

The 6th International Biennial Steelpan Conference

7th-9th October 2016

venue
The Tabernacle, 34-35 Powis Square,
London W11 2AY



*'The Fusion of Steelpan with other
Art Forms in the 21st Century'*

**This conference is dedicated to the late Jit Samaroo and
Asami Nagakiya for their devotion, passion for steelpan and
fervour to inspire a global commonality.**



General Information for Speakers and Participants

Registration and Lunch:

Registration will begin at 9.00 am at the Reception Desk, which is to the left of the main entrance of the Tabernacle. Following registration, refreshments and breakfast may be purchased from the Tabernacle Bar and Kitchen. Drinks may be taken to the Theatre upstairs where the formal programme will take place. Lunch may also be pre-purchased at Registration. We suggest that orders are placed upon arrival so that time will not be lost placing orders during the one hour lunch break. The conference programme will commence promptly at 09.45.

PowerPoint Preview:

There will be a laptop for speakers to check their presentation near the Registration Desk. Staff will be available to assist you. As soon as you are satisfied with your slides, please pass your USB to the Projectionist at least one hour before the start of a session.

Related Activities:

There are two concerts (1) ‘*Calypso and Film Concert*’ on Friday 7th October and (2) ‘*Steelpan Concert*’ on Saturday 8th October. Both will take place in the Theatre on the first floor and both start at 7pm.

The Calypso and Film Concert on Friday 7th October will also serve as the official opening of the 6th biennial steelpan conference and will commence with a tribute by James McGrath to the remarkable calypsonian, the late Lord Woodbine, mentor to the celebrated Beatles. Gerald Lanos and Aki de Leon will take us on a calypso journey from 1912 to 1950 using sound bites, pictures and narrative. Finally calypsonians from the ‘*Association of British Calypsonians*’ will engage the audience with host of favourite calypsos.

On Saturday 8th October, the Steelpan concert is tribute to the late Russ Henderson in Pan and will include ‘Funland Serenaders’ from Switzerland, ‘St Michaels & All Angels Steel Orchestra’, Nostalgia Steelband, Pan Nectar and several pan soloists. These events will be highly entertaining and are good opportunities for participants to meet informally.

Course Credit and ‘Certificate of Attendance:

The meeting does not carry any official accreditation but the organisers would welcome your completion of a questionnaire to help evaluate and plan future meetings. If a ‘*Certificate of Attendance*’ is required please inform staff at the Registration Desk upon arrival.

Information and Messages:

Messages received during the course of the meeting will be posted up near the Registration Desk.

Kindly switch off mobile phones during all activities in the Theatre.



The organisers* of this conference gratefully acknowledge the support of the following:

- *The Carnival Village Trust - Tabernacle - for hosting the meeting*
- *Funland Serenaders' from Switzerland, 'St Michael & All Angels Steel Orchestra', Nostalgia Steelband, Pan Nectar and several pan musicians*
- *School of Steelpan, SV2G and SPETA (Steelpan Education & Tutors Association)*
- *Representatives of the British Association of Steelbands, Association of British Calypsonians and Pan Podium*
- *Jimi Phillip and Freddy Totesaut; Pan Tuning Workshop for Youths*
- *Jenny Webb; Pan Jam Community Workshop*

***Organising Committee:**

Haroun Shah (Chair), Marvin Barbe, Nicole Ferdinand, Debi Gardner, Debora Alleyne-De Gazon, Shareen Gray, Robbie Joseph, David Loewenthal (Alexander-D-Great), Celia Burgess-Macey, Lionel McCalman, Nicole-Rachelle Moore, Rachel Rankin, Jacque Roberts, Debra Romain, Clary Salandy, Laila Shah, Nestor Sullivan and Ansel Wong.

Confrence Book produced by Laila Shah

6th International Biennial Steelpan Conference

“The Fusion of Steelpan with other Arts Forms in the 21st Century”

Venue: The Tabernacle, 34-35 Powis Square
London W11 2AY

The Caribbean impact on British culture through arts, music, dance, painting, sculpture, theatre, religion and mythology has been profound, as witnessed over the 5 decades of the Notting Hill Carnival. Wherever carnival arts have taken root, advances take shape in the retreat of the ‘pan-yards’, ‘mas camps’ and ‘calypso tents’. The sheer intensity, dedication and creativity that radiates at these venues drives innovation. Until recently little had been documented, methods remain unpublished and only at specific events do some of these new developments come to light.

At previous conferences, beginning from 2006 to 2014, the *savoir-faire* behind some of these innovations were presented in the context of their history and impact. Considerable success was reported, for example, in graded steelpan examinations, youth training projects, mas design and new materials, acoustics, metallurgy, inventions that revolutionised both sound and transport methods for steelpan while the roots of calypso, dating back over century, were captured by speakers. The long silence of the mentoring of the Beatles from 1958 to early 1960s by the calypsonian Lord Woodbine was unveiled. Conversely, the deterioration of these arts in some cities such as Toronto, where the renowned Caribana is in the decline, or the tumultuous struggle for survival by steelbands and calypsonians were vividly expressed by authoritative speakers as paradigms to grapple with.

This 6th conference coincides with Notting Hill Carnival’s Golden Jubilee and aims to play a pivotal role in bridging its components and exploring its fusion into new British art forms. Progress is dependent on research, development and cohesion and reaching the far corners of the community. This conference provides a platform to facilitate this and fosters creative interactive development as a foundation to futuristic direction.

Haroun N. Shah: Programme Organiser.

The conference programme consists of 4 sessions over two days with all events being held at the Tabernacle, Carnival Village

Conference Programme Outline:

Saturday 8th October

Session I: ‘Calypso and Black Music’

Session II: ‘Carnival Arts in the Golden Jubilee’

Sunday 9th October:

Session III: ‘UK Steelpan Activities’

Session IV: ‘Steelpan and the Wider World’

PROGRAMME: Registration: From:9.00 am

Saturday 8th October; Day 1

09.45 -10.00 ***Opening Remarks and Outline of the Programme***
Haroun Shah

Session 1: 10.00 - 13.00: ***'Calypso and Black Music'***
Chairs: Alexander-D-Great and D'Alberto

10.00 -10.45: ***The Inextricable Link between Pan and Calypso***
Alexander-D-Great. Steelpan - Debra Romain

10.45-11.15: ***Steel Pans To Play Stations; How innovation and a DIY culture has fueled British black music's perpetual development***
Lloyd Bradly

11.15 -11.45: ***The People's Journalism' versus Publishers' Journalism***
Stephen Spark

11.45 -12.00: **Open Discussion**

12.00 -12.30: ***Funding Carnival Arts Projects***
Jacqueline Roberts

12.30 -13.30: **LUNCH**

Session 2: 13.30 - 17.00: ***'Carnival Arts in its Golden Jubilee'***
Chairs: Ansel Wong & Christopher Innes

13.30 -14.00: ***Using the Elements of Notting Hill Carnival to Develop a Carnival in South Yorkshire***
Debora Alleyne-De Gazon

14.00- 14.30: ***Caribbean and African Dance in Carnival***
Caroline Muraldo

14.30 -15.00: ***"London is the Place for Me"; Notting Hill Carnival 2016***
Clary Salandy and Michael 'Speedy' Ramdeen

15.00 -15.30: ***Taking Carnival Arts into New Regions***
Ansel Wong

15.30 -16.00 **Workshops and Open Discussion**
Jenny Webb and Jimi Phillip

16.00 -17.00: **Plenary Lecture:**
Expressive Culture of the African Diaspora
Professor Christopher Innes, York University, Canada

Sunday 9th October; Day 2

Session 3: 10.00 - 13.15: 'Steelpan; UK Activities'

Chairs: Haroun Shah & Shareen Gray

10.00 -10.30: *Behind Closed Doors: Archiving Notting Hill Carnival and its Value to British Arts*
Imani Douglas-Walker

10.30 -11.00: *Inspiring the Youth in Steelpan Projects*
Fred Totesaut and Patrick McKay

11.00 -11.30: *Taking Steelpan to Another Level; Projects Across the UK*
Shareen Gray

11.30 -12.00: *The Colour of Pan*
Lionel McCalman

12.00 -12.15: **Free Papers**

12.15 -13.15: **Plenary Lecture:**
The Power of Pan
Professor Dawn Batson,
Professor of Music, Intern. Cultural Consultant, USA

13.15 -14.15: **LUNCH**

Session 4: 14.30 - 16.00: 'Pan and the Wider World'

Chairs: Nestor Sullivan & Jacqueline Roberts

14.15 -14.30: *Asami Nagakiya and Steelpan in Japan; A Dedication from England*
Laila Shah

14.30 -15.00: *Pan-epedia: Observing Steelpan's Styles Across Time and Space*
Aurélie Helmlinger

15.00- 15.30: *PRSSV: Accredited Graded Steel Pan Examinations*
Frances Shepherd, Jill Scarfe, David Griffiths

15.30 -16.00: *Vision to Network European Steelbands: 'First Panyard European Steelband Festival- Steelpan - Steeldrum*
Paul Francis

16.00 -16.30 *Making Beaters Out of Beats: Steelband and Youth Empowerment in American Cities*
Andrew R. Martin

16.30 -17.00 *The Steelpan Legacy of the Musical Genius, Jit Samaroo*
Nestor Sullivan

17.00 *Closing Remarks*
Haroun Shah

Abstracts

Lord Woodbine, Calypsonian and Panman, What is History Telling Us?

James McGrath , PhD

Senior Lecturer in Cultural Studies,
Leeds Beckett University

Lord Woodbine (Harold Phillips, 1929-2000) was a Trinidadian Calypsonian, guitarist, steel band leader, tenor-pannist and maker of steel pans. Woodbine served in the RAF during World War Two, and settled in England after arriving (with his friend Lord Kitchener, plus Lord Beginner) on the first voyage of *Empire Windrush* in 1948. Woodbine began performing Calypso in Laventille in toured Jamaica in 1947 with Kitchener.

