

# **I**nternational **J**ournal of **C**arnival **A**rts



**Volume 5**  
**June 2022**

This volume is dedicated to two former members of the Editorial Board of the International Journal of Carnival Arts:

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**Nestor Sullivan**

1956 - April 2022  
 Role Model and Mentor

Steelpan devotee, virtuoso, educator and administrator. Past student of St. Mary's College, Port of Spain, Teacher's Training College and The University of Trinidad and Tobago where he obtained an MA in Carnival Studies. Played pan with the Finland Steel Orchestra (San Juan), Sky Chiefs Steel Orchestra (Belmont), Pamberi Steel Orchestra (San Juan), Mangrove Steel Orchestra (London), Pan Rebels (New York), Calypsociation (Paris) and Pan Ramajay (Paris). Later captain and manager of Pamberi Steel Orchestra which toured the globe widely. Nestor was the Operations Manager of the Trinidad and Tobago National Steel Orchestra while he served in Pan Trinbago as the Chairman (Eastern Region), Public Relations Officer (Central Executive) and Vice President (Central Executive). He attended and presented at every biennial steelpan/carnival arts conference in London since its inception in 2006. His last was in 2018 (London) and at York University, Toronto in 2019. He was a major supporter in the establishment of the *International Journal of Carnival Arts* and the *International Steelpan/Carnival Arts Conferences* organised by Nostalgia Steelband from 2006.

**Dr. Violet Cuffy**  
 1966 -2021

Senior Lecturer at the University of Bedfordshire, a key member of the Board of Trustees for the UK Centre for Carnival Arts. Actively participated in many cultural and community initiatives. A protagonist for social reform among the underprivileged and destitute, a heroine for racial unity, latitudinarianism and liberalism

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 This volume also celebrates

100 Years of the birth of Lord Kitchener,  
 Grandmaster of Calypso from Trinidad and  
 Tobago

ACASA, IJCA & MAESTRO<sup>7</sup> PRESENT

**100 YEARS OF  
 LORD  
 KITCHENER**

A TRIBUTE TO THE GRAND  
 MASTER OF CALYPSO

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 TOBAGO CRUSOE  
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## Nestor Sullivan

### **Goodbye Nestor from London, the city you so cherished and in turn loved you back.**

Nestor Sullivan loved London – the vibrance of the city, its creativity, vision, enduring Trinis and among the Caribbean community, its drive and determination to preserve its history and culture as just witnessed in the three-month Caribbean-British Arts exhibition ‘Life Between Islands’ that ended on the day he passed away. He often said, London is the only place where he could listen and sing along to the old classic calypsos or join a steelband playing on the streets of Notting Hill during both days of carnival as he did while growing up in Trinidad. He did everything in this city he called his second home; a judge at panorama, a judge during the parade of the bands during both days of carnival, visited and played at nearly every panyard including Nostalgia Steelband, lime all night with Metronomes Steel Orchestra, cooking and playing cards in their panyard, visited schools and youth workshops as an educator and as a scholar, spoke at several universities and at every steelpan conference we organised in London from 2006. He was a founding editor of the biannual journal, *International Journal of Carnival Arts* (IJCA) which was launched in May 2020. The journal had only reached Volume 4 when he passed away and already Nestor had published two papers:

**IJCA- Vol. 1: May 2020:** "*Cultural Pluralism in the Steelband Movement of Trinidad and Tobago; East Indian Involvement in Steelband*". **Nestor Sullivan**, Pamberi Steel Orchestra, Former Vice President, Pan Trinbago, Trinidad & Tobago pages: 43 - 62.

**IJCA- Vol. 4: Dec 2021:** "*Seventy Years and TASPO's Journey of Mythical Proportions Lives On; Intergenerational Links, Key to Preservation*". **Nestor Sullivan**. Pages: 39 - 47. <https://www.steelpanconference.com/>

Volume 5 is dedicated to him and covers many projects that would have been close to his heart. He was undoubtedly Trinidad and Tobago's unofficial Cultural and Steelpan Ambassador, His friends in London will miss his annual visits immensely and many of London's steelbands have lost a proficient percussionist, but most of all, lost a very dear friend. They will forever thank him for his generosity, warmth, great sense of humour and his huge depth of knowledge he brought to the diaspora - saying goodbye to us in the same month, and just 11 days before the world celebrated 100 years of the birth of the legendary Lord Kitchener, would surely have pleased our dear friend; God bless you Nestor and RIP. Rest assured that Pamberi Steet Orchestra will be well represented in London's Notting Hill Carnival Panorama 2022 through Mangrove Steel Band bringing in members of Pamberi to support Andre White who also arranged for your steelband.

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## Scope of the ‘International Journal of Carnival Arts: Steelpan, Calypso and Mas’ (IJCA)

[www.steelpanconference.com/journal](http://www.steelpanconference.com/journal)

The ‘International Journal of Carnival Arts; Steelpan, Calypso and Mas’ (IJCA) provides an expansive platform on which to report work on steelpan, calypso and related carnival arts. Authors are responsible for the content of their work and ownership of their material and for seeking permission to report the work from their own establishments. Confirmation of approval for the sharing of material should be submitted with the paper. IJCA conforms to high ethical standards, and published papers will have been subjected to peer-review.

IJCA aims to provide clear, invigorating and comprehensible accounts of early and contemporary research in steelpan, calypso and carnival arts. It unifies aspects of steelpan activities within the carnival arts and welcomes both academic research and the work of grass roots practitioners of the pan yards, calypso tents and mas camps. Its coverage spans both more abstract research as well as applied fields, and welcomes contributions from related areas including metallurgy, acoustics, new technologies and software, databases, steelpan forms, advances and performances, arts and crafts, movement, costumes, archiving, social commentary, music, history and development of calypso, extempo, soca and related genres and pioneering work of artists (biographical or otherwise), and the development of carnival arts globally. The journal strives to strengthen connections between research and practice, and in so doing enhancing professional development and improving practice within the field of carnival arts.

Material in the journal remains the property of authors. Papers in the journal are open access for group sharing and interaction, and do not reflect the editors’ views or ownership.

### Why publish in the IJCA?

- Much of the history of carnival arts – steelpan, calypso and mas – are oral. Statements are often based on personal views and the memory of individuals. This journal provides a forum for diverse views to be expressed and, in doing so, consensus may eventually be derived that reflects a more accurate history of carnival arts.
- Academic papers in carnival arts are published in highly specific and inaccessible journals that are outside the realm of the general carnivalist. We anticipate that this journal will allow authors of such papers to adapt some of their work for the more general audience of this journal where grassroots enthusiasts can learn and appreciate the broader aspects of this field.
- Postgraduate students are doing tremendous work on various facets of carnival arts and will continue to publish their work in well-established recognised journals for their own career development. We envisage this journal could be used by such students to draw attention to their valued work and to make it more accessible to the general public.
- The grassroots workers of steelpan, calypso and mas who drive the development of these artforms are often excluded from direct publication of their valuable work. This journal provides an informal, cost-free means to get their work aired and brought to the forefront of enthusiasts.
- Some of the legends of carnival arts – for example steelpan pioneers such as Anthony Williams, Sterling Betancourt, Cyril Khamai, Lennox ‘Bobby’ Mohammed, Alfred Totesaut and Peter Joseph – are still active and possess a wealth of information. Such individuals contributed to key stages in development of steelpan. They may be interviewed in pieces for this journal, and their incisive contributions thus brought to readers.
- We are encouraging all to write and capture a holistic view of carnival arts and not to feel intimidated by language and grammar - papers will be edited with their consent and brought to the attention of a global audience.
- Initially the journal will be published biannually – first and last quarter of the year but will be responsive to change.

**Types of Papers:**

- i) Original Full-length papers - usually 3,000 - 7,000 words.
- ii) Short Communications - up to 3,000 words.
- iii) Research Papers e.g. carnival arts studies, hypotheses and analyses.
- iv) Reviews - e.g. of relevant books, exhibitions, films etc.
- v) Request for an opinion - an author who wishes to share views on a subject.
- vi) Letter to the Editor – queries or comments on published papers.
- vii) Historical - e.g. carnival in rural town or on a pioneer of carnival arts.
- viii) Social anthropological studies on carnival.
- ix) Personal Experiences of aspects of carnival.
- x) Reports of carnival archives.
- xi) Technological developments e.g. in sound, acoustics, new material for mas etc.
- xii) Erratum – From Volume 2, IJCA will include a designated Erratum page(s) to correct any errors of the previous volume. However, this represents an important part of the feedback, and a mechanism for the informed criticism of papers in IJCA. Because much of the history of carnival arts relies on the memory of individuals, information may be skewed towards the interest and exposure of an individual. By readers submitting comments and corrections on controversial topics, eventually consensus may help to point to the most likely scenario.

**Requirements for Submission****Cover Letter:**

All submissions should be accompanied by a covering letter briefly stating the significance of the work and agreement of author/s and institute for publication. Please also submit the names and affiliations of all authors, including the contact details of the corresponding author.

**Preparation of a paper for submission** (see detailed guidelines <https://www.steelpanconference.com/> - see Journal.)

Most of the process outlined below is standard procedure but is provided to try to maintain a level of uniformity of papers within the journal. The Editors have opted to use ‘Elsevier - Harvard (with titles) Style’. Briefly this follows the format below:

**Title:** A succinct representation of the paper. Use font 14, Times New Roman. Capitalise each word. Centralised, and keep to about 40 words without abbreviation.

**Author Name<sup>1</sup> – Size 14 – Bold**

<sup>1</sup>Institute/Company/Band’s Name and Address - Times New Roman – size 12  
Add- telephone, email address of the corresponding author.

**Abstract:**

Should be informative and self-explanatory, briefly present the topic, state the scope of the paper, indicate significant results and point out major findings and conclusions. The abstract should summarise the manuscript content in less than 500 words.

**Key Words:** Size 11. This follows the Abstract and consists of a list of Key Words (4-10) and any abbreviations used in the text.

**Text: A) Research Papers (B) Reviews and other articles:**

**A) Introduction:**

This should set the tone of the paper by providing a clear statement of the study, the relevant literature on the subject, and the proposed approach or solution. The introduction should be general enough to attract a reader's attention from a broad range of carnival arts disciplines and should lead directly into the aims of the work.

**Description of the work:**

This section should provide a complete overview of the design of the study. Detailed descriptions of materials or participants, comparisons, interventions and types of analysis should be mentioned. However, only new procedures need to be described in detail. Previously published procedures should be cited, and important modifications of published procedures should be mentioned briefly.

**Findings and Discussion:**

This section should provide evidence that supports the conclusion of the study, while speculation and detailed interpretation of data should be included in the Discussion.

**Acknowledgements:**

Acknowledgment of people, grant details, funds, etc may be included under this section.

**B) Reviews and other articles:**

The Abstract and Introduction should follow the above guidelines, however, for the remainder of the paper, authors may devise their own headings and subheadings to follow a chronological order of work presented.

**References in text:**

Published or accepted manuscripts should be included in the reference list. Meetings, abstracts, conference talks, or papers that have been submitted but not yet accepted may be cited as 'submitted for publication', 'personal communication (abbreviate as 'per. com.') or 'Proceedings of the meeting'. References in the text should be listed by the first author's surname followed by year of publication, for example, Brown,1990. or if several authors as Brown *et al.*,1990. Multiple citations should be separated by semicolons eg. Brown, 1990; O'Connor, 1995.

The following are examples for the reference list/bibliography to be included at the end of the paper:

**Book reference:**

Hocking, C., 2005. The story of the Bridgewater Carnival from 1880 to 2005. The Bridgewater Educational Press; Somerset.

**Article reference:**

Ramtahal, Kumaree, Kumar, Marilyn, 2016. Documenting and Archiving the Ramleela Legacy in Trinidad: Practice and Prospects. Caribbean Library Journal, 4, 41-61.

**Conference: e.g.** Shah H.N., 2016. The Fusion of Steelpan with other Art Forms in the 21st Century. Proceedings of the 6th International Biennial Steelpan Conference. London, 7-9th October 2016.

**Tables:**

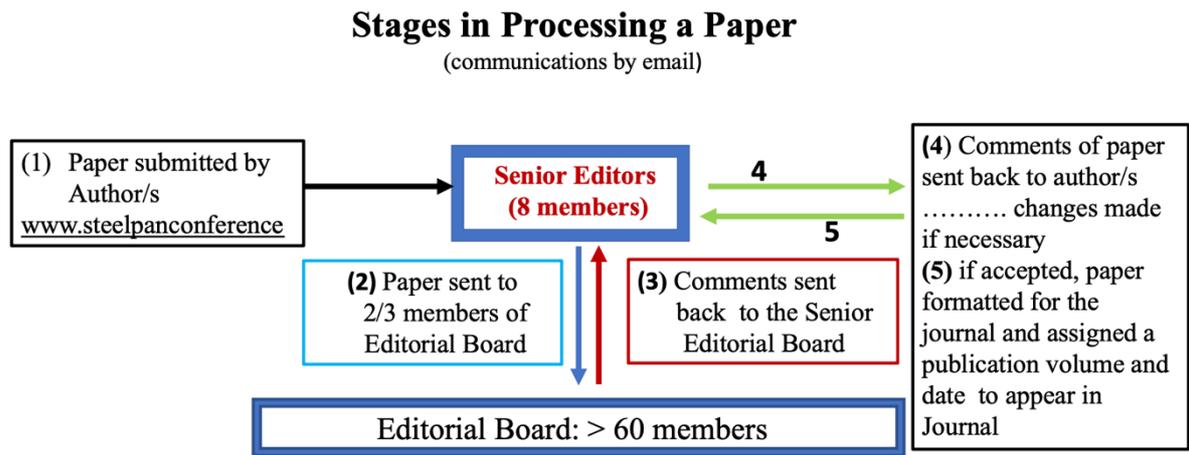
These should be designed as simple as possible. Each table should be numbered consecutively using Arabic numerals and supplied with a heading and a legend at the top of the table. Tables should be self-explanatory without reference to the text. The same data should not be presented in both table and graph form or repeated in the text.

**Figures:**

The preferred file formats for photographic images are TIFF and JPEG. Begin each legend with a title (below the figure) and include sufficient description so that the figure is understandable without reading the text of the manuscript. Information given in legends should not be repeated in the text. Label figures sequentially (e.g. Figure 1: ..... ) and cite in the text as Fig 1.

**Process after Submission for Publication – Reviewers, Report & Proofs.**

The figure below illustrates the process that takes place once a manuscript (MS) is submitted to IJCA. It shows the interaction between the Senior Editorial Board and the Editorial Board. Once the review process has been completed, a member of the Senior Editorial Board will send a letter to the corresponding author informing them of the outcome, and if required, detailing suggestions to improve the MS. The senior board member will then liaise with the author to finalise the MS and prepare it for publication.



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## Editorial Board:

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Nikoli Adrian **Attai**, PhD, Provost's Postdoctoral Fellow, University of Toronto, Women and Gender Studies Institute. Women and Gender Studies. Queer Carnival Studies: transgression, sexuality, gender performance, queer tourism, carnival tourism, J'Ouvert, diaspora carnivals.

Darrell **Baksh**, PhD Candidate (ABD), The University of the West Indies at St. Augustine, Trinidad. Caribbean popular culture: Indo-Caribbean popular culture, Caribbean carnival cultures, popular music, identity politics, feminisms.

Zuleika **Beaven**, PhD. Lecturer, Middlesex University London. Arts Management: governance, organisational behaviour, enterprise & start-up, event management and carnival arts.

Brigitte **Bogar**, PhD. York University, Canada. Music, theatre and street theatre.

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Bowie Sonnie **Bowei**, PhD. VistaPan Africa; International Percussion Federation; International Arts Games Committee. Steelpan; African history, development, dissemination, pioneers, carnival in Nigeria.

Glenn **Charles**, Director, UK Trini & Friends. Pannist, carnival arts promoter, teacher, event organiser, performer and youth leader.

Tola **Dabiri**, PhD. Managing Director, UK Centre for Carnival Arts. Intangible cultural heritage of carnival, orality, traditional mas and skills. Organisation of Luton Carnival.

Deborah **de Gazon**, PgDip, MA, PhD (ongoing). (Former Creative Director, Notting Hill Carnival) at Creative Learning Circuit Ltd. Work widely across the field of carnival arts; creative consultancy, researcher, lecturer, management, community worker

Erika Melek **Delgado**, PhD. Leverhulme Fellow - King's College London, Associate Director of Freedom Narratives Project. Brazilian Carnival, Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade, Migration and Expressive Cultures.

Marlene **Edwin**, PhD. Centre for Caribbean and Diaspora Studies, Goldsmiths, University of London. Caribbean women writers, carnival, history, literature, linguistics.

Francois **Evans**, PhD. Lecturer, Middlesex University London. Steelpan: composing and arranging for ensemble, contemporary composition for steel pan ensemble, stylistic fusion/s, steel pan music and electronics.

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Harmony **Farrell**, MA Cultural Studies (in prog.), BA (Hons) Theatre and Performance w/ Creative Writing, Interest/expertise: Drama in Education, Postcolonial Performance Studies, Arts & Culture Journalism

Nicole **Ferdinand**, PhD. Senior Lecturer, Oxford Brookes University. Lecturer in carnival arts, events manager, researcher, consultant, International marketing, enterprise, carnival business.

Janice B **Fournillier**, PhD (Educational Psychology). Professor, Research Measurement and Statistics, Educational Policy Studies, College of Education and Human Development, Georgia State University. Interest/Expertise. Teaching, learning practices in non-school contexts like Trinidad and Tobago's Carnival was' camps, Qualitative Research Methodologies: Theories and practices. Teacher Education

Kela N. **Francis**, BA, PhD. Assistant Professor. Lecturer in Caribbean History, calypso composition, academic writing and Communication. University of Trinidad and Tobago. masquerade, calypso, secularized ritual. Research interests include African diaspora Literature, music, festivals; popular culture; cultural studies; and human spirituality.

Debi **Gardener**, **Executive Officer of the British Association of Steelbands**. Notting Hill Carnival Board Director. Steel pan: performance. business of managing a steel band. Organising steel pan and steel band events. Carnival arts.

Roger **Gibbs**. Shak Shak. Calypso: music history, Caribbean drumming & rhythms, fusion/s, calypso jazz, Caribbean traditional and vintage music. Non-pan instrumental. Choral/a cappella: Calypso & Soca, popular & traditional Caribbean.

Jenny **Gilberg**, BA (Fine Art), Newcastle upon Tyne, UK. Multi-Instrumentalist, Musical Director, North Tyneside Steel Band, musician and artist, steelpan soloist, tutor, arranger and composer. Email: Jenny.gilberg@btinternet.com; [www.jennygilberg-steelpan.co.uk](http://www.jennygilberg-steelpan.co.uk)

Shareen **Gray**, BA (Hons) Business Publishing, Director Steel Pan Trust Business Owner Steel Pan Agency. Provides steelpan performances and workshops for all age and abilities, specialises in teaching people with special needs and learning difficulties. Tutor, training accessories and qualifications.

Maica **Gugolati**, PhD. Social and visual anthropology. Researcher at Institute of African Worlds, School of Advanced Studies In The Social Sciences (Ehess), Paris, France. Visual and performative art and carnival production. Photography and film, creative industries focused on the Caribbean region, insular and continental, and its diaspora. Postcolonial and decolonial theories and practices.

Rachel **Hayward**, MA. (Music Performance). City University, London. PhD. Author of several books. Leader, Euphoria Steelband. History of steel band, pan-round-neck, worldwide dissemination of pan, repertoire development and arrangement/transcription for pan, pan solos, pan with "conventional" instruments.

Jeffery **Hinds**, Calypso sobriquet; De Admiral. Professional Boxing Referee. Justice of the Peace. Calypso, composer, monarch, pannists, community worker, event organiser.

Nesreen N. **Hussein**, BFA, MRes, PhD, AFHEA. Lecturer in Contemporary Theatre, Faculty of Arts and Creative Industries, Middlesex University. Music, theatre and street theatre. The socio-political history of carnival arts and steelpan, legacy of carnival arts and steelpan as a form of resistance, art and activism, connections with global cultures, diversity, multiculturalism, colonialism, relation to the history of empire.

Kal **Juman**, Toronto Caribbean Carnival, Digital Marketing, Sponsorships, Partnerships and New Business Opportunities. Carnival Arts, innovative methods of modernising Toronto Caribbean Carnival including management corporation sponsorship and partnerships.

Linett **Kamala**, BA MA NPQH. Associate Lecturer, University of the Arts London, BA Performance: Design and Practice team. Lin Kam Art Ltd. Director, Notting Hill Carnival. Artist, educator, facilitator, promoter, carnival, mas and sound systems. Use of art to inspire, heal, enrich and transform lives - 'freestyle calligraffiti'.

Dr Hanna **Klien-Thomas**, PhD (Cultural Anthropology). Research Fellow in Creative Industry, Oxford Brookes University and University of Vienna). Associate Lecturer in Media, Culture and Screen Studies. Interest/Expertise: media practices, digitalisation, cinema audiences, ethnographic research methods, intersectionality and in particular youth, gender and ethnicity.

Christopher **Laird**, PhD. York University. Caribbean Culture and Society. Digital archiving of carnival arts; publishing and electronic recording. Kalenda and traditional music and dance.

Anna **Lawrence**, BA, MPhil – PhD. University of Cambridge. Steelpan and mas: history, geography, culture, Caribbean diaspora, cultural appropriation, politics of music and race, multiculturalism, (post)colonial Britain.

Frauke **Lühning**. BA Ethnomusicology, University of Amsterdam. School of Arts as ballet accompanist. Founder, teacher and musical director of Bijlmer Steelband, Amsterdam. Conservatory degrees in church organ and World music, Latin American and Caribbean music, piano. Steelband composition, arranging, transcription. History and development of steelpan and steelband music. Methodology for steelpan lessons.

Ray **Mahabir**, Artistic Director, Sunshine International Arts. Hands on artistic director, designer, promoter.

Emily Zobel **Marshall**, PhD. Course Director for English Literature and Senior Lecturer in Postcolonial Literature. Leeds Beckett University. Caribbean Carnival Cultures, Traditional Mas, Gender and Carnival Studies, Carnival and Plantation History, Carnival Poetry and Literature, Trickster Figures in Carnival, Carnival and Folklore.

**Patrick McKay**, Coordinator, St Michael Youth Project. Pannist, arranger, youth steelpan tutor, project leader, fundraiser, community worker

Johanne **Narayn**, PGCE, Dip. Graphic Design, Dip. Fine Arts, Art and Literacy Lecturer. CE/Owner, Flamingo Arts Emporium; Arts & Crafts. Fine artist: exhibiting predominantly paintings inspired by the Flora and Fauna of Trinidad, especially Hummingbirds. Combined poetry, song and arts.

Aneesa **Oumarally**, Lawyer, Public Policy and Administration, MBA, University of Toronto. CEO, Festival Management Committee. Board of Directors, Toronto Caribbean Carnival. History of Carnival Art culture; Growth and change of the culture over time. Vibrant member of the Caribbean Community, carnival arts, Toronto Caribbean Carnival performer, organiser, administration and promoter.

'H' **Patten**, PhD. Artistic Director Koromanti Arts, choreographer, dancer, storyteller, visual artist, filmmaker. Lecturer in African Peoples' dance. Caribbean arts and culture, popular culture. carnival staging, Caribbean History and genealogy, carnival production, dance and music.

Jimi **Philip**. NIHERST- Science of Steelpan. Pannist, numerous awards, steelpan tutor at schools and universities, musician, steelpan innovator, performer, promoter and tuner.

Lamar **Pollard**. MA (Carnival Studies), Production Manager, The University of Trinidad and Tobago Academy for the Performing Arts. Cultural Management, Public Policies for Culture, Cultural Policy, Technical Design and Implementation for Carnival.

Jeannine **Remy**, BA, MA, PhD. Senior Lecturer in Music. Department of Creative and Festival Arts, UWI, Trinidad. Pannist, Educator, Arranger, Writer, Steelpan historian. Percussionist and Tutor.

Lynda **Rosenior-Patten**, MA. CEO Maestro7 Creative Management Consultancy. Board Member, Ebony Steel band, Former Managing Director Notting Hill Carnival Pioneers Community Festival. Origins and Genealogy of Carnival and its links to West African Mas traditions, Notting Hill Carnival, sound systems, strategic management and leadership training programmes, gender and equality issues.

Stacey Leigh **Ross**, MA, FHEA. Life Story Artist at By Leigh, Associate Lecturer and PhD Researcher at University of the Arts London - Carnival of Compassion: curating carnival and art to inspire acts of compassion. Caribbean carnival, mixed media art, social change curation, inclusive teaching/learning, creative practice development, confidence building and social cohesion.

Louise C.F. **Shah**, BA, University of Southampton, MA, SOAS, University of London. Pannist, Tutored by Sterling Betancourt as a youth. From aged 14, played with Nostalgia in the UK and abroad. Co-organiser and author - third steelpan conference 2010. Play piano, guitar and sing. Avid follower and performer of steelpan and carnival.

Laura S. **Singh** – Senior Lecturer in Mental Health. Undergraduate programme lead Middlesex University London. Senior Fellowship of the Higher Education Academy, PhD research was in Trinidad Carnival and psychological wellbeing. Interest in transcultural psychiatry and how cultural factors influence and affect the cause, diagnosis, and treatment of mental illness.

Dmitri **Subotsky**, MA FIA Actuary, Guy Carpenter, London. Collecting and compiling information on calypso, Soca and steel band recordings. Compiled a database of such recordings from the Caribbean, USA, Canada, the UK and elsewhere, with coverage particularly strong in the vinyl era.

Meagan **Sylvester**, PhD (Narratives of Resistance in Calypso and Ragga Soca). Senior Lecturer, Cipriani College of Labour and Co-operative Studies, T&T. Labour market research, academic/government programmes. Music, gender, and national Identity in calypso and soca, music of diasporic carnivals, music and human rights and steelpan and kaisoJazz musical identities.

Vernon Shabaka **Thompson**, MA, PhD. Former CEO, London Notting Hill Carnival, co-founder Calypso Tent. Carnival organiser, band leader, carnival event manager and lecturer. Theatre, education and community development. Carnival specialist. Strategic planning, fundraising and costume production.

Rebecca **Watson**, PhD. Reader, Leeds Beckett University. Editorial Board of the Journal Leisure Sciences. Dance, Gender, Equality, intersectionality public leisure space, popular music. Miscegenation.

Jenny **Webb**, BSc. Organiser Pan Jam. Pannist, performer, promoter, tutor, arranger, pan development, globalisation, education. steelpan history and carnival arts.

Allyson **Williams**, MBE, NHS long service. Co-founder of mas band Genesis (1980). Interim Chair, Mas Arena. Notting Hill Carnival Board member. Street theatre. Mas camp administration, mas design, costume making, mas and carnival history, teacher and educator.

Nigel **Williams**, PhD. Senior Lecturer, Portsmouth Business School, University of Portsmouth. Festival management and technology, impact analysis in tourism and festivals, e.g. evaluating Notting Hill Carnival using social media platforms. Development of analytical tools such as FestIM and A.I.

Salah **Wilson**, PhD, Lecturer/Performer, York University, Toronto, Canada. Steelpan development/ curriculum development, composer/arranger of all types of steelpan ensembles/ all genre of music/ Ideas on major pan promotional programs/author of steelpan textbooks.

Ansel **Wong**, JP, BA (Hons), Dip.Ed., MEd., FRSA. Carnival Arts as practitioner, artist, band leader and governance. Educator and Race Relation Advisor. Founder of Elimu Mas Band. Managing editor at multicultural publisher, Hansib Publications.

Natasha **Young**, MA, BA. Teacher of Art and Design, North London Collegiate School, Edgware. Steelpan, calypso and Carnival Arts in general.

## Foreword

### Trinidad & Tobago; Socio-cultural Transnationalism. The Growing Influence of Its Diaspora in the Development of Steelpan/Carnival Arts.

Trinidad and Tobago's diasporic communities who live in large cities such as London, New York, Miami, Toronto and others, travel *en masse* for the island's annual carnival as eloquently expressed in calypsonian Explainer's iconic masterpiece 'Lorraine'. This observation was expanded in the first volume of the *International Journal of Carnival Arts* (IJCA, Shah et al, 2020) as follows: "Steelband projects between Trinidad and Tobago and the diaspora invoke a strong sense of passion, nostalgia and poignancy. Like swallows migrating south for the winter months, pannists from the northern hemisphere navigate their way to Trinidad, taking every seat on filled aeroplanes to join others who descend upon the island prior to carnival annually. Many of the 35,000 visitors/players (CSO, 2016) don't have an ancestral link with the islands but go simply for the yearning of pan, the deep affection and veneration they hold for the 'Land of Steelband, Calypso and Mas'. This was evidenced and movingly described in Shareen Gray's commentary "UK pan players invade Trinidad for Panorama 2018" (Gray, 2018)."

This annual exodus, with exception of the hiatus during the COVID-19 pandemic between 2020 - 2022, has, over the years, led to exceptionally strong bonds between communities and a desire to steadfastly maintain carnivals and its associated artforms rigidly to practises of its homeland. Thus, events such as Panorama, J'Ouvert, Calypso Monarch, King and Queen, Fetes, Blockoramas, Red Indian costumes and feathers, Pretty Mas, Devils, Moko Jumbie etc were procured and orthodoxy obeyed as a form of reverence by migrants in their new homelands. Breaking the rules were considered sacrilege, thus the introduction of Sound Systems by Leslie Palmer in 1973 to Notting Hill Carnival (NHC) took years to gain the general acceptance of the traditional carnivalist. However, some changes are necessary to comply with the bylaws of each city. Thus, it may be necessary to convert a 'Street Carnival' to a Festival in a park or even essential to share a Caribbean carnival with other local festivals.

Over the years, as confidence grew in steelpan/carnival arts, diasporic communities started becoming more assertive and innovative; introducing new ideas, applying new technologies and modifying existing systems that may even be exported back to Trinbago. Some of these were in full display at the Queen's Platinum Jubilee pageant on 5<sup>th</sup> June 2022 where materials used for the animals in Mahogany's Mas Band were among the lightest and most malleable materials available today. Recognising the significant contributions that diasporic communities can impart to develop carnival, the Trinidadian educator, music director, artist and cultural icon, the late Pat Bishop stated the following:

"Diasporic art should be unapologetic and cast a more ambitious net and seek, not for tolerance but for art; art that exists in the glorious light of innovation, creativity and the spectacle. This art should be retrieved, re-appropriated and returned to its community – a better, freer place where all the bread isn't ready-sliced and all the information isn't transmitted by Power Point!; where a mas is not a computer generated graphic and where a mas camp with its food, its music, its sharing, its skill development and the verbally expressed life of the mind could, in some way return to the people". Dr Bishop concluded that we (in Britain) should ensure that Carnival is accredited among the "high arts". We should challenge recognised arts practitioners to give it due esteem and recognition. We should affirm and ensure its continuity" (Wong, 2009).

Without glorifying its advances, the diasporic communities have made considerable input into the development of current carnivals. NHC for example attracts some two million revellers and over the years its pioneers have developed significant creative international partnerships in steelpan, mas and calypso. Events such the tribute to Lord Kitchener on the centenary of his birth (April 2022), the Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations (June 2022), taking a UK

steelband to partner a local steelband to perform on the streets of Trinidad for carnival (February 2018) or joint participation in the recent 9<sup>th</sup> International Conference in Carnival Arts (1-2<sup>nd</sup> July 2022) are examples of recent collaborative projects. In the latter, one of the two keynote speakers will be Dr. Kela N. Francis from the University of Trinidad and Tobago (UTT) whilst a complete session on 2<sup>nd</sup> July titled: '*From the Barrack Yard to the World – Promoting Cultural Ownership and Cultural Confidences from an Emic Perspective*' will be led by speakers Krisson Joseph, Roger Henry and Mia Gromandy-Benjamin from UTT. In general presentations at this conference will share this common cultural experience in various forms as shown in the programme below:

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# 9<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Carnival Arts and Cultures

Oxford Brookes University | 1 – 2 July 2022

Day 1 - Friday 1st July 2022 : Abercrombie AB115a at Gipsy Lane

09:30 Coffee and tea

10:15 Welcome

10:30 Keynote Lecture - *Kela Francis* (University of Trinidad and Tobago)  
**Bikini, Bead, and Feathers: The Latent Ritual Potential of Pretty Mas**

11:15 Break

**11.30 Panel: Carnival communities - Space, place and narratives**

Chair: *Meleisa Ono George* (University of Oxford)

*Junie James* (ACKHI – Afrikan Caribbean Kultural Heritage Initiative)

**Carnival in Oxford**

*Michelle Harewood* (University of East London)

**Exploring narratives of power and rights in Notting Hill's Carnival:  
Masquerading for humanity**

*Roger P. Gibbs* (Canada)

**Toronto Carnival: from the streets to the stadium**

With a storytelling session by Junie James on Carnival in Oxford and the Windrush  
Exhibition by the Museum of Oxford

13.00 Lunch Break

**14.00 Panel: Steelpan**

Chair: *Andrew Martin* (Inver Hills College, Minnesota)

*Andrew Martin* (Inver Hills College, Minnesota)

**Sunday Carnival: Traditional Music in the Caribbean Church**

*Paul Massy* (Florida Atlantic University College of Education)

**Post-pandemic - The return of the Panyard and its role in advancing steelpan  
teaching and learning**

*Wanda Atkins* (The French Panorama IG)

**The French Panorama 2022: We Love Pan - the French Touch**

**15.30 Coffee and Tea****16.00 Roundtable: Carnival, digitisation and the challenges of archiving performing arts**

Moderation: *Rachel Barbaresi*

Discussants: *Ruth Tompsett* (Carnival Archive Project), *Christopher Laird* (Banyan Archives), *Annabele Valentine* (Paul Oliver Archive of African American Music), *Tola Dabiri* (Museum X and Brick by Brick Communities), *Laila Shah* (Carnival Village Trust Youth and Windrush Memorial Committee), *Stephen Spark* (Soca News)

**17.00 Refreshments****17.30 Panel: Calypso in the Diaspora – Rhythm, Timelines, Lyrical Content and its Future**

Chair: *Haroun Shah*

*Roger P. Gibbs* (Canada)

*Alexander Loewenthal* (aka Alexander D Great (UK)

*Jeffery Hinds* (aka De Admiral (UK)

*Vincent John* (UK)

With percussion and performance by Roger Gibbs on Rhythm in Calypso

**19.30 Conference Dinner**

## Day 2 – Saturday 2nd July 2022 : Green Room at Headington Hill Hall

10.00 Coffee and tea

10.30 Keynote Lecture - *Emily Zobel Marshall* (Leeds Beckett University)  
**Women in Carnival: Mas Intersections**

11.15 Break

**11.30 Panel: Mas**Chair: *Lynda Rosenior-Patten*

*Janice Fournillier* (Georgia State University) and *Stacey Leigh Ross* (University of the Arts, London)

**The Legacy Lives On / The Mas' Lives On***Tola Dabiri* (Museum X and Brick by Brick Communities)**Singing the Past - Singing the Future***Greta Mendez MBE*

**'Come on Fish, sing to me': Traditional Mas and Carnival in the art film  
 'Ah! Hard Rain'**

13.00 Lunch Break

**14.00 Panel: Digital Media - A Bitter/Sweet Taste of Carnival**Chair: *Marvin George* (The Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts)*Alpha Obika* (University of the West Indies, Mona)**Exploring the use of Digital Technology in Trinidad's Virtual Carnival 2021 and Beyond**

*Kai Barratt* (University of Technology, Jamaica) and *Kearn Williams* (Carnival Institute of Trinidad and Tobago)

**We Outside?...” Perceptions of Virtual Presentations of the Trinidad Carnival 2022***Camille Quamina* (University of the West Indies, Mona)**Lavway: (Per)Forming Cultural Citizenship in the Virtual Space**

15.30 Coffee and Tea

**15:45 Panel: From the Barrack Yard to the World - Promoting Cultural Ownership and Cultural Confidence from an Emic Perspective**Chair: *Kela Francis**Krisson Joseph* (University of Trinidad and Tobago)**The barrack yard communal education site***Roger Henry* (University of Trinidad and Tobago)**Codifying Steelpan Music***Mia Gromandy-Benjamin* (University of Trinidad and Tobago)**Merging the barrack yard with traditional education**

17:15 Break

17:30 *Lynda Rosenior-Patten* (Maestro7 Creative Management Consultancy)

**A 'call to action' for creative sector professionals: a collaborative, diaspora centred, development approach towards a decolonised, community focused strategy for arts and cultural development and production**

**18:00 Roundtable: The Future of Carnival in Oxford – Closed event**

19:00 Closing Remarks

**Keynote Addresses:****Bikini, Beads, and Feathers: The Latent Ritual Potential of Pretty Mas**

**Kela Francis** (Assistant Professor, Academy of Arts, Letters, Culture and Public Affairs, The University of Trinidad and Tobago)

Typically, when discussing Carnival as a socio-political cultural force, the ritual potency of Traditional mas—Fancy/King Sailor, Fancy/Wild Indian, Midnight Robber, Jab Jab, Jab Molassie, and so on—is acknowledged and discussed. Pretty Mas, however, is usually considered mere spectacle, undermining the seriousness of traditional mas. The irony of this binary formulation is three-fold. First, most of the traditional mas characters started as Fancy (pretty) mas, a response to colonial aesthetic pressures. Second, this separation speaks to the lingering colonial hegemonic definitions of culture—we are using Eurocentric ethnographic definitions to distinguish ritual from spectacle. Yet, in Yoruba tradition, for example, ritual is spectacle and spectacle can be ritual. Third, while the word ritual is evoked, the spirituality of the festival is underexplored. This paper seeks to shift the framework from Eurocentric ethnography to Afrocentric ontology and epistemology as a means of interpreting the latent ritual potential of all carnival masquerading practices, traditional as well as pretty.

