

Nicolás Dumit Estévez opens a disused folkloric museum in Santiago de los Treinta Caballeros to a Vodoun-spirited masking practice on a Sunday in late January (*C Room*), keeping the spiked masks of the whip-yielding *lechones* outside; Christophe Chassol films and mixes audiovisual fragments of robin songs, creole speech, beachside rap, and costumed parades in and around Fort-de-France circa late February/early March (*BIG SUN*) while monkey impersonators taunt him through his car windshield; Marlon Griffith leads a nocturnal procession shining a towering light over Port of Spain on the second Tuesday of March (*POSITIONS + POWER*), as ubiquitous bikini-and-beads masqueraders run countercurrent; Charles Campbell invites select guests to follow a guided tour and attend an event behind masks in a downtown Kingston neighborhood on Easter Monday (*Actor Boy: Fractal Engagements*), reinserting Actor Boy as a social actor in post-Jonkonnu Jamaica; Ebony Patterson convenes a mock funeral-cum-political protest in uptown Kingston a week after (*Invisible Presence: Bling Memories*), fending off feathered headdresses with standing coffins; Cauleen Smith films bass-clef musicians during a few overcast days at various sites across New Orleans sometime during the month of May for *H-E-L-L-O (Infra-Sound/Structure)*, sidestepping second lines to dive into the low end of the city's sonic spectrum; Hew Locke charges Tate Modern's Turbine Hall with a cardboard army of samba drummers on a bank holiday weekend (*Give and Take*) and steers clear of police surveillance in the streets of Notting Hill; Lorraine O'Grady records her conversations with a friend over footage on the computer during Labor Day weekend (*Looking for a Headdress*) as she summons the world on-screen in search of a costume piece; Mario Benjamin cancels a motion-activated, auto-recording, retro-projecting son et lumière display planned for the late summer in Miami (untitled); John Beadle postpones the fabrication and installation of his one-costume gallery and Polaroid photo booth in Nassau over Christmas (*Inside-Out, Outside-In*).¹

The nine Caribbean and African American artists selected and commissioned to create new performances for *EN MAS'*: *Carnival and Performance Art of the*

Caribbean tackled Carnival, Junkanoo, and second lines—African diasporic street masquerading and parading practices—directly or tangentially, critically or subversively. They charted the course of the 2014 Caribbean Carnival season, calling at Santiago de los Treinta Caballeros, Fort-de-France, Port of Spain, Kingston, New Orleans, London, New York, and Nassau, drafting a new cartography of performance practices in the process. The artists chosen for *EN MAS'* have had a long history of engagement with Carnival and carnivalesque masquerading practices. They come from radically distinct yet undeniably linked historical backgrounds and artistic formations that do not preclude yet cannot be subsumed under the canonical histories of artistic performance, which are aligned with narrow Western modernist narratives long debunked by black Atlantic countercultural networks. [Figure 1]

The works of the artists in *EN MAS'* queer identities, denounce police surveillance, castigate racism, highlight social divides, condemn government murders, intimate resistance from below, criticize gentrification, comment on social ostracism, and reflect on diaspora through guided tours, processions, protest marches, mock funerals, and other forms of public address. While the artistic strategies they employ are at the forefront of community driven, socially engaged, collaborative, participatory practices in keeping with artistic trends that have emerged in North America and Western Europe since the late 1990s, I argue in this essay that these practices follow a distinct genealogy that can be traced up to Caribbean Carnival and related festivals from the region.²

The timeline I edited in this catalogue shows how, starting in the 1930s, such developments evolved from the spheres of dance and theater to the visual and performance arts of the 1980s—and how the artistic projects in *EN MAS'* are the latest outcome of this process. From its modern development in the Americas to current artistic and curatorial experiments in the Caribbean, Carnival provides a critical anchor for the rearticulation of contemporary discourses and practices around performance art and exhibition making.

In this essay, I first challenge Carnival theory by suggesting that an examination of the word

Figure 1:
Nicolás Dumit Estévez, *Sketches for yet to be realized performances*, pencil and colored pencils on paper, 1999, 11" x 15".



Carnival itself is in order, considering how radically Carnival metamorphosed in the aftermath of the Middle Passage—possibly to the point of misrecognition. I then open up genealogical paths linking Carnival to the development of performance in the Caribbean. Finally, I bring Carnival back into the exhibitionary fold by showing how it belonged all along, if as a countermodel.

I. Toward a Theory of Modern Carnival in the Americas

Carnival occurs year-round in the Caribbean. A calendrical legacy of the colonial era, it has come to encompass emancipation and independence celebrations, accommodate touristic economies, comfort national identifications, and generate diasporic cross-pollination. Intensification, then, as Richard Burton alleges—rather than inversion—characterizes Caribbean carnivals as everyday life assumes the guise of carnival.³ Post-Bakhtinian carnival theory focuses “not on the social hierarchies [Carnival] challenges, but on the value and sense of community it affirms,” offers Milla Cozart Riggio.⁴ Visibility, not concealment, is the masquerader’s premium, argues Gerard Aching, as masquerades are played sans masques.⁵ While these notions have done much to further Carnival theory after Bakhtin, I ask fundamental questions and propose foundational articulations to theorize the development of modern Carnival in the Americas.

Is Carnival but an ill-fitted Old World costume for an unfathomable New World custom? Can the word *Carnival* account for the multifaceted manifestations of traditions in the making in the insular and continental Caribbean over centuries of acculturation?⁶ How did Carnival, the word and the practice, come to subsume or suppress Native American, European, and African memories, histories, and cultures?

What became of Carnival during the crossing of the Middle Passage and following the experience of slavery and colonization in the Americas? Of what use could Carnival, a foundational civilizational principle relegated to the periphery of enlightened Europe, be in colonized America?⁷ Did American slavery and colonization substitute for European and African servitude and feudalism?

Figure 2:
Coco Fusco, *La Chavela Realty*, performance with costume design by Pepón Osorio, Brooklyn Academy of Music, 1991, in conjunction with Guillermo Gómez-Peña’s 1991 (*A Performance Chronicle of the Rediscovery of America by the Warrior for Gringostroiika*).



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How is carnival theory affected by the figure of the slave, as commodity of flesh and instrument of labor, in the circum-Atlantic drama of modernity’s counterculture? How, also, to reconcile the economic ramifications of the word *performance* within the productivist context of slavery, indentured servitude, and other forms of coerced labor?

Etymology as Theoretical Premise

Putting the word *Carnival* under etymological, mythological, indeed etymythological scrutiny, I provide a theoretical premise for a radical re-imagining and re-imagining of the practice and meaning of Carnival in the Americas in the modern era. In *The Practice of Diaspora*, Brent Hayes Edwards rethinks diaspora through the notion of articulation explained as such: “Articulation is always a strange and ambivalent gesture, because finally, in the body it is only *difference*—the separation between bones and members—that allows movement.”⁸ I would like to argue that the word *Carnival* needs to be dismembered etymologically in order to be re-membered mythologically, and to be articulated to diaspora. Articulating Carnival and diaspora allows for the movement of difference within circum-Atlantic Carnival. Following further from Hortense J. Spillers’s assertion in her landmark essay “Mama’s Baby, Papa’s Maybe” that “before there is ‘body,’ there is ‘flesh,’” I question the construction of a Caribbean bodily subjectivity through Carnival with “flesh as a primary narrative.”⁹

Indeed, I question the reliance of the word *Carnival* on *carne levare*, or “farewell to the flesh,” its accepted Latin etymology. “Human flesh” was “the most revolutionary commodity” in the circum-Atlantic economies of the late seventeenth century, “and not only because slave labor produced huge quantities of the

addictive substances (sugar, coffee, tobacco, and—most insidiously—sugar and chocolate in combination),” Joseph Roach writes in *Cities of the Dead*, his magnum opus on circum-Atlantic performance.¹⁰ As circum-Atlantic Carnival activated anew the meaning of flesh consumption as sweat meat and slave body, we cannot carry on conceptualizing Carnival as a celebration of the flesh within a circum-Atlantic economy of human flesh. [Figure 2]

I choose instead to elaborate on *carrus navalis*, or “chariot of the sea,” the contested, if likewise Latin, etymology of *Carnival*, as it provides a contrasting account of the transformation of Carnival in the aftermath of the Middle Passage. In the introductory chapter to *The Black Atlantic*, Paul Gilroy introduces the ship as “the first of the novel chronotopes presupposed by [his] attempts to rethink modernity via the history of the black Atlantic and the African diaspora in the western hemisphere.”¹¹ Significantly, Gilroy characterizes the ship as a *chronotope*, a term borrowed from Bakhtin’s carnivalesque literary theory.¹² Gilroy’s conceptualization of ships as “cultural and political units rather than abstract embodiments of the slave trade” speaks to the historical, political, economical, and cultural entanglements of black Atlantic modernity, of which Carnival is an archetype. The many floats and headdresses of ships in circum-Atlantic Carnival and performance suggest as much.¹³ In the 1991 performance *La Chavela Realty*, Coco Fusco, disguised as Isabel la Católica, Christopher Columbus’s patron, donned just such a headdress, designed by Pepón Osorio in the loose likeness of a caravel, inaugurating another history of intercultural performance.¹⁴

Carnival in the Americas, then, is a misnomer. Such is my preliminary conclusion to my investigative premise into the role, meaning, and function of Carnival in the art of the Caribbean today and contemporary African diasporic aesthetic practices in general. My continuing use of the word *Carnival* in this essay is informed by these critical reflections.

