

## 4<sup>th</sup> International Steelpan Conference

### From Empire Windrush to the London 2012 Olympics; An Epic Journey for Steelpan, Calypso and Carnival



**26 -28<sup>th</sup> October 2012**

**Venue: University of East London, Stratford Campus**

This conference is dedicated to the late Crystal Holder for her immense enthusiasm and considerable contribution to steelpan in the UK.

## ***General Information for Speakers and Participants***

### ***Registration and Lunch:***

Registration will commence from 8.30 am at the Reception Desk, which is just outside the main conference Lecture Theatre. This will be sign-posted as you enter the Stratford Campus. Following registration, refreshments may be purchased in the University's Refectory up 10.00am after which the conference programme will commence.

### ***PowerPoint Preview:***

There will be a laptop/data projector for speakers to check their presentation outside the conference Lecture Theatre. Staff will be available to assist you.

### ***Related Activities:***

On Friday 26<sup>th</sup> October, the '*School of Steelpan*' will be officially opened in High Wycombe, Bucks, HP13 5TA as part of this conference. There will be a reception and cultural activities to mark the occasion. On Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> October, 7 -10.30pm, there will be an entertaining evening entitled "***Just Kitch, A celebration of the Grandmaster Lord Kitchener in Calypso and Pan***" at The Yaa Centre, 1 Chippenham Mews, London W9 2AN. A full programme of events will be posted up just outside the Conference Lecture Theatre. These events will be highly entertaining and are good opportunities for participants to meet informally.

### ***Course Credit and 'Certificate of Attendance':***

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

### ***Information and Messages:***

Messages received during the course of the meeting will be posted up on a Notice Board near the Registration Desk.

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

- ***The University of East London - for hosting the meeting.***
- ***Nostalgia Steelband.***
- ***School of Steelpan, SV2G and SPETA (Steelpan Education & Tutors Association).***
- ***Representatives of the British Association of Steelbands, Association of British Calypsonians and The Carnival Village.***
- ***UK Centre for Carnival Arts, Luton.***

**\*Organising Committee:**

Haroun Shah, Ray Funk, Lionel McCalman, Marvin Barbe, David Loewenthal (Alexander-D-Great), Pepe Francis, Ruth Tompsett, Nicole Ferdinand, Jacqueline Roberts, Ansel Wong, Diana Hancox, Josephine 'Sephi' Scorer and Debra Romain.



**British  
Association of  
Steelbands**

**UK Centre**



## 4<sup>th</sup> International Steelpan Conference

### From Empire Windrush to the London 2012 Olympics: An Epic Journey for Steelpan, Calypso and Carnival

*Venue: University of East London, Stratford Campus*

Lord Kitchener was one of the many passengers that the S. S. Empire Windrush brought to London in 1948. The footage of him singing ‘*London is the place for me*’ has been used countless times by the media to epitomise the arrival of West Indians to the UK. These immigrants, and those who followed, often faced formidable hardships which made them even more determined to show resilience and fortitude; elements of which were manifested in their arts.

United by cricket, both on and off the field, calypso and steelpan provided West Indians with the driving force to celebrate these trying years as their legendary heroes provided the impetus to celebrate. C.L.R. James noted that the impact of this era went beyond the game in his book ‘*Beyond a Boundary*’. The seeds of multicultural Britain was sown as steelband pushed carnival onto the streets of Notting Hill, a high point in British West Indian arts which was depicted in the opening ceremony of the London 2012 Olympics. Nostalgia, London’s oldest steelband, formed part of Caribbean arts brought to Britain, while choreography representing the Windrush passengers and the Notting Hill carnival costumes of *Mahogany* illuminated the stage. To have achieved such prominence in British arts in just over 60 years, and to have been such an integral part of one of the world's biggest events, is real testimony to the remarkable commitment and contribution made by musicians and artists since those early days when Lord Kitchener sang ‘*London is the place for me*’ in 1948. He foretold the mission of many pioneers from the Caribbean, who made London and other UK cities their new home and fused their culture into the British art form. This conference celebrates this epic journey and aims to map out some of the prominent moments in this short history that transformed the creative perception of our people and gained their respect and admiration in Britain.

Haroun N. Shah, Programme Organiser.

The conference programme consists of 4 sessions over two days (see below); an evening at the Carnival Village entitled “**Just Kitch: A Celebration of the Grandmaster Lord Kitchener in Calypso and Pan**” (The Yaa Centre, 27<sup>th</sup> October, 7.30pm -10pm) and a Plenary Lecture by Professor Dawn K. Batson entitled “**The Triumph of Steelpan**” (28<sup>th</sup> October, 13.45-14.30).:

Programme Outline:

**Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> October**

**Session I:** 'London is the Place for Me'

**Session II:** 'Carnival Arts: Developments during the Turbulent Years'

**Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> October:**

**Session III:** 'Steelpan; An Epic Journey'

**Session IV:** 'Steelpan and Carnival Arts'

**PROGRAMME: Registration: From:8.30 am**

**Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> October; Day 1**

10.00 -10.15 **Opening Remarks and Outline of the Programme**

*Haroun Shah*

**Session 1: 10.15 - 12.00: *'London is the Place for Me'* \_\_\_\_\_  
Chair: Ray Funk & Alexander-D-Great**

10.15 -11.00: **Sowing the Seeds of Calypso; History of the ABC**

*Nicole Rachelle Moore*

11.00-11.30: **Calypso for a Healthy School**

*Alexander-D-Great and Celia Burgess-Macey*

11.30 -12.00: **Women in Calypso**

*Cleo Guiste*

12.00 -12.30: **Challenges of Survival in Calypso and Carnival Arts**

*Kemi Sobers*

12.30 -13.30: **LUNCH - Steelpan**

**Session 2: 13.30 - 16.00: *'Carnival Arts: Developments during the Turbulent Years'*  
Chair: Carole Morrison and Ruth Tompsett**

13.30 -14.00: **Vision for the Carnival Village in the Context of Carnival Arts in UK.**

*Carole Morrison*

14.00- 14.30: **From Devil Mas to Minshall**  
*Greta Mendez*

14.30 -15.00: **The Claudia Jones Carnivals**  
*Ray Funk*

**Session 2: ctd.**

15.00 -15.30: **Notting Hill Carnival; Combining Creativity and Entrepreneurial Leadership to Improve its Status**  
*Suzanne Burke*

15.30 -16.00: **Taking Notting Hill Carnival Globally**  
*Ruth Tompsett*

16.00 -16.15 **Panomundo, a Short Film Documentary on the Birth of Steelpan**  
*Keith Musaman Morton*

**Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> October; Day 2**

**Session 3: 10.00 - 12.30: ‘Steelpan; An Epic Journey’**  
**Chair: Haroun Shah & Dawn Batson**

10.00 -10.30: **Folklore and Poems in Steel**  
*Faustin Charles*

10.30 -11.00: **Children’s Corner: Views**  
*Laila Shah, Marvin Barbe, and Fred Totesaut*

11.00 -11.30: **UK Developments in the Steelpan: Graded Steelpan Exams, Music Hubs, ABRSM, SPETA & the 2012 Olympiad**  
*Jacqueline Roberts*

11.30 -12.00: **Journey to the London 2012 Olympics; Cultural Implications**  
*Lionel McCalman, André Rostant, and Haroun Shah*

12.00 -12.15: **Bridging Gaps between Steelbands; UK, Trinidad, New York and London 2012**

