes. However he still sees this departure as “inescapably dependent” on the global nature of concrete architecture. The third strategy is where Forty makes a case that a truly independent from of architecture was created in which “the monocultural medium of concrete sought explicitly to avoid this position of dependency.” To do this he describes the work of the “Paulista School” born of the works of the São Paulo architect Vilanova Artigas.

The Faculty of Architecture and Urbanism building designed by Artigas for the University of São Paulo is a perfect case study of the third strategy outlined by Forty. The massing of the building gives the impression of a massive block of concrete sitting upon twelve columns cantilevered at the corners leaving the columns to carry the bulk of the weight. The columns continue from the surface of the above structure that would converging triangularly to meet the ground if not converging with a pyramid rising from the base whose apex ends where the top of the column begins at the base of the block. Forty notes the unusual nature of the structure, “I know of no better demonstration of Ruskin’s principle of ‘superimposition’, of ‘heavy on light’, than this, where we see a dead weight carried upon visibly active supports … Artigas and his engineer went to a great deal of trouble to create the effect of so much being carried on so little.”

12 The Carioca School was the name given to architects of Rio de Janeiro, the most notable being Oscar Niemeyer.
14 Ibid.
Figure 9: Faculty of Architecture and Urbanism Building, University of São Paulo. Designed by Vilanova Artigas
“The building is certainly knowing about the global discourse of concrete—for example the device of twisting the axis of a pier through 90 degrees had already been done by Nervi—but at the same time it responds to the specific condition of Latin American economies. Equally, the building shows a familiarity with the established ‘Carioca’ style: what appears at first to be a large concrete block sitting on legs, turns out, when one examines it from the corner, to be a wafer thin sheet of concrete enclosing something (an open volume) within, so it does, in a sense, conform to what Cardozo had defined as the ‘Brazilian style’ by working in thin sheets of concrete. Where it differs however from the Carioca-style concrete sheets is in being, firstly, demonstrably flat and, secondly, exceedingly raw... this building is an odd combination of sophisticated technical expertise and, on the other hand, crudeness of execution.”15
We can thus conclude that in designing the FAU building Artigas was confronted with a number of design dilemmas. Firstly the necessity to create an architecture that expressed the technical ability of the newly modernized Brazil using the innovations of the Carioca School, secondly the abundance of concrete, unskilled labor and human inventiveness, and finally the understanding that the deficiencies of Brazilian building techniques and labor would pose a challenge towards presenting an architecture of a finished quality that met the world's view of what modern architecture should be.

Artigas was able to overcome this problem by changing the perception of the building’s formal and material tectonics. In Kenneth Frampton’s book, “Studies in Tectonic Culture” he mentions the idea of metaphor. “Metaphor, rather than being solely a linguistic or rhetorical trope, constitutes a human process by which we understand and structure one domain of experience in terms of another of a different kind.” By reversing the tectonic of concrete, usually conceived as the “repetitious piling up of heavyweight elements,” Artigas was thus able to invert the accepted perception of typical concrete construction tectonic into a more advanced structural and technological tectonic use. The perception of the FAU building as a block of concrete held up by thin supports was thus used as a metaphor to bring forward an interpretation of the building that expressed a highly technical and modern identity of a country whose National identity was striving toward such values at the same time.

The innovation and metaphor were so well paired that the poor quality of the concrete was overlooked or pushed to the background in favor of the building’s value as an example of technical and architectural achievement.

17 Ibid. pg 5.
Transculturation

Modernist and Critical Regionalist architectural methods, as analyzed earlier, have been used to successfully help represent the identity of a nation, culture or place through the use of topography, context, climate, light and tectonic form, however most of these theories and ideologies focus on an overarching collective characteristic of place. While this can prove useful in a nationalistic and regional sense, it does not address the more complex issues of differentiation within a place. It is for this reason that the concept of transculturation becomes valuable in order to discuss the methods of addressing the deeper issues of identity within the society of place, and how these issues affect and can and should influence architectural design.

Transculturation was coined by the Cuban anthropologist Fernando Ortiz in the 1940s. It refers to a phenomenon by which multicultural societies develop through multidirectional interaction among co-existing cultural movements. This interaction defies the unidirectional and hierarchical principles generally associated with a society based on a societal structure imposed by its colonial authority.18 With the multiplicity of cultures within the Trinbagonian19 diaspora, it is necessary to acknowledge and examine the complex interactions among them and the manner in which this contributes to the continual redefinition of Trinidad and Tobago’s cultural context.
In the essay, “Transculturation and Architecture in Latin America,” Felipe Hernandez describes a similar shift in absolute power as Latin American cities became socially heterogeneous with the influx of a multiplicity of minority groups. The resulting effect was the inversion of a culture dominated by the colonial powers in favor of an inclusive acceptance of multiple cultures co-existing and ultimately affecting each other. Hernandez says, “Contrary to the concept of acculturation, which implies the imposition of superior cultures over those considered inferior, transculturation makes visible how cultures become mutually affected as a result of their interaction.”