Bio: Kela Nnarka Francis, assistant professor at the University of Trinidad and Tobago, earned her PhD in Caribbean Literature from Howard University in 2012 and continues to research topics in Caribbean literature, culture, and society, with particular focus on secular rituals in the Caribbean and the wider African diaspora.

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### **Women in Carnival: Mas Intersections**

**Emily Zobel Marshall** (Reader, School of Cultural Studies, Leeds Beckett University)

Caribbean Carnival was born in an extremely patriarchal society. Yet, while its cultural forms have replicated some of the gendered binaries at its heart, it also remains a space in which established rules or gender and sexuality are turned upside down. Today women across the Caribbean and its diaspora are changing carnival and using it as a platform for feminist empowerment, to call for social and racial justice and to challenge preconceived ideas around sexuality and femininity. Based on research conducted during the international, diasporic AHRC-funded research network project ‘Women in Carnival’, this keynote will explore how carnivals in Trinidad, New Orleans and Leeds are challenging boundaries through ‘mas intersections’ and taking politics and intersectional feminism on the road.

Bio: Dr Emily Zobel Marshall is of French-Caribbean and British heritage and grew up in the mountains of Snowdonia in North Wales. She is a Reader in Postcolonial Literature at the School of Cultural Studies at Leeds Beckett University. She is an expert on the trickster figure in the folklore, oral cultures and literature of the African Diaspora and has published widely in these fields, including her books *Anansi’s Journey: A Story of Jamaican Cultural Resistance* (published in 2012 by the University of the West Indies

6 Press) and *American Trickster: Trauma Tradition and Brer Rabbit* (published in 2019 by Rowman and Littlefield). She plays mas in Leeds West Indian carnival and has established a Caribbean Carnival Cultures research platform and network that aims to bring the critical, creative, academic and artistic aspects of carnival into dialogue with one another. She also consults arts and educational organisations on Decolonial methodologies and approaches. Emily develops her creative work alongside her academic writing. She has had poems published in several international journals and anthologies. She is Co-Chair of the David Oluwale Memorial Association, a charity committed to fighting racism and homelessness, and a Creative Associate of the Geraldine Connor Foundation.

## The French Panorama 2022; We Love Pan - the French Touch

**Wanda Atkins**

6b rue Apollon Logt 2  
44118 La Chevrolière , France

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### Abstract

Emerging from two years of lockdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic, France like most countries not only suffered immeasurably from this ghastly viral infection and austere measures imposed by government but was also agonised by the lack of public musical performances, arts and cultural events. The subsidence of the pandemic and gradual relaxation of measures still meant that holding large scale events carried harsh health risk. The French Panorama 2022 was created to rekindle live music but with virtual performances from steelbands across France and was very much an experiment. After considerable planning including sending out notices, assembling a panel of judges, coordinating zoom meetings, troubleshooting, the first virtual Panorama took place on 15<sup>th</sup> January 2022, in the midst of winter. It brought together 300 players from all over France and included a steelband from Guadelupe. It was a delightful, scintillating evening of inspirational, invigorating steelpan music featuring pieces such as The 100 century by Kitchener to Commandant Cousteau by Jean Michel-Jarre. The programme began at 8pm and ended 9.30pm. Eighteen steelbands performed virtually, from the capital Paris to various provinces and territories. The finalist were Calypsociation (Paris) Sunday Band who played 'More Sokah' by Nailah Blackman (1st), LADB (Louverné) Pan woman by De Alberto (2nd) and finally Calypsociation Clemazband (Paris) played 'Happy Place' by Lyrikal (3rd). The feedback from the event was so phenomenal that we foresee this event in the future expanding to include steelbands from outside the mainland France and especially Trinidad and Tobago where this magnificent instrument originated.

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**Key Words:** Panorama, Steelpan, French Steelbands, Virtual Pan, Pan Competition, Guadelupe Steelband.

### Introduction – History of Pan in France

Main body of all text size 12 in two columns. This should set the tone of the paper by providing a clear statement of the study, the relevant literature on the study subject, and the proposed approach or

solution. The introduction should be general enough to attract a reader's attention from a broad range of carnival arts disciplines and should lead directly into the aspirations of the work. Caribbean islands

were no exception. However, while the history of Pan in Britain is well documented, the same is not true for France. This may be partly due to its more indirect transition, being markedly influenced and supported by its French connections in the Caribbean and the mainland of South America such as French Guyana.

This paper reports the first attempt to openly record the History of Pan in France hence the author foresees this as a stepwise process and will be modified in subsequent volumes of this journal as more information comes to hand. At the onset, I humbly pay tribute and thank Xavier Mertian who gave up considerable time and put in enormous effort into compiling much of the information herein. However, the reader should be made aware that this is ‘still a work in progress’ project. Below is an overview of some of the steelbands that participated in French Panorama 2022

### St. Martin

The origins of the expansion of steelpan to the island of Saint Martin was in the early 1950’s when *The Gunslingers Steelband* was founded by Victor Benjamin in 1954. Before Hurricane Irma in 2017, the association had several conventional steelbands (Stage Team, Seniors, Children, etc). They also participated in the 2015 International World Steelband Panorama in Trinidad & Tobago. Despite the loss of their instruments, their panyard and many of their pannists who left the island, they still continue the steelpan tradition. Shortly after steelpan arrived on the French mainland in 1957, Cyril Aventurin, (originally from St Kitts) and his traditional steelband brought the sweet sounds of pan in the 50's to the 2000's to Paris. The



Figure 1: The distribution of Steelbands that took part in the French Panorama 2022, including the Caribbean island of Guadeloupe (shown as SW of France) in the figure above.

[https://www.instagram.com/p/CYYwVtOM5xa/?utm\\_source=ig\\_web\\_copy\\_link](https://www.instagram.com/p/CYYwVtOM5xa/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link)

band is still active in 2022 under the direction of his son, Alain Aventurin, The year 1967 also saw the arrival the Lalsingué family from Guadeloupe (Port Louis) in Tourcoing . Pierre Lalsingué’s children, took over the steelband “les Alizés”. In the mid 90s, a new generation led to fantastic collaborations (Laurent and Pierre-Etienne Lalsingué, Yann and Cédric Brabant, Mehdi Menadji) at the Calypsociation panyard in Paris. Future arrangements combined the duo of Laurent

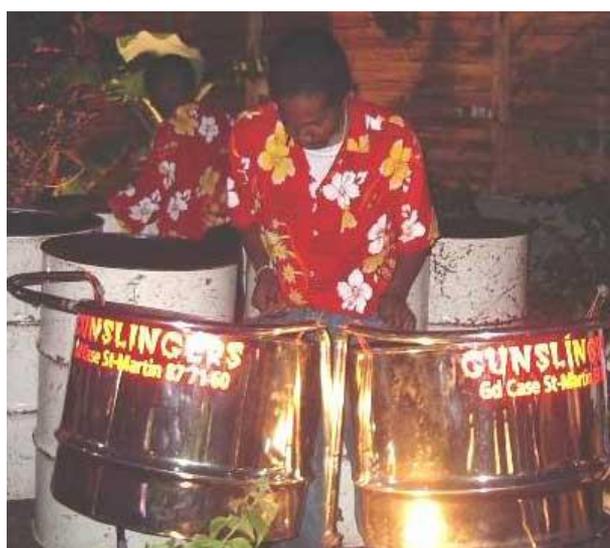


Figure 2. The Gunslingers Steel Band in concert at the Princess Casino. From Faxinfo

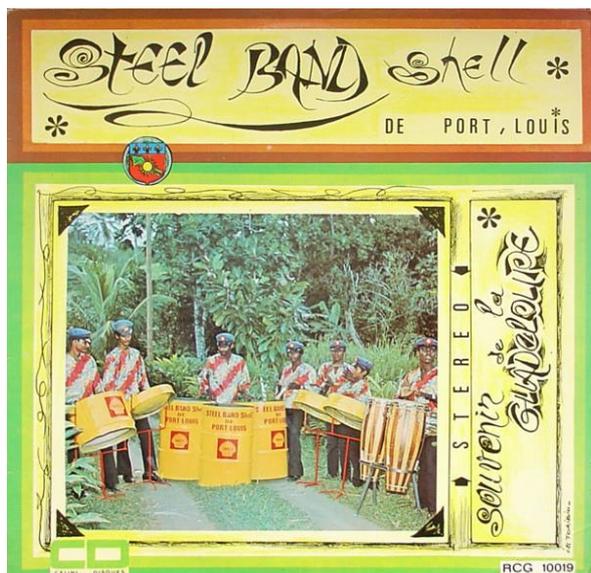


Figure 3a (left) The 'Steelband of Port Louis' sponsored by Shell. <https://www.discogs.com/release/2576574-Steel-Band-Shell-De-Port-Louis-Souvenir-De-La-Guadeloupe>  
 Figure 3b (top) Steel Band-L'etoile des îles de Port Louis Guadeloupe. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jaP4RIAgWG0&ab\\_channel=PromodilesR](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jaP4RIAgWG0&ab_channel=PromodilesR)

Lalsingué and Matthieu Borgne, who spent several months in Trinidad in 2002 under the influence of the famous late Clive Bradley. Currently, Laurent Lalsingué and Yann Brabant are also tuners.

### Guadeloupe

The "Steelband of Port Louis" is regarded as one of the oldest and most enduring in the territory. It is directed today by Jean-Luc Luce who is related to the Lalsingué family.

The steelband "L'Étoile des îles" was also created in Port Louis in 1996 by Fritz de Souza who had founded the "Steelband de Port Louis" with Vernais Luce. Capesterre-Belle-Eau is probably the place of the very first steelband in Guadeloupe, where the Shell Karukera Steelband was born in 2010. It is directed by Yanis Roset who was also at the start of the Steelband Festival of Trois-Rivières in 2015.

The Harmonik Steel Quartet association was founded in 2012. The steelband is directed by Denis Walter whose family has been practicing pan since 1954 under the influence of the Florimont brothers.

Steelband of the Amadeus School of Music in Pointe à Pitre, Guadeloupe.

Tibou Steelband is based at the School of Dance and Music of Petit-Bourg in Guadeloupe. Workshops were directed by Abdel Zedira (former member of

Calyps'Atlantic) until 2016 after which Guillaume Kervel carried on until 2019.

In 2022, the Karukera Steelband directed by Yanis Roset and Fritz De Souza at the Collège Front de Mer in Pointe à Pitre were part of a School Orchestra program.

### Martinique

Steelband began appearing in Martinique towards the end of the 1960s. The first steelband appears to be Brasserie Lorraine. Gabriel Desroc is the oldest tuner quoted by Chantal Remion. on her web page. Guy



Figure 4. The Brasserie Lorraine Steel Band recorded an album with 10 tracks in 1975. See link: <https://www.plexusrecords.com/brasserie-lorraine-steel-band-a15820-en.html>

Louiset (1950, died in 2022) conducted the Martinique Steelpan Orchestra. He has trained many pannists at Sermac in Fort de France, the training workshop was taken over by Jean-Michel Calmo.

Chantal Remion began teaching courses and carrying out workshops on pan at the music school Lakou Sanblé Matinik in Schoelcher from 2013. Steelbands can also be found in Adventist churches as shown by the "Meeting Pan" festivals that have been held for over the past 20 years.

### French Guyana

From 2006, the association Show Sport et Culture of Matoury in French Guyana has been providing steelpan workshops in schools and neighbourhoods. The Atlantic Wave Steelband is composed of the most talented ex-interns.

### Reunion island

On the Reunion island (Le Tampon), Ludo Perez founded the Ferblan & Co. Steelband in 2007 with a team of pannists who also run workshops.

**France.** Shortly after, steel-pan arrived on the French mainland, in 1957. Cyril Aventurin, (originally from St Kitts) and his traditional steelband brought the sweet sounds of pan to Paris.. Apart from the Caribbean pannists, the Lalsingué Famille, Jean-Michel Jandia and René Abaul who had already played earlier overseas introducing pan to France in 1967, the first pannists and tuners seem to appear in the 80s. These include:

Cathy Alimeck, Emmanuel Masselot, Guillaume Kervel, Josselin Julieno, Alain Richard,

Alain Rouaud, Susy Birgé, Michel "Coco" Lemeur, Laurent Trouchaud, Nicolas Terrance, Gilles Daney, Etienne Hazard, Philippe Langel, Fabienne Rivère, Philippe Gal, René "Gus" Martineau, and Philippe Maignaut

These pannists can be found in the following first Steelbands to be formed in France. Below is an attempt to devise a chronological list of some of the key dates and activities that helped to nurture and consolidate steelpan/steelbands in France from 1986.:

**1986:** Tropique du Cancer Steelband is still active in 2022 with Philippe Gal in Toulouse. <http://tropiqueducancer.com/>

**1992:** The Swing Atlantic steelband in St Macaire (near Bordeaux) is under the directionship of Philippe Langel. <http://pansenpresquile.free.fr/>

**1993:** Birth of Calypsociation in Romainville, in the suburbs of Paris. The founders were Emmanuel Masselot, Guillaume Kervel and Barthelemy Fougea.

The first steelpans of the association were bought from Phase II and Pamberi Steelbands. Collaborations, records and workshops with Andy Narell, Ray Holman, Michelle Huggins Watts, Calypso Rose, Pamberi, Ferrum Helveticum, Les Allumés du Bidon et al took place. Depending on the period, the association comprised over 100 pannists constituting up to 5 steelbands.

<http://www.calypsociation.com/>

**1993:** Guillaume Kervel set up the professional steelband Pan a Paname with the first pannists of Paris, professional drummers and percussionists who started playing pan. Three records were produced: Pan à Paname at the New Morning, Soka Rakaï and Fantaisies pour Steel Band). Collaborations and workshops were undertaken by Duvone Stewart, Emmanuel Bex, Calyps'Atlantic, the Fanfan brothers and others see : <https://www.facebook.com/PanAPaname/>

**1995:** Saint Aubin le Cloud Steelband (near Poitiers) was built around the

expertise of the tuner and arranger René "Gus" Martineau. Steelbands: PanaTchao and A Cloch'Pan.

<https://lesateliersdugriffon.fr/panatchao/>  
 .From 2002, they have organised several festivals and concerts.  
<https://lesateliersdugriffon.fr/festival/>

**1996:** the first steelbands in Cahors (Pan à Pat') then in Soulac-sur-mer (Mandel Steel Orchestra) founded by the tuner Michel "Coco" Lemeur. This was followed by 3 workshops in and music schools in Agen from 1999 to 2009.

**1996:** Birth of the Acousteel Gang, a steelband from Langon still active in 2022 with traditional tunes.  
<http://acousteelgang.wix.com/acousteelgang#!le-gang/cxfr>

**1997:** Founding of the steelband Calyps'Atlantic in Nantes. The association, created by Mokhtar El Mokhtari, worked with the arrangers Tommy Crichlow, Jason Baptiste and Duvone Stewart. School activities developed by Calyps'Atlantic around Nantes led to some becoming permanent Steelbands such as Nantes Nord, St. Herblain, Coueron who with the Renegades play a classical music repertoire almost every year at the "Folle journée de Nantes". It is Wanda Atkins, president of Calyps'Atlantic (2019-2022) in 2021 who initiated the French Panorama.

**From 1997 to 2009:** Panasuk, traditional steelband founded in Aulnay sous Bois (93) by Emmanuel Masselot. It was a "Stage Team" of pannists from the Paris region.

**1997:** The Pan Spirit Steel Orchestra in Villandraut (South of Gironde) was founded and up 2022 is active and works under the direction of Nicolas Terrance.

**1998:** Calypsud "Steelband de Montagnac" (near Montpellier) was founded and

directed by Laurent Trouchaud who still offers steelband courses in 2022.  
<https://www.calypsud.fr/>

**1998:** "Steeldream" event in the Grande Halle de La Villette for the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the abolition of slavery. A steelband of 150 panists from France, England and Trinidad were gathered for the occasion.

Recordings by Pascale Gellez : Part 1  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YWqL3yYqzhk> Part 2  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eXwguSa1-Q4> Part 3  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zCLD73r9kFI>

**From 1998 to 2002:** FIPA (Forum International des Percussions en Auvergne) set up a steelband workshop. It was a summer course aimed at future professional musicians (students of conservatories at the end of their studies). First and last edition were conventional, but most often, workshops on single pans were provided by Bruno Grare (from Pan à Paname and classical percussionist). The last part featured a concert by the Sakésho with Andy Narell who also gave a master class. There was also a concert by the steelband Pan à Paname who provided the instruments.

**1999:** Following the first FIPA workshop, Bruno Grare held workshops on single pans in Reims , Grenoble (university and Orfeo), Villers-Cotteret (02) and La Côte Saint André (38) where the Steelband Joséphine (Stage Team set up for the occasion) played for the Festival.

Berlioz Festival in 2015. Bruno Grare will also have a stage team on single pans, the Steelband Auversois, in Auvers Saint Georges (91) from 2008 to 2011

**2000:** Steelpan European in Paris La Villette. First festival with 12 European

steelbands (700 pannists) playing in front of Trinidadian adjudicators. The first steelbands of the ranking (Ebony GB, Calypsociation FR, Steel Pan Lovers FI and Panch 2000 CH) were invited to Trinidad to participate in the World Pan Festival in October 2000.

**2000:** Alain Rouaud starts a long list of traditional steelband workshops in the Paris region Caducia in Conflans St Honorine, Les Métales in Nanterre, Panacoda in Paris, Pan Arc en Ciel in Achères, the workshops of the Cité de la Musique (which became Philharmonic de Paris in 2015). This last venue was directed by arrangers and band leaders :Aurélie Helmlinger, Xavier Mertian and José Babeu.

Alain Rouaud has often brought together all these workshops for concerts reaching 120 pannists until the end of the 2010s. <http://panart.steeldrum.free.fr/>

Since the beginning of the millennium and following a course in Trappes (78) by Xavier Mertian and Alain Rouaud many future steelband leaders have trained. Traditional steelband workshops in St Arnoult en Yvelines (78), La Verrières (78), Trappes (78), Montigny and Voisin le Bretonneux (78) were provided by Sonia Descamps, Guillaume Cazal then Jean-Pierre Lanez, Benjamin Magnan and Guillaume Kervel.

**2001 to 2012:** Panash steelband, a stage team set up by Clément Bazin and Laurent Lalsingué was hosted by Calypsociation. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S1EY5xfLc-s>

**2001 to 2016:** D.N'Roy Steelband traditional and then conventional pans combo is a “stage team” led by Xavier Mertian in Buc (78) then Montargis (45). Record “Single pans can sing”. 2002 Steelpan European in Sète. 2nd European steelband festival. The participation of Calypsociation is the subject of a feature film directed by Pascale Gellez

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AmL0LAynOHM>

**2002:** Andy Narell moved to live in Paris. He played in the Sakésho quartet with Mario Canonge, Jean-Philippe Fanfant and Michel Alibo and started to collaborate with Calypsociation (Arrangement for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Steelpan European, record "Le passage", concerts with the "Stage Team of the association). His steelband project with pannists from Calypsociation would tour from 2005 to 2011.

**2002** Steelband "Arrogante venganza para Jaco P." initiated by Xavier Mertian, Laurent Lalsingué and Mathieu Borgne. This stage team, hosted by Calypsociation, played the compositions by Jaco Pastorius with guests Claudio Pini (from Ferrum Helveticum CH), vibraphonist David Patrois and Cuban percussionists Abraham Mansfaroll and Javier Campos. Javier Campos.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=daEztH82\\_A](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=daEztH82_A)

**2000:** Louverné steelband (near Laval). Les allumés du bidon" (The canisters) LADB revolutionised the manufacturing of pan by introducing pneumatic hammers, regarded as major advance for relatively new steelband in the association.

<https://www.lesallumesdubidon.fr/>

The association has also organised PAN! festival since 2014 gathering steelbands in France including bands from the UK.

Pan'n'co steelband in Tours. A conventional steelband, a stage team in single pans and a combo including a pan. <https://www.pannco-steelband.com/>

### Workshops for primary school children

Since the middle of the year 2000, traditional steelband workshops for primary school children in the South of Lille have

been alternately led by Alain Rouaud, Laurent Lalsingué, Xavier Mertian and José Babeu. Directed by the Lille Conservatory of Music./Lille music conservatory. Steelpans produced by Yann Brabant.

**2004:** Traditional workshop involving conventional band in Migennes (near Auxerre). Directed alternately by E.Masselot, X.Mertian, C.Bazin, M.Fecil and today by Manu Judith.

2006 in Montpellier, Daniel Costa created the Steeldrum-Languedoc association. A “stage team and 2 workshops (steelbands of Villeveyrac and Montpellier)

**2010:** Pan’s Passion. This was a conventional band in Cenon that was directed by Alain Camé

**2006 to 2018:** Traditional steelband workshops at CAP d’Aulnay sous bois (93) directed by Emmanuel Masselot. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7ivEO2aNg9c>

**2008:** Steel Vibration: conventional workshop of Mathieu Borgne in Janvry (91) then At the Radazic in Les Ulis (91) then at the MJC in Limours then steelband in Sermaise (91) [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xB\\_k\\_g\\_wj-g](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xB_k_g_wj-g)

**2008 to 2013:** Conventional steelband workshops "Steely Parrots" at the conservatory of Montargis directed by Xavier Mertian.

**2010:** In Bourgoin Jallieu commune, Rémy Zanon set up Les Calyp’Sôts: Team training in single pans and courses in MJC. Rémy discovered pan at FIPA. He participated in the Arrogante Venganza project in Paris as a Double Second Reader and improviser. He also played with the Pan steelband in Paname.

**2012:** Arcueil (94) Ramajay Steelband, a stage team set up by Aurélie Helmlinger who makes the arrangements. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hJ7LoJ6gv1M>

**2014:** In Bournazel (81), Chroma Steel was formed by Olivier Wiren (former pillar of Calypsociation). This is a conventional steelband that participated in French Panorama 2022 <https://chromasteel.wordpress.com/a-propos/>

**2016:** Workshop organised and directed by Micael Lubin (from Calypsociation) in Lagny plus Chelles since 2021. Steelband "SteelAlive" performed at French Panorama 2022.

**2017:** Conventional workshop at the University of Evry Val d’Essonne and 2018 workshop at the of music of Plessi Pâté (91) under the direction of Benoit Colin (of Calypsociation)

**2017:** Pan Berry traditional steelband in Bourges. Contact Estelle Roudet <https://www.facebook.com/PanBerrySteelDrum/>

**2021:** The Panvengers steelband, stage team put together by Yann and Cédric Brabant (from the Lalsingué family Lalsingué family, so ex-Alysés ...) <https://www.facebook.com/panvenger/>

**2022:** First virtual French Panorama created by Wanda Atkins, president of Calyps’Atlantic <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mI5AuWrAjA>

The steelpans are also played from time to time in French symphony orchestras such as-Philharmonica etc).

The percussionist’s expertise is value to the sound and theme of his/her work. Some

well-known classical percussionists include: Xavier Mertian, Bruno Grare, Jean Duval, Fred Deshuy, José Babeu ... Experienced composers have been using pans in contemporary music since the end of the 90s in France: Pierre Boulez, Philippe Manoury, Pascal Dusapin, Martin Matalon

#### iv) Steelpan and Trinidad and Tobago links

Trinidad remains the Mecca musically and culturally for pan. Many musicians travel annually to join and compete in Panorama. Phase II, Desperadoes and Renegades Workshops between France and Trinidad remain an important part of Steelpan apprenticeship.

Over the years, there have been several collaborations with Renegades, Valley Harps, Duvone Stewart, Michelle Higgins Watts and others that allows us to enrich our connections with the twin islands.

Renegades have toured France and participated in the renowned classical Festival “Les Folles journées” in Nantes.



<https://www.dailymotion.com/video/xgwjjs4>

<https://www.ouest-france.fr/pays-de-la-loire/la-roche-sur-yon-85000/folle-journee-les-renegades-sur-le-bon-rythme-4770534>

<https://lesateliersdugriffon.fr/2016/07/un-steelband-trinidadien-en-gatine/>



<https://tt.ambafrance.org/French-steelband-P-tit-Pan-visits-the-Embassy>

#### v) Pan in Schools

Over the last few decades, several initiatives had been put forth to encourage introducing steelpan into schools. Below are a few examples:

In St Martin, The Gunslingers Steelband was at the commencement of this endeavour in 2016. Children from ages, 7-12 participated in this project.

<http://lepelican-journal.fr/saint-martin/education/Le-steelpan-a-l-ecole-11887.html>

In Nantes, Calyps’atlantic assisted in creating courses with the guidance of the arranger and musical director, David Canu (St. Herblain). Steeldrum is part of their curriculum. Annually a Children’s Panorama takes place with over 300 participants.

<https://www.ouest-france.fr/pays-de-la-loire/saint-herblain-44800/steel-drum-300-ecoliers-vont-passer-la-casserole-3448026>  
<https://www.saint-herblain.fr/Actualites/Culture/Les-rythmes-chaloupes-de-Panorama>

## vi) The French Panorama 2022

<https://anchor.fm/strike-up/episodes/Episode-3-Wanda-Atkins-and-The-French-Panorama-e1c2ksf>

In February 2020, I had my first opportunity to attend Panorama and Carnival in Trinidad! I now understand why we say it is the greatest show on Earth! I returned to France with pan ringing in my ears. In March 2020, everything changed. The idea of not being able to play pan took its toll. How could we reignite the fervour that we once had? France started to reopen, in May 2020 and then I started to think about how we could unite this feeling in one event. The situation was so unpredictable. At the time, I was President of Calyps'atlantic in Nantes, I saw how conditions had become critical for all the bands in France. So, I picked up the phone and started calling people. If you have ever had an idea and had to convince people, you can relate. I didn't have a structure, logistics, just an idea. Paris was very instrumental in helping me find contacts. Apparently, this idea had been spoken about for years. In a sense, it was like an enormous team building project. Some were reluctant at first, it had never been done before in France. There had been European festivals that were quite successful in the past, so why a French one? A Panorama competition like Trinidad? Musical events in France are quite different. Eventually, I started holding meetings to listen to the steelbands concerns and points of view. I realised that I had a completely different view coming from an English-speaking culture and perspective.

I had to finally find out what my vision was and make a decision. I didn't know who would follow... fortunately they did. One by one they joined, some heard about it through the others. The news spread and it finally got back to me. Most people didn't know that I was behind it all.

So we held monthly meetings to shape a small group in order to organise statements, share our vision, work out video specifications etc; Mathieu Borgne who



already direct connection with many Steelbands and well respected in the community, guided me in the choice of judges ensure impartiality and attain the highest standards.

### **The French Panorama the French touch was born.**

The vision was to have an event with all steelbands (all levels), without a criteria, playing two songs from their playlist. The songs were to be 4 - 6 minutes long and were filmed facing the band's in landscape. The overall aim was to promote visibility of steelpan musical development in France while acknowledging the style and content of each band.

Filming was an issue, with curfews and local lockdowns. The final date had been postponed to accommodate the group from Guadeloupe due to riots during curfew. It was a rollercoaster ride that invented new routes at every turn. Like organising any event, resilience and patience were key. Energy became one of the main challenges. How do you motivate 300 people? Luckily, each group's musical director had a large influence on group participation. Having the goal to play, improve and share a moment in history became an ideal goal and the author is deeply indebted.

Personally, I was a novice at social media (still currently in a learning curve) and tried to connect with the outside world. People also shared the event and it snowballed. I hadn't expected such a response. My apologies if my bilingual posts were hilarious, excitement and stress were fuelling my comments. Pressing the post button made my heart jump. Our published words mean everything.

Some many questions arose. Could we do this every year? Could we expand? How

could we improve our presentation? Who would like to join?

In my mind, time will tell how it develops. The music is there and so are the players. Universally speaking, it will continue to evolve and bring joy to all those who shared and contributed to its exciting future. We love pan!

**The final list of 18 steelbands and songs played are given below together with a photo during their performance:**

1. Band: A Cloch Pan

Tune: Ederlezi/ by Goran Bregovic

Arranger: Gus Martineau

<https://lesateliersdugriffon.fr/>



2. Band: Calyps'Atlantic  
Tune: Year For Love/ by Voice  
Arranger: Suleiman Benmoumene  
<https://calypsatlantic.fr/>



3. Band: PanaTchao  
Tune: Navigatore/ by Renaud Garcia-Fons  
Arranger: Gus Martineau  
<https://lesateliersdugriffon.fr/>



4. The Panvengers

Tune: You will know/ by Stevie Wonder

Arranger: Yann Brabant

<https://www.facebook.com/panvenger/>



5. Band: Bidon é Vous

Tune: Savannah Grass/ by Kes

Arranger: Christophe Brégaïnt

<https://bidonevous.fr.gd/>



6. Band: Chroma Steel  
Tune: Pan of the 21st Century/ by Lord Kitchener  
Arranger: Olivier Wiren  
[https://chromasteel.wordpress.com/-](https://chromasteel.wordpress.com/)



7. Band: Pan's Passion Steelband  
Tune: Toco Band/ by Lord Kitchener  
Arranger: Sean Steele (Rising Stars)  
Adapted by Alain Calmé  
<https://www.pans-passion.fr/>



8. Band: Calypsociation ClemBazBand (3rd Place)  
Tune: Happy Place/ by Lyrikal  
Arranger: Clément Bazin  
<http://www.calypsociation.com/fr/#:>



9. Band: Panasuc Steel Band  
Tune: Pass the dutchie/ by Musical Youth  
Arranger: Sandrine Bernard Abraham  
<https://www.facebook.com/nantesnordsteelband/>



10. Band: Les Allumettes Steel Band  
Tune: Gerudo Valley/ by Koji Kondo  
Arranger: Valentin Chapot  
<https://www.lesallumesdubidon.fr/bio-ladb>



11. Band: LADB Steel Band (2<sup>nd</sup> Place)  
Tune: Pan Woman/ by De Alberto  
Arranger: Jérémy Beucher  
<https://www.lesallumesdubidon.fr/bio-ladb>



12. Band: Pan'n'Co SteelBand  
Tune: Spain/ by Chick Corea  
Arranger: Mathys Meunier  
<https://www.pannco-steelband.com/>



13. Band: SteelAlive  
Tune: Big Bad Soca/ by Bunji Garlin  
Arranger: Micaël Lubin



14. Band: Calypsociation Jumbies  
Tune: La grev baré men/ by Yoles Rondes // Tu as volé/ by Tabou Combo  
Arranger: Xavier Mertian  
<http://www.calypsociation.com/fr/#:>



15. Milpan  
Tune: En attendant Cousteau/ by Jean-Michel Jarre  
Arranger: Fred Maillard



16. Band: Calypsociation Sunday (1st Place)  
Tune: More Sokah/ by Nailah Blackman  
Arranger: Mathieu Borgne  
<http://www.calypsociation.com/fr/#:>



17. Band: Calypsociation Pankillers  
Tune: This is de place/ by Patrice Roberts  
Arranger: Julie Goldstein  
<http://www.calypsociation.com/fr/#:>



18. Band: Karukera Steel Band (Guadeloupe)  
Tune: Dear Promoter/ by Kes and Voice  
Arranger: T REY MA / Yanis SteeldrumMusic  
<https://www.karukerasteelband.com/>



*That was Year One... let's see what Year Two brings!*

**Acknowledgement:**

I would like to express my sincere thanks to Xavier Mertian who gave up considerable time and effort to help me compile the information herein which believe sheds light on a new aspect on history of Pan to become part of musical culture of France.

## References:

Most of the information presented in this paper has been through personal communications as documents on much of the history of steelpan in France are sparse. The author is therefore unable to cite published data in the standard format of the journal but instead has given a list of sources where the information was collected and used to construct the present narrative.

These are as follow

<https://www.facebook.com/thegunslingerssteelband>

<https://www.discogs.com/fr/release/5463534-Cyril-Aventurin-Et-Son-Steel-Band-Folklore->

<https://www.discogs.com/fr/artist/851929-Cyril-Aventurin>

<https://www.discogs.com/fr/master/608464-Steel-Band-De-La-Guadeloupe-Les-Aliz%C3%A9s>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EBshpcj3qJc>

<https://www.discogs.com/fr/release/2974018-Brasserie-Lorraine-Steel-Band-Brasserie-Lorraine-Steel-Band>

<https://steelpanmartinique.wordpress.com/>  
Gabriel Desroc is the oldest tuner quoted by Chantal

Remion. on her web page.

<https://www.discogs.com/fr/release/17751673-Orchestre-De-Steel-Pan-De-La-Martinique->

<https://www.discogs.com/fr/release/17751673-Orchestre-De-Steel-Pan-De-La-Martinique-Direction-Guy-Louis-et-Fl%C3%B9re-De->

Pan-Simion-Stanciu-Syrinx-Or  
"Meeting Pan" festivals that have been held for over

20 years

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BzM12iddU00>

French Guyana

<https://www.saintlaurentdumaroni.fr/attachment/336934/>

Réunion Island

<http://tropiqueducancer.com/>

<http://pansenpresquile.free.fr/>

<http://www.calypsociation.com/>

<https://www.facebook.com/PanAPaname/>

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## Every Year You Re-Make Yourself! So, What You Go Do This Year?

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### Abstract

In the spirit of Sankofa<sup>1</sup>, a self-identified native anthropologist reflects on the history of the Trinidad and Tobago Carnival event and her involvement as a child, and a researcher with an interest in learning/teaching practices in non-school contexts like the Carnival mas'<sup>2</sup> camp<sup>3</sup>. Her ultimate involvement as a participant and a researcher brings her to the realization that Carnival mas' makers see themselves as important to the transformation that comes about annually as many participate in an event that is cathartic among other things. The doing of this research allowed her to recognize the mas' camp in which the costumes are made and distributed as a perfect school in which teaching/learning practices take place and which allowed for 'imagined possibilities'. It is within this context that this Caribbean Belmont born woman who lives and works in the USA bemoans the loss of the 2021 Annual Trinidad and Tobago Carnival.

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**Key Words:** Carnival, Mas' Camp, Mas' makers, Street Theatre, COVID-19, Dragon Mas', Burokeets, J'ouvert, Sailor Mas'.

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<sup>1</sup> Sankofa is **an African word from the Akan tribe in Ghana**. The literal translation of the word and the symbol is "it is not taboo to fetch what is at risk of being left behind."

<sup>2</sup> Shortened form of the word masquerade

<sup>3</sup> The space in which in some instances costumes are designed and manufactured

**Sankofa: JanJan Reflects**

*Long time no hear? ☺How are you doing in these difficult times with no Carnival to ease the stress? (Personal Communication, November 2020)*

The text message is one of the many that flooded my inbox as it became clear that the 2021 annual festival would be cancelled. Having been “born and bred” in Belmont, Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, I lived and breathed Carnival. Indeed, Belmont is a place, which according to Wendell Manwarren (2021) is stimulated by all things Carnival—not just mas’. Having lived in various parts of the country for 50 years of my life, one can say that I am according to artist David Rudder and Carl Jacob (2003) a “Trini 2 De Bone” for whom Carnival was a ‘must’. Belmont, formerly called Freetown in memory of the enslaved immigrants from Sierra Leone, was the home of those who in the post emancipation era (1834) took over Carnival from the White members of the population and made it into something the Black people in the community added their imagination to and made it their own. Carnival, one of Trinidad and Tobago’s major cultural traditions, reflects the mixture and diversity of the people of the country and its historical development. Riggio (2004) claimed,

The history of Trinidad Carnival is essentially the history of the peoples of Trinidad— embedded in the

stories of conquest, enslavement, resistance, and indentureship, and in commercial, cultural, and ethnic exchange among the many who were forcibly brought to the place or settled there after Columbus first named the island Trinidad in 1498: Spanish, French, English, Africans, (East) Indians, Irish, Germans, Corsicans, Chinese, Syrians, Portuguese, Canadians, Lebanese, and probably more. (p. 39)

The festival evolved over the years. It moved from being an upper- and middle-class celebration to one in which our ancestors parodied what their owners celebrated but added their imagination to it. Meanwhile, the upper- and middle-class participants returned to their inner sanctuaries to celebrate and plan how to stop this type of Carnival celebration. Indeed, we must admit that those who self-identify as upper and middle class now are no longer in their sanctuaries but in the thick of things and might have demonized the event. This takeover, some scholars (Pearse, 1956,1988; Hill, 1972; Brereton, 1981; De Verteuil, 1984; van Koningsbruggen, 1997; Liverpool, 1998, 2001) claimed gave rise to the hostility and negative attitudes to the festival associated with the lower-class groups in the society of which I was a member as a young girl growing up in Belmont.

My family was classified as lower class. My seven siblings shared a small two-bedroom house with my mother and my father who was the sole bread winner. I lived in a somewhat larger house not very far away, with adopted parents whose only son migrated to Canada when I was five years old. I only realized I was poor when at age 11, I passed an entrance examination and began attending a state-assisted denominational secondary girls'



Figure 1. Grandmother playing mas'

school. I did not go on vacations out of the country and my father only drove me to school on the first day when the *grip* in which I carried all



Figure 2. 'The Dragon Mas'

the new books for the school year was much too heavy. After the first day, I walked to and from school

twice a day because I went home for cooked lunch. I did not buy things to eat in the cafeteria. My mother made snacks like sugar cake and tamarind balls that I took with me to school. Mother, which is how I called my adopted mother, ensured that I spoke Trinidadian Standard English and insisted that education was the key to success. "*Hold your head up high*", mother insisted, and "*Be proud of who you are*".

The only member of my family that I saw playing mas' was my maternal grandmother (Figure 1). She made the Carnival festival an integral aspect of my out of school education and development. I therefore could not resist being part of a festival that Antonio Benitez Rojo (1996), a Caribbean literary scholar asserted, "best expresses the strategies that the people of the Caribbean have for speaking at once of themselves and their relationship with the world, with history, with nature and with God" (p. 2).

