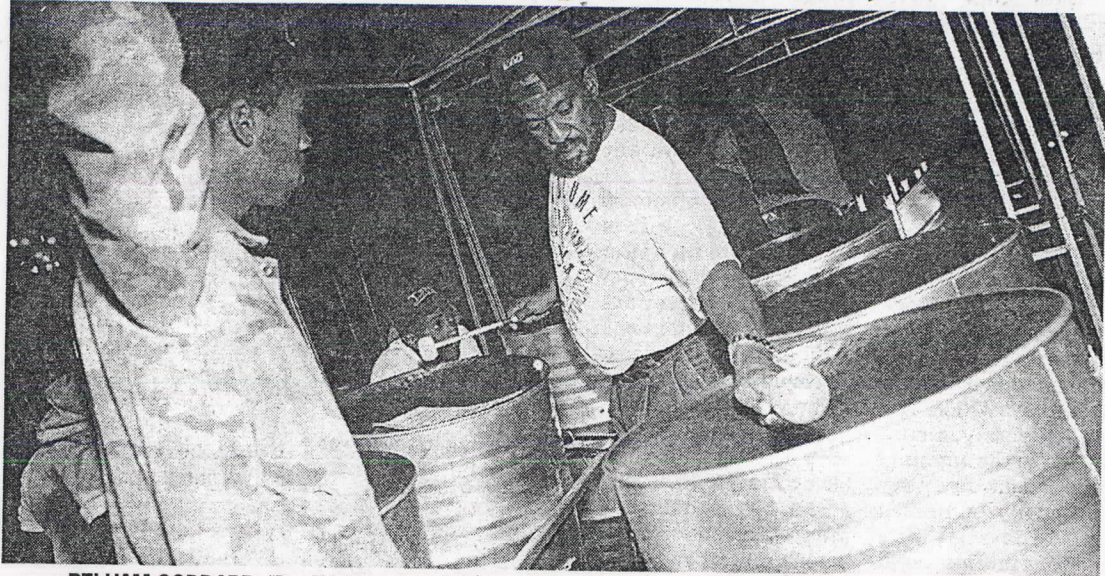


Goddard: If pan dies, it will be Pan Trinbago that will help kill it



PELHAM GODDARD: "Pan Trinbago does little to promote pan the way it should." Photos by SEAN DRAKES.

By SHEREEN ALI

ALTHOUGH THE emphasis for Panorama is on competitive, high-energy music, many pan players never make the Savannah stage. For many small communities, the district panyard is where people come togeth-

er to make music and socialise.

Pelham Goddard, arranging music for Exodus steelband in Tunapuna this year, is a self taught musician who grew up surrounded by pan culture.

"Our family had a tenor pan in a shed in the back

yard, and everybody used to pick out a tune," he remembers.

"My whole family is pan. I had three brothers in Tripoli, I was with Crossfire, then Silver Stars, I played Starlift in '68, I have family in Invaders. The first band I arranged for

was Third World, in St James — from '73 to '79. I founded that band. Then I arranged for Invaders in '83, Starlift in '86, and Exodus in '89."

A veteran pan player who has arranged many songs — "I arranged *Sugar Bum Bum* for Kitchener, and many road marches — *Soca Baptist* (Superblue), *Look de Devil* (Penguin), *Bahia Girl* and *The Hammer* (Rudder), to name some," — Goddard's involvement in local music has been consistent.

Goddard says: "If pan dies, it will be Pan Trinbago and some media that will help kill it. Pan Trinbago does little to promote pan the way it should.

"Pan Trinbago takes too many things for granted. Take the prelims, for example. There were too many competing festivals

serious industry, he thinks.

"All (the officials) seem to want to do is to push pan down people throat, teach it to children in schools, while ignoring what the actual musicians need. We should be doing better than that," says Goddard.

"One radio station which advertises itself as the station for local, TT culture, never even broadcast live coverage of the Panorama preliminaries — so up to now, the general public who couldn't make it to the Savannah, doesn't know what played," notes Goddard.

His observations reflect perennial problems besetting the organisation of Panorama as a national event, and the perception by many pan players that they are under-valued. More professional presentation and marketing of pan is needed, Goddard suggests.