**Olympics**

*Stephon Phillip*

12.15 -12.30: **Pan in Harmony; The Novel One Thousand Pans Project**

*Colin Salmon, Fiona Hawthorne, Josephine*

*Scorer*

*Musical Director - Brent Holder*

12.30 -13.45: **LUNCH - Steelpan and Calypso**

**13.45 - 14.30: PLENARY LECTURE:**

***The Triumph of Steelpan***

***Dr. Dawn K. Batson, FMU, USA***

**Session 4: 14.30 - 16.00: *'Steelpan and Carnival Arts.*  
**Chair: Ansel Wong & Jacqui Roberts****

14.30 -15.00: **Beyond A Boundary; the Legacy of C.L.R. James**

*Andy Smith, Sociology, University of Glasgow*

15.00- 15.30: **The Pivotal Role of the Pan Tuner in an Age of Changing Metallurgy**

*Robbie Joseph, Grafton, Yearwood and  
Toussaint Clark*

15.30 -16.00: **50 Years of Independence of Trinidad & Tobago and Steelpan**

*Nestor Sullivan*

16.00: **Closing Remarks:**

*Professor Ann Slater, Dean,  
Cass School of Education and Communities,  
University of East London*

**Plenary Lecturer:**  
**Professor of Music**  
**Chair, Visual & Performing Arts Florida Memorial**  
**University 15800 42<sup>nd</sup> Avenue**

Dawn K. Batson, Ph.D., has been involved with the Caribbean cultural arts movement as performer, arranger, conductor, teacher, judge, composer, musical director and producer. She has toured Europe, the Caribbean, North and South America as Music Director and Conductor with some of Trinidad and Tobago's top cultural groups and steel orchestras. Dr. Batson has also given lectures and coordinated teacher workshops on Music Business and Caribbean culture in Trinidad and Tobago, Great Britain, France, Canada, the Netherlands, North Africa and the United States of America.

Her interest in the Music Business and her focus on economic development through culture grew from her varied experiences and led to her designing and completing a Ph.D. program in International Affairs/Music at the University of Miami. She also holds a Master of Music Industry from the University of Miami and a Bachelor of Science in Music Education specializing in strings, from Hofstra University in Long Island, New York. She is currently a Professor of Music and Chair of Visual & Performing Arts at Florida Memorial University.

Dr. Batson conceived and coordinated three international expositions on the steelband. She also produced cultural shows for past Presidents of Trinidad and Tobago for visiting heads of state and is a cultural consultant for various private and public bodies. Dr. Batson was the first Chairman of the Board of the Trinidad and Tobago National Steel Orchestra. She has judged for international steelband and calypso competitions throughout the United States, Trinidad and Tobago, the Cayman Islands, Europe and Toronto, Canada. In December of 2010 she was awarded a Lifetime Achievement Award for her contribution to the International Steelband Movement and recognized in 2011 by ICABA World as one of South Florida's most accomplished Black academics.

**Florida Memorial University** Steelband Program, Dr. Dawn K. Batson, Director. The members of the band also perform with the FMU Presidential Jazz Band with a form of music they call "Pazz".

The program was started in the Fall of 1996 by Dr. Alfred Pinkson (former Music Coordinator) and Dr. Dawn K. Batson. The program allows music students to use the various instruments of the steel orchestra as their major instrument. The program supports a steel ensemble that has performed nationally and internationally and has appeared on television/radio and performed live in the United States, Europe, the Caribbean and Brazil. The ensemble also holds the distinction of being the first steel ensemble outside of Trinidad and Tobago, the birthplace of the steelband, to win or tie for first place in the Ensemble Class of the World Steel Band Festival held in Trinidad. The ensemble also has the distinction of having students in first place in the



solo, duet, trio and quartet categories in the World Steelband Festival. Members of the band are responsible for original compositions and musical arrangements in the band's repertoire.

# *Abstracts*

## **Sowing the Seeds of Calypso; History of the ABC**

*Nicole Rachelle Moore  
Lecturer, Author and Administrator, ABC*

This presentation will give a brief outline of early calypso in the United Kingdom before going into the history of the ABC; the reason why such an organisation became a necessity in the eyes of those who valued calypso as a relevant art form. The presentation will then look at some of the highlights of the past several years including cultural collaborations with Canada and Trinidad and Tobago. It will conclude with an overview of the continuing ambitions of the ABC in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### **Brief Biography:**

Nicole-Rachelle Moore was born in London but did much of her growing up in Trinidad, island home of both her parents. She returned to live in London in 1987 at the age of 20 with an abiding passion for art, film, literature and music and admits to a biased affection for African and Caribbean offerings of the above! Miss Moore completed a degree in Caribbean Studies and English, trained and worked as an English teacher and went on to complete a Masters degree in Post Colonial Cultures. New Beacon Books in Finsbury Park has been a big part of Nicole's academic and literary life in London. She has been a guest lecturer on calypso at Goldsmiths College in London and more recently in Trinidad at the College of Science, Technology and Applied Arts. In November 2010 Miss Moore was the guest speaker at the Griot Foundation's AGM in Lewisham as part of the borough's Black History Month program. Miss Moore's alliance with the Association of British Calypsonians began in 1993 when she did some publicity work for the ABC. She was the organization's official Administrator between 2005 and 2008 and again since July 2010. Her role is a multifaceted one which includes making links with other organizations who are interested in the cultural education aspect of the ABC's work. Nicole-Rachelle Moore is the mother of 2 sons and is currently working on the book 'Oral Landscapes: Black Men Speak Their Lives'.



# Calypso for a Healthy School

*Alexander Loewenthal (Alexander-D-Great)<sup>1</sup> and  
Celia Burgess-Macey<sup>2</sup>*

*<sup>1</sup>Calypso Monach 2010, 2011, London, ABC Calypso-Tent*

*and*

*<sup>2</sup>Department of Educational Studies,  
Goldsmith's College, University of London*

This presentation is on a method of engaging young people in creative learning through the writing and performance of Calypso. We shall show a series of short clips and describe the learning processes under observation.

Celia and Alex have worked together for more than ten years. Alex was asked to deliver the Calypso component of Goldsmiths Carnival Arts Course and this led to the development of the Calypso For Healthy Schools (CFHS) project. It was piloted in three schools in the UK and two in Trinidad and was funded by Keith Ferguson of Kingston Management, sadly now deceased.

**The Aims** of CFHS are

- 1) To ensure that all participants in the group are included, fully involved, feel able to contribute and that their contributions are valued.
- 2) To focus on the key learning processes used by the participants in the production of a satisfactory end result - a calypso song and performance.
- 3) To use calypso as a vehicle to explore/reflect on important issues. These might include global warming, bullying, gender awareness, alcohol and drug awareness or similar topics.

For the pilot of CFHS we discussed topics with three heads of schools in Southwark and it was agreed that drugs and alcohol awareness was an important topic for 10 and 11 year - olds to deal with in their move from Primary to Secondary education.

**Gains for participants**

Gains for participants include increased self - confidence, greater cultural awareness and knowledge, recognition of skills of others, experience of the importance of different roles within the group, improved communication and negotiation skills and the ability to collaborate towards the shared goal of the performance.

There are also gains in terms of broadening musical skills such as composition, musical appreciation (especially in relation to genre) and ability to perform. Literacy skills can be advanced through use of rhyme, metaphor, alliteration and increased knowledge and understanding of the subject matter chosen for the calypso. Through researching and discussing their topic in small groups participants also increase their communication and democratic decision making.

**The approach in the workshops**

Calypso competitions are held in many schools in the Caribbean at Carnival time, as do various businesses, banks and public service bodies such as the Police. This is in keeping with the ethos of Calypso, which (rather like folk song) allows for any and all to have the right to perform. We noted, however, that only a few children participated in the school competitions, usually those lucky enough to have connections with the calypso world through a relative or friend

who might be quite proficient in the art form. This meant that the majority of pupils who might wish to perform rarely got the chance to do so.