He continues by arguing that architects view this heterogeneity as a problem and seek to fix the problems that may exist between the co-existing cultures. Cultural theorists, however, understand the complex relationships among these cultures and this scenario is not perceived as a problem. Thus the architects need, Hernandez argues, to stop trying “to try to reconstruct architectural paradigms so as to provide a sense of order and homogeneity” and should instead “embrace the existing cultural fabric and identities.”

This distinction between cultural identity and regional or nationalistic identity is important. The existing transculture, due to its complex nature and pluralistic beliefs, heritages and individualistic character, is always in flux, being tied more closely to a persons self being. This becomes hard to identify. The nationalistic identity of the collective is a productive endeavor however, since it reflects the unified goals, perception and image that a people fashion out of a pride for their country at that moment in time.

Figure 12: Map of Port of Spain, Trinidad, showing growth and development of the city from 1800–2000.
Carnival

Figure 13: Steel Pan competition called Panorama.
Carni
“By some strange design of time and space, history and geography, the races, the religions, the cultures of the world are here on this island. They belong to us all. We belong to us all. Our diversity is our originality. We are a marvellous twentieth-century hybrid. We are a callaloo. That is our strength and our destiny. That is our nationhood. Let us accept it with pride. Let us accept the responsibility and the joy that comes with the knowledge that we, through our art, can speak to the rest of the world.”

— Peter Minshall, 1985, “The Use of Traditional Figures in Carnival Art”
Figure 14: Mas Digrache, Costume competition
TRINIDAD & Tobago

Carnival

Emergence of Carnival

1498
Columbus

1783
Cédula de Poblacion

1806
Indentured labour

1797
British Capture
Figure 16: Revelers crossing the Savannah Stage on Carnival Monday morning
TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO CARNIVAL, colloquially known as “the Greatest Show on Earth”, is the largest event of the cultural calendar. It was born from the development of Trinidadian society, beginning with Spanish, British, and French colonialism, sugar and cocoa plantations, slavery, indentured servitude, international markets for oil, anti-colonialism, decolonization, post-independence nationhood and finally capitalism. A bricolage of cultural expression, the event has evolved over the last 200 years to represent the entire society, nation and culture of Trinidad and Tobago.²²

The Carnival season begins shortly after Christmas and involves orchestration of various fetes (outdoor parties), competitions and parades leading to the climax of the event, Carnival Monday and Tuesday, celebrated every year before the signification of the Christian Lenten season, Ash Wednesday.
The series of competitions and parades usually take place within the capital city of Port of Spain, specifically centered around a level ground, 260 acre site north of the city known as the Savannah. Formerly used as race track, the Savannahs southern edge contains a ‘Grand Stand’ which when coupled with a temporary ‘North Stand’ which is erected yearly creates the ‘Big Yard’, from which the Carnival competitions are held and the parades begin, end and can be viewed.

This next section will analyze these many rituals of Trinidad Carnival that encompasses a wide range of cultural and spatial relationships between varying cultural groups and the urban environment. This will thus help to define the psychological nature of Trinbagonian transculturation as well as begin the process of codifying a logic by which the ordering of space an time can be understood.
[In]Visibilities:
The ritual ordering of Carnival.
Trinidadian Carnival involves many different elements that are embodied through the actions and activities of the celebration, which order the manner in which time and space is experienced inside and outside of the Carnival season.23 Richard Schechner in his essay “Carnival (theory) after Bakhtin”, defines the five main rituals of Carnival; hybridity, competition, hierarchy, inversion and playing on the world stage. These themes start to analyze the spatial and cultural relationships Carnival embodies.

**Hybridity** refers to the inter-cultural nature of Carnival as opposed to multi-cultural. While multi-cultural is “where every culture performs in its assigned place,” intercultural is “where cultural practices are obliged to share the same time-place”23 and thus enter into inevitable and sometimes controversial juxtapositions and negotiations.

**Competition** is described as having two different types and is related culturally and spatially. “Carnival 1 focuses on the official stages and competitions and Carnival 2, erupting in the streets and permeating the many private parties and more hidden venues that have been filled with carnival revelry for many weeks, dissolves the boundaries between inside and outside, private and public, the church calendar and the ‘real’ calendar of celebration.”24

**Hierarchy** exists between the “binary space” of the Savannah stage where, “competitors have two audiences to satisfy: that of official culture and that of the people”25 the official culture existing in the more affluent Grand Stand and that of the people existing in the North Stand.