Moving to Liverpool in 1949, Woodbine (later joined by Winston ‘Spree’ Simon) led some of the very first steelbands to tour in Britain. In the late 1950s, Woodbine’s All Caribbean Steel Band came to the attention of a teenage John Lennon and Paul McCartney in Liverpool.

One of the first albums owned by Lennon in the late 1950s was Lord Kitchener compilation LP. Lennon’s own first composition was titled ‘Calypso Rock’. Lord Woodbine as a Liverpool-based Calypsonian became a figure much admired by Lennon and McCartney. The two white youngsters became regular followers of Woodbine’s band, and soon developed a close friendship with him. The Trinidadian Calypsonian and steel-pannist holds the historical distinction of being first fellow singer --songwriter whom Lennon and McCartney would meet.

Woodbine was also a vital mentor and promoter of the young Beatles; many people regarded him as their first manager. He organized bookings for the band, helped to drive them across Europe to Germany in 1960, and for The Beatles’ first performance in Hamburg, Lord Woodbine took to the stage before them to warm up the audience with some of his own songs.

In 2016, Lord Woodbine’s work has been discussed in a documentary on Calypso for Ujima Radio 98FM Bristol; on BBC Radio 4’s *The Matter of the North*, presented by Melvyn Bragg; he will also be discussed on 7 October at this international conference. Yet recognition of Lord Woodbine as a singer-songwriter and musician in standard biographies of The Beatles remains minimal. What is also drastically undermined in most accounts is his role in professionally supporting The Beatles at a crucial early stage in their development. So one of the questions confronted in this paper will be: why is it that this mentions of this fascinating, multi-talented Trinidadian musician and his relationship to The Beatles remain minimal in histories of the white Liverpool foursome?

Some might suggest that the inattention given to Lord Woodbine in most accounts of The Beatles’ career show that his role was actually slight. Yet, there is extensive evidence from a variety of sources to demonstrate that his role in The Beatles’ story should not remain overlooked. Moreover, Woodbine was not the only black musician in Liverpool to mentor the young Beatles. As this paper will also detail, Lennon and McCartney were taught how to play Chuck Berry riffs by a young black Liverpoolian guitarist, Vinnie Ismail. Other local black musicians admired and followed by the young Beatles included Odie Taylor, Gerry Gobin, Zanes Logi, Willie Osu, and The Chants.

Expanding on my 2014 paper on Lord Woodbine at the 5th Biennial Conference on Steelpan, this talk will discuss further aspects of this Calypsonian’s life and work, and will also consider The Beatles’ ongoing debt to black musicians in the Liverpool years, as well as the influences they drew from black and Asian artists from the USA, India, Jamaica, Nigeria, and of course, from Britain.

Dr James McGrath, j.mcgrath@leedsbeckett.ac.uk.

James completed his PhD on Lennon and McCartney’s work, and has published and broadcast widely on the Beatles and also on Lord Woodbine. He is currently researching a further subject—cultural portrayals of autism—on which he will publish his first book, *Naming Adult Autism* in 2017.

The Inextricable Link between Pan and Calypso

Alexander D Great

Association of British Calypsonians
Musician and Teacher

There are many and varied accounts of the origin of the steel pan and it is not for me to argue the merits of one version over another. Suffice it to say that the steel pan was invented as a direct result of the banning of African drums from being played in the Trinidad carnival in the latter part of the 19th century. The year of the ban varies from 1877 to 1884, depending on which source one chooses to believe. What is important though, is the fact that, but for this ban Trinidad's carnival would have been more like Brazil's, with bands of drummers (with additional percussion) as is the case with Samba.

The ban led to the use of bamboo as a percussive ensemble to accompany carnival celebrations on the road. The Tamboo Bamboo led in turn to the use of various additional instruments which could be beaten alongside the bamboo, such as biscuit tins, cans, bottle and spoon, and dustbin lids, to name a few.

The building of the American military base in north western Trinidad brought oil drums in their thousands and percussionists soon employed these as additions to the "rhythm sections" that accompanied carnival revelers on the road. As we know, with experimentation and refinements over a number of years the steelpan now stands as a model of artistic and scientific excellence of the highest order.

The griot tradition of West Africa is the source of many forms of oral/musical expression, comprising story-telling, political/social commentary, satire and celebration in a number of musical genres. Calypso (Kaiso) was the first of these and is derived from two main strands, the praise-singer and the *chantuelle* (literally "good singer"), whose job it was to lead the "call and response" singing at events such as stick fights and public celebrations. These events were always accompanied by drums and percussion, so it was natural that the pan became closely linked with the calypso tradition from about 1947 onwards.

The Trinidad All Steel Percussion Orchestra (TASPO), formed to attend the Festival of Britain in 1951, was the first steelband whose instruments were all made from oil drums. Esso Tripoli Steel Band played in Montreal, Canada, at the world fair and later toured with Liberace.

The steelband repertoire is extensive, representing many types of music, particularly Latin and jazz, film music and many varieties of popular music. There is a tradition of performing classical music which dates back to 1946. In the 1950 and '60s "The Bomb" (a classical piece) was "dropped" at carnival to confound rival bands with their expertise and faithful rendering of a well-known classical piece.

The Panorama competition, started in Trinidad in 1963, requires a band to play a popular calypso of the year, in a format which includes key changes and variations on the theme and treatment of the song. The steelpan arrangers compete with one another in terms of the complexity and innovation in their treatment of the calypso in question. However, in recent years the arrangers themselves have written the calypsos and then asked calypsonians to record them under the auspices of the pan captain/arranger. In my own mind this has not always been as successful as arranging a great existing song. In my opinion this is often because the arranger may be more concerned with showing off his or her own expertise than considering the quality of the material they are using. Many great jazz musicians prefer to show off their skills by improvising on a great jazz standard than composing a new piece with less immediate impact. Consider a song like “Summertime” with its obvious melodic appeal. It is because the tune is so well – known that the great players can show their expertise to fuller advantage than in the case of a more obscure piece.

The dominance of Panorama has meant that most steel bands outside of Trinidad and Tobago prefer to play a hit tune from there rather than use a song from the country in which they reside. This has been true in the USA, Canada and the UK for many years. It was the great Russell Henderson who said that he looked forward to the day when Panorama in the UK was won by a locally composed song and not one necessarily from Trinidad. This finally happened when “Pan in the Atmosphere” by De Mighty Jamma won panorama 2014.

In the 21st century it is now quite usual for calypsonians to play pan and for pannists to be calypso or Soca singers and many of them are very skilled in both genres. De Jamma was the first pannist/calypsonian to win UK Calypso Monarch. Prior to that, calypsonian/pannist “Prodigal Son” (aka Bubbles) spent two years in the London Calypso tent where he delivered two brilliant calypsos. Debra Romain (renowned pannist and singer) and I wrote “Pan Woman On Trial”, which won me the UK Calypso Monarch title in 2011. The recording was played hundreds of times in Trinidad and Tobago although no pan band played it. The song received lots of acclaim on the “When Steel Talks” website. We subsequently went on to compose “Russell Henderson” two days after the demise of that icon of Trinidadian musical culture.

In 2016 Carlene “Sweet Wrists” Etienne and duo Sunshine and Nadiva (all three pannists) competed in the Association of Calypsonians UK Groovy Soca competition, the latter duo winning the title on their first appearance. Triniboy Joojie, the premier UK Soca performer is a front line member of Ebony Steel band and the tradition of the pan-playing calypsonian/Soca artist is set to become the norm in the future. Long may it continue.

Steel Pans To Play Stations

How innovation and a DIY culture has fueled British black music's perpetual development

Lloyd Bradley

Author

lloydbradley.net

Quite apart from being one of only handful of musical instruments invented in the 20th Century, the steel pan marked the start of a long history of resourcefulness and tangible creativity that not only allowed British black music to evolve at a pace that left the more mainstream industry standing still. Of far greater importance, however, this signified a self-reliance vital to the music shaping its own unique identity, which in turn played a central role in the building of the emerging black British character. So rather than dwell on the steel pan itself, I will instead be looking at and talking about the sequence of situations it precipitated, and how they became the driving force behind British black music both culturally and commercially.

When writing *Sounds Like London: 100 Years of Black Music In The Capital* and *Bass Culture: When Reggae Was King* some ten years earlier, a single theme emerged in both books: ingenuity in the face of ... well, in the face of not very much. It was the idea that creativity and musical excellence could blossom, regardless of convention or conventional opportunity, but through a DIY ethic and a fierce independence of spirit. The steel pan was immediately more than merely a musical instrument, it was – and remains – emblematic of what can be achieved if you put your mind and a bit of hard work to it. While from that vital cultural perspective, steel orchestras showed everybody who would care to notice – ie London's tight black music community who swiftly welcomed it into jazz and dance band situations – what could be gained from the sense of ownership involved in making such a break with convention.

With the steel pan pointing the way forward, British black music moved through a pre-roots reggae Rasta music more about spirituality than sufferation; lovers rock pop reggae that accurately represented the young black London; jazz/funk repurposing of Boys' Brigade marching bands; Jazzie B's uniquely domestic confection of soul, funk and hip hop; grime's mixing of Playstation bleeps, TV soundtracks and traffic noises to create something that spoke directly to its intended audience.

"Use what you got to get what you want", is how James Brown defined such self-reliance. "A sound system mentality" is what people of my generation called the underground music industry that allowed black music to evolve and flourish outside of conventional constraints. "Every spoil is a style" was always my parents' pithy description of how apparently unhelpful circumstances can be turned to considerable advantage.

What it also is, is a series of events that has kept British black music at the cutting edge of urban-type culture all over the world. One that was kicked off when, at the Festival of Britain, the Trinidad All-Steel Percussion Orchestra unleashed beautiful music from a collection of rusted sawn off oil drums.