I grew up in the 1960s putting sequins on my grandmother's cape, which was an important part of the costume she always seemed to wear. In the secrecy of her small one room house, Chinee [as my grandmother was affectionately called, because of her Asian heritage] gave my siblings and me small sips of that good Trinidad rum "for the worms" and taught us how to dance the dragon mas' (Figure 2). My siblings and I paraded in our own bedroom stage, the headpieces, and parts of the costumes she wore on Carnival Mondays and Tuesdays.

For me one of the most important events of the year was never Christmas but instead Carnival. I remember my mother commenting that J’ouvert morning was the only day she didn’t have to wake me up. After weeks and months of hearing the steel bands in the area rehearsing, I could not wait for “J’ouvert morning when my mother would take all of us down the hill to go ‘jump up’ with the famous Burokeets ole mas’ band. Who can forget the then school Principal



Figure 3. ‘Sailor Mas’ Costume

Peter Simon with a chamber pot<sup>4</sup> on his head as part of his ole’ mas’ costume? The excitement I felt could not be described. Then we would be even more excited for Carnival Monday and Tuesday when we would see our grandmother dressed in her varying costumes that we had to make even prettier than what she brought home from the mas’ maker.

After years of standing on the side and looking on at other masqueraders, I finally played a fancy sailor mas’ in 1966 (Figure 3). It was my emancipation moment. I had been preparing for it for years as a “spectator.” Boal (1985) theorized that in

festivals like Trinidad Carnival, which he would describe as street theatre, no one is a spectator. I was playing fancy sailor mas’ in one of the traditional mas’ bands that depicted the sailors who came off the ships that passed through the capital, Port of Spain, and misbehaved on the streets. It was an up-and-coming steel band, Amboys. My mas’ costume consisted of a pair of colored bell-bottomed pants and a t-shirt bearing the name of the band “Sailors Ashore.”

A white sailor cap protected my head from the rays of sun, and the comfortable white tennis shoes and socks allowed for the long hours of parade and dancing through the streets. I felt like Charles Bennet, who in a personal communication with Hill (1972) said, “When the moment comes for me to take up that mask, and I take the mask and put it on, I become a different being entirely” (Bennet quoted Hill, 1972, p. 89). Yes, I began re-making myself at that moment. Although I did not play a devil mas’ like the one Bennet described, I was excited to be in a costume and on the streets playing mas’ for the first time. Like Edwidge Danticat (2002), who in 2001 celebrated Masquerade for the first time in Haiti, her country of birth, I had allowed myself to put on and take off my masks. I can hear the voice of Lawrence Dunbar (1895) mockingly reminding me, “Oh the masks we wear! And years later my sisters and I played with Burokeets and Starlift Steel Orchestra on Carnival Mondays and Barbarosa on Carnival Tuesdays. We took over from our grandmother who played mas’ until

<sup>4</sup> The local name for this was a “posy”.

she was in her 80s and we are still playing. Yes, Carnival is in our blood! It is little wonder that my PhD dissertation focused on Carnival mas' and teaching and learning practices (Fournillier, 2005). It is then I realized how even more valuable and important the festival is for many different groups of individuals in the country. But more so for the artists whose creativity comes alive as we the mas' players have the opportunity to re-make themselves annually. It is more than an event in which we only wine and jam. And so as soon as one Carnival ends, we the Carnival junkies are preparing our minds and bodies for the following year. But in 2021, the Mighty COVID 19 had other plans.

### **The Mighty Covid**

*Well they moan & they fuss, and they say  
"We want we fete"  
And they buse and they cuss & they say  
"This is a threat!!"  
And they damn & they blast, and they  
say we hope it ain't true  
They won't dare to cancel we jump up  
1972 (Kitchener, 73)*

For some of us this was not the first time we were experiencing the disappointment of no traditional pre-Ash Wednesday Carnival celebrations. The calypsonian Lord Kitchener (1973) left us the lyrics of his *Rain-O-Rama* after the threat of polio forced the postponement of Carnival 1972. But we were rewarded with "Mas' in May" although the rain came and washed it out. This time it was different. Finally, after weeks of uncertainty, the long-awaited

announcement came as the Trinidad and Tobago's Prime Minister loudly and proudly announced that there would be no Carnival 2021. Indeed, the note accompanying the video that came to my desk and went viral stated, "He rough us up"! The Prime Minister announced in his broadcast,

Today I can put everybody on notice that as long as there is some dramatic wind that will blow across whereby Christmas this pandemic will be a thing of the past ... Carnival in Trinidad and Tobago in 2021 is NOT on. (Rowley, 2020)

We all suspected it would come to this but were hoping against hope it would not. The comedians had a field day! What with characters depicting the outrage and the pain and others deciding can we do something virtual. But for lots of us who take the event to be much more than just an annual event but a time to 're-make oneself' as I found in my dissertation study (Fournillier, 2005) it re-presented a loss.

According to Lovelace (1979) "Carnival it is that springs this hill alive" (p.11). And this hill might have been Laventille in the novel, but it is the hill inside of all of us Trinidadians and Tobagonians at home and abroad who spend the year preparing for this event. As Explainer (1982), whose calypso Lorraine lives on as annually we return to the lyrics sings:

Lorraine, girl take it easy  
I don't mean to hurt you baby  
The coldness makin' me shiver

And back home, it hot like fire  
 That is why I say de next jet plane  
 Must take me to Port-of-Spain  
 Where all my fans are waiting  
 Preparing for J'ouvert Morning,  
 Darlin'

The cry was now a different one. “Wha’ we go do? Oh Gawd, ah go dead, ah go dead!” The cartoon character moaned. So, what happens when the opportunity is taken away by COVID 19 pandemic and any other such events? What happens when the authorities find themselves caught between a rock and a hard place? Where some wonder is the ‘compassion’ for the loss of event? Lovelace’s “The Dragon can’t dance” highlights the importance of the festival not merely as an economic venture but also social and psychological relief, an opportunity for individuals to find release, and time to be gainfully engaged in the art form in its various ways—making mas’ beating pan singing calypso and soca chutney, stick fighting, doing make up—all of the activities that demand preparation and performance—with sometimes little financial gain—but more importantly a spiritual connection that comes from the doing and the being that one cannot find words to explain. Some mourned that COVID 19 had silenced the calypsonians. Still not willing to accept the reality I turned to Earl Lovelace (1979) who captures in his novel some of the solemnity of the event in these lines and indeed throughout the novel.

*With the door of his little shack half open, Aldrick worked solemnly on his*

*dragon costume, saying nothing to Basil, the little boy of ten who came from somewhere in the neighbourhood of Alice Street, appeared just so a year before, in the ragged khaki pants and sleeveless merino that was his uniform all that year, and stood at the door and gazed in at the dragon costume Aldrick was then making, looking from the costume to Aldrick with a fullness of wonderment and fascination and awe, leaving, only when dark fell, to return next day and the next all through the making of the dragon costume, maintaining that attitude of reverence throughout, as if he were in the presence of holiness, until one day Aldrick asked him to run to Miss Cleothilda's parlour and buy him a pack of cigarettes; and cemented in that act the boy's apprenticeship to dragon making. So, the boy was here again this year. And, working now, he seemed to divine exactly which tool or piece of material Aldrick needed for his work, and he handed it to him with a ceremonial solemnity as if he, the boy, were an acolyte, and Aldrick the priest. (p. 35)*

I too experienced the solemnity as a novice researcher studying mas’ making in the traditional Carnival mas’ camp

and so understood first-hand what it felt like to not be able to participate in the solemnity of the occasion. There seemed to be little understanding that needed to be mixed with the practicality and the dangers associated with the pandemic! No softness! Just “badjohn” tone of voice and threats. I fear that this is too much for politicians who do not dare or are not able or cannot ever get as they deal with the pandemic and the health, social and economic issues at hand and do not seem to recognize the mental and emotional health issues that might also arise. Bunji Garlin’s (2021) composition *Heart of the People* could not say it any better. He reminds us of the many forms of employment and that Carnival is not only about woman and wine as he belts out the lyrics that seem to come from deep down within:

*I know you see it but you  
never take stock  
For Carnival in your  
mind s only about  
woman and wuk  
People so caught up  
with enjoyment  
that they doh see the  
level of employment  
that coulda’ save life  
when you think this ting  
woulda’ destroy them.  
Carnival is a sea that  
deep.  
And you don’t know  
nutten bout depth  
because you follow ole  
talk like sheep  
and you don’t know  
nutten bout depth  
It start from de people*

*deep down in de heart of  
de people*

The soca and calypso artists, the voice of the people, were suffering but took time to make a case for the importance and value of the festival Others found ways to bring the enjoyment home in backyard party (Farmer Nappy, 2021) and virtual shows. Kess reminds us that, “As much as people categorize [Carnival] as rum and fêtes and debauchery in some cases, it is a spiritual ritual” (Drakes, 2021). Music indeed is an integral part of Carnival, and it is what helps to bring relief. Lovelace (1979) vividly described the impact of the music:

*The music insists that you dance;  
if it tells the troubles of a  
brother, the music says dance.  
Dance to the hurt! Dance! If you  
catching hell, dance, and the  
government don’t care, dance!  
You woman take your money and  
run away with another man,  
dance! Dance! Dance! Dance! It  
is in dancing that you ward off  
evil. Dancing is a chant that cuts  
off the power from the devil.  
Dance! Dance! Dance! Carnival  
brings this dancing to every  
crevice in the hill. (p. 14)*

Given my interest in the festival that I turned on its head in my dissertation work and other subsequent publications (Fournillier, 2005, 2009) I bemoaned the loss of the event. I therefore returned to the lessons I learned about the event and the value I was able to place on it given my research for my comfort.

Moreso, I too could not do my annual ritual of re-making myself—a major lesson I learned from my research work (Fournillier, 2005).

### **The Carnival Mas' Camp: A perfect School that could not go virtual**

The important aspect of the Carnival that intrigued me as an educator and researcher was what happens in a traditional Carnival mas' camp and the kinds of teaching learning practices that take place there. While K-12 school classes went virtual the mas' makers were not able to do so. Like Carnival artists Bunji Garlin and Wendell Manwarren, I saw Carnival as much more than a wine and jam event but instead a space that was at the heart of one of our most important rituals. Using an anthropological perspective, I explored the practices within one of Trinidad's Carnival communities that was able to draw to its fold students from all the social and economic groups and assisted in their development of skills as mas' makers.

The mas' makers take the designs and work their magic to create the costumes. These various mas' makers (wire benders, seamstresses, decorators) gather daily in the mas' camp, the mas' headquarters of the bands, to produce costumes for all the potential masqueraders. Some of the mas' makers are seasoned workers who are paid sums of money for the jobs. In conversation with one mas' maker, he jokingly said, *"I make more money these days than I was making before. I wouldn't tell you how much. But I do it for the love."* He made sure I had the tape on as he emphasized that, despite

the need for money, he did it for the love. Other volunteers, who enjoy the social life in the camp and learn to make mas' in the process, are sometimes given a costume for their participation in the mas' making activities.

One of the members of a community described the world of the mas' camp she worked with as,

*The variety of people Minshall's work pulled together involved students, photographers, painters, sculptors, teachers, Ph.D. students, vacationers, yachties, inventors, high-school dropouts, wire benders, welders, carpenters, joiners, masons, tailors, seamstresses, gay, straight, lesbian, bi-sexual, single, married, divorced, craftsmen and women of every ilk from age 13-70, from Venezuela to France and beyond. That warehouse was a buzzing microcosm of the world of art...and I do mean the world!* (Ms. Mommy, email communication, March 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2004).

I took the position that these practices seemed to work, and we could and ought to showcase and include them in our knowledge base on learning. My 28 years of experiences as a teacher in Trinidad and Tobago, my interests in learning teaching practices in out-of-school contexts, and my new knowledge gained from the sociocultural theories of learning, spurred me to explore the practices in the mas' camp from the perspective of the community of mas' makers. The history of Trinidad

Carnival and the contributions the festival made to the development of national identity fill the texts on Trinidad Carnival. However, there was limited empirical work done on the practices of mas' makers. Although there was need for research into the possible role that Trinidad Carnival can play in the formal educational system, my focus was on mas' making: the practices of the men and women who produce the costumes for the bands that parade the streets. My ethnographic study was an examination of the practices involved in mas' making from the perspectives of the mas' makers in Trinidad. I focused on: How do mas' camps operate? What are the kinds of practices involved in learning to make mas'? What are the selected members' perceptions of the practices?

It was an opportunity to learn from and with the informants in the traditional mas' camps where the costumes were being made, and not imported from China.

*Our art both performing and practical art making have all grown up in the informal sector. Whether you are making a pan, you making mas', you making paintings in a studio, you making a dress, everybody is etching a space out of the whole. You are at the edges of town, or you under your house...in those edges you begging lodging by somebody, or you are working in some dilapidated space. All right you know we really on the edges. And in those edges, we have formulated some practices which*

*help us to do what we do.* (Personal Communication, Ken, 2005)

The places I visited and the individuals with whom I communicated and shared (informants) helped me to realize what this mas' making and Carnival art form were about, and how these practices that were taking place on the edges were so very important. I began to realize that these were more than spaces to make mas'. They were the homes for some of the men and women. They provided an arena and space for the men and women to come together to make mas'. They are places in which you learn about life as your hands move and your mouth tells your life stories. They are the spaces where men and women gathered almost ceremoniously annually to spend long nights and days making mas'. It did not seem to matter to the informants in the camps whether they were high or low spaces. They were places to make mas' and do what they enjoyed and were committed to doing. The question then becomes: what are these men and women to do when there is no Carnival? It is about this situation that Bunji Garlin and 3 Canal and Etienne and so many other artists sang during the No Carnival Season.

My experience of studying the practices at work in the traditional mas' camp that took various shapes and sizes and occupied a variety of spaces confirmed that Carnival and indeed mas' making is rather complex as is the entire event. Thus, to simply announce its cancellation without thoughts of how it affected so many hundreds and thousands of people in and out of the industry itself was not as simple as it

seemed. Yes, the health of the nation was priority, but no thought seemed to have been given to the spin off effects.

I discovered that making mas' was more than assembling in a space and producing costumes. There are organizational structures, and practices that facilitate making mas'. I learned about the chain of command, the unwritten rules, standards, and practices at work in the mas' camp. A space that on the surface appeared informal and casual was indeed very complex and like every community was filled with tensions and conflict. To see it as otherwise I realized was to be unrealistic.

A mas' camp appears to be a casual place because of the social interactions, lots of chat, drinking, smoking, and loud calypso and reggae music at times. But there was within this social framework, a structure that allowed for cooperative learning and mutual engagement in tasks as I described in my field work notes. But more than those activities were the kind of learning spaces they were for so many young men and women whom the educational system had abandoned in some instances.

### ***Mas' camp: The perfect school***

Patrick, the director of a mas' making enterprise, compared the mas' camp to a perfect school where "*no voice is more powerful than any other voice.*" He was describing how his godson, an eight-year-old helped him with a problem that he was struggling to solve. I was interested in what made it a perfect school.

**Janice:** *What makes it the perfect school? How is it different from the normal school?*

**Patrick:** *In the normal school the teacher is always perceived to be the one passing out the information and the student perceived as the one receiving the information and the teacher. Everyone is a teacher, and everyone is a student. In a mas' camp we don't work like that. We work around a table, we work on a bench, we work on a step, you work where you comfortable. You might have one driving the team, the person... but his voice is not the only voice. I am in charge of the production of the adult mas' but the person who is doing the production of the band is one of my students at Trinity College and he tells me what he wants. So here I am his teacher from school, and he tells me what he wants. I am his boss yes, but he runs things. And a number of the guys working there are students of mine.*

The same kinds of things might be happening in another Carnival arena that I did not study—the steel pan yard (Dudley, 2007; Drakes, 2021; Martin, 2014). No Carnival meant a lack of activities that would engage persons for at least three to four months in: doing things they enjoyed; participating in a learning process from which they might gain some economic benefits however small and being creative in some way.

The traditional mas' camp that I studied demonstrated that there was no one source but diverse kinds of knowledge (s) at work in the mas' camp. There was



Figure 4. Researcher at work in the mas' camp

community that allowed for a cultural experience (Figure 4).

And so, all of these individuals from the mas' camps, like the ones I studied, who learned from and taught each other, would be without this community when Carnival was cancelled. Figure 5 provides an outline of the various persons involved in the process of making mas' work. This range and variety of persons allow for the kinds of participation necessary for making mas' on a large scale. One-man operations can cater only for very small numbers. The larger the size of the band, the greater the need there is for

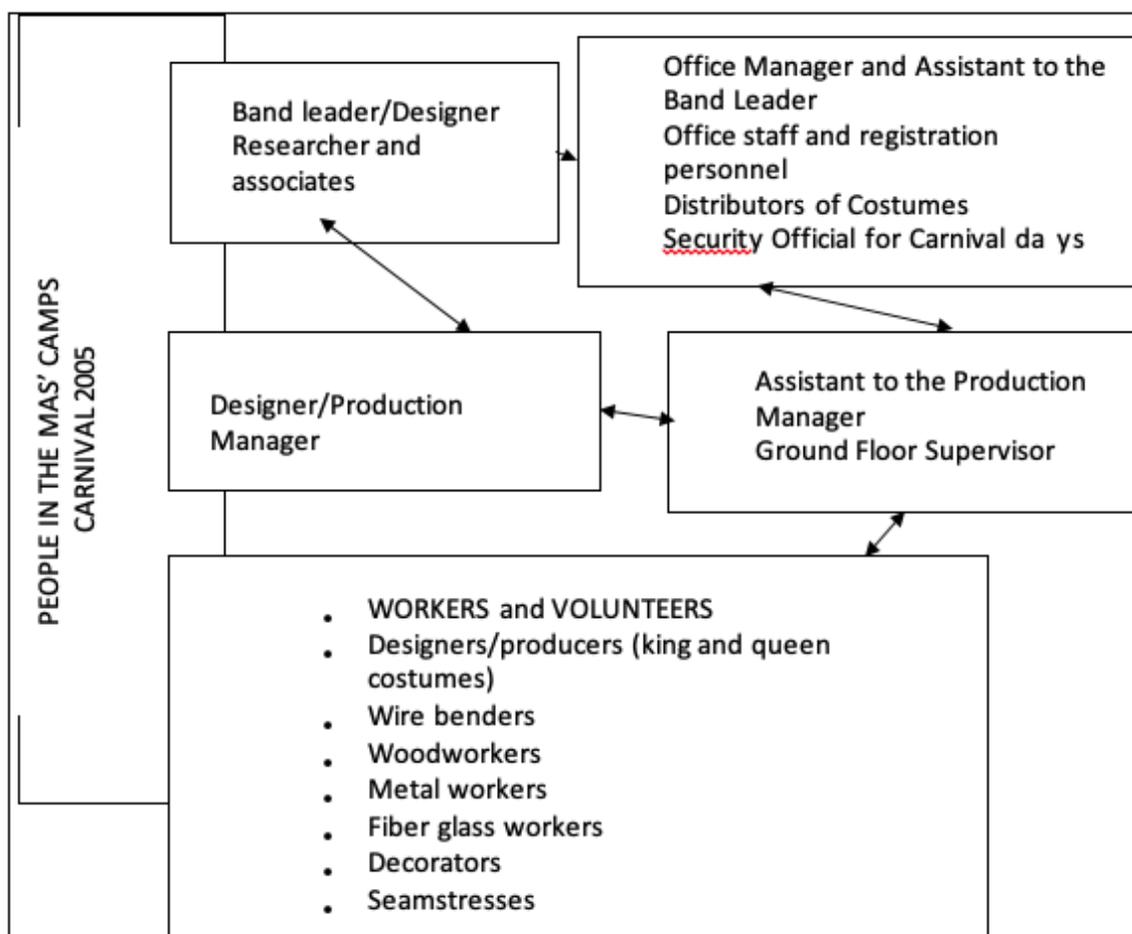


Figure 5. Community of Mas' Makers: Brian Mc Farlane's Art Factory  
Adapted from James P. Spradley & David W. McCurdy's (1972) *The Cultural Experience* San Jose, CA: Science Research Associates, Inc.

organizational structures and a range of competencies and skills. Individuals identified in Figure 5 participate in one or all of the stages of the mas' making process.

The level and extent of participation depend on the type of mas' camp and the experiences the individual brings to the group. Throughout the process there is room for growth and development as the



Figure 6. Brian McFarlane's Mas' Camp: Researcher's Field Notes

individual moves between his or her statuses as apprentice or novice and expert. The individuals draw from what Goodenough (1973) calls the *culture pool*, as they learn, grow, and share with the group their cultural knowledge and the competencies that they bring with them. A culture pool “consists of all the ideas, beliefs, values, recipes, and traditions that are known to one or more members of the society—in other words, everything in every one of its members’ propriospects” (Goodenough, 1973, p. 42).

I found that the spaces in which mas’ making takes place, the persons involved in the mas’ making activities, the kinds of knowledge (s) gained from the activities, and the practices used to learn and teach mas’ making are varied and diverse. The range in the kinds of activities needed to make mas’ allows for limitless opportunities for learning about mas’ making and about oneself as a learner. The varied nature of the knowledge (s) that persons bring and use in the mas’ making process and the interactive nature of the situation also contribute to the variety of learning-teaching practices. The learner can be a novice and an expert within the learning-teaching environment. This fluidity, interactivity, limitless opportunities for learning-teaching, variety, and diversity of knowledge (s) within organizational structures and spaces that vary in status make learning/teaching in the mas’ camp happen. The same things do not happen every year and so Carnival is filled with imagined possibilities just like it was when it first began. And so, for me it became an issue of every year you re-make yourself in some form or fashion—both the mas’ makers and the mas’ players

who are the recipients of the designs. There could not be a more fitting way to bring this discussion to a close than with some lines from 3 Canal and Etienne Charles’ (2021) bemoaning of the loss of Carnival and Maria Nunes’ photograph of my participation in K2K Carnival production (Figure 6).

*I love mih Carnival*

*I love it*

*I love mih festival*

*Carnival is a living ritual*

*Fete food bras we spreading*

*joy*

*Ah feel a spirit taking over*

*Ah feel a madness taking over*

*Inside outside spilling over*

*Oy a love mih Carnaval*

*One day we together again*

*Celebrating under de sun*

*No Carnival (I love it) (3 Canal*

*& Etienne Charles*

[https://youtu.be/en2q\\_JkG7k0](https://youtu.be/en2q_JkG7k0)



Figure 7. Researcher/Participant K2K Carnival 2019

Many of us, like Wendell Manwarren, “lived from the Carnival, for the Carnival and by the Carnival”. (Nunes. interview, 2021) [https://youtu.be/ux\\_YDiOoV7o](https://youtu.be/ux_YDiOoV7o). What we go do nex? Did COVID 19 silence the artists or did it allow them the opportunity to “reignite the imagination”? Manwarren brings some balance to the loss by suggesting that it is possibly an opportunity to reflect on what is Carnival how we can possibly influence where it is going and can go. Again, imagined possibilities could spring from what seemed a disaster and a pandemic in itself—NO CARNIVAL...

### Acknowledgements

This paper draws on the data collected for my PhD dissertation study--photographs, field notes, material from the oral history interviews, and participant observation in major traditional mas' camps. They included: Brian Mc Farlane's Art Factory, Lionel Jaggessar's mas' camp in San Fernando, the late Senor Gomez mas' camp in Port of Spain, Geraldo Viera's mas' camp in Baratara and Rosalind Gabriel's children mas' camp. I give thanks to these legends, some of whom have joined the realms of ancestors, for opening their doors and hearts to me and sharing how they learned and taught others how to make mas'. The outcome of this experience was my PhD dissertation: “Every year you

remake yourself” (Fournillier, 2005) that has spawned numerous conference presentations and peer reviewed journal publications. I also honor the memory of my grandmother now an ancestor—my first example of what it means to “play mas” and to make mas’ and my ancestor great

uncles who were real stick fighters in Gran Couva Trinidad and Tobago. Finally, I thank Maria Nunes the phenomenal photographer who gave me permission to use a photograph of my participation in K2K Carnival band that allows me to remake myself every year.

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## Arima and London Link up to Mark the Centenary of Lord Kitchener and Highlight Moments of His Remarkable Life

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### Abstract

The Arima Rebranding Team and associates and a group from the London Notting Hill Carnival Community comprising ACASA (Association of Calypsonians and Soca Artistes), Maestro<sup>7</sup>, London Steelbands and the Carnival Village Trust marked 100 years of the birth of Aldwyn Roberts, (Lord Kitchener) between 18<sup>th</sup> - 19<sup>th</sup> April 2022. Both cities were central to the life of the Grandmaster and played a critical role in shaping his career and the vast repertoire of expressive music which he gifted to his fans across the world. It began in Arima where he was born on 18<sup>th</sup> April 1922, one of six siblings. He was educated at Arima Boys Government School and grew up as a budding calypsonian, while London provided the platform for his arrival on board the HMT Windrush on the 22<sup>nd</sup> June 1948. He had not even disembarked when he was called upon by Pathé News reporter John Parsons to sing a calypso, and out came his iconic ‘*London Is The Place For Me*’ which was so profound, that it subsequently became an anthem for all Caribbean events in the UK. He returned to Trinidad in late 1962, just in time for the first national steelband panorama in 1963, instantly winning the Road March with ‘*The Road Make to Walk on Carnival Day*’. He dominated these competitions annually, winning the Road March a staggering 11 times before he passed away on 11<sup>th</sup> February 2000. The tribute from Arima appropriately began with a church service on 18<sup>th</sup> April and was followed at 4:00pm by a musical extravaganza which included many of Kitchie’s peers. In London, the event took place on the 19<sup>th</sup> April and comprised a mixture of calypso, steelpan, calypso/jazz and music from DJ Smokey Joe. Calypsonians Alexander D Great, De Admiral and Lord Cloak paid tribute to the Grandmaster to start the evening. This was followed by a medley of Lord Kitchener’s calypsos by St Michael and All Angels Steel Orchestra. Former Pan Am North Stars pannist, Michael “Bubbles” Olivierre encapsulated the aspiration of the event with his inimitable impersonation of Lord Kitchener that saw the entire audience on their feet and supported by those looking on online - singing along to Kitchie’s classics, ‘Pan in A Minor’ and ‘Sugar Bum Bum’ to the backing of the talented Tabernacle Crew band.

**Key Words:** Lord Kitchener, Arima Rebranding Team, Kitchener's Centenary, Grandmaster, Calypso, Road March King, Empire Windrush

## Introduction

*Soca News* carried the headline “*Kitchener 100 - celebrate the Grandmaster of calypso at the Tab*” (Tabernacle) on Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> April 2022 with an exquisite photo of the young exuberant Kitchener singing with his band through an unwieldy microphone, symbolic of the time. The lines read “Surely every reader of *Soca News* has seen the iconic photograph and newsreel footage of the sharply dressed 26-year-old Kitchener singing his newly penned composition on the gangplank of troopship *Empire Windrush* when it docked at Tilbury on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 1948. His astutely timed bit of self-promotion was effective, for young Aldwyn soon found work in high-end clubs and society events; calypso became the music that everyone wanted to dance to; and the song itself became an enduring hit” (Spark, 2022). This was part of a joint celebration between the London Carnival Community and the Arima Rebranding Team, in the two countries where the Grandmaster spent most of his life composing and performing. This paper reports both events and highlights key moments of his life in both countries and the multidimensional impact he had on so many lives including the authors.

### Marking the Centenary of Lord Kitchener in Arima and London.

In Lord Kitchener centenary year, Kernal Roberts, his son joined the Mayor of Arima, Cagney Casimire and Henry Saunders, Chair of the Arima Rebranding Team (ART) to put together a number of events to mark this milestone in the history of Trinidad and Tobago’s culture. Saunders was the education curriculum coordinator and is a community activist. His team includes Donald Baldeosingh, Thomas Isaac and James Toussaint. Several public announcements were made that led to contact with organisers in the UK to coordinate events between Trinidad and

London where part of the Grandmaster’s life was shared. While some of Kitchener’s work may be well documented in Trinidad and Tobago (see example The National Library and Information System of Trinidad and Tobago’s Heritage Library), some aspects of Kitchie’s life in Britain remains elusive. Collaborators in London regarded this as an opportune moment to exchange narratives that may supplement some of ART’s proposed work to assemble a more holistic account of Kitchie’s life during his centenary year. The exchanges also provided insight into several of the long term plans that ART and London planned during a year of celebrations.

ART, in partnership with the Mayor of Arima, proposed the renaming Queen Street in Arima after Lord Kitchener. ART is also spearheading a book and a documentary-type movie about Kitchener’s life which will include works from his childhood; his first steps into calypso, his journey to Port of Spain, voyage to the UK in 1948 on the *Empire Windrush* and his triumphant return to Trinidad in 1963. Kernal Roberts was at the centre of activities and in an interview at Kichie’s RainoRama Palace, Diego Martin, Roberts explained to reporter Melissa Doughty (2022) that the ART events would take place in north and south Trinidad as follows:

- A. A concert titled ‘100 Years of Kitch’ at the Southern Academy for the Performing Arts. produced by SAO Soca Awards Ltd between 7 pm-11.30 pm on April 16. It will feature performances by the son of the Grandmaster – Kernal Roberts, Terri Lyons, Explainer,

Abu the Entertainer and other local and international artistes (see poster – Figure 1)

- B. A concert on Kitchener’s birthday titled “All things Kitchener” at the Arima Angel Harps’ Steel Orchestra’s panyard, Arima featuring Kernal Roberts once more, along with some of Kitchener’s peers such as Crazy, Sugar Aloes and Baron performing some of his father’s tunes.
- C. A interfaith church service in his honour at the Church of God Ministries, Malabar at 9am on the 18<sup>th</sup> June 2022.

Excellent synopses of these events were reported on TTT News by Sunil Lalla on 18<sup>th</sup> April and, Cherrylene Lewis 21<sup>st</sup> April 2022.

ART’s Henry Saunders requested a verbal message from Haroun Shah for the church service on 18<sup>th</sup> April but IT communications broke down at the time of broadcast. However, the transcript was delivered beforehand to Henry and read as follows:

Monday 18<sup>th</sup> April 2022

Dear Henry and the Arima Rebranding Team,

“Easter blessings and greetings from London - I believe I can safely say my heartfelt wishes come from the entire Caribbean Carnival Community in England who idolised Lord Kitchener. It is an honour for me to be given the opportunity to convey our very warm greetings and congratulations to Mr Henry Saunders and the Arima Rebranding Team who worked tirelessly with their hearts, souls, love and passion for this very auspicious landmark in the history of Trinidad and Tobago viz. the start of celebrations to mark 100 years of the legendary Lord Kitchener’s birth.

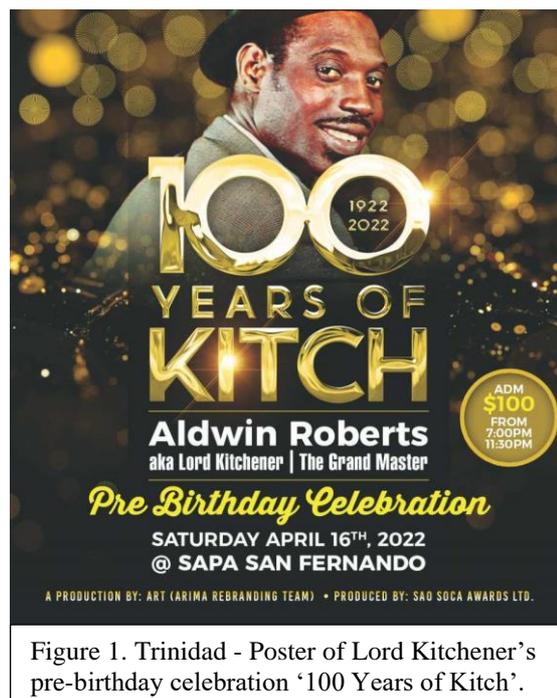


Figure 1. Trinidad - Poster of Lord Kitchener’s pre-birthday celebration ‘100 Years of Kitch’.

When I say it is an ‘honour’ I truly mean that because, for all diasporic Trinbagonians our hearts and souls are still there - we feel very much a part of you all and hope that you see us in the same light. Therefore, today is another landmark as it signals the start of more genuine collaborations between T&T and its diasporic communities and how proud the Grandmaster will be as he too lived and worked in Britain for many years – so again I warmly thank Henry for reaching out to us and linking the celebrations in Arima with ours in London.

On a personal level, I left Trinidad the year Kitchie sang ‘67’ and my cousin, the late Bobby Mohammed of ‘Guinness Cavaliers’ won Panorama with this cherished tune. Kitchie was so proud of Bobby’s arrangement that he was at the Queen’s Park Savanna in 1967 to greet Bobby and even helped pushed the pans of Cavaliers on to the stage (per. com. with Henry “King Cosmos” Gomez, President, Organization of Calypso Performing Artistes (OCPA), Toronto). These are moments in the history of calypso and pan that should be documented and remain in

the hearts of all pannists whom Kitchie has had the highest regard for.

Our tribute will take place tomorrow because of Easter Monday’s closures here – we aim to live-stream ours so that we can coordinate events and details have been forwarded to Mr Saunders.

We again send our warmest congratulations for all you have achieved to get this far and wish you great success with the entire project.

Our best regards from Kitchie’s second home

God’s blessings

Haroun

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**Tribute to Lord Kitchener from London’s Carnival Village - 19th April 2022**

Representatives of the ‘Association of Calypsonians and Soca Artistes’ (ACASA), The British Association of Steelbands (BAS), The Carnival Village’s ‘Tabernacle Crew Calypso and Jazz band, DJ Smokey Joe, The International Journal of Carnival Arts (IJCA), Pan Podium, Soca News and a number of pannists, calypsonians and Mas

enthusiasts in London, teamed up on 19<sup>th</sup> April 2022 to celebrate “**100 Years of Lord Kitchener**’. The event, to pay tribute to the ‘Grandmaster of Calypso’ was held at the majestic 135-year-old ‘Tabernacle’, a Grade II-listed building in the heart of London’s Notting Hill Carnival that has become the epicentre of carnival arts in Britain (Figure 2 below). “Kitchie” was one of the Founding Fathers of Notting Hill Carnival and so the area was associated with him and therefore a fitting venue to celebrate this landmark.

Kitchener’s legacy lives on in places such as The Tabernacle and The Yaa Centre (former Calypso Tent, and panyard of Ebony Steel Band) and through a succession of formidable calypsonians such as Lord Cloak, De Admiral, Alexander D Great, Bubbles and others paid tribute to the Grandmaster on 19<sup>th</sup> April with many of his old songs. Previous Calypso Monarch, Calypsonian, Alexander D Great, who visited Kitchener on three occasions at his home in the 1990s, started the evening with one of his own compositions - a tribute to Lord Kitchener titled ‘Grandmaster’ which he dedicated to him in 2000.



Figure 2. The Tabernacle in the heart of Notting Hill Carnival. The photo shows its curved Romanesque façade of red brick and terracotta, and towers with broach spires on either side. Built in 1887 as a church, it was the focal point of carnival activities in the 60-70s and later became part of the Carnival Village Trust. Today, it is a hot liming spot, houses one of Britain’s premier steelbands ‘Mangrove’, an Art Gallery, Concert Hall/Lecture Theatre, Caribbean Restaurant, Bar, Workshop spaces, Meeting Rooms and Offices.

**Lord Kitchener – The Grandmaster of Calypso by Alexander D Great:**

I was born in Trinidad and moved to the UK in the early 1950s. We had a lot of music in our house, from classical to folk, to Blues, Ella Fitzgerald, the Rat Pack and Count

Basie as well as Tommy Steele and Anthony Newley. Aunties and cousins came to London to train as nurses or to study at university here and when they came, they often brought a new album of calypso or Pan. I first encountered



Figure 3. Alexander D Great (right) being introduced by Vincent John (left – chair of ACASA) to start the evening programme. Alex's interview on calypso for the Trinidad Guardian was read by Kitchener. He was subsequently invited by Kitch to his home, Rain-O-Rama, Diego Martin – a memorable, warm and enriching experience (see text).

Kitchener's music in 1963, when I heard "Dr. Kitch". I had heard Sparrow's "Jean and Dinah" and several other calypsos by Lord Cristo and Lord Melody, featured on an album released in 1957 but "Dr, Kitch" with its *double – entendre* meaning was a new experience. My parents did not explain the meaning of the lyrics to me but I got the idea. This was also the year that the West Indies cricket team came to Britain for the last time by boat. (After that they always came by air.) We had a calypsonian staying with us in London, a man called Michael Goddard. He took me to Waterloo station

on the day the team arrived, and it was packed with West Indians sitting around in groups with large containers of food and rum and people playing songs on guitars and banging on little drums or playing "bottle and spoon". I was enchanted. Michael had taken his guitar along and sang some of the popular calypsos of the day. However, the Beatles had just exploded on Britain's youth culture and upon leaving school I became a professional musician and played many different styles, including Rock, Soul, Motown and R 'n' B, but little calypso.

In 1990 I returned to my roots and concentrated on becoming a calypsonian. I cut down on singing "covers" at functions and pubs and began to do only my own calypso material at folk clubs and small festivals. In 1993 I went to carnival in Trinidad and heard the Police Band backing many superb singers, but none was as interesting as Kitch. His songs were unique for their sophisticated chord progressions, gleaned from the Jazz like sequences that he had always revered and introduced into his work. In 1995 I went again to carnival in Trinidad to promote my song "Lash Dem Lara". While there I was interviewed by the Trinidad Guardian. In the course of discussing my work and influences I told journalist Everard Gordon that Kitch was the most impressive and innovative calypsonian on the scene. I told him that while many calypsonians' songs would consist of simple verse-chorus structures (including Kitchener in his early work) Kitch began to try new ways of extending his Pan tunes by introducing a bridge and even a "false" chorus before the real chorus comes in. Two sections became three or four sections, with the final part being the "real chorus" where the audience joins in. I will cite just three examples, "Mystery Band", "Pan Earthquake" and "Toco Band". These all have a verse, a bridge and something that sounds like the chorus. Citing "Mystery Band" as an example, let

us look at the division of the structure, using the lyrics as a guide.