(Mis)Naming, Masquerade, Mas’
Naming is power. The vernacular languages of the Caribbean have forged other vocables for naming the performance practices that have historically evolved in the Caribbean during the colonial calendar of masking, mummery, and harvesting seasons. As Caribbean populations reinvented these festivals on the American side of the Atlantic and started to participate in them en masse post-emancipation, they rechristened them. Thus *mas’*, an abbreviation of *masquerade*, is often used instead of *Carnival*.¹⁵

Mas’ is better known through, but by no means exclusive to, the Trinidadian vernacular. Indeed, *Carnival* found a linguistic alternative and a notable semantic reinforcement of the notion of masque and masquerade within vernacular languages across the Caribbean in *mas’*: in French Creole, *mas* or *mass* is “masque,” as used in Guadeloupe

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and Martinique in *mas a congo*, *mas a Saint Jean*, and *mas a l’ennô*; and in the Trinidadian colloquium *mas’*, the preferred term for Carnival in the English-speaking Caribbean, where to participate in Carnival is “to play *mas’*.” At any rate, the African diasporic imprint seems to press upon precisely the space created by the distance and distinction between Carnival and masquerade.

ENMAS’, Carnival, and Performance Art
Mas’ features in a punning relationship with the word *masses*, and in a series of subordinate relationships to the words *Carnival*, *performance*, and *art* in the title of this project.¹⁶ The relationships of subordination, subjugation, and possible surrogation it negotiates with the other words in the title, as well as the histories, genealogies, and ideologies they at once disclose and foreclose, point to the challenges and opportunities afforded by the current shift from representational to performative space specifically within African diasporic aesthetics.¹⁷

The predominance of *mas’* within wider critical discourses and practices also prompts inquiries about the popularity of the Trinidad Carnival model, at home in the Caribbean and abroad in the diaspora. This model has evolved from ragtag nocturnal processions to the sound of tamboo bamboo, a warring turf for competing steel bands, regal parades of historical and mythological themes, skimpy displays of Soca-powered bikini-and-beads *mas’* bands. Nowadays, the middle classes form the masquerades. Made-in-China suppliers provision them with bikinis, beads, and feathers. *Mas’* men and Junkanoo masters, carnivaliers and other carnival makers handle glue and staple guns, mold plastic and form-fit backpacks. Contemporary artists desert *mas’* camps and shacks, migrate to North America, the United Kingdom, or Japan, or suffer disaffection on the home front if showing too much innovation. Audiences huddle up behind television screens rather than hustle in the streets. Public space is as privatized as it is carnivalized; bodies are branded by advertisement on shirts worn, flags held, rags waved.

The Trinidad Carnival model, then, has become synonymous with Caribbean Carnivals. *Mas’* man (Trinidadian Carnival designer) Peter Minshall has claimed contemporary invention of the artistic practice of *mas’*. He problematized *mas’* in its relation of anteriority to performance art, succeeding in placing *mas’* within the realm of art but failing to do so in a way that was not derivative of metropolitan definitions. Notable *mas’* and carnival

commentators since have included Christopher Cozier, who located the festival within the visual culture of the Caribbean, as well as Luis Camnitzer, who further built upon both Minshall's and Cozier's works. One of Cozier's greatest exercises in naming power consisted in replacing the word *artwork* with *roadwork*, laconically expressed in an oft-reproduced sentence applied to Minshall's work: "Since many of the activities surrounding our lives are street activities I thought it interesting to replace the word art with road."¹⁸

Nominal matters notwithstanding, it remains something of a remarkable phenomenon that the Trinidad Carnival model would have taken hold of most Caribbean and pan-Caribbean diasporic Carnivals in the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom.¹⁹ To the historic mid-twentieth-century Trinidad-style carnivals of Harlem (1947–62) and Brooklyn (1963–ongoing), as well as London (St. Pancras Town Hall, 1959–63; Notting Hill, 1965–ongoing²⁰) and Toronto (1967–ongoing), one can add the carnival of Miami (1985–ongoing), which also bears significant contributions from other Caribbean diasporas, such as the Haitian diaspora. More recently in the Caribbean, Trinidad-style carnivals have started to penetrate even those countries with independent masquerade traditions, such as Jonkonnu in Jamaica (or *Junkanoo*, as it is spelled in the Bahamas) and the Calabar carnival in Nigeria, affirming both European and African diasporic cultural retro-colonization processes.²¹ From Toronto to New York and across the inner-Caribbean diasporic axis that connects Trinidad to Jamaica, the word *mas'* is used, the practice of *mas'* exported, the technology of *mas'* appropriated. *Everybody playing mas' dis year!* the crowds respond in unison to Machel Montano's call, well beyond Trinidad's boundaries.²²

II. Circumambulating the 2014 Carnival Season, Circumventing Carnival

As *EN MAS'* followed the carnival season, I called at every one of its ports. In the following section, I recount each performance I witnessed, photographed, helped produce, or participated in by relying upon three temporal modes and attendant archival stages: my memory of the lived experiences, the mnemonic support of documentation provided by the audiovisual material commissioned alongside the performances as well as my own documentation of the performances, and the projection of the exhibition. I do not, however, do so in the chronological and geographical order

restituted in the artists' monograph section of the catalogue. Breaking away from the linearity established by the month-to-month progression of the project and presupposed by the processional medium developed in public ceremonial culture and employed by some of the artists in *EN MAS'*, I have found myself treading on intersectionality and circularity instead, for the latter connects with deeper seasonal patterns, predicated upon lunar cycles, themselves the determiners of oceanic rhythms, of which the African diaspora is the ever-flowing-and-ebbing becoming.

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Lorraine O'Grady has built a conceptual practice in which Carnival might seem an anomaly. Yet as our two-year conversation around her Beckettian search for a carnival costume revealed, as *Looking for a Headdress* will further suggest, and as the resulting performance of this late-day *Mlle Bourgeoise Noire* avatar will later manifest, O'Grady has had a lifelong engagement with Carnival. To the contemporary art world, O'Grady's early eighties performance *Art Is. . .*, staged in Harlem as part of the African American Day Parade, provides the prime and sole such indication of her carnival interest, if in a somewhat roundabout way, as she avoided going the route of the West Indian American Day Carnival Parade. As she recalls: "I wasn't from Harlem, so half the time I didn't know what I was looking at. But I had deliberately not put the float into the West Indian Day parade in Brooklyn, where I would have felt at home, because I didn't think avant-garde art could compete with real carnival art. I felt it might do better with the umpah-umpah of marching bands and the beer company floats."²³ *Art Is. . .* featured white leotard-clad black dancers framing parade goers with several handheld picture-size gilded frames and one monumental frame on a truck-powered float, producing a performance of seeing and being seen that turned the classical Western pictorial tradition inside out.