'The People's Journalism' versus Publishers' Journalism

Stephen Spark

Photographer and Commentator

The first part of the title is Roaring Lion's apt description of social commentary calypso. In an interview with *Billboard* magazine in 1995 the 88-year-old calypsonian said: "When something important happens, people would find me and give me the facts, and I would compose something right away. That's the way the calypsonian goes about doing his work." [Fergusson, I, 'Ice's Lion reigns as calypso king' in *Billboard*, 10 Jun 1995, p89]

In his book *Kaiso and society*, Dr Hollis Liverpool (Mighty Chalkdust) wrote: "History has proven that the Calypsonian was the very first journalist in the Caribbean." [Liverpool, H (199). *Kaiso and society*, Juba Publications, Diego Martin, p39]

The kaisonian's tradition of combining news with often acerbic comment is one that remains unbroken from the era of the chantwell in Trinidad to the present day in the Caribbean and its diaspora. This year at the ABC Tent in London, G-String (Gerry Archer) won the UK Calypso Monarch title with his take on the hottest political topic in Britain. In 'Referendum', he sings, "Tell Theresa so, the only referendum we're voting for is the one for calypso".

However, that tradition is not unique to Trinidad. The islands of the Indian Ocean have their own social commentary musical genres, such as moutya in Seychelles and séga in Mauritius. In the UK, broadsheet ballads – song lyrics on topical, humorous and scandalous subjects printed on single sheets of paper and sold in pubs and on street corners for a penny a time – were hugely popular from the 1600s onwards. They were the way ordinary working people received the news and could express their anger at injustice or could mock the powerful and pompous.

Unlike calypso, the broadsheets failed to survive the rapid spread of cheap newspapers and the professionalisation of entertainment. As ballad-revivalist Jennifer Reid put it: "Newspapers killed off the dubious gossip that was not regulated in ballads - yes you got the news but whose version - and newspapers refined the actual facts and presented them to people the country over." [Jennifer Reid, pers comm., 19 Sep 2016]

The printed media gave a semblance of objectivity that the calypso or the ballad lacked, and yet the control of the press by 'gatekeepers' – proprietors, editors, sub-editors, advertisers – meant that the view they presented of the world was a partial one, and one inevitably skewed in favour of the elites. We only have to look at the disapproving way Carnival in Trinidad was reported in the 19th and early 20th centuries and the way Notting Hill Carnival is reported right up to the present day to see that the voice of the ordinary man and woman is often excluded.

Today, those same newspapers are struggling to compete with web-based news sources. Increasingly, they have abandoned straight news reporting in favour of opinion, lifestyle coverage, humour and analysis. The journalist is trespassing on the calypsonian's territory. Meanwhile, calypso, sega perhaps even the ballad have a new form of distribution. No longer confined to tents, stages and street corners, they can use the web to spread the people's journalism far beyond their immediate neighbourhood.

Funding Carnival Arts Projects

Jacqueline Roberts

Chief Executive Officer, SV²G
School of Steelpans UK
Wycombe Steel Orchestra
Steelman Educators & Tutors Association
Wycombe Community Festival & Carnival

In response to the decline in funding streams and the prolific competition in applying for funding, creative ways around targeted funding will be considered. In this presentation, I will discuss and share my knowledge of the successful funding grants awarded to SV²G. I believe that carnival arts create corridors in education, from learning through the curriculum, one can increase confidence and self-esteem in young people. The intergenerational experience of carnival arts through family learning enriches lives and connects communities. As the Vice-Chair of Carnival Network South, co-founder and Chief Executive Officer of SV²G; I am also Creative Director for the School of Steelpans UK, Wycombe Steel Orchestra and produces the Wycombe Community Festival & Carnival.

SV²G (St. Vincent & the Grenadines 2nd Generation), was established in 2003 to develop awareness of the African and Caribbean heritage within the communities in and around High Wycombe. As a registered Charity, SV²G works with hundreds of young people aged between 7 - 25 years, as well as individual adults and families within the community delivering: the Wycombe Steel Orchestra through workshops, rehearsal and performance opportunities, a renowned School of Steelpan, including formal accreditation. SV²G also produces the Wycombe Community Festival and a range of innovative and creative combined arts projects. SV²G therefore has an excellent track-record of delivering high quality activities and events with strong community participation and audiences. The organisation has also been invited to play before high profile audiences and venues including Buckingham Palace and Parliament.

SV²G

P O Box 1064, High Wycombe

Buckinghamshire

HP12 3ZB

Office@sv2g.org.uk

01494 459449

07967 296789

Using the Elements of Notting Hill Carnival to Develop a Carnival in South Yorkshire

Debora Alleyne-De Gazon

Creative director, Notting Hill Carnival
Creative consultant, Creative Learning Circuit



The presentation is a proposal which highlights ways in which creative elements of an established carnival such as Notting Hill can be adapted to foster the development of a carnival in South Yorkshire.

In developing the proposal an astute understanding of the power of carnival arts is examined. This highlights the general perspective of the arts as an important medium which facilitates community engagement and cohesion; encourages the appreciation of other cultures as various cultures share the same space and fosters the development of a sense of identity.

These dynamic qualities of the arts was adopted 50years ago when the London Fayre was re-introduced in Notting Hill and further evolved into a Carnival.

In analysing the Notting Hill Carnival it is noted the festival consists directly and indirectly of various creative elements such as visual arts, theatre, music, dance, craft, fashion and food. These elements mirrors the community identity and heritage which have significantly contributes to the event's uniqueness and its contribution to the area and London's regeneration and development of cultural tourism. South Yorkshire Carnival Arts Regional Festival is design to adopt these creative principles including collaborative input from professional artists in Yorkshire, nationally and internationally thus producing innovative programmes which educate, engage and entertain all ages.

The expected outcome of the programmes implemented in schools and community groups, is a grand showcase woven within a carnival tapestry of national and international cultures thus promoting South Yorkshires cultures, supporting culture –led- regeneration and enhancement of cultural tourism of the area

Caribbean and African Dance in Carnival

Caroline Muraldo

Artistic Director/Manager Muraldo D.C.
Dancer/teacher, choreographer, actress, designer,
United Kingdom Performing Arts

Amongst the many facets of Caribbean Carnivals such as steelpan, sound systems, mas and calypso, dance underpins its holistic form, brings it to life and provides the exuberance that we now take for granted. Because it happens so naturally and spontaneously, onlookers often miss the extraordinary amount of work that goes into preparation and choreography and are often unaware of the colourful, intricate and diverse expressive cultures that emanated from Africa.

My Trinidadian father helped to develop a passion in me for Caribbean culture, often talking to me as I grew up, about steel pan, calypso and carnival with great pride. As I discovered the integral role of dance within carnival, a rich area of interest opened up, forming part of my life long dedication to the traditional dance forms of the Caribbean.

I have therefore devoted my career to this unique and diverse art form, as a dancer choreographer in Caribbean and African Dance, forming my own company (Muraldo D.C) to teach dance on a weekly basis in primary schools, adult special needs and adult dance classes in 'Africanistic Movement'. Additionally, we undertakes weekly Children's Saturdays school in dance, drumming and drama with emphasis on Caribbean and African culture. Every opportunity is taken to develop awareness and appreciation of black culture, with a particular emphasis on traditional Caribbean dance. The group offers educational establishments the opportunity to utilise their professional skills as qualified teachers to imaginatively apply dance as an effective tool of learning, teaching from one-off workshops to residencies and regular classes.

The company promotes and teach dances of African heritage with a particular emphasis on Caribbean dances traditions. The group is especially renowned for its work with Caribbean Quadrilles and their own unique development 'Africanistic movement' which provides individuals a movement basis from which to study these exciting and challenging dance forms.

The group focuses on three main areas:

- Performance in venues such as theatres, schools, community venues or festivals,
- Work for educational establishments, community centres or projects
- Church Ministry through both performance and teaching.

Over the past four years in particular, I have had the opportunity to have a far more intimate relationship with Carnival, utilising my experiences of costume and dance creation, leading to the presentation of my own band, where I intend to build upon the rich foundational principals central to the heritage of traditional Caribbean carnival.

“London is the Place for Me”; Notting Hill Carnival 2016

Clary Salandy and Michael ‘Speedy’ Ramdeen

Mahogany Carnival Design
Harlesden, London

Mahogany is a group of multi-disciplinary artists who design and create large scale kinetic sculptures/carnival costumes utilising the human body in the art form of “Mas Making”, Masquerade or Street Theatre. The group was created by designer, Clary Salandy and structural engineer Michael Ramdeen, to develop techniques of costume design and construction and to heighten the understanding of Carnival and Carnival Arts. Their inspiration originates from involvement in the Trinidad Carnival, one of the world’s most magnificent celebrations.

Formed in 1989, Mahogany has gone from strength to strength and their success in design is now recognised worldwide. Mahogany has been instrumental in introducing the art form of MAS-MAKING across the UK. They are the seminal force in educating European communities in the development of Carnival. Their award winning collaborations have been featured in the Caribbean, London, Paris, Nice, Sweden, United States and Trinidad and act as a catalyst for bringing together people from cult COSTUME PRESENTATIONS

In the year that Notting Hill Carnival celebrates its 50th anniversary of London, Mahogany is presenting “London is the Place for Me”, the collection for Notting Hill Carnival 2016. The theme spans five designs that encompasses the glory of this era: English Rose, the Tube, Skyline, Pence, Modernity, Football and All the Queen Roses.



These vivid sketches came to life on the streets of the London Carnival Parade route in 2016. Mahogany remains the only masquerade band still creates traditional backpack wire frame costumes for Carnival. These are larger than life creations and works of precision designed by Clary Salandy and Michael Ramdeen and will be presented and discussed during this presentation.

In these uncertain times brought about by the “Brexit”, and the questions around the sustainability of the Notting Hill Carnival in its current format, bringing dismay and consternation to the Carnival sphere, London remains a place that a large Caribbean population calls home. Mahogany chooses to pay homage to the intrinsic multiculturalism of the Carnival.

