

'Play Mas With Shakespeare: A Carnival Rebellion'

Trinidad's Theatre of Carnival meets Shakespeare in this unique comedy

Trinidad & Tobago's Carnival is reimagined through a "Theatre of Carnival" bringing some of its most colourful traditional "Mas" characters to life on the stage. Come see Jab Molassie, Jab Jab, Midnight Robber, Pierrot Grenade and Jamette spout Shakespeare and sing calypsos as they wreak havoc on the world in this post-colonial post-modern satirical comedy that defines its own theatrical genre.

Produced by Louris Martin Lee-Sing for Brown Cotton Theatre, arm of the not-for-profit NGO Brown Cotton Outreach (BCO), Play Mas is an original script written by Wayne Lee-Sing and 'National Theatre Icon' Ellen O'Malley Camps who directed the staged play. The show is based on Camps' own original concept of a Theatre of Carnival as a pillar of her own Camps Carnival Theatre Technique (CCTT).

Louris, who plays Midnight Robber, was thrilled when the show was selected for the Fringe from a large pool of international applicants. Of course this meant that Play Mas had to be shot and edited as a short film, no small feat as Trinidad was (and still is) under a strict lockdown and curfew due to the pandemic. But needs must and Louris transformed her living room into a film studio. And under strict covid protocols, the actors came one at a time to film their parts. Luckily for Louris, she has a husband (Wayne who plays Jamette) with a Media Studies background who is a writer, photographer, videographer, actor, general theatre practitioner and cook. Then with borrowed microphone and smartphone video camera, Louris and Wayne made a Theatre Video edited by Canadians assigned to them through the largesse of the Fringe. What a journey it's been.

The Cast & Crew of Play Mas: Afi Ford Hopson as Jab Molassie; Dr. Danielle Elliott as King Jab Jab; Leslie Ann Lavine as Pierrot; Louris Lee-Sing as Midnight Robber; and Wayne Lee-Sing as Jamette. Videography by W. Lee-Sing; Sound Rec. by L. Lee-Sing; Calypsos sung by actors and produced by Roger Israel; Costumes are Actor's own; Make-up design by Mervyn De Goetas and applied by Actors; Edited by Logan Giles and Joshua Oliveros; Theatrical direction by Ellen O'Malley Camps and filmic direction by Louris and Wayne.

Brown Cotton Theatre team has started a FundmeTnT campaign as a safe way for people all over the world to help cover actors stipends and other production costs. You can also support and stay up to date by following Brown Cotton Outreach on Facebook and subscribing to their YouTube page. Don't miss us in the 2021 Toronto Fringe Festival. Opens July 21-31, online at fringetoronto.com

Media contact: Louris Martin Lee-Sing, browncotton@gmail.com, 868-686-9965.