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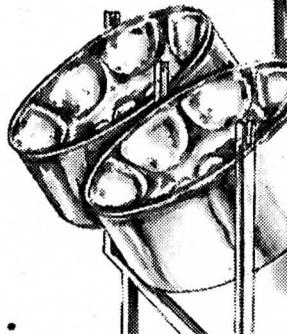
Pan science conference attracts world scholars

By TERRY JOSEPH

BILLED as The First International Conference on the Science and Technology of the Steelpan, a three-day symposium, due to be held here in October, is already attracting the attention of scholars from around the world and has thoroughly excited stakeholders in the local steelband movement.

Mounted jointly by Pan Trinidad and the National Institute of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology (Niherst), the conference is designed to parallel the period of the World Steelband Music Festival, which takes place here from October 12 to 21 as part of Government's millennium celebrations.

To complement the scholarship, pan makers and tuners in-



involved in the experimental aspects of pan development, are also being invited to present their innovations for study and discussions at the conference, which takes place from October 16 to 18 at Crowne Plaza (formerly the Holiday Inn). By the same opportunity, contributors will have their work documented for publication at the end of the talks.

The conference programme includes special presentations by distinguished scien-

tists and panmakers who are actively engaged in research, including conference chairman Dr Anthony Achong (University of the West Indies—Department of Physics), Bertie Marshall (Trinidad & Tobago—premier panmaker), Thomas D Rossing (Professor of Physics, Northern Illinois University—main area acoustics and musical instruments), Uwe J. Hansen (Professor Emeritus, Dept of Physics, Indiana State University—main research in acoustics and musical instruments), Felix Rohner, of the Panart organisation in Berne, Switzerland and Dr Derek Gay (University of the West Indies—Dept of Civil Engineering).

For more than 20 years, Dr Achong, who has also done extensive research in the areas of astronomy, solar energy and math, has been working with pan. He has investigated construction, processing (with

heat and other treatments), tuning, acoustics, dynamics, history, panface layout and modifications.

Dr Achong has also produced an electronic version that does everything the "classical" mechanical version does, whether it is tuned or untuned and a computerized version that does not require pre-recorded pan sounds for sampling (software not yet fully optimised for live play).

He has published a lot of his work, including the Niherst Sci-TechKnoFest 97 pan book, *The Theory of the Steelpan*.

The talks are being held on the rest days between rounds of the music festival.

For those wishing to participate, registration forms and other technical and administrative particulars are available on the Internet at www.steelpanresearch.com or from the Conference Secretariat, Pan Trinidad, Queen's Park West and Niherst Head Office, 20 Victoria Avenue, Port of Spain.