Taking Carnival Arts into New Regions

Ansel Wong

Elimu Mas Band, London

“I know very well that Descartes and his rationalism are outdated but man is nothing positive if he is not continuity. To excel the past we must not allow ourselves to lose contact with it; on the contrary, we must feel it under our feet because we have raised ourselves upon it.”

The London’s Notting Hill Carnival is one of the most celebrated and recognised street festivals. In 2016, it celebrated its 50 years of existence. Making contact with its essences and antecedents, promoting the event, both here and abroad, and continuing to feel every element of Carnival under our feet come has its own challenges and issues. Carnival, as an art form and event, occupies a deeply contested terrain. My presentation will explore key aspects of the Carnival artscape; aspects that need to be confronted when attempting to take Carnival to new audiences and faraway places.

Over the past ten years, I have participated in Carnival events as a judge, promoter and Tour Manger in London North Kensington, Bridgwater and Kingston upon Thames.

For us, Carnival, as an event and as an art form, has three key modalities: It is a ritual of resistance, a festival of otherness and performance art. Referencing the London Notting Hill Carnival that occupies a contested terrain on which notions of public space, performance and participation dominate, my presentation will explore these notions, seeing Carnival as a medium of artistic production and a form of social and political discourse and outlining the impact on the logistics and artistic considerations for taking a carnival Band abroad.

What is this ‘Carnival’ that we are taking to China, Malta, Tobago, Tunisia, Hollywood and UAE? Dr Pat Bishop defines ‘Carnival’ as an opportunity for identity change and role reversal; a time for reversion, for exploring our multiple and impermanent selves, for levelling the complexities of the human condition, for becoming extraordinary. *“We see Carnival as a pre-Lenten or indeed a summer festival of street parades and fancy costumes (or not-so-fancy costumes); music from sound system black boxes – here and there a steel band perhaps. Crowds – controlled and routed of course. Judges. Disputed judges’ decisions and then the thing starts all over again. It is a time of hustle and a time for the small man to make a bread. Or lose a bread.”*

Taking Mas to new regions brings its own rewards and its own challenges.

Plenary Lecture

Expressive Cultures of the African Diaspora

Christopher Innes

Canada Research Chair
Distinguished Research Professor
Department of English, York University
Canada

Working together with colleagues across the world, I am applying for a major grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada in order to research and explore the cultural influences of the African diaspora. The primary focus is on Carnival/Mas (Masquerade) since African art includes the spectators, making them part of the action; and this type of performance is common in America, Canada, the UK and Europe.

I shall be speaking about the ways in which we hope to trace these cultural influences: from dance and music through painting, to hairstyles, tattoos and fashions. We are also hoping to demonstrate the liveliness and sophistication of African cultures, and their effect on Western cultures.

The results of this research are intended to be advertised through developing new kinds of digital performances and presentations to Museums and schools, and to establish a new form of knowledge mobilization.

Behind Closed Doors: Archiving Notting Hill Carnival and its Value to British Arts

Imani Douglas-Walker
Carnival Village

The Golden Jubilee of the Notting Hill Carnival marks a significant point in its history due to its tumultuous legacy of celebration and commemoration set against a contextual historical backdrop of grassroots' social, economic and political issues, violence and community social action. (*Ansel Wong*)

Despite its significant milestone and its contribution made over the last 50 years, the Notting Hill Carnival is excluded from the wider interpretation of what is considered art by the elite British society. The general perception held of the Notting Hill Carnival, when compared to other professional art forms such as Opera and theater, is not only very poor but this perception is accompanied by a narrative of it being a street party - a non-professional amateur based voluntary activity that has no value.

What is evident is the inherent need to raise awareness and greater understanding not only within the elite art landscape but also amongst stakeholders and audiences outside of the Carnival arts sector of the NHC cultural and intellectual value and its impact on British mainstream cultural artistic landscape.

Archiving Notting Hill Carnival allows the sector to champion and advocate its rich cultural heritage, historical value and relevance, thus playing homage to the existence of a highly skilled based professional art form which is diverse, encompassing both culturally and artistic traditions, as well as the immense work delivered to ensure the excellence of carnival arts is accessible within our communities and beyond UK shores.

Archiving and Advocacy go hand in hand as it is crucial to the preservation of the legacy and cultural heritage of the Notting Hill Carnival. Preserving the history, artifacts, values and cultural items (and or memory institutions) can be passed on to future generations. Moreover, advocacy allows the sector to safeguard the living, the concept that being living practices by people which is core to the preservation and sustainability of the NHC future. Safeguarding the intangible heritage activities such as oral tradition, dance, music, performing arts, grassroots knowledge, artisanship, festivals, rituals, social events and food/ drink cultures we can 'pass on the baton' and strengthen narrative for today and tomorrow generations.

The legacy of Notting Hill Carnival not only links one back to a rich historical timeline, a past shaped on the streets of Notting Hill, but the NHC legacy is linked to the present day which also has to be preserved and passed on the future (our progeny) too. Therefore contemporary heritage of Notting Hill Carnival has to be treated with the same regard. The Notting Hill carnival is not a static art form but an organic evolving art form which is continually shaped by social, economic and politically factors. The cultural heritage of the Notting Hill Carnival is unique and irreplaceable and we, as custodians and present generation, have a duty to preserve it not only for today's generation but for those in the future.

St Michael's Youth Project (SMYP, 1996 -2016)

Freddy Totesaut and Patrick McKay
St Michael & All Angels Steel Orchestra

St Michael's Youth Project (SMYP) was formed in 1996. Our aim is to raise the aspiration, self-esteem and self-worth of children and young people and provide educational, musical, recreational, personal development and leadership activities for children and young people aged 8 to 25 years on Saturdays, after school and during school holidays in order to improve their life chances and better prepare them to recognise opportunities and take advantage of them when they arise.

Our Vision: Here achievement and success is the norm for all young people: This is done through our personal development and music programmes. Here participants come to learn to play Steel Pan and befriend the community through community performances, at residential care homes and day centres for Older People and people with disabilities, to travel and support other voluntary organisations and to work in partnership with Voluntary and Statutory sector agencies for the benefit of the wider community.

Our Personal Development Programmes run every Half Term and Holiday Break during Afternoon Sessions, as this provides the ideal time for delivering activities that uses a platform of developing skills in literacy, numeracy and effective communication. Outcome:

We make an impact wherever we go by demonstrating musical excellence as well as professional conduct, be it at The Notting Hill Carnival, Lords Cricket Ground, the local Day Care Centre, wedding, funeral or community celebration.

St Michael & All Angels Steel Orchestra (SMA3SO) Mission: To educate and inspire young musicians through exceptional ensemble training and performance opportunities and to present an international platform for dynamic young musicians who can find their niche as individuals and become a brand in their own right and to bring communities together through music:

Core Values

- We value the excellence of our teaching and mentoring.
- We encourage personal development, creativity, self-discipline, and working well with others.
- No one is to be excluded on the basis of ability to pay.
- We aspire to a culture of fairness and mutual respect.
- We expect a strong commitment from all members of the SMYP community –musicians, teachers, staff, and Trustees.
- We value the special relationship between our musicians and their audiences.
- We strive to be an inclusive organization reflecting the diversity of, and actively reaching out to, the communities of Brent and beyond.
- We value performances in prominent venues.

SMYP Mission (in short): For all young people to be empowered to achieve their full potential and have the opportunity of fulfilling their dreams and ambitions.

- To inspire people about the positive contribution that young people can make to their communities, our nation and the world.

- To empower young people with skills, knowledge and confidence to advance their career aspirations, whatever they may be and for them in turn to inspire and support others to do the same. **Our Values:**

- Participation – We value meaningful participation of young people, enabling and empowering them to bring about a better world for all.
- Inclusion ages to ensure a rich mix.
- Equality- We value all young people equally, promoting equal rights in the UK, and globally.
- Youth Leadership. We value and nurture youth leadership, creating tomorrow's leaders today, for a better future.

- Recognition. We value the recognition of young people's achievements, publicly valuing them as part of our society.

Taking Steelpan to Another Level; Projects Across the UK

Shareen Gray BA (Hons)
Manager - Steel Pan Agency
Director – Steel Pan Trust
Ealing, London

Taking steelpan across the UK is a part of my personal and organisational goals. This is the newest instrument to be invented in the world and promoting it to maximum across the UK in turn increases the opportunities for UK Pan Industry People!

Background

I bumped into Panorama in 1994 on my way to my cousin's house. Blown away by this instrument, aged 12, I asked my mum if I could learn to play steelpan. By Panorama 1995, I played my first Panorama '4 Lara 4' with the Ebony Steelband and as they say "the rest is history"!

I spent over a decade traveling and performing with Ebony Steelband, became their Millennium Volunteers Officer 2005 - 2007 funded by Community Service Volunteering and a Fundraiser for CSI Steelband in 2007. In 2010 steelpan became my life's vocation. I formed 'Steel Pan Agency' steering away from my original Fundraising background where I was employed by several charities and community groups.

Steel Pan Agency

Steel Pan Agency (SPA) formed in 2010 is my personal business and occupation. SPA predominantly delivers workshops at schools as well as performances for private and corporate events. This organisation has travelled most of the UK and visited over 400 schools introducing tens of thousands of pupils into the art of steelpan.

Steel Pan Trust

Steel Pan Trust (SPT) was formed out of Steel Pan Agency in 2013. I initiated Pan Clash (an annual soloist competition in October), an annual Soloist Competition in 2007 which then became a part of SPT projects which also includes: 'Classorama', an annual School Steelband Competition in July, 'STEELPAN' (A theatre Production currently in rehearsals), weekly Steelpan Classes for children, adults and special needs and using SPT's aggressive social Media to promote Steelpan Musicians and Steelbands. The charity also has many volunteers involved in different projects to help complete the above objectives.

