

Pat Bishop experiments for more accurate pan

By TERRY JOSEPH

THE Lydian Steel Ensemble will this weekend premiere its

latest approach to pan performance at two concerts called Basically Baroque, to be held Under the Trees at Hotel

Normandie. Musical director Pat Bishop describes the work as: "part of a relentless search for

the purest pan, as distinct from perfect pan". To achieve her purpose, Bishop has trained her pan-

nists to perform on combinations of lead instruments rather than confine each player to one orchestral voice.

Of the 20 performers in Basically Baroque, six will play such combinations.

The single-tenor will be combined with either double-tenor or double-second, to offer a sufficiency of notes to lead players and by the same opportunity, ensure more accurate pitch.

"Really, what we are attempting to do is eliminate those single-player pans that limit the interpretation of melodic line by available notes and give the tenor player enough notes to be able to reproduce the standard repertoire more effectively," Bishop said.

"While there may be nothing spectacular about the idea, it has already produced purer pan. It is an experiment. We are trying to push the limits of what pan could sound like, what it can do and investigate possible techniques for a more accurate identification with the written music.

"Not a lot of this is going on elsewhere, because the Panorama competition and other contests push those who handle music for the steel orchestra in a particular direction, a very narrow tunnel, which makes them do only what the competition demands," she said.

"The interest is, therefore, focused on a single area and not enough emphasis is being placed on the music.

"Because players have been drilled to concentrate on winning a competition and going on tour and steelband management almost invariably shares that interest, all other questions have been