#### Verse

Pan beating whole night in the dry river,  
Darling we all hearing but can't see this orchestra

Pan beating whole night in the dry river,  
Darling we all hearing but can't see this orchestra

Well another thing confusing the whole public

You could only hear the pan when rain fall  
We had to believe this is mystery or sheer magic

Why it is we can't see this band at all?

#### Bridge (with backing vocals)

And so it start to rain, buckets o' drum in the heart of Port Of Spain

Go Bring your big umbrella – me decide to brave the weather

To see this mystery band in the river.

#### Middle eight (or false chorus)

The flood bringing down a set of debris,  
De rainin', de rainin', dey hear de music in de park

Sounding like a real symphony,

We hearin' Pan but...can't see de band

#### Real chorus (where the audience joins in with the call and response and Kitch ad libs quasi pan)

Comin' down, (wo-oh!) River comin' down  
(wo-oh) Water comin' down

Prip prip be dug ung ga doong don doop pap  
bee doo pap be doo be doong da

Comin' down, (wo-oh!) River comin' down  
(wo-oh) Water comin' down

Prip prip be dug ung ga doong don doop pap  
bee doo pap be doo be doong da

Comin' down, (wo-oh!) River comin' down  
(wo-oh) Water comin' down

Prip prip be dug ung ga doong don doop pap  
bee doo pap be doo be doong da.

First using this type of structure in "Pan in A minor" Kitchener set a standard of complexity for others to follow and some of the great arrangers like Ray Holman and Boogie Sharpe took this path to show their inventive musical skills.

Because of that article in the Trinidad Guardian, I was lucky enough to be invited to visit Kitch at his home, Rain-O-Rama, in Diego Martin, due to a cousin calling on him and telling him that I was in Trinidad. My cousin Greer, who lived in the same area, used to pass his house regularly and chat with him over the fence. She told him my name and he said he had read the Guardian article and was intrigued by what I had said. As a consequence, he told me to call on him anytime and I had the distinct pleasure of meeting him on three other occasions when I went "home". He always welcomed me and was generous and warm. He did have a bit of a stammer when being interviewed on TV or in a public place but in my visits to his home he seemed to have no trouble with it.

When he died in February 2000 I had just taken on the job of calypsonian – in-residence to BBC Radio London, enjoined with the task of coming up with a weekly calypso about news-based issues. The first song I wrote for them was a short version of "Grandmaster", which I later turned into a full song, very much based on his extended chorus structure. The words are printed here, and the song uses a suggestion of "Sugar Bum Bum" in the tune (intentionally) so that "Audrey, where you get that sugar?" becomes "Aldwyn, we're going to miss you" and is me tipping the hat to the great man (Figure 3).

#### **Grand Master (Alexander D Great 1998)**

The Lord Kitchener was born in 1922  
And left school young, as many had to do.  
Losing both his parents by the age of sixteen

Music became his love and kaiso was his scene.  
 He start to sing in the Tamboo Bamboo tents  
 And wuk whole night for a fee of just five cents,  
 Three years in the victory Tent, then he joined the Young Brigade  
 And he took on the Old One,  
 The Lion and the Tiger,  
 Beginner, Pretender, Caresser, Destroyer -  
 Even Atilla the Hun.

CHORUS: Aldwyn, we going to miss you  
 And all of the sweet calypso you would sing  
 You could make we laugh until we bawl,  
 Sing 'bout history, but most of all  
 In Panorama the people declared you the king.  
 Kitchie, nobody could match you  
 When it come to melody, You create a symphony  
 You cannot be surpassed, You were the Grand Master.  
 You know ah talkin' Kitchener (I could still hear him sing)  
 Kitchener (in de ping pong ping)  
 Kitchener (In the sound of the horn)  
 Kitchener (de man has not gone)  
 I know the legacy that you left us will last,  
 You were the Grand Master.

He travelled to England way back in 1948  
 And stepping off the boat, right there he started to create.  
 He sang for the crowd "London is the place for me"  
 And soon made his debut upon the BBC.  
 In three clubs a night he would display his Kaiso arts  
 And had some hits in the UK record charts.  
 Then when he returned back home in 1963  
 He state' his position  
 He comin' for the title,  
 The man from Arima bring trouble from England  
 To mash up the opposition.

He sang in Revue Tent – presiding for over 30 years  
 And groomed new stars whom now everybody hears,  
 Composer, Explainer, Iwer, even the Black Stalin  
 All benefitted from the Master's cheeky grin.  
 This man put Pan right at the heart of Carnival  
 And scaled new heights in this Genre Musicale,  
 Winning Panorama eighteen times with his mighty songs  
 And everyone who love' Pan,  
 From Chile to Japan  
 Want Kitchener studies in conservatories,  
 That is where this man belongs.

### **Lord Kitchener and Me - Jeff 'De Admiral' Hinds**

My introduction to Calypso occurred when my sister Diane (Barbara) arrived in England in 1966. Apart from meeting her for the first time at the age of 6 and all that meant to me and my other siblings, she arrived with several 45 RPM records. One of these records was red in colour than so naturally attracted our curiosity. We instantly put it on our old Cossor Gram (radio & record player). I remember the song started with a quick run on the bass guitar and then it broke into a rhythm that instantly gripped our inner souls. This Calypso was called 'The Guns' and was the by the Barbadian group – The Merry-men. We would play this song so often it was not long before we knew each word we heard and even the B side which was called 'Calypso Island'.

Not long after this, my father took us to cricket as he was a player and on one occasion there was a Steel Band performing before the game started - and again the rhythm took us in and I then became interested to hear more and learn more about Steel Band and my first love –

Calypso. I would ask my parent's friends and some family what they could tell me about Calypso and Steel Band over the next few years. Many of them felt it unusual that a kid born in Reading, having never visited the Caribbean, was so interested in Calypso & Steel Band.



Figure 4. A zealous De Admiral looking on from the right of the stage at the opening events to gauge the ambience of the room. Finding his way to Kitchie was intriguing serendipity- involving family, a visit to a second-hand record-shop as a boy in 1971 and concocting a gadget with a clothes hanger to boost the signal of his radio to listen to a programme on Caribbean music - where he heard Kitch's 'Spree Simon' (see text).

### **My First Introduction to the Work of Lord Kitchener**

My mother and father both left Barbados in 1956 and had just caught the beginning of the career of the Mighty Sparrow and had informed me years earlier that he was the King of Calypso. However, on my way home from Saturday Morning Pictures, I stopped in a second-hand shop on the Oxford Road in Reading – the shop was called 'Sirrells Second-Hand Shop' and for some reason I started looking through a large shelf of vinyl LP's. To my astonishment I came across an LP with a man sitting on a stool with a guitar in his hand and looking straight at the camera wearing a slight smile. To me the expression on his face was akin to that which my father would have when he was pleased with something we had either said or done. I instantly stated reading the liner notes on the LP and it transpired this was an LP called Kitch 67 and was Lord Kitchener's 1967 album on the International Camden Label and in Stereo. I spent my pocket money on this album which cost me 55 pence (this was 1971 and a huge sum then). On arrival home I almost immediately with the same old 'Gram' put on the LP to play. The room filled with the song '67' and that feeling I had experienced five years earlier upon hearing 'The Merryman' was re-ignited again but this time in a different way as I had been informed that I would hear different forms and styles of Calypso throughout the Caribbean.

It was not long before my younger brother Jerry and I knew each song and the order of the album. The fourth track on side one was entitled 'Take Your Meat Out Meh Rice' and this really drew my parents in, and they called several friends and family to listen to the lyrics of the tune. My father was excited by the lyrical content and mildly suggested to be careful about the interpretations we drew from that topical song.

It was not too long after that a friend of the family presented me with Lord Kitchener's

1964 album entitled – Lord Kitchener accompanied by Rupert Nurse & His Orchestra. That was also a fascinating album which contained ‘Mama Dis is Mas’. I would then talk to my peers at Primary School about Calypso and Steel Band and to my surprise and disappointment, they hardly knew anything and were only interested in Pop Music and the early Reggae which I also liked but not on the level of Calypso and Steel Band.

### **Access to Calypso**

It was a challenge gaining access to real calypso in the early 1970’s but I discovered a music DJ called Steve Barnard who had a show on Radio London which was mainly Reggae. One Sunday he played a sort of Calypso by a singer called Roy Alton which was not fully like a Kitchener’s song but there was something there to investigate. I then discovered a programme that was on Radio London on Saturday evenings – the presenter, a Mr St. John, but again it featured Reggae. These were the days when we could not get a clear reception on radio being miles away from London. I concocted a gadget which included the use of a clothes hanger to boost the signal so I could listen to the programme. I distinctly remembered one Saturday evening St. John read out a letter which had been sent to him complaining that ‘there were other West Indians in London who would also like to hear music from their regions featured on the show’. On that evening he played his usual Reggae for the first hour but the second hour he played Calypso. His first tune on the Calypso hour was ‘**Spree Simon**’. When he announced it, I ran for my cassette player and managed to record about half of the song. I was crazy about how great this Kitchener song was which was new to me. In the evening, he touched Barbados with something from the Drayton’s Two and Antigua with something from King Short Shirt. I was now beginning to feel like a semi – authority on the art form and I reckon I had the cassette for years until I managed to get

all the tunes he played into my personal collection.

I would now be on the hunt for every new Kitchener Album, and I knew they would be released around Christmas time with the songs for the following year featured. I collected every one of his albums from the 1970s onwards to his last in 2000 when he died and since then with the growth of the internet and particularly YouTube, I have discovered songs from his early career that demonstrated the genius of the legendary Grandmaster.

### **Lord Kitchener’s Centenary Celebration**

We gathered at the Tabernacle (Carnival Village) West London on 19<sup>th</sup> April 2022 to mark this day with tributes in song to the Grandmaster. I performed his 1950 composition ‘The Underground Train’, his 1964 Road March Winning ‘Mama Dis is Mas’ and a tune from his 1967 album ‘Take You Meat Out Meh Rice’. My tribute that night to the great Lord Kitchener brought back memories of winning the UK Calypso Monarch Final on 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2018 at the Tabernacle (Carnival Village)

My life in calypso indicates how much of life is due to serendipity - had I not walked into that second-hand shop on my way home from the pictures in 1971, I may never have encountered the works of this iconic and outstanding artist who I consider to be responsible for me becoming a Calypsonian and a Pannist, not only as a practitioner, but with an enduring love for the artform and all that it brings to World Music. The skill and virtuosity of Aldwyn Robert – The Lord Kitchener is second to none I ever knew.

### **Lord Cloak, One of the Longest Serving Calypsonians of The London Calypso Tent**

The evening of the 19<sup>th</sup> April 2022 ‘Tribute to Kitchener’ was graced with the performance of Trinidadian-born Lord Cloak, (Errol Brown), veteran of the London Calypso Tent. He began singing at

the original calypso tent, The Asantewaa Centre with the ABC (Association of British Calypsonians) which was formed in 1991. In 2015, it was changed to the 'Association of Calypsonians UK' to be more inclusive. With Soca becoming such a driving force in Caribbean music, it was renamed ACASA (Association of Calypsonians and Soca Artistes) in 2018 to reflect this change. Cloak's greatest success was at the original tent where up to 2002, he won the Calypso Monarch, his style being often compared to the Trinidad Calypsonian "Lord Blakie" (Figure 5).



Figure 5. Lord Cloak is full flow on stage - "a witty and mischievous stage presence ... he holds the record for gaining the greatest number of UK Calypso Monarch Crowns [14] - his last in 2002" (Stephen Spark -see text). His tribute to Kitch on 19<sup>th</sup> April was to relate some of his personal experiences in song as the Grandmaster would have done.

The following is a brief biography of Lord Cloak from Stephen Spark's book to commemorate the Silver Jubilee of the London Calypso Tent:

"This founder member of the ABC may be a veteran these days, but he still provides stiff competition for calypsonians half his age, coming third in 2015 with 'People to

Remember'. In 2017 he again reached into the past with his fifth-placed 'Where Were You?', which compared the travels of the early Caribbean migrants with the experiences of newer arrivals. He is a potent crowd favourite at the London Calypso Tent, with a witty and mischievous stage presence. For two decades he was the principal rival of the Mighty Tiger, tying with him in 1979 before winning the next two years' competitions outright.

He holds the record for gaining the greatest number of UK Calypso Monarch Crowns, believed to be 14 in all, up to his last in 2002 with 'Rules and Regulations'. Like many of Cloak's calypsos, it targeted the Notting Hill Carnival establishment; others in the same vein included 'The Council Taking Over' (2004) and 'Since Claire Gone' (2006). Striking outfits, impeccable timing and great interaction with the crowd are hallmarks of Cloak's presentations. In 1998, he revealed some of his secrets: "You must have good diction, presentation and performance. The judges want to hear lyrics; your song must say something." (Spark 2017).

Over the years, he has naturally seen many of his closest friends, family and fellow calypsonians including Lord Kitchener pass on. His first song 'Lost Love One' dealt with this emotional topic, which he delivered in his own unique style, dressed in his all-white outfit. Cloak was very fond of the original calypso tent and aware of the emphasis that Lord Kitchener placed on the Professionalism and ambience of the Calypso Tent. Consequently, his second choice of calypso for the evening was on this topic which he called "Carnival Village". The site of the current Calypso Tent which he is not very keen on.

Following Lord Cloak, St Michael and All Angels Steel Orchestra took the stage playing a medley of Kitchener's tunes including their favourite 'Bees Melody' and 'Sugar Bum Bum'.

This pulsating youth steelband is one of London’s most revered steelbands, with many of their young players going on to play for the UK’s top steelbands such as Mangrove, Ebony and Metronomes. They celebrated their Silver Anniversary on 30<sup>th</sup> October 2021. Until his recent illness, Freddy Totesaut, (<https://alfredtotesaut.com/>), one the UK’s most gifted pannists, who came to the UK with the renowned ‘Dixieland Steel Orchestra in 1961, was the band’s tuner and arranger However, over the years he was ably supported by Patrick McKay who is now their arranger and chief executive. The band has performed with opera singer Anne Fridal, backed calypsonians such as

Alexander D Great and D’Alberto, hosted royalty and steelpan legends such as the late Nestor Sullivan and Russell Henderson, Dawn Batson and Ray Holman. They had the entire audience on their feet on 19<sup>th</sup> April as they paid tribute to the Grandmaster with scintillating renditions of favourite Kitchener’s songs

Figure 6. (below). St Michael and All Angels Steel Orchestra on stage (far side of the room, in purple tops). As a youth steelband, and with this event taking place during a normal school day, many of the youths were unable to attend. However, this did not stop the band from retaining their very high standard as they went through a medley of Lord Kitchener’s songs.





Figure 7. The multitalented flamboyant ‘Bubbles’ singing and dancing to ‘Pan in A Minor’ - impersonating the Grandmaster on stage in such meticulous detail, even Kitchie would have been proud of him. The audience rose to their feet in response, mesmerised by this authentic display of showmanship and impersonation. Bottom right - a section of the percussion, led by the legendary 90-year Cyril Khamai (red top and scratcher) – tuner, arranger, innovator and pannist from San Fernando] who took pan to 35 countries around the world including the foreboding ‘Iron Curtain’ and is hailed as a hero of Notting Hill Carnival (see Shah, 2020, IJCA. Vol.1).

Following their performance, the stage was now set for arrival of the evening’s star, former Pan Am North Stars pannist, tuner, arranger and singer, the flamboyant

Michael “Bubbles” Olivierre who burst on to the stage, grabbed the microphone and started singing and dancing as Kitchener would have done. He encapsulated the aspiration of the event with his unrivalled impersonation of Lord Kitchener. Dressed

in a bright red suit and a Kitchener’s white hat that the Grandmaster always wore, Bubbles soon had the entire audience on their feet - and supported by those looking on online - singing along to Kitchie’s classics, ‘Pan in A Minor’ and ‘Sugar Bum Bum’ to the backing of the talented. Tabernacle Crew band. His shuffling down on one leg and using one hand to connect with the audience as Kitchener did, soon brought the audience under his spell. Even the legendary Kitchener would have been delighted with such a performance - a fitting climax to end a delightful tribute to the Grandmaster (Figure 7).

**Arima and the Young Aldwyn Roberts**

The young Aldwyn Roberts, later to become one of the greatest calypsonians of all time, began life from very humble beginnings in the town of Arima, becoming orphaned at age only 14 (Thompson, 2002). His early education was at Arima Boys Government School and whoever his English teacher was, must have imparted such powerful diction to this youngster that he subsequently mastered language and poetry in the most dramatic and philosophical manner. He used these skills effectively in later years with intuitive, well-crafted lyrics to capture any event he



Figure 8 (Above, left) A view from inside the Tabernacle at Kitchie’s 100 celebration – all tables packed and many standing. The Bar is to the far right of the crammed restaurant (not in view). The stage can be seen in the far mid-section of the photo - next to a green panel. (Above right and below). Cross-sections of the audience Trini Corner; Haroun Shah and Sister Monica - others not in view. (Below-left) Christine Warrington and Louise Shah (middle) Congos and Richard Bailey [pan] (c) Pan Diva Debra Eden who shares a birthday with Kitchie.

desired and even though he stuttered when speaking, his delivery in song was fluent and assured and gave none of this away. He was obviously born with musical genes as his dad, a blacksmith by trade, was a musician and taught him to play guitar (Talevski, 2010) which is soon put into great effect. During this early period, the Trinidad & Tobago Water Scheme labourers were laying pipes in the San Fernando Valley area and the young Aldwyn Roberts landed his first job viz. playing guitar and singing while the work was in progress (Carter, 2012). His popularity in Arima grew and he became the lead singer with the Sheriff Band with hits such as "Shops Close Too Early" (Pareles, 2000). His career as a calypsonian was sealed with him winning the Arima Borough Council's calypso competition five times between 1938 and 1942 (Thompson 2002).

#### **Lord Kitchener's Brief Sojourn in Jamaica (1947- 48) and its Impact Prior to Arrival in Britain.**

Apart from a few sketchy reports of Lord Kitchener performing at hot spots such as Idlers Rest, Beeston Street in downtown Kingston, there is a paucity of clearly documented activities during his brief but hugely significant sojourn in Jamaica between 1947-1948, prior to his departure for London on board the HMT Windrush on 28<sup>th</sup> May 1948. However, he had fond memories of the island as clearly evident in his calypso 'Sweet Jamaica' written after his arrival in London where he refers to Jamaica as that "happy land" and "blessed country." Jamaica too recognised his presence (see review Black, 2019), and his records such as 'Jamaica Woman' (with its flip side 'Love in the Cemetery') became a huge success and was distributed widely across the country on the Edward Seaga's WIRL label. He inspired a new generation of calypsonians in the island and soon songs such as "Jamaica is the Place to Go" by Charlie Binger & and His Quartet and later

Alerth Bedasse, leader of the renowned Chin's Calypso Sextet were following in his footsteps. His presence in Jamaica also had a marked impact on the birth of many Jamaican megastars including 'Toots & The Maytals', Jimmy Cliff and 'Byron Lee and the Dragonaires'.

Students returning to Trinidad on completion of their studies at UWI, Jamaica often recounted their memories of a carnival they created on that UWI campus at Mona, Jamaica following World War II. Lord Kitchener had won the Road March in both 1946 and 1947 and his presence in Jamaica from 1947 coincided with students from Trinidad & Tobago at UWI taking a keen interest. Soon their fellow university students began accompanying them annually to Port of Spain for carnival. It is stated that these visits were curtailed in 1988/9 because of Hurricane Gilbert and Jamaica's elections and led directly to the initiation of a carnival in Jamaica (Bacchus, 2015). One of the pioneers of its development was Byron Lee who was captivated by calypso and later Soca and performed with many great calypsonians such as the Mighty Sparrow. The year, 1989 marked the start of Jamaica's Carnival as a street carnival in the Kingston Metropolitan Area and was led by Byron Lee and a small group of musicians. A large number of Kitch's calypsos were played, including his 'trademark' song 'Sugar Bum Bum' (Joseph, 2000) which was released in 1978 and a favourite of Byron Lee. Lord Kitchener was not present at this carnival, but it seems likely that his presence in Jamaica between 1947/8 would have helped to sow the seeds of calypso and eventually Jamaica's largest festival – a Trinbagonian style street carnival that is now held annually in Kingston and other urban areas in Jamaica.

#### **The Young Kitchener Struggles to Navigate his Way Around London's Troubled Metropolis.**

Kitchener was among the tens of thousands Caribbean immigrants who answered the call for workers to fill a depleted labour force in the ‘Mother Country’ - to repair an ailing economy following the ravages of World War II (Fryer, 1984, McDowell, 2013, 2018). And like so many West Indians migrating *en masse* to Britain then, he envisioned Britain as a move to the promise land. Kitchener’s much acclaimed calypso *‘London Is the Place for Me’* reinforces this vision of what life might be before he even stepped off the Empire Windrush on to British soil. Residents recently settled in London greeted him with euphoria but there was a mere handful of Trinbagonians residing in London to support him and the raw reality of life in post-war Britain came home to roost. Ruth Tompsett states “The reality was very different and the initial welcome for the arrivants soon turned to hostility. West Indians lived under difficult and discriminatory circumstances, were paid lower wages than white counterparts, charged higher rents, frequently banned from clubs and pubs and were regularly attacked by white youths on the streets where they lived. It was specifically in these circumstances, that their birth culture became ever more important for the Caribbean British, not only for recreation, but significantly for self-expression and self-affirmation and as statement of identity (Tompsett, 2005). Thus, unlike his optimistic arrival song, his experiences were now very different to his initial expectations, and he turns to calypso again to express his deep despair in *‘Sweet Jamaica’* released in 1952 (Table 1, below).

“Thousands of people are asking me, how I spend my time in London City”  
Thousands of people are asking me, how ah spend meh time in London City  
Well that is a question I cannot answer, I regret the day I left sweet Jamaica.

Ah mean you would pity my position,  
because ah nearly died from starvation.

So darling, Jamaica, Jamaica, we bound to remember  
Jamaica, Jamaica, a heaven and saviour

Another I have another thing that humbugging me, is the food control in London city.

They say you must have a ration book, before you could put on something to cook.

And friends they weekly ration so small, in a day or two you can surely eat all, so before I suffer, ah going over for me Aki and Saltfish in Jamaica.

Chorus

During the winter in Great Britain, I miss Jamaica that happy land

If I had wings like an aeroplane, I would fly to that blessed country again where you see the sun shining every day, people and the lovely beach at Montego Bay

These are the things I remember, that urge me to fly back to Jamaica

Chorus

Many West Indians are sorry now, they left their country and don’t know how  
Some left their jobs and their family, and determine to come to London city  
Well they are crying they now regret, no kind a employment they can get  
The city of London they have to roam, and they can get their passage to go back home.

Lord Cristo was enraged by the racist attacks against his compatriots and the indifference and whitewash by police in both the USA and UK and expressed it in the lines of his poignant calypso:

‘They will lynch and torture you in Jacksonville  
Frame and persecute you in Notting Hill

Exercising inhumanity  
And still proclaiming to believe in  
democracy'

In conversation with the late Russell Henderson and TASPO's sole survivor, the steelpan pioneer Sterling Betancourt and his 95-year-old brother Herman, the author had many in-depth discussions about the life in London during this uncompromising period when they soon faced enormous opposition to their presence (Shah, 1999). Henderson, the Betancourt's bothers and Mervyn Constantine founded Britain's first steelband, 'Nostalgia' but also did many ad hoc gigs to back Lord Kitchener in pubs and clubs around London and sometimes in Manchester. They recalled an early period of immense intimidation, not only from local white punters but even among Caribbean performers who perceived Kitchener as a threat. During some of Kitchie's performances, a variety of flying missiles, from shoes and cans to plates, glasses, and bottles, were thrown at him to get him to terminate his performance. Sometimes he was hurt, especially if they were flung from the slides and he was severely bruised and injured with bleeding gashes that forced him to stop. However, in most cases he was able to dodge the objects and carried on oblivious to the belligerence. Calypso was gaining an international audience and Kitchie's presence intimidated many hopeful performers, particularly Jamaicans who had a far superior presence in the UK and during this period were endeavouring to promote calypso as their national music. Kitchener carried on relentlessly, calypso was his life and these 'anomalies' as he referred to them 'would soon iron out themselves'. He was soon aided and abetted by fellow Trinidadian calypsonian, Fitzgerald Henry aka 'Mighty Terror' in 1953. Terror was unaware of Kitchener's agonising experiences, but he had such admiration for his fellow calypsonian, had he known of his predicament, perhaps he would have come

to London even earlier to support him. He expected everyone to know of Lord Kitchener and in his own words describes his arrival at London:

"I jump in a taxi and I say, Do you know of a gentleman called Lord Kitchener? I figure he popular and as a taxi driver he should know. He tell me "he dead long time ago. Not that one I said. This one is a calypsonian from the West Indies, Trinidad."

The taxi driver had no idea who Lord Kitchener was but London cabbies, who use meters to cost their trips, never miss an opportunity to extend a journey and took him to a West Indian club where he eventually met his hero. Terror began making his own career and soon began to have similar experiences, in his case mainly from Jamaican calypsonians. By then he would have been aware of Kitchener's experiences also and would have been so incensed, he released his famous 'Calypso War', an outburst against "fake" calypsonians from Jamaica. Some of the lines in this song reveal his anger against the "imposters" and admiration for the Grandmaster:

"If you not a Trinidadian you are not a Calypsonian, here in Great Britain..."

.....only Terror, Lion and Kitchener in Britain are real calypso singers ..."

If you call up me or Lord Kitchener we could sing from January to December – why? - for we are born Trinidadians and real calypsonians here in Great Britain"

As Kitchie consolidated his position in England, this genre, so new to England caught the attention of various pop groups. Perhaps the most popular was Johnny Duncan's version of 'Last Train to San Fernando', released by Columbia Records and reached No. 2 in the UK Singles Charts of 1957 (Wikipedia). Interestingly, among the fans of Duncan's recording were the

Liverpool skiffle band, ‘The Quarrymen’, forerunner to the Beatles whose members included John Lennon, Paul McCartney, and George Harrison (see McGrath 2020). Among the Royal family, Princess Margaret, the Queen’s sister who became acquainted with calypso through her frequent visits to the Caribbean, enjoyed Kitchie’s calypsos. She was highly amused with his ‘Ah Bernice’ and is known to have purchased over 100 copies for her friends (Black, 2019):

“Kitch, come go to bed  
I have a small comb to scratch your head  
Kitch, don’t make me cry  
You know I love you, you’re playing shy.”

His fame spread to the USA with the then president, Harry Truman in an interview placed Kitchener on the same musical pedestal with jazz legends of the time such as Miles Davis, John Coltrane, and Thelonious Monk (Black, 2019).

### **Lord Kitchener, Unifying the Caribbean Through Cricket - the 1950 Test Series**

Even though the British Caribbean islands are geographically relatively close and share a common culture and heritage, each island has its distinctive character, local dialect, cuisine, affinity and practises that naturally leads to the formation of domestic clusters of common communities in various parts of London and other urban settlements in the UK. In the face of violent racism and threats from mainly ‘Far Right’ groups and the added problems related to unemployment, accommodation and police harassment, it was essential West Indian communities came together and formed a stronger common bond. Kitchener was instrumental in using his powerful music to help foster closer links among W. I. communities through cricket and carnivals such as Noting Hill Carnival. In Volume 1 of the International Journal of Carnival Arts, we stressed Kitchener’s contribution

and reproduced part of it below in the context of the present paper:

“The unifying force among West Indians living in this large unfamiliar, unforgiving metropolis was cricket and to beat the mother country at the home of cricket, Lords, was the ultimate dream of every W.I. immigrant (C.L.R. James, 1963). Unlike previous test series in Britain where W.I. crowd support was sparse, the arrival of significant numbers of Caribbean migrants post-WW II, would be a significant boost to a young West Indian team that were about to descend on England for the 1950 Test Series. The series got off to a bad start for the tourists who lost at Old Trafford on 12<sup>th</sup> June by 202 runs (Frindall, 1995). The 2<sup>nd</sup> Test at Lords was set for 24-29<sup>th</sup> June and for the first time, W.I. would have a formidably turn out of supporters, among them Lords Kitchener and Beginner. They sang, danced and cheered every run and every wicket taken by their team who in turn were inspired by their tumultuous support and responded with fortitude (Williamson, 2006). The West Indies sensational 326-run victory on 29<sup>th</sup> June at Lords had to be celebrated and Lord Kitchener’s response is still talked about today. He began playing his guitar and led scores of ecstatic supporters round the cricket field, then through Lord’s Main Gate and into central London to Piccadilly Circus. Kitchener recalled that people stared out of their windows in amazement at this utterly bizarre spectacle and continued “... *and we’re dancing Trinidad-style, like mas, and dance right down Piccadilly and around*” (Williamson, 2006). West Indies went on to win the Test series 4-1. (Frindall, 1995). With nearly 30% of the supporters from the Caribbean and such a huge margin of victory, this cricket series was seen as the launchpad to West Indians finding cohesion and self-esteem to begin expressing themselves collectively in their new homeland and indirectly helped to significantly reduce racial tension in Britain (James 2013).

Kitchener's jubilant 'carnival' with his band of revellers from Lords Cricket Ground (north London) to central London on 29<sup>th</sup> June, a distance of two miles, was so unique that he was interviewed by several reporters on his *modus operandi*. While it was great fun for newly arrived immigrants to celebrate such a momentous event on the streets of central London, it required taking huge risk and revealed one of the obstinate traits of the legendary Lord Kitchener and West Indians in general viz. '*party on the street and worry about the consequences later on*' (El-Houni, 2020). Minor incidences like this, even in Trinidad & Tobago resulted in zero tolerance by the police and culminated in arrest, charges even imprisonment (Hill, 1972) A similar impulsive response 16 years later, this time by Russell Henderson would kick-off one of the largest and most prestigious street-theatre festivals globally, the inimitable Notting Hill Carnival. While Jamaicans and most W.I. appear to prefer to celebrate in a fixed place with static sound systems, Trinidadians typically celebrate through street parades, a trait that goes back to the earliest carnivals of post-emancipation and is intrinsically retained in the DNA of its compatriots". Apart from his profound leadership skills in using cricket to unify fragmented West Indian communities, Kitchener would repeat this by paving the way for Notting Hill Carnival, one of the most vivid manifestations of Caribbean unity.

### **Lord Kitchener, Arrival of Steelpan in Britain – TASPO and the Festival of Britain 1951.**

"Information posted up about the Festival of Britain was unlikely to include mention of TASPO or the appearance of a steelband. This can be inferred from Lord Kitchener's calypso 'Festival of Britain' in which he notes 'Sir Thomas Beecham will be conducting his symphony – there will be concerts, dancing, sports and exhibitions'" - but there is no mention of TASPO. As

Kitchener was such an avid disciple of steelpan, he would have definitely included TASPO in his lyrics if it were on the programme or if he were aware of it." The suggestion to include a steelband at the Festival of Britain 1951 stemmed from the foresight of Sir Hubert Rance, Trinidad's British governor at the time who saw an opportunity and passed on the information. The Trinidad All-Steel Pan Percussion Orchestra (TASPO) was formed specifically to participate in this Festival" (see review Shah, 2021).

"TASPO arrived a few weeks later than expected but the Festival organisers evidently made no plans for their stay in London. Arrangements for the Festival may not have been as smooth as reported and virtually no preparations were made to host TASPO. In their case it was left up to the benevolence and generosity of compatriot Edric Connor to accommodate them and all their instruments in his basement flat. The photo (Figure 9) shows how arduous the task of getting their instruments in and out of a basement flat must have been. If TASPO had simply come to Britain, performed at the Festival of Britain and returned home, its impact may have been negligible and gone unnoticed. However, when TASPO left Trinidad aboard the banana boat SS San Mateo on 6<sup>th</sup> July 1951, Edric Connor and Lord Kitchener were at hand in London to maximise the impact of this pioneering expedition. Following their performance at the South Bank, the band accepted a contract with the Savoy Hotel which enabled them to undertake a two-week tour of Britain, playing at great northern cities such as Edinburgh, Glasgow, Leeds and Manchester. Their reputation was markedly enhanced when they performed live on a 30-minute BBC television programme 'Caribbean Cabaret' on 24<sup>th</sup> August 1951 alongside Trinidad's Boscoe Holder and his Caribbean Dancers, and Lord Kitchener (Figure 10). TASPO then travelled to Paris for a two-week engagement before returning to Trinidad on



Figure 9. TASPO's members transporting their pans out of compatriot Edric Connor's basement flat. They were also supported by Lord Kitchener for their first performance in London in 1951. The black painted Victorian corrugated iron railings and steps are a unique feature of different parts of London and characteristic of those present in the Notting Hill area (courtesy Kim Johnson, 2011)

12<sup>th</sup> December 1951. Sterling Betancourt was the lone member who did not return to Trinidad but instead made London his home and started his own steelband, Nostalgia, with Russell Henderson, that eventually helped to establish the Notting Hill Carnival. Thus, while the Festival provided the opportunity for TASPO to perform, its legacy is largely of its own making with the support of Edric Connor and Lord Kitchener.” (see reviews, Shah, 2021, Sullivan, 2021).

#### Memorable Calypsos Released by Kitchener while Domiciled in the UK.

At the onset of his early career as a calypsonian, Kitchener's theme was always about everyday life in the Caribbean with a great leaning toward his admiration and reverence for the steelpan. His move to England saw him continuing this theme with such precision that much can be gleaned from life in Britain through these brilliantly crafted calypsos. And despite his own turmoil and abject experiences of racism, he generously refrains from putting these into his lyrics. Perhaps the nearest he



Figure 10. Lord Kitchener performing to the backing of TASPO players. Reports of these performances reached Trinidad and Tobago via news reels such as Pathe News and the Trinidad Guardian and were very positive. So awestruck were some people at the South Bank when they heard the music from the 'rusted oil drums' they described it as "Black Magic". Kitchener's calypso 'Festival of Britain' was released before the Festival. (Newspaper clipping courtesy Kim Johnson).

came to it was to comment and advise about the disadvantages of being brown and black in the skilfully written "*If You're Not White, You're Black*", cleverly using a very short chorus to get the message into very powerful verses:

'Your father is an African  
Your mother may be Norwegian  
You pass me, you wouldn't say goodnight  
Feeling you are really white  
Your skin may be a little pink  
And that's the reason why you think  
That the complexion of your face  
Can hide you from the negro race  
No! You can never get away from the fact  
If you not white, you considered Black

You jet along the thoroughfare  
You shake your waist like Fred Astaire  
And when you see me passing by  
You watch me with a crooked eye  
And yet, you speak to Mr. B—  
Who does not want your company  
In every way you endeavour  
To show yourself superior  
Chorus

Your negro hair is obvious  
 You make it more conspicuous  
 You use all sorts of Vaseline  
 To make out you are European  
 You speak with exaggeration  
 To make the greatest impression  
 That you were taught, apparently  
 At Cambridge University  
 . Chorus  
 You hate the name of Africa  
 The land of your great-grandfather  
 The country where you can't be wrong  
 The home where you really belong  
 You rather be amongst the whites  
 Than stick up for your father's rights  
 And very often, from your face  
 To think you're from the negro race!

Kitchener like many migrants was confronted with poor employment opportunities, run down and decrepit accommodation if indeed they were able to find rooms to rent, deep-seated xenophobia, epitomised by the iniquitous 'No Blacks, No Dogs, No Irish' slogan that were prominently displayed to intimidate them. Undaunted Kitchener went about finding his way around this large and bewildering city which to the uninitiated is initially unnerving. He began writing calypsos and performing in local clubs and pubs, but it took him about 18 months before he could begin recording at the famous Abbey Road Studios through Denis Preston who instantly recognised his potential. He then unleashed a continuous succession of calypsos between 1950 to his departure in 1962/63 (see Table 1), narrating in song his personal experiences of life in his new home, his vision, hope and self-reflection. Among his early releases was a vivid account of his experience on London's 'Underground Train',

“A ha my first misery, is when I embark at Piccadilly,  
 I went down below, I stand up in the crowd don't know where to go.  
 I decided to follow a young lady, well I

nearly met with my destiny,  
 That night was bad luck for Kitchener, I fall down on the escalator.”

His account of the forthcoming 'Festival of Britain' is detailed and insightful while his experience with his 'Landlady' gels with fellow migrants who were having similar experiences. He emersed himself in sport, particularly cricket and even today his songs provide the most vivid accounts Test matches between the West Indies vs England some 70 years on. His output was staggering as seen from the list of some of his recordings, however the authors are mindful that this is only a partial list that could be located currently from online sources and from various distributors (Table 1 - see below).

