

Chan, Minshall's right-hand woman

Only Minshall: No one else

Only Trinidad: Nowhere else in the World

KATHERINE CHAN is officially Minshall's Assistant Designer, in charge of design development. Unofficially she is his right-hand woman.

Chan has had a long and fruitful working relationship with Minshall, and has been involved in most of his work for the past decade. It is this long term understanding between them that allows her to be able to materially effect Minshall's visions from incomplete sketches and brief telephone conversations.

She, along with the other members of the Callaloo company have worked long and somewhat erratic hours in the past few months in the build up to the opening of

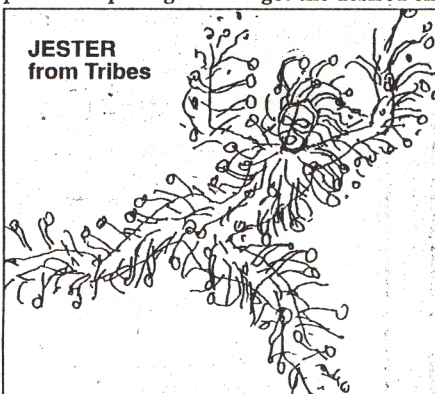
Atlanta '96. Her job is demanding and she admits that as the end of this project approaches she is exhausted.

Katherine spends half of the year in London in her studio and came to Trinidad earlier this year to assist with carnival preparations. Before she knew it, she was caught up in the excitement of the Olympics and is still here working hard.

Chan says that a lot of the inspiration for the designs has come from a combination of "Hallelujah" and "Song of the Earth". The same spiritual and earthy feeling is created but on a much larger scale using a combination of different materials ranging from cardboard to fibre-glass. She stresses the importance of understanding the capabilities of the materials

that she is working with as she believes "a true understanding of the materials and how they can be used is integral to the process of creation". Chan firmly believes that much of the work that has been done by the Callaloo company could not have been achieved by any one else, anywhere in the world. "They have created a feeling that is structurally and aesthetically Minshall. When people watch the ceremony they will know it's Minshall's work."

Another important thing to note is that each of the 6476 pieces have been created by hand sometimes involving days of individual development and attention. For example with the five Jester's costumes each piece of jersey hanging from the suit had to be weighted with a one cent piece in order to get the desired effect.



Katherine is required to understand and oversee each stage of development. She develops the designs given to her, into a prototype which is then sent to America for approval. If it is approved they will go ahead and produce it, however if it is unsuitable, or not exactly the right texture, or colour, or does not give the right feeling, it is back to the drawing board. Although Chan usually understands exactly

what Minshall wants; she admits that there have been times where the process of trial and error were somewhat exasperating. However, it is easy to see the immense pride that Chan takes in her work, as she achieves the indescribable satisfaction of being an instrumental part of the world's largest sporting event.