CFHS seeks to rebalance this by having the whole class participate in the “making” of a calypso, with each child contributing in whichever capacity suits them best. This could be lyric writing, composing the tune, playing an instrument, inventing dance and movement to accompany the song etc. Many children are shy but wish to perform. There is strength in numbers and the group performance allows each child to contribute as they wish.

**Key features of the way children work, which both they and their teachers highlighted as significant.**

These include:

Enjoyment of their learning- they had fun researching the information.

Communicating with peers rather than their teachers, both in the workshops and as audience for other groups’ songs added purpose to their research and writing. It also changed the nature of the writing and performances which included more popular ‘street’ language and gestures

Working together in their friendship groups

Or with people they did *not* usually work with (which some children found helpful because there was less “messaging about” than in friendship groups)

Working with an adult (artist) whom they recognised as a good performer and one who works differently from their teachers, who got down to their level, often literally sitting on floor with them and who gave them ultimate responsibility for their calypso.

The way they were able to work together in their groups, taking ownership of the task and changing usual classroom roles and hierarchies.

The central role of talk in the co construction of meaning - the “to and fro” of exchanging ideas and evaluating each others suggestions and making choices-

The importance of risk – taking, being a little bit scared but ultimately discovering that it was worth it and that the outcome justified the risk in every way.

The artist/facilitator must be sensitive to issues of culture and identity and their crucial place in classrooms and societies throughout the diaspora.

Calypso is an inclusive musical form, which can be expressed in a variety of styles. The artist needs to understand the flexible nature of calypso and its links to other musical genres including Mento, Reggae, Rapso, Chutney, Soca, Zouk etc.

The artist’s must be flexible and work alongside children as a facilitator and wise friend rather than expert authority figure. He/she needs to hand control over to the children/young people and to trust in their competence and creativity. In this way the resulting song will be owned by its creators.

## Women in Calypso

*Cleo Guiste*  
ABC Calypso-Tent

Calypso has been used as a powerful medium for both sexes to challenge traditional structures, however, for women in particular, it has been used further to question the hegemonic structures of a male dominated art form. Calypso Rose, Drupatee, Denyse Plummer, Singing Francine, Calypso Princess and others have influenced major changes in social patterns in Trinidad where this genre was created over a century ago. When Calypso came to Britain, it continued as a male dominated form with for example the 'The Mighty Tiger' (Ashton Moore, also president of the ABC) being the reigning Monarch more than 10 times between 1970 to 1997. All this was about to change as women, not only began appearing in the Calypso Tents, but began dominating the competitions. Some notable examples include Brown Sugar who joined the ABC in 2004 and was the UK's first female to win the Calypso Monarch consecutively (2006 & 2007). Between 2007 - 2009 she also won the Groovy Soca title. Helena B has been participating at the London Calypso Tent for several years was the crowned Calypso Monarch in 2005.. She also performed at the Kaiso House Calypso Tent in Trinidad and Tobago at carnival 2006, while her daughter, Kiki B was crowned the Junior Monarch twice. Cleopatra (Cleo Guiste) has performed with bands including Tropical Brass, Sound Revolution and Ruption, and has been a regular performer with the ABC since 2002. She cites Calypso Rose and Singing Francine as the women who most influenced her. Cleopatra captured the 2012 London Calypso Tent Groovy Crown with her song, "*Feelings*" (see eg of recent results below) in a final that was dominated by women. Giselle launched her professional career in calypso in 1998, In 2007, she won the first ever UK Groovy Soca Monarch competition and a year later, her calypso, '*I Have Hope*', which was dedicated to the memory of eight year old Hope Arismandez, won her the Calypso Monarch. To further emphasise the strong position women hold in British calypso, Giselle Carter-Sandy was elected as the new chair of the Association of British Calypsonians 14<sup>th</sup> April 2012..

### **Calypso Tent Groovy Soca 2012 results:**

1st ...Cleopatra  
2nd....Nikisha  
3rd ...Helena B

Similarly, the Calypso Monarch again saw a number women holding the top places.

### **ABC Calypso Monarch 2012 results:**

1<sup>st</sup> ....Sheldon Skeete ...A Sightless Nation  
2<sup>nd</sup> ...Brown Sugar .....Children  
3<sup>rd</sup>....Helena B .....Retire and Die  
4<sup>th</sup> ....Lord Cloak .....Shabaka Gone  
5<sup>th</sup> .. Nikisha .....Strong Woman  
6<sup>th</sup> ....Cleopatra .....Sleeping with the Enemy





## Challenges of Survival in Calypso and Carnival Arts in the UK

*Kemi Sobers*

*ABC (Executive) and the Carnival Trust, LNH CET*

A constant when one examines UK Carnival Arts is the inextricable link with the Caribbean community from which the Culture emanates. In Trinidad & Tobago - Carnival's Motherland – this synergy has developed over many generations; on this side of the Atlantic, however, both practitioners and administrators of the Carnival Arts face considerable challenges, principally those of integrating within the wider British society while maintaining artistic integrity, of relevance and of financial viability.

The term “challenge”: needn't have a negative connotation though. Taking the lead from Tambu's classic calypso “Culture” (1988):

*Let we love the calypso  
And give praise to the limbo  
And believe in the steelpan  
for the next generation*

*Let we love our Tassa  
Our own people's Culture  
When we look to the future  
It's then we're on the road to a brand new mode*

From the 1930s, the "Tropical" rhythms of Trinidad born Edmundo Ros catered to an extremely appreciative British audience, but it was the mass arrival of Trinbagonians in the 50s, 60s and 70s, bringing their own culture to entertain themselves, which created a viable space for the development of Carnival Arts. This first generation instinctively transferred an appreciation of Carnival to their UK-born children and grandchildren, as well as to the wider Caribbean community, providing a solid base from which to face the challenges which would invariably ensue.

The challenge of survival often comes down to financing and so we'll look at various sources of funding, including:

1) Self-financing (2), Sponsorship, (3) Non-sponsorship) commercial agreements and (4) Public subsidy

We'll then consider the integration of Carnival Arts in the UK generally, and how this manifests itself specifically within the context of the Notting Hill Carnival, our showcase event; the Association of British Calypsonians' London Calypso Tent kicks off the Carnival season each year and an examination of its history since 1991 offers valuable insights into the development of innovative ways in which to nurture and promote Calypso and Soca.

As the Notting Hill Carnival approaches its 50th Anniversary we'll compare and contrast our event with Carnivals across the UK and North America, concluding with an examination of how new technology and social media can be used to face the various challenges of cultural survival head on.

## **Vision for the Carnival Village in the Context of Carnival Arts in UK**

*Carole Morrison  
Director, Carnival Village Trust  
(The Tabernacle and The Yaa Centre, London)*

This presentation will explore the role of Carnival Arts in Contemporary Britain. Carnival Village Trust (CVT) is ideally placed to be at the forefront of innovative programming and projects. Carnival Village Trust is a partnership organisation involving four founding partners – ABC – the Association of British Calypsonians, Ebony Steelband, Mangrove Steelband and Yaa Asantewaa Arts. CVT operates two venues - *The Tabernacle* and *The Yaa Centre* as well as programming events in other creative spaces. The organisation has lively annual programme of Carnival related events and is funded by the Arts Council England and the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea. CVT programmes a wide range of creative, cultural and community events. This presentation will highlight a number of ideas and methodologies related to our developing learning and participation programme.

## The Claudia Jones Carnivals

*Ray Funk, Alaska, USA*

(The full length article 'The Caribbean Beat' is reproduced on pages 30- 34)

Fifty-three years ago at St. Pancras Town Hall in central London - the first real Trinidad Carnival occurred in England. The vision of Claudia Jones (1915-1964), this Carnival which was indoors and mid-Winter was the precursor to Notting Hill Carnival. It went for six years before it stopped when only a year later, in 1965, Notting Hill Carnival started, taking to the streets but following Carnival traditions first advanced in England by Claudia Jones. This year, two 'Blue Heritage Plaques' were unveiled in London in honour of Russell Henderson and Leslie Palmer to mark this historic event.