### **Kitchener Reaching out to Africa from England.**

When Kitchener performed in London it was evident, he had a significant following from African communities which to many Caribbean migrants was a bit of an enigma. Steelbands and calypsonians had already visited some of these countries and its roots were so evident, it was easy to see the attraction. However, it is interesting that amongst the African countries, it is the West African countries such as Ghana, Nigeria and Sierra Leon that strongly embraces calypso and both the Mighty Sparrow and Lord Kitchener enjoyed huge popularity there. Kitchener's tribute to Ghana Independence remains as a national anthem 65 years on. Eloquently summarised by Taylor (2002), he compliments Kitchener on his insightful understanding of the significance of the occasion and meticulous crafting of his compacted lyrics as the hallmark of a genius – “Ghana's independence electrified the Black world; perhaps ..because Ghana (once called the Gold Coast) was the first of Britain's Black colonies to fly the colonial coop ..... Caribbean people, and, especially the followers of the ideas of

Marcus Garvey (1887-1940) were overjoyed to see Marcus Mosiah's black star at the centre of Ghana's national flag. Kitchener grasped the symbolism of the

Table 1 Kitchener’s prolific output of calypsos released during his stay in the UK. Sources of information: <https://www.discogs.com/artist/53143-Lord-Kitchener>, eBay; various distributors and websites e.g. <http://www.45worlds.com/78rpm/record/1208>. Lord Kitchener Biography Gloria Cooksey: [https://musicianguide.com/biography\\_groups/14](https://musicianguide.com/biography_groups/14)

1953	Mistress Jacob Alec Bedser Calypso	Lyragon St. Vincent Street Six
1954	Wife And Mother	Melodisc Caribbean Calypso Boys
1954	Too Late Kitch Saxophone No. 2	Melodisc Fitzroy Coleman's Trinidad Rangers
1954	St. Agnes Is Trouble	Melodisc Kitchener Calypso Band
1954	Counting Cats Cricket Umpires	Melodisc Coleman’s Calypso Boys
1954	Wife And Mother Mango Tree	Melodisc Coleman’s Calypso Boys
1954	Marjorie's Flirtation My Wife Went Away With A Yankee	Melodisc Fitzroy Coleman's Calypso Band
1957	Kitch's Mambo Calypso Birth of Ghana (6 <sup>th</sup> March 1957)	Melodisc Calypso All Stars
1959	Federation Alfonso In Town	Melodisc Rupert Nurse Caribbean Band
1960	Jamaica Turkey Edna What Do You Want	Starling Rupert Nurse Band
1962	Kitch Take It Easy	Melodisc Fitzroy Coleman's Trinidad Rangers
1962	Love In the Cemetery Jamaica Woman	Jump Up Island Records Ltd
1963	The Road Make to Walk on Carnival Day Neighbour	Jump Up Island Records Ltd
1963	Muriel and the Bug Norma and the Yankee	Melodisc Fitzroy Coleman's Sunny Boys
1963	Dr. Kitch – the Needle Come Back Home Meh Boy	Jump Up Island Records Ltd

black star.” Furthermore, Taylor (2002) stated “Caribbean people were proud of the fact that Ghana’s charismatic leader Kwame Nkrumah (1909-1972) was "taking advice" from two outstanding Caribbeansons, CLR James (1901-1989)

and George Padmore (1902-1959); both from Trinidad and Tobago”. Kitchener’s timeless gift to Ghana is played annually as a national anthem to Ghanaians for their Independence Day.

### The African Connection

Kitchie's classic 'Sugar Bum Bum' on the ICE label has other relevance for co-author Lynda Rosenior-Patten. Founder of Maestro7 Creative Management Consultancy and a board member of Ebony Steel Band. In 1981 Lynda became the first black female 'Buyer' for the Calypso, Soca, African and Reggae 12inch department at Virgin Music Mega store in London's West End, then Europe's biggest music outlet. Released three years previously in 1978 'Sugar Bum Bum' was undoubtedly Kitchie's most commercially successful UK release and Lynda made sure that this and many other great Calypso and Soca tracks were well stocked every week.

Hailing from Freetown, Sierra Leone and also as co-founder and DJ with one of the UK's longest running all female sound systems Nzinga Soundz, Lynda (AKA DJ Ade), witnessed first-hand the global impact of Calypso and Soca music generally and Lord Kitchener's music specifically over the last forty years. Sugar Bum Bum was and is routinely played at West African parties including Sierra Leonean gatherings and celebrations such as the Sierra Leone Women's' Association (SLWA) events and regular old school association celebrations. Funk (2005) observes, "...in tracing the African roots of Calypso and Carnival, commentators like Dr Liverpool, Trinidad's seven-time calypso monarch, have seen strong connections between the West African griot and the calypsonian. Griots were hired by African royalty to sing their praises, celebrate their lives and document their achievements. In his chapter "Lord Kitchener, From Mother England to Mother Africa", Funk continues "If one looks at the calypsos of Lord Kitchener while he lived in England during the period from 1948 to 1962, this subversion, this striving for identity and freedom is clear". However, post his seminal "London is De Place For Me", Kitchener's rosy view of England was

to change radically as the harsh realities of life in the 'Mother Land' became all too apparent. Funk (2005) notes: "...besides documenting the harsh reality of life in the Mother Country, Kitchener was shifting his focus and his allegiance from England to what was for him the real mother country. Kitchener proclaimed his allegiance in his 1951 calypso, "Africa My Home:" with lyrics including "I want to come back home, Africa / Girl, I tried, roam, Africa."

Further, during the 1950s the BBC was broadcasting calypsos on the Overseas Service. The broadcasts were not only to audiences in the Caribbean but significantly, also to West African audiences and these broadcasts were extremely popular. At the same time Kitchie was coming into contact with the British Commonwealth Citizens arriving from Africa and his musical output of the time reflected common aspirations of independence, autonomy and freedom from "yoke" of Britain. "Kitchener leaves no doubt that Nkrumah's struggle was for the benefit of all "Africans" under colonial rule, be it in Africa or elsewhere, or be it only as a means of creating pan-African solidarity. He does not hesitate to emphasize his identification with those who benefit from Nkrumah's achievement – Independence. Indeed, all subsequent calypsos in direct celebration of independence from British colonial rule owe a debt to Kitchener's song". Funk (2005)

That debt of gratitude was reflected in the fact that the late 1950s and early 1960s witnessed a plethora of Caribbean and African artists following Kitchener's lead and making powerful music that reflected the mood of the time and the ambitions of independence led by Nkrumah's example in leading his country from the colonial mantle of "the Gold Coast" to the emergence of independent and proud Ghana. Funk (2005) observed: "From

Kitchener's pen then came the first calypso to directly address the subject of a country receiving Independence from Great Britain in his 1956 "Birth of Ghana." This song proved very popular. Indeed, a recording firm manager is quoted in the Jamaica Gleaner in October 1957, as stating that it had sold an amazing 300,000 copies. Which would make this record a best-selling real calypso of its time. It is unlikely that these sales were largely in Britain but instead from export sales to Africa and the Caribbean".

Moving into the 1960s, leading international artists of the time who recorded independence tributes included the uncompromising Fela Kuti - Nigeria Independence Special (1961), Jimmy Cliff - King of Kings (1961), Mighty Sparrow - One Model Nation (1962), ET Mensah - Ghana Freedom (1961), Derrick Morgan - Forward March (1962), Le Grand Kalle et L'African Jazz - Independence Cha Cha (1960), Freedom Highlife - E C Arinze (1961), African Jazz - Vive Patrice Lumumba (1960) and Lord Creator - Independent Jamaica (1962). In Sierra Leone, Ebenezer Calendar, recorded "Double Decker" (1961) in celebration of the country's independence and a nod to the famous Double Decker buses of London and its former coloniser. Born in 1912 to a Barbadian or Jamaican father and a Creole (Krio) mother, Calendar and his Maringa Band popularised Gumbe (Gumbay) and Maringa (Palm Wine) music, popularly referred to as "an off shoot of Trinidadian calypso" Lahai (2014).

Today, Nigeria has overtaken Ghana in its quest to forge strong links to the Caribbean and adopted calypso and steelpan as part of its culture. There is an astounding 30 steelbands in Nigeria and a successful panorama competition, however the instrument continues to expand into Tanzania, Botswana and an astonishing 150 steelbands are now established in South

Africa (Bowe, 2020). Continuing with the theme, West African states in particular have been extending the invitation to its diaspora counterparts to reconnect for many years. For example, leading cultural activists and practitioners in Sierra Leone are deeply committed to bringing steel pan and carnival "home" to Africa in line with the government's "Home Coming" drive. This is reflected in organisations such as Salone Carnival Ltd established in Freetown by co-author Lynda Rosenior-Patten. Lynda has extensive experience of working in West Africa and is keen to foster creative cultural collaborations with diaspora partners including steel pan and carnival practitioners. Further, "Fambul Tik" (Family Tree) is headed by US based Amadu Massally, an African Diaspora Community Organiser with a passion for carnival and pan who has visited Trinidad and Tobago many times and fostered relations with key practitioners. Massally states "I even visited Siparia, a place in South Trinidad with a strong Pan presence. It is a symbolic gesture, a strong one for Africans in the diaspora to give back to the Continental Africans in a meaningful and lasting way. And why we must take Pan to Africa, Sierra Leone especially".

### **Kitchener Meets the Legendary Claudia Jones; A Trinbagonian Style Carnival Emerges in Britain.**

For a calypsonian, the absence of a carnival in the country you are domiciled must have left a huge void in Kitchener's life. But this was about to change, brought on by events albeit smaller in scale but nevertheless parallels the origin of carnival in Trinidad i.e. a response to the pain and misery dished out by white supremacist, in this case to black migrants who were invited to 'work and rebuild the mother country'. It was the vision and fearless heroic efforts of Trinidadian-born Claudia Jones whose ingenious foresight sets the scene for the future Notting Hill Carnival). Jones "dedicated her life to the fight against racial

discrimination and oppression, relentlessly championing issues such as civil rights and gender equality.” (Boyce Davies, 2007, 2011, Morgan, 2020).

In 1959, the callous and public murder of the young Antiguan, Kelso Cochrane on 17th May in Notting Hill’s Southam Street reignited the violence between black and white groups. His funeral on 6th June 1959 drew in vast crowds, “both black and white people attended as a symbol of defiance and unity against racism. Sensing a need for compromise, the ever-astute Jones called a meeting in December 1958 to “*wash the taste of Notting Hill out of our mouths*” (Hinds, 2008). Jones called for suggestions during the meeting and a response to hold a carnival in the middle of winter by a Trinidadian prompted loud laughter. However, Jones did not dismiss this but instead saw this as a potential powerful antidote to the racial violence. She regarded carnival as a vibrant celebration of black freedom in the Caribbean and so the celebrated indoor carnivals (West Indian Gazette Caribbean Carnival) began at St Pancras Town Hall in January 1959 and continued to her death in 1964 (Hinds, 2008). The Mighty Terror marked the occasion with a searing impact on the event with his “Carnival at St. Pancras”. Many of the artists named above participated and even drew in the Mighty Sparrow from Trinidad, who met Kitchener for the first time there in the presence of some 1000 revellers. Photographs captured West Indians dancing, celebrating and coming together at the first annual Caribbean carnival in Britain. The event included masquerades, steelbands, calypso and dance performances, plus a carnival queen competition. By 1960, the number doubled and so the calibre of well-known artists which included luminaries such as Cy Grant, Cleo Laine, Guyanese pianist Mike McKenzie, steelbands from Trinidad, Jazz bands and musicians from Jamaica, Guyana, Trinidad & Tobago, the USA etc and was filmed and broadcast by the BBC.

However, the report of the event stated: “The highlight of the show was calypsonian Lord Kitchener. Ten years ago, he had led an improvisational Carnival march from Lord’s Cricket ground. Five years later he performed at London’s first Caribbean Carnival at the Albert Hall, travelling from Manchester especially for the event. In 1960 he again travelled from Manchester to London to perform at the indoor Carnival at Seymour Hall.” (Friar, 2017). These comments alone revealed the level of accord given to Kitchener by his peers. However, his days in London were now coming to an end as he began making plans to return to Trinidad for carnival 1963. He would never see Claudia Jones again. She sadly passed away on Christmas Eve 1964, aged 49, after suffering a heart attack caused by heart disease and tuberculosis. She was buried to the left of her hero, Karl Marx, in north London’s Highgate Cemetery. But her legacy as a force for change and instrumental role in liberating Britain’s Black community lives on. These carnivals came to end in 1964 with her passing but two years later this was reborn into its current form as a street carnival in Notting Hill.

### Conclusion

When Notting Hill Carnival started, Kitchener was already in Trinidad, arriving to a hero’s welcome and soon continued his prolific output of extraordinary calypsos there. Before he even had time to settle properly, he was already winning Road Marches again, beginning in 1963 as noted above. His legacy in Britain is immense and lives on the streets of Notting Hill Carnival annually where his songs are played repeatedly. His colleague, Russell Henderson and his ‘Trinidadian Steel Band’ who also performed with Kitchener at the 1960 Claudia Jones Carnival, kicked off the Notting Hill Carnival. Claudia Jones’s untimely death in 1964 and Kitchener’s relocation to Trinidad could have led to the demise of their monumental

work but the foundation they both built in carnival arts over the years were so resilient that there were many disciples to continue. Among Kitchener's strongest protagonist was Russell Henderson who was both a pianist and a jazz/calypso pianist whose repertoire always consisted of a number of Kitchener's calypsos, particularly his 1953 release, 'Old Lady Walk a Mile and a Half' which up to today is played weekly at Tuesday's Calypso-Jazz evenings at the Tabernacle. Kitchie sang this at his last live performance at the Sir Garfield Sobers Gymnasium in Barbados in 1999 (Daniell, 1999). Henderson took Kitchener's tunes on to the streets of Notting Hill with just a few dozen revellers in 1965 - just as Kitchener did after the Lords Cricket match of 1950 (see above) and from 1966, Notting Hill Carnival was on the way to becoming an annual carnival. Today, Notting Hill Carnival boast over two million participants, second in size only to Brazil's Rio Carnival and remains a lasting memory to its icons such Lord Kitchener and large groups of artists who he inspired during his stay in Britain. Notting Hill Carnival represents more than a street party to the Caribbean community, it is a continuation of the rituals and triumph from oppression. Kitchener first Road March on his return in 1963 viz. "The Road Make to Walk on Carnival Day" etched his legacy in Britain – a symbol of resistance to colonialism - claiming the very public space which his Windrush Generation feared to thread in the dark dismal days when young Kelso Cochrane cruelly had

his life taken away, a generation of migrants having to relive the heavy hand of the law and the many injustices meted out to them. Ruth Tompsett eloquently states "it connects past to present. It respects the stand made in the (1960) 1970s to the 1980s to hold the street in the face of antagonism from the authorities. Carnival performance says 'I am here.' (Tompsett, 2005). Few individuals could claim such a prodigious lasting legacy for its people. Celebrating the centenary of his birth was therefore essential and its fitting that the cities that shaped much of his life came together and remembered him in the way he would have liked, Calypso and Pan!

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## **“Learn Music On...The Steel Pan” : A Progressive Music Tuition Book Series For Beginner Musicians**

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### **Abstract**

During my teaching of Woodwind musical instrument, I started creating my own exercises and compositions to enhance the understanding of a new concept. I saw that my resources were helping the students. Slowly, but surely, I began producing my books using my compositions. First for Clarinet, Saxophone and Bassoon because the learners were already on their music theory journey.

In 2019, the idea to have my own music school for Steel Pan came to fruition and the TamBam Steel Orchestra Academy was born. I then began looking for resources to use for my Steel Pan Music School viz. to create a 2-year curriculum and planning and to support any current Steel Pan authors. During various searches, I found two books that were more focused at the tutor and had roughly 2/3 ensemble songs to teach a class. One book was for a small steel band and the other for the Mini-Pans. So, there were arrangements already done for non-pan music tutors. However, I thought that I needed a music tuition book similar to the one I use for my Clarinet and Saxophone students that illustrates the following:

- Teaches how to read music
- Learn where their notes are
- Includes music theory
- Great as a homework tool

Not finding what I needed, I began to make my own, based on my online music theory lessons, my 20+ years of teaching experience and incorporating relevant material from other music tuition books.

My experience as both tutor and performer pointed me to some deficiencies for example that the background Pans do not get as much attention as the front-line Pans do. Consequently, my approach was to create more balance hence there is a Learn Music On...which covers 2 octaves:

- The Tenor Pan (low C)
- The Double Tenor/Seconds Pans
- Guitar and Cello Pans
- The Bass Pans

This paper focus on some of the history of this marvellous instrument, its arrival into Britain, its power initiate global events such as Notting Hill Carnival and its transition into Schools to become part of the teaching curriculum. Historically, the instrument has been taught by rote and started in the same manner in schools. However, accompanying books soon began to appear as various regional music hubs started their own programmes. I became aware of these music programmes and but felt that there were shortcomings and something different was needed. The approach I have taken in this “Learn Music On...” A Steel Pan Music Tuition Series”, I found to be effective especially for the early stages of learning and because learners enjoy practising accompanied, playing along with others markedly enhances the process. Hence all songs are presented as Duets with equivalent levelled parts. The duet format has the added value of also introducing the learner to playing in an ensemble and the basic 2 - part harmony encourages the importance of independent practice. Learners may swap parts, as the music concept taught in each piece is included in each part. As a supplement, “Learn Music On” can be used for sight-reading, practice techniques, aural training and music theory understanding.

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**Key Words:** Steelpan, Music Tuition Book, Workbook, Musical Instruments, Teaching, Schools, Learning in Duets, Ensembles.

## Introduction

### The Birth of Steelpan in Trinidad

The following is taken from the introduction to Jimi Phillips's book 'How to Play the Soprano Pan (2000) and lucidly and succinctly encapsulates a very complex process of the evolution of steelpan as follows:

"The steel band is often referred to as the only truly new significant musical instrument invented in the 20th century. Born in the underbelly of the high creative but restrictive society that was colonial Trinidad, the steelpan emerged from being primarily in the ghetto subculture to arguably the most defining cultural characteristic of the country of Trinidad and Tobago and a gift to the world. Invented in Trinidad some 80 years ago the steelpan or (pan as it is popularly called) quickly spread throughout the Caribbean and has become increasingly popular in North America and Europe as well as other parts of the world. The African skin drum, a powerful rhythmic symbol of the spirit of the oppressed African descendants, was banned from street parades. The use of metal containers was introduced into the bands. This increased in the 1930s and by the end of the decade biscuit tins, paint cans and other metal containers predominated. By the early 1940s crude notes were placed on these containers. Innovation flourished and by the end of the Second World War, the first instrument was made with a 45 imperial gallon steel oil drum. Improvements continued apace and by 1951 the Trinidad All Steel Percussion Orchestra (TASPO) toured Britain (and

played in Europe) to rave reviews. The pan evolved from an exotic curiosity to an authentic musical instrument.

The first step in the production of a steelpan is the process referred to as sinking where the face of the drum is sunk, the depth depending on the pitch and range of the pan. The lead instrument (soprano pan) is about 200 mm (8 inches) at the deepest point. The notes are then marked and boundaries grooved with a small flat punch. This cylindrical part (skirt) of the drum is then cut to length depending on the range of the pan, the soprano's skirt being of the order of 100 - 150 mm long. The pan is then subjected to a heat treatment process over an open flame of about 300 to 400°C to stress relieve the deformed metal which also results in hardening by strain aging. The final stage is the tuning of the instruments. Tuning is an iterative, complex process because the pan is a unique instrument in that notes are physically (and therefore acoustically) connected in a continuous membrane. The tuner uses a rounded hammer to shape each note in the middle and sides to generate the pitch and harmonics. Most of the higher range pans are chrome plated mainly for corrosion resistance and aesthetic purposes. It was through the genius, dedication and courage of the steelpan pioneers (who had to endure social rejection official harassment and gang violence) that the steelpan came to be accepted as a serious artform of the highest order. Steelpan music is now formally taught by The University of the West Indies and also in music departments of many schools and

universities in other parts of the world, particularly the U.S.A.” (Phillips, 2000).

**Movement of Steelpan from Trinidad and Tobago to Britain**

Manchester. Their return to Trinidad on 12<sup>th</sup> December 1951 witness the absence one member. TASPO’s legendary pioneer, Sterling Betancourt who opted not to return



Figure 1a. (Left). TASPO performing at the South Bank on 26<sup>th</sup> July 1951 with pans on their lap. The base players (standing) were using multiple pans for the first time to accommodate additional notes for their repertoire. Figure 1b (Right). The tenor and alto sections of the band are seen, with the base players just visible, playing to a packed audience (Newspaper clipping courtesy Kim Johnson)

The ground-breaking performance TASPO at London’s South Bank on 26<sup>th</sup> July 1951, as part of the Festival of Britain, inadvertently sowed the seeds of steelpan as a *tour de force* in British music today. That poignant day witnessed 11 pannists, seated near the banks of the Thames, with ‘rusty oil drums’ on their laps producing the most melodic and thrilling music to a large, dumbfounded audience amid glowing reports in newspapers in Britain and Trinidad (Steumpfle, 1995). However, little preparations were made for TASPO’s visit and the entire event could have fallen into oblivion had it not been for the utter dedication and unreserved belief by their fellow resident Trinidadians, Edric Connor, Boscoe Holder and Lord Kitchener who tirelessly promoted their visit by negotiating performances at the Savoy Hotel and the BBC which extended their stay and enabled a two-week tour of Britain, playing at great northern cities such as Edinburgh, Glasgow, Leeds and

to Trinidad with the group, but instead search for a new life in Britain and in doing so ensured the continuance of TASPO’s legacy outside its homeland of Trinidad and Tobago (Figures 1a, 1b). Betancourt soon met and began performing with the young and upcoming jazz pianist/pannist, the late Russell Henderson and together they brought about the first Notting Hill Carnival in 1965 which featured their ‘Russell Henderson Steel Band.’



Figure 2. The late Gerald Forsythe OBE who began playing in Newtown Boys School, Trinidad masterminded the introduction of steelpan into the London Schools curriculum. By 1990, 160 schools were in the programme.

### **Steelpan as Part of Music Curriculum in Schools.**

Prior to Notting Hill Carnival, there was a steady stream of pannists from Trinidad and Tobago, including former TASPO members such as Philmore 'Boots' Davidson, Theo Stephens, Winston 'Spree' Simon migrating or passing through Britain and the sound of a steelband became more audible as the years went by. Schools, particularly those with significant number of the Windrush Generation pupils encouraged their music teachers to introduce steelpan and while many initiatives began taking place, it is generally agreed that the most concerted and successful programme was due to the heroic effort of the late Gerald Forsyth OBE, former member of Trinidad's renowned 'Invaders Steel Orchestra' (La Rose & McCalman, 2001. Joseph, 2017). Forsyth a gifted pannist and tuner, arrived in Britain in 1962 and began doing gigs with well-established performers in London such as Boots Davidson, Zigilee Constantine, Eamon Thorpe and Desmond Bowen and toured the USA in 1966. It was on his return that he pioneered the teaching of the steelpan at the Islington Green School where he formed the New Sensation Steel Band in 1969 (Joseph, 2017). This opened the doors for several 'Inner London Education Authority' [ILEA] schools to introduce steel pan classes and by 1975 there were over 50 schools with steel bands! The year 1978 witnessed significant developments; Gerald Forsyth was appointed Steelband Organiser for Schools with an office at the headquarters of the Greater London Council (Figure 2). Almost simultaneously, Sterling Betancourt was recruited to Elmwood Junior School Steelband whose band was among the

finalists for the National Music Festival at the Royal Albert Hall. That year also saw the commencement of Panorama, the UK National Steel Band Competition which to the present time precedes Notting Hill Carnival annually. By 1990 a stunning 160+ schools had steel pan music as part of their curriculum. To capitalise on this moment, the British Association of Steelbands (BAS) was later established in December 1995 to represent the interest of all steelbands in the UK in musical, artistic, educational and social aspects of this artform and retains a strong presence in Britain. Hence as recently Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> June 2022, 100 members (UK All Steel Percussion Orchestra comprising 25 each pannists from Ebony Steelband, Mangrove Steelband and Metronomes and Croydon and Steel Orchestras) performed at Queen's Platinum Jubilee Celebrations at Buckingham Palace to a global audience.

### **Rote to Steelpan Music Sheets; Arrival of Notation Sheets and Books**

Steelpan music is traditionally taught by rote, employing repetitive methods of learning via a tutor/arranger. With the arrival of steelpan as part of the music curriculum of schools and with it often being taught alongside other instruments, many schools began teaching music theory. Soon music notation and sight reading were being used to teach and play rather than reliance solely on conventional methods. It is common to see in steelbands tutors today, handing out sheets of alphabetical notation that they have written for practice

as in the case here for the popular calypso ‘Pan in A Minor’ (Figure 3a).

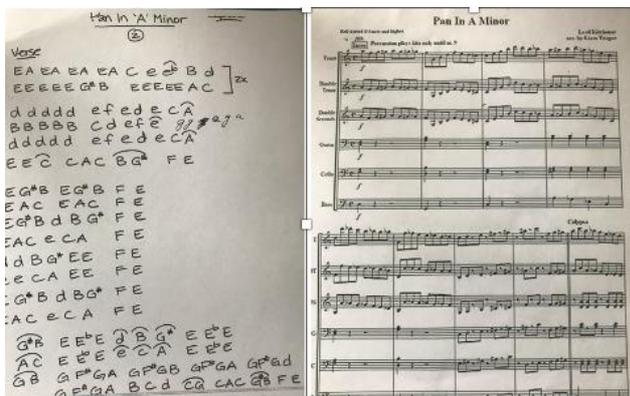


Figure 3a. The very popular Lord Kitchener’s calypso ‘Pan in A Minor’ is a favourite among steelbands and often handed out to players to learn the notes. It enables a player to learn the melody but gives no indication of timing and phrasing which is learnt through practice. Figure 3b. The musical score of the same calypso produced Professor Liam Teague, Head of Steelpan Studies, School of Music, Northern Illinois University.

In steelbands where music theory is taught, tutors often acquire published music scores and teach by the more conservative approach used for traditional musical instruments as shown in Figure 3b and used recently by UKASPO cited above.

In many schools there are structured programmes for local and regional ensembles. Consequently, a large number of small books have been written by music tutors in various regions of the UK, often for a particular course or event. For example, Mike Simpson produced a book titled ‘TEACH & PLAY STEEL PANS’ (2012) in which he covers five pieces that represents an exciting and varied selection of steelpan music, from traditional calypso and soca to a reggae piece and a song by Beyoncé. The author states that “each piece is broken down into clear and simple steps that show you how to build up the music gradually with your class. This is combined with an accompanying DVD that contains over 50 short clips of the author and a group

of KS3 students demonstrating all of the instruments and patterns to each piece. The author delightfully declares – “teaching and learning world music has never been so easy or enjoyable.” (Simpson, 2012).

### Examples of Early Books on Steelpan Theory and Performance

Several books on steelpan theory have been written in Trinidad and Tobago for schools but rarely leave the islands because limited copies are produced for specific events. Two that have gained international prominence were produced by Trinidadian steelpan virtuosos, Jimi Phillip, who after years abroad as an international pannist, returned to Trinidad and Dr. Salah A. Wilson, a Trinidadian pannist domiciled in Canada who returns annually to arrange for steelbands in Trinidad, particularly his childhood band, ‘Flamingos Steel Orchestra’ (see Wilson, 2012). Jimi Phillips received the ‘Anthony Williams Award for Technological Innovation in Arts & Culture, NIHERST Awards for Excellence in Science and Technology, 2013.

**Jimi Phillips:** With some 50 years of experience in steelpan, Jimi Phillip is regarded in Trinidad and Tobago as “pan



Figure 4a. Front cover of Jimi Phillip’s steelpan tuition book.

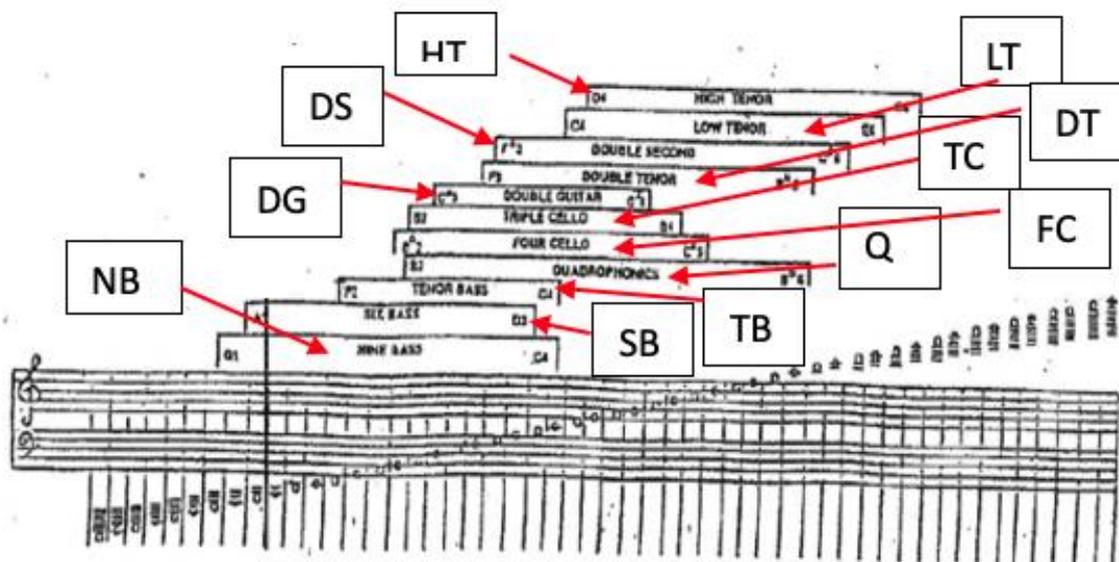


Figure 4b (above) front cover of Jimi Phillip’s book – Figure 4b (right) Typical ranges of pans used in modern steelband. Taken from the Introduction of “How to Play THE SUPARANO PAN” (Phillip 2000). Abbreviations: HT- High Tenor; LT-Low Tenor; DS-Double Second; DT-Double Tenor; DG-Double Guitar; TC Triple Cello; FC-Four Cello; Q- Quadrophonic; TB-Tenor Base; SB-Six Base; NB-Nine Base

musician extraordinaire who has become an internationally renowned pan maker, pan tuner, arranger, teacher, author and innovator” (NIHERST, 2013). He has conducted pan workshops for the Ministry of Culture, The University of the West Indies and The University of Trinidad and Tobago. Phillip is a strong advocate for music literacy for pan players as he believes all players of different musical instruments must be able to relate and communicate with each other. His book titled “How to Play THE SUPARANO PAN (from Middles C, copyright 1981)’ reflects his deep knowledge and understanding of the instrument which he is immensely passionate about. The book begins with a formidable introduction (see Figure 4a, 4b) to the instrument before proceeding sequentially through music theory, dynamics, major and minor scales, major and minor chords, technique exercises and music scores. The book is written with authority, as would be expected of such an

expert, and is well laid out and, to his credit, can be followed by a complete beginner which many other books strive to do but rarely achieve.

**Salah A. Wilson’s Book: Steelpan Playing with Theory**

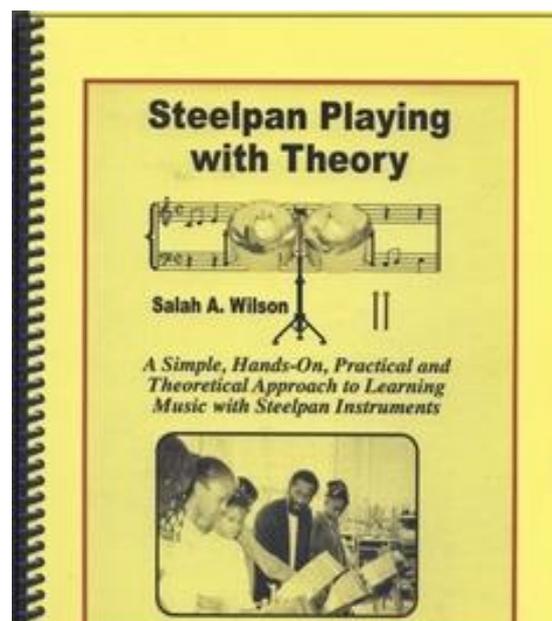


Figure 5. This book offers players a simple but comprehensive approach to acquiring basic music skills (Salah A. Wilson (1999).

Salah Wilson has had a lifetime in pan, literally growing up in the panyard of 'Flamingos Steel Orchestra' from which one of Trinidad and Tobago's most renowned steelbands, Exodus was born (see Wilson, 2012). Since his move to Montreal, he formed the Salah's Steelpan Academy in which his entire family are involved. He is perhaps the best-known steelpan entrepreneur and arranger in Canada (having won Panorama the most times) and a committed tutor teaching pan through reading of music. Naturally, his 400-page book, 'Steelpan Playing with Theory' is an outstanding comprehensive masterpiece described as "A Simple, Hands-on, Practical and Theoretical Approach to Learning Music with Steelpan Instruments" by Google Books. However, this does little to describe the depth to which the book delves into. Consisting of 12 chapters, the book sets out to be user-friendly using a step by step approach to learning music with the steelpan and takes the student from the making of the instrument through basic music theory, rhythmic patterns, intervals, scales, harmony and chords and eventually to jazz exercises (Wilson, 1999, Figure 5). In an effort to stimulate music theory among pannists, Wilson expands its coverage with the title: "*Time to learn music Theory and become musically literate. I have the tools to assist in this process contact me for more info or send me an email; salah@steelpanplus.com, visit my website*" via When Steel Talks in March 2009 (Wilson, 2009). The book is arranged in progressive stages to accommodate the different levels of students. While used widely in North America, the book remains largely unknown in the UK.

### **The author's background and inspiration for this book**

Having done my work experience with my Pan Tutor, Dennis 'Tweed' Joseph, it became evident that my career would lead me to becoming a peripatetic music teacher. While studying, I would teach Steel Pan classes and also cover Steel Pan lessons and all schools had the same plan and outcome for these lessons: 'Teach the children songs'. And even though we could teach whatever we wanted, no time was allocated for technique or any other music skills to be taught due to the children learning by rote and having different abilities in the class. For over a decade I noticed that nothing was changing for the budding Steel Pan player.

Once I started teaching Woodwind instruments for two London Boroughs at their music services/hubs, I noticed that all the other instruments were taught using a book and their music lessons incorporated a variety to the structure of their lessons. The children, as well as learning how to play their instrument (including posture and technique) also learnt how to read music. They learnt and memorised where (or rather) how to play notes and instinctively learnt music theory.

Their workbook was pivotal to their progress and learning. Whichever book was used and for which ever instrument, the workbook explained what was needed to read and play music. But, as a tutor I constantly asked myself 'where is a Steel Pan workbook?'

I am a self-taught musician who was given a music tuition book for piano as a gift and I worked my way through the book and learnt how to read music, at 8 years old. Up to Grade V Music theory, I had a teacher to guide me through examinations, but I

progressed and achieved Grade VIII on my own through reading books.

During the COVID-19 lockdown, I still needed to teach Steel Pan, online, with some students (for example children of essential workers) in school and some at home. For the children at home, I suggested Steel Pan Apps for Android and iOS while the children at school used the pans. Those with the Apps were (rightly so) upset that the layout was different, also, I couldn't hear what they were playing.

This is in sharp contrast to all my other instruments online lessons which were fine. Even my online music theory classes, were good. All I thought about were my books and wish they were complete. This period put my Steel Pan teaching and pedagogy into perspective, and it became evident that my students were losing out and getting left behind. I wanted my Steel Pan students to be on an equal playing field as conventional western instruments and produced music tuition books for Steel Pan...for them and everyone.

### **The Series**

The author has published 4 music tuition books for the Steel Pan music instrument family: The Tenor, Double Tenor/Seconds, Guitar/Cellos and the Bass Steel Pans. This is to cover the full range of notes and so that all Pans are included. These Pans are also the main pans that are used in schools in my music service establishments/hubs and the pans that are taught on. These tuition books are to teach beginner Steel Pan learners music theory/literacy and to read music notation while learning how to correctly play the Steel Pan of their choice. They are a resource to assist other Pan tutors and to help set out a path for learner's progression.

### **The Concept**

During my Woodwind teaching sessions, I started creating my own exercises and compositions to enhance the understanding of a new concept. It's what all tutors generally do when a learner is having difficulty. I saw that my resources were working and that the children were beginning to understand what they didn't before. All the Woodwind learners I teach, buy a workbook to study from, based on my recommendations. Through-out the years, I have used and tried many workbooks/series and continue to search. I buy these books from my own resources. I noticed with these books that they were in a series so for example, Abracadabra Bassoon, Abracadabra Clarinet, Abracadabra Saxophone or Clarinet Basics, Saxophone Basics, Flute Basics etc.

At first, I thought about producing a progressive performance book; 10 duet and trio compositions for the instruments that I teach (not Steel Pan). I wanted to get some of my own music out and for my Woodwind learners to perform them. Then, I thought that I keep creating exercises so why not do a book of exercises and compositions. That's where I began to write and create. Then I thought, why don't I just do my own music tuition book for these instruments. Even though there are so many (see above), I thought it wouldn't hurt to have more and it would help my Woodwind students with their music theory and performance journey. Many compositions had been created and correct transpositions for the non-C instruments had been established. So, as I'm working on this Clarinet, Saxophone, Bassoon music tuition workbook of which there are many, I'm still teaching and preparing all my students for some sort of performance at the

end of term. One of my Bassoon students brought in his score for their school orchestra and asked if we could work on this. I agreed and noticed that it's a Horn part but has been altered with my pencil marks for Bassoon. I ask how many songs they were performing and noted that there were three. My Steel Pan students were only performing one, because that's all they were able to perform as an ensemble in the time frame. The same time frame that the orchestra gets. It was my Eureka moment as it then became apparent to me that if my Steel Pan students could read music, we could get through far more music.

The striking comparison is that my Bassoon student started his instrument, learning at the same time as my Steel Pan student. Not only was my Bassoon student performing more but was also gaining more musical skills as he learnt to play his instrument. Also, the school orchestra conductor altered the original score to include my Bassoon player, hence there was no reason why they could not alter any music part to include a Pan player in their orchestra or any other school ensemble they have.

I dropped everything I had done and decided to produce music tuition books for Steel Pan.

Doing these books also would greatly help in the building of the Steel Pan music school I am trying to establish; TamBam Steel Orchestra Academy where music reading, and music theory/literacy will be included in the curriculum. As well as learning by rote to also maintain their ability to learn Steel Pan by that method also and, keep the traditional skill as many classically trained musicians are missing this skill. By doing these books I have created a Steel Pan curriculum to follow and that I can use year after year as a guide.

This keeps track of attainment target while following the standard musical element's structure. This is also, for other Steel Pan tutors to vary their lesson plans rather than have the same lesson structure every session/term.

