

A close-up photograph of a carnival dancer's face and headdress. The dancer has a serious expression and is wearing a headdress made of silver tinsel and white cowrie shells. The background is blurred, showing other dancers in white costumes.

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**Parade staging
area: before the
entrance**

Learn more Parade **staging** area: before the entrance

The staging area is a place for preparation and transition to the parade route. Before entering the route, each participant takes on a role within the school: percussionist, samba dancer, Baiana, featured performer, section member, director, float pusher, or float operator. In this interval between ordinary routine and public performance, the school organizes roles, positions, and responsibilities.



Anthropologist Roberto DaMatta interprets Carnival as a ritual in which the street becomes a space for intense collective experiences. In the staging area, this transformation has already begun. Bodies organize themselves, instruments warm up, voices sing, costumes are adjusted, and sections find their positions.

For anthropologist Maria Laura Viveiros de Castro Cavalcanti, the parade emerges from an extensive network of work, affection, and belonging. In the staging area, everything converges in one place. The work carried out over the course of months in the rehearsal hall, float-building workshop, and rehearsals meets the percussion section, the harmony team, participants, and the community.



Everything must be ready when the gates open.

This is also where a part of Carnival the public does not always see becomes visible. Floats receive last-minute repairs, sculptures are checked, mechanisms are tested, and technical teams work against the clock. Behind the spectacle that reaches the parade avenue lies a precise, intense, collective operation.

Photographer Walter Firmo found images behind the scenes that reveal another dimension of Carnival: focused faces, hands holding instruments, final costume adjustments, and embraces before the entrance. These are moments when technique, emotion, anxiety, and collective responsibility occupy the same space.

For those watching the assembly near Sector 1, the transformation happens before their eyes. The opening float approaches, the percussion section establishes the rhythm, and the singing grows louder. Then the gate opens. The wait is over. The school enters the parade avenue.



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