Jones started this event in the wake of the Notting Hill Riots. She wanted to put on a display for the British that involved a unique Caribbean explosion of joy and culture. She and her newspaper sponsored the Carnival each year until she died. Indeed, while based on the Trinidad Carnival and with a large number of Trinidadians participating, Jones wanted it to be like the West Indies cricket team really a pan-Caribbean Carnival. She wrote in the souvenir booklet for the Carnival of her desire for it to evoke this theme.

This presentation follows the development of Carnival, from its humble beginnings in St Pancras Town Hall in London on its way to becoming the now world famous street party, The Notting Hill Carnival. It was Claudia's vision to use Carnival as a unifying force for the community, initially as a constructive distraction following the aftermath of the riots of 1958. Along the way we recognise the contribution of others, as musicians, as calypsonians, as actors and as producers as the timeline moves from 1959 to 1964. Claudia's pivotal role is recognised through her sponsorship and that of her publications in the 'West Indian Gazette'. Early inclusions such as beauty contests and cabaret are mentioned including some the legendary names such Lord Kitchener and the Mighty Sparrow. Setting the early Carnivals in context, hearing again the names of performers along with their contributions, will honour those pioneers who used this art form to bring people together - 'the wholehearted response from peoples from the Islands of the Caribbean in then new West Indies Federation. She was immensely saddened by the dissolution of the Federation a few years later but nevertheless saw these carnivals as a means of using the arts to bring people together for common aims, and to its focussing of the cultural, spiritual, as well as political and economic interests of West Indians in the UK and at home.

## **Notting Hill Carnival; Combining Creativity and Entrepreneurial Leadership to Improve its Status**

*Suzanne Burke PhD  
Cultural Studies Unit  
University of the West Indies  
St. Augustine, Trinidad.*

The paper will explore the ways in which festivals, namely the Notting Hill Carnival can be used as a platform for local community development.

It will use the Trinidad Carnival Complex as a basis for analysis and show how strategies such as innovation and clustering can facilitate both social and business entrepreneurship.

In the main, the paper will make a statement on how Notting Hill can be re-purposed and developed in ways that benefit the primary stakeholders and creators through the promotion of cultural citizenship and the generation of income and employment.

## **Seeking Recognition for Carnival Art Forms**

*Adela Ruth Tompsett  
Lecturer and Artist*

For many years concern has been expressed within the carnival community about the status accorded to carnival arts. Where do the art forms of carnival stand in relation to discussion of contemporary art? Are the song forms, mas and musics of Caribbean-derived carnival in Britain recognised as art forms?

This brief paper focuses on the mas. It seeks to raise some of the more relevant issues in this debate and to identify examples of recognition for mas as art, including reference to the touring exhibition 'Midnight Robbers: The Artists of Notting Hill Carnival', (2007 – 2010).

This is a hotly debated topic and no easy solutions are proposed here. However this paper is premised on a belief in carnival as art, and it aims to contribute positively to the debate, considering possible ways forward.

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### **Panomundo, a Short Film Documentary on the Birth of Steelpan**

*Keith Musaman Morton  
Film Maker*

A teaser trailer of a forthcoming feature documentary that looks at the birth of steelpan and how it has travelled the world.

### **Folklore and Poems in Steel**

*Faustin Charles*  
*Writer and Poet*

## *The Magic Pan*

This story is about a magic man who plays the steel pan very skilfully. His name is Seeto, nicknamed 'Sweeto' because he plays the ping pong very sweetly, charming humans and animals alike. He was very poor and played the pan for a livelihood.

He lived alone.

One night he met a woman, who was enchanted by his playing. She took him away to live with her, to play only for her and nobody else. He never saw his village nor his friends again. Every day and every night he played his pan for this mysterious woman who kept him prisoner in an iron cage. Sweeto's only means of escape was to invent a new chord which hypnotised the woman and he was able to get away from her captivity.

Two poems will be read on steelbands,

(1) From a collection of poems on steelband.

(2) The steelband's man tale; shows how he feels, the skill, dexterity and passion used to play the instrument and the artistry and the love displayed by the musician

**Children's Corner: Views**

*Laila Shah<sup>1</sup>, Marvin Barbe<sup>1</sup> and Fred Totesaut<sup>2</sup>*

*<sup>1</sup>Nostalgia Steelband, London and <sup>2</sup>St Michael and All Angels Steelband, London*

The arrival of the first major wave of immigrants from the Caribbean in 1948 (via S.S. Empire Windrush) and steelpan in 1951 (TASPO) meant that we are now entering a 3<sup>rd</sup> generation of descendents of this transmigration. Although, this 3<sup>rd</sup> generation is distinctly British; participation in all major events in the UK (such as the Olympics) are undertaken with similar passion and pride to their *bona fide* British counterparts. However, when it comes to music and culture, the children of this generation often cling to their roots from the Caribbean. No where is this more clearly manifested than with steelpan, calypso and the carnival of Trinidad and Tobago.

Many of us grow up in homes where our parents steadfastly hold on to their music and culture. In our home for example, there is a steelpan in the living and dining rooms while calypso is played in the bathroom from early morning and even while travelling to school by car. Even our mobile telephone ring tone alternates between Sparrow and Kitchener! But even though we hold on to this culture with great love and passion and a sense of duty to retain and preserve it in the UK, our perspective and emphasis is changing to those of previous generations.

It is our view that to create interest and promote this art form here, many of the traditional customs need to change. West Indians are for example stigmatised by a lack of punctuality, turning up late and even missing pre-booked performances or getting dates incorrect. We should change the dress code of a bygone era with '*bright colours and palms trees*' and leave '*Yellow Bird*' for only when it is requested. This latter request is the most significant; a change to more contemporary music that audiences can recognise will not only appeal but allows the audience to see the versatility of this truly amazing instrument. It is noticeable that when such tunes are played at festivals and even at the Notting Hill carnival, the curious expression of the faces of onlookers is markedly noticeable.

St Michael & All Angels Steel Band:

Founded in 1996 as part of the St Michaels Music project, the steel band through its can do approach which is underpinned by discipline and respect, helps youngsters raise their self-esteem and develop leadership, peer education and teamwork skills.

The St Michael & All Angels Steel Band has performed at St Paul's Cathedral twice, at many civic events including the annual fundraising Ball for the Mayor of Brent on three occasions. The band opened the first Diversity Conference of the National Probation Service at the Novatel Hotel in Hammersmith, London. The St Michael & All Angels Steel Band is well known in Brent for their support of community groups in the area.

During the first four weeks of the summer break, the band ran a workshop, which ended with the annual summer concert at the St Michael & All Angels Church. In 2006, the band performed classical pieces by Mozart and Mendelssohn, as well as a strong repertoire of popular music going back over 60 years in a variety of different styles. Band master, arranger and tuner, Alfred Totesaut, affectionately known by all as 'Freddy' has been with the steelband from its formation and is the main reason why the standard of play in the band is so high and yet still aspiring to achieve more..

## **UK Developments in the Steelpan: Graded Steelpan Exams, Music Hubs, ABRSM, SPETA & the 2012 Olympiad**

*Jacqueline Roberts, Chair & Creative Director,  
St. Vincent and the Grenadines 2<sup>nd</sup> Generation (SV2G);  
Wycombe Steel Orchestra, Steelpan Educators & Tutors  
Association (SPETA) and School of Steelpans*

SV2G's Olympic journey with steelpans delivering a cultural legacy.