To her familial diasporic world, O'Grady might be the teenager who attended *Caribbean Carnival* at the Boston Opera House in 1948. As she herself recalls:

I remember going with my mother and aunts to see my new sister-in-law, Billie Allen, perform at the Boston Opera House in the show *Caribbean Carnival*. I remember going backstage. It was so much fun. It was all about the cast really. The big star was Josephine Premice, a singer from Haiti. Not everyone

was from the Caribbean. Many were like me, born in the States to Caribbean parents. And many were not connected to the islands at all. Billie was from Virginia, and Jacqui Hairston's roots were in the South. But they both danced with Claude Marchant, and he was from the islands, I think. There was such a small black theater world at the time that it must have taken everybody to put on a professional show! The show was a bit untogether, as I recall. And honestly, it was a bit unsophisticated to me. I was one of those stupid-smart 14-year-olds who thinks they know everything, and it felt somehow fake and touristy to me.²⁴ [Figure 3]

O'Grady's recollection of Trinidadian calypsonian Samuel Manning's Broadway preview, which was to premiere the following year at the International Theatre in New York as "The First Calypso Review Ever Presented," echoes her current feelings about the aesthetics of Carnival and the politics of diaspora as expressed in e-mail exchanges with Andil Gosine in preparation for the shooting of *Looking for a Headdress*: "How can any of us in the diaspora NOT feel a distance from Carnival? It's part of us, yes, but in such a now passive way. And in my own work, I have a horror of kitsch, which so much commercial carnival now falls into."²⁵ O'Grady goes on to state that she is "very clear about what [she] do[es], what [she] want[s] to do": "not carnival as contemporary art but contemporary art influenced in part by carnival," translating diasporic distance into artistic process.²⁶

These two conversation fragments—about, on the one hand, *Caribbean Carnival*, an early pan-Caribbean diasporic artistic gathering around Carnival, and, on the other hand, contemporary Carnivals from Brazil, the Caribbean, and their diasporas—are a measure of the distance between being *of* and/or being *from* the Caribbean. The dispositive of distancing created by O'Grady in *Looking for a Headdress*—a kind of talking-head reaction video in which she and Gosine are briefly seen in slow motion, watching and discussing and seemingly spoofing worldwide carnival footage—brings no closure to this state of

diasporic of-and/or-from-ness. As if obfuscating, their image was to memory what forgetting is to performance: a prerequisite for surrogation toward the emergence of the artistic process.

O'Grady's Carnival, Caribbean, art, and performance experience situate her at a crossroads from which to follow the various paths forged ahead by the artists in *EN MAS'*. By shooting the West Indian American Day Carnival Parade on Labor Day and hosting their conversations during the summer (when Gosine also attended Toronto's Caribana), O'Grady and Gosine did inscribe *Looking for a Headdress* within the chronology of the Caribbean Carnival season. O'Grady also excised *Looking for a Headdress* from Carnival altogether, navigating in and out of a real and imaginary inspirational Carnival space. So did *EN MAS'* artists circumvent or reinvent such spatial and temporal frames, creating projects concurrent with, proximate to, or overlapping with Carnival—but never easily assimilable into it.

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Veteran *mas'* practitioner Marlon Griffith and *mas'* newcomer Ebony Patterson chose to jump right into the fray.²⁷ Griffith took to the streets of Port of Spain in the evening of the last and most symbolic day of Carnival, Fat Tuesday (or Carnival Tuesday, as it is simply called in Trinidad), while Patterson launched her procession in uptown Kingston during the daytime on the last Sunday of Jamaica's Trinidad-style Carnival after last-minute suspense over the status of her parade permit.²⁸ The ways they positioned their performances—the former a nocturnal procession outside of the official "parade of the bands," the latter a diurnal parade within the sanctioned Carnival route—played decisive roles in the different outcomes they garnered.

"This is obeah!" onlookers exclaimed within minutes of spotting a small crowd of masqueraders moving through a halo of light shone from one of their own. Standing on top of a metallic structure, precariously wheeled out of Belmont toward the Savannah into the open night, the female masquerader from whose helmet the light beamed was pointing her index finger in various directions. At her feet, a man with high heels on his hands wore a rounded visor onto which a video of

Figure 3:
Caribbean Carnival still, 1947.



grinding human teeth played. A dozen masqueraders, like them clad in black short-sleeve samurai-like calicos and knee-length lap-skirts, but sporting self-styled hats and face-covering fishnets, pushed or else walked them along. Contrasting with their dark do-up, fast-fading white powder in lattice-like motifs appliquéd on the skin of their chests could be glimpsed beneath their open vests. Trailing the procession was a sound system emitting a barely audible, ghostly heartbeat. [Figure 4]

Marlon Griffith's *POSITIONS + POWER* seemed an unprepossessing procession by mainstream Trinidad Carnival standards. As it maneuvered traffic, potholes, and policemen and came across strings of bikini-and-beads masqueraders on Ariapita Avenue before ending in a cloud of white powder in front of Alice Yard, the contrast between Griffith's performance, Carnival, and contemporary art in Trinidad registered starkly. Right from the start, upon leaving his makeshift mas' camp at Granderson Lab in his home neighborhood, Griffith, walking backward with his hand outstretched to provide traffic directions, faced the arduous task of motivating his troupes, prone to much the same silent questionings that had his ad hoc audience guessing out loud. The stone-faced mas' players walked in a solemn funeral formation as if mourning the loss of their autonomy due to their codependent relationship with the towering figure—it needed them to move, they needed it to see. The *OVERSEER*, the female masquerader on top of the surveillance tower, and *DOBERMAN*, a dog impersonator—her watchdog—took on the Trinidad Carnival tradition of “individuals,” special character designs above the identical outfits of the foot soldiers but

under the prestigious King and Queen costumes; they were discursive visual clues linking colonial and contemporary modes of surveillance. Policemen, having replaced plantation overseers and dogs, remained.

Based in Nagoya, Japan, since 2009, Griffith has made a name for himself as a contemporary artist in the international art world with mas'-inspired processional

performances, as well as in the carnival world as a sought-after mas' man. Why, then, was this post-Minshall roadwork prompting so much guesswork from his participants as well as the general public? Having stepped into the group of Minshallites, Alice Yard followers, and devoted students as a half-costumed masquerader myself, I pondered the generational divide among us. Was playing mas' even available as a performance register among the twenty- or even thirty-somethings more accustomed to wining in made-in-China spandex outfits in all-inclusive mega mas' bands than portraying Dame Lorraine, speechifying in the Midnight Robber and Pierrot Grenade tradition, impersonating a Fancy Sailor, or sewing scales on a Dragon costume come Christmas-end? Had the Port of Spain public forgotten the likewise haunting visions of Peter Minshall's “Man crab” (1983)? Was the critical evocation of lower-class status implied by the sweat-prevention practice of chest powdering, sometimes also associated with prostitution, too faint or too coarse, despite having been beautified through ornate motifs? Was the plantation metaphor too abstract—or had the colonial era become too remote for the public to care to remember it, less it failed to recognize its present-day iteration?

Ebony Patterson picked up where Griffith left off, following in the mourning mode with a funeral procession of fancy coffins, emerging from streams of bikini seamlessness and soca sameness carried over from Port of Spain to Kingston.

Teenage marching-band players with matching outfits in the national colors waited out Jamaica's Trinidad-style Carnival crowds while a mix of students and supporters in everyday clothes waited to

pick up their load as part of Patterson's *Invisible Presence: Bling Memories*. Once the last sound of trucks and mas' players had cleared up, they stormed out of their gas-station encampment in full force, took over the avenue, and caught public and police by surprise as they made for pallbearers as unlikely as they did mas' players Jamaican-style. “One step to the right, one step to the left,” shouted

Figure 4:
Marlon Griffith, *POSITIONS + POWER*, Port of Spain, Trinidad, 2014.



Patterson, flanked by two queered male nun characters. [Figure 5]

In one performance, her second in this vein, Patterson, assuming the role of bandleader, brought together African diasporic aesthetics from not so far yet very wide.²⁹ From ole mas', Trinidad's old-time Carnival protest tradition, she borrowed the visual language; for musical accompaniment, she hired a marching band that brought back to my ears sonic reminiscences of New Orleans's McDonogh 35 and St. Augustine high school marching bands. From and for Jamaica she created and launched a protest against and within Carnival all at once, a funeral march in honor of her country's fallen class warriors and in defiance of bourgeois good taste as much as local law enforcement. Downtown against uptown, Carnival versus dancehall, students against police. In so making an incursion into Jamaica's nascent Carnival tradition, Patterson performed a double *mise en abyme* of inter-Caribbean diasporic exchanges as she, a Jamaican, brought her Trinidad-inspired mas' performance within a Trinidad-style Jamaican Carnival, itself a protest against dancehall. Choosing to veer off course before the bands' judging point, Patterson preempted the police from retaliating and enforcing censorship unfitting to the freedom presupposed by Carnival and denounced by Patterson on just those grounds. Her final words, if not steps, about the matter: “Carnival no good again! We doh want it!”

