

# Pan is Beautiful 111 needs support of all Trinidadians

By Selwyn Tarradath  
P.R.O. Pan Trnabago

THE STEELBAND Music Festival started in the early 1950's as an effort to channel the fierce and often violent rivalries of the different steelbands into the more sophisticated arena of musical competition.

The first competition held at Roxy Theatre, was won by Boys Town Steelband of Pt Cumana which was led by Clem Bellerand. They played the tune Anna, a Latin American Meringue. These competitions continued in a sporadic and spontaneous fashion throughout the 50s, but what attracted the most attention was the rivalry between the soloists, for it was an era of fine pan musicians whose skills caused much debate and controversy.

The names most bandied about were Kelvin Hart, Patsy Haynes, Theo Stephens, Belgrave Bonaparte, Eamon Thorpe, Emmanuel 'Cobo Jack' Riley, Errol Zyparine and Herman 'Rock' Johnson.

The fancied bands were Invaders, Dixieland, Ebonites, Trinidad All Stars, Crossfire, Southern All Stars, Free French, Southern Symphony and Southern Marines among others.

The Festival began to gain public acclaim and attention and was brought starkly into the limelight in the year 1959 when Dixieland led by Curtis Pierre and playing *Agnus Dei* just narrowly edged out Ellie Mannette's Invaders with a Jocelyn Pierre arrangement of *In a Monastery Garden*.

The 60s saw the advent of Pan Am North Stars and the legendary Anthony Williams, the acknowledged genius of pan. The lighter classics of Bach and Handel along with Strauss waltzes became favourite tunes of choice and the steelband became recognised as one of the most important musical discoveries of the 20th century.

The festival was brought to its zenith in 1966 when both North Stars and Syncopators played Von Suppe's *Poets and Peasants* with such accuracy and skill that only Tony Williams' creative and artistic treatment of the test piece, *Intermezzo in E* by Superintendent Anthony Prospect could break the deadlock between these two bands.

The golden days of pan were at an end and steelbands went into a decline. The Panorama syndrome engrossed and strangled most of the development of the art form.

There was a lapse between the years 1973 to 1980 when Pan Trnabago found a willing partner in the Kirpalani Group of Companies to re-establish the Steelband Music Festival which although failing to realize a profit was an enormous success. Kirpalani's again subsidised and assisted in the production of "Pan is Beautiful II" in 1982.

The stage was now set for Pan Trnabago to stand on its own and bear the burden of the 1984 Steelband Music Festival "Pan is Beautiful III".

We have decided to keep the continuity of the name for this festival as a tribute to the contribution of Kirpalani's and to the efforts of its key personnel especially Dr Fareed Sultan Khan, Roy Boyke and Kenny De Silva.

We have had the experience of initiating and managing the School Steelband Festivals in 1981 and 1983 and with the theme of *Steelband Resurgence* uppermost in our mind, we are approaching the 1984 Festival with confidence.

The organising committee consists of Arnim Smith as chairman, Andre Moses and Richard Forteau as the other Pan Trnabago representatives. The festival is now a national effort so we have appointed Dr Fareed Sultan Khan of Kirpalani and Ms Angela Hamel Smith of the Chamber of Commerce as the private sector representatives on the organising committee. Government through the Ministry of Sports, Culture and Youth Affairs has indicated, its intention of supplying two Public Sector representatives to the committee but so far these have not been identified to us.

Kirpalani has jumped the gun by donating \$50,000 to the festival as well as back up services such as the use of its retail outlets for ticket sales. Government has pledged \$91,000 which represents the cost of rental of the venue and the provision of security services.

The response from the private sector has been very encouraging. Firms have already sponsored the payment of performance fees for the semi-finals and finals which are \$5,000 and \$10,000 per band respectively and we expect others to come forward with similar offers.

Business houses have donated thousands of dollars worth of their products to be used as refreshment for the participants and others have subscribed to our advertising programme but we still need a lot more commitment from the commercial sector if we are to cover our expenses and put the Festival on a sound financial footing. We expect that whenever the public sector representatives are forwarded to the committee that the festival would receive some sort of assistance from the state enterprises.

The advertisement and promotion of the festival is the responsibility of the public relations sub-committee which is convened by the public relations officer of Pan Trnabago and consists of well known P.R. Personnel including Ron Pollard, Colonial Life Insurance Co. Ltd.; Sandra Bernard, P.R.A.T.T. and Royal Bank; Ann Marie Grant, Trinidad & Tobago Tourist Board; Winston Sadoo, Trinidad & Tobago Television; Paul Rennie, National Broadcasting Service; Lee Johnson, McCann Erickson; Louis Lee Sing, B.W.I.A.; Jan Beausoliel, Trinidad & Tobago Hotel Association; and representative of Atlas Advertising Agency, which has been retained for 'Pan is



Beautiful III', with the expectation that they would maintain the high standard of efficiency and performance which

was manifested in the last two festivals. The committee's secretary is Barbara Critchlow of Catelli All Stars.

The dates of the festival are the 19th, 20th and 21st of October for the preliminaries, 29th

and 30th October for the semi-finals and the grand final takes place on the 3rd November 1984. Venue is the Jean Pierre Complex. Tickets are available at the Astor Cinema, Pan Trnabago's Office at No 111 Queen Street, Port of Spain and at all Kirpalani Stores.

Tickets for the finals cost \$40 each and there are only 1,800 single tickets available, all the others are twinned to the semi-finals and cost \$75 for the three shows, this arrangement offers a saving of \$35 as each semi-final ticket costs \$35.

It also assures that bona fide pan enthusiasts are not excluded from total participation in the festival by people who just want to be a part of the spectacle of the grand finale.

The preliminary rounds often offer the most entertainment and bands may play a very interesting piece of music which does not automatically merit them the

opportunity to go further. Boogie Sharpe's *Moods 1st Movement* which was so highly acclaimed as the test piece for the schools' festival was heard only at the preliminary round last time.

The organising committee is making special arrangements for the preliminaries to accommodate students and supporters of bands. The admission price of \$14 will be reduced to \$8 for students and \$10 for band supporters.

The motto of the festival *Yours, Mine and Ours* is self explanatory and we of Pan Trnabago look forward to the success of "Pan is Beautiful III" which must be the objective of every true citizen of Trinidad and Tobago. Now is the time to stop paying lip service to pan and to put your money where your mouth is to ensure that there are no empty seats while our "heroes" are performing their hearts out.