

ML 1040



Clyde "Lightning" George and Bertie Marshall.

'Prince of pan' celebrates birthday with benefit dinner

THE Diego Martin Pan Institute (DMPI) will once again celebrate the birthday of "the prince of pan," Bertie Marshall, with benefit performances and a dinner to be hosted on Tuesday February 6, from 6-10 p.m., at the DMPI headquarters in Diego Martin.

Marshall, the immortal Trinbagonian pan innovator who invented the double-tenor, has been hospitalised twice in recent years with complications stemming from a stroke and diabetes.

All proceeds from the DMPI event will go to the Bertie Marshall Fund.

Clyde "Lightning" George, the well-known jazz pannist who played with Marshall in the Highlanders during the 1960s and who is also musical director at DMPI, will head up the music with his Trini-based band Steelinversions.

This star-studded group includes Tony Voisin, Wayne Guerra, Winston Matthews and Russell Durity.

Music will also include performances by calypso stalwarts Crazy, Conqueror and the dynamic duo Regeneration Now.

Since 2004, Clyde and his wife Cathy, of the DMPI, have raised over \$10,000 on Marshall's behalf.

They have also spearheaded an online fundraiser to assist the pan icon at www.paninstitute.com.

"I would like people to know that our motto at the DMPI is 'Live Music is Best!'" said DMPI event director Cathy George.

"We don't do 'canned music' at DMPI. This is the real deal. Artistes who want to attend the party and perform to honour Bertie can leave their CD's at home."

George also said that all pannists — especially those who have used Marshall to tune their pans over the past half-century — are invited to join the jam and will be admitted to the celebration free of charge.

Marshall, who tunes the pans of his long-time friend and pan master Len "Boogsie" Sharpe and Ken "Professor" Philmore, taught "Lightning" George how to use three or four sticks to play the pan, which only a handful of pannists have mastered.

George promises to display those techniques at the DMPI event.

Joining George's Steelinversions will be the highly acclaimed drummer from Chicago, Aras Biskis, creator and director of two Urban Gateways touring ensembles and a featured soloist in the "Swing Shift Orchestra," which performs every Thursday at the world famous "Green Mill Lounge" in downtown Chicago.

Food for the event will once again be provided by the well-known gourmet chef Oral "Baby" Thomas, the culinary director at DMPI.

Ticket prices for all the fete are \$100, including dinner.