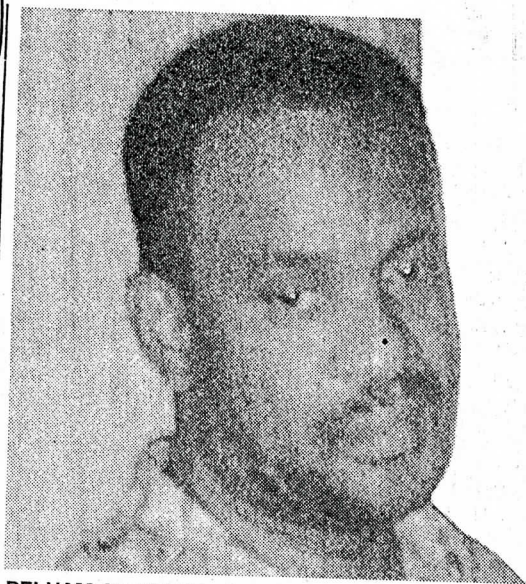


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PELHAM GODDARD...judges lessening the commercialisation of music. Photo by FELIX PAUL

Goddard knocks Panorama judges

By FELIX PAUL

ML1040

AFTER this year's Panorama competition, Pan Trinbago held a post mortem which saw a number of players and arrangers expressing their frustrations about the system of judging. The meeting turned out to be quite argumentative, with a number of people leaving in disappointment.

The *Guardian* sought several of the pan arrangers for their views, but they were unwilling to go public.

There was one exception, though. Well known musician and steelpan arranger, Pelham Goddard, was not only convinced about the present judging system being archaic, he also threw out a challenge to Pan Trinbago's Panorama judges.

"I will give any or all of the judges free studio time if they will come and arrange a Panorama tune to be judged by international musicians, and top the present crop of established pan arrangers," Goddard exclaimed.

This year Pelham Goddard arranged David Rudder's *Case Of The Disappearing Panyards* for East Zone champ, Exodus, which also tied for third place with WITCO Deperadoes at the national finals.

But, like the sentiments shared by other pan arrangers who preferred anonymity, Goddard's contention has nothing to do with the placing of his band. "It has to do with the appreciation of music and the inability of judges to recognise the innovations of the pan, its music, as well as its composers and arrangers."

Goddard, who has arranged 12 Road March tunes in 16 years, was referring to what he termed "the impracticability of judges," stating that many of them have learnt music in one era and are unable to adapt to modern trends.

"Many of the judges learnt music decades ago. It was at a time when Mozart, Bach and others like them were people you had to study. The classics were a must. Today, however, most of the music schools have gone more contemporary in their approach. The people who students have to study now are the Miles Davises, Charlie Parkers, Stevie Wonders, Thelonus Monks and even the Michael Jacksons.

"Students have to take segments of their music and analyse them. While they have to understand the classics, they also have to interpret the modern jazz idioms. So it is difficult for judges who do not appreciate the more contemporary music to relate to compositions by people who do, especially the more innovative. What the judges ask for is a sound that's more like the Boston Philharmonic, than a steelband with its own unique sound for its own peculiar event — carnival."

"For example," he explained, "the judges always complain to arrangers that they are getting a clattering of sound. But what they fail to understand is that to be creative arrangers must use different musical colours."

Goddard said that another request from judges is that the arrangers change the "texture" of their music. But according to him, "when the judges finish with their request following your preliminary appearance, the tune is no longer your own."

The Humming Bird Silver medalist said a number of the judges do not understand such chord structures that incorporate augmented whole tones, flatted fifths and ninth chords. And he believes this is due to the fact that many of them do not play music for a living everyday like Robbie Greenidge, Ken Philmore, "Boogie" Sharpe and himself.

"Panorama judges want to hear the same type of outdated orchestration year after year. But even the winners of Panorama cannot get people to remember their introduction and sometimes the verse and chorus of the winning tune. That is a major component of lessening the commercialisation of the music. After Panorama, people forget the tune the same judges forced you to play."

Goddard wanted it known that fewer musicians are composing for the pan as a result of the system of judging. But more importantly, he thought, was that many foreign music students doing their theses, come to Trinidad to learn the innovations in pan from the same arrangers the Panorama judges reject.

"We are the Miles Davises, Stevie Wonders and Charlie Parkers in the contemporary music of Trinidad and Tobago. It is time these ancient thinking judges understand that, and Pan Trinbago do something to help elevate the pan and its music before it is lost," he said.