

A&amp;E

Arts &amp; Entertainment

## Despite poor Queen's Hall acoustics

## PATASAR TRIUMPHS AT PAN JAZZ

By TERRY JOSEPH

**B**AD SOUND reproduction and inordinately long set-changes marred an

other-wise interesting weekend of Pan Jazz. Visiting performers Freddie Hubbard and Paquito D'Rivera made the best of it, but both for-foreign-based artistes and locally grown musicians protested about the conditions under which they had to perform.

Queen's Hall, used for the first time as a venue for Pan Jazz, is notorious for bad acoustics and is situated at a major traffic interchange, providing enormous challenges for any sound engineer. But at the launch of the show last month, production officials assured the media that they had taken care of the sound difficulties. Their

efforts were not evident.

Mungal Patasar, whose group Pantar was the first real victim of the electronic system, actually called out to the sound engineer during their performance on Friday night, pleading with him to make adjustments, in par-

was important, therefore, to have careful mixing, to avoid unpleasant noises.

Patasar later explained that many sound engineers do not understand the tabla, which is more of a musical than a percussion instrument. On Saturday night, Raf Robertson would complain that the sound engineers did not seem to understand the acoustic piano.

During "Varni", the combination of a raga and the traditional folk song "Ah Go Tell Mih Mama (Doh Sen' Mih Dong Dey)", the lower register of the tabla was lost in a flapping sound that muffled the notes.

But Patasar was well-received by the near-capacity audience, although the group, which utilises a single tenor, double tenor, two keyboards, sitar, tabla, tenor saxophone and drums, could use some more

intensive rehearsals.

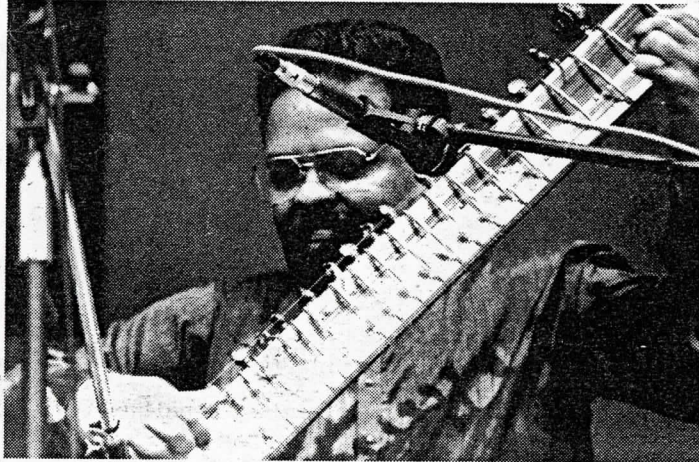
Midway through the performance he told the audience, "You make me feel that the philosophy of Pantar has been achieved." It is a philosophy that he describes as "incorporating all the indigenous forms of home". The group

closed with a Harold Headley interpretation of another traditional song, "Old Lady Walk a Mile and a Half".

The pan ensembles were perhaps the only groups which seemed to have no problem with the sound. On Friday, Earl Brooks' Pan Caribe and the Tropical Angel Harps on Saturday both delivered balanced tones, but the quartets and quintets which mixed pan and conventional instruments suffered.

The Othello Molineaux quartet suffered on Friday night but was spared the agony of excessively loud kit drums on Saturday, after discussions with the sound engineer and the producers. Molineaux was also reduced to signalling to the engineers while concentrating on works as intricate as "Bluesette".

PAN JAZZ continues on page 31



ticular to raise the level of the tabla, played by his son Prashad.

In Pantar's fusion of eastern and western music, the sitar often performs the same patterns as the single-tenor pan. Tabla and kit drums also share much the same musical space. It