A reference to the Tivoli Gardens incursion, as it is locally known, the 2010 *chasse à l'homme* waged against drug lord Christopher “Dudus” Coke that left seventy-two dead, *Invisible Presence: Bling Memories* was also a commemoration of the year's deceased, who initially were meant to be exacted in the number of coffins. The visual redundancy of carnivalesque and bling aesthetics brought together ensured visibility for the otherwise invisible lower classes Patterson sought to bring back from the “socially dead,” as Patterson's namesake, fellow countryman Orlando Patterson, once called slaves. As she redressed

Figure 5:
Ebony G. Patterson, *Invisible Presence: Bling Memories*, Jamaica, April 27, 2014.



the coffins and held them up as if protest placards—the performance participants standing right under them and standing in, as it were, for the newly, longtime, and future dead—she brought full circle a legacy of race and class relations that was indeed born of slavery in a surprising mood lifter for social depression inside and outside Carnival.

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Long after the Kingston funeral drum line had receded from earshot, a more mournful tremor rose from the sedimented sounds of New Orleans.³⁰ In partially recovering these sounds, and awakening others from the bed of the Mississippi River, Cauleen Smith's aural exploration subtly restored the circum-Atlantic memories embedded above and below ground. Unlike in Patterson's marching band, though, there were no snare or bass drums; only other bass-clef instruments were utilized in Smith's sound parade. Nor was there a marching band at all. Much to her point “to focus on the sounds we hear with the same level of attentiveness that we apply to what we see,” Smith eschewed the visual distraction of carnival parades and second lines, New Orleans's year-round carnivalesque processions, toning down images to play up sound and saving processional motion for the camera itself.³¹

A shot of the sky, the sight of a crane, then the vibrations of a trombone and a sousaphone a few feet apart against the background of the city's industrial waterscape. “Setting the tone” was never so apt a phrase as when used to describe the opening traveling shot of Cauleen Smith's *H-E-L-L-O (Infra-Sound/Structure)*, a meandering elegy to New Orleans's low sounds and bass lines, barely

audible and hardly recorded sonic artifacts of last breaths and silent deaths. Each of the five notes played on baritone and bass saxophones, several sousaphones, a trombone, a contrabassoon, and a cello by musicians enlisted by Smith and sited at symbolic locations throughout the city—St. Augustine Church, Congo Square, Preservation Hall, and Tipitina's—distilled a sense of loss as Smith's moving camera recorded

a panoramic landscape of residual poststorm emptitude. Yet the musicians' tropism toward Smith, of their instruments to her camera, their sounds to her images, as some rotated to follow her following them even as she steered away from them, while others stood or sat still, looked straight back or closed their eyes, accrues over time to a kinesthetic recomposition akin to an invisible parade.³² By slowing down the processional motion of her camera and the rendition of the musician's reduced score and synching them, she sophisticates visual representations associated with New Orleans's public ceremonial culture with minute attention to its seemingly less appealing aspects. By making visible the filmic performance of music rather than the human performance to music, she doesn't so much revert as avert the more obvious surrogate processes associated with moving bodies. She similarly motorized processional motion in *Depth Procession*, an attendant performance held partly in a party bus and partly on a ferry with invited guests bound on a round-trip from the Warehouse District to the west bank of the Mississippi River.³³ Not your traditional second line, *Depth Procession* took steps toward a different kind of navigation, just as *H-E-L-L-O* played notes of a different kind of partition. It is not that the musicians in *H-E-L-L-O* and the participants in *Depth Procession* are not incarnated, but rather that those to whom the music is addressed have long departed or not yet arrived: they are, as the inaugural shot to the sky maybe alludes to, the extraterrestrial beings of Steven Spielberg's *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* (1977), from which the score is borrowed.³⁴ As she mined New Orleans's ample memorial repertoire, Smith resorted to science fiction as she has done before and as the city itself often does—think Superdome, August 29, 2005—to prompt the performance of its future rather than its past, though of course Roach would argue that this is what performance does, for restoring behavior is making the futurity of the past tangible in the present.

With *H-E-L-L-O* and *BIG SUN*, respectively, Smith and Christophe Chassol expand the mutually reinforcing performative qualities of music and film, using scoring and editing to make performance memorable. But where Smith slows down music and camera motion, Chassol creates such and other effects by cutting and repeating and otherwise intervening within the medium of the moving image itself.

Throughout *BIG SUN*, Christophe Chassol's hour-long film essay shot during the 2014

pre-Lenten Carnival season in and around Martinique's capital city, Fort-de-France, Chassol, a Paris-based pianist and composer of Martinican descent, arranged robin songs, French Creole speech, dancehall-style spoken-word verses, marketplace conversations, carnival beats, and tonal music (Bela Bartók) he himself played on the piano as he would distinct sonic fragments, creating so-called ultrascores that underline the intrinsic musical qualities of manmade and natural sounds.³⁵ Visual and sonic fragments in lockstep elaborate the narrative of a day from sunup to sunset and of carnival everydayness. *BIG SUN* features sites and protagonists related to each aspect of its audiovisual investigation: Martinican conteur extraordinaire Joby Bernabé, who delivers a carnival song-poem in French Creole in what seems like the lobby of a hotel with fading colonial imagery; famed Martinican band Malavoi member Pipo Gertrude, whistling birdsongs against the remembered sights of Saint-Pierre; and many other lesser-known or anonymous actors of Martinican culture.

Carnival memory looms large over the entire film through evocations of Saint-Pierre, the former Petit Paris and Carnival capital of the Caribbean before the latter title was seized by Trinidad, in no small part due to steady migratory flows from Martinique to Trinidad since the 1783 Cedula of Population and up until the eruption of Mount Pelée in 1902, which destroyed Saint-Pierre.³⁶ Unsurprisingly, the first verbal enunciation of the word *Carnival* and accompanying pelvis-gyrating movements occur at the marketplace—a carnivalesque site par excellence as per Bakhtin, circum-Atlantic behavioral vortex according to Roach—though by the unexpected figure of Madame Etienne Lise, an eighty-five-year-old market woman, who goes on to proudly enumerate her daily ballroom outings and boast about her carnival title of Reine des Mers du Sud (Queen of the South Seas).

The film's final segment, uncannily begun inside a car assailed by marauding monkeys against a mountain backdrop, surveys Fort-de-France's carnivalescape until its seaside ending scene surrenders all its prior movements to the once intractable ebb and flow of the ocean from which it came. Marching bands reappear with snare and bass drums strapped to the bodies of their male and female players, women in various states of undress dare the camera with moves more coy than provocative, as in Trinidad or Jamaica, but still less so than those of an old

lady—the marketplace woman?—wining to the front fender of a music truck. Monkeys, finally, make a show of strength with their ugly plastic masks, a reference to and, for Chassol, deliberate gesture of protest against racial slurs suffered by French Guyanan Christiane Taubira, the minister of justice of France. I do not recall the sound of the monkey sequence, nor care to rewatch the video to be reminded of it. Maybe no amount of sophisticated montage can replace silence in the face of outrage.

*

Whistles, too, can do that—call out and interrupt with stridence. They feature in *BIG SUN*, and indeed have been prominent fixtures in West Indian carnivals. Also a police accessory, whistles were used for policing and carnivalizing power in Hew Locke's *Give and Take*, by which we return to the path of mas' after this filmic intermission. Though not following the tradition of mas' sensu stricto, Locke's project inscribed itself within the context of one of Trinidad Carnival's historic diasporic spin-offs, fifty years older than recent carnival incubators like that of Jamaica. Shielded from the Carnival crowds inside Tate Modern's Turbine Hall, it also played to a more rarefied audience, from which Notting Hill Carnival members were mostly absent, despite some overlap, and faced a different kind of critical reception at the heart of Britain's former imperial capital, in the belly of the art-world beast.³⁷

The outcome of decade-old meditations on Carnival in Guyana (Mashramani) and London (Notting Hill Carnival), *Give and Take* was Locke's first Carnival performance, even though carnival aesthetics have long suffused a body of work characterized by visual profusion some would call baroque. In early discussions about the project nearly two years ago, Locke had gone from shying away from venturing into performance at all, to declining to engage with the streets of Notting Hill, to expressing the desire to create Minshall-esque carnival bands showing just how complex the relationship to a certain form of stereotypical Caribbeanness embodied in Carnival could be for artists *of* and *from* the

Caribbean. Ultimately, *Give and Take* was conceived specifically for the setting of the Turbine Hall, and was decidedly not meant to be Carnival as contemporary art performance, but strategically designed instead as a carnival-inspired museum performance playing off of the careful choreography of cross-references to, rather than reproductions of, a variety of Carnival spaces in *Up Hill Down Hill*—a two-hour long performance I curated—in which the Turbine Hall was likened to Rio de Janeiro's Sambódromo (its carnival stadium), while its bridge midway across was reminiscent of Notting Hill's Westway Bridge, a site of great memorial strength to Locke and others who remember bottle-throwing contests among sound systems in the 1980s.³⁸

On the Saturday of the Notting Hill Carnival weekend, drummers from the Batala London samba-reggae band, a Salvador de Bahia-styled *bateria* (drum corps), hid under the Turbine Hall's bridge to force audience members down from it and enlarge the "street"-level crowd, while another set of masqueraders, armed with shields and batons, attempted to corral the crowd through kettling maneuvers and sweep it out of the hall altogether. An exploration of the changing spatial politics of the Notting Hill neighborhood, *Give and Take* sought to critique the gentrification of a formerly predominantly Caribbean area that has become home to MPs and investment bankers, while embracing the Brazilian influence on the historically pan-Caribbean Notting Hill Carnival that has long been a façade for Britain's fraught claims to multiculturalism. Wearing soft cardboard masks shaped like traditional Guianese devil masks and printed with photographs of the classic Caribbean peas and rice dish, the masqueraders cut rather genteel figures. Shifting from masqueraders to police officers as they turned their drumsticks into batons, did they manage to bring the performance's intended message home, or did they provide instead, in the words of Christopher Cozier, "a tropical summer distraction between art seasons at Tate"?³⁹ Give and take.