Lastly he describes the **Reverse Globalization** that occurs by the playing (participating in) of Carnival on the world stage. “Far from being an eruption of “the people,” it is the signature happening of an entire nation, the most prominent mark of its culture and by means of its Carnival, Trinidad continues to make an impression on the world stage far beyond its size geographically or its numbers in terms of population.”26

These relationships express a dynamic tension and culture of opposing yet synchronistic events, spaces and experiences. This duality begins to represent the delicate balance that survives within the culture of Trinidad and Tobago that makes appropriating or creating an architectural space for this event an interesting conceptual design problem.

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22 Garth L. Green and Philip W. Scher, Trinidad Carnival; the cultural politics of a transnational festival, (Indiana, Indiana University Press, 2007).
24 Ibid pg 8.
26 Ibid pg 8.
HYBRIDITY

As referred to earlier, hybridity relates to the concept of multiple cultures sharing and participating within the same place-time in society. Milla Cozart Riggio’s essay “Time Out or Time In? The Urban Dialectic of Carnival”, analyses the historical origins of Carnival within this context. She says:

“Carnival (from Italian carnevalare, literally ‘removal of meat’) was in its European origins a period of ritualized conflict and celebration identified with the pre-Lenten period between Christmas and Ash Wednesday. Carnival has always licensed the crossing of many kinds of boundaries – between classes or estates, genders, races, ethnicities, and carefully guarded geographical territories or neighborhoods.”

This analysis agrees with Schechner’s assessment of Carnival as intercultural rather than multicultural. This hybrid nature of Carnival thus represents the essence of Trinbagonian society. Burton Sankeralli writes in the book, Carnival; Culture in Action: the Trinidad Experience, “The ‘road’ is the gathering, the concentration, the intense focus of the earth. It is a place of dwelling and journeying, a space of play and struggle. It is here that the energies of our people are focused. However, carnival does not disclose abstract ‘cultural expressions’ or ‘artifacts.’ The space is engaged by living communities, who assimilate, contest, and participate.” This suggests and supports the transcultural interactions and phenomena discussed by Ortiz and Hernández.

In other words, the result of this hybrid occupation of space and time is a conception of “human-environment” relations emphasizing depth of meaning, closeness of engagement or attentiveness, or spending time, and where the pre-reflective structures and meaningful character of the lifeworld (and therefore the fundamental nature of human existence) are gathered up and revealed, or

refreshed. Merlot Ponty explains that, “our engagement with the world is not purely cognitive, intellectual or theoretical... it is emotional, practical, aesthetic, imaginative, economic and so on.”²⁹ All these aspects of life are reflected yet intensified in Carnival.

Figure 19: Revelers having fun on the Savannah Stage dressed in costume for Carnival Tuesday.
ENGLUF

OBSUSTRUCT

RELAX

IMPROVISE

APPROPRIATE

PRIVATE

SEMI-PRIVATE

LEVEL OF OCCUPANCY ENCROACHED ON BY PUBLIC CARNIVAL

SEMI-PUBLIC

PUBLIC

TYPICALLY ACCEPTED LEVEL OF PUBLIC OCCUPANCY

COMMUNAL

PERMISSIBLE

INVITED

RESTRICTED

TYPICALLY ACCEPTED LEVEL OF PUBLIC OCCUPANCY

FIGURE 20


**COMPETITION**

Competition 1 and competition 2, as described by Schechner, express the liminal aspects of Carnival and dissolution of these boundaries within society. Riggio elaborates:

“Claiming the streets and replacing the corporate and governmental infrastructure with festive exuberance for a day or two may seem like nothing more than a temporary inversion of the classic kind. However, by bridging the gap between the material and the aesthetic and by transforming the space itself, such an appropriation creates a more lasting effect throughout culture... the line between those participating and those watching the festival is consistently blurred. Such a massive take over marks the space permanently.”

The tensions and boundaries crossed during the Carnival season help to mark space and time within the society’s experience of place. Peter Zumthor identifies with the manipulation of liminality and boundaries to create space in his book *Thinking Architecture*:

“I like the idea of arranging the inner structures of my buildings in sequences of rooms that guide us, take us places, but also let us go and seduce us. Architecture is the art of space and it is the art of time as well—between order and freedom, between following a path and discovering (.). I give thought to careful and conscious staging of tension between inside and outside, public and intimate, and to thresholds, transitions, and borders.”


Figure 21: A JAMBOLASSIE; Traditional Carnival character, also known as Red or Blue Devils, blow fire and roam the streets on Carnival Monday and Tuesday Playin' Mas'
HEIRARCHY

Heirarchy refers to the societal inversion that occurs during Carnival. As discussed in the section on transculturation, multicultural post-colonial societies express modes of communication that often defy the structural hierarchy imposed by colonial authority.

