

# LifeStyle Education



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## Future arrangers tune up

A NEW generation of music arrangers is expected to enter the exciting world of Panorama competition in the near future. This conclusion is certainly valid, judging by the infectious enthusiasm and aptitude demonstrated by young music students and teachers who have completed an intensive three-week workshop in 'Panorama Arranging'.

Organised by the Pan-in-Schools Coordinating Council (PSCC) and fully sponsored by energy company bpTT, the workshop involved 30 music students and teachers with ambitions to eventually arrange tunes for the popular Panorama steelband competition.

At the daily sessions at the St Augustine Secondary School, the aspiring arrangers demonstrated keen interest, as facilitator Michelle Huggins-Watts, a qualified music teacher and championship winning Panorama arranger with Valley Harps Steel Orchestra, re-emphasised the fundamentals of the workshop. This workshop, coordinated by PSCC executive team member Stacy Alcantara, came to a successful end this week.

The Panorama Arranging session was one of three hands-on music workshops conducted simultaneously by the PSCC in north and south Trinidad during the school vacation period. The second workshop, also held at St Augustine Secondary, dealt with Music Composition for CXC students in Forms Three to Five. The third, catering for students sitting the CXC music examinations, took place at Naparima Girls' High School in San Fernando.

It is the seventh year that bpTT has partnered with the PSCC in nurturing the musical talents of the young people of Trinidad and Tobago. The company has established a rich tradition of involvement in the steelband movement, dating back to the 1970s with multiple Panorama champions bpTT Renegades, its association with the Junior Panorama Championships, and ongoing sponsorship of training courses in steelpan construction.

Ronda Francis, bpTT's corporate responsibility manager, said the company has invested heavily in developing the potential of the young people of Trinidad and Tobago, adding that the continuing partnership with the PSCC represents a valuable contribution to the musical development of the participants.

These workshops will provide a sound foundation for many of these students to embark on a professional career in music. BPTT is

proud to be part of this exciting undertaking," Francis stated.

Andre Moses, PSCC President, is heartened by the overwhelming response to the Panorama Arranging workshop, which was over-subscribed. "We are delighted that so many persons have shown interest in this workshop. We are sure that they will get more involved as future professionals in the steelpan movement," he noted.

Moses expressed the hope that the workshops, conducted annually by the PSCC, would also prove to be a stepping stone for qualified personnel to enter an expanding steelpan industry at the administrative level.

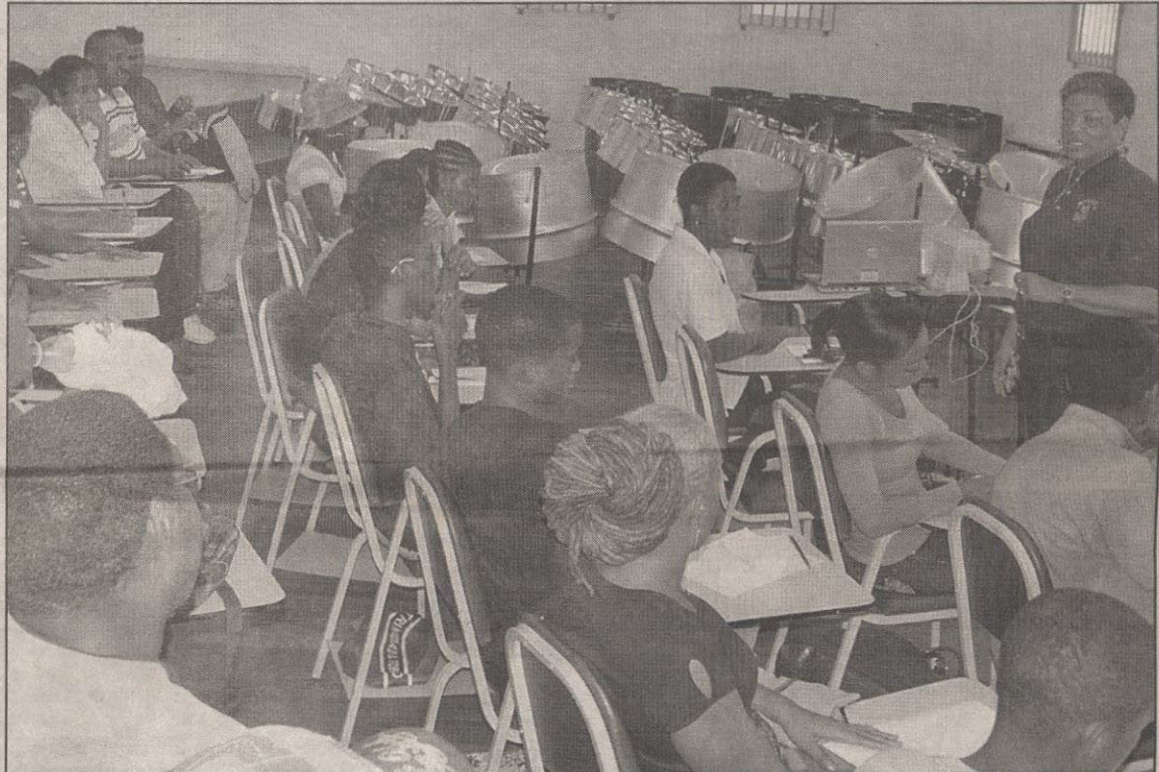
"The ultimate objective is for these music students and teachers to evolve as composers, arrangers and tuners, and administrators, in their own right. In fact, we are already seeing more and more of these young people arranging music for school and community events. It is a step in the right direction," he pointed out.

On behalf of the PSCC, Moses thanked bpTT for its continuing support of the organisation's initiative since it was an expensive project to undertake.

Curtis Jones, music teacher at San Fernando Girls' Government Primary School, found the workshop to be very interesting and informative. "Although I have been arranging music for competitions for some years now, I learned quite a lot from the sessions. I have a better understanding of the elements of arranging and I intend to pursue it more seriously in the future. This workshop is a blessing. The course outline was very comprehensive and covered all aspects of arranging for Panorama competitions," said a contented Jones.

One of the youngest participants was Megan-Leigh Langton-Attang, a Form 4 student at Charlieville Girls' ASJA College, Chaguanas. "I really want to pursue music as a career and I am happy that we can attend these workshops. It gives you a lot of practical experience and opens your mind to the opportunities in the industry," said Langton-Attang, who has been playing pan with Tropical Angel Harps since she was four.

"I am delighted with the great enthusiasm and interest shown by the participants. They are really keen. Who knows, we may have a Len 'Boogie' Sharpe in the making among this group," observed facilitator Huggins-Watts, who arranged the winning composition for Valley Harps in this year's Panorama medium-band category.



ALL EARS: A cross-section of participants listen attentively to facilitator Michelle Huggins-Watts at the bpTT-sponsored Panorama Arranging workshop at St Augustine Secondary School.



DURING CLASS: Music teacher and pan arranger Michelle Huggins-Watts, third from left, engages in an interactive session with participants at the bpTT-sponsored Panorama Arranging workshop.