

The SteelpanAuthority.com is here!

Despers apprentice promotes lifestyle pan

The SteelpanAuthority.com is here!

Where does the T&T steelband disappear to after Panorama and Carnival?

Most of the freshly-painted drums—Trinidad All Stars' gold, Desperadoes' silver, Renegades' white—usually collect dust until the next festive season, when pannists can be found in the yards well into the night, practising their tune for Panorama.

Journalist and pan aficionado Sean Nero wants to change that image of the steelband: T&T's national musical instrument.

Nero's initiative is to create steelpanauthority.com, dubbed The Pulse of Pan. The Web site was developed by SIR Technologies.

By Nero's definition, Steelpan Authority is not just another Web site, but a lifestyle.

Here's how he plans to bring the steelpan alive, especially post-Carnival and for the benefit of many young pannists, who right now can't envision a viable future playing the pan. The violence between the police and patrons on the Greens at the Queen's Park Savannah on February 5, has not helped.

For instance, do pan lovers know that there were 50-plus pan concerts in T&T in 2011?

There were Pan Trinbago's series, Pan in de Countryside; Harmonites' annual Christmas in de Panyard event; Carib Woodbrook Playboyz periodically opens up its panyard for a month for Friday after-work limes, where the steelpan is the entertainment.

Caribbean Airlines Invaders had a Father's Day concert at its Tragarete Road panyard. That event was separate from its annual Pan, Parang and Pork, held at the Queen's Park Oval.

PCS Nitrogen Silver Stars had its own Pan, Parang and Pork, which is a five-consecutive Saturday event. Silver Stars' lime attracts what Nero has described as "middle-class" pan lovers. Among its attendees are senior counsel Martin Daly, human resource specialist Hollick Rajkumar, and diplomats.

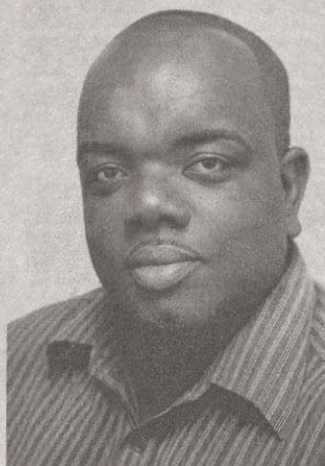
There was also the National Steel Symphony Orchestra, which was conceived by the Patrick Manning administration, had in 2011 several concerts, a major one being Pan on a Higher Note, held at the National Academy for the Performing Arts.

Nero plans to observe major events throughout the year, including Black History Month, Emancipation Day and Divali, on this Web site.

For instance, he spoke of wanting to profile a female pannist, local or foreign, for International Women's Day.

There are other offshoots of Steelpan Authority in the making.

Nero said that by March, the pan community



Sean Nero

would be viewing its own brand of television. As the name suggests, steelpanTV.com is part of the Nero multi-media approach to the ongoing promotion and growing acceptance of the steelpan in T&T.

SteelpanTV.com plans to develop content that remains specific to the steelpan. Already, interviews have been recorded with Destra Garcia, former International Power Monarch Ronnie Mc Intosh and reigning Play Whe Groovy Monarch Kees Dieffenthaler, in which they share their thoughts on the steelpan and how they can use their international gigs as soca entertainers to promote this genre of

music.

The steelpanTV.com crew has been attending events and gathering material for what promises to be an exciting and entertaining series.

Other projects in the pipeline for 2012 include steelpanradio.com and a magazine.

A 25th Anniversary gift

The emergence of the steelpanauthority.com as part of a multi-media experience coincides with Nero's 25th anniversary as a member of the steelpan fraternity.

He started playing the steelpan while still attending Morvant Laventille Junior Secondary School with the in-house steel orchestra, under the direction of Edgar Wilson and the late Roland Gordon. The year was 1987. The school steelband was commonly referred to as junior Desperadoes and Nero, whose trademark instrument is the double second pan, honed his skill further under the expertise guidance of pannists from the legendary steelband.

During his eight-year tenure with the school steelband, Nero also served as a vice-captain. The band brought home three National Junior Panorama titles. He was still a principle member of the youth steel orchestra when he joined the Renegades Steel Orchestra in 1990.

It's now 22 years since Nero became a stage-side member of Renegades. He has also served as a member of the band's management team.

When Nero became a bonafide member of nine-time National Panorama champion—Renegades—he was just 15. After just two months on its stage-side Nero became eligible to tour with the band and there began globe-trotting to the other islands in the Caribbean, the United States, Canada, Japan, Taiwan, and multiple European countries.

He was also a trustee with the Northern Region of Pan Trinbago.

As a young musician Nero has composed original pieces including Trade Winds, published at the 1996 Pan Is Beautiful Steelband Competition and the unpublished work, The Tempest.

Nero said that by March, the pan community would be viewing its own brand of television. As the name suggests, steelpanTV.com is part of the Nero multi-media approach to the ongoing promotion and growing acceptance of the steelpan in T&T.