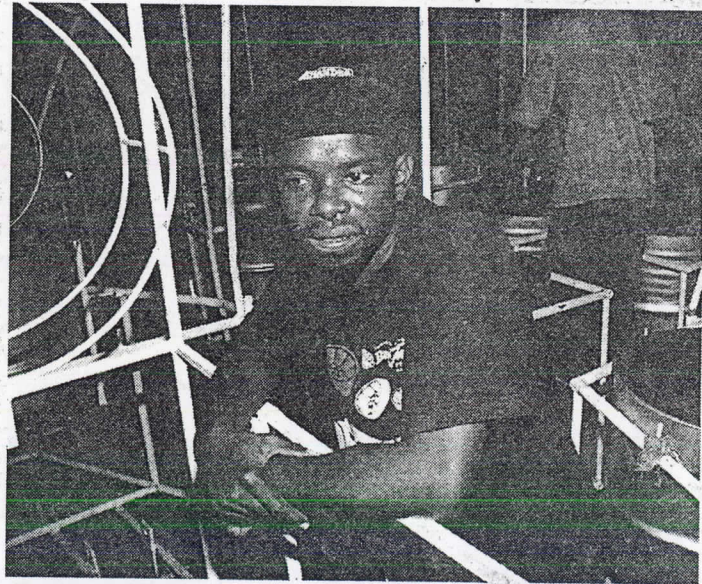
Pan arranger Clarence Morris, 30, of Tropical Angel Harps in Enterprise, Chaguanas, agrees that more should be done to systematically promote and nurture pan, but avoids the politics to focus on music.

Like Goddard, Morris is a child of pan. Also self-taught, a soft-spoken Morris says that for him, "Pan is a family thing."

"Since I was born, the family was involved. I started at age 11, joined the band and played tenor. Now, I can play all kinds of pan. I had nine brothers playing in the band, now there are seven. Sisters, nephews, all play pan," reveals Morris.

The rites of pan

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teenager I couldn't afford a pan so I played in Scherzando (not the current band by the same name!), and later a band called Camboulay. I came from Surrey Village, 2.5 miles up Lopinot Road, and music was always in the air, especially parang. So I developed a good sense of chords from there and

be heard twice weekly.

Over the years, Samaroo has been a prolific arranger for bands competing in Panorama. He comments that one problem facing arrangers this year — and indeed in the past few years — has been the lack of a variety of music to work from.

"We're getting lots of dance hall music and par-

the future, though, I might look more to this."

"Now we have some very bright pannists" — who can read, play and even compose their own music. The majority, though, still learn by rote.

About the craft of arranging music for pan, Goddard says: "An arranger puts the raw material to-

adding: "Sometimes a tune falls down a hole, and you have to rework parts of it to rescue it during practice."

Clarence Morris, of Angel Harps, observes that: "Certain players develop an ear for music and can listen and play.

Peter Grey was our arranger until he migrated to the US in 1984. We went to other arrangers, but they didn't have the time. I eventually did a lot of the work and they decided to let me carry on as arranger.

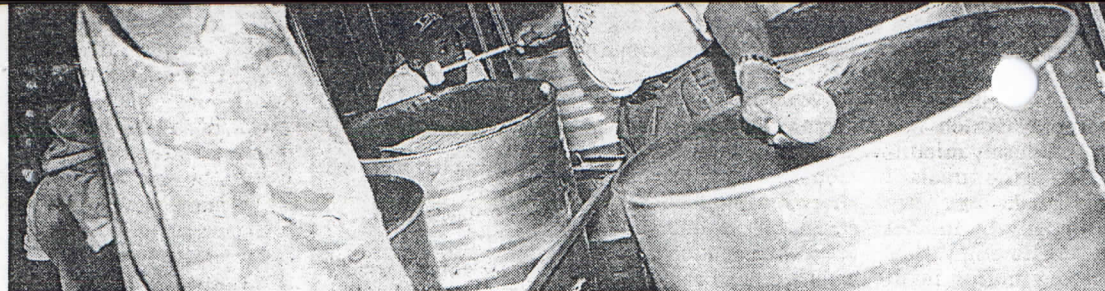
"But arranging can be hard work. You have to sit down and think and sometimes you can't go to sleep at night until you have it right. And you improve during nightly practice," says Morris.

