

#CanadianClownInReno:

A daily journal when attending the 2015 World Clown Convention
by Empress Cherry Sunday (Stacey Laureyssens)



#CanadianClownInReno - Day #1:

Got up at 6 AM this morning in Toronto. In a limo by 7 AM. Through customs by 9 AM and on air plane by 11 AM. Flew across 2/3 of the continent. Change planes in San Francisco took a little plane to Reno. We arrived at our hotel just before 5 PM local time here. We missed our meeting but were able to register for the convention and apply for the competitions.

Did a little walkabout and made our way over to the Blind Onion for some pizza. Came back to watch Bruce Johnson a.k.a. Charlie the Juggling Clown where he did he retrospective and history of tramp clown over a 2-hour show. No time to socialize afterwards for me as I'm still on Toronto time.

Headed straight back to the room to unpack only to find that my toiletries had made a mess but thank you god they were in their own little bag. Off to bed at around 1:30 AM local time Toronto (which is only 10:20 AM in Reno) hopefully it will feel like I slept in because my first workshop tomorrow is at 8 AM Reno time. What a great start of my journey!

#CanadianClownInReno - Day #2:

The day has been wonderful. Woke up early and walk down to the 711 to get some food for sandwiches and some fruit for the rest of the week. This morning I took three workshops! They were about skits and caring clown. I cried at least twice during the caring clown workshop because the stories that he was telling were so heartwarming.

Got dressed and done up with my #glitternose for the makeup and wardrobe contest today. It was way longer than expected because every artist had a moment to show off their character and then stood still present in the moment but neutral for approximately three minutes each, which makes for very long afternoon when there is more than 40 contestants. Needless to say I missed 2 of the workshops I wanted to take.

Then after that went up and adjusted my cost gym to be more steam punk themed with my #RavenAndKiwi accessories! Had dinner with my 'date' Deaw from Thailand Circus and Ken Ken from Red Nose Productions. I won a #Play-doh balloon dog contest! During dinner at least 2 judges came up to me to compliment my clown, they thought my look was great, that I stayed in character the entire 3-minutes of standing still and that they loved my puppet, Prince Leo Arm-Bottom.

Well I'm off to a little balloon jam before bed. Xoxo

#CanadianClownInReno - Day #3:

Did workshops today on how to make parties fun, marketing, restaurant work, character development and face painting - I learned so much and took lots of notes. Today they also announced where at the 2017 World Clown Association convention will be - THAILAND! My new friend, Kritsana, my 'date' last night if you've been paying attention, will be organizing the event through his company www.thaicircus.com

The performance competition was today as well so we got to watch what all the clowns have been working on - very inspiring. All of the tramp clones were amazing! One made me cry and another was a cube spinning tramp from Taiwan. So much fun! I finally figured out the third look for my face painting competition tomorrow and have booked all three of my models. Stay tuned for more updates as the week continues to unfold.

#CanadianClownInReno - Day #4:

Today was a great day! I took classes on parade work as well as improvisation and how to really work with a partner.

Then there was the face painting competition which was really fun to be part of. Frank took us to a local vintage that some of the performers recommended to us.

Tonight was the Bucky & Gigi show - and I got to be pulled up on stage to do what juggling act with Bucky! So much fun! It was really nice to get some of my shopping done and Ken Ken programmed me a new mini LED lapel pin! Tomorrow is the last day and I know that I'm going to miss all of my new friend.

CanadianClownInReno - Day #5:

Felling so honoured by my peers. Today I was awarded a Bronze Metal in face painting by the World Clown Association at the 2015 Reno Convention!! So time to start saving up to go to the WCA Orlando Convention next year! (& Thailand 2017!)

#CanadianClownInReno - Day #5:

Final day here and it was great! We did a Paradability contest this morning with a balloon contest in the afternoon. Had some time off so we watched the auction where the money raised goes to the Junior Joeys.

Then we had our gala awards dinner and I was honoured to place 3rd in the face painting competition! Such an amazing time here - gotta leave super early so I'm staying up til I leave for the flight.

I just have to keep telling myself this Dr. Seuss quote "Don't cry because it is over. Smile because it happened."



#CanadianClownInReno - Day #6 - Perspective:

I have only been a member of my local TCA Family Entertainers group for about a month and within that time I attended a meeting, took a 3-day workshop, attended a jam, got recommended to an agency for a multiple day gig this summer and referred an amazing instructor/performer with unsurpassed skill to TCA for a mini workshop at a meeting.

I have been welcomed with open arms, taken under wings, lifted up, shown the true support of peers and have created fast and true friendships.

To be able to attend the World Clown Association 2015 Reno Convention, thanks to the support of friends and a Canada Council of the Arts travel grant, and feel that same sense of community and belonging brings tears to my eyes and lifts my heart in ways I don't think I have ever felt.

I had the opportunity to make lasting friendships during this trip has been wonderful! Been honoured by my peers by winning the bronze metal for face painting has been priceless. And best of all being able support my peers and share in their joy of art and cheer on those who were recognized with achievements awards - especially Robin "Pinkie Bee" Bryan who won Clown of the Year Award and her inspiring journey!

I want to bring my experiences to my communities and hopefully bring a bunch of the amazing performers from home out to the next WCA Convention in Orlando 2016 and Thailand 2017.

Coming home today on my flight I write my last journal entry feeling ready to face the world and dive into the deep. There are so many things I'm excited about - courses I'm planning on taking, workshops I'm looking forward to and trips to build my art. I never want to stop learning, growing and playing with my peers.





Here are some great sound bites from different workshops Stacey attended at WCA:

- Clowns make this simple hard in the hard simple - Randy Christiansen
- Be interested rather than interesting - this can relieve fear from audience - Randy Christiansen
- We are many things/rolls – all are possibilities to bring to clown. Don't ignore your experiences! - Dr. Richard Snowburg
- Entertainment is a gift - Dr. Richard Snowburg
- Connects your skills to your compassion! - Ice McDonald
- Don't feel like you have to stick with what you started with - Chris and Gina Allison
- Improv is an important tool for clown - Chris and Gina Allison
- Things can go wrong and the unexpected happens - Chris and Gina Allison
- The only mistake is letting the audience know - Chris and Gina Allison
- You can never do the same trick to the same group of people twice. - Dana Hill
- Birthday parties are not difficult but they are special – BeBop
- If it's a circus theme party the clown is the light switch that brings it to life – BeBop
- We have a responsibility to the art of clowning - BeBop
- Love what you do in the money will follow – but it just doesn't follow fast – BeBop
- You're going to speak – articulate and project – BeBop
- Anytime that you were in crown – you are representing the art of clown – BeBop
- If it ain't fun - it ain't done! - BeBop
- If you only need 2 - don't book 4 – don't worry about hurting peoples feelings – Rone & Gigi
- Film what you were doing! - Rone & Gigi