Riggio refers to such a hierarchical inversion where, “affirming the power of imagination and fantasy against the logic of reason and by resisting the tyranny of clock time in favour of an organic and seasonal temporal flow, carnival offers what Goethe called “der Menschen wunderliches Weben” (the wonderful texture of humanity; quoted in Catannés) – the “confusion, chaos... pushing, pressing and rubbing” not only of the neighborhood market place but even more potently of the extended family, street festival, or artist colony as an alternative to the efficiency of the producing, industrializing world.”32 This reversal and push back serves a particular Trinbagonian need to rebel against authority and any forms of neocolonialism that may emerge. Lastly Riggio’s essay helps to sum up Carnival as a collective identity:

“Carnival thus affirms not only the restorative value of festivity but also the concept of cultural and individual history, seen not as the story of public institutions, centralized governments, systems of law and order, governing economies, or even conquering or the subjugated peoples, but as the encoding and imprinting of genetic, cultural and artistic legacies, of cultural memory embodied in dance, music and fantasy.”33

Recalling the earlier section on tectonics, the case study of the FAU building in São Paulo by Artigas suggests how such inversion in heirarchy applies to architecture. The tectonic inversion and reversal of perception was in opposition to traditional modernist concepts being imposed in a manner

33 Ibid pg 22.
similar to colonialism. The inversion of these concepts was an innovation played upon the established hierarchy to bring forward a truth embodied by the architecture.

Juhani Pallasmaa argues that successful architecture uses this tension to connect with its occupants. He states:

“Moreover, an architectural work is great precisely because of the oppositional and contradictory intentions and allusions it succeeds in fusing together. A tension between conscious and unconscious drivers is necessary for a work in order to open up the emotional participation of the observer. ‘In every case one must achieve a simultaneous solution of opposites,’ as Alvar Aalto wrote.”

Figure 23: Jouvert; Starting on the Sunday night and rolling into the early morning hours of Carnival Monday, revelers covered in mud and paint dance in the streets to the sound of Steel Pan. It is also known as Dirty Mas'.
IDENTITY EXPORT

DISAPORIC CARIBBEAN CARNIVALS
Derivations of Trinidad Carnival

UK (30)
BARROW-IN-FURNESS
BEDFORD
BIRMINGHAM
BRADFORD
BRISTOL
COVENTRY
DERBY
DOVER
HEREFORD
HIGH WYCOMBE
HUDDERSFIELD
LEEDS
LEICESTER
LIVERPOOL
LUTON
MANCHESTER
NORWICH
NOTTINGHAM
NOTTING HILL - 2 MILLION
OXFORD
PLYMOUTH
PRESTON
READING
SHEFFIELD
SOUTHAMPTON
STAFFORD
SWINDON
WALTHAM FOREST
WOKING
WOLVERHAMPTON

CANADA (7)
CALGARY
EDMONTON
MONTREAL
OTTAWA
TORONTO - 1 MILLION
VANCOUVER
WINNIPEG

USA (20)
ATLANTA
BALTIMORE
BOSTON
CAMBRIDGE - MASS.
CHICAGO
DALLAS
DETROIT
HARTFORD
HOUSTON
JACKSONVILLE
MIAMI
NEW YORK - 3.5 MILLION
OAKLAND
ORLANDO
PHILADELPHIA
ROCHESTER
SAN FRANCISCO
TALLAHASSEE
WASHINGTON DC
WESTCHESTER

EUROPE (4)
NICE - FRANCE
NYLON - SWITZERLAND
ROTTERDAM - NETHERLANDS
STOCKHOLM - SWEDEN

Trinidad and Tobago
GLOBALIZATION: PLAYING ON THE WORLD STAGE

Trinidad and Tobago Carnival is not only a local festival but a globally exported festival held in foreign cities with Trinbagonian communities. This exportation of Trinbagonian culture is an interesting contrast to the claims of homogenization brought on by a globalized world. In this context Carnival has become a commodity with a particular brand and identity that allows Trinidad and Tobago the unique advantage of differentiating itself. Schechner refers to this in his essay: “Whether Trinidad Carnival is a great art form in itself, as Mas’ master Peter Minshall avers, or whether it is an eruption of popular culture, or whether it is a marketable performance commodity does not constitute a set of choices but a complex of probabilities. Trinidad Carnival is all of the above.”

It could be argued that diasporic Carribean Carnivals are a form of reverse colonization in which many of the former European colonizing nations are dealing with the immigration of peoples from former colonies such as Trinidad and Tobago, Carnival, involving the occupation and possession of space, allows Trinbagionans to appropriate and create a sense of place within the foreign city. In the essay “Globalization in Reverse: Diaspora and the Export of Trinidad Carnival”, Keith Nurse underscores this observation saying, “The diasporic Caribbean carnivals have developed into a means to affirm cultural identity and promote sociopolitical integration within the Caribbean diasporic community as well as with the host society. The diversity in participation suggests that the diasporic Carribean carnivals have become multicultural or polyethnic festivals.”

The cultural life of Trinidad and Tobago and specifically the festival of Carnival vividly portrays common or shared participation that transcends ethnic, political, class, cultural, spatial, organizational and temporal boundaries to unite the country in a shared cultural pride and individuality, manifested naturally amongst the peoples of a transcultural nation.