Morris arranged for the El Dorado school's steelband from 1985 to 1994, and reflects that: "It's harder arranging for students because you have to teach them skills of playing pan as well as learning new tunes."

"In the panyard, you can't get too flustered. Sometimes I might knock the pan to signal — stop coasting — to the fellas, cool it. Some might get a bit frustrated.

But it's vibes, it's a music, it's supposed to be about love, and once you have that understanding, the band comes together, no matter how many times you have to rehearse a part," says Pelham Goddard of his love for pan.

Morris echoes this when he says: "What's the most rewarding part of arrange-



PELHAM GODDARD: "Pan Trinbago does little to promote pan the way it should." *Photos by SEAN DRAKES.*

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er to make music and socialise.

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yard, and everybody used to pick out a tune," he remembers.

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was Third World, in St James — from '73 to '79. I founded that band. Then I arranged for Invaders in '83, Starlift in '86, and Exodus in '89."

A veteran pan player who has arranged many songs — "I arranged *Sugar Bum Bum* for Kitchener, and many road marches — *Soca Baptist* (Superblue), *Look de Devil* (Penguin), *Bahia Girl* and *The Hammer* (Rudder), to name some," — Goddard's involvement in local music has been consistent.

Goddard says: "If pan dies, it will be Pan Trinbago and some media that will help kill it. Pan Trinbago does little to promote pan the way it should.

"Pan Trinbago takes too many things for granted. Take the prelims, for example. There were too many competing festivals on that Saturday for them to assume people would flock to Panorama. They needed to advertise more. There was no promotion for Panorama. Imagine: so many hundreds of pan musicians taking part, and no promotion!"

This attitude, Goddard believes, was reflected last November with the Pan Festival, when only 200 spectators showed up. People take pan for granted, without investing in it as a

tion for local, TT culture, never even broadcast live coverage of the Panorama preliminaries — so up to now, the general public who couldn't make it to the Savannah, doesn't know what played," notes Goddard.

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Like Goddard, Morris is a child of pan. Also self-taught, a soft-spoken Morris says that for him, "Pan is a family thing."

"Since I was born, the family was involved. I started at age 11, joined the band and played tenor. Now, I can play all kinds of pan. I had nine brothers playing in the band, now there are seven. Sisters, nephews, all play pan," reveals Morris.

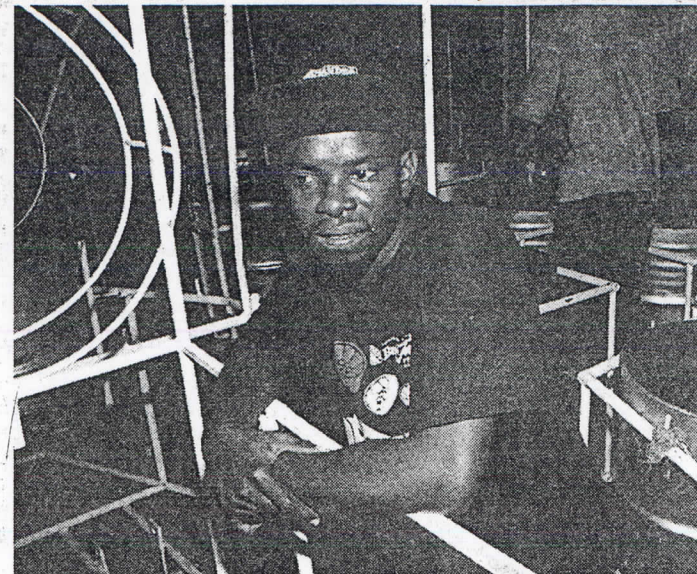
He says the number of people, especially youth, wanting to join the band has increased in the past few years, with a significant number of young women interested in improving their music skills.

Jit Samaroo, who is arranging music for three pan sides this year — Amoco Renegades, Lee Chong and Cordettes — is another arranger who is self-taught.

"I always liked pan," says Samaroo, 45, "but as a

of pan

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teenager I couldn't afford a pan so I played in Scherzando (not the current band by the same name!), and later a band called Camboulay. I came from Surrey Village, 2.5 miles up Lopinot Road, and music was always in the air, especially parang. So I developed a good sense of chords from there and got into the pan at about age 13 or 14."