With the newly launched School of Steelpans, a base for Wycombe Steel Orchestra and the Steelpan Educators & Tutors Association (SPETA). Jacqueline Roberts - Chair & Creative Director, will discuss the accreditation opportunities available to Students, Music Tutors and Teachers at the School of Steelpans. In response to the National Plan for Music Education, the development and delivery of the newly formed Music Hubs in the UK will be critiqued on how the steelpan instrument and tuition can be incorporated into the core and extension roles of the plan.

## **Journey to the London 2012 Olympics; Cultural Implications**



*Lionel McCalman<sup>1,2</sup>, André Rostant<sup>1</sup>, and Haroun Shah<sup>1</sup>  
Nostalgia Steelband<sup>1</sup> and University of East London<sup>2</sup>*

“I watched it on television, but I didn’t see you...” was what many of Nostalgia members’ friends and relatives said. Nor did many millions of UK television viewers who watched the breathtaking spectacle that was the Olympic Opening Ceremony catch much more than a fleeting glimpse of the ten-metre long S.S. Empire Windrush with its dozens of porters and passengers, our 50-strong steel band, or the giant, elegant costumes of Mahogany’s beautiful Masquerade dancers. After a journey of five months, hundreds of hours and a great deal of anticipation, we played to ecstatic applause in the Stadium, but our 15 minutes of fame evaporated from TV.

The history of Steelpan and carnival arts in the UK has, from its very beginnings, been a struggle between an urge to integrate, to be recognised by the wider musical establishment and an equally powerful intuitive inclination to stay “true” to traditional roots: a journey in two directions at once. And, just as Nostalgia was visible, yet unseen at the Ceremony, so too is West Indian art and culture recognised but “not quite” accepted.

The same tangled stream of feelings toward our participation; was it an amazing opportunity or did we fall victims to a sceptical exercise in tokenism? Notting Hill Carnival is at once a symbol of West Indian cultural resistance – a ritual of rebellion and a multifaceted mirror of what the Caribbean diaspora has become in Britain and what it has made Britain – reggae sound systems, samba and oriental bands, food from every corner of the globe; features of Carnival – an immense sea of revellers of all shapes and colours.

But we were there, representing Notting Hill and the whole West Indian community. Nobody can take that away, and that Danny Boyle chose to represent carnival at all shows how far we have come – we were the sole significant nod to the millions of immigrants and the memory of an empire upon which the “Isle of Wonder” celebrated was built. **Yet Mas and Steelband were totally excluded from live coverage.**

In a letter sent out by the Prime Minister, David Cameron, to all the Olympics and Paralympics participants, he said:

*‘You and your fellow volunteers have been an essential ingredient in a remarkable summer that millions of people across the country have shared and will remember for a lifetime. You have sent an incredible message about the warmth, friendliness and can-do spirit of the United Kingdom right around the world. Quite frankly, the games couldn’t have happened without you’.*

This presentation will explore the journey of a steel band and its participation in an Olympic Games Opening Ceremony, and the positive impact it could have on the pan fraternity. However, despite the significance of it all, the presentation will seek to explore why the Prime Minister’s message rings hollow in the Caribbean music community.

## **Bridging Gaps between Steelbands; UK, Trinidad, New York and London 2012 Olympics**

### *Stephon Phillip Phase One Steelband, Birmingham*

The unwavering support and endorsement of my family and friends in the UK, Trinidad and the USA have played a crucial role in the development of my career as a steelpan musician and teacher over the years. In 1979, at the age of 10, my father, a pan maker and teacher introduced me to steelpan rather casually, largely as a means of occupying my time. To his surprise, I took to it immediately and learnt at a brisk pace. My mother took my sister and I to Trinidad six years later. And, it was through my cousin Kirt, that my world and interest in steelpan changed forever. Our visit to Phase 2's panyard was humbling; seeing the maestro, Boogsie Sharp and the sheer genius of his work, along with the scintillating ambience of the panyard stirred my inner feelings to such a profound level that a life long passion and commitment was created almost instantaneously to this art form. While there, I was taken to see Southern Panorama at Skinner's Park and was particularly keen to see *Dunlop Tornadoes*, a band that used some pans made by my dad in previous years. They were on course to take the country by storm with their rendition of Jit Samaroo's arrangement of '*Pan in Danger*'. Walking into the band and being introduced as a "*pan man from England*" my ability to play at this level was challenged immediately by a player. This statement struck a deep sensation in me and provided the impetus to strive to the highest level of proficiency.

By 1897, our band Phase 1 was ready to participate in its first UK panorama - but my dad's vision went beyond this and he arranged for three members of the band to go to the zenith of steelpan activity, Trinidad's panorama. After visiting several steelbands, my uncle successfully recruited us to *Amoco Renegades*, who were practicing "*Pan in A Minor*" for panorama. Locals were amazed, that even without a pan to practice on, I was considered proficient in 3 days and was allowed to play on the road, but not panorama. This experience was repeated in 1988 with the same result. However, undaunted by this, I returned to Trinidad for the 3<sup>rd</sup> successive year to play with *Renegades* again. This time, I was not only successful but went on to play through all zones to reach the final and win the competition.

Between 1993 -1997, I also played in the USA where my family in New York were similarly deeply involved with the steelband movement. In particular, my family supported one of the leading bands, *Metro*. My arrival was met with the band feverishly learning Kitchener's "*Mystery Band*" and I was given the opportunity to teach members and help prepare them for panorama. This period introduced me to several gifted arrangers such as Eddie Quarless whose "jazzy sounds and waving tempos" did much to stimulate my imagination and extend my own interpretation of steelpan music.

One of my most delightful experiences of pan is the sheer joy of teaming up with other bands for various events. I believe this shared experience works to the mutual benefit of all and brings with it a sense of strong community spirit. *Phase One* has been particularly active, teaming up with bands such as *Steelpan Academy* and *Nostalgia Steelband* to play as a "*pan-around-neck*" band at various workshops and the Notting Hill carnival. The most poignant and recent experience was the opening ceremony of the London 2012 Olympics when I had the opportunity to do my own interpretation of Alex Smith's "*And I Will Kiss*". Soon after this, an even larger gathering of steelpanners were assembled for the '*ONE THOUSAND PANS*' project on 8<sup>th</sup> September in London's Jubilee Gardens. The idea that steelbands can team up to play communally represents a new and exciting era in the development of steelpan; a vision that I have always had and pursued and will endeavour to continue in the years to come.

## **Pan in Harmony; The Novel 'One Thousand Pans' Project**

*Colin Salmon, British actor;  
Fiona Hawthorne, Josephine 'Sephi' Scorer and  
Brent Holder, Musical Director, CSI.*

In a year in which events in London were being beamed around the globe, the city was waiting to see how the final curtain would be brought down at the end of an historic summer that witnessed its biggest audiences ever.

ONE THOUSAND PANS was the event that made steelpan's mark on this very special period in UK's history. Taking place in London's Jubilee Gardens on 8<sup>th</sup> September, the closing weekend of the Olympic Games, this unique live music event brought together hundreds of pan players from all corners of the UK to perform Ary Barroso's 1939 classic "Brasil". Musically directed on the day by Brent Holder, leader of Caribbean Steel International, the event celebrated the passing of the Torch from London 2012 to Rio 2016 and drew in tens of thousands of onlookers to witness one of the most astonishing artistic experiences on one of the most glorious days of the summer.