*

Unlike Marlon Griffith and Ebony Patterson and,

Figure 6:
Raymond Marrero, *Comparsa a las Bellas Artes*, Gran Gala del Carnaval, Gran Teatro del Cibao, Santiago de los Treinta Caballeros, February 26, 2014.



to some extent, Hew Locke, Nicolás Dumit Estévez and Charles Campbell chose to locate their projects at a relative spatial and/or temporal distance from Carnival: Estévez on the last Sunday of January, in the lead-up to the official Carnival parades, and Campbell on Easter Monday, on the day of, if not as part of, Kingston's downtown Carnival. [Figure 6]

At the Gran Gala del Carnaval at the Gran Teatro del Cibao in Santiago de los Treinta Caballeros, carnival and contemporary art competed for the limelight; one comparsa presented its satin dancers framing one another in large white handheld frames, as if in tongue-in-cheek response to O'Grady's *Art Is ...*

Bronx-based native son Nicolás Dumit Estévez (or "Dumit," as he is known locally), with whom I attended the performance, instigated similar overlaps as he invited real-life Carnival and *gagá* performers from the Karamanchés, Las Guarcharnas, and Los Makeros groups to join him for a two-part, eight-hour, semiprivate durational performance in the former mask room of the Museo Folklórico Don Tomás Morel as part of *C Room*.⁴⁰

"Eso no es un atraco"—this is not a robbery—declared a cardboard sign. The sign hangs around Estévez's neck in the video documentation of the performance I watched but did not attend, and was later pinned in the mask room, where I saw it when I visited Estévez a couple of weeks later. What "this" was, or wasn't, was unclear. What was clear was that whatever "this" was, or purported to be, it did not belong in the declarative linguistic mode but rather in an evocative visual and aural modality within a performative realm with ritual undertones. An instrumental overture steeped in shared Haitian Dominican heritage provided an immemorial score for the performance's otherwise loosely scripted proceedings. As two *gagá* bands successively filled the museum's courtyard with the drone-like sounds of *vaccines* and drums, dispensing musical accompaniment and spiritual sustenance with herb concoctions, Estévez, every bit the *servidor de misterios* (server of mysteries) in the Dominican Vodoun tradition, served up participants with an array of previously utilitarian elements (kitchen utensils, bathroom wares, and bedroom apparel, alongside organic refuses) transformed into adornments (overturned sifters became hats; hollowed orange peels, goggles; netted hats, face veils; clothespins, ear and nose pincers; thin stockings, long arm gloves), dangling from a canopy of multicolor umbrellas where *lechones* had

previously filled the walls in characteristic xenophobic fashion.⁴¹

Was flesh being celebrated, or put instead to the service of the *loas*, by which its earthly incumbents were supposed to be mounted? How was performance reframed through the intimation of Vodoun and the mediation of Carnival masquerade within a museographic dialogic of excess, loss, and recovery? Did the participants in this carnival Vodoun ritual (or vice versa?), as caterers to and caretakers of the museum's damaged mask collection, hold on to and hold up to the memories to which they availed their bodies during the performance's span? Did "making room for Carnival within their own personal/domestic spaces," the artist's stated intention for *C Room*, mean remaking a room in which embodied memories—in Roach's idiom, the kinesthetic imagination—could take place?⁴²

Portraits of performance participants singled out against a white photographic backdrop, and Estévez's own portrait, subsequently taken by Santiago photographer Raymond Marrero, made for an interesting gallery in which performance codes were blurred. Did the cardboard sign around Estévez's neck signal his status as a performance artist in its deliberate declamatory stance? Did the orange peels point to a local user and indicate a Carnival performer instead? Taken together, these portraits show an infinitesimal differential between the two through nearly imperceptible visual variants that translate an interstitial space of identification that can only resist fixation through performance.

*

Video and photo documentation of Estévez's *C Room*, as of Charles Campbell's *Actor Boy: Fractal Engagement*, make the contrast between performance artist—or artist using performance—and performer more salient than do after-the-fact portraits such as the ones Estévez chose to stage, which Campbell eschewed altogether.

A photograph by Marvin Bartley of Charles Campbell's *Actor Boy: Fractal Engagement* showing a dark-skinned black man in a makeshift multicolor suit with a tattered briefcase, brown hat, and oversized black reading glasses for accessories next to a lighter-skinned man in simple white clothes and open sandals, his face concealed, encaged in a headpiece of soft, perforated cardboard, seemed to leave little doubt about who was the street performer and who the performance artist.⁴³ Yet under the peculiar circumstances of the performance, the two were almost expected to shape-shift into one another—shape-shifting,

performance might be a counter memorial as the birds flew off from the fire.

As Estévez did in a likewise vandalized room, Campbell transformed the space of the performance through reciprocal actions that upended time and suspended disbelief. Where *C Room* was a former museum room that was temporarily restored to its prior use by means of performance, *Fractal Engagement*'s upper room became a site for exhibition following the performance, as Black, his painter father, and others began to use it immediately after it had been vacated. The inside-outsiding and outside-insiding of Carnival and performance but also of Carnival, performance, and exhibitionary spaces is put into perspective in John Beadle's *Inside-Out, Outside-In*.

A contemporary artist and Junkanoo maker, the only artist to tackle that Bahamian Christmas masquerading tradition for *EN MAS*' besides Campbell and, to a much lesser extent, O'Grady, Beadle constricted a Junkanoo costume inside a mobile apparatus meant for display and performance on Nassau's Bay Street during the Junkanoo parades and in the space of the touring exhibition.⁴⁴ Employing a process of fractalization at the scale of an entire costume, Beadle, like Campbell and Griffith, used unadorned cardboard to revert the space of visibility and place as its obverse not adorned material but raw matter. In conceiving of a performance space that, to paraphrase Beadle, was simultaneously the space and its exhibition, and for that space to be an inverted Junkanoo costume, Beadle sought to prevent representative associations in lieu of performative actions while making a performance of it. Beadle's counterperformance in Nassau, which was initially scheduled to be first, ended up last, trespassing into the 2015 Caribbean season—and the Bahamas' first Carnival, on May 7–9 of that year—and marking the chronological and geographical end of *EN MAS*'.

*

Beadle's boxed-in space is also reminiscent of another box and of a living being inside it, looking for a way out. A performance of invisibility and, in the words of Adrienne Edwards, who

after all, is what the twenty or so audience members underwent, as Campbell distributed similar masks, only blue instead of red, performing yet another reversal as gazers became gazed at and the neighborhood looked back. Uptown met downtown on downtown terms as uptowners were brought to make up for their class estrangement by being made to look and feel strange. Having been brought by bus ride from a safe location to an out-of-our-way neighborhood and given a guided tour of it, we became auto-tourists of sorts as we delighted in drinking coconut water as if a foreign delicacy at the first stop of a string of no-longer-seen local sights arranged for our visit.

