

Sunday Express

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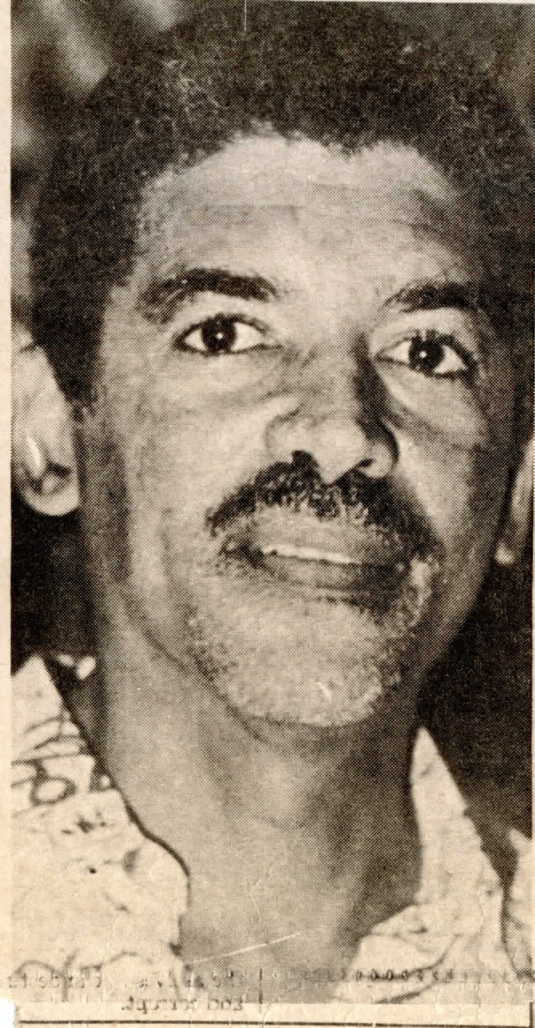
Living

Saying it in pan

ALL foreign based, but back home with their own compositions are, from left, Anise "Haffers" Hadeed, Ken "Professor" Philmore, Robert Greenidge and Len "Boogsie" Sharpe. Photo: ANDRE ALEXANDER

Below: **RAY HOLMAN** composed a melodious piece, Special Brew, for Tokyo





Biggest ever harvest in '91 of custom-made Panorama tunes

By **PETER RAY BLOOD**
Staff Writer

BACK in 1971, when Ray Holman wrote *Pan on the Move* for then CIBC Starlift, he faced a wave of derision from his peers and the media. So strong was the protest against this revolutionary move, that Starlift was physically attacked by a neighbouring band on Carnival day. But this incident only spurred Holman on, and the following year he related the incident in song—*Pan on the Run*.

After a break, Holman resumed his adventure with the "steelband calypso"; he composed and arranged a number of songs for Pandemonium, among them *Super Pan* and *Panyard Vibrations*.

Holman's mentor, Len "Boogsie" Sharpe, was next to join the cause of "customised" Panorama music. Fully supported by the pannists of Phase II Pan Groove, then a fledgling band formed by Boogsie and half a dozen friends, the young, gifted, though slightly unpolished Boogsie provided the Panorama competitions of the late 1970s and through the 1980s with some of its most progressive music.

In 1977, Boogsie's *avant garde* Woodbrook band shocked town by emerging as North Panorama champions, playing Boogsie's *Rags to Riches*. Though he attracted a growing number of "disciples" to his Panorama music, it took Boogsie another 10 years for his music to convince the judges

PANMEN'S MUSICAL PENMANSHIP

that it was worth a national Panorama title.

During those 10 years, the quickly improving Boogsie presented several gems, among which were *I Like to Beat Pan*, '79 *is Mine* and *Pan Rebels*. Names like Alvin Daniel and Joe Caesar worked in the background with Boogsie on some of these hits, providing just the right lyrics and encouragement..

Simultaneously in the western suburbs of the capital, yet another composer/pannist/arranger was being lured by the excitement and mystique of the music of Holman and Boogsie. Michael Cupidore, arranger of Humming Bird Pan Groove, of St James, teased the palates of serious pan lovers during the 1980s with a beautiful

song called *Kay, Boogsie and Me*. Maybe, due to the band's size, quality of instruments, or just plain indifference by the judges, this piece never got the recognition it deserved.