Future Vision & Recommendations

Through the activities of both SPA & SPT I intend to increase the audience that listens to steelpan music and in turn widen the opportunities for UK Steelpan Industry People. For other steelpan affiliated people the following advice is recommended:

- Exploit Social Media to promote what you do, use other pan organisations social media such as SPT and post plentiful. Learn about how social media best works for what you do.

- Consider branding as fundamental. Give your work a theme colour and a logo that is always used despite any other design on your merchandise. Let your audience become familiar with who you are.
 - Always pass on services if it is not the service you provide but is steelpan affiliated and you know who does!
 - SUPPORT OTHER PAN EVENTS. Not enough pan affiliated people turn up at each other's events. It is not this way in Trinidad or in the USA; this habit needs breaking immediately for future success of our steelpan businesses/projects.
- Pan Making/Tuning/Tutor Qualifications are all requirements in our current industry for the instruments continuation. I recently visited Fundland Serenades Steelband in Switzerland to discuss options for Pan-Making and Pan Tuning. Additionally I recently received a large amount of documents to review that apparently has been set up with an examining body for Pan Tutor qualifications; pending review. I am far more interested in the latter as I believe Pan Making/Tuning courses are better delivered and organised by those from that field and I believe this is currently being considered for the near future.
- The London Notting Hill Carnival carries our biggest audience and therefore should be our biggest fundraiser. I Managed Endurance Steel Orchestra for 2-years and brought them to their first Panorama Steelband Competition. This gave me my first insight into the phenomenon of being a Steelband Manager. Steelbands find it extremely difficult to cope financially but make every effort to be present at Notting Hill Carnivals annually. However, new innovative ways should be found to recoup some of the money from this, one the largest festivals of its kind globally, to support steelbands that actively participate.

All of the above helps to spread steelpan across the UK and take it to higher artistic levels.

The Colour of Pan

Lionel McCalman

University of East London and
Nostalgia Steelband

This paper is based on a two-year long research project that sought to understand the impact of steel bands in the British school system. In 1969, Gerald Forsyth, a pan pioneer, introduced steel pans at Islington Green School in North London, and soon after, the expansion within inner cities began. There was a sense among British school music teachers of what will 'work' for their pupils and what would not, and, in those early years, steel pans in schools were seen as a 'valuable' experience for children – but only for children of Caribbean background. Today, children of diverse backgrounds have the opportunity to learn and play the steel pan. However, the public's perception of steel pan is very different. Entertainment agencies and booking agents still see steel pans as the sole preserve of the 'ethnic' Caribbean, and some even ask for an 'authentic' Caribbean steel band.

The paper considers the impact of the public's perception, in relation to an instrument that is now a global phenomenon. Its perceived potential as a main stream musical genre, and how this may correlate with the public's perception of the steel pan musician, are explored. Opportunities for developing skills associated with sociability and incorporating these into the school ethos, are no longer sufficient. This is not to deny steel pan music as an important aspect of the Caribbean's cultural heritage, but to recognise that after 60 years, in the UK, it certainly has much more to offer.

Plenary Lecture

The Power of Pan

Dawn K. Batson, Ph.D.

Professor of Music, International Cultural Consultant,
dkbat@bellsouth.net 954-609-1034

This presentation investigates the power inherent in the steel orchestra and questions whether this power has been harnessed to the benefit of the steelband movement as a whole. Through the lens of more than thirty years in the pan world, an exploration of the various means through which pan enthusiasts push the limit of their art is undertaken. Incursions made into various genres of music – gospel, jazz, classical, folk; dance in its many splendored forms; art media from pastels to batik; fusion of all types; are highlighted and form a backdrop to the main question: is the power of pan truly being accessed by those to whom it is their life blood?

From the early days of pan, the proponents of the art sought to gain validation for the instrument. This was effected musically by performing the music of the world - European classics, the music of Latin America, and Caribbean folksongs. Later on the music of India, Africa and North America were incorporated into the steelband repertoire. Today, the improvisational technique and harmony of the jazz world are integral components of the panist's arsenal. Works composed specifically for the instrument have almost become the norm.

Music, especially music that has the soul of Africa, never exists in a vacuum. Dance and music go hand in hand enveloping in their wake, art and costuming. Again from its earliest history, the steel orchestra has embraced movement and art. From Emancipation to Carnival, the music, dance, art and drama of the streets have become irrevocably combined. The steel orchestra has partnered with dance forms such as the gum boot dances of South Africa, the ballet of Europe, the folk dances of the Caribbean and the diverse dances of Asia.

Artists and writers such as LeRoy Clarke, Valerie Belgrave, and Earl Lovelace, to name just three out of many, have incorporated the steel orchestra into their art in many exciting ways. The instrument honed by a succession of brilliant tuners over the years, is itself a work of art. In short, artists of all stripes have celebrated and embraced the steel orchestra.

The power of the steel pan is thus seen in the artistic expression of myriad art forms. The rewards come in terms of accolades, monetary gain in some instances, and hopefully self-fulfillment or at the very least, a sense of accomplishment.

The power of pan however, is seen not only in its artistic influence but also in the potential for social development. The pan and its people are inextricably intertwined but while impactful art is created, the human element can introduce a discordant note. Envy, fear and greed sometimes rear their ugly heads stripping the power that is intrinsic to the art. To really move forward and take full advantage of the benefits imparted by Trinidad and Tobago's gift to the world, the hoarding of talents must cease. The building of relationships, the rebuilding of trust and honest and open scrutiny of all involved must take place for true fulfillment. As Jahmoun in "Let Go" by Kit Israel and Emmanuel Rudder sings:

"You got to let go whatever holdin' you back"

The time to take hold of the true power of pan has come.

Asami Nagakiya and Steelpan in Japan; A Dedication from England

Laila Shah

St Michael and All Angels Steel Orchestra and Nostalgia Steelband

In the first of these conferences in 2006, I heard a presentation by Ms Yoko Kimura (PhD student, Nagoya University) about her work on Notting Hill Carnival and why it was important in Japan. Even though I was 7 years old then, I was surprised that Notting Hill Carnival could be of value in such a distant land and culture. I later met Yoko and followed her work over the next 5 years. She stated that steelpan festivals were introduced to Japan in 1961, making it older than Notting Hill Carnival. Thus, 55 years ago, Japan already started taking a keen interest in steelpan; developing pan yards and tuning their own pans with the help of Trinidadians such as Michael Robinson. In the 1990s, Renegades, Pamberi and Caribbean Magic from Trinidad toured Japan and their influence was so profound that steelbands were being used for novel projects. One of the most poignant was in 2001 in which steelbands were used to rejuvenate a town in Kobe after the devastating Hanshin and Awaji Earthquake. There was considerable anguish and pain by the locals and all attempts to lift them out of their despair failed. With the help of the local authority, Yuki Murakami, director 'Fantastics Steelband' in Kobe performed for several nights, and used the tranquil sound of the steelpan to mysteriously restore the community's spirit.

When Jit Samaroo arrived with his band (Samaroo Jets) in 1995 to perform in the Festival of Fukuno, youngsters such as Asami Nagakiya were influenced and many began making a pilgrimage across the ocean to play with steelbands in Trinidad for carnival.

Asami Nagakiya was born in Tomakomai in 1985, and later moved to Sapporo-shi on the northern Japanese island of Hokkaido. She had played an electric organ since childhood, and started studying percussion instruments in 2000 while at Hokkaido Sapporo Shiraishi High School. She played in the brass band and graduated three years later. She went on to study at Senzoku Gakuen College of Music. It was there that her life changed forever as she discovered steelpan - began playing and used it to busk. She graduated in 2007 and went on to become a full-time musician, making steelpan her specialist instrument. Because of her energy and passion for the instrument, she saved enough money and in 2012 made her first trip to Trinidad with some of her friends - on a mission to play in the Panorama finals. Some of her colleagues joined top bands such as Phase II, Starlift or Desperadoes, but Asami chose Silver Stars Steel Orchestra as her band. Silver Stars has a long history as one of Trinidad's top steelbands; starting in the early years of Panorama competitions of the 1960s - playing such memorable pieces as Kitchener's 67 under the leader/arranger of Junior Pouchet and subsequently his younger brother, Edwin Pouchet. With their girls, Christine and Chanel Pouchet now at the helm, this must have created the ambience, warmth and deep passion that overwhelmed Asami. She was mesmerised by the band and its electrifying music and soon fell in love with everything Trinidadian. She was so enthralled by her band, their music and the island, it was not surprising that she returned every year until her tragic death at carnival 2016. Despite insensitive comments by the Mayor, former Prime Minister, Kamla Persad-Bissessar conveyed the true feeling of the nation in the midst of a continuous outpouring of grief and condolences for her by musicians all over the world.

In her short life, Asami lived it to the fullest, stretching herself to the limit to pursue her dream and rose to the top of her career as a Pannist with one of the best bands in the world. She is in every sense a role-model for many young women who dream of playing pan at the highest level. As a girl of 15, I recall myself seeing bands such as Phase 11 on my first visit to Trinidad in 2013 and the hypnotic effect it had on me. Then meeting some of the legendary figures of pan such as my own cousin, Bobby Mohammed who competed intensely against Junior Pouchet's Silver Stars in the 1960s. What a feeling of ecstasy it must have been for Asami when she finally achieved her goal and played at Panorama. Like so many others, I was not lucky to meet Asami but we in England still hear music, feel her passion, her love and energy and will always idolise her for pursuing her dream and dedicating her life to Steelpan!

Pan-epedia: Observing Steelpans Styles Across Time and Space

Aurélie Helmlinger Ph.D

CNRS

CREM-LESC, UMR 7186

The very rapid spread of steelbands since their invention has inspired a large scale organological study. Which instruments are adopted? A study of the variety of the original settings of the musical scale has been undertaken with the aim of developing a comprehensive approach to organology. Indeed, a remarkable aspect of naturalistic and cognitive paradigm in anthropology is probably its potential in terms of causal understanding of the culture, in place of taking the culture as explanation (Atran 2003: 137). Beyond an access to local mental representations, anthropology can, through a cognitive and naturalistic approach allow to build explanations of the observations (Sperber 1996, Boyer 2001, Atran 2004, Morin 2011).