Musically it may have seemed impossible: all bands would need to play in the same key, apply the same phrasing with minimal practice and be ready to adjust to changes as they were made during the day, but it worked and became an iconic event in the world of pan

The idea was conceived by British actor Colin Salmon, himself a musician and composer, who was inspired by the excellence of young pan players in CSI, the band his sons played in. But it was his wife, carnival artist Fiona Hawthorne who developed the idea, creating a strong brand based on artistic integrity and advocating the idea of one band, in one block of colour. Winning the support of the Arts Council of England, Hawthorne also brought in The Notting Hill Carnival and Festival's Trust to help administer the massive project, and set against the iconic backdrop of The London Eye, ONE THOUSAND PANS was an astounding success. It was a particularly emotional moment when the compere announced that the first steelband to ever come to the shores of England, the legendary 'TASPO' played on the very same site in 1951. What an event to mark such a poignant moment in the history of steelpan!

The creators and organisers will share the story of how this event was inspired, developed and executed with the aim of raising the profile of steelpan by bringing it to a wider audience.

**Acknowledgements:** One Thousand Pans' wishes to acknowledge the support of Arts Council England for the Project. The pan performance was held at Jubilee Gardens on 8th September, 2012.

## **Plenary Lecturer**

### **“The Triumph of Pan”**

***Dr. Dawn K. Batson***

*Professor of Music*

*Chair, Visual & Performing Arts Florida Memorial  
University 15800 42<sup>nd</sup> Avenue*

“The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away. “ Psalm 90:10 King James Version (KJV) The Steel Orchestra had its genesis in what is today, the twin island republic of Trinidad and Tobago, in the 1930s. By any reckoning, in 2012, the instruments have passed the oft cited given time of man, and “by reason of strength” soon will celebrate fourscore years. There ends the literal comparison with the psalm, for the journey of the orchestra has long been one of “labour and sorrow” yet also a voyage filled with great achievements, shared joys and moments of wonder.

This paper will explore the global journey of the steel orchestra – its proponents, its detractors, its performers, its audience, the places to which it has travelled and the spaces it has changed. From Albert Hall to Carnegie Hall, from Alaska to Australia, from poet to peasant and from poor man to rich man, the instruments have enriched lives and altered destinies. The past has been negotiated, the present celebrated and the future set in motion. How have these changes occurred, what more can be done and how will the global marketplace and the ongoing technological storm, impact the instruments and those who hold it near. These questions and others will form the core of the presentation and the discussion to follow.

## **British Association of Steelbands**

*Pepe Francis*  
*Chairman, BAS and Director, Ebony Steel Band Trust*

Established in 1995, the British Association of Steelbands (BAS) is the UK's only national carnival arts related organisation. The Association's membership includes steel bands (conventional, traditional and youth orchestras), soloists and interested individuals. BAS's primary role is to represent and promote steelbands, and to further the musical, artistic, educational and social aspects of this art.

BAS is a Company Limited by Guarantee. The organisation has an elected Board of Executive Officers and has regular meetings around the country open to all members. As the founder of Steelpan European, the network of partner organisations extends across Europe. The Association also actively involved in steelband associations in the USA and, of course, the Caribbean. The current Chair, Pepe Francis, MBE, is the UK and European Representative with Pan Trinbago, the world governing body for steelpan. Other Executive Officers are Matthew Phillip (Executive Officer), Eversley Mills (Vice Chair), Debi Gardner (Company Secretary), Robbie Joseph (Public Relations Officer) and Tara Baptiste (FDF Liaison Officer).

## **Beyond A Boundary, 50 years on; the Legacy of C.L.R. James**

*Andy Smith,  
Sociology, University of Glasgow*

2013 marks the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the publication of C.L.R. James' path breaking work *Beyond a Boundary*.

In this paper I seek to offer some thoughts about the enduring significance of James' account, and to draw out some of the vital lessons which the book continues to offer for anyone interested in understanding any kind of cultural practice better – not just cricket, but music, literature, film and all other forms of creative, expressive activity.

I propose also that it is important to understand how James' writing on these kinds of topic fits with his political writings; as James consistently argued, culture and politics have to be understood as a part of each other.

# The Pivotal Role of the Pan Tuner in an Age of Changing Metallurgy

*<sup>1</sup>Robbie Joseph, Dudley Dixon; Toussaint Clark and Grafton Yearwood*

*UK Steelpan Tuners Guild,<sup>1</sup>Chair.*

The UK Steelpan Tuners Guild was formed on the 4th November 2007. Steelpan craftsmen in the UK who wish to support the development of their craft and industry set up the Guild. This not for profit organisation was created by Guild members who wished to work together as a benevolent society supporting themselves and their families by the practice of their craft.

The Guild was constituted on the 12th December 2010.

## **The Aims of the Guild are :**

- To create a forum for sharing good practice
- To create a centre for tuning services, technical advice and teaching
- To develop and provide specialist education, training and accreditation.
- To develop improved health and safety guidance
- To develop mechanisms to help members work more effectively together (especially in situations involving large orders)
- To create a forum to develop and share research and future technical developments
- To act as an organisation working together collectively sharing benefits in areas such as the purchasing of raw materials, research, teaching, the development of advice and guidance for customers and members
- To provide a forum to enable the benefit and support of Guild members
- To provide a forum for Guild members to hear member issues and problems and debate the solutions.
- To act as a union and provide support and protection for Guild members
- To develop a benevolent society for Guild members

Membership depended on a number of strict criteria being met. The Guild was constituted on the 12th December 2010. Current members continue to spread their professional services globally offering steelbands and individuals the benefit of their highly honed skills, ensuring that they actively contribute to the growth and expansion of the steelpan culture, capturing audiences and encouraging the birth of steelbands in different parts of the world that are still virgin to this art form.

## **50 Years of Independence of Trinidad & Tobago and Steelpan**

*Nestor Sullivan*

*Judge; Notting Hill Panorama Championships, London.*

*Director of Mango Rose Steelpan Services, Trinidad.*

*Global Consultant: Steelband, Carnival and Mas.*

When Trinidad and Tobago became independent from Britain on 31<sup>st</sup> August 1962 that event concluded 165 years of British colonial rule that came after 300 years of Spanish control of the island. The achievement of political Independence presented new aspirations, opportunities and challenges for the population and the national leadership of the new nation. By that time the steelband had established itself as an important symbol of our nationalism and our capacity for self-determination and self-reliance.

This paper will look at these two developments, the struggle for political independence and the rise of the steelband firstly independent of each other and then examine the impact of one on the other. The paper will go on to look at the Post-Independence era in the history of the steelband up to the present time. Some analysis will also be made of the political developments of the immediate post-Independence era and the socio-economic impact of Independence on the mas of the population.

The period 1960 to 1970 is considered the “Golden Era of Steelband Music” because of the significant strides in the development of the orchestras both in terms of instrumentation and repertoire. The instrument was first heard by the public at the ‘Victory over Europe’ (VE) Day carnival-like celebrations in May 1945. In fifteen years this initial development was transformed into a complete orchestra by persons without formal music education or training. They created an orchestra with a capacity to perform any type of music, although it started off as the instrument on the road for the carnival celebrations.

While these events were taking place in the steelband movement, the population was becoming restless as many felt that Independence had not delivered on its promises to the mas of the people. By 1970, workers, students, unemployed and sections of the clergy and the military formed themselves into an organization to challenge the newly independent state for power. What is popularly referred to as the ‘Black Power Revolution’ or the ‘February Revolution’ was a statement from the populace about governance in newly independent Trinidad and Tobago.

This paper will examine the situation of governance in T&T fifty years on and its relationship with culture generally and the steelband movement in



particular. The paper will also look at the steelband movement today and its position in the local communities, the economy, the region and the rest of the world.

