

Mannette: I'm coming back home

Newsday
30/9/99 pg. 5

By SEAN NERO

ELLIOT "Ellie" Mannette, recipient of the US National Endowment Award for his contribution cultural development, is coming home.

After living in the United States of America — his adopted home for the past 30 years — Mannette on Tuesday said he will be coming home to Trinidad, the place of his birth, next year.

But his visit will not be a social one, as Mannette, artiste-in-resident at West Virginia University, plans to bring his team of pan technicians to Trinidad at the University of the West Indies, St Augustine, where they will set up camp and invite pan tuners to witness his work over the years.

Since migrating to the US, Mannette has never returned to Trinidad and Tobago.

"I could not return home," he said. "My schedule was too hectic and it denied me the time to do so."

While admitting that he was unaware of the happenings in Trinidad and Tobago as it related to the pan, the US National Endowment for the Arts awardee championed the call for Trinidad and Tobago's Government to establish pan development programmes at the University of the West Indies.

"Bertie Marshall and Tony Williams are just as talented as I am," said Mannette, "and they should be given the adjunct title of Professors at the UWI, developing pan programmes."

Mannette established over 500 programmes in other colleges and institutions

across the US and has done lectures in that country as well as internationally.

He intimated that members of the scientific community needed to become more involved.

Mannette believes that this country's government has two minds about pan: they love it and hate it at the same time.

"The US must love pan to bring it to one of its campuses and make me a member of its faculty," Mannette remarked.

Mannette lamented that he would hate to see pan on a grand scale in the United States but on a small scale in Trinidad and Tobago.

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