Masking: putting into ‘play’
Masking is the action of practicing the aforementioned rituals in the celebration of Trinidad Carnival. It comes from the term to ‘play mas’ (literally the action of masking).

The Oxford English Dictionary defines play as:

1. \[no \ object\] engage in activity for enjoyment and recreation rather than a serious or practical purpose
2. \[with \ object\] take part in (a sport or competition)
3. \[no \ object, \ usually \ with \ negative\] be cooperative
4. \[with \ object\] represent (a character) in a theatrical performance or a film
5. \[with \ object\] perform on (a musical instrument)\(^{37}\)

All of these descriptions describe the many actions and activities involved in ‘playing mas’. As discussed earlier this ‘playing’ is a form of transculturation or communication between the many ethnic, political, class, cultural, spatial, and organizational cultures of Trinidad and Tobago.

However, what is the significance of masking? In his book “Masking and Power”, Gerard Aching, states, “Slovoj Zizek captures the kind of understanding to which I refer when he writes that the mask does not conceal the ‘truth’ but embodies the ‘ideological distortion’.”\(^{38}\) In other words, it shows something rather than conceals something.

The definition of ‘truth’ here is similar to the phenomenological interpretation of truth which Heidegger refers to as alitheia in the book *Being and Time*. Heidegger says, “the entities of which one is talking must be taken out of their hiddenness; one must let them be seen as something unhidden.”

Thus phenomenology is letting the thing which shows itself be seen “from itself in the very way in which it shows itself from itself.” This truth can be discovered through the everyday (life world) pre-understanding of the entity itself, a guide to the way in which the task of uncovering or alitheia should be entered. Merlot Ponty says, “the meaning which objects in the world have for me are not given to them by me, or by my thoughts about them but are discovered in the objects themselves.”

The mask is thus thought of as what calls “the ritual of wearing thresholds” and embodies the method through which the ‘truth’, usually hidden from plain sight within culture and society, appears. The phenomena of awareness or uncovering of the truth through the act of wearing a mask or playing a mask is called ‘demasking’. Aching defines demasking as, “an unexpected and undesirable ideological self-recognition (the shock of self-recognition) that is brought on by contact with a masked subject.”

One way of helping to define this concept of masking in terms of Carnival is by using the novel, *The Dragon Can’t Dance* by Earl Lovlace, a Trinidadian born playwright and author. Set in the depressed neighborhood of Laventille, on the hills overlooking the city of Port of Spain, the book defines the many relationships, cultures, prejudices, and roles that exist inside and outside of the Carnival season as well as the implications of masking and the role it plays in society through various characters of multiple genders, races, authority and personality.

Aching interprets some of the themes and roles that masking plays, as portrayed in Lovelaces’ novel, most notably focusing on the young Aldrick, an Afro-Trinidadian male who has taken on the role of playing and designing the

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40 Ibid, 56.
costume for his role of a Dragon in Carnival, a character of great pride and authority. Aching makes note of the “invisibilities” that Aldrick is able to bring forward masking of the dragon:

“\textit{Aldrick thus flaunts his invisibility and that of his community by donning a frightful and unnerving disguise, “he wanted everybody to see him. When they saw him, they had to be blind not to see”}. And he thrusts his invisibility into public consciousness, so to speak, through a conspicuous “tall, rejoicing dance, cry”. The dragon mask, in short, performs what the viewer can potentially see but fails or refuses to see... In other words, frightening the population into seeing and acknowledging social injustices, that is to say, demasking the public, is the mark of a successful dragon mask and dance.”

Again it is the “play”, the “masking” that affords the bringing forward of the truth. That allows the public and the culture of Trinidad and Tobago to be seen for what it is, to confront the state of society and allow it to become open to critique and reflection. The city becomes a stage on which the truth of our lives is played out for us to see, uninhibited by what people wish us to see.

\footnote{Gerard Achong, \textit{Masking and Power: Carnival and Popular Culture in the Caribbean}, (Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 2002) pg 60.}
Permanence of the Temporary
Permanence of the Temporary
“.... shall I attempt to describe Zaira, city of high bastions. I could tell you how many steps make up the streets rising like stairways, and the degree of the arcades’ curves, and what kind of zinc scales cover the roofs; but I already know this would be the same as telling you nothing. The city does not consist of this, but of relationships between the measurements of its space and the events of its past.... the festions that decorate the course of the queen’s nuptial procession.... As this wave from memories flows in, the city soaks it up like a sponge and expands. A description of Zaira as it is today should contain all Zaira’s past. The city, however does not tell its past, but contains it like the lines of a hand....”

— ITALO CALVINO, “Invisible Cities”
The previous section discussed masking and the manner in which it helps to demask the public and the reveler, and the implicit contingencies of their relationships with each other in society and the lifeworld, however, what role does architecture play in all of this? The background on which Carnival occurs is architecture: the city provides the stage, the setting for the masking to take place, and just as a stage set helps to support the “play,” the urban situation affects both the spectator and the masquerader.