A quiet, unassuming man, Samaroo formed a family band called the Samaroo Kids in 1961 as a form of therapy to deal with the death of his mother. The band's first performance was made with two tenor pans, one triple guitar, one double second, one four-bass and a trap set. In 1970 they were contracted to play for the Trinidad Hilton, where they can still

be heard twice weekly.

Over the years, Samaroo has been a prolific arranger for bands competing in Panorama. He comments that one problem facing arrangers this year — and indeed in the past few years — has been the lack of a variety of music to work from.

"We're getting lots of dance hall music and party music. That's not to say that party music can't be arranged into good pan music — remember *A Minor* and *Bee's Melody*, both of which were good party tunes as well as good Panorama tunes. But there's less variety."

What about the option of composing music himself, exclusively for pan?

"I used to compose, I did it three years for Cordettes, but I haven't done my own compositions this year. In

the future, though, I might look more to this."

"Now we have some very bright pannists" — who can read, play and even compose their own music. The majority, though, still learn by rote.

About the craft of arranging music for pan, Goddard says: "An arranger puts the raw material together. It's like getting your tailor to make a pants: you give him the cloth, your ideas on style, then he uses his scissors and thread and skills to make something good for you."

"It's a thing that develops as you practice, so that at the end of the day, you could do up to 20 minutes of variations on the composition, even though you are only required to do 10 for the Panorama competition," Goddard explains,

arranger until he migrated to the US in 1984. We went to other arrangers, but they didn't have the time. I eventually did a lot of the work and they decided to let me carry on as arranger.

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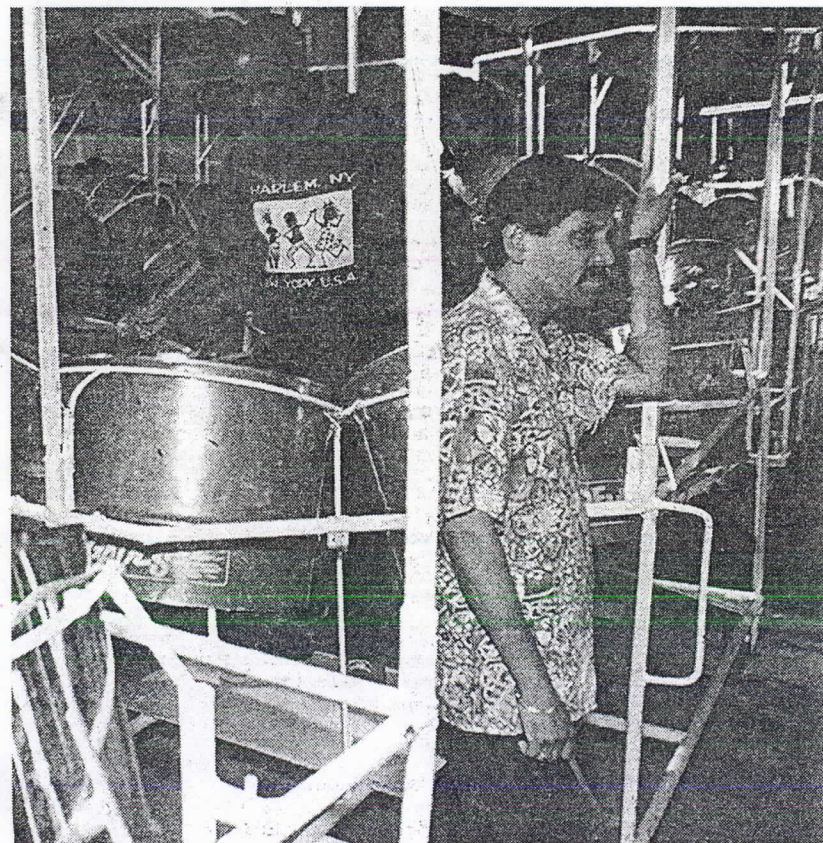
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Morris echoes this when he says: "What's the most rewarding part of arranging? ... Winning! But even when you don't win, it's always a great experience, because you're always learning. Ours is a family band. We have a love, it's more like home — I would like to stay there for the rest of my life."

And for Jit Samaroo, "When you finish a piece of music, and you see that people are enjoying it, and that it is making them happy — that is a priceless feeling."



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