### **Why they are important?**

With 20+ years of teaching experience, I noticed that Steel Pan classes don't really have any structured lessons, pupils simply just learn as many songs as possible; many times, being told what exact songs to play. Even though it would get done, there would be no time to teach or work on anything else, for example, holding the sticks correctly, scales, note placement, notation etc

There are no easily accessible resources for new Steel Pan players to learn notation or any music language/literacy but now, there is.

These books will help Steel Pan students be INCLUDED in other ensembles, where just like the Bassoon part was altered from a Horn part, a Double Seconds can use a Clarinet part for example. Music writers will begin writing parts for the Steel Pan and INCLUDE players in their ensembles/bands/orchestras.

This will lead to OPPORTUNITIES in different fields of music. Getting on a music course, auditioning for a band, career opportunities, recording and performing opportunities because the Steel Pan player, can read music.

Skills are of the utmost importance. Regardless of age, these books can teach beginner musicians how to read music on the Steel Pan. Now there is a structured way to learn this as a NEW SKILL to enrich one's life. Many people of different ages, cultures, backgrounds, take up learning a

new instrument. If they are interested in learning how to read music on Pan, these books are now there.

**Technology**

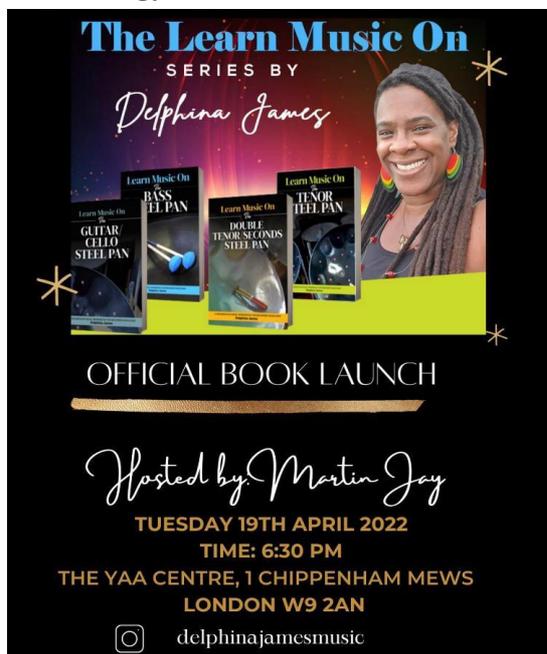


Figure 6. Poster used for the official book launch of ‘The Learn Music On series by the author on 19<sup>th</sup> April 2022 at the Yaa Centre, London W9 2AN

From the beginning, I wanted my books to be an eBook. Homes are losing any extra space for hardback books and that even a small device is becoming the norm in every household. I knew that it would be cheaper for the buyer therefore, accessible for those on a tighter budget. I want my books to be available to all.

I have integrated Augmented Reality (AR) on each of the books. This means that you can use your mobile device to see/hear a media format from facing the device at the books and the media will begin. This has been done using a mobile application (App) called ‘AR Zone’. Using this App, facing the cover of each book, a welcome video, which includes a quick demonstration for each Pan, will appear on the device. I believe that Steel Pan has to “keep up with



Figure 7. The Welcoming entertainment. Denzel James-Onyi: Tenor. Delvin James-Onyi: Double Seconds 2 (left) and Dominic James-Onyi: Double seconds 1 (right)

the times” and that technology is the way forward and the world we live in.

I learnt how to read music with no tutor but using...A book.

Now, you can ‘Learn Music On....’ The Steel Pan and was ready to launch on 19<sup>th</sup> April 2022 at the Carnival Village’s Yaa Centre while its sister building, the Tabernacle was hosting a centenary of Lord Kitchener’s birth (Figure 6) and both activities merged.



Figure 8. Martin Jay; the MC for the book launch introducing the commencement of the evening



Figure 9. Delphina teaching the whole room time value symbols in the live demonstration section



Figure 10. Audience participation. Two people who has never played Steel Pan or can't read music, participates in the live demonstration.



Figure 11. Audience listening attentively to a performance by Debra 'Pan Diva' Eden during the book launch.



Figure 12. British actor and musician, Colin Salmon and others, enquiring about the "Learn Music On..." series



Figure 13. Participants asking questions and requesting signed copies of books.

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## Post-Graduate Arts Students Meet the Artists of Notting Hill Carnival; An Ongoing Programme by Middlesex University London to Develop and Promote Carnival Arts. The Pioneering Work of Adela Ruth Tompsett

Mike Dines<sup>1</sup>, Zuleika Beavan<sup>2</sup>, Joanna Daykin<sup>3</sup>, Francois Evans<sup>4</sup>, Opemipo Agosu-Sodeinde<sup>5</sup>, Rafia Asghar<sup>5</sup>, Harshil Chauhan<sup>5</sup>, Shubham Deora<sup>5</sup>, Peter Folley<sup>5</sup>, Akari Ito<sup>5</sup>, Adela Jerabkova<sup>5</sup>, Clare Lee<sup>5</sup>, Yuan-Yuan Lee<sup>5</sup>, Virag Muzslai<sup>5</sup>, Comfort Ugbaja<sup>5</sup>, Larisa Zazzero<sup>5</sup>n and Haroun N. Shah<sup>6,7</sup>

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### Abstract

As part of a continuing programme at Middlesex University that was begun nearly four decades ago by Principal Lecturer Adela Ruth Tompsett, eleven postgraduate students from the university were taken to meet and see first-hand the work of some of the key artists and organisers of Notting Hill Carnival [NHC] on Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> May. The three key elements of the traditional carnival that originated in Trinidad and Tobago in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, Calypso, Masquerade [Mas] and Steelpan are entrenched in the work and performances of the Carnival Village (Tabernacle and Yaa Centre). These elegant buildings serve as both functional centres for these artforms and as a type of ‘museum’ due to their rich resources that have been built up over 57 years of NHC. The visit was set up against the historical background of the NHC, meeting artists of the three key disciplines. From the outset it was made abundantly clear that NHC was not just a street party, but in the words of Tompsett ‘*it is also a statement of presence and celebration of identity in the Black British community. As art form it is total theatre. This is Notting Hill Carnival. It is a Caribbean-derived festival, which has developed out of a specific history and a particular set of circumstances.*’ (Tompsett, 2007). The author further states that a ‘*Recognition of that history is key to understanding the nature of Notting Hill Carnival as both performance and exploration of identity.*’ In the past, the university’s role has been based mainly on facilitating students who were largely of Caribbean descent, or those who already had such an interest and recruited the necessary tutors to devise specific modules for study. This visit was an experiment in that none of the students were indigenous to the Caribbean but instead came from very different parts of the world where NHC is unknown. However, they were all post-graduate students, specialising in a broad spectrum of art forms, but, unlike previous groups, had no prior lectures on NHC nor carnival in general. Coming out of two years of COVID-19 restrictions and online education, their anxiety and apprehension at the commencement was noticeable, but contrasted sharply with their singing, dancing and laughter when they ended the day playing steelpan using the instruments of the legendary Ebony Steelband. This paper reports each of their views of this experiment and its impact on Middlesex University Arts programmes against a background of work initiated by Ruth Tompsett.

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**Key Words:** Performing Arts, Creative Industries, Street Theatre, University Students meet the Artists, Carnival Village, Notting Hill Carnival, Steelpan, Calypso, Mas.

## Introduction

The Faculty of Arts and Creative Industries at Middlesex University [MDX] has a long history as a creative community, led by practitioners in creative industries who inspire and challenge students in a friendly, inclusive and practice-led environment. Teaching is underpinned by scholarship, innovative pedagogy, and leading research of national and international significance. Programmes are diverse, ranging from Animation to Journalism, Fine Art to Digital Media, with creativity as a cornerstone. The Faculty encourages interdisciplinary study, practical experience and the interrelation of practice and theory alongside the development of specialist and transferable skills, with the aim of preparing graduates for work in contemporary creative industries. Because of the broad range of interest amongst academic staff, courses have often expanded in line with the interests of course leaders. One such course was pioneered by Ruth A. Tompsett nearly four decades ago and has inspired new courses in carnival arts at various universities, even in its homeland of Trinidad and Tobago such as the University of the West Indies [UWI] and the University of Trinidad and Tobago [UTT] where she has lectured. Some of her former students at Middlesex University are now lecturers at both these institutions. Here, the Faculty mirrors the ethos at the heart of the university, not least in its 2031 strategy where it notes how ‘our vision is to transform outcomes for individuals, communities and organisations and to

empower people to change their lives’ (Middlesex 2022). Key to this strategy, therefore, is the ‘bringing people together’ to ‘create knowledge and put it into action to develop fairer, healthier, more prosperous and sustainable societies’ (Middlesex 2022). Consequently, collaboration is core to the Faculty, not least in its links to the wider community.

## The Pioneering work of Adela Ruth Tompsett in Laying the Foundation for Current Developments in Carnival Arts at Middlesex University

In an Arts Council England podcast on 9<sup>th</sup> August 2016, Ruth Tompsett was one of the three members of a discussion panel for the topic ‘The Arts of Carnival’. The brief for the podcast described her as a ‘writer, academic and founder of Carnival studies at Middlesex University’ (ACE 2016). This is a fitting tribute and one that she would have been proud of after the many years she served as a principal lecturer on Carnival Arts at the Trent Park Campus prior to and following its change of status from polytechnic to university. Tompsett developed a full carnival arts programme with workshops for Mas and Calypso, and even established one of the first university-based steelbands in Britain. This naturally attracted a large number of students of Caribbean heritage. Some of the more recent students who are also highly visible at NHC are listed in Figure 1 (below), with some unfortunately only resurfacing in biographies and eulogies when they passed on. For example, Haroun Shah (Middlesex

University and previous director of Nostalgia Steelband), states that he knew the world-renowned pannist Junior Gill (based in Switzerland) for over 25 years and even played in each other's steelbands, but only became aware that he was a part-time tutor on the Steelpan Unit of the Carnival Module of Ruth Tompsett's Course when he passed away in December 2021. This component of the course was shared with his colleagues Tamla Batra, Eversley 'Breeze' Mills and Freddy Tautsaut and the late Junior Gill (Ruth Tompsett, per.comm). This course ran for 21 years. The International Journal of Carnival Arts dedicated Vol. 4 to Junior Gill with the following statement:

**Wilbert "Junior" Gill**

1963 - 2021

Born in London and completed a combined degree at Middlesex University (formerly Middlesex Polytechnic) with Music as his major and Quantitative Mathematics as a minor. He lived in Zürich (Switzerland) where he was director of Music Center Affoltern, Zurich. As a steelpan virtuoso, he performed with well-known musicians Phil Collins, Santana, George Duke, Airtó Moreira and Victor Bailey. He frequently joined Nostalgia Steelband for Notting Hill Carnival.

It was interesting that all the key artists the students engaged with on 19<sup>th</sup> May 2022 asked about Ruth Tompsett and MDX, especially Carl Gabriel whom she nurtured and encouraged from early in his career as a carnival artist of wire sculpture. While she worked tirelessly at the university to establish a world class centre for Carnival

studies, Tompsett also carried out considerable field work at carnivals in the

UK. She found part-time employment for many artists, bringing in steelpan tutors, mas designers and calypsonians to work with the students. She has done excellent interviews with many of these artists

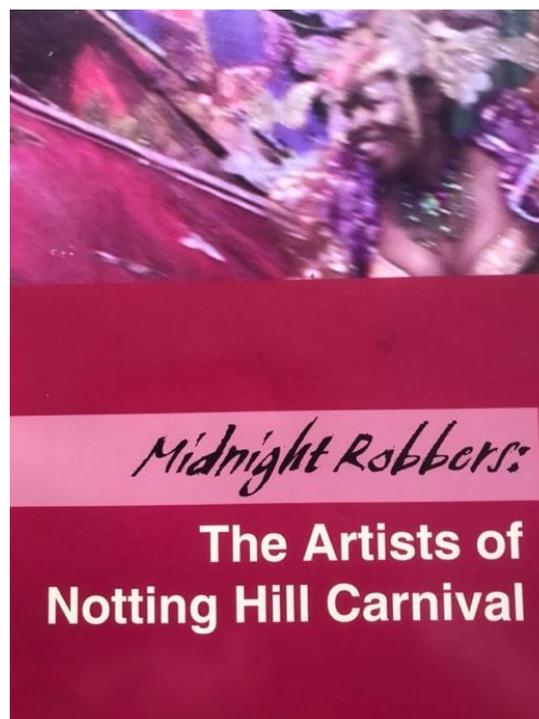


Figure 1. Front cover of the booklet to accompany the 'Midnight Robbers' exhibition at City Hall, London in 2007 and the Ohio State University Urban Art Space in 2008. Curated by Lesley Ferris and Adela Ruth Tompsett.

including the late Lawrence Noel and many aspiring artists whose names today are among Britain's best known, including Carl Gabriel (NHC Wire Sculptor), Clary Salandy (Mahogany Carnival Design) and Ali Pretty (Kinetika, Outdoor Arts Company) all of whom will play a significant part in the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Celebrations in June 2022.

Using her background in colonial history, Tompsett then embarked on an enormous project to mark the bicentenary of the Abolition Act in 1807 which ended slave

trading in the British colonies. In an informative book that accompanied the exhibition (see Figure 1), and which also documented the history alongside the exhibition, she reminded visitors that while the Abolition of Slavery Act was passed in 1834, it took another four years to achieve full emancipation. That very year, in 1838, Carnival in Trinidad began, with Afro-Trinidadians coming onto the streets claiming ‘their right to occupy public spaces’, (a theme that she reemphasises in her teaching and public lectures). It took just nine years for slavery to be supplanted by a new form – indentureship – in which vast numbers of Indian and Chinese workers took the place of slaves to toil in the fields for cash crops such as tea, coffee, sugar etc. that swelled the coffers of the Mother Country. Trinidad is therefore very cosmopolitan, and this is reflected in the artforms seen at carnivals in Trinidad and Tobago and London and in her exhibition, visible through the artists documented. The exhibition adopted the motif of the ‘Midnight Robber’ that symbolises the many sinister acts used to capture and transport labourers to the Caribbean.

With the restructuring from polytechnic to university status in 1992 and a £10 million deficit, there was considerable upheaval. Many of the old campuses were closed or relocation to its flagship campus in Hendon. In 2012 with the closure of Trent Park Campus and the loss of Tompsett from the university, much of the momentum and expertise built up over several decades was unfortunately lost

### **Resurgence of Carnival Arts at Middlesex University**

Haroun Shah began collaboration with Ruth Tompsett via biennial carnival arts conferences which he initiated from 2006 at the University of East London. After some 20 years at the University of London as a clinical scientist, he moved to Public Health England [PHE] to head a new laboratory and began collaborating with the Department of Natural Sciences at Middlesex University. The short distance between organisations facilitated easy access and many students pursued research projects drawing on the expertise of both institutes. Upon retirement in 2015, Shah was invited to take up a post as a Visiting Professor to continue his research programme at PHE on a voluntary basis. Having co-organised the 3<sup>rd</sup> International Conference on Carnival Arts - ‘*Integrating The Three Elements of Carnival, Steelman, Calypso and Mas*’ 23-24th October 2010 - at the University of East London, Stratford with Tompsett, Shah was encouraged by her to seek contact with the Arts and Music department at MDX. He was soon in contact with Dr Phil Healey, Head of Visual Arts, and an early exhibition by Healey and Susan Hansen (2016) titled ‘*Art on the Streets*’ led to discussions on Street Art and Notting Hill Carnival. NHC is highly connected to art and design, and many mas-makers and designers have seen their work and design as an art form, an art form which ‘speaks through the costumed mas player’ in performance. There was more common ground between Performing, rather than Visual Arts and contact was soon made with Dr Zuleika Beavan which initiated fruitful collaborations that continue to grow in strength.

### **The Dogged Pursuit of Undergraduate Student Euan Lloyd-Taylor (2016-2019)**

With the upcoming Arts Council England funded '6<sup>th</sup> Biennial Steelpan Conference titled *The Fusion of Steelpan with other Art Forms in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*', 7-9<sup>th</sup> October 2016,

(<https://www.steelpanconference.com/6th-conference>), a late submission to present a paper came from undergraduate Euan Lloyd-Taylor who had just joined the Department of Music at MDX. His submission was so interesting that even though the conference programme was crammed and already finalised, a 20-minute slot was created for him to do a lunchtime presentation that drew in Tompsett. As a Caucasian British, Euan Lloyd Taylor took an early interest in steelpan music in the seaside town of Portsmouth where he grew up, playing steelpan with Panjazz International and eventually becoming very proficient. He was keen to further his studies and applied to several universities in the UK to undertake a BA in Music with steelpan as his major instrument. Apart from Middlesex and Chichester universities, his applications were utterly rejected. MDX, his first choice, gladly accepted him and designed courses to meet his needs and those of other students with specific interests. By the 7<sup>th</sup> International Conference in Carnival Arts in 2018, Lloyd-Taylor was approaching his final year and keen to let other steelpan players know of his predicament and his approach to circumventing the hurdles to university entry. He was also keen to communicate his experience to funding councils such as Arts Council England and those involved in university admission, and his presentation titled '*A Call to British Universities to Introduce Steelpan Music as Part of the Music and Arts Programmes*' was a courageous statement for a young

undergraduate at an international conference. Cheered on by MDX predecessor Ruth Tompsett whom he first met at the 2016 conference, his presentation was confident, lucid and so well argued that it provoked considerable debate throughout the meeting. He stated: Middlesex University:

*may be well placed to redesign a course that bridges the interest of the Department of Arts and the Department of Music. With steelpan education and training gaining such momentum in North America, British universities should take advantage of their experience and perhaps through exchange programmes implement such courses more widely. It is interesting that Cambridge University, who has had a functional steelband (CUSPS) for nearly a decade and is actively involved in this conference, does not have an accompanying steelpan and carnival arts programme. Steelpan is now firmly part of the musical landscape of Britain and younger generations who play in various steelbands, using solely oral methods of teaching, are keen to pursue an accompanying degree in which*



Figure 2. Opening slide used by H. Shah in a lecture to students on the Arts Management Module. It highlights former students of Middlesex University surrounded by Ruth Tompsett. The slide lists a few bullet points of their achievements. This volume (5) of IJCA also includes a paper by Delphina James (bottom right) who has just launched a novel book on an innovative method of teaching steelpan

*music theory and performance are added to help provide a sound foundation for their future careers. My own experience indicates that undertaking such a programme is enormously beneficial and opens up many new avenues to further my career.*

Following this conference, several young steelpan musicians (pannists) visited MDX to speak to Euan Lloyd-Taylor and virtuoso pannist Marlon Hibbert who was also studying at MDX and who had started his own steelband, Endurance Steel Orchestra, where he is the current director and arranger.

To prove his point, Miranda Hohenkirk (of Caribbean decent and pannist with Nostalgia Steelband) also completed her

B.A. Music with steelpan as her major instrument by virtue of the university’s willingness to introduce external tutors such as Eversley Mills (Metronomes Steel Orchestra, London) to assist in areas where they lacked expertise.

**Departments of Art Management and Music and Carnival Arts; Communications with the Carnival Village Trust**

By March 2019, Shah was invited to give his first lecture to the students registered for an MA in Arts Management module MUS4071. The topic focused on Notting Hill Carnival and covered three main areas, viz. (1) how communities are understood within NHC, (2) mechanisms and/or cultures for ensuring representation and participation in carnival arts companies (including governance and related aspects), and (3) recent trends and their impact upon

development. The lecture opened by highlighting the achievements of a few past students who did similar courses to theirs and were all enjoying successful careers as shown in Figure 2.

As interest grew at MDX, it was becoming clear that a meeting between the Carnival Village Trust [CVT] and the University would be mutually beneficial. CVT (comprised of the Tabernacle, a grade II listed building with a rich history of carnival arts, and its sister venue the Yaa Centre which houses some of the leading artists in the UK) hosted a team from Middlesex University, where Drs Zuleika Beaven, Francois Evans, Nesreen Hussein and Nicola Stammers arranged to meet members of the CVT Board (Matthew Phillip, Tara Hobson and Ian Comfort) on the 20<sup>th</sup> November 2019 to discuss the prospects for collaboration and to sign a

memorandum of understanding. This was a highly successful meeting which paved the way for many independent and joint activities.

A month later, Middlesex University hosted a joint Christmas Concert titled ‘The Little Match Girl’ with the Barnet Education Arts Trust, which included Barnet Youth Steel Pan Orchestra accompanying a 100-voice choir led by Dr Francois Evans (see Figure 3) – a delightful concert in which steelband music was played at the university again. The spacious glass covered Quad (see <https://embed.mdx.ac.uk/vt2018/?/map/la-w/7/1>) is an elegant setting for such an event, and that very evening discussions began on holding part of the 8<sup>th</sup> International Carnival Arts Conference at this venue.

The meeting at CVT was reciprocated by the visit of C.E.O Matthew Phillip to



Figure 3. (Left) Xmas Concert 2019 Poster to advertise the ‘The Little Match Girl’ at Middlesex University as part of a collaboration with the Barnet Education Arts Trust. See link: <https://bit.ly/37hq8OM>  
 Right: Performers: Barnet Youth Symphony Orchestra (ca 21 players); Barnet Youth Wind Orchestra (ca 34 players); Barnet Youth Brass Band (ca 21 players) and Barnet Youth Steel Pan Orchestra (16 players - under the leadership of steelpan virtuoso, Abdul Williams)

Middlesex University 31<sup>st</sup> January 2020 who spent three hours at the university, meeting staff, viewing Faculty's recording studios and a Q&A session with the students. A planned visit for the postgraduate students to meet some of the administrative and management staff and artists of CVT on 17<sup>th</sup> March 2020, soon after the COVID-19 pandemic had started, came to an abrupt and disappointing end. The cars were literally parked outside the doors of the building and the students were about to enter when news came that the anticipated COVID-19 lockdown had just come into effect and it was now illegal to meet. Soon all plans were shelved and the pandemic showed no signs of abating.

The inability to go forward with our plans was particularly distressing after the successful outcome of an EU Network Bid between Middlesex University and the youth steelband, St Michael and All Angels Steel Orchestra. Dr Evans had met this steelband through the 6<sup>th</sup> International Carnival Arts Conference in 2016 at the Tabernacle, and was so impressed by their musicality that he soon began to write music specifically for this band and looked into avenues for joint projects. This successful application would have linked this steelband with the Berlin Kammersymphonie, music students at Middlesex University and the Miller-Zillmer Foundation. The plan was to support the making of an original composition for a Steel Orchestra with live modular synthesisers and chamber strings for a performance either at St George's, Hanover Square or St. Pancras Church, Euston for Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2021.

### **Work Through the COVID-19 Lockdown and the Restart of Live Events**

Like all educational centres, teaching moved online, but for subjects such as carnival arts or science that required significant practical components, the loss was immeasurable. Our proposed joint 8<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Carnival Arts between Middlesex University and the Carnival Village Trust scheduled for 16-18<sup>th</sup> October 2020 was cancelled. Innovative methods needed to be developed to prevent the groundwork established so far from collapse. Soon lectures and meetings were conducted online and while not stimulating, it created additional time due to the lack of travel. One such project, the launch of the new biannual International Journal of Carnival Arts, which had been in the process of planning for four years, was successfully achieved. An Editorial Board of 80 experts, including several from MDX and around the world gave their full support to the project.

For the first time since its commencement, NHC needed to be virtual in August 2020 and this was shown to Arts Management students to retain their interest. After a two year cessation of meetings and outdoor activities, there has been a gradual return to more live events and reinstatement of cancelled activities. The 8<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Carnival Arts which was postponed in October 2020, took place at the Tabernacle between 1-3<sup>rd</sup> October 2021. Titled 'The Transformative Power of Carnival Arts, Rebounding from the COVID-19 Pandemic; Celebrating 70 years of TASPO's Arrival'. The programme included two former Middlesex students, Marlon Hibbert and Delphina James who

have been very active in the carnival community. Hibbert studied at PanJazz and MDX and graduated in 2018, then moved to Guildhall School of Music and Drama to further his studies. His presentation took the form of a panel discussion with Haroun Shah and Debi Gardener (Hibbert, 2018) in which his outstanding career was traced and discussed, including his recent BBC interview for the programme ‘Slave’ and his life as a student at Middlesex University. Delphina James is a music teacher who is among the top pannists in the UK. Having taught music in schools for over 20 years on a range of instruments, she had just written the ‘Learn Music On...’ A Steel Pan Music Tuition Series.’ Her presentation took the audience through the novelty of her approach as a preamble to her formal book launch on 19<sup>th</sup> April, 2022 at the Yaa Centre.

### **Meeting the Artists of Notting Hill Carnival at the Carnival Village, the Epicentre of Notting Hill Carnival**

The proposed visit by the postgraduate Arts Management students that was cancelled on 17<sup>th</sup> March 2020 was rescheduled for 19<sup>th</sup> May 2022. This was taken very much as an experiment in that none of the students were indigenous to the Caribbean but instead came from very different parts of the world where NHC is unknown. Indeed, although specialising in a broad spectrum of art forms, unlike previous groups, these students had no prior lectures on NHC nor carnival in general. Coming out of two years of COVID-19 restrictions and mostly online education, their anxiety and apprehension at the commencement was noticeable but contrasted sharply with their singing, dancing and laughter when they ended the day playing steelpan using the

instruments of the legendary Ebony Steelband. In relating their experiences of the visit, students said they were inspired by the artistic, historic and social importance of the event. As a cohort of international students, a Hungarian student Virag Muzslai noted how, ‘I had heard about the Carnival many years ago when I was still living in Hungary. So, I was thrilled by this field trip.’, whilst Comfort Ugbaja found the experience made her ‘feel at home’ after living in the UK for four months, helped by the visit to the Yaa Centre where

*I was drawn to one of the wire and papier-mâché sculptures by the "Wire Man" Carl Gabriel. I quickly beckoned on my friend and fellow Nigerian "Opemipo" and within minutes we began to argue whether the inspiration for the carnival sculpture came from the Bronze Head images of Ile-Ife or Benin (both traditional kingdoms in Nigeria). In case you are wondering, Opemipo was correct because Carl later informed us that he drew inspiration from the Benin Kingdom.*

The event proper began in the Tabernacle, where students heard Haroun Shah and the Calypso artist Alexander D. Great talk about the involvement of African and Caribbean soldiers who fought in both world wars, the influx of families from Trinidad and Tobago in the 1950s and the ensuing race riots of the 1960s. Indeed, for Larisa Zazzeron, the visit was an eye-opening experience. ‘I thought the goal of our university trip there was to learn what it takes to organise such a big event,’ she notes, ‘but what happens when an event was actually born as an opportunity to fight for your own identity? [...] I have learned that this festivity is so much more. It’s

about culture, history, heritage, being true to who you are and preserve it to future generations.’ Students were made aware of the business acumen and the complexity of the organisation behind the carnival through meeting the cultural activist and CEO of Maestro7 Management Consultancy, Lynda Rosenior-Patten. Here, Lynda gave the students excellent advice on event management and organisation; this was supported by the CEO of The Carnival Village Trust, Matthew Phillip who took time out to say hello to the students and to give them an insight into the various stakeholders involved in the organisation of the Carnival.

From the Tabernacle, Shah took students and staff along the street of Notting Hill, finishing at the Yaa Centre. Here, they met the sculptor and artist Carl Gabriel, as well as what Rafia Asghar notes as ‘the flamboyant costume-making process [of] Allyson and Symone from Genesis Mas Band,’ where they provided ‘a vivid depiction of how rich the carnival is and how much effort has been put up by all the artists at the back end of the carnival.’ This was echoed by Larisa, who said that, ‘hearing the story of Genesis was very inspiring. A family business that grew in time thanks to dedication and passion. The costumes they create are culture representation, hand-made and designed with a lot of attention to details.’ And for Comfort, it was once again reminiscent of African culture, noting how some of the masquerade costumes (MAS), looked eerily like the traditional attires worn by various tribes of Nigeria during festivals and ceremonies. As such, it was no surprise when Symone showed us a mas larger than life that was inspired by SANGO (the

Yoruba god of thunder and lightning) made in honour of her father the legendary Vernon ‘Fellows’ Williams, one of the co-founders of Notting Hill Carnival.

The visit ended with an introduction to Cyril Khamai, also known as the ‘Scratcher Man’, and a fantastic steel pan workshop from Carlene Etienne, who invited students and staff to the Ebony Steel Band practice room. ‘I felt like a little girl again,’ noted Virag, ‘music has a big part in my life and having the opportunity to try and happily fail to play the steel pan filled my heart with love and happiness.’ Whilst Larisa found the experience ‘joyful and enriching.’ Overall, students drew a great deal from the experience. ‘The entire event, from start to finish, will be etched in my memory as the beginning of a shift in my thinking about Arts and Culture in Nigeria,’ notes Comfort. She continues, ‘being able to relate to the experiences, art, and music of the wonderful people of Nothing Hill Carnival in my own small way made me feel welcomed and at home in England.’ Some of the photos taken during the visit are shown below - Figures 4 – 11.



Figure 4. Carl Gabriel aka “Wire Man” was initially a photographer who later joined Ebony Steel Band in the early 1970s and played pan for ~10 years. His training as an engineer and skills in working with materials propelled him towards mas sculpture, not using the traditional materials, but instead working in wire. His work was so novel that within two years he began holding exhibitions e.g. the V&A and Science Museums. These early exhibits shown in the figure above combines his interests in his African roots and love of steelpan. These are at the entrance of the Tabernacle, situated near to a plaque of one of the community’s most venerated legends, the remarkable Claudia Jones.



Figure 5. Zeus, the supreme god of Greek mythology who took up residence in Olympus around 1200BC. Created by Carl Gabriel for the London 2012 Olympics – one of his favourite pieces



Figure 6. “Carnival” - carrying all the elements of carnival - created by Carl Gabriel and his late wife Lynette.



Figure 7. Gabriel completing the crown for the bust of the Queen Elizabeth II for the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee Pageant, just 16 days before the event - yet he took time off to generously give the students a comprehensive insight into his unique work. This breathtaking wire sculpture was the focal point of the parade with Mahogany Mas Band on Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> June along the Mall, in which large numbers of animals’ figures (elephants, giraffes etc) represented the late Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh’s work as president of the World Wildlife Fund.



Figure 9. Symone Williams, Genesis Mas Band, demonstrating some of the technical aspects of creating a Mas costume for Notting Hill Carnival. Her mother, Allyson Williams, who helped to organised the session (not in photo), took over Genesis after her husband the legendary Vernon “Fellows” Williams, one of the co-founders of Notting Hill Carnival, passed away.



Figure 8. Carlene Etienne (green) steelpan virtuoso and singer with Ebony Steelband, teaching the tenor players their parts to Lord Kitchener’s Sugar Bum Bum. These pans would be used later as part of a combined steelband consisting of the UK’s 4 top steelbands “UKASPO” to play at Buckingham Palace on 5<sup>th</sup> June as part of the Platinum Jubilee Celebrations.



Figure 10. Two students learning the parts to the Sugar Bum Bum on the 6-base. In the far-right corner (seated) is Cyril Khamai and lecturer Mike Dines (standing) recording the session. Soon after the jam with the entire group began.



Figure 11. Post graduate students and lecturers from Middlesex University about to leave the Yaa Centre after a highly successful day. Cyril Khamai (far right) and Carl Gabriel (front row, 3<sup>rd</sup> from left) joined the group for the photograph on 19<sup>th</sup> May 2022.

### Acknowledgement

We thank the directors of the Carnival Village for facilitating this visit. We are indebted to the many artists who gave up their precious time to take part in this event; these include at the Tabernacle, Chief Executive, Matthew Phillip and his staff, Calypsonian Alexander Lowenthal (aka Alexander D Great), Lynda Rosendo-Pattern (Mas and Business Management). Our thanks also for the opportunity to tour the Tabernacle and have lunch and refreshments there. Our huge appreciation to the group we met at the Yaa Centre; Carl Gabriel (Sculpture and Mas), Allyson and

Symone Williams (Genesis Mas Band), Pepe Francis (Ebony Steelband) and Cyril Khamai. We are enormously grateful to Carlene Étienne who, with less than a minute's notice, took us into Ebony Steel Band's panyard and taught us to play Lord Kitchener's 'Sugar Bum Bum'. We were delighted to have the opportunity to see the electric vehicle being constructed that will soon take the place of the petrol driven vehicles to pull the floats during carnival parades. Finally, we wish to acknowledge the time and energy that went into organising this visit on 19<sup>th</sup> May 2022 by co-author Haroun Shah

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## Appendix - Archive and Resource for Carnival Study (ARCS)

Adela Ruth Tompsett



A retired Adela Ruth Tompsett (far right) still presenting at carnival arts conferences - here on a panel titled “Carnival, Digitisation, and the Challenges of Archiving Performing Arts” on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2022. Her presentation led to this Appendix being added to Vol. 5 IJCA. Sitting next to her is Annabele Valentine and far left sitting, Laila Shah. The moderator of the session (left, standing) was Oxford Brookes University lecturer, Dr. Rachel Barbaresi. Ruth Tompsett is an educator, scholar, historian, artist and pioneer of Notting Hill Carnival Arts.

### History of ARCS:

To understand Caribbean Carnival and to know it, it is essential to experience it whether as spectator, or, for the full, deep and most meaningful experience, to enter fully *into* carnival, whether in a ‘mas’ or as a steelpan player, a calypsonian or a soca DJ with sound system.

It was in the latter 1970s, several years after the first carnival-on-the-road in Notting Hill held in 1966, that the ever-increasing number of police on duty attacked carnivalists in 1976, in particular seeking out the streets where black men and women were most densely gathered. The police were on the offensive again in NHC in 1977, and came prepared to attack revellers, spectators and players.

After each of the above so-called riots, I had purchased newspaper reporting and took the cuttings into the teacher training college where I worked, and invited students studying to teach English in secondary schools, to get into small groups, study copies of the national press reporting, including photographic material, and report back on their findings, reactions and

thinking, based on analysis of the material and discussion in their groups. The results were varied. Some students were angered by what they read and picked out issues of concern or of possible exaggeration, of bias or of the major emphasis on this as a black event or they noted the photo, in which six policemen were holding down one black man, spread-eagled on the ground. Others

were somewhat unsure about how to comment or felt there must be some validity in the police action. Some useful, if heated, discussion followed between groups. Incidentally (and I only learnt this afterwards) it was interesting to find out

that the local press, with more genuine knowledge and familiarity with the carnival's development and the carnival community, wrote more balanced reports.

My own reaction to the press reporting's often sole focus on disorder and the assumption that the carnivalists were entirely to blame, was a key influence on me to learn about carnival and its traditions, arts, and intrinsic validity and value, and to begin seeking and keeping any material I came across relating to NHC.

It was late in 1985, after the 1985 NHC, that I submitted to the Head of the Performance Arts Degree, Byron Davies, at Middlesex University, a proposal for a module on Notting Hill Carnival. It went through the validation procedures, as a matter of urgency, to enable it to run in semester 2, of the academic year, 1985/6. The module combined theoretical and practical study and students were assessed both by essay and practical project. It opened with the history of African enslavement and aspects of culture that were carried by the enslaved, in mind and body, rituals and practices, on into the lives in the islands in the Caribbean to which they were transported. It went on to include the development of carnival in Trinidad, from its earliest recorded manifestations and its ongoing development after emancipation. The workshops focussing on the specific content and practices of Caribbean carnival were taught by practitioners in the key carnivals arts.

Students were required to prepare for each session and, part way into the module, to research for, and prepare, a written essay. For both the essay and the practical

assessment, students needed reference and research resources, and it was this need that drove ever further development of the Carnival Collection, (later to become ARCS). In addition, with family living in Trinidad, I spent most of my time while out there, out and about meeting carnival practitioners, seeking out study resources, learning all that I could about Trinidadian Carnival, from way back, to the present.

Any material that could be of use in carnival study was collected, from books to ephemera, from recorded interviews with carnivalists, calypsonians and pan players to designs for costumes, minutes from meetings etc. There was very little study material available in 1986, but the resource was built rapidly, both from Trinidad and the UK, by intensive and determined searching, purchasing, requesting, interviewing, buying and collating.

Within a few years, requests to use the resource were beginning to come in from outside Middlesex Uni. In the early 1990s an MA student from Trinidad who used the resource, indicated that it was the fullest collection on carnival she had encountered in her searches across the UK. It's now, of course, vastly bigger, wider in interest and yet more diverse. Since then the collection, now titled ARCS, has continued to grow and has met substantially increasing scholarly interest in Caribbean-derived carnival and carnival arts more widely. Scholars, teachers and writers who have used ARCS have come from across the UK, Europe and beyond, including the Caribbean, Japan, Australia, and the U.S.A.

#### **Use:**

In the past, and particularly in the nineties and early 2000s, while Middlesex Uni continued to hold ARCS, partly in Trent Park Campus Library and partly in the Middlesex University Archive, students, teachers, journalists, postgraduate scholars and researchers, authors, film-makers and events managers are amongst those who

used the collection. They came to it from many different areas of study, as well as for use in different media; postgraduates in particular demonstrated the range of interest and relevance from disciplines as diverse as geography, history, social science, politics, media studies, performance, visual arts, literature, arts administration, events management, psychology and more. In addition to making available specific resources that a user might be seeking, I realized that ARCS could also stimulate fresh interests and unexpected new areas and directions for potential study that the scholar / student may not have considered.

### **Nature of the collection:**

Because of its history, the collection might be considered in some instances to be eclectic or haphazard. Although to some extent that may be true, the personal nature of the collection may also be its strength. To this collector, nothing is beyond seeking, nothing too esoteric or tangential; all things with any carnival reference or possible link or offering a point of comparison, are potentially interesting and of value, alongside much that a student or researcher may expect to find.

So while the collection includes much key material which might be anticipated, in terms of books, music recordings, video recordings of carnival, programmes, media articles, magazines, photography, press coverage etc., it also contains less obvious material, for example recordings of television series that used carnival as context or backdrop, articles about comparable events, documents about police action in the 70s and 80s together with a range of later police documents,

ARCS focuses on Caribbean-derived carnival, in UK and Trinidad. It includes items and information of relevance on carnivals in North and South Americas and

Europe. Material has mainly been intensively collected from 1985, but it holds earlier material relating to the 50s, 60s and 70s.