William Alexander McClung discusses the architecture of festivals in his essay, “A Place for a Time: The Architecture of Festivals and Theatres.” In it he says, “[in] the case of civic festivals, architecture's broad strategy is to treat the stage as a world. In both instances we knowingly submit to a reordering of space and time.” 44 He classifies festival architecture based on its ability to “displace our awareness of the built environment.” 45

He cites the difference between the organized and almost choreographed systems of the everyday space and time and the “fluid” and “centripetal” action of a procession which draws the public energy and awareness toward a celebratory pinnacle. 46 McClung points to triumphal arches as a form of architecture that achieves this and contends that they are conceived as temporary not permanent structures within the everyday perception of time and space:

46 Ibid pg 88.
The importance of the arch lies in the fact that it is to be passed under, penetrated, and so experienced not only at a distance, by the eye, but during a specific passage of time, by the body... Arches of triumph cannot be usefully distinguished as permanent or occasional; their formal properties are the same and equate the ephemeral with the enduring.”47
Figure 30: Traces of Carnival left behind on the streets and buildings months after the festival.
TEMPORARY VS PERMANENT

Figure 29
The same is true for the Savannah stage. By virtue of the procession across it by masqueraders, performers, artists etc, within the specific passage of Carnival time, the site and the architecture of the stage gain permanence during Carnival. There is, however, also an ephemeral and temporary nature of the architecture that exists through the absence of this confluence of forces and associative activity throughout the rest of the year that give the architecture its power of presence.
Temporal events & spatial form
Having acknowledged the notion that permanent architecture can have a temporary nature in time and space, and conversely temporary architecture can retain permanence in urban space based on the presence or absence of urban activity, it can be argued that this phenomenon is a form of urban “masking”. Similar to the participants of Carnival, architecture possesses the ability to be “masked” and thus represent, exist and affect space in a way that inverts it’s role in the “everyday” perception of itself. However how does one use this relationship to help create the connections between space, place and identity?

In her essay titled “Shaping Settlements: A study of Temporal Events and Spatial Form in South Indian Temples”, Aarati Kanekar outlines the spatial and formal manifestation of processions and elements within the South Indian temple town of Srirangam. This will serve as a precedent, providing ways in which the design of urban space and architecture can relate to both the everyday and celebratory time and sense of place.

Kanekar firstly outlines the system that the path of procession-al rituals use to order urban space as movement, specifically the importance of “Circumambulation” and the designated center of the procession in relation to the city. She notes four types of movement patterns; the movement towards, movement around, movement away from and movement beside a spatial entity. She says, “the ceremonial axis, the positioning of the tanks, the car streets, even the small alleys around their corner, the widening of diagonal corners, could all be attributed to rituals... The concept of circumambulation in these towns is dramatic impressive, elaborate and so intrinsically choreographed that it becomes a central feature of public life.”

Kanekar mentions three components of the system of organization that exist in the temple city of Srirangam. The first of these consists of the basic urban elements such as temples, water bodies, walls, residential areas, and areas of commerce.

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The second is the method of organization that guides the spatial order of these urban elements. She explains, “[h]ere a specific hierarchy is followed; the temple occupying the center of the town, the eight water bodies in the cardinal and intermediate directions, the gopurams in the cardinal directions and the fabric of the city itself following the mandala layout.”49 The last level of order she calls “spatial mediation” and is basically, “a refined geometrical balance of the two (previous) superimposed symmetrical systems... axial symmetry of the walls, gates and zones – diagonal symmetry of the ring road pattern; concentric system of sacred zones.”50

Lastly she points out the importance of time and memory as the final aspect of urban space and architecture which combines all the systems of organization mentioned earlier to create the connections between space, place and identity. She explains,

“In Srirangam, the ritual sequence and circumambulation followed in bathing at particular tanks during specific festive rituals shows the significance of one’s place in space and time. Moreover, it also reminds one of his location within a larger context of the city form. This demonstrates the spatial marking of time in relation to the festive events. The spatial gesture validates a controlled space within the larger universal realm and also marks its extent in the four cardinals and four intermediate directions. Similarly, the temporal gesture controls the seemingly random flow of time by structuring and marking it through the festive events, and in turn establishing the yearly cycle.”51

50 Ibid pg 295.
51 Ibid pg 296.
Northward orientation of water system; eastward orientation of town and temple.

Duality of spatial organisation: juxtaposition of water and town — 1. tank, 2. arat ghat, 3. river ghat.

Duality of social topography: Bahmin (hatched) and non-Bahmin quarters.


Thresholds: A & B, barrier stones of Kshetrapalas and Brahmarajasa; 1-8, dwellings of the ashtadikpalas.