## *Notes*

### **The Claudia Jones Carnivals**

*Reprinted from 'The Caribbean Beat' and the Proceedings of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Biannual Conference (2010) – Ray Funk.*

Fifty years ago at St. Pancras Town Hall in central London - the first real Trinidad Carnival occurred in England. The vision of Claudia Jones (1915-1964), this Carnival which was indoors and mid-Winter was the precursor to Notting Hill Carnival. It went for six years before it stopped when only a couple years later, in 1967, Notting Hill Carnival started, taking to the streets but following Carnival traditions first advanced in England by Claudia Jones.

Jones started this event in the wake of the Notting Hill Riots. She wanted to put on a display for the British that involved a unique Caribbean explosion of joy and culture, Carnival. She and her newspaper sponsored the Carnival each year until she died. Indeed, while based on the Trinidad Carnival and with a large number of Trinidadians participating, Jones wanted it to be like the West Indies cricket team really a pan-Caribbean Carnival. She wrote in the souvenir booklet for the Carnival of her desire for it to evoke:

***the wholehearted response from the peoples from the Islands of the Caribbean in the new West Indies Federation, this is itself testament to the role of the arts in bringing people together for common aims, and to its fusing of the cultural, spiritual, as well as political and economic interests of West Indians in the UK and at home.***

#### **Claudia Jones**

While little remembered for many years, Claudia Jones is starting to take her place as a unique Trinidad-born woman who faced jail and exile for her political beliefs while living in the United States. Extradited to Britain, she went on to create the first weekly Black newspaper in England, the *West Indian Gazette*.

Last year saw a fascinating second book about her published, Carole Boyce Davies' *Left of Karl Marx: The Political Life of Black Communist Claudia Jones* (Duke University Press). In England a postage stamp was issued in her honor, and two plaques were put up at Portobello Road and Powis Square in London calling her "the mother of Notting Hill Carnival".

The plaques were unveiled in August before last year's Notting Hill Carnival. The High Commission for the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago noted at the time, "We are pleased to be associated with this commemorative event to celebrate the life of Claudia Jones. A true daughter of the soil, Ms. Jones' efforts to promote our culture and

bring recognition to the early Caribbean diaspora and thereby create history in the United Kingdom must be heralded."

Only recently has her pivotal role been accepted. That started with a 1996 symposium organized by historian Marika Sherwood at the Institute of Commonwealth Studies in London in an attempt to preserve oral memories of this remarkable woman by those who knew her. This resulted in a book, *Claudia Jones: A Life in Exile* (Lawrence & Wishart Ltd.). More recently, Carole Boyce Davies's award winning *Left of Marx* has explored Jones's philosophy in detail, looking at her writings and speeches going back to when she was active in the American Communist Party. It offers a detailed look at her life in the United States and her struggles for women's rights and workers' rights while facing incarceration and deportation. Yet she still had energy for poetry and journalism. Professor Davies is currently editing a collection of Jones's writings. Taken together, it appears there is a Claudia Jones renaissance going on.

Born in Trinidad, Jones's family moved to Harlem when she was eight. As she grew up, she became very politicized about working conditions for the poor in the United States. This led her to joining first the Young Communist League of the Communist Party of the USA where she became a writer for the party and later editor for one of the Party's newspapers. She became a leading speaker for the party and was unique in presenting the perspective of a Black working woman on issues of labor and discrimination. In the McCarthy era, she was arrested and sent to jail four different times and served months in jail. In 1955, she was deported to England. She soon founded a monthly newspaper to serve the Caribbean immigrant community, the *West Indian Gazette*.

After horrible race riots occurred in Notting Hill, a London suburb, Jones organized a meeting to discuss what could be done. Donald Hinds, a writer for the *Gazette*, recently recalled what happened next:

Claudia asked for suggestions which would wash the taste of Notting Hill and Nottingham out of our mouths. It was then that someone, most likely a Trinidadian, suggested that we should have a carnival - in winter? It was [November] of 1958. Everybody laughed, and then Claudia called us to order. 'Why not?' she asked. 'Could it not be held in a hall, somewhere?'

Jones went to two leading Trinidadian artists to put the show together. She chose as director Edric Connor, already a leading actor and performer at the time who was having great success in feature films and had just been the first W.I. actor to appear in a Royal Shakespeare company production in Stratford on Avon. For choreographer of the show, she chose a talented Trinidadian dancer who had moved to England only months before, Stanley Jack.

### **Stanley Jack**

Though not a familiar name today, Jack was a distinguished dancer and producer in Trinidad and the Caribbean before moving to England where he continued to dance and tour the world with his wife as dancers.

Growing up in Woodbrook, Stanley Jack attended Richmond Street Secondary School. He had early on focused on music and dance. And while he worked as a chef at the Colonial Hospital, he became a member of choral groups with the Royal Victorian

Institute of Music and the Philharmonic Society. He studied piano and voice during this period, taking private lessons. He formed his own school of dance in Nelson Street upstairs at Samaritan Hall. His group did several performances at the Royal Victoria Institute. He also worked with Olive Walke and appeared regularly with her, singing folk material on a *Radio Trinidad* show called "Musicians in the Making".

He also determined on his own to study traditional folk dance and folk songs. He did field work in Trinidad, the Grenadines, and St. Vincent. He also accepted a six month scholarship from the Haitian Institute of Folklore and Classic Dance, run by the legendary Lavina Williams. As a direct result of his interest in folk culture, Jack became very interested in the belair and in shango.

His greatest interest was in Caribbean performance of spirituals. This led to a show he created called *In the Great Gittin Up Morning* at the Roxie Theatre with Ken Oxley's Argonaught Male Voice Choir with his friend Dr. Eric Williams writing and recording the narration for the show to be broadcast. He formed a dance troupe called the Caribbean Entertainment Group featuring himself and several other local dancers: Irma Kirton, Cynthia Yulie, Harold Edinborough, Gloria Thorne and Mike Quashie with drummer Francois Innis. Kirton, Edinborough and Quashie all would go on to have international fame as dancers for many years outside of Trinidad.

With them, Jack took a memorable trip to Grenada, Barbados, St. Lucia, Monserrat, Antigua and Jamaica. In Jamaica, he worked with local impresario Stephen Hill in an *Carnival in Trinidad* show with a cast of 60 featured a Trinidad steelband and calypsonians Dictator and Panther besides Jamaican performers including Louise Bennett, Frats Quintette, and the Mapletoft Poulle Orchestra. The show featured calypso dancing, mambo, limbo, interpretive dances to spirituals, shango and a climactic Carnival Bacchanale. Jack and his dancers stayed for several weeks performing in Kingston and at the North Coast resorts. The show was the first time that there had ever been such an elaborate effort to stage Trinidad carnival in Jamaica and it proved very popular.

The troupe returned to Trinidad and continued to do shows locally and around Trinidad. Then in 1958 he went to London to seek his fortune, going over to give a lecture as part of a series on West Indian culture. There he met Patricia Fleming, who was dancing at the same series. She was born in Trinidad but raised in Grenada, where she had been part of Allister Bain's folk dance troupe. Jack and his future wife started performing together and quickly got involved with the West Indian artist community.

Pearl Connor acted as Jack's agent and he soon got work acting, as an extra in films, and performing in cabarets. He appeared in Errol John's *Moon on a Rainbow Shawl* in a Manchester theatre and later in the British television version. His wife meanwhile became one of the leading female limbo dancers in England.

As the Islanders, the husband and wife team started what was one of the longest running Caribbean cabaret acts. They performed throughout Great Britain and Europe in night clubs and hotels well into the Seventies. They were well known for years in the annual Christmas pantomime *Robinson Crusoe* at the Birmingham Theatre. They also toured the English holiday camps in the summers.

Jack became active politically in a committee to allow Paul Robeson to travel outside the US. His committee work brought him in touch with leading activists like Claudia Jones and Amy Ashwood Garvey. Besides their cabaret work, he and Patsy

formed another business from her unique ability to create designs, for crocheted dresses that were very popular with beauty contests. The Islanders retired, moving first to Trinidad and then the United States.