Fractal Engagement was Campbell's latest iteration of *Actor Boy*, the historic nineteenth-century Jonkonnu figure of Belisario fame Campbell debuted in Jamaica in 2011, with public performances that quietly carnivalized space as they derailed daily routine with the quasi-normal yet disquieting presence of a character in a feathered headdress but otherwise unremarkable attire. In Kingston, *Actor Boy*'s guests ventured into the oft off-limits downtown territory of dons, thanks to the embassy of Jamaican artist, fashion designer, and music entrepreneur Kemar Black, following a sinuous network of alleyways where street performers lined up to play their tricks before entering into the disused upper room of a neighborhood bar. There, in a room that still bore burn marks from an arson incident several months before, between columns of coal around which shapes similar to the masks' had been stapled, the audience stood, inert but for the spontaneous body ripples from the dancehall riffs down below—and the irrepressible drive to snap pictures and post on social media—while *Actor Boy*, now sans mask, arranged the performer apprentices on the eponymous fractals painted on the cement floor. As I recalled stapling cardboard triangles onto each other around the column and helping paint blue bands onto the floor days earlier with my cocurator, I watched Campbell draw white lines in broad brushstrokes, squinting until I could decipher a repeating pattern of flying birds. I wondered if this

Figure 7: Illustration of Henry Box Brown's "resurrection" in Philadelphia. From William Still, *The underground railroad. A record of facts, authentic narratives, letters, &c., narrating the hardships, hair-breadth escapes, and death struggles of the slaves in their efforts for freedom, as related by themselves and others, or witnessed by the author; together with sketches of some of the largest stockholders, and most liberal aiders and advisers, of the road, 1872.*



suggests it might be “one of the earliest avant-garde performances of blackness,” “a virtuosic performance of stillness in motion,” I am referring here to Henry “Box” Brown’s disappearing act as he mailed himself to freedom in a wooden crate circa the mid-nineteenth century.⁴⁵ As crates were being prepared to ship some of the material remnants of our year-round, looping, processional travels, I was made to wonder again about the meaning of Carnival and performance within the Atlantic oceanic interculturalures of the Americas, when flesh can be bid farewell indeed, but only in a process of reverse transubstantiation into matter, object, or commodity. [Figure 7]

I finished writing this essay as I began to think about the materialization and spatialization of the exhibition in conversation with the artists and the exhibition designer, Gia Wolff. Cauleen Smith’s and Christophe Chassol’s films, the former seconds short of twelve minutes and the latter over one hour, would be featured as projections in self-contained screening rooms closed off by black velvet curtains. Nicolás Dumit Estévez and John Beadle planned to facilitate reperformances, the former in a makeshift closet that would provide intimacy for the exploration of one’s own “carnival self” and the latter by inviting the public to wear the smaller of the two costumes on display in the exhibition. Charles Campbell, on the other hand, recreated an installation in reference to but not illustrative of his performance. Marlon Griffith’s surveillance tower, destroyed over the course of his performance, was refabricated, and a selection of his costumes featured on mannequins in a way that, given their high design quality, eschewed ethnographic associations. Drawing on yet another museological model, Hew Locke’s selection of printed cardboard shields and masks was displayed hanging on the wall like armors in a medieval museum. All but one of each, however, will be destroyed at the close of the exhibition tour, putting an end to his performance’s afterlife, in keeping with the old carnival fashion of throwing away one’s costume after the performance is over. Meanwhile, Lorraine O’Grady’s *Looking for a*

Headdress displayed an interactive video pending the realization of the actual headdress for possible future performance as part of *EN MAS’* on tour and elsewhere in what O’Grady referred to as a lifelong performance, there, too, anticipating her performance’s afterlife, as well as her own, putting the body, in its very incarnate fleshy matter, as its center. Lastly, Ebony Patterson’s coffins, the very resting place of bodies before flesh returns to earth, were put on sale by her gallery prior to the exhibition’s opening. [Figure 8]

In closing, the historical anteriority of African diasporic performance alluded to earlier is not my primary concern. My focus, then, is on the question of posterity and immateriality. How might Carnival be critically reinserted within the history of the exhibitionary complex? This at a time when the performance turn in artistic and curatorial experiments is cannibalizing even that which may have seemed unabsorbable—indeed, instrumentalizing that against which the very display apparatus of the modern museum was erected, and capitalizing upon the production of experiences that were meant to evade the commodification of object-based practices.

In his classic essay “The Exhibitionary Complex,” Tony Bennett mounts a critique against Douglas Crimp’s suggestion that in addition to “the asylum, the clinic, and the prison as institutional articulations of power and knowledge relations ... there ‘is another such institution of confinement ripe for analysis in Foucault’s terms - the museum - and another discipline - art history.’”⁴⁶ Bennett goes on to write that “while these [museums and a wide range of other nineteenth-century institutions] comprised an intersecting set of institutional and disciplinary

relations which might be productively analysed as particular articulations of power and knowledge, the suggestion that they should be construed as institutions of confinement is curious. *It seems to imply that works of art had previously wandered through the streets of Europe like the Ship of Fools in Foucault’s Madness and Civilization.*”⁴⁷

In this essay, I drafted the contours of an original

Figure 8:
Installation view from *EN MAS’*, Contemporary Arts Center,
New Orleans, 2015.



Carnival theory and performance genealogy with artists who, like Lorraine O’Grady, had seen just where *art is*, as well as with other artists, participants, and indeed artworks in *EN MAS’* which wandered across the waters of the Caribbean Sea and the Atlantic Ocean, and on the streets and avenues of the black Atlantic’s port cities. In so doing, I reassessed some of the foundational yet partly erroneous and largely misguided claims of the Western art-historical and museological systems, which have gone global at the same time as circum-Atlantic Carnival has consolidated as a reinvigorated cultural tradition, artistic practice, and exhibitionary display model—one just as equally international and with growing staying power. For, I conclude, *stultifera navis*, the Ship of Fools, in the way Foucault identified it as a vessel of alienation of the late medieval era, did anticipate the colonial outlets of the American conquests and the *carrus navalis*, or circum-Atlantic Carnival.⁴⁸ Carnival only bids farewell to the flesh when confined to boxed-in museum spaces and conscripted to modernity’s increasingly cramped closets.⁴⁹

- 1 Mario Benjamin’s project had to be cancelled for technical reasons. An artist working predominantly with painting as well as installation, he twice contributed floats to the carnival parades of Port-au-Prince in collaboration with the Grand Rue artists. John Beadle’s performance was likewise postponed for technical reasons. The Cuban artist collective Los Carpinteros, though not considered at the time of the elaboration of *EN MAS’*, would have been a good fit for it in light of *Conga Irreversible*, their reversed parade for the 2012 Havana Biennial.
- 2 I am here referring to “participatory art” as defined by Claire Bishop in *Artificial Hells: Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship* (London: Verso, 2012).
- 3 Richard D. E. Burton, *Afro-Creole: Power, Opposition, and Play in the Caribbean* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997), 156.
- 4 Milla Cozart Riggio, ed., *Carnival: Culture in Action - The Trinidad Experience* (New York: Routledge, 2004), i. See also Richard Schechner’s essay in the same volume, “Carnival (theory) after Bakhtin,” 5–11.
- 5 Gerard Aching, *Masking and Power: Carnival and Popular Culture in the Caribbean* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002), 18.
- 6 This is a nod to John Cowley’s landmark book on the history of nineteenth-century Trinidad Carnival, *Carnival, Canboulay and Calypso: Traditions in the*

Making (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

- 7 See Peter Stallybrass and Allon White, *The Politics and Poetics of Transgression* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1986).
- 8 Brent Hayes Edwards, *The Practice of Diaspora: Literature, Translation, and the Rise of Black Internationalism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003), 14–15. Edwards conceives of the notion of diaspora as difference as a critique of Gilroy’s as “purity as invariant sameness,” 12.
- 9 Hortense J. Spillers, “Mama’s Baby, Papa’s Maybe: An American Grammar Book,” *Diacritics* 17, no. 2 (Summer 1987): 67. Thanks to Krista Thompson for referring me to Spillers’s work.
- 10 Joseph Roach, *Cities of the Dead: Circum-Atlantic Performance* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 4.
- 11 Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993), 17.
- 12 “A unit of analysis for studying texts according to the ration and nature of the temporal and spatial categories represented. The chronotope is an optic for reading texts as xrays of the forces of work in the culture system from which they spring.” Mikhail Bakhtin, *The Dialogical Imagination*, ed. and trans. Michael Holquist (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981), 426.
- 13 There is also the usage of the word *krewe*, likely from the maritime term *crew*, in New Orleans’s Mardi Gras. More generally, see the figure of the ship in historical African diasporic visual representations and performance practices, summarized in part in Krista Thompson’s essay in this volume.
- 14 La Chavela Realty is described by El Museo del Barrio, where it is preserved, as “a site-specific performance held at the Brooklyn Academy of Music in conjunction with Guillermo Gómez-Peña’s 1991: A Performance Chronicle, in which Fusco as Queen Isabella sold patrons deeds to the New World. Costume designed by Pepón Osorio.” Fusco would later go on to write her influential essay “The Other History of Intercultural Performance,” which was first published in *TDR/The Drama Review* in 1994.
- 15 I was surprised to find the following entry for *mas* in the *New Oxford American Dictionary*: “Mas: noun [mass noun] W. Indian carnival celebrations. [as modifier] : mas bands. ORIGIN abbreviation of masquerade.” Owing maybe to a French linguistic bias, I like to keep the apostrophe at the end—*mas’*—as a reminder of the word’s provenance. *Mas’* is not, to my knowledge, used in the Spanish-speaking Caribbean.

