

Pan in art

By DEBORAH JOHN

PERHAPS the most worthwhile contribution of our artists is their role in making us look beyond ourselves, beyond the way things appear at face value. Rukuumba Nedd is such an artist and his unique way of looking at things can be currently seen at Royal Bank, Independence Square, Port of Spain.

Nedd's exhibition *Pan Is Beautiful Too* would be familiar to those who know his work. Every year of the pan festival he plans an exhibition to coincide with the event. Nedd began working with the theme since 1974.

In an interview with the *Express*, Nedd, an art teacher at the Malick Senior Comprehensive School, said he started to work with pan themes because it is so much a part of us.

He said: "The psyche of Trinidad is embedded in the steelband and one can see it from its beginnings through the years of struggle and its potential to reach to greater heights."

The thing about an art exhibition in a bank though, is that it may not always attract potential or interested buyers. The viewers, remain, of necessity, people who

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have come there to get on with their financial affairs. The art collector is rare in this audience.

Still Nedd feels that the message has been getting across. There are 38 paintings on exhibit each with the pan relating to cultural themes in the society. One such painting embodies a bele dancer rising out of the pan. Here Nedd sees cultural links that go beyond the obvious and pan becomes representational of the bele.

In other paintings, the panman is portrayed with reverence, he seems almost to be steeped in myth and legend. And there is a joyous throw-

ing back of the body as they play.

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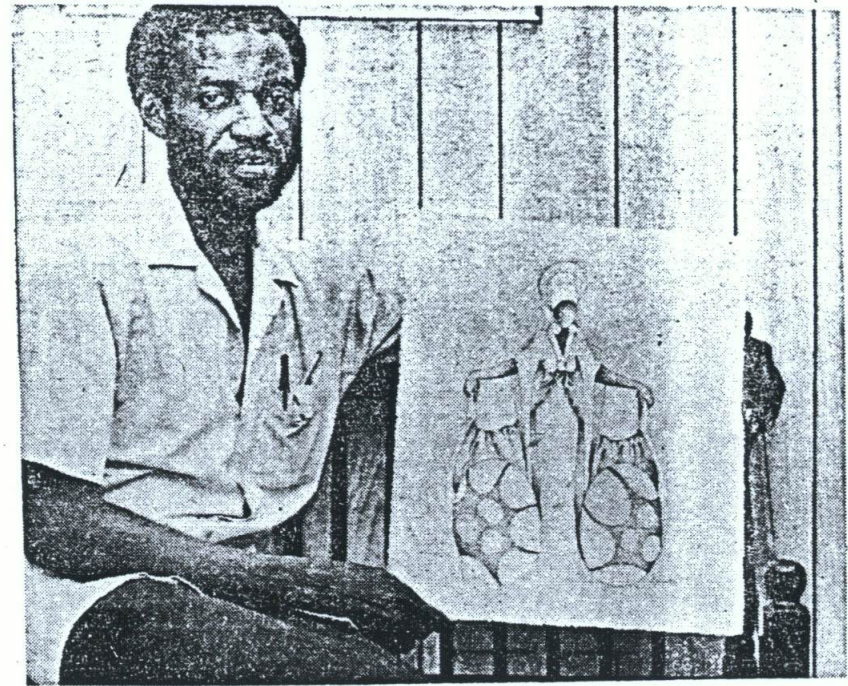
Some of Nedd's titles are "Song of Grace," "Women In Pan," "A Musical Discovery," "Minuet In G," and "Blue Harmony," to name just a few.

Nedd started to paint seriously in 1975. "I had just graduated from Government Teachers' Training College and I

had an exhibition which was very highly commended."

Nedd has been an executive member of the Trinidad and Tobago Art Society, the first vice-president of the Trinidad and Tobago Art Teachers Association, and is an honorary member of the Royal Academy of Art, Birmingham.

Nedd hopes that by exhibiting at the bank a greater cross section of the community will see his work. He has exhibited at Art Creators, the Alliance Francaise, West Mall, with A Sprit Undaunted and at the Commonwealth Institute, London.



UKUUMBA NEDD holds his painting which portrays a bele dancer rising out of a pan