

Tobago sets the trend in pan

SEAN NERO

TOBAGO-BASED RBTT Redemption Sound Setters Steel Orchestra has produced the best overall concert of the 2006 Digicel/Pan Trinbago Carols on Steel series.

Following six consecutive weeks of pan carolling activity across the country, Sound Setters, led by Marie Toby, offered a musical package that proved superior.

With a cast that included ten-time National Panorama Champion Witco Desperadoes, Carib Dixieland, vocalists Petunia Thomas, Alicia Stephens, Ruth Dass, Signal Hill Alumni Choir, Bindley B, saxophonist Hans Phillips and, of course, the host, it was easy to understand the production's success.

Laventille-based Desperadoes was given a lusty Tobago welcome as its members took the spotlight.

Outfitted in black waistcoats and trousers, with white long sleeve

shirts, the band, led by Bertram Glasgow, was ready to share its special musical brand.

In tribute to late arranger Clive Bradley, Desperadoes opened with John Legend's Ordinary People, which earned the band its first Pan In the 21st Century title in 2005.

The wondrous vibes continued with Despers' performance of its 2006 Pan In the 21st Century tune-of-choice titled So Sick, from R&B star Ne-Yo, before introducing Scrunter's parang soca number Leroy—then to another winning piece worked on by Bradley.

Continuing on its tremendous musical journey the band from the Hill dipped into the songbook of Offenbach to render Orpheus In the Underworld.

That's when the audience was introduced to Desperadoes' assistant manager/bass player and guest conductor Anthony Mc Quilkin.

Pan Trinbago president Patrick



WINSTON GORDON conducts RBTT Redemption Sound Setters during its smooth show.

Arnold and other members of his national and regional executives could not contain their delight as Mc Quilkin took the stage.

Mc Quilkin was focused and composed and commanded the full attention of the pannists.

This year's Carols on Steel began at the panyard of Curepe Scherzando and ended at the Duke Street, Port-of-Spain base of Neal and Massy Trinidad All Stars.

But, when the curtain closed on the series, there was no disputing that Sound Setters' show, nestled in the middle of the series, had the edge on rivals presentations.

Its concert was staged on the weekend of De-

ember 3, at its Bethel, Tobago, pan theatre, before a capacity audience and its mix of local-based international renowned artistes were in fine form.

Under the direction of manager and musical director Winston Gordon, Sound Setters—the multiple time Tobago House of Assembly Pan Champ, delivered smooth and caressing notes.

Sharing the spotlight with songsters Petunia Thomas and Ruth Dass, these acts represented another brilliant coming together of voices and steel.

First up was Thomas dressed in fiery red, doing I'll Be Home for Christmas, followed by Kiss Me for Christmas.

Ruth Dass joined Thomas for a duo of O Holy Night.

The yuletide repertoire continued with Hans Phillips on saxophone doing Luther Vandross' Holiday Cheer.

Carib Dixieland was well received during its capsule, doing Christmas favourites as heard by the conventional orchestras on site, but injecting its own style.



RUTH DASS, left and PETUNIA THOMAS deliver O Holy Night.