- 16 I discuss Carnival and performance in contemporary Caribbean art, and the role of mas' in articulating it, in "Curating Carnival? Performance in Contemporary Caribbean Art," in *Curating in the Caribbean*, ed. David A. Bailey, Alissandra Cummins, Axel Lapp, and Allison Thompson (Berlin: The Green Box, 2012), 37-62.
- 17 A shift toward performance is also occurring in contemporary African art.
- 18 Christopher Cozier quoted in Tancons, "Curating Carnival? Performance in Contemporary Caribbean Art," 49-50. Thanks to Krista Thompson for pointing out that Roadworks was the name of a Trinidad Carnival magazine in the 1990s.
- 19 For historical elements about the Harlem Carnival and the West Indian American Day Carnival Parade in New York, and the St. Pancras Town Hall and Notting Hill carnivals in London, see Claire Tancons, "Occupy Wall Street: Carnival Against Capital? Carnavalesque as Protest Sensibility," e-flux 30 (December 2011): 1-20, <http://www.e-flux.com/journal/occupy-wall-street-carnival-against-capital-carnavalesque-as-protest-sensibility/>, and Claire Tancons, curatorial statement for *Up Hill Down Hall: An Indoor Carnival* (exhibition shown at Tate Modern), August 2014, <http://www.tate.org.uk/download/file/fid/41657> (see endnote 38 for further information).
- 20 Recent scholarship shows that "The First Caribbean Carnival in London" was in fact held twelve years prior to Claudia Jones's, on July 31, 1955, at the Royal Albert Hall and organized by Jamaican entrepreneur Hugh Scotland. See Ray Funk, "The First London Carnival was 1955!" upcoming article in the *Trinidad Guardian*.
- 21 "African and Indian cultures are a driving force in a process of retro-colonization whereby practices, styles and beliefs from the former colonies are affecting the cultures of former colonial homelands." Schechner, "Carnival (theory) after Bakhtin," 7.
- 22 Machel Montano, "Unconditional Love (Prelude)," from the album *Winning Season*, 2008.
- 23 Lorraine O'Grady, "This Will Have Been: My 1980s," *Art Journal* 17, no. 2 (Summer 2012): 6-17. O'Grady also recounted the anecdote to me when we first met in person on the occasion of the photographic presentation of *Art Is ...* in Prospect.2 New Orleans, in 2011.
- 24 Lorraine O'Grady, e-mail conversation with the author, December 20, 2013.
- 25 Lorraine O'Grady, "Lorraine and Andil - email exchange before shooting (distilled)," one of various sections of Lorraine O'Grady's project description, October 6, 2014.

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Farewell to Farewell: Carnival, Performance and Exhibition in the Circum-Atlantic Economy of the Flesh

- 26 O'Grady, "Lorraine and Andil - email exchange before shooting (distilled)," October 6, 2014.
- 27 Griffith, a mas' man with a practice in *kiddies* bands (children carnival bands) and a visual artist trained as a graphic designer in Trinidad, slowly started to bring mas' within his contemporary artistic practice. I found out about Griffith's use of mas' techniques in an installation he created for an exhibition I curated at Caribbean Contemporary Arts (CCA) in Port of Spain, *Lighting the Shadow: Trinidad In and Out of Light* (October 7-November 4, 2004). I later provided the curatorial context for the first performance expression of Griffith's mas' work with my first curated processional performance, *SPRING*, in 2008, for the 7th Gwangju Biennale, and have provided such context several times since.
- 28 It is worth noting that, in the French West Indies, i.e., Guadeloupe, Martinique, and Guiana, the last day of Carnival is Ash Wednesday, during which masqueraders don black-and-white costumes and burn Vaval, a Carnival effigy and often times a likeness of the previous year's popular scapegoat.
- 29 While an artist-in-residence at Alice Yard, Port of Spain, in 2011, Patterson executed a rougher version of *Invisible Presence*. Called *9 of 219* and alluding directly to the Tivoli Gardens massacre, it included coffins held not vertically but horizontally.
- 30 Cauleen Smith's *H-E-L-L-O (Infra-Sound/Structure)* and *Depth Procession: Go Low, Go Light* were inspired by "Bass Lines: Deep Sounds and Soils," in Rebecca Solnit and Rebecca Snedeker, *Unfathomable City: A New Orleans Atlas* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2013).
- 31 Cauleen Smith, artist statement for *H-E-L-L-O (Infra-Sound/Structure)*.
- 32 I engaged Smith on the topic of public ceremonial culture in "Cauleen Smith and Claire Tancons in conversation about THE SUPERNOVA PROCESSION," *ISSUE Project Room* (blog), May 30, 2012, http://www.academia.edu/2356883/Cauleen_Smith_and_Claire_Tancons_in_Conversation_about_the_Supernova_Procession (archived copy of original interview).
- 33 Cauleen Smith's *Depth Procession: Go Low, Go Light* assembled in front of Contemporary Arts Center New Orleans on June 7, 2014.
- 34 In 2007, Smith shot *The Fullness of Time*, a sci-fi narrative that used Paul Chan's *Waiting For Godot* (2007) as a starting point, which I presented in the exhibition *City Stage* at Contemporary Arts Center New Orleans (July 12-October 5, 2008).
- 35 Chassol's father was an amateur marching-band musician in Martinique. Chassol's interest in brass bands first unfolded in New Orleans with *Nola Chérie*,

- an early fanfharmonized (a portmanteau of *fanfare* and *harmonized*, coined by Chassol) film with St. Augustine High School marching band and Rebirth Brass Band, among others, which I commissioned and exhibited in *Score & Script: Music in Video* at Contemporary Arts Center New Orleans (February 7-April 5, 2009).
- 36 For the most comprehensive history of the Trinidad Carnival in the nineteenth century, see John Cowley, *Carnival, Canboulay and Calypso: Traditions in the Making*. For a detailed account and comparative history of nineteenth- and twentieth-century Trinidadian and Martinican masquerading practices in French Creole carnivals, see Claire Tancons, "Quand les cannes brûlaient: Danse des coupeuses de cannes à la Martinique, Canboulay à Trinidad" and "De récoltes en révoltes dans les carnivals caribéens de tradition créole française," in *Les Cahiers du Patrimoine* 23 & 24, *Le Carnaval: Sources, traditions, modernité* (Conseil Régional de Martinique, 2007), 170-87.
- 37 Claire Tancons, curatorial statement for *Up Hill Down Hall: An Indoor Carnival* (exhibition shown at Tate Modern), August 2014, <http://www.tate.org.uk/download/file/fid/41657>. See also endnote 38.
- 38 *Up Hill Down Hall: An Indoor Carnival* was commissioned to me by Catherine Wood and Capucine Perrot, curators of the BMW Tate Live series. In response to their invitation to guest curate a carnival performance in the Turbine Hall on the weekend of the Notting Hill Carnival, I brought together architectural designer Gia Wolff, artists Marlon Griffith and Hew Locke, and Dubmorphology, as well as Central Saint Martins students and recent graduates, on Saturday, August 23, 2014. Only *Give and Take*, the performance by Locke, who had already been slated to intervene during the Notting Hill Carnival for *EN MAS'*, was a coproduction with CAC New Orleans. Tate Modern's independent interest in Carnival signaled the art world's growing interest in and appreciation for the importance of Carnival in the discourse and practice of performance.
- 39 Christopher Cozier, e-mail conversation with the author, December 8, 2013. Cozier's comment was aimed at *Up Hill Down Hall* as a whole but applies well to each of its constituent parts.
- 40 Estévez, whose native city is reputed for its Carnival, has showed an interest in Carnival, alongside other queer rituals and processional forms, for decades. I first became aware of Estévez's interest in Carnival in 2007, when I exhibited his drawings of never-realized carnival costumes in *Mas': From Process to Procession* at BRIC's Rotunda Gallery.

