

ML1040

# Pan... Judging the judges

By TERRY JOSEPH

**AT THE LAUNCH of Pan Ramajay, the question was raised again: "Are we going to see the same set of judges for yet another pan event?"**

IT IS A DILEMMA that now squarely confronts Pan Trinbago. Clearly pannists, musical arrangers and the public are growing tired of predictable results from every competition, but no new jurists seem anxious to come forward and replace the erring few.

At last week's launch of Pan Ramajay, chairman of the proceedings Desmond Waithe told a tale of how difficult it was to get new people onto the bench. Naming Clive Zanda as one person who declined, but who they felt would be a natural choice for this event, Waithe said that none of their hopes had materialised.

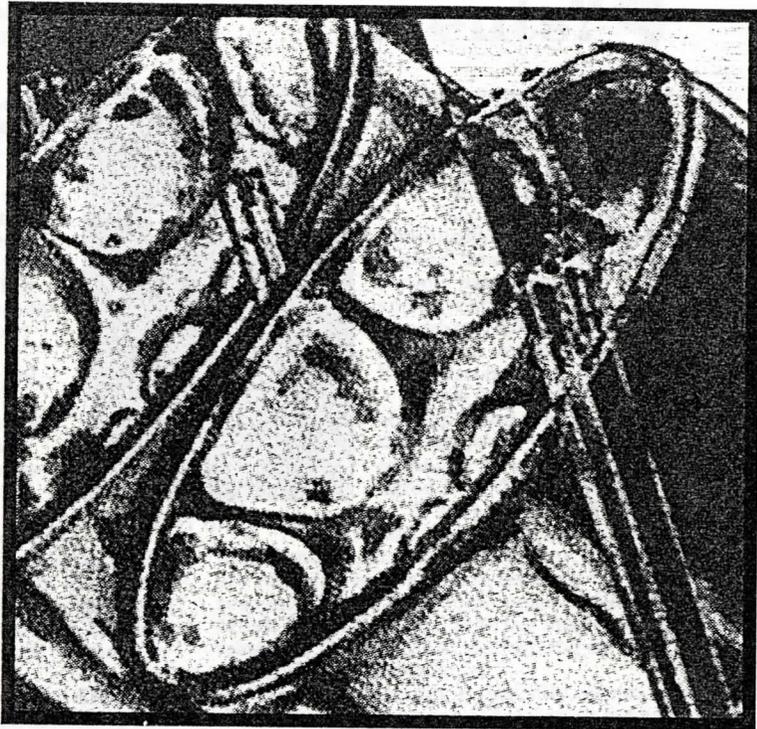
Last year at Jouvert, members of Pamberi Steel Orchestra dragged an effigy of respected musician Leston Paul all the way through Port of Spain, presumably because they did not like his judging at the Panorama finals. This year, members of Carib Tokyo stormed the offices of Pan Trinbago for much the same reason.

Pan Trinbago President Owen Serrette told the *Sunday Express* that it was not an easy problem to solve.

"We at Pan Trinbago have discussed this matter at both the executive and general membership levels and are now considering inviting comments from the public on this matter.

"We were there. We heard the public outcry when the placings for the Hydro Agri Skiffle Bunch and the Courts Laventille Sounds Specialists were announced at the Panorama finals. It was clear to us that the opinions of the judges were some distance from the feeling of the audience.

"But there are a lot of questions to be considered in these matters. Should we look at



**'Should we look at crowd response, when we have already agreed upon a set of musical**

Listen to Bach's 'Jesu Joy of Man's Desiring' and you will know the Jit style, there is no breathing, no rest between the notes, they travel on relentlessly. That is Jit Samaroo for you. Who can say that this style is right or wrong?

"Few of the arrangers may be as meticulous as Jit. You get to know the work, the style, perhaps, but that does not determine the points on the actual night of performance.

**"T**HOSE WHO argue that we who learnt music back in the fifties do not understand today's chords are silly and uninformed. There are no new chords and no new music. It is nothing more than a whole lot of rubbish. Only in the classical format have any changes occurred. Godwin Bowen is an innovative musician, Boogie is always worth listening to and Bradley, of course, is a genius.

"People like Junior Regrello only argue when the judgement comes out against them. When he won in San Fernando, bet he didn't come running to you to give you a story then!" she fumed.

Still, there will be a predictable roar when the pannists play arrangements containing chromatic scales and crescendos, whether

or not the arranger has managed to integrate those musical manoeuvres into the structure of the song.

Owen Serrette maintains that: "These judges are competent musicians and are the best people that we can get at present. Loud and sometimes violent objections from unsuccessful bands make it even more difficult to source new judges.

"We do not mind if people question their abilities, but we cannot stand by and hear people questioning the integrity of our judges.

"Those who feel that things like 'spirit of Carnival' or some other nebulous concept like that should be included in the criteria, really ought to tell us how we could possibly judge such an absolutely intangible area."



MERLE ALBINO DE COTEAU

Serrette also wants the public to write in its views. His problems and those of Pan Trinbago may have been exacerbated by this exchange, as Merle Albino de Coteau concluded: "All these complainers may have done me a favour, yes. They may very well have made up my mind for me. I feel it is time that I stop subjecting myself to all of this ridicule."

Now, even if they leave most of the panel exactly as it has been for the last 15 years, it seems, they have to look for at least one new judge.