### **Content:**

- books, journals, extracted articles, programmes
- photographic documentation, copies of designs, non-photographic images,
- press reporting,
- video recordings, audio recordings (music and interviews), recorded interviews, - - - conference proceedings,
- policy documents and reports, committee meetings' minutes,
- ephemera e.g brochures, tickets, flyers, posters, letters, etc.
- films, and TV and radio programmes.

The first inspiring item I received long before establishing ARCS is a now-fragile postcard, with a 45rpm steelband recording fixed to it, which my father brought home for me from a working visit to the Caribbean in 1959.

The collection is ongoing. It exists to be used.

Adela Ruth Tompsett

**Note:** I wish to acknowledge the assistance of carnivalist and one-time mas band designer, Yvonne Ocampo, for her role in encouraging and contributing to the planning of the Caribbean Carnival Module at Middlesex University, and for sharing in the teaching in the first year.

**N.B.** *Since closure of Middlesex University Archive, parts of ARCS are in the process of being transferred to Black Cultural Archive):*

**email:** [info@bcaheritage.org.uk](mailto:info@bcaheritage.org.uk)

**Address:** Black Cultural Archives  
1 Windrush Square  
Brixton  
London, SW2 1E, UK

## Singing the Past, Singing the Future - Orality and the Language of Patois in the Traditional Masquerade of the Islands of Grenada

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### Abstract

In my research I explore British Caribbean Carnival and the retention of the intangible cultural ege of enslaved Africans, which has been preserved and transmitted using orality. Orality here in this context is the actual process of using speech to preserve and transmit information from person to person, and generation to generation over centuries. The information which is preserved and transmitted using orality, which can be songs, stories, language and masquerade, is often referred to as the oral tradition (Ong 2012). The *UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage* defines intangible cultural heritage as “the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge and skills – as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith – that communities, groups and in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage” (UNESCO, 2003).

**Key Words:** Orality, Patois, Intangible Cultural Heritage, African diaspora, Masquerade, Big Drum Songs, Grenada, Carriacou, Petit Martinique.

### Introduction

My exploration of Caribbean music in this paper, is from an ethnographic, rather than ethnomusicological perspective. In other words, I will be looking at the singer, rather than the song, in my examination of orality and the masquerade songs of Grenada and Carriacou. In particular, I am looking at the importance of the patois language, also known as French Creole, in the preservation and transmission of the intangible cultural heritage of the islands’ masquerade. Throughout, I argue that patois, like Carnival and masquerade, is a repository of the retained intangible cultural heritage of enslaved Africans in the Caribbean.

On cold and rainy days in England, I often reminisce about my visit to Grenada and



Figure 1. A view of Carriacou from the harbour at Hillsborough.

Carriacou, where I conducted the field research for my doctoral thesis. I think about the kindness and warmth of the people, the forests and the towering mountains, the sandy beaches and warm sea (Figure 1). And I also remember the wonderful drumming, chanting dancing and singing of the masqueraders that I met during my stay. At these quixotic times, I also listen to the recordings that I made on

Carriacou of the singing by Big Drum chantwells Maria Hamley and Patricia John. Their beautiful and haunting voices transport me, not only back to the beauty of the island, its wandering animals and the beautiful, ornate rooftops, but also to the world of enslaved African ancestors who first sang the songs. I can hear the stories of their resistance and resilience, which I am told are contained within the songs, but as I don't understand the language of patois myself, I do not know the individual stories being told. This need for an explanation and translation of patois is the position in which most people from Grenada and Carriacou now find themselves when trying to communicate with their ancestors. Due to the alarming decline in the use and understanding of the patois language, most Grenadians and Carriacouans have lost their direct access to the intangible cultural heritage of the islands.

When the ethnomusicologist Donald Hill visited Carriacou in the 1970s to study the musical traditions there, the use of patois and traditional musical performances was strong among the older generation, although it was rarely spoken among young people (Hill 1974). Sadly, by the time of my visit to Grenada and Carriacou in 2018, I met no fluent patois speakers, and I was told that very few people still had these language skills. The precious stories in the songs of Big Drum and the chants of other traditional masquerades such as Wild Indian Mas, which have been so faithfully passed from successive generations for centuries, were inaccessible to the masqueraders who sang its songs for me (Dabiri 2019). In my work here on Big Drum, I am building on the works of several notable scholars including Lorna McDaniel (1998), Donald Hill (1974) and Edwina Ashie-Nikoi, whose invaluable research has explored Big Drum before me (Figure 2).

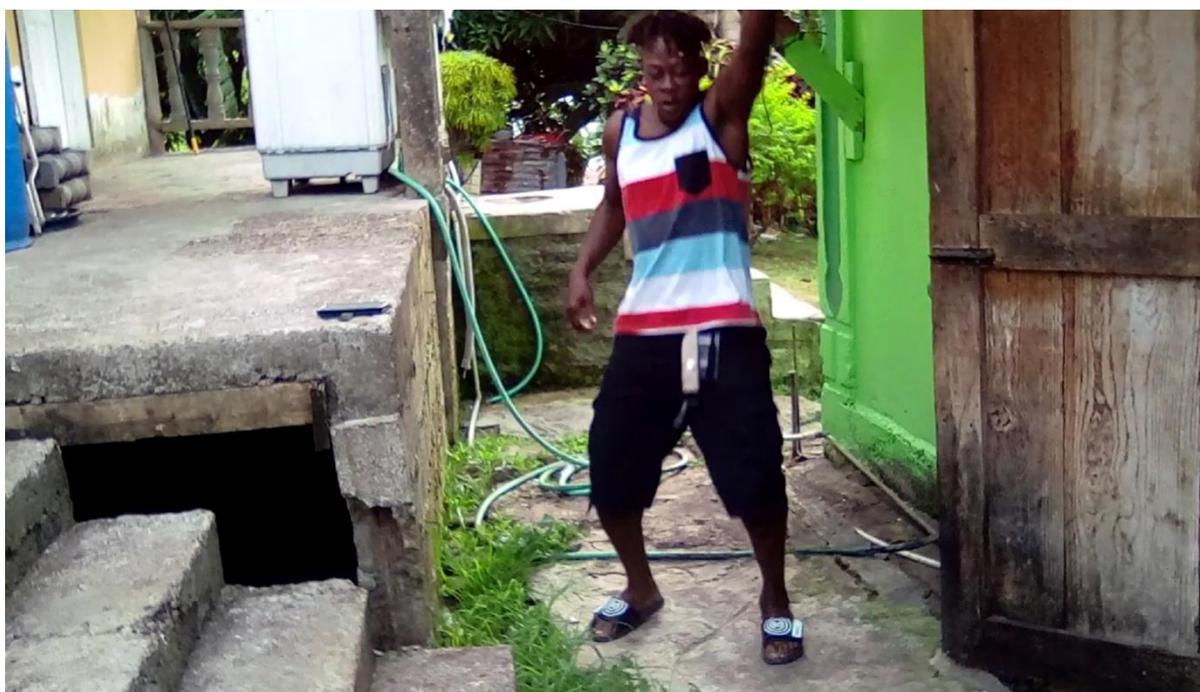


Figure 2. Yammi a Wild Indian Mas player, Coals Gap, St David's, Grenada

Big Drum dancer Mary Augustine who I interviewed in April 2021, said that she was accustomed to speaking to researchers about her heritage and performance of Big Drum, in Carriacou and the U.K. Indeed, the people of Grenada and Carriacou show tremendous patience and generosity as I question and discuss their culture.

### **Ka Palé Lasou Patois (Talking About Patois)**

Patois, pidgin and creole are languages which developed on Caribbean plantations in the seventeenth centuries. In the patois language you can hear the entwined voices of enslaved Africans, European planters and Overseers, Kalingos and Arawaks, during the invasion, enslavement and colonisation of the islands since the seventeenth century (Steele 2003).

Ekaterina Bobyleva writes about creole languages around the globe, the impact of sugar plantation African enslavement, and the development of creole languages in the Caribbean:

The introduction of large-scale sugar production in the colonies totally reshaped the demographic composition of the colonial communities leading to an enslaved African population of up to ten times larger than white European population (Bobyleva , 2013)

Bobyleva continues to argue that in the early 1700s, the Europeans justified brutal and harsh enslavement through “the ideology of racial segregation based on the assumption of the inferiority of Black people” (27); that the plantocracy had no interest in a socio-cultural exchange with

their enslaved Africans, and therefore placed restrictions on interactions between them, which were formalised in the legal framework such as British Slaves Codes (1661) and the French Code Noir (1685), as discussed by Govia (1970). As a result of these demographic and legal changes, most interactions of the enslaved Africans took place within the enslaved population itself, rather than between the enslaved and the plantocracy. Bobyleva argues that this isolation of the enslaved Africans resulted in the development of creole as an autonomous language.

Faraclas and Bellido de Luna also discuss the development of creole in the Caribbean but disagree that this was a peculiarity of the result of enslavement alone, and that it was a product of racialised othering by the Europeans. This approach removes any agency from the enslaved Africans themselves and does not consider the languages of the indigenous people of the Caribbean, runaway Maroons, and pirates in the region, which collectively led to the development of creole languages in the region. Faraclas and Bellido de Luna write that this pluralistic co-existence of languages was not new, but rather was operational on the Atlantic coasts of Africa and the Americas for centuries. They further argue that an understanding of creole is essential if the Caribbean is to be understood, a claim with which I agree: that the creole languages provide an essential tool with which we can glimpse the world of the enslaved African, through the intangible cultural heritage that has been left behind, preserved and transmitted using orality. In the words of Faraclas and de Luna:



Figure 3. Orality in action - Heritage Social Arts and Dance Mas Camp 2017

While creolistics cannot be done meaningfully without history, history cannot be done in a meaningful way without creolistics (Faraclas and Bellido de Luna 2012).

French creole, which is commonly called patois in the three islands of the nation of Grenada,<sup>5</sup> has become a vital part of the intangible cultural heritage. This is particularly the case for the heritage of the enslaved Africans, whose descendants make up the majority of the population (Population Census 2011). Patois is essential for accessing the historical information contained within the songs and chants of the masqueraders. However, the use and understanding of patois has as I have already discussed.

<sup>5</sup> The three islands of Grenada, Carriacou and Petit Martinique form the nation of Grenada.

<sup>6</sup> Dr. Joseph's book *Untying the Ancestors' Tongue* was launched in April 2021

Urgent measures are being taken to safeguard this intangible cultural heritage of the patois language in Grenada, using formal and literacy-based teaching methods instead of the traditional mechanism of orality (Figure 3).

As patois faces extinction, it is essential to ensure that the music and songs of the ancestors continue to be sung by their descendants, for centuries more. These actions are being spearheaded by Dr. Marguerite Joseph and the Grenada Creole Society<sup>6</sup>This important work is a documentation of the French Creole language, (patois) used in Grenada, Carriacou and Petit Martinique. As well as providing an invaluable documentation of the language, the book is also a teaching tool, intended to revive the language for all Grenadians, and not just the enthusiasts in

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JHLiV1ZhhjU>, 2021), is an important tool in safeguarding Patois in Grenada.

the Creole Society on the islands. On the zoom book launch in April 2021 (held virtually because of the COVID-19 pandemic), Dr. Joseph comments that a language has to be written down if it is to survive. Ong supports this belief and writes that of the innumerable number of languages which have been spoken, only ‘106 have ever been committed to writing to a degree sufficient to have produced literature’ (Ong 2012). For myself as a researcher of orality and its power to preserve and transmit the intangible cultural heritage of centuries, I am pleased to see that the aim of safeguarding patois is to ensure that it continues to live in its people, and not become a crystalised repository of history. As a working and accessible language, patois has to be able to reflect the current challenges of the people as well as those of the past.

Edwina Ashie-Nikoi’s doctoral thesis, *Beating the Pen on the Drum* (2007) is an excellent and comprehensive study of the socio-economic history of Carriacou between 1750 and 1920. In this work, Ashie-Nikoi reconstructs the lives of enslaved Africans on the island, including their religion, language and culture, as well as their strength and resistance in the plantation system. Ashie-Nikoi discusses the importance of Big Drum songs which have been preserved and transmitted in the oral tradition of the island and analyses these songs for the information about the lives of the enslaved Africans, which has been stored and transmitted using orality.

The songs, which have been preserved in the Patois language, are an important example of intangible cultural heritage, not just for Carriacou but also for the wider

African diaspora because they counter the colonial narrative that enslaved Africans lost their identity and traditions during the Middle Passage and the brutality of the plantation system (Goveia, 1970). Craton’s quotation below is an example of this colonialist approach:

the African slaves came from an area larger and even more ethnically diverse than Europe, and that their festivals, like their religion and cultures in general were bound to be fractured and mixed during the Middle Passage before being reconstituted and creolized in the European colonies (Craton, 1995).

Big Drum and Nation Dance provide strong evidence that counter this narrative with the clear links to the nations from which the enslaved Africans were stolen. Big Drum songs contain the anguish, pain and sufferings of the enslaved Africans on Carriacou, but also some contain practical advice, such as the foods with which the enslaved supplemented their diets:

Pwa tululu     Eat the tululu crab  
 C’est vivian-o It is like meat  
 Kongo-o        Kongo people  
 Pwa tululu     Eat the tululu crab  
 C’est vivian-o It is like meat  
 Kongo-o        Kongo people  
 (McDaniel, 1998 in Ashie-Nikoi; 127)

This song is about the resistance techniques of the enslaved on Carriacou:

Popo ave Orelia  
 Popo and Orelia  
 Ka bulé engine Belmont  
 They burn down Belmont’s engine

Pa sa ki tombé  
 Popo falls down  
 Ka bulé engine Belmont  
 They burn down Belmont's engine  
 (McDaniel 1998, in Ashie-Nikoi: 154)

If patois is to survive as a living and relevant cultural and historical expression in the contemporary lives of the people of Grenada, Carriacou and Petit Martinique, then patois must be able to continue to express, preserve and transmit the current and future concerns of its people, such as climate change and globalisation. I find the inclusion of information in patois about the current COVID-19 pandemic in Joseph's book to be an extremely reassuring indication of the resilience of the language, and the steps being taken to preserve it. How Grenada responds to the current

pandemic will also become part of the nation's history, and the ability to relay this story in patois will also provide a continuous link to the country's past.

### In Praise of Words

My interest in Caribbean music comes from my fascination with orality and the phenomenon of Carnival and masquerade. Calypso, steelpan and chanting on the road are essential parts of a complex spiritual procession, ancestor worship, ritual, performance and play.

In my research I use the work of Walter Ong in *Orality and Literacy* (2012), to explore orality and the oral culture of Carnivalists in the Caribbean and the U.K. Orality is central to Carnival and the Carnivalists who preserve and transmit this

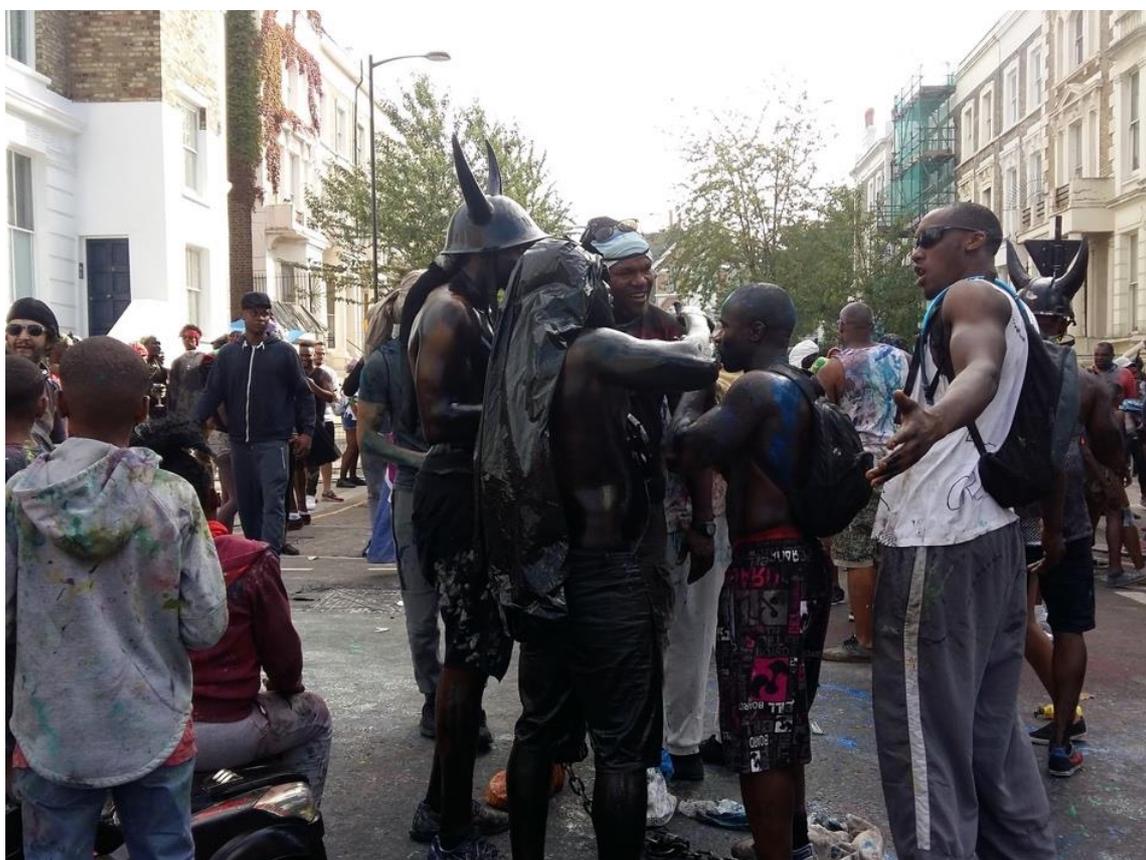


Figure 4. Jab Jab mas players gathering at J' Ouvert, London's Notting Hill Carnival (2017).

intangible cultural heritage. There is very little documentation about the Carnival and Carnival culture, and the few examples of academic work available in this area have centred on Trinidad Carnival and its traditions.

In the U.K., British Caribbean Carnival faces a complex set of restrictions and expectations, which the Carnivalists have to meet before they are able to gain the permissions required to ‘go on the road.’ (Figure 4. above)

These permissions have to be obtained from the police, local authorities and funding bodies, all of whom control the environment within which Carnival takes place. From these organisations, Carnivalists are often met with suspicions that crime, disorder and partying will occur on Carnival day. In the media, Carnival is often presented to the wider populace as excess and revelry, and not the intangible cultural heritage of Caribbean people in the diaspora. In my work I argue that a major cause of this misrepresentation of British Caribbean Carnival has arisen because of the dominance of Mikhail Bakhtin’s theories of Carnival and the Carnavalesque. Bakhtin’s theories have dominated academic Carnival discourse since the 1960s and have been almost universally used to discuss Carnival. I argue that in order to fully understand Carnival and Carnivalists, we must challenge and extend Bakhtin’s theories.

Carnival is not the Carnavalesque. Carnival is richer and more complex than the Carnavalesque to which it has been reduced (Dabiri 2020; 134).

Bakhtin’s theories describe Carnival as a time of sanctioned misrule and excess which is a temporary challenge to the status quo. Bakhtin’s theories (1968) were developed in his literary criticism of Francois Rabelais’ comic novels, *Gargantua and Pantagruel* (2006), and the feast days and Lenten Carnivals of early Renaissance Europe. This description of Carnival as corporal excess, and the inversion of norms, can still be seen in some European Carnival traditions, as I witnessed in the Carnival in Koln region of Germany (participant observation, 2019). This behaviour can also be seen in the *bacchanal* on Carnival day. However, it does not reflect the importance of Carnival as intangible cultural heritage to the Caribbean diaspora in the U.K, nor does it explain the diverse traditional Mas celebrated in Grenada, and the preserved African intangible cultural heritage it contains.

I argue that orality is one alternative approach, with which we can expand our knowledge and understanding of British Caribbean Carnival, because it gives us direct access to Carnivalists and their understanding of the intangible cultural heritage contained within the masquerade, and allows them to tell their own story, without the filter of European academic and cultural values, which have traditionally contained inaccurate and racialised views about Black culture and heritage.

Orality is also essential to the music of Carnival and masquerade, and in particular to Calypso. In *Rituals of Power and Rebellion*, Hollis Liverpool writes that Calypso music in Trinidad developed from the songs and performances of West

African griots, who were enslaved on the island. Liverpool writes that, like Big Drum on Carriacou, some Calypsos can be traced back to enslaved Africans on the pre-emancipation plantations of the island (Liverpool 2003). The enslaved griots were highly prized by the Europeans on Trinidad, and Liverpool writes about one griot who was so highly favoured by his French proprietor, that he was buried in the family crypt when he died. The griots in Trinidad performed the same function as they had in the courts and festivals in their African nations; war songs to frighten enemies; amusing songs which were full of insults about neighbours and rivals; and praise songs which the griots performed. Large numbers of the enslaved in Trinidad were from the Yoruba nation of present day Nigeria. (Fayola and Childs (2004). These enslaved Africans brought their intangible cultural heritage with them, as Liverpool discusses in his description of griots and praise songs. Liverpool cites the work of ethnomusicologist Maureen Warner-Lewis and her doctoral thesis *The Yoruba Language in Trinidad* (1984). In this research, Warner-Lewis identifies Yoruba melodies and lyrics, which have been preserved and transmitted using orality, from enslaved Yorubas in Trinidad, and are now performed as Calypso. Liverpool writes about the Calypsonian Growling Tiger who sang Calypsos which he had been taught by his elders. The elders and Calypsonian asserted that some of these songs had been sung during the Middle Passage, as the Africans were trafficked across the Atlantic.

Praise songs, such as those sung by the early enslaved griots, continue to be an active part of Yoruba culture; when I visited Lagos in 2018, I attended a family gathering, which began with a praise song for our family (participant observation Lagos, 2018). Another example of a praise song has been recorded by Carriacou band, The Country Boys., a Carriacou band who have recorded a soca praise song for Big Drum, its importance as part of their island culture. The song, E-bolay, honours the singers and dancers who are preserving Big Drum by name.<sup>7</sup>

In my exploration of retained African intangible cultural heritage in the Caribbean, I argue that the ability to trace shared ancestors, is essential for Caribbeans and Africans alike, as we attempt to navigate around the damaging racism and find our identity in the post-Colonial global environment. In revealing the Yoruba origins in Growling Tiger's Calypsos, Liverpool and Warner-Lewis are providing link to the ancestors who first sang the Yoruba style songs.

### **When Words Fail**

Orality is only able to preserve and transmit intangible cultural heritage when it is actively used to do so. Ong writes about the use of mnemonics, parables and memorable phrases which oral cultures use to ensure that the information stored in speech is easy to access and to pass on. Memory, collective and personal, is an essential tool of oral cultures, and active participation in this memory is necessary if oral cultures are to retain their knowledge, skills and

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[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=twekbQifh\\_w](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=twekbQifh_w)

heritage (Ong 2012). The need to safeguard patois, orality and oral traditions in Grenada and Carriacou is essential not only for the language system itself, but also for some forms of traditional masquerade songs which have been stored in patois,

Ong writes that a move from orality to literacy is important for societies to advance, and that the shift to literacy creates a permanent psychological change. Once literacy has established its restructuring of the mind removes the ability to participate fully in an oral culture (Ong 2012). Here I disagree with Ong, as I believe that oral cultures and the psychodynamics of the peoples which use these, are capable of higher, abstract and scientific thought, and that the ideas about the necessity of literacy for progress demonstrate a Western bias towards learning and scholarship. I also argue that it is possible to move between oral and literate cultures, in a state which I call fluid orality as they need to do so; many masqueraders who participate in an oral culture for this pursuit, are professional and highly literate people.

In contemporary, literate societies such as Grenada and Carriacou, orality only works for the preservation and transmission of oral traditions of songs, masquerade and language, if the people choose to use it. The loss of patois skills in the country can be attributed to a reluctance of the elders to transmit this oral tradition to their children and grandchildren.

During my visit to Grenada, I met with David Thomas of the Grenada Folk Dance School. During our conversation David told me, as have many Grenadians, that his parents would speak patois during private

conversations, and therefore did not teach the language to the next generation (interview with David Thomas, St. Georges, Grenada, 2018). Although Grenadians continue to use isolated patois words and phrases in everyday language, a generation of Grenadians have lost the ability to capture their everyday experiences, and express themselves in patois, as their ancestors before them.

McDaniel writes:

The people of the Big Drum preserve texts that project meanings different from those understood by their foremothers and forefathers. They no longer recall specific ancestors but instead relate a rich, tenacious legacy of a collective African past (1998).

In other words, Big Drum has become an expression of 'African-ess' for the people of Carriacou, rather than the stories of their own individual ancestors, as had been the case for the transmission of the intangible cultural heritage in earlier generations.

The importance of safeguarding Patois on Carriacou is well understood which I will discuss here. Within a generation, the people on the island have experienced the loss of an important expression of intangible cultural heritage, which cannot be recovered as the musicians who were able to play the music and instruments that accompanied the quadrille dance, which, like Big Drum, was traditionally danced at social gatherings and festivals. Quadrille dancing has been practised on the island

since pre-emancipation plantation society and has been danced by the descendants of enslaved Africans since the seventeenth century. Ethnomusicologist Rebecca Miller describes the quadrille as a creolised version of formal dances, which were extremely popular in the Caribbean, and still known as the English Quadrille. The L’Esterre quadrille group were known as exceptional quadrille dancers and performers, who performed at dances and festivals. However, despite the European origins of Caribbean quadrille, there is an African ‘polyrhythmic underpinning to the European-derived violin melodies’ (Miller 2004).

However, the dance began to lose its popularity in the 1960s and 1970s, and the musical skills were not preserved and transmitted. When Canute Caliste, the celebrated painter and musician died, so did his fiddle skills, which are an essential part of the music of the quadrille<sup>8</sup> (2015). Efforts are now being made to safeguard the oral tradition of the quadrille dance, and it is now taught in schools. During my visit, Clemencia Alexander, Caliste’s daughter and curator of Carriacou museum, played me the recordings of the quadrille music which is now used when the quadrille is danced, as there is no-one who can play the music anymore.

Miller believes that the decline in the quadrille was the result of a growing sense of cultural ambivalence on the island towards the colonial past, embodied by the quadrille. Unlike Big Drum which connects with the resilience and rebellion of their

revered African ancestors, the eighteenth-century quadrille dance connects to the European planters who had enslaved them. Miller writes:

Because of its European origins, its links to slavery and with subsequent years of Colonial rule, Quadrille today has an uncertain status in Carriacou (2005)

Wild Indian Mas is another example of how the loss of patois language skills are threatening the intangible cultural heritage on Grenada. (The name, Wild Indian Mas, refers to the masquerade of the descendants of the Kalinago and Arawak peoples of Grenada, and although its title may seem insensitive, it is the name given to it by Grenadians, and therefore I am respecting this here). With its links to the indigenous peoples of Grenada, this masquerade also contains invaluable information about the history of Grenada, and interactions between the invading French and their enslaved Africans. However, the Wild Indian Mas player who I met during my visit in 2018, was unable to tell me what his masquerading song was about. As with the quadrille, this intangible cultural heritage is in a vulnerable position, and in danger of losing its connection with the descendants of the ancestors who performed, preserved and transmitted this Mas.

Ong writes that text is a visual representation of the spoken word, and that

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(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VWdQWFaH98M>)

the spoken word itself cannot be described as a sign:

It is impossible for script to be more than marks on the surface unless it is used by a conscious human being as a cue to sounded words, real or imagined, directly or indirectly (2012)

However, it is interesting to explore here whether a language system can become a sign, and my observations of the Patois language leads me to believe that this does occur.

In the continued formulation of Big Drum songs and masquerade chants, I believe that the patois words are becoming semiotic signs, which represent connections to the ancestors and heritage of the islands, and belonging to and identity with Carriacou and Grenada, even if the singer cannot understand what is being sung. I argue that it is the action of singing, and participation in Big Drum and masquerade, which is as, if not more important to contemporary masqueraders, than the songs being sung, once the language of the masquerade has been lost. In my work I argue that contemporary Carnivalists are not performing the original masquerades which were brought to the Caribbean by their enslaved African ancestors.

Rather, that these masquerading traditions have become semiotic signs, which represent the identity, ancestor worship and ritual to the masqueraders and their audiences. Post-structuralist Stuart Hall discusses ‘representation’ in society and culture (Hall and Gray, 2013). Signs, Hall writes, enable individuals and groups to navigate their world, through the use of signs which they have learnt to interpret.

Hall writes that individuals within groups “learn the systems and conventions of representation, the codes of their language and culture, which equip them with cultural ‘know-how’” (Hall, 1997). It is unrealistic to ignore the impact of displacement, creolisation and time on the intangible cultural heritage of Africans during enslavement and on their descendants during colonialism, and therefore rather than searching for pure, unchanged versions of the retained African intangible heritage which can be found within Caribbean Carnival and masquerade. However conventional academic explorations of Caribbean culture, such as Craton’s work above, which emphasise the europeanisation of Africans, ignoring the residual African culture which remains. Liverpool’s work is a rare example of an academic examination of the retention of African intangible heritage in Caribbean Carnival and masquerade.

### **Big Drum and Patois in the Diaspora**

The intangible cultural heritage of Big Drum and the language of the songs can also be found in the Carriacou diaspora in the U.K. Mary Augustine led the Huddersfield Big Drum Nation until 2014, a group dedicated to preserving and transmitting Big Drum in the diaspora. In my interview with Mrs. Augustine, we discussed the African intangible heritage of Big Drum, and the language of its songs. For her, Big Drum produced a strong desire to participate and preserve rituals, songs and dances:

I left Carriacou but Big Drum never left me. It calls to you. There’s something in it (interview with Mary Augustine 2021).

Mrs. Augustine told me about how Big Drum rituals are still active parts of life in Carriacou and take place to mark significant occasions such as boat launches, stone feasts, funeral rites, or when moving to a new house. Big Drum dances continue to provide spiritual guidance, and as well as providing a connection to the ancestors, Big Drum rituals have also taken place to help with dream interpretation. Mrs. Augustine described the strict order of Big Drum rituals, and the importance of the dance ring, and the participation of the ancestors, and how the dance begins and ends. Big Drum begins with three Cromanti songs, which Mrs. Augustine told me were from the Cromanti chiefs. This ties in with Ashie-Nikoi's descriptions of Chief Cudjo, the Cromanti leader on Carriacou (Ashie-Nikoi 2007: 121). Mrs. Augustine told me that Big Drum's African heritage is easily recognisable, which is clear from the different nations which are represented, the dance ring rituals and the language of the songs. It is evident that this intangible cultural heritage crossed the Middle Passage and survived the enslavement and colonisation of Africans in Carriacou. However, that patois is the language of Big Drum is something Mrs. Augustine thinks can be debated, as the songs contain African and English words as well. I question whether the description of the language as patois is sometimes used as a shorthand to describe the plurality of Caribbean languages as discussed by Faraclas and Bellido de Luna above. In other words, patois can be used as a term to describe a colloquial, local language as well as a strict description of French Creole as I believed during my field research. If so, then there is more information about the

language of enslaved Africans to be found within the songs.

Like many people of her generation, Mary Augustine does not speak patois/French creole, and although her grandparents spoke it, they did not pass this language skill to her.

Temne O  
 Temne O  
 I don't know see  
 Temne O

It was sung to me by Mrs. Augustine during our interview, and also recorded in a slightly different version by Ashie-Nikoi (2007). The existence of the descendants of enslaved Temne people on Carriacou was celebrated during a research project which reunited the descendants with Temne people in Sierra Leone. Mrs. Augustine does not understand the African languages in Big Drum, and believes that this an area for further research.

Mrs. Augustine dances Big Drum on Carriacou whenever she returns and believes that although there are challenges in safeguarding the intangible cultural heritage, Big Drum is very much alive, and is being taught in schools to the young people. With the hopeful revival of patois language skills, this next generation will be able to completely access the culture of their ancestors.

With dedicated supporters such as Mrs. Augustine, and Dr. Joseph and the Grenada Creole Society, it seems as though the ancestors are fighting back, against the silencing of their stories.

## Conclusion

It could be argued that the plight of patois in Grenada today, is reminiscent of that of the Welsh language in Britain in the 1970s (BBC 2014). Like Grenada, Wales is a small mountainous country, with a green and verdant landscape (although with far less sunshine!). Welsh too was a language on the verge of extinction, with only a few isolated rural speakers in the north of the country (Higgins, 2016). However, a highly successful public campaign within the country, bound up with a growing call for devolution and independence, led to the passing of the Welsh Language Act (1993), which has placed the Welsh language on an equal footing with English. The Welsh language is now a thriving; street signs, official and legal publications are all available in Welsh. The language is taught in schools, and all public sector employees must have (or willing to acquire) Welsh language skills. I would find it wonderful to visit Grenada in the future and witness such a successful revival of patois. From recent events there are reasons to be optimistic.

Along with the launch of *Untying the Ancestor's Tongue* (2021), there has been a raising of public awareness that is being helped by articles on the television news, aiming to increase and popularise the knowledge and use of patois. The Grenadian cultural and education

department have pledged their support for the introduction of patois lessons in primary schools. The translation of the African languages used for the Big Drum songs would also further create even greater interest in this important intangible cultural heritage. Without safeguarding this intangible cultural heritage, these songs will remain an historical artefact, with their stories of resistance and resilience lost and crystallised into performance.

In patois, the songs which are sung to us are from the past to our present. A vibrant patois language would mean that Grenadian people would be able to sing from this present to generations in the future.

**Singing the future, is hope.**

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## Trinidad & Tobago's Carnival Arts Illuminates the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Celebrations.

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### Abstract

The presence of carnival arts (Calypso, Mas, Steelpan and Dance) from Trinidad & Tobago into Britain expanded significantly with the arrival of the Empire Windrush on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 1948, Lord Kitchener's mighty presence serving as the catalyst to expand this artform exponentially in Britain. His tenacity, genius, drive and output drew in other talented migrants and with the arrival of steelpan for the Festival of Britain in 1951, a nucleus of extraordinary artists began performing widely at theatres, concert halls, the BBC and other venues. Some 30 calypsos mentioned the Queen during this early period, thus as early as 1953, Trinidad's Bosco Holder Dance Troupe was included in the Queen's Coronation pageant. With the commencement of Notting Hill Carnival just over a decade later and its dissemination to other urban areas, by the Millennium, carnival arts began to seek out a more prominent space in large-scale celebrations. Mas grew in stature and occupied a dominant part of the spectacular opening ceremonies at the London Millennium Dome and two years later at the Manchester Commonwealth Games. That same year, 2002, Frank Rollock and Gerald Forsyth OBE assembled 100 steelpan players to perform at the Queen's Golden Jubilee Parade, complemented by Mahogany Carnival Arts and the late Roz Price from South Connections, 2,500 Notting Hill Carnival performers who led the way from the Victoria Embankment to Trafalgar Square. The year 2012 marked the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II and celebrations were significantly scaled back due to a poor economy. The SV2G Wycombe Steel Orchestra performed at Buckingham Palace Garden, again retaining a central place for carnival arts. With the country coming out of the COVID-19 lockdown in 2022, it was evident from the onset that the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Celebrations would surpass previous events and the carnival community could hardly quell its excitement. Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force Steel Orchestra began the celebrations by performing for Her Majesty and Members of the Royal Family at Windsor Castle on 14<sup>th</sup> May 2022. During this period, veteran calypsonian Alexander Loewenthal (aka Alexander D Great) entered the TV show 'Britain's Got Talent' with a tribute to the Queen called 'Big Party For Your Platinum Jubilee' and received a standing ovation from all four judges. Although not selected for the grand final, by mid-May nearly 1 million views from around the world acknowledged his effort and voiced their support for calypso. The celebrations continued at street level with two 'Trini-Street Parties' in North West London, at Harlesden and Kingsbury. Mas, as expected, took centre-stage at the Jubilee Pageant on the Mall on Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> June with Mahogany's Clary Salandy's elegant costumes and masterly performances along the Mall that included Carl Gabriel's exquisite wire sculpture of the Queen,

a display that eclipsed all other bands judging by the euphoria of TV's commentary team. However, the carnival community, who patiently remained glued to the television for the five-hour spectacle hoping to catch a glimpse at UKASPO's live performance were bitterly disappointed by their exclusion and had to resort to social media to see the awe-inspiring performance of the 100-player band's delightful arrangement and splendid performance of Lord Kitchener's 'London is the Place for Me' and 'Pan in A Minor'. The formal celebrations ended on 9<sup>th</sup> June when the Trinidad & Tobago High Commission nominated four representatives to meet The Prince of Wales and The Duchess of Cornwall at Buckingham Palace at a reception to celebrate the Commonwealth Diaspora of the UK.

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**Key Words:** Queen's Platinum Jubilee Celebrations, Steelpan – UKASPO, Jubilee Calypso, Mas on the Mall, Queen's Sculpture in Wire, Pan in Military Parades, Street Parties.

## Introduction

### 1. Overview of the Musical Events taking place during the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Celebrations and the Increasing Presence of Carnival Arts in British Culture.