In ethnomusicology, such an approach can be fruitfully applied to the study of performance. Trinidad and Tobago steelbands, for instance, have been well studied in terms of social and political history. But their very rapid spread – they have disseminated to around 50 countries since their invention in the 1940s and needs incisive analysis. I've shown that their organological particularities favours the player's memory (Helmlinger 2012), and can probably explain their success.

But this spread is also raising other correlated questions: which steelpans, the steelbands's main instruments, are adopted? One of the most interesting aspects of steelpans is their very original and rich ergonomics: they are a whole family of instruments, only partially and recently standardized. Acoustical constraints, combined with the concave shape of the playing surfaces and the number of oil drums used for one instrument (from 1 to 12), creates a large variety of very original note layout settings. They create therefore a variety of "public representations" of the musical scale on 2 to 3 dimensional patterns.

« Pan-e-pedia », a project funded by the Fyssen foundation, aims to build an online observatory of the steelpan's large variety of layouts, that will be fed by a worldwide coalition of researchers. The website will include the database of the various pan styles that have been documented in Trinidad and Tobago fieldworks, as material observed in bibliographic documents, and multimedia analytic tools of these documents.

This paper will describe the multimedia tools of research that will be officially launched in December 2016.

Accredited Graded Steel Pan Examinations

Frances Shepherd, Jill Scarfe, David Griffiths
PRSSV

This presentation will trace the development of these examinations and will be given by Dr Frances Shepherd, Honorary Director of PRSSV with Dr Jill Scarfe and David Griffiths, authors of Steel Pan Graded Examinations, PRSSV.

Examinations for steel pan were first successfully introduced by PRSSV¹ to schools in Birmingham in July 2015. These examinations are available in Initial grade and grades 1 – 8. Developed by Dr Jill Scarfe of Pandit Ram Sahai Sangit Vidyalaya and David Griffiths, steel pan teacher and arranger (UK), they built upon work they pioneered with Terry Noel MBE J.P.² of the Steel Band Advisory Service of Great Britain, and in consultation with Robert Thompson, steel pan composer and arranger (Trinidad).

These examination grades are validated by the Open College Network Credit4learning. OCN Credit4learning is licensed by the British government to validate examination courses and to moderate them. These grades equate to the National Framework of Qualifications (UK) where Grade 3 is Level One, grade 5 is Level Two (GCSE level) and grade 8 is Level Three, (A level). This ensures that examinations available to performers of world musics have parity with the provision from existing examination boards - Associated Board, Trinity Guildhall, Rock School etc.

Whilst the rationale for these examinations is to first celebrate students' achievements, it is also to protect the steel pan culture; to ensure that it does not become subsumed by other musics; to enable its students to develop skills that will help them and the steel pan instrument to develop and to ensure its future as an outstanding artistic phenomenon. One of the stated purposes of these examinations is to provide support to teachers; students; arrangers and players and to this end, PRSSV has developed a training programme that recognises teacher competences in teaching world music and dance. Originally intended for teachers of Steel Pan, it is also available for teachers of Indian Music and Dance and will be made available for teachers of other world music genres. This course is also validated by the Open College Network Credit4learning and successful candidates will be awarded a qualification at Level 4 (equivalent to First Year University).

So far, there have been no Diploma qualifications available for teachers and performers of world music. PRSSV has therefore created an opportunity for those wishing to seek a higher qualification and the PRSSV Performance Diploma and PRSSV Teacher's Diploma, Level 5, are now available.

Further information may be found on our web site <http://sangeet-examinations.co.uk/steel-pan-0> or from: Dr Frances Shepherd PRSSV Dominion Centre, 112 The Green, Southall, UB2 4BQ

¹ PRSSV, created in 1987, is the leading examination and assessment board promoting world musics

² Terry Noel and Jill Scarfe wrote the book 'Play Pan', published by Trentham Books in 1988, rewritten in 2009 and available on DVD from terry.noel@btinternet.com

A New Vision to Network European Steelbands: 'First Panyard European Steelband Festival'

Paul Francis

Director, Funland Serenaders

Switzerland has been making a profound contribution to the development of steel pan in Europe over the last 40 years. Today with something like 100 plus steelbands, Switzerland boasts one of the largest number of steelbands per capita in mainland Europe. Funland Serenaders is based in Switzerland's capital city, Bern, and is fortunate to be associated with the major Steelband events that have occurred in its Panyard over the last 17 years and will host the "First Panyard European Steelband Festival" on the weekend of 24-25th June, 2017. We envisage that this will be a unique experience for participants and will enable steelbands in Europe to foster more collaborative projects which will ultimately serve to further enhance and promote the development of this unique art form.

This event is being developed by "Alforms" a newly registered organisation that was founded on 1st September 2016 and is closely associated with the organisers of the International Biennial Steelpan Conferences (7-9th October, 2016). The steel pan conferences provide a formal and academic forum for the art forms of steel pan, calypso and mas while the Panyard event will be developed as a Steelpan Festival; but will also include carnival arts to maintain the major elements of carnival into which steel pan has had its inception.

Europe has had a number of Steelband festivals for example, Paris in 2000 and Sète in 2002 both in France. Holland will host its 5th steelband festival in 2017, but this will be the first *bona fide* Panyard Steelband Festival. One of the major benefits is the range of activities available in the beautiful, historic, cultural and picturesque city of Bern. During the event, the organisers will hold a Calypso Concert involving leading artists from the Caribbean and Europe, and Pamberi Steelband from Trinidad and Tobago who will make their third visit to the Panyard and will actively participate in the festival, as well as contribute in the organisation of some aspects of the event. A Pan European Steelband Panorama would be an interesting objective to aim for but there are significant challenges that need to be addressed for this to materialize. The biggest challenge will be the financing of such a project and meticulously putting it together.

The first objective may be far greater contact and communication between steelbands. Although steelbands are often designated a 'Steel Orchestra', unlike a classical orchestra, players are often part-time, unpaid and play as a hobby rather than a professional. Steelband organisers therefore need to be acutely aware opportunities and I will provide examples of some during my presentation. Having solos, duets and small ensembles in new innovative programs would be a worthy inclusion to standard formats but ultimately new dimensions will still be dictated by the key word:

"Funding".

Steel Drum - Steel Pan Wait & See!

Making Beaters out of Beats: Steelband and Youth Empowerment in American Cities

Andrew Martin

Professor of Music, Inver Hills College, St. Paul, Minnesota

When social worker Murray Narell (father of Andy and Jeff Narell) began working as a Youth Director for the Educational Alliance at the lower eastside settlement houses of Manhattan, New York in the early 1960s the area was undergoing great change. The settlement houses originally aided the Jewish immigrant community in the early twentieth-century with integrating into American society; however, over time the surrounding community demographics changed (with the addition of African American and Puerto Rican immigrants) and the Educational Alliance became a full-fledged social services organization. Murray Narell ran several diversionary programs—which included steelbands—for inner-city school kids on the lower eastside of Manhattan to keep them off the streets and away from crime. The steelband program was immediately successful and gained wide attention throughout New York City. Murray Narell also famously formed his own family into a small steelband that would often accompany the lower eastside settlement house steelbands in concert and in a *New York Times* article from 1967 previewing an upcoming performance columnist Raymond Ericson notes that the diverse group of children are, “far from being delinquents, they are performers on the relatively new form of instruments created from oil drums.” In the same article, Murray Narell later remarks that steelbands are useful in order to “make beaters out of beats.”

The steelband program started by Murray Narell in New York marks the first time in which steelbands were used in the United States as a tool for teaching leadership, teambuilding, self-worth as well as a method of fostering youth empowerment. Currently (2016), the steelband sound has firmly asserted itself as the signifying musical voice of the Caribbean on a global scale. In the United States, steelbands have become increasingly popular in school, college, and university curriculums as part of larger diversity initiatives undertaken in public education over the past thirty years. Yet, since the 1960s only a select few educational and community-based organizations have utilized the unique power of steelbands and steelpan to foster leadership and empowerment skills among youth in a systemic method. This paper will explore the history of steelbands role in youth diversionary programs and as a tool for teaching empowerment among youth in American cities. The study will focus on the historical work of Pete Seeger and Murray Narell in the 1950s and 1960s in order to establish a foundation for future programs that feature steelband as a key component of their mission. We then progress to case studies from various American cities including the St. Paul Central steelband programs in St. Paul, Minnesota (1970s-1980s), Virginia Rhythm Project of Virginia Beach, Virginia (1990s-Present), Mosaic Steel Orchestra of Norfolk/Virginia Beach, Virginia (2000s-Present), and the CAFÉ Steelband program in Washington, DC. The paper will conclude with recommendations and best practices for implementing similar programs in other cities throughout the globe

The Steelpan Legacy of the Musical Genius, Jit Samaroo

Nestor Sullivan

MA Carnival Studies; Director, Pamberi Steel Orchestra, Trinidad

Jit Samaroo has been described as a very humble human being, this in spite of the major achievements he had made in the steelband as: Arranger; Player; Leader and Composer. This presentation will examine the legacy of this individual and the impact he had on the Steelband Movement in Trinidad and Tobago and beyond.

In the exploration of the life of Jit, the paper will reflect on the views of persons with whom he had long relationships during his years of involvement. Beginning with his family life in the community of Lopinot and the role he played in the development of one of Trinidad and Tobago's finest Steelband Ensembles, the Samaroo Jets. The important achievements of this group will reflect the philosophy that guided Jit in the areas of: Economics; Professionalism; Family Life and Musicianship.

