

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Kamarsha Potter Crowned Carnival Queen 2016

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Written by Carlene Woods for St. Thomas Carnival Committee.

ST. THOMAS -- It was pageant night in the Virgin Islands once again, as three young ladies took to the stage at Lionel Roberts Stadium on Saturday, April 16, 2016, and gave great performances as the Virgin Islands Carnival Committee presented the Carnival Queen Selection Show.

By the end of the event, it was 18-year-old Charlotte Amalie High School Senior, Kamarsha Potter who captured the coveted title. Ms. Potter was sponsored by Comprehensive Orthopaedic Global.

The other two contestants were 17-year-old Bianca Phillips, a senior attending St. Peter & Paul Catholic School, sponsored by A9 Trucking Enterprise Inc., and 17-year-old Charlotte Amalie High School Senior, Ceara Roberts, sponsored by the Virgin Islands Carnival Committee. The cheering section for each contestant made their presence known throughout the night as they rooted for their favorites.

The contestants were judged on stage in the categories of introductory speech, swimwear, cultural/historical costume, talent, evening wear and question and answer. There were three segments that were judged prior to the show, namely presentation, promotional presentation and personal interview.

The young ladies first introduced themselves dressed in pink sparkling tops and rainbow colored ribbon skirts, giving insight into what could be expected for the rest of the night. Contestant #1 was Ms. Phillips, Contestant #2, Ms. Roberts and Contestant #3, Ms. Potter. They then performed an energetic, choreographed dance routine accompanied by 2015 Carnival Queen, Derisa Greaves -- who welcomed everyone to the show -- and the Cancryn Jewel Dancers.

The next segment was swimwear, and each young lady showed poise and confidence. They all wore retro one piece suits with the same colorful print, but each one added their own twist reflecting their style and personality. Ms. Phillips chose a sparkling, iridescent style dominated by turquoise over the colorful print, accessorized with a glittering swim cap. Ms. Roberts called her swimwear "A Taste of Honey" and she emphasized the colors of fuchsia and yellow as she preferred a tropical style. She wore a removable jacket which she turned into a skirt. And Ms. Potter came on stage with her turquoise wings flowing and giving the effect of waves, which she later removed to show her pink and turquoise tube top suit with the tropical print. The cheers from the audience reflected their approval.

The cultural/historical segment was a display of creativity, as each young lady portrayed a different aspect of the Virgin Islands. Ms. Phillips paid tribute to late Governor Cyril E. King. Her costume revealed various impacts that the late Governor had on the territory, such as the airport being named in his honor and these were all displayed as she opened her skirt. Ms. Roberts' costume portrayed the historical churches in the Virgin Islands, and as she moved across the stage, her skirt displayed churches such as Moravian, Lutheran, St. Thomas Reformed, Methodist and the Synagogue in the front, and the Anglican Church at the back. Ms. Potter was the winner of this segment, with her costume entitled "I am Fabulously Carnival", in which she highlighted various Carnival activities such as boat races, j'ouvert, the Carnival Village, horse races and Main Street during the parades. These were all cleverly displayed as she kept opening different sections of her skirt. The crowd roared in appreciation when her headpiece which paid tribute to all carnival royalty, lit up to portray carnival fireworks.

The next segment, always a crowd favorite, was talent. Ms. Phillips displayed her dance skills, then completed her performance with a bouncy routine on the trampoline. Ms. Roberts, who was the winner of this category, showed her musical skills as she first played the tenor steelpan, then the bass pans, performing several popular local tunes from past carnivals. Her talent was entitled "Virgin Islands Mine in High Esteem for Carnival 2016." She ended her performance with a dance. Ms. Potter displayed her vocal skills as she performed to the theme, "Rising from Depression - The Bridge to Fabulous".

She began with poetry then sang “Bridge over Troubled Water” as she reflected on overcoming her depression.

During the evening wear segment, the contestants displayed poise and elegance in their form fitting crystalized gowns. Ms. Phillips entered the stage in a royal blue and silver gown with a cape. As she removed the cape, she revealed a glittering gown of a gemstone floral pattern. Ms. Phillips' white gown was entitled “Bridge of Light”, a “Mother of Pearls Creation”. It was decorated with fuchsia crystals and pearls. Ms. Potter won this segment in an angelic white gown with a crystalized neckline. This gown, with crystals over her heart, was entitled “In the Arms of an Angel”, and was dedicated to her late father, Cecil Potter.

The last segment was question and answer. The young ladies were all asked the same question about what would be their role as carnival queen to preserve carnival as part of the territory's culture. The answers varied as each young lady gave her thoughts.

After the final walk by 2015 Carnival Queen, Ms. Greaves, it was time for the announcement of the results. Miss cooperative was awarded to all three contestants. Ms. Roberts was awarded miss congeniality and best talent. Ms. Phillips was selected as miss photogenic and best promotional presentation. Ms. Potter was announced the 2016 Carnival Queen after winning best evening wear, best cultural/historical costume and miss intellect.

All of the Contestants must be commended for their outstanding performances.

Image Credit: St. Thomas Carnival Committee.