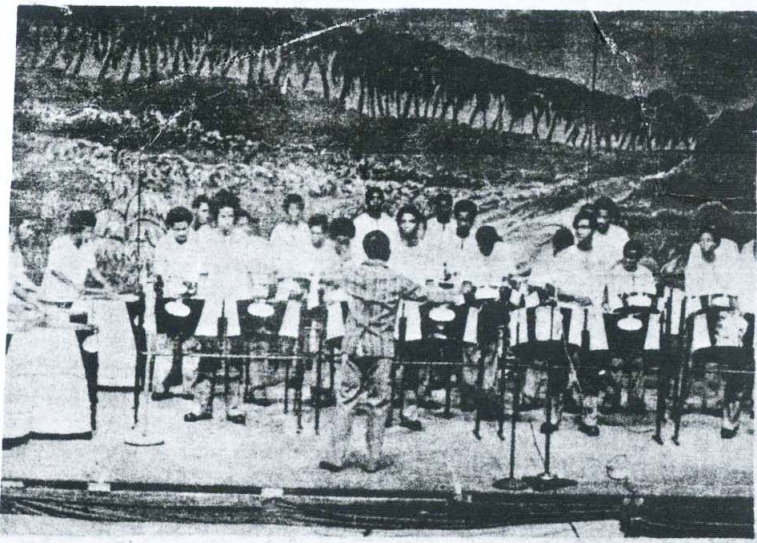


Panmen can't cope with classics



Flashback: Catelli Panmen in action

I would have liked to hear the All Stars tackle a more substantial complete work instead of doing single movements from "Eine Kleine Nachtmusik" and the "New World"; and in the latter piece a lot more flexibility was needed in the interpretation, particularly the several tempo changes required to deal with the contrasting themes.

Soloists Pat Flores and Ken Oxley sang with their customary distinction, but the San Fernando Chorale nearly came to grief in the middle of "The Heavens Are Telling" in spite of the reduced speed, even venturing for a while into bitonality.

The "1812 Overture" was a good choice to close with, though musicians in the audience will have been

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EREMY TAYLOR, EXPRESS music critic, listened to Catelli All Stars play a variety of classical tunes at Queen's Hall on Wednesday and Friday night but is not convinced that the steelband really does justice to this sort of music.

variety of their tones and the clarity of their interweaving lines for the overall musical effect.

The variety of tones available to the steelband

is much less than in the conventional orchestra, and I sometimes wonder if the lower-pitched pans are capable of sustaining polyphonic parts with any clarity.

Called upon to provide a contrapuntal melody in, say the Dvorak movement, the lack of definition caused a sort of pleasant rumbling, like trying to shape a tune

out of distant thunder.

I found it hard actually to hear the middle and lower parts; and the bigger the work, the more difficult the definition.

STEELBANDS have been playing classics for a long time now; but in the past month there have been two major presentations entirely of classical music, the first in Trinidad and Tobago. In October, the Samaroo Jets, sponsored by the Recital Club, gave a concert of complete, mainly chamber, works at St. Joseph's Convent, and now the Trinidad All Stars have followed up at Queen's Hall. (they move to the Naparima Bowl on November 26)

The All Stars' programme was more spectacular than the Samaroos, using vocal soloists, a visiting choir, and an energetic conductor (their musical director Jerry Jemmott), and tackling work for full orchestra; though this had its drawbacks as well as its attractions.

Fantastic

One has to admire the sheer labour that goes into a performance of this sort: the long months of rote-learning and memorisation mastering music which orchestral musicians would simply read from a score (it's a pity the programme didn't elaborate on the "novel approach to sight reading" used by the All Stars).

That alone, whatever else happens, is a fantastic achievement.

One has to admire All Stars' tone and technique though this is no less than

At certain from a group like the end of the "1812" and "Barber of Seville" overtures and sometimes in the Dvorak "New World" movement, they produced a really thrilling sound, precise (except for the cannons) and vital.

Exciting

The parts which came over best were the parts for full orchestra, fortissimo, with the melody pealing out clearly from the front row of tenors, and solid harmonic accompaniment from the rest.

These were the straightforward exciting bits that got the audience on their feet shouting for more.

The real difficulties came in the other, usually quieter sections, where orchestral instruments