Four Anima temples in the four corners of the town centred on the nulesthana of the Bhanumalaya temple.
Figure 35: Srirangam spatial correspondence between tank and temple. The diagonal organisation of the floating festival corresponds to the organisation of the chariot festival:
1. installation of the idol on the float;
2. fireworks in the north-west corner after three rounds on water;
3. Submerging the idol in water during the arat ceremony;
4. “submerging” the idol in nagaswaram music.
All these elements play a role in not only playing a function role in the everyday lives of people but creates a deeper connection to the identity of that space and place within time. These elements ‘play’ many different roles in the urban structure gaining temporal meanings that work both singularly and separately along the flow of time, yet allowing them to remain fundamentally linked though there cyclical and ritual significance both in everyday and celebratory dimensions. Once this process has been accomplished these elements forever become lined both to the past and present due to their significance of there introduction and presence in that cycle within the larger flow of history where the present becomes past and thus a permanent part of the temporal cycles and flows of the past, present and by influence the future.
Identifying with the Temporary
The method of universalism practiced by Modernism ran aground because it overlooked the specificities of space, place, and identity. However, as discussed, space, place, and identity are not static or permanent entities. They are always in flux and thus by nature temporal. Even the tenets of Critical Regionalism; topography, context, climate, light and tectonic form, were not universal or absolute, but elements that changed over time due to natural or sociopolitical changes, a notion acknowledged in the work of Transculturalists. What differs is the timeframe in which these changes arise and how we perceive these changes with reference to the present.

To represent the identity of place one must thus recognize the many existing structures that are working on a site and in what temporal timeframe they exist. Once this is established, the identity can be expressed through the careful choreography of opposing structures, which allow the pre-existing structures to bring forward true identities through the perception of difference. As previously discussed, the design of urban architecture can use organizational structures such as vistas, ritual paths and significant landmarks to choreograph a temporal opposing structure from which the true identity of the architecture will be contrasted and brought forward. The character of place thus comes forward from the persistent structuring of identities and differences.
Design
Trinidad and Tobago is an amalgamation of various cultures, ethnicities and religions all sharing space and time together. Carnival represents a coming together of these peoples together in one place, parading through the streets and celebrating life. In many ways the parade route through the city is a reflection of this celebration.

Starting at the Savannah, the main point at which the parades start and end as well as the site at which performances and competitions are held, this site represents recreation and nature. The 5 hectares of mostly flat grassy land is used as the city’s playground and refuge. It is regarded as sacred space, as documented by numerous newspaper articles protesting the construction of or destruction of these lands for anything other than a park.
From the Savannah one moves West through the residential neighborhoods, South through the entertainment district where bars and restaurants line the streets, East past the main historical cemetery, South again past the Parliament, the High Court and the Police Headquarters, bastions of Law, Order and the State, into the heart of the city, the epicenter of trade and business with the Financial Towers two significant land marks greeting one as the parade enters the capital’s main central promenade. Passing along the port the ocean lies to the left, the now landlocked lighthouse the next marker as one makes another left turn now North up the main commercial street of town, with a straight shot back towards the Savannah site where the parade reaches its climax after crossing the stage.

This procession represents a spatial celebration of life, moving through the everyday lives of the citizen, reconnecting to all the aspects of society, community, commerce, government, life, death, land and sea.

The memories, and experiences connected to these spaces are triggered through the interaction with a context that opposes the typical everyday happenings of daily life. Like Carnival itself, the elements of inversion, ritual, and appropriation act as a marker to which the everyday can come forward and be reflected upon. The use of the site, the urban context and architecture as marker by which a sense of time; present, past and future, can be judged occurs through the ritual inversion of society in the first two months of the Trinidad and Tobago calendar. The appropriation of space in a manner that inverts it’s conventional use, is the trigger that enables this phenomenon.
It’s her first kiddies Carnival and at the age of 8 she cannot think of anything else more exciting than “playing mas”. She and her mother have been working on her costume for a month now and she is so excited to wear it on stage in front of everyone! It’s 9 a.m. on Carnival Saturday and Ordessia and her parents are driving into town. Despite how early it is she is bubbling with excitement as she sees all the people
heading into town dressed in their costumes. They find a parking spot in one of the parking garages just south of the Savannah and begin the walk up towards the open green space at the end of the street. People are beginning to flood the streets as they are on their way to watch or participate. At the end of the street Ordessia spots it, the Stage.
SITE FORCES

- City Grid
- Parade Route
- Vehicular Traffic
- Crosswalks/ Access Points
LANDSCAPE INTERVENTION

Natural Grasses

Trees

Cricket Pitch

Football/ Rugby Field

Figure 44
By mid-day she will be crossing it in all her glory. The family meets up with their neighbors who have put together a band for their kids. All dressed in as humming birds, Ordessa and her friends start to dance as the music begins to play. Mom and Dad are close behind but she isn’t worried. This is her time to shine, to “Play mas” like she had learned in social studies class, like everyone else during Carnival. The crowds line the streets smiling and cheering, the music carries everyone along, singing, danc-
The moment arrives. The left turn approach has snuck up on her. She knew she was close when saw the trees lining the streets but the crowds had blocked her view of the actual stands. The crowd thins out as she approaches the stage.