As a young man of East Indian descent from the rural district of Lopinot, I will examine his role and function in the Renegades Steelband from La Cour Harpe in Port of Spain. He was introduced to this band by Bertram Kelman, the Tuner, in 1972. Here, he went on to become the most successful Arranger in the history of the Steelband Panorama Competition to date. His involvement in this urban community consolidates his dedication and love for music and the establishment of the steelband as an institution for human development. The members of Renegades take real pleasure in speaking of Jit's involvement in the band as: Arranger; Mentor and Inspiration to all players and supporters.

I will also include the relationships Jit had developed with other Steelband Arrangers and Leaders with whom he interacted. The views of these individuals will expose the nature of his aspirations for the entire Steelband Movement. Jit Samaroo's impact on the international music scenario will also be explored. His family band, the Samaroo Jets, is one of the most travelled Steel Orchestras in the country. This band and the Renegades have performed for audiences in many countries on several continents performing music arranged and composed by Jit.

On several occasions, he was approached to compose Test pieces for Steelband Music Festivals in Trinidad and Tobago. He willingly accepted these challenges and produced some remarkable music for the occasions. The impact of these works will be discussed. Jit was a 'man of the people' always happy to share and give advice on any topic that he was capable of contributing. He was a personal friend of mine and we shared many experiences, some of which will be included in this presentation.

Finally, Jit was a family man: Father; Big Brother; Husband and Uncle. He took these responsibilities seriously while setting high standards to be emulated. This is evident in the success story of the Steelband, Supernovas, from his community of Lopinot and the Arranger being none other than his son, Amrit Samaroo, successfully following in the footsteps of his Dad...the legendary Jit Samaroo.

Poster Abstracts

Challenges of Maintaining a Youth Steelpan in the Midst of Continuous Change; St Michael's Youth Project (SMYP)

Candice Falconer, Siobhan Mitchell, Dylan Mitchell and Laila Shah

St Michael's & All Angels Steel Orchestra
Hillside, Stonebridge, London NW10 8LB

Introduction and Aim of the Project

Steelpan music is generally taught by memorisation and therefore the best known bands are those that maintain a steady core of players over long periods who can support others and instruct new members. This is not possible in a youth steelband



where continuous change is inevitable and there is an underlying current of formidable challenges. The turnover of players is rapid as youths progress with their education and careers. In general, parents rarely see steelpan as having equivalent status to traditional string or brass instruments and often send their children only if there are no alternatives, they live close by and no cost are incurred. Personal problems

markedly affect children's regular attendance especially in the lower socio-economic communities such as ours in Stonebridge in the London Borough of Brent. From the tutors' perspective, it requires additional input, immense dedication, understanding of personal issues, patience in teaching, physical work in moving heavy instruments and particular attention to health and safety issues such as performing on a moving truck during Notting Hill Carnival.

St Michael's & All Angels Steel Orchestra, part of the St Michael's Youth Project (SMYP) which began in 1996, has succeeded in retaining a high standard during this long period. Furthermore, many of the UK's best known bands have benefitted from recruiting many of our well trained, highly skilled, musically proficient and disciplined youths. However, their movement creates instability and gaps which must be quickly remedied to maintain the high standards of the band. Therefore, the aim of this presentation is to demonstrate how SMYP has dealt with this problem for two decades; constantly building up a broad range of initiatives to keep our players motivated and engaged while educating them as highly proficient steelpan musicians.

Description of Work

Website <http://www.smyplondon.org/about-the-steel-orchestra>



The youth project provides a range of diverse programmes that are educational, musical and recreational for young people aged 8-25, on Tuesday's, Saturday's and during school holidays. The music programme is the main programme run with a heavy focus on steelpan music and playing, in which the young people play at community events. Non-musical activities include a leadership programme and an environmental programme. As an

example, our annual Summer Music Programme of for June and July 2015 is shown and includes 21st July – 31st Aug 2015 including musical and personal development activities, with an interval Summer Evening Concert on 13th Aug 2015, 6.30 pm at St Michaels Church, Stonebridge and ending with our two-day performance at Notting Hill Carnival as shown below:

- 13th June 15** Band Performance
- 20th June 15** Youth Bank Meeting (10.30am-5pm)
- 21st June 15** Father's Day Service
- 25th June 15** Band Performance
- 27th June 15** SMYP Auditions & Band Performance

4th July 15 Band Performance
10th July 15 Band Performance
11th July 15 SMYP OUR BIG GIG Concert
18th July 15 Sponsored Walk & Band Performance
21st July – 31st Aug 15 Summer Music Programme
13th August 15 Summer Evening Concert.

This year our Summer Evening Concert was held on 11th August between 6.30 -8.30pm to packed hall. While the concert was a resounding success, many of our key players were away on family holidays or school activities and is typical of the problems faced by a youth steelband.

Discussion and Conclusions

We believe that SMYP has been a major success and provides a sound model for other youth groups that seek to establish equivalent projects.



Young people have found the programme stimulating and annually have picked up accolades such as Jack Petchy Foundation Awards for a host of skills including volunteering and fundraising. Members give up their entire summer break to help train over 50 new students each summer, providing not only steelpan tuition but broadening the programme to fulfil the request of parents; even running courses in numeracy and basic language skills.

Stability is of paramount importance to such a project. SMYP has been fortunate to have an expert tutor (Alfred Totesaut) and programme manager/musician (Patrick McKay) who have remained unchanged throughout the project. They have given countless hours of help to maintain high standards, training youths from 8 years, starting with the basic layout of the instruments, chord progression, simple and popular melodies to highly complex classical pieces of the masters, Mozart, Strauss, Tchaikovsky or Waldteufel.

The band performs weekly at public venues including several Superstores and actively seeks funding from a range of sources including John Lyon's Charity, Brent Council, HACC (capital Radio), Foyle Foundation, Role Model & Mentor Centre, Jack Petchey Foundation to keep the band financially solvent. Some of our players have been trained into grants funding proposals and are using these skills themselves to award small grants.

The success of a steelband depends largely on having a stable 'panyard' for regular practice, easy access and storage of instruments. St Michael's Steel Orchestra has been housed in St Michael & All Angels Church since the commencement of the project. The band has reciprocated by playing at church services; using the facilities for a number of high profile events such as our annual Summer Concerts in mid-August which attracts a packed hall and includes renowned players from Europe, North America and the Caribbean and is reported in various newspapers. We believe such events help to keep the youth engaged and does much to improve their self-confidence and esteem. It is our view that St Michael's Steel Orchestra has built up an international reputation, benefitted a large number of youths in their various careers who in turn have propelled the band to one of the UK's premier steelbands, capable of competing at the highest level. We believe that SMYP provides a sound model to build up a steelband programme and take it to its pinnacle. Proof of this came at Notting Hill carnival 2016 in which the band, for the first time, attained 1st place against the best playing band on the road.

Together and Apart; Integrating Art with Design in Steelpan

Laila Shah

St Michael's & All Angels Steel Orchestra
Hillside, Stonebridge, London &
North London Collegiate School, Edgware

Introduction

The theme for GCSE Art & Design in June 2015 was '**Together and Apart**'. The topic allowed for wide interpretation of a holistic form and dismantling of its constituent parts to construct new designs. The syllabus called for imaginative and intuitive ways of working to develop knowledge and understanding of media, materials and technologies in historical and contemporary contexts, societies and cultures.

Initially I explored Nature, commencing with the lotus flower and its component petals and was inspired by the work of the Iranian architect Fariborz Sahba who used 20 colossal marble petals to fashion the stunning Lotus Temple in India in 1986. I traced similar ideas by the American artists, Georgia O'Keeffe and Judy Chicago. O'Keeffe is best known for her paintings of enlarged flowers such as her oil on canvas '*Pineapple Bud*', (1939) while the feminist Chicago produced work such as '*The Dinner Party*' to symbolise the history of women in western civilisation.

I then began to explore musical instruments combining my passion for music with science; first exploring the piano, violin, saxophone and finally the steelpan. In all these instruments, I was intrigued with the single note, which with specific multiple notes produces a chord which then permits the creation of accompaniment and harmonisation for the melody.

Aim of the Project

Having explored a numbers of objects, the aim of this project was to use steelpan, and the mystical melody created from these discarded oil drums, to inspire new art forms such as Peter Minshall's carnival sculptures that integrate the performer with costume. Described as a 20th century wonder, this project traced the evolution of the steelpan in its historical context, dissecting our its components and reassembling them not only to form the 'steel orchestra' but also in its capacity to draw in thousands of masquerade revelers in such events as the Notting Hill Carnival. Out of its basic musical elements, new forms will be attempted to integrate Art with Design.

Description of Work and Outcome

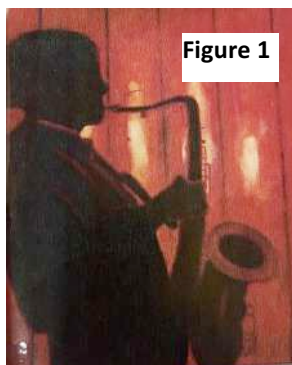


Figure 1

I worked in charcoal initially focusing on the Musical Soloist since this is the element that comprise a band or an orchestra. I began with a saxophone but was fascinated by the potential to use a steelpan to dissect out its components and search for substructures to design a functioning domestic object, a requirement of the course.

I took photos of my piano, guitar and saxophone in black and white. I was intrigued with a



Figure 2

silhouette of a saxophone player (Fig.1) and first sketched a water colour painting (Fig.2)



Figure 3

and then drew a high resolution segment of a saxophone in colour pencil (Fig. 3). The album 'Jazz Life' features a lone saxophone player which was so poignant that it became the logo for United Artists Jazz Series. In 1992, Frank Gauna was commissioned to create an oil painting (Fig. 4)



Figure 4

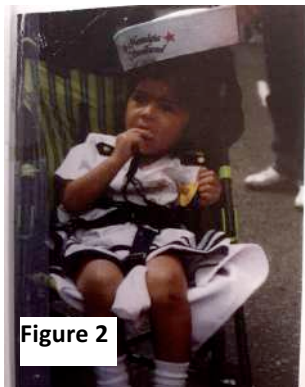


Figure 2

that captivated my imagination by its sheer artistic quality, expression and movement. I began to build on this image and designated it the 'solo panman' (Fig. 5). Using a black silhouette, I placed the hands only in white, to emphasise the magical moment when the steelpan note is struck. I then began to trace my involvement back to 11 months when I was dressed as a 'Sailor' for carnival with Nostalgia Steelband in 1999 (Fig.