### **First Carnival 1959**

The first Carnival on January 30, 1959 was a packed event and a great success. Part of the show was even televised on the BBC. Sponsored by Claudia Jones and her *West Indian Gazette*, the show was directed by Edric Connor who, before the event occurred, noted in the *Jamaica Gleaner*, “We want to make it as much like the Port of Spain one as possible.” The décor crew worked from midnight to seven am the night before to transform the hall to a West Indian setting. The turn out was overwhelming, more than any one expected and the hall proved inadequate to the demand as over 1,000 people showed up to dance and party. Connor had arranged for the BBC to broadcast live a half hour televised glimpse of the Carnival from 10:45 pm to 11:15 pm. It featured the crowning of the Carnival Queen and the cabaret portion of the evening.

The primary event was a beauty contest. There were twelve contestants, six from Jamaica, four from Trinidad and one each from British Guiana and St. Vincent. The winner got a free round trip to Trinidad for Carnival. Corinne Skinner-Carter was blunt at the 1996 symposium in stating the importance of this. “[Claudia Jones] also started ... a Black beauty contest. And this was before the Black power days. This was before we all knew that we were beautiful. We might not have known it but she knew that we were beautiful and she started this beauty contest.”

There was much dancing by everyone who attended but there was also a cabaret performance with a number of artists. The reporter for the *Jamaica Gleaner* noted:

Despite the cramped conditions, the show went on with a bang. Songs from Edric Connor, The Southlanders and the Sepia Serenaders [with soloist Pearl Prescod] and dances from David Berahzer’s Malimba Dancers were enthusiastically received. Trinidad calypsonian – The Mighty Terror – sang the number he had specially composed for the occasion, and the evening was enlivened by Errol Phillips and the Trinidad Hummingbirds steelband, with solos by Venice Villarion.

Also featured in the cabaret were Boscoe Holder and his troupe performing “Carnival Fantasia”. There were exhibitions of limbo dancing, tamboo bamboo, and bongo. Fitzroy Coleman performed on his guitar and the young jazz singer Cleo Laine performed with Guyanese pianist Mike McKenzie and his trio.

It was quite appropriate that Terror was the first calypsonian featured – in 1955 he had recorded a calypso decrying the lack of mas, “No Carnival in Britain”:

Yes, I does cry when the time comes  
No mas here in Great Britain

Perhaps, Claudia Jones was inspired by listening to Terror’s record.

Stanley Jack remembers they also did a jump up around the building and back in the hall. They had no problem with the police who were too stunned and amused to see any problem. The Southlanders were a quartet of Jamaicans who were protégés of Edric Connor whom he took under his wing in the early Fifties and used as back-up on his

albums. On their own, the Southlanders became a very popular quartet having ten top hits in England and Europe. They always credited their success to the assistance of Edric Connor who first trained them. “Sneggs” Villarion was a leading pannist from Tacarigua who had come to London in 1958. He performed pan across Europe and beyond until his untimely death in 1991. His career is discussed in detail in Kenrick Thomas’s book *Panriga*.

In the souvenir program for the 1959 Carnival, Claudia Jones wrote: “It would be unfair for me not to tell you that we have still another determination, that is, to make the .. Caribbean Carnival an annual event.” Her determination became a reality and for the next five years her newspaper *West Indian Gazette* sponsored highly successful carnivals each year.

### **Carnival 1960 to 1964**

For 1960, the Carnival was switched to the bigger Seymour Hall and over two thousand people turned out, though some people still had to be turned away. A portion was again broadcast on the BBC. Edric Conner, Stanley Jack remembered that he had hoped to make a film of these carnival dances but was not able to raise the necessary funds. It was a fast paced cabaret program of the best, as the *Jamaica Gleaner* reporter noted:

It began with a fire dance, followed by [Trinidadian] Rupert Nurse and his orchestra, the Russ Henderson Trinidadian Steel Band, the Tropicana steelband, Grenadian Allister Bain and his dancers. Then came the soloists, British Guiana’s Cy Grant, Jamaican Elaine Delmar, and Trinidadian calypsonian Lord Kitchener, Trinidadian dancer Patsy Fleming [the late Mrs. Stanley Jack] performing a spirited limbo dance.

Jeff Henry also performed that year as did Corinne Skinner-Carter. Delmar was then a young singer who grew up in show business as the daughter of the great jazz trumpeter Leslie “Jiver” Hutchinson and has had a long career as a jazz singer and in theatre.

Allister Bain had arrived in England in 1958 after teaching Dorothy Dandridge to limbo for the movie *Island in the Sun*. Born and raised in Grenada, he led a struggling troupe there but decided to go on to try to reach fame and fortune in England. He parleyed contacts he made during the filming of *Island in the Sun* in the world of film, TV and theatre in England.

Bain had come just to attend the first Carnival but arrived too late and couldn’t get in the door it was so crowded and he didn’t know anybody. By 1960, he was performing in the cabaret segment and continued in years to come. He danced and had a troupe for several years but later was more active as an actor in British television. Just in the last few years, he has had two plays produced in London at Oval House, *Effie May* in 2005 and his latest *Catalyst* in 2008.

The 1961 Carnival was held in the Lyceum. A Jamaican nurse won the Queen contest. The cabaret featured Elaine Delmar again and the Ray Ellington orchestra which for many years featured Laudric Caton, Trinidad’s great electric jazz guitarist. Stanley Jack was again in charge and the show featured his limbo dancers. Stanley Jack

remembers that he invited lots of British theatre and film people who came and supported these carnivals.

The 1962 Carnival was held again at Seymour Hall on March 16, 1962. This was a particularly momentous one because Jones and her committee arranged for the Mighty Sparrow, by then the most celebrated calypsonian in Trinidad, to come for the Carnival. While Sparrow had been to the United States as early as the late 50s, this was his first trip to England and it was highly anticipated. Veteran broadcaster Alex Pascall remembered that it was a tense time waiting to see if Sparrow would make it. He did but there were problems with the band and in the end it was him and his guitar. Also featured were Curtis Pierre and the Dixieland Steelband who had come to England in 1961. The show was produced by Pat Castagne who had come over from Trinidad to work for the High Commission and the cabaret was directed by Boscoe Holder.

Also, for the first time, the Carnival went to Manchester. There was a busload of participants who went on that trip from London to Manchester. Pachall who was traveling as a drummer for the dancers in the show, remembered that the ride was interminable. Tensions mounted. The great Trinidadian actor Horace James who had gone to England to attend the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art in 1960 was on board. He and Sparrow got in a row after a bit of picing and had to be separated. Paschall felt the ride was significant. "It was on the bus that bluebeat met calypso with Laurel Aitken from Jamaica and Sparrow from Trinidad." Regrettably, the turnout in Manchester was so poor that it seemed as if they were performing for each other.

Lord Kitchener was living in Manchester at the time and despite the poor attendance the trip caused a fateful meeting of the two legends of calypso. More importantly, Sparrow convinced Kitch to return to Trinidad which occurred later that year and that changed the face of calypso with his return and the start of the Revue.

In 1963, the London Carnival got away from the Beauty Queen contest and replaced it with a Carnival masquerade costume competition. It was won by a Trinidadian playing King Sailor. Highlights of the cabaret were provided by Horace. The *Gleaner* noted:

Trinidadian comedian Horace James compere with his usual brilliance, excelling himself with a skit on various British television shows as he thinks they will be presented on television in Jamaica and Trinidad. Later he teamed up with Charles Hyatt to do a song on why the Federation broke up. It was a parody of "*Lets Call the Whole Thing Off*".

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