Lord Kitchener's refrain, 'London is the Place for Me' marked a watershed moment in the history of calypso and provided a global stage for the grandmaster to announce his presence through a live Pathé News report as he disembarked the Empire Windrush on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 1948 (Spencer, 2011). Three years later, Kitchener was there again, this time to usher in steelpan as he met members of Trinidad All-Steel Pan Percussion Orchestra's (TASPO) on 26<sup>th</sup> July 1951 following their arrival from Trinidad to perform at the Festival of Britain at London's South Bank (Stuempfle, 1995, Johnson, 2012, 2013). This would develop further as Mas, Calypso, Steelpan, and Dance were aired to the nation during the (TASPO) BBC performance with Bosco Holder and His Caribbean Dancers and Lord Kitchener; the first show to host an all-Trinidad & Tobago cast in an absorbing spectacle of the islands' cultural heritage. The presence of Russell Henderson who arrived from Trinidad in 1950, TASPO's Sterling Betancourt, and a host of talented migrants from the twin islands fuelled the budding

presence of carnival arts in Britain. So robust was this foundation that Bosco Holder and his Dance Company performed for events such as the Queen's Coronation in 1953 and again two years later at Windsor Castle (Cowley, 1990) while calypsos such as 'I was there at the Coronation' by Young Tiger or the 'Queen Elizabeth Calypso' by Lord Beginner (1953) vividly captured the moment.

The Queen is reported to be mentioned in 30 British calypsos of that period (Leeds Mas Media, 2018). Kitchener would stay another 10 years in England before returning to Trinidad, but his calypsos were the substratum of a burgeoning cultural revolution, deep-rooted in the history of Trinidad & Tobago following the Slavery Abolition Act of 1883 and measured emancipation in the late 1830s. It is ironic that these anti-colonial expressive cultures would be transported to the mother country, absorbed and establish such a presence that from the start of the Millennium nearly every major public British celebration would witness a significant component of carnival arts and in the last three Queen Jubilee celebrations (Gold, 2002, Diamond, 2012 and Platinum in 2022) would be dubbed a 'carnival', expressing the cultural diversity developed under the reign of Queen Elizabeth II both within the UK and across the Commonwealth. For example, Frank Rollock and Gerald Forsyth OBE were responsible for the formation of the

UK National Steelband that played at Buckingham Palace for the Queen's Golden Jubilee celebrations in June 2002 while London All Stars players were notably included in the programme (Spark, 2022). The BBC news reported "Even after the royals left the balcony, a steel band continued the Caribbean rhythms heard earlier in the day. In the parades, about 2,500 Notting Hill Carnival performers led the way from the Victoria Embankment to Trafalgar Square." (BBC 2002).

The Queen's Platinum Jubilee 2022 was concentrated in a specially extended Bank holiday weekend between Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> - Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> June 2022. In brief these were: Thursday 2 June: Queen's birthday parade and Trooping the Colour amidst Platinum Jubilee Beacons being lit in 2,000 towns and cities across the country.

Friday 3 June: A National Service of Thanksgiving was held at St Pauls. Prince Charles and Camilla stepped in for the Queen.

Saturday 4 June: The Derby at Epsom Downs Racecourse - and BBC Platinum Party at the Palace took place. Start of Street Parties - including Dulcie Joseph's (Trinidad Roti Shop), Harlesden Street Party with St Michael and All Angels Steelband.

Sunday 5 June - Big Jubilee Lunch and Street parties. Platinum Jubilee Pageant, a procession and performance in central London on the Mall, involving 10,000 people, the Gold State Coach, the presence of Mahogany Mas band and the 100 player steelband, UKASPO on the Mall.

However, well before the designated Platinum Jubilee weekend, indications that Trinidad and Tobago would be given a prominent presence at the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Celebrations were revealed by the twin-island's president Paula-Mae Weekes who invited members of the Trinbago diaspora to attend a celebratory evening at the offices of The High Commission, 42 Belgrave Square,

London on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> May 2022. After violin and steelpan performances, both the president and the High Commissioner, His Excellency Vishnu Dhanpaul addressed guests, reiterating their passion for steelpan and carnival and stating that Trinidad and Tobago was a favourite destination of the late Duke and of course the Queen's sister, the late Princess Margaret. Others commented that the Royal Family had a special likeness for the twin islands and its music and culture. Princess Margaret loved calypso and dancing and was said to have purchased over 100 copies of Lord Kitchener's 'Ah Bernice' for her friends when the record was released in 1951 (Black, 2019, Saunders et al, 2022).

The following day, Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> May, evidence of Trinidad and Tobago's dynamic role in these celebrations began to unfold at Windsor Castle at the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Equestrian Extravaganza. In a live broadcast on Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> May, the nation was treated to performances by The Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force Steel Orchestra performing a number of well-known traditional Caribbean songs such as 'Island in the Sun', Jamaican Farewell, Don't Stop the Carnival along with selections from ABBA "Take on Me" and "Dancing Queen"! Using the traditional 'pan-around-neck' format. This broadcast went out to the nation at prime time on Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> May and was so proficient and enthralling that it was widely covered by the press and set the scene of more carnival and steelpan (Figure 1 below).

## **2. Calypso in Britain, Alexander D Great's Platinum Jubilee Contribution, Prince Charles - a Calypso Fan!**

The history of calypso in Britain stretches back over a century (Cowley, 2017). 'When the first wave of Calypsonians arrived in Britain in the 1940s and 1950s they were quick to write songs that reflected life in their new home. Artists like Lord Kitchener, Lord Beginner, Young Tiger,



Figure 1. Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force Steel Orchestra's performing for Her Majesty, Members of the Royal Family at Windsor Castle as part of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Celebrations on 14<sup>th</sup> May 2022. It was seen by the nation on Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> May on BBC.

Mighty Terror and Edric Connor began recording songs with British themes' ....

'from football to race relations, cricket to the hydrogen bomb and TV to food. Each song was a snapshot into life for Caribbean immigrants living in the UK in the 1950s' (Leeds Mas Media, 2017). Lord Woodbine, pannist, Winston 'Spree' Simon, and Lord Invader may be added to the list. Calypso became so popular that it may have contributed to its own downfall. The UK charts for example were awash with the so-called Cod-Calypso (Brewster, 2015) while renowned singers such as Eartha Kitt and Shirley Bassey exploited the popularity of calypso music and calypso began to influence new forms of music. Apart from Lord Kitchener and the Mighty Terror, few calypsonians earned their living from the sale of records. Instead, British calypso fans were keen on live music, and clubs in London, Manchester and Liverpool sought their services. Soon, a new wave of younger calypsonians began engaging with the artform, becoming better organised and in 1992 established the Association of British Calypsonian (ABC). A comprehensive history of calypso, its first monarch, its artistes and impact of the tent is given by Stephen Spark in a book to commemorate 25 years of the London Calypso Tent (Spark, 2017).

One of the pioneers of the London Calypso Tent and previous calypso monarch

Alexander Loewenthal (Alexander D Great) has done much to lift the profile of calypso during the lead up to the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Celebrations.

Born in Port of Spain, Trinidad, Alexander grew up in London from the age of five but returns to Trinidad annually for carnival. He left school in the late 1960s to become a professional musician/songwriter and spent a year in the USA playing with a 50-piece band. There he learned to arrange and orchestrate, after which he gained a BA in Music at Dartington College, Devon, followed by a PGCE at the University of London. He has taught music at all levels, from schools to degree students, and has lectured on Calypso at several universities. He returned to his calypso roots in the late 1980s and has appeared on TV and Radio in Trinidad, Dominica, Canada and the UK. Between 2000-2012 he was Calypsonian-in-Residence for the BBC, writing and performing around 550 songs for broadcast on BBC London and other BBC local stations.

Alexander was the Windrush Foundation's Calypsonian-in-Residence where he was commissioned to write a number of songs celebrating the lives of many from the African Caribbean diaspora, including icons of sport, the National Health Service, unsung heroes of Black history and more. In 2019 he was made Calypsonian-in-Residence for the Equiano Society of Great

Britain. From 1996 he ran his own small record label, Lion Valley Records, through which he has released 15 CD albums/EPs of his compositions. He continues to run calypso workshops in schools, colleges and Immigration Removal Centres. He is also a member of the Association of Calypso and Soca Artists (ACASA) and has twice been UK Calypso Monarch.

Alexander is dedicated to keeping this Caribbean art form alive through song-writing workshops, performances, and supporting the development of younger practitioners in this genre. Recently, he raised calypso to meteoric heights as preparations for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Celebrations approached.

In early 2021 he was contacted by a scout for the Television show Britain's Got Talent (BGT). He was told that they had been studying some of his videos on YouTube and found a song he recorded in 2012 called 'Big Party for your Diamond Jubilee'. It was done with an acoustic guitar, a little bit of percussion and a flute and featured the voices of some pupils from his son's primary school. BGT suggested that he might want to adapt the song for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebration in 2022 and he agreed. A year went by because of the pandemic but eventually he got the call to do an audition in March 2022. He comments 'The creative teams and staff of BGT were a joy to work with.' They created a huge collage of pictures of the Queen to be shown while he performed. He recorded a full band backing track for the song which he performed to. It was well received by the crowd and the judges of the show, with Simon Cowell looking genuinely pleased and all four judges voted 'Yes'. However, a couple of weeks later he was informed that he would not be going on to the next stage of the competition, but he was not particularly bothered. However, having taken the trouble to produce the backing track, he decided to release the song on 30<sup>th</sup> April 2022. BGT then called to say that they would be airing a clip of his

song on 14<sup>th</sup> May. While exciting, the clip only showed about two lines of the verse and the chorus. However, it was viewed over 900,000 times on YouTube and appeared on TV news in Trinidad and led to several performances over the Platinum Jubilee weekend. How wonderful it would have been to have this calypso included in the Platinum Party at the Palace on 4<sup>th</sup> June. However, the following day, Soca Artist Triniboi Jocie, represented the voice of calypso, singing Lord Kitchener's 'Pan in A Minor' with the 'UK All-Steel Percussion Orchestra' (UKASPO).

The formal celebrations ended on 9<sup>th</sup> June when the Trinidad & Tobago High Commission nominated four representatives (Clary Salandy, Pepe Francis, Ansel Wong and Haroun Shah) to meet The Prince of Wales and The Duchess of Cornwall at Buckingham Palace at a reception to celebrate the Commonwealth Diaspora of the UK. In brief conversation with the Prince, it was suggested that he and the Duchess should visit Notting Hill Carnival and the Carnival Village.

### **3. The Trinidad & Tobago's Diaspora Rises to the Occasion - Street Parties in Harlesden and Kingsbury with Steelpan, Mas and Calypso.**

#### **(A) Harlesden: High Street - Craven Park - Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> June 2022.**

With 67% of the population labelled Black, Asian and minority Ethnic, Harlesden – in the London Borough of Brent, North West London – has been celebrated for its vibrant Caribbean culture (Harlesden, Census, 2011). It is often referred to as London's reggae capital for its contributions to the musical genre, and it is where legends such as Bob Marley lived during his early career. Notting Hill Carnival often spills over into its High Street and its extension, Craven Park Rd, where Mahogany Carnival Design (Clary Salandy and Michael 'Speedy' Ramdeen) and Trinidad Roti Shop (Dulcie Joseph) respectively are based. On his visit

to Harlesden in 2007, Prince Charles commented ‘I don't think I have enjoyed myself so much for a long time going down the High Street and popping into one or two shops’ (UPI, 2007). It is well known in Harlesden that when the Prince's parents were married in 1947, McVitie's Factory in Harlesden baked their wedding cake. Harlesden is famed for its many street parties, and over the last ten years these have been primarily led by Dulcie Joseph who is known in the community as a keen promoter of the culture and arts of her Trinidadian roots. The youth steelband, ‘St Michael and All Angels’, who celebrated 25 years recently, is based close by and has temporarily used Mahogany Carnival Design as their panyard. They can often be seen performing at the front of Trinidad Roti Shop on weekends and would therefore be an integral part of the proposed Street Party for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Celebrations on Saturday

Protection in the Borough of Brent. She was also an active voluntary worker in the Caribbean community becoming Secretary of Black Rights UK (1979 -1984), Deputy Secretary of Notting Hill Carnival (1977-83), Treasurer/Chair of Mangrove Association (2006) and Secretary of the West Indian Women's Association (1980-1986). Upon retirement, she established her business, Trinidad Roti Shop in 2006 in Harlesden and soon became a prominent worker in the local community. For the past eight years, she has been the Chair of the Harlesden's Business Association which comprises some 440 businesses.

Co-author Haroun Shah was privileged to be at one of their planning meetings at Rubios Restaurant in Harlesden on 4<sup>th</sup> May 2022 which focused on the proposed performances and the schedule of selected Artistes for the event. In addition to modest funding from Brent Council, many of the businesses pledged their contribution to



Figure 2. A glimpse of carnival activities on Craven Park Road during the Street Party on 4<sup>th</sup> June 2022 (A) Samba dancers and (B) Steelpan - a section of St Michael and All Angels Steel Orchestra

4<sup>th</sup> June 2022.

Dulcie Joseph hails from Tacaigua, Trinidad and arrived in London on a cold winter's day in January 1967 to train as a psychiatric nurse at St. Francis Hospital, Sussex. She moved to London in 1971 and four years later became a social worker, graduating from the University of North London in 1986. She soon rose up the ranks to become Service Manager for Child

expand this beyond a single street to include several main streets of Harlesden. The meeting included some of the local businesses who also perceived this as an opportunity to boost their ailing trade, but it was clear that the festivities took precedence (Figure 2). Those taking part would decorate their businesses using some 10,000 white and purple balloons, red, white and blue bunting adorned with

images of the Royal Family and supplied by Dulcie Joseph. Several dignitaries such as the Mayor, Leaders of Brent Council, Local Councillors, and local MP Dawn Butler confirmed their participation. It was evident that much thought went into the performances for the day. A notable example proposed by the Chair focused on the Asian community in which a Bollywood Group would dance but decked out in Indo-Trinidadian costumes from Mahogany Carnival Design. They would then do their Bollywood dance routines to Chutney music of Trinidad and Tobago, thus combining the roots of both cultures and demonstrating the huge benefits of

Artists effectively utilised the wide pavements that mark the main street and at the façade of Trinidad Roti Shop, 100 chairs were laid out like a concert hall to view the performing artists which included Irish, Samba and Indian/Chutney Dancers, and Tassa Drummers (Figure 3). The steelbands of St Michael and All Angels ensured that a carnival atmosphere prevailed throughout the celebrations. The day was summed up succinctly by MP Dawn Butler who stated ‘I had a wonderful time at the Harlesden Jubilee Street Party. It’s so great to see our community coming together once again. Brent Central has had a weekend of celebrating and building our



Figure 3. Tassa drummers with Indian dancers performing on the wide pavement opposite Trinidad Roti Shop. Dulcie Joseph (middle, green skirt) with MP Dawn Butler (to her left) and local mayor Councillor Abdi Aden.

multiculturalism. Walking through Harlesden on the 4<sup>th</sup> June was thrilling with activities taking place at several venues.

local communities. Thank you to all the organisers” (Figure 2)

### (B) Hillside, Kingsbury Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> June 2022

The residents of Hillside, Kingsbury in North West London are no strangers to the sound of steelpan and calypso, especially

Brent, one of London's Councils that actively promoted celebrations by offering competitive, limited small grants to support such events. The neighbourhood's successful application was based on the



Figure 4. (a) Left. The birch tree in the middle of the mini roundabout to which flags and bunting were fastened from the surrounding houses (b) Right. The lower part of the hill and street entrance with bunting running between houses on opposite side of the street as well as criss-crossing. Many residents found it too emotional to remove and retained them to the end of June.

for New Year's Eve celebrations over the last 20 years in which local steelbands were brought onto the streets for communal celebrations. Beyond the neighbourhood, Shah et al. have been taking the winsome sounds of steelpan and calypso onto streets, parks, train stations, schools, care homes, residential homes, housing estates, and hospitals (Shah, H.N, 2020, Shah, L.M.N. 2021) prior to and during the COVID-19 pandemic. With the cancellation of Notting Hill Carnival in August 2021 and a lull in COVID-19 regulations that permitted socially distanced, limited gatherings, the residents came together to hold a mini-carnival party with Trinidad and Tobago's Independence. Therefore, celebrating the Queen's Platinum Jubilee on 5<sup>th</sup> June with a more audacious 'Street Party' seemed a natural progression. Hillside is in the Borough of

formidable presence of carnival artforms in the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Celebrations and the group's own enthusiasm to engage the entire street and surrounding neighbourhood in a full day of steelpan and calypso. It was proposed as a multicultural party to reflect the huge diversity of the borough (see A above). The council even sent out workers to clean and tidy the street just ahead of Street Party. Hillside is a cul-de-sac that rises up ~40% incline to a flattened top with a mini roundabout in which an elegant birch tree stands aloft as it's a focal point. Bunting was tied from the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of each house around the roundabout to the central branches of the tree so that even a London bus could pass unimpeded. This continued down the hill, but this time criss-crossing the street between houses on opposite sides of the street (Figure 4). This pattern continued to last house of the street.



Figure 5 (a) Residents whose roots are Trinidad and Palestine proudly drape their flags across the street (b) residents using Union Jacks across a table in front of their home to celebrate with food and drink for part of the day while listening to entertainers on stage.

This 1000 meters of bunting provided a party-like canopy for the entire street and mini-roundabout and helped broke down social barriers to create an ambience that enabled residents who had not spoken to each other before (some lived 70 years on the street) to communicate, become friends and participate in the celebrations. Residents were encouraged to express their own cultures in flags, decorations, photographs, food and any form they wished. For example, at the Shah's residence, flags from Trinidad and Tobago and Palestine flew proudly over the street (Figure 5) criss-crossing the bunting and was reflected in the music and cuisine during the celebrations. The group constructed a stage from pieces of wood in their gardens and assembled two 9- and 8-meter marquees and 6- meter tent that belonged to neighbours. The largest marquee served as a cover for the stage (Figure 6) while the other two (not shown) were used to serve the vast amount of food and drink that were bought or prepared at home by residents. The marquees also served as shelters as the weather forecast for Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> June was gloomy with continuous rain predicted for all London. Unexpectedly, the all-night rain paused at 11am to give the group sufficient time to undertake last minute preparations, assemble tables and chairs, layout a 20-foot

square tarpaulin on the road to serve as sitting area in front of the stage (Figure 7) and also attach electrical cabling to the stage and carry out sound checks. Crowds began assembling from midday and helped with the final arrangements.

The concert commenced at 1pm with Reem Kelani as the group's MC who began by thanking all for their contributions. She paid special tribute to 90-year old Cyril Khamai who travelled by several buses to get there and then sat poised with his scratcher to support all artists. The small band Alexander D Great (guitar), Haroun Shah (tenor pan, Laila was away), Aisha Goodman (keyboards/double tenor), Jaki Tompy and Reem Kelani (dudup), Leslie Palmer and several others (percussion). Soprano Anne Fridal then opened the evening with the National Anthem and the cutting of Anne's large, delightful Jubilee cake. Alexander D Great followed with his 'Big Party for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee' which by this time was so familiar to most of the residents that they joined him in the chorus. He then played several of his favourite pieces, including a number of his own calypsos such as 'Grand Master', 'Peace and Reconciliation', 'Amandla Mandela' and several popular calypsos. Anne returned to the stage and sang various Caribbean folk songs, getting her audience to join in a call and response.



Figure 6. A 9-meter marquee housed a makeshift stage that served as the focal point for artistes for the event. Reem Kelani, MC and a professional Palestinian singer, shows her versatility by singing ‘Yellow Bird’ to the backing of steelpan and guitar following the National Anthem sung by Trinidadian Soprano, Anne Fridal



Figure 7. A 20-foot square blue tarpaulin placed in front of the stage that served as a seating area for onlookers. It proved an excellent meeting place for neighbours and visitors to intermingle, get to know each other and participate in the day’s activities.

Leslie Palmer (Figure 8) followed as a calypsonian singing one of his own compositions on steelpan and getting the audience to join him to sing Lord Blakie’s ‘Steelpan Clash’. He brought on stage an artist who he is promoting who impersonates the popular UK superstar

Adel. Her authentic voice and performance led to her being called back to perform. Several neighbours then had the courage to join the stage and sing to the backing of Aisha Goodman on keyboard. Reem Kelani then sang a number Palestinian and Persian songs occasionally being joined by

members of the audience. By 4.00pm St Michael and All Angels Steelband arrived, and the entire audience stood up and started dancing to the scintillating sounds of this extremely talented steelband whose immense repertoire covers calypso, pop, jazz, Latin and even military music. They played on to 6.30pm, intermittently pausing to back other singers such as Joan Achong who sang George Gershwin’s ‘Summertime’ and Roberta Flack’s, ‘Killing me Softly with his Song’. As soon she finished, a few rain drops could be felt and so the rush began to pack up and dismantle the marquees, stage and equipment and tidy the area. Three weeks on from the event and the residents were still too emotional to take down their bunting which still criss-crossed the street; some houses even had a Trinbago flag perched on their windows to voice their appreciation.



Figure 8. Veteran Notting Hill Carnival pioneer Leslie Palmer often referred to as the ‘Father of Carnival’ taking a rest after performing and chatting with neighbours Nuala and her dad.

**The Carnival Costumes Pageantry of Clary Salandy and Michael ‘Speedy’ Ramdeen. The Artistry of Carl Gabriel - Mas to Sculpture**

Clary Salandy and her husband Michael ‘Speedy’ Ramdeen founded Mahogany Carnival Design in 1989 in Harlesden High Street. Prior to this, they both ‘grew up in Mas Camps’ in Trinidad and studied accordingly; Clary at The Wimbledon School of Art and worked at Central St Martin’s in London, whilst Speedy became a Structural Engineer. They both draw heavily on their cultural roots and family history of carnival in Trinidad. Although Clary studied theatre design, her tutors



Figure 9 A herd of colourful elephants

encouraged her to get involved with Notting Hill Carnival in the 1980s, the entire Caribbean community are forever grateful that she heeded this advice. Today she is one of the UK’s leading carnival designers, and has worked on major events such as the Queen’s Golden Jubilee, Millennium projects and the London 2012 Olympics.



Figure 10. The spectacular giraffes who poked their long necks into the crowds which brought huge screams of excitement from the children. While funny and elegant their design represents a feat of phenomenal engineering ingenuity.

She often says that her underlying concept is to make ‘Carnival visual, dynamic and a larger-than-life spectacle.’ Consequently, Mahogany stretches design concepts,

explores movement and musical rhythms to tell vivid, theatrical and powerful stories. Clary’s states that what she aims to achieve is to put on a memorable show in which the



Figure 11. A group of dancers uniting to form the Queen's Coronation Robe. There are symbols to represent major faiths and to all 54 of the Commonwealth nations woven into its purple and white fabric.

fusion of her costumes is inextricably linked with movement, dance and street theatre. In brief, she sets out to take the spectator’s breath away!

The Queen’s Platinum Jubilee Parade on Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> June presented the ideal opportunity to showcase her imaginative and creative talent, phenomenal engineering ingenuity alongside sublime production and faultless teamwork resulting in a breath-taking spectacle that drew gasps of delight from young and old, all witnessed by over 1 billion viewers worldwide. Clary’s humble wish was to celebrate the diversity of Britain and the Commonwealth involving many artists and performers from the African-Caribbean community (H. Shah per. com). Her theme was based on a narrative she tells with great passion of a young rapturous Queen

magnificent spectacle would bring joy to all and help to ‘lift people out of despair in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic and the current cost of living crisis’ which directly affected many of her artistes.

While Mahogany Carnival Arts took overall responsibility for the Coronation segment of the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee pageant. The Mahogany team comprised skilled artists, community volunteers and a logistics team. Table 1 below highlights key national carnival artists who were invited to share their talent and expertise as part of a collaboration of UK exemplary carnival designers and makers who delivered the dramatic event seen live on BBC TV on 5<sup>th</sup> June 2022. The parade began at Whitehall then through Admiralty Arch along the Mall and on to Buckingham Palace.



Figure 12. (Above) an array of flame red blooms one of the many tropical floral tributes that were featured

Elizabeth II in 1952 on a wildlife expedition in Kenya with the late Duke and the wonderful experience she seemed to have had. Prince Phillip subsequently became the first President of the World Wildlife Fund and devoted many of years of his life to conservation and environmental issues. Clary’s intuition was a theme of tropical animals from imperious and colourful Africa Elephants and statuesque Zebras to elegantly loping Giraffes, moving fluidly amongst a sea of vividly coloured giant tropical blooms. Her intention was that this



Figure 13 (Left) Carl Gabriel’s breath-taking wire sculpture of the Queen Elizabeth II bust and crown draped in the same colours of purple and white with Big Ben in the background.

Table 1. Mahogany Carnival Arts and Supporting Artistes of the Coronation Segment of the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee Pageant

Artists	Responsibility	Affiliation/City
Michael ‘Speedy’ Ramdeen and Clary Salandy	Mas leaders	Mahogany Carnival Arts
Clary Salandy	Artistic direction	Mahogany Carnival Arts
Carl Gabriel	Wire sculpture portrait of the Queen with crown	Yaa Centre, Carnival Village Trust.
Hughbon Condor	Elephant structures team	Leeds
Steven Hoyte	Royal Orb and Sceptre	Rampage Mas Band, Luton
Alison Denholm	Flamingos on electric mobility scooters	Nottingham
Kamal El Alaoui	Children Costumes	Luton Schools, Chantry Primary Academy, Whitefields Primary School and Southfields Primary School
Taz Sanusi	Sound Track	
Always Furthering & Nurturing Development Company	Choreography	



Figure 14 Masqueraders in bejewelled Royal Orb and Sceptre costumes ingeniously designed by Clary Salandy were another popular attraction as the parade approaches Nelson’s Column at Trafalgar Square

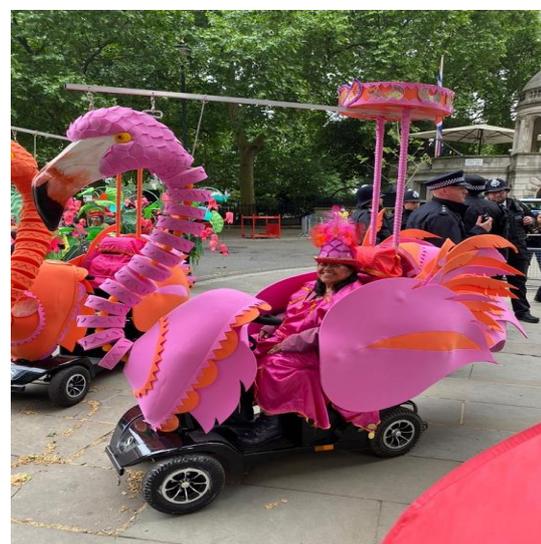


Figure 15 Senior performers on mobility scooters adorned as flamingos

After months of work in the Mas Camp, 300 artists and performers, many adorned in white and purple fabric, did exactly what

Clary had visualised and ‘wowed’ the world as they paraded and exhibited their costumes along the Embankment, past the



Figure 16 Local school children and their teachers adorned as tropical plants and grasses approach Big Ben and the Houses of Parliament on the home stretch of the epic Platinum Jubilee Parade

Houses of Parliament and Big Ben and on to the Mall. Children became swans, more senior performers performed in mobility scooters adorned as flamingos and dancers, while excited local school children accompanied by their teachers formed a moving sea of green grass and foliage. Listening to the running commentary on BBC television, Mahogany's parade on the Mall drew the loudest cheers of excitement and delight over the entire 5 hours of commentary and is a tribute to the creative virtuosity, organisational experience, technical expertise and inherent gift of expression due to many years of performing at Notting Hill Carnival and other large scale international events. Many groups of performers simply paraded down the Mall, bunching to the centre of the road, appearing anxious to complete their task flawlessly. By contrast, Mahogany's parade not only occupied the full width of their space, but extended towards the sides

and engaged the entire audience. Giraffes steered their long necks into the crowds which brought huge screams of excitement, particularly from children who must have thought for a minute that they were in the Serengeti National Park! (Figures 9-15). They might have been brought back to reality with very nimble and colourful elephants bobbing and weaving to rhythms of very carefully selected music. In the midst of this surreal world of display and fantasy, Artist Carl Gabriel's breath-taking wire sculpture of the Queen Elizabeth II bust and crown enhanced the entire performance by appearing to place the Queen back at her memorable 1952 safari (see photos Figure 9 -15).

Viewing this incredible spectacle on television or from the pavement on the Mall will never compare to the excitement and exhilaration of performing, especially on such a grand stage. One of Clary's artist, Lynda Rosenior-Patten, described the experience as follows: 'Without doubt this was one of the best creative experiences that I have ever been a part of. The various elements; costumes, colour, dance, movement and music all came together in a magical way that lifted the crowds to another level. Amongst the performers, and the support team on the road there was a palpable sense of "communitas" and pride. There was also a feeling that the vast majority of the live audience had never witnessed anything like this before and were truly blown away, while for those familiar with carnival and masquerade there was a wonderful sense of comradeship and deep, deep pride in seeing our culture showcased in such a powerful way' (Figure 16).

##### **5. Four Steelbands Combine to Illuminate the Queen's Party at Buckingham Palace**

On Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> March 2022, the *SocaNews* headline "*Steelpan to play for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee*" (Spark,

2022) set the steelpan community abuzz. There were hints of a steelband appearing in the Platinum Jubilee Celebrations but what made this so exciting, and novel was that four steelbands would come together and simultaneously use this watershed moment to also pay tribute to Lord Kitchener in the centenary year of his birth. The organisers further paid homage to the legendary TASPO (Trinidad All-Steel Percussion Orchestra) who laid the foundation for where this marvellous instrument has reached today. The “T” was replaced with “UK” to remind us of TASPO’s epic journey. TASPO played at the South Bank in July 1951, a stone’s throw from where UKASPO played on 5<sup>th</sup> June 2022. History was again multiplied by handing the baton to the legendary Sterling Betancourt, the only surviving member of TASPO, who at 93 conducted UKASPO at Buckingham Palace during their Platinum Jubilee performance. And, as if there weren’t enough packed into the history of pan and calypso for this appearance, the selected pieces were Kitchener’s classics, the immortal *‘London Is the Place for Me’* and one of the Grandmaster’s favourite calypsos, *‘Pan in A Minor’*. Kitchie wrote this calypso 35 years ago and it remains popular and still reverberates with Jit Samaroo’s 1987 panorama arrangement for Renegades Steel Orchestra, one of Trinidad’s oldest surviving steelbands. Now the huge task that laid before arranger Andre White and musical director Leon Foster Thomas was to bring this to a global audience of over 1 billion and in nine minutes reveal to the world the utter splendour and ingenuity of pan, millions of whom would be hearing these instruments for the first time. Many would be equally inquisitive as why the UK decided to showcase something that only recently became part of its cultural landscape, driven largely by the success of Notting Hill Carnival (NHC). However, while NHC has grown in such magnitude and repute over its 56-year history, its roots remain so

deeply entrenched in the tiny twin islands of Trinidad and Tobago that the veteran pan tuner, Bertram “Birch” Kelman (originally from Southern Marines and subsequently Renegades Steel Orchestra) was flown over from Trinidad to partner Dudley Dickson to tune and blend the pans of the four steelbands.

For any arranger and musical director, training a single steelband for panorama or such a prestigious event is a major challenge. Consequently, bringing together the four bands, Ebony Steel Band, Mangrove Steel Band, Croydon Steel Orchestra and Metronomes Steel Orchestra demanded enormous work in a relatively short period. In their favour was the fact that Andre White and Leon Foster Thomas are a *tour de force* who has seen Mangrove win the Panorama title for the last three successive panorama competitions. In practical terms, three of the steelbands are located within one mile of each other with only Croydon Steel Orchestra being sited just outside London.

Foster commented that ‘Practising in each other’s panyard was a new concept for them and social barriers needed to be broken. But soon they began to adapt, enjoy the spirit and comradery of the occasion. For the pannists, it was necessary to undertake most of the groundwork in their separate pan yards prior to the arrival of Andre and Leon Foster. Their arrival left little time for joint practise, but these took place between 1<sup>st</sup> - 2<sup>nd</sup> June to a packed Tabernacle that struggled to hold 100 players (Figure 17).

### **The Journey to the Palace**

Much credit must be given to Carnival Village Trust’s CEO, Matthew Philip for having the vision for the concept of re-enacting the historic and legendary steel orchestra TASPO (Trinidad All Steel Percussion Orchestra). Their participation at the 1951 world fair catapulted the steel pan phenomenon globally. It is because of



Figure 17 UKASPO rehearsing at the Carnival Village's Tabernacle on 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2022 with Andre White and Leon Foster Thomas - a familiar venue to both that they have used to prepare Mangrove Steel Band panorama over several years.

TASPO's contribution to British culture that we can find steel bands throughout the United Kingdom; in community centres, schools, churches etc. Therefore, having the steel pan, and by extension the culture of Trinidad and Tobago, represented at the Queen's Platinum Jubilee 2022 was only fitting. It also was the perfect opportunity to pay homage to TASPO by forming UKASPO (United Kingdom's All-Steel Percussion Orchestra), a combination of four of the top steel orchestras in the United Kingdom: Mangrove Steel Band, Ebony Steel Band, Croydon Steel Orchestra and Metronomes Steel Orchestra. These were the four bands that participated in the first Notting Hill Carnival's Panorama competition post-COVID-19.

Meetings of the minds began during February, 2022 with the various musical directors, arrangers, and representatives of the four bands. Rehearsals followed from March at each band's panyards where Andre White's arrangement, a medley (due to time slot constraints allocated for the performance) of Lord Kitchener's *London Is the Place for Me* and *Pan in A Minor*. It is important to note that not only was it a time to celebrate the Monarch, but 2022 marked a year of great significance for the calypso and steel pan world, as April 18<sup>th</sup>, 2022, was the 100<sup>th</sup> birthday of the

Grandmaster of Calypso, the late great Lord Kitchener (Aldwyn Roberts). Kitchener's love affair with the steel Pan is legendary. You cannot say steel pan without mentioning the name Kitchener and vice-versa. *Pan in A Minor*, a staple selection and "test-piece", if you will, for steel bands worldwide; and *London Is the Place for Me* which, similar to Sinatra's *New York, New York*, has become London's theme song, better yet, the city's national anthem. *London Is the Place for Me* also holds great significance in the commemoration of the arrival of the Empire Windrush. It was without question that these selections were ideal for a celebrated band (UKASPO), a celebrated people (The Windrush Generation), the Grandmaster, the Queen, and the City of London.

As jubilee day drew closer, the rehearsals became more intense. Due to logistical issues, the entire band would only come together for two days, 1<sup>st</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup> June before the main performance on 5<sup>th</sup> June. Because of this, each band continued their individual band practices while also opening up to the members of the other bands. This enabled camaraderie amongst pannists which proved vital towards the success of UKASPO and the Jubilee experience. As musical director, co-author Leon Foster Thomas's goal was for UKASPO to present

itself, and a performance, that would match any other professional orchestra or performer, and to also erase any notion that the steel pan is not suited for occasions such as this Platinum Jubilee Pageant.

On the final day of rehearsals (2<sup>nd</sup> June), the local public at the Tabernacle was treated to UKASPO's presentation for the Queen's Jubilee. Members of all four bands shared their vibe and skill as they presented the Lord Kitchener's tribute medley of *London Is the Place for Me* and *Pan in A Minor* with vocals by UK Soca artist, Triniboi Joojie (Rodell Sorzano), arranged by Andre White. All in attendance applauded and were full of praise of UKASPO's presentation, including Jubilee pageant master Adrian Evans who, along with members of his staff were spellbound by what they had just witnessed.

### Performance

Jubilee day was a chilly day but that did little to thwart the spirit members of UKASPO. Confidence was high and the excitement was indeed evident. The band had an amazing aura and energy. From the band's first note during sound check, it seemed to have put people on notice for what was to come, and based on the reaction of the stage crew, they seemed a bit surprised to hear the quality and control of such a large collection of steel pans.

Situated right at the front gates of Buckingham Palace was the main concert stage, which was portioned into three parts; UKASPO at stage right, the London Gospel Choir at stage left, making way for Ed Sheeran at centre stage. Steel Pan sharing the main stage with one of the world's top artists, Ed Sheeran, at the Queen's Platinum Jubilee seemed surreal. It was an evening filled with great performers, dignitaries, and celebrities. The Jubilee Pageant time frame was from 1pm to 5pm with UKASPO scheduled to perform at 4:25 pm. Backstage, photographer, Alex Coley took

pictures of the band and their respective sections, which was great for the purpose of documenting this historic event (pictures via UKASPO's Instagram page: @uk\_aspo). At one point, players started singing their individual parts of the song, ultimately evolving into a full-blown vocal performance, to the delight of the workers and fellow performers in the backstage area and was a great bonding experience.

At 4pm the band made its way to the concert stage, in order to be in place and ready for the stage manager's cue. Also, waiting on cue was Sterling Betancourt MBE, steel pan pioneer, an original member of TASPO, and one of the major figures in pioneering the artform throughout the United Kingdom and Europe. It was an honour to have Sterling Betancourt, as the band conductor for this grand occasion. While everyone was in place for the big moment, due to time management issues with the Jubilee Pageant Parade, the band's 4:25 PM slot passed. UKASPO's big television moment was delayed and never aired by the BBC. When the band was finally able to begin performing, BBC TV instead chose to interview Ed Sheeran during UKASPO's performance. However, for those present at the event, what was happening in real time was a great moment for the crowds that gathered at the front of the stage and in the stands. When the band started playing onlookers were dancing and singing to Kitchener's *London Is the Place for Me*, then when the band broke into *Pan in A Minor*, the crowds were even more in a frenzy. Triniboi Joojie's introduction to the Jubilee audience set the pace and the band took it from there. It was a fabulous performance that left those who attended mind blown, and Caribbean audiences proud; Trinidad and Tobago's gift to the world, the steel pan, being played at one of the most historic events in the world!



Figure 18. Posing with the youngest member of UKASPO 11yr old tenor pan player Nkiru of (Croydon Steel Orchestra). From left: Leon Foster Thomas, Kyron Akal and Anthony Francis). Photo: Leon Foster Thomas



Figure 19. TASPO's living legend, Sterling Betancourt MBE conducting UKASPO on Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> June 2022 at Buckingham Palace. Photo: Alex Coley

Figure 20. UKASPO set up with Buckingham Palace to the back. Photo: Leon Foster Thomas



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