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Farewell to Farewell: Carnival, Performance and Exhibition in the Circum-Atlantic Economy of the Flesh

- 41 In Nicolás Dumit Estévez, "El Almacén de los Olvidos Oferta Recuerdos al por Mayor," unpublished paper, 2004, Estévez discusses the Museo Folklórico Don Tomás Morel's horror vacui hanging style.
- 42 Nicolás Dumit Estévez, e-mail conversation with the author, February 2, 2014.
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- 46 Tony Bennett, "The Exhibitionary Complex," *New Formations* no. 4 (Spring 1988): 73. The interior quoted material is Douglas Crimp, "On the museum's ruins," in Hal Foster, ed., *The Anti-Aesthetic: Essays on Postmodern Culture* (Seattle: Bay Press, 1983), 45.
- 47 Tony Bennett, *The Birth of the Museum: History, Theory, Politics* (London: Routledge, 1995), 59. Emphasis is mine.
- 48 This is not the place for me to continue carrying out this argument. Instead, I recommend rereading the first chapter of Michel Foucault's *Madness and Civilization*, "Stultifera navis."
- 49 The idea of being conscripted into modernity is David Scott's, in his book *Conscripts of Modernity: The Tragedy of Colonial Enlightenment* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004).

- 16 I discuss Carnival and performance in contemporary Caribbean art, and the role of mas' in articulating it, in "Curating Carnival? Performance in Contemporary Caribbean Art," in *Curating in the Caribbean*, ed. David A. Bailey, Alissandra Cummins, Axel Lapp, and Allison Thompson (Berlin: The Green Box, 2012), 37-62.
- 17 A shift toward performance is also occurring in contemporary African art.
- 18 Christopher Cozier quoted in Tancons, "Curating Carnival? Performance in Contemporary Caribbean Art," 49-50. Thanks to Krista Thompson for pointing out that Roadworks was the name of a Trinidad Carnival magazine in the 1990s.
- 19 For historical elements about the Harlem Carnival and the West Indian American Day Carnival Parade in New York, and the St. Pancras Town Hall and Notting Hill carnivals in London, see Claire Tancons, "Occupy Wall Street: Carnival Against Capital? Carnavalesque as Protest Sensibility," e-flux 30 (December 2011): 1-20, <http://www.e-flux.com/journal/occupy-wall-street-carnival-against-capital-carnavalesque-as-protest-sensibility/>, and Claire Tancons, curatorial statement for *Up Hill Down Hall: An Indoor Carnival* (exhibition shown at Tate Modern), August 2014, <http://www.tate.org.uk/download/file/fid/41657> (see endnote 38 for further information).
- 20 Recent scholarship shows that "The First Caribbean Carnival in London" was in fact held twelve years prior to Claudia Jones's, on July 31, 1955, at the Royal Albert Hall and organized by Jamaican entrepreneur Hugh Scotland. See Ray Funk, "The First London Carnival was 1955!" upcoming article in the *Trinidad Guardian*.
- 21 "African and Indian cultures are a driving force in a process of retro-colonization whereby practices, styles and beliefs from the former colonies are affecting the cultures of former colonial homelands." Schechner, "Carnival (theory) after Bakhtin," 7.
- 22 Machel Montano, "Unconditional Love (Prelude)," from the album *Winning Season*, 2008.
- 23 Lorraine O'Grady, "This Will Have Been: My 1980s," *Art Journal* 17, no. 2 (Summer 2012): 6-17. O'Grady also recounted the anecdote to me when we first met in person on the occasion of the photographic presentation of *Art Is ...* in Prospect.2 New Orleans, in 2011.
- 24 Lorraine O'Grady, e-mail conversation with the author, December 20, 2013.
- 25 Lorraine O'Grady, "Lorraine and Andil - email exchange before shooting (distilled)," one of various sections of Lorraine O'Grady's project description, October 6, 2014.

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- 26 O'Grady, "Lorraine and Andil - email exchange before shooting (distilled)," October 6, 2014.
- 27 Griffith, a mas' man with a practice in *kiddies* bands (children carnival bands) and a visual artist trained as a graphic designer in Trinidad, slowly started to bring mas' within his contemporary artistic practice. I found out about Griffith's use of mas' techniques in an installation he created for an exhibition I curated at Caribbean Contemporary Arts (CCA) in Port of Spain, *Lighting the Shadow: Trinidad In and Out of Light* (October 7-November 4, 2004). I later provided the curatorial context for the first performance expression of Griffith's mas' work with my first curated processional performance, *SPRING*, in 2008, for the 7th Gwangju Biennale, and have provided such context several times since.
- 28 It is worth noting that, in the French West Indies, i.e., Guadeloupe, Martinique, and Guiana, the last day of Carnival is Ash Wednesday, during which masqueraders don black-and-white costumes and burn Vaval, a Carnival effigy and often times a likeness of the previous year's popular scapegoat.
- 29 While an artist-in-residence at Alice Yard, Port of Spain, in 2011, Patterson executed a rougher version of *Invisible Presence*. Called *9 of 219* and alluding directly to the Tivoli Gardens massacre, it included coffins held not vertically but horizontally.
- 30 Cauleen Smith's *H-E-L-L-O (Infra-Sound/Structure)* and *Depth Procession: Go Low, Go Light* were inspired by "Bass Lines: Deep Sounds and Soils," in Rebecca Solnit and Rebecca Snedeker, *Unfathomable City: A New Orleans Atlas* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2013).
- 31 Cauleen Smith, artist statement for *H-E-L-L-O (Infra-Sound/Structure)*.
- 32 I engaged Smith on the topic of public ceremonial culture in "Cauleen Smith and Claire Tancons in conversation about THE SUPERNOVA PROCESSION," *ISSUE Project Room* (blog), May 30, 2012, http://www.academia.edu/2356883/Cauleen_Smith_and_Claire_Tancons_in_Conversation_about_the_Supernova_Procession (archived copy of original interview).
- 33 Cauleen Smith's *Depth Procession: Go Low, Go Light* assembled in front of Contemporary Arts Center New Orleans on June 7, 2014.
- 34 In 2007, Smith shot *The Fullness of Time*, a sci-fi narrative that used Paul Chan's *Waiting For Godot* (2007) as a starting point, which I presented in the exhibition *City Stage* at Contemporary Arts Center New Orleans (July 12-October 5, 2008).
- 35 Chassol's father was an amateur marching-band musician in Martinique. Chassol's interest in brass bands first unfolded in New Orleans with *Nola Chérie*,

- an early fanfharmonized (a portmanteau of *fanfare* and *harmonized*, coined by Chassol) film with St. Augustine High School marching band and Rebirth Brass Band, among others, which I commissioned and exhibited in *Score & Script: Music in Video* at Contemporary Arts Center New Orleans (February 7-April 5, 2009).
- 36 For the most comprehensive history of the Trinidad Carnival in the nineteenth century, see John Cowley, *Carnival, Canboulay and Calypso: Traditions in the Making*. For a detailed account and comparative history of nineteenth- and twentieth-century Trinidadian and Martinican masquerading practices in French Creole carnivals, see Claire Tancons, "Quand les cannes brûlaient: Danse des coupeuses de cannes à la Martinique, Canboulay à Trinidad" and "De récoltes en révoltes dans les carnivals caribéens de tradition créole française," in *Les Cahiers du Patrimoine* 23 & 24, *Le Carnaval: Sources, traditions, modernité* (Conseil Régional de Martinique, 2007), 170-87.
- 37 Claire Tancons, curatorial statement for *Up Hill Down Hall: An Indoor Carnival* (exhibition shown at Tate Modern), August 2014, <http://www.tate.org.uk/download/file/fid/41657>. See also endnote 38.
- 38 *Up Hill Down Hall: An Indoor Carnival* was commissioned to me by Catherine Wood and Capucine Perrot, curators of the BMW Tate Live series. In response to their invitation to guest curate a carnival performance in the Turbine Hall on the weekend of the Notting Hill Carnival, I brought together architectural designer Gia Wolff, artists Marlon Griffith and Hew Locke, and Dubmorphology, as well as Central Saint Martins students and recent graduates, on Saturday, August 23, 2014. Only *Give and Take*, the performance by Locke, who had already been slated to intervene during the Notting Hill Carnival for *EN MAS'*, was a coproduction with CAC New Orleans. Tate Modern's independent interest in Carnival signaled the art world's growing interest in and appreciation for the importance of Carnival in the discourse and practice of performance.
- 39 Christopher Cozier, e-mail conversation with the author, December 8, 2013. Cozier's comment was aimed at *Up Hill Down Hall* as a whole but applies well to each of its constituent parts.
- 40 Estévez, whose native city is reputed for its Carnival, has showed an interest in Carnival, alongside other queer rituals and processional forms, for decades. I first became aware of Estévez's interest in Carnival in 2007, when I exhibited his drawings of never-realized carnival costumes in *Mas': From Process to Procession* at BRIC's Rotunda Gallery.

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