The space changes, she is standing before this vast stage like desert-scape with people scattered like cactus. She is no longer crowded by the people encroaching on the streets or able to make out the faces of the spectators sitting below.
SITE ANALYSIS

Using the overall ordering forces of the city, surroundings and movement through and around the site, a site plan was made to reinforce the major axis and structure the sense of space and procession through the site. Starting with the major entry, the site has been set up such that landscaping leads people out into it toward the different playing grounds. The landscaping also helps create spatial delineation of space allocated to each area without the use of permanent structures or fences.

To the East, once one has past the viewing area, the site becomes a grove of trees that are haphazardly planted within a larger area, which has been organized using the grid of the city. This allows a perceived sense of natural ordering, as the trees are free to grow within the larger contextual grid. The overlay of these two systems allows the site to begin to reintegrate the user with the ordering systems of the city gradually by allowing it to play a secondary role in the site structure after the perceived natural structures of the environment.
her in the shade. She suddenly feels free. Free to takeover the stage, to dance as she pleases, running, swirling, jumping to the music. The fabric of costume rustles and swirls around her with ever movement. She forgets that anyone is even around but herself on this fast plane raised above everything, her face on the screens, sun glistening from above. She joins her friends as the flutter about like busy hummingbirds feeding on the nectar of hibiscus.

Now she has reached the end of the stage, the music shifting further behind her. She glances back at those behind her bursting with energy on the stage, her parents now having to lead her away as she wishes and hopes, awaits for her return to the stage.
The “building” program builds upon the idea of the Indian temple cities. Using the site forces, paths and the procession of carnival through the city this design aims to translate the many invisible and visible forces of the city and site. First is the permanent stand, which will act as a symbol of national identity but also as a reminder of the Carnival itself as it will act as a “marker” of the event and time as it will receive other programmatic elements that exist in the site. The second elements are the mobile “markers” which are either water towers, mobile projection museums and viewing stands. These elements will be able to be moved and configured on the site to be appropriated and facilitate the many events that take place on the site. This movement and the ritual positioning of these elements for particular events will begin to set up an ordering structure within time and the perception of the space in time.
**WATER TOWERS**

The water towers are to aid in supplying water to the site since there is a lack of infrastructure to currently support this on site. They are also simultaneously viewing towers from which the city and site can be seen. The tower will act as a marker because of its use as a water tower in the daily life of the citizens, serving the specific task of supplying water in the recreational area as well as physical marker or landmark on the site. During Carnival the tower will be moved to facilitate the needs of the Parade and play a larger role in creating the spatial setting for the event stage. It is at this moment two things will happen. Although the tower will still supply water it will now be connected to the event of Carnival and heightened nature of the celebratory season. Secondly the movement of the actual tower will signal a change in the spatial ordering of the site, as its movement will trigger the absence of the landmark in space. This opposition will trigger or emphasize the change in space and time in the timeline and everyday ordering of time and space as experienced by the user.
The projection towers, while acting as similar spatial "markers" of time and space, are mobile time capsules of the event of Carnival. Inside continuous footage of The Carnival event will be shown, projected on all the walls of the room from a first person perspective to recreate the sense of being in Carnival “time”. They can act as a museum of the moment of Carnival, both for locals and tourists. During the Carnival period the tower will be moved and instead show instructional info for tourists and patron goers at the Carnival event.

The last elements of the site are the mobile viewing stands. The mobile viewing stands, outside of Carnival, will help to define the many recreational areas within the larger site and act as spatial markers of these areas. During Carnival, the stands will move to provide extra seating for the Events of Carnival. The Stands will essentially help to create the site of Carnival, and transform the permanent viewing structure into its Carnival form. This process will reorder and reorient the site causing the focus to be at the south stands rather than focused on the individual activities taking place in the site. This change and opposition or inversion of order and space in the site will be the catalyst and thus a “marker” representative of the perceived threshold in time and space at which this change occurs.
CONCLUSION

The use of these elements as “markers” of the threshold of change that will bring about the necessary awareness of time and space within the larger calendar year and daily and yearly cycles. This awareness will hopefully allow the event and actions of Carnival and the perception of the temporary space to be reconciled and better understood in relation to the everyday actions, use and perception of the space as well as create the linkage between the past present and future marked by the threshold of the change in space causing it to gain a permanence, an identity, a marker of life in Trinidad and Tobago at that moment in time.
Bibliography


Gerard Achong, Masking and Power: Carnival and Popular Culture in the Caribbean, (Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 2002).


