

= Carnival of Carnage =

Carnival of Carnage is the debut album by American hip hop group Insane Clown Posse , released on October 18 , 1992 , by Psychopathic Records . It is the first Joker Card in the first deck . Recording sessions for the album took place from 1991 to 1992 at Miller Midi Productions and The Tempermill Studio . The album is the first Joker 's Card in the group 's Dark Carnival mythology . The album 's lyrics describe the Carnival of Carnage as a representation of the violence that occurs within the ghettos , which takes the form of a traveling carnival to enact the same brutality on the upper class .

Carnival of Carnage was the first album on which Insane Clown Posse collaborated with producer Mike E. Clark , who would work with the group throughout much of their career . It features guest appearances by popular Detroit rappers Esham and Kid Rock . The album features the only recorded appearances of member John Kickjazz , who left the group prior to the album 's release . Although the album did not initially sell well , it became eligible for gold certification by the RIAA in 2010 .

= = Conception = =

= = = Background = = =

Joseph Bruce and Joseph Utsler formed a hip hop group in 1990 . Under the stage names Violent J , 2 Dope , and John Kickjazz , the group began performing at local night clubs under the name of their gang , Inner City Posse . By late 1991 , the group had invested more money into production than was covered by returns . They decided that their gangsta rap style was the cause of the problem : Most emcees at the time used similar styles , making it difficult for Inner City Posse to distinguish itself stylistically . Bruce suggested the band instead adapt a style similar to the hallucinatory , surrealistic " acid rap " of fellow Detroit rapper Esham , in a bid to have Detroit represent acid rap , much as Los Angeles represented gangsta rap . The group agreed , but not to copying the style of Esham closely . Instead , they suggested using horror @-@ themed lyrics as an emotional outlet for all their negative life experiences . They were also unanimous in deciding not to rap openly about Satan , which Esham often did .

After the change in musical style , the group decided that it needed a new name . Utsler suggested keeping the " I.C.P. " initials to inform the community that Inner City Posse was not defunct , an idea to which the group agreed . Several names were considered before Bruce recalled his dream of a clown running around in Delray , which became the inspiration for the group 's new name Insane Clown Posse . The other members agreed , deciding that they would take on this new genre and name , and would all don face paint due to the success of their former clown @-@ painted hype man .

= = = Recording = = =

Carnival of Carnage began recording at Miller Midi Productions in Detroit , Michigan with Chuck Miller producing and mastering the album . Miller charged the group US \$ 6 @,@ 000 to produce the songs " Red Neck Hoe , " " Psychopathic , " " Your Rebel Flag , " and part of " Night of the Axe . " Seeing that they were being overcharged , Alex Abbiss made his first major managerial move by finding another producer , Mike E. Clark . The group finished recording the album with Clark at The Tempermill Studio in Ferndale , Michigan . Clark mastered his part of the album at Rythmatic Studio , and continued to work with the group throughout their career .

Original group member John Kickjazz appeared on the songs " Your Rebel Flag , " " Psychopathic , " " Blacken ' Your Eyes , " " Wizard of the Hood , " " Red Neck Hoe , " and " Taste . " " Carnival of Carnage " was originally recorded by Esham at Hells Doors Studio , but he pronounced " carnage " as " carnicks " and refused to redo it . The final version of the song was recorded by Joseph Bruce

over a reversed recording of the original .

Awesome Dre was originally going to do a verse on " Taste . " While Insane Clown Posse waited in the studio for him to arrive , Esham suggested that he appear on the track instead for the same amount of money , and the group allowed him to record a verse . Esham was paid \$ 500 for his appearance . Kid Rock demanded a hundred more than Esham , and was paid \$ 600 to appear on " Is That You ? " He showed up to record the song intoxicated , but re @-@ recorded his vocals and record scratching the following day .

= = = Joker 's Cards = = =

Carnival of Carnage is the first Joker 's Card in Insane Clown Posse 's Dark Carnival concept album series . The Dark Carnival is a concept of the afterlife in which souls are sent to a form of limbo while waiting to be sent to heaven or hell based on their individual actions . These concepts are related by Insane Clown Posse in a series of albums called the six Joker 's Cards . Each of the six Joker 's Cards relate to a specific character ? an entity of the Dark Carnival ? that tries to " save the human soul " by showing the wicked inside of one 's self .

This Joker 's Card is a representation of the ghettos and the violence that occurs within them . It takes the form of a traveling carnival which releases the same brutality on those who have ignored the inner cities ' cries for help . The Card issues a warning against the upper @-@ class and government 's negligence toward the lower classes . The cover of Carnival of Carnage was drawn by Joseph Utsler , who would later create artwork for the rest of the albums in the Joker 's Cards series .