Over time, other pannists offered these "exclusive pan calypsoes," resulting in this year's larger than ever collection of these songs. Aside from the regular calypsonians who write at least one song for pan each year, including Kitchener and Terror, a dozen or more composers have written songs for pan this Carnival.

The list includes Holman, Boogsie, Philmore, Robert Greenidge, Jit Samaroo, Godwin Bowen,

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CHALLENGING REALM OF MUSIC

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Robert Bailey, Anise Hadeed, B.J. Marcelle and Neale Serrant.

Most of these selections were introduced in the now popular record launching functions. Following Boogsie's impressive launch at the Mas Camp Pub, a large audience turned up there, for a second time last week, to witness the launch of records featuring the music of Greenidge, Samaroo and Bowen.

With the earliest whispers of Panorama 1991 came the gossip that Holman had returned to Trintopec Starlift to arrange his *Celebration*, sung by Merchant, for the Woodbrook steelband. However, after Holman and Starlift decided that they could not 'boogie' in '91, Carib Tokyo became the only band Holman will arrange for in Panorama. Recorded by Drupatee, Holman's tune for Tokyo is a melodious piece, *Special Brew*.

Boogsie's two Panorama tunes, with vocals by George Victory and O.C. Blackman, respectively, are *Calypso* and *Pan in Yuh Rass*, the latter being the selection Phase II will perform at this year's Panorama competition.

Coming in from cold New York, Ken Philmore arrived armed with a steamy number entitled *Pan Ecstasy*. Bubbling with confidence, he promised that Vat 19 Fonclaire will make amends in '91 for the band's disappointing second placing at last year's final. New York-based Victory assisted Philmore in arranging this calypso, with vocals by Designer.

Godwin Bowen's music over the past few years has been among the most infectious to be performed at Panorama. One just has to recall Pamberi's performances of *Steel on Wheels*, *Posse* and *Ten Minutes of Glory* to support this view. This year, once again with vocals by Kai Maloney, Bowen and Pamberi will come to the Savannah with a fiery number, entitled *Bu'n Down*.

Composed another ditty

WHILE Jit Samaroo has composed classical, Indian and even parang music for steelband competitions, in 1991 he decided to do his own thing for Panorama. Unfortunately, after much discussion, the man who helped Amoco Renegades to five national Panorama titles had his *Gaping Season* deferred by the reigning champions of pan. Renegades will now play Samaroo's arrangement of Tambu's *Rant and Rave*, while Sangre Grande based Cordettes will present *Gaping Season*.

Samaroo also composed another ditty, *For the Love of Pan*. Both Samaroo compositions featured vocals by Gerry Prudent, lead singer with Rukshun.

In his short stint as arranger of WITCO Desperadoes, Robert Greenidge has done pieces that, on any final night, could stand up to some of the best ever played at Panorama. With the Desperadoes musicians always game to try new ideas (remember Rudolph Charles' inventions and the adventurous winning arrangements of Clive Bradley), the Laven-tille band will for the first time play a Greenidge signature selection. With vocals by new TAXI vocalist Bernadette Paul, Greenidge's *Music Volcano* was recorded at Ottie Mieres' Musik Kraft Studio in San Juan.

Following a successful career at the helm of Group Solo during the '60s, Robert Bailey subsequently rose to international prominence as a member of the multi-national Osibisa aggregation. As promised in 1990, Bailey has returned home with a song for Valley Harps (*Doh Touch Mih*), one which has been recorded by Fire Flight vocalist Ajala.

Bringing a refreshing change to the style of steel-band arrangements traditionally heard in south Trinidad, Anise "Haffers" Hadeed composed *Fresh* for Kalomo Kings, a song that is also the title track on GB's 1991 album. A protege of Boogsie, Hadeed captured attention last year with an enticing *Ramajay*.

Fresh is also being arranged by Swedish-based musician Rudy "Two Leff" Smith for South Sunvalley.

Young and moving on, B.J. Marcelle is so far arranging for two eastern bands in Arima Golden Symphony and Jay Notes. For the last couple years, this young man's music has caught the fancy of many a Panorama regular. This year, Marcelle has composed *Mr B.J.* for Golden Symphony.

Finally, there is Neale Serrant, a member of the talented Serrant clan, who is arranging *Pan Tremors*, sung by Calypso Revue chorus singer Michelle Alleyne, for pan-round-neck side JADAPT.

Who knows, perhaps with the success by some of these pioneers in steelband music this year, Panorama 1992 will see even more of their peers venturing into this exciting and challenging realm of music.