Figure 1

6) then to arranging my first tune with the same band in 2013 and playing with St. Michael's & All Angels Steelband (Fig. 7).



Figure 7

My combined experience of playing pan and the extraordinary beauty and warmth of the Caribbean is captured in Fig. 8 which was inspired by John Rogriguez.



Figure 8

The astonishing costumes Peter Minshall (Fig. 9) focus on social and philosophical issues and brings the steelpan into focus.



Figure 9

Creating Geometric patterns of music and the Bass Clef.

I believe, as John Cage so eloquently stated, "art breaks down the divisions between the various

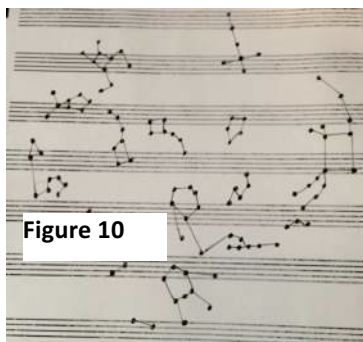


Figure 10

realms of art production, such as music, performance, painting, and dance..." In my view, steelpan is pivotal in integrating the elements of



Figure 11

carnival; masquerade, pan and calypso.

Cage was inspired by random geometric shapes and crafted an 'Atlas Eclipticalis' which could be played by musicians. I was inspired by his work and converted known constellations onto scored paper to reflect the heavenly qualities of steelpan music (Fig. 10). This led me to explore the lines of music that supports the melody, the Bass Clef. I did numerous household designs incorporating the bass clef in for example a reading lamp, chair, a book case etc before merging a steelpan with the bass clef. To emphasise its origin, I incorporated Trinidad & Tobago's national colours (Fig.11) and attempted to merge key masquerade costumes such as the 'Midnight Robber'. However, I deleted the latter in favour of steelpan representation only and began constructing a table using styrofoam and acrylic. Considerable preparative was done to complete the final product (Fig.12).



Discussion and Conclusions

This project needed to have a design component to it and Figure 12 shows a photograph of the final product which is currently housed in our family's living room alongside my steelpan. It is the end product of a long process that began with music in general as

part of the GCSE Art & Design theme in June 2015 'Together and Apart'. It is difficult in such a study not to be influenced by one's own passion and its context in the artistic culture of Trinidad & Tobago. This is particularly so in 2016 because it is the Golden Jubilee of Notting Hill carnival and much attention is being given to its various art forms this year. This conference is part of the many events that are taking place and this project is one of the many developing facets that have emanated from the profound impact of Caribbean arts in England.

Just prior to this project, I made my first trip to Trinidad in March 2013 and was overwhelmed by the vigour and dynamism of the legendary steelbands such a Phase II, Desperados, Renegades, Silver Stars, Starliff, All Stars, Exodus, Skiffle etc. For the first time I met my cousin, the steelpan protagonist, Bobby Mohammed who contributed significantly to its development in the 1960s which made the trip even more memorable. I was totally astounded by how much more spirited a steelpan sounded in Trinidad and this culminated in a piece of work I created to reflect my mood (Fig. 8). I used coloured pencils with abstract features of the hands of a 'panman' against very bright colours that are reminiscent of the Caribbean; blue reflecting the bright blue sea, golden yellow of the sunshine and red to capture the hypnotic and divine sound of the pan – and a touch of green to keep the environment in perspective.

Much is written about the admiration of the steelpan, its history, its role in society, its technical innovation, movement around the globe and its profound impact on various forms of music. However, more should be devoted to capturing its delightful and divine artistic qualities which culminated in Figure 8 which could be titled "The Exuberance of Steelpan".



Pan Jam Workshop - Cambridge, March 2017 and 6th Biennial Steelpan Conference: *"The Fusion of Steelpan with other Art Forms in the 21st Century"*

Jenny Webb and Yasmin Emerson

In association with Cambridge University Steel Pan Society (CUSPS)



Introduction:

Pan-Jam was established by the authors in 2012 as a fully acoustic duo offering workshops to schools and community groups. The aim was to give more people the opportunity to play pan which is so rarely seen outside of the big cities. Funding for instruments and tuning was generated by playing for weddings, garden parties, community events etc. It soon spring boarded into plans for its first major workshop as a community event; the rationale being to bring bands together from across the Eastern region to give people a chance to experience playing in larger steelband. The authors recognised that unlike London, where players from different bands interact frequently, bands in the region were isolated and that sharing events and collaborations could bring the community together.

Bands (typically less than 10 players) practice and perform gigs in their local area and there was little opportunity for them to hear each other play or share their enthusiasm and passion for the instrument. Organiser, Jenny Webb played with bands of 10 players and in a steel orchestra of 70 players and found that the thrill and euphoria of being part of a big band was breathtaking - especially if one is used to a playing in a smaller band.

Aims:

The annual Pan Jam was established as a community project to give people the chance to experience playing together as part of a bigger steel orchestra. Its aims included challenging players with new tunes, taking them out of their comfort zones, inspiring them and at the same time forging networks between the local bands for future collaborative projects, sharing information and supporting each other.

Outcomes:

The first Pan-Jam event took place on 7th March, 2015 had three bands and some individual players who came together for a full day's workshop under the tuition of Delphina James of Ebony Steelband, London. The assembled musicians took the day to learn a piece of music. The arrangement was more complex and gently pushed participants out of their comfort zones. There was plenty of opportunity for the players to get to know each other. The day ended with a concert, which was completely free and open to the all members of the local community. Each band played 2-3 tunes from their repertoire, culminating in the whole ensemble playing the tune they had learnt on the day. Following a second event in 2016, the feedback was excellent, and plans are to expand the event in March 2017 as part of 6th Biennial Steelpan Conference "*The Fusion of Steelpan with other Art Forms in the 21st Century*". We aim to use the conference to stimulate participation into this delightful, worthwhile and enjoyable community project.



Pan-Jam – www.pan-jam.co.uk

Cambridge University Steel Pan Society - <https://www.facebook.com/CUSPSSSteelband>

Sawston Steel - <http://www.sawstonsteelpanband.co.uk/>

sPANgle "Yes We Pan!" - <http://www.spanglerfolk.co.uk/>

St. Vincent & the Grenadines 2nd Generation (SV²G);
A 2003 Project to Develop Awareness of the African and Caribbean
Heritage High Wycombe Communities and Beyond.

Jacqueline Roberts

SV²G
P O Box 1064
High Wycombe
Buckinghamshire
HP12 3ZB

Office@sv2g.org.uk

01494 459449
07967 296789

SV²G (St. Vincent & the Grenadines 2nd Generation), was established in 2003 to develop awareness of the African and Caribbean heritage within the communities in and around High Wycombe. As a registered Charity, SV²G works with hundreds of young people aged between 7 – 25 years, as well as individual adults and families within the community delivering: the Wycombe Steel Orchestra through workshops, rehearsal and performance opportunities, a renowned School of Steelpan, including formal accreditation. SV²G also produces the Wycombe Community Festival and a range of innovative and creative combined arts projects. SV²G therefore has an excellent track-record of delivering high quality activities and events with strong community participation and audiences. The organisation has also been invited to play before high profile audiences and venues including Buckingham Palace and Parliament.

Retaining a Niche for Pan-Round-Neck Tradition in Carnival and Steelbands in General

Haroun Shah and All Members

Nostalgia Steelband, London

Although steelpans were originally carried by a neck strap during carnival, the arrival of multiple pans in the early 1950s necessitated a means to solve the problem of weight and mobility. This was brilliantly solved by Anthony Williams, (Pan Am North Stars) who first introduced wooden stands; adding legs to the Double Cello and metal stands in place of the neck strap for the 'Ping Pong' (tenor pan). By 1954, Williams placed both pan and stand on wheels, making the bands more mobile. This revolutionary idea completely transformed the steelband and led to the era of the 'Big Band' in the 1960s, permitting steelbands to appear on carnival day with their full complement of pans for various competitions.

The arrival of the legendary, 18-member strong TASPO (Trinidad All Steel Percussion Orchestra) in 1951 to play at the 'Festival of Britain', London provided the impetus for the development of steelpan in the UK. Players sat on chairs or 'pan-round-neck' to perform. After their tour of the UK, one of their members, Sterling Betancourt, stayed back in London and, with Russell Henderson, subsequently founded the legendary 'Russell Henderson Steelband', the first home grown steelband in Britain. From its inception, the band was a 'pan-round-neck' steelband. In 1969, Philmore Davidson coined the name 'Nostalgia' for a steelband that has nurtured players for numerous steelbands. Today, the band retains a vibrant group of players who almost single-handedly uphold and maintain the pan-round-neck tradition in England despite the immense logistical problems.

Apart from the passion of retaining this traditional method of playing, members of Nostalgia Steelband contend that there are distinct advantages for retaining this mode of playing. The key element of pan-round-neck is the freedom and mobility given to the pannists. This in turn enables pan playing to be more visible and accessible during street carnivals; breaking down the mystery and allowing audiences to intermingle and freely participate. Nostalgia is therefore called upon to perform at a variety of events. A poignant moment was the wild excitement created at the Opening Ceremony of London 2012 Olympics, when the mobility of pan-round-neck steelband music enabled the band to perform alongside the splendid mas costumes of Mahogany.

Notes

Notes

Notes

Notes