= = Music = =

= = = Samples = = =

Mike Clark samples Johnny " Hammond " Smith 's " Big Sur Suite " , from Smith 's 1974 album Higher Ground , Black Sabbath 's " The Wizard " , from their 1970 debut album , and the Beastie Boys " Pass the Mic " from their 1992 album Check Your Head in his production of " Never Had It Made . " Joseph Bruce samples several clips from the film The Wizard of Oz in " Wizard of the Hood . " The song " Psychopathic " features a sample of " More Bounce to the Ounce " by Zapp and " Halloween theme " from the Halloween film franchise . The song " Redneck Hoe " features a sample from " City , Country , City " by WAR . The song " Taste " samples Esham 's " Word After Word " .

= = = Lyricism = = =

Joseph Bruce uses elements of political hip hop throughout the album . Many of his lyrics were derived from his experiences of growing up in a poor family that was neglected by the government . He and his brother Robert used to escape from their impoverished reality by gathering themselves in a forest called " Picker Forest " . Joe cites " Picker Forest " as a strong influence on the Dark Carnival mythology which began with this album . The themes of the Dark Carnival also derived from a dream Bruce had shortly after the group adopted its new name , in which spirits in a traveling carnival appeared to him .

" Red Neck Hoe " and " Your Rebel Flag " stem from the group 's anti @-@ bigotry philosophy , based on various experiences witnessed by Bruce . As a teenager , he had briefly lived in Bonnie Doone , North Carolina , a trailer park town just outside Fort Bragg , where his brother Robert had been staying with the U.S. Army . There , Joseph witnessed firsthand the hatred and open racism directed toward African American citizens , as well as the minorities serving in the Army , and became disgusted and infuriated with the actions that took place . " Wizard of the Hood " was originally written by Bruce sometime in the late 1980s . The first recorded version of the song appeared on the Intelligence and Violence EP under the name " Wizard of Delray . " The Carnival of

Carnage version is derived from a 1991 recording which appeared on the EP Dog Beats .

= = Release = =

Just weeks prior to the release of their album , John left the group because he felt that it was " taking up too much of [his] life . " When Bruce and Utsler attempted to call a meeting to talk about the issues , John did not attend . Carnival of Carnage was released on October 18 , 1992 , with distribution within a 120 @-@ mile (190 km) radius of Detroit . Carnival of Carnage sold 17 copies on its release date . The number would become a reoccurring theme in Insane Clown Posse 's work throughout much of the following decade . A condensed extended play featuring tracks from Carnival of Carnage was pressed on vinyl in hopes that DJs would play the songs in Detroit @-@ area nightclubs .

= = Reception = =

Although Carnival of Carnage was not reviewed at the time of its release , later reviews of the album have been unfavorable . Allmusic reviewer Stephen Thomas Erlewine gave the album three out of five stars , comparing the group 's performance on the album to " a third @-@ rate Beastie Boys supported by a cut @-@ rate Faith No More , all tempered with the sensibility that made GWAR cult heroes ? only with [...] more sexism and jokes that are supposed to be street , but wind up sounding racist " , but stating that the album would appeal to fans of the group . In The Great Rock Discography , Martin Charles Strong gave the album four out of ten stars . The album received one star out of five in The New Rolling Stone Album Guide , in which Ben Sisario panned it , along with the rest of the group 's discography as " gangsta @-@ inspired wigga posturing " .

= = Legacy = =

During a live performance of the song " The Juggla " in 1993 , Bruce addressed the audience as Juggalos , and the positive response resulted in the group using the word thereafter . The word has been the subject of criticism from both Sisario and Erlewine , who suggested the term is similar to the racial slur jigaboo . In 1997 , Twiztid released a cover of the song " First Day Out " on the duo 's debut album , Mostasteless . In 1998 , the album was reissued by Island Records without the tracks " Blackin ' Your Eyes " and " Night of the Axe . " The original version continues to be sold by Psychopathic Records . By 2010 , the album had sold well enough to become eligible for gold certification by the RIAA . In the Aqua Teen Hunger Force episode " Juggalo " , Bruce and Utsler appear as themselves during a trial after Master Shake commits suicide . George Lowe asks " Mr. 2 Dope " to read lyrics from " Blackin ' Your Eyes " .

= = Track listing = =

= = Personnel = =

Violent J ? vocals , production
2 Dope ? vocals , scratching
John Kickjazz ? vocals
Nate The Mack ? guest vocals
Kid Rock ? guest vocals , scratching
Capitol E ? guest vocals
Jumpsteady ? guest vocals
Esham ? guest vocals , production
Mike E. Clark ? production
Chuck Miller - production

