

Panmen boycott Panorama and Savannah

By SHEILA RAMPERSAD

CARNIVAL 1979 was propelled by controversy. Many will remember it as the year of the Panorama boycott. The beginning of February saw 81 steelbands scheduled to compete in Panorama. The preliminaries got under way, but the judge's inaccurate calculation offended the panmen. When Government refused to accept the notion of a \$3,500 "participation incentive" in addition to the \$500 appearance fee, Pan Trinbago flexed its muscles and cried BOYCOTT!

Not a single band turned up for the South Panorama, and Tobago's Shaw Park was like a ghost town. Pan Trinbago issued a warning to panmen: Break pan boycott and you will be banned from entering any future competitions in which Pan Trinbago has a say.

On Carnival Tuesday, Desperadoes Steel Orchestra was the only panside in the city who rebelled and crossed the stage at the Savannah. In Couva, one band—Internal Vibes—broke the boycott. In San Fernando, a pan-around-the-neck side, Sounds 2001, also broke the boycott but was suspended by Pan Trinbago.

Pan Trinbago's president, George Goddard later accused one senior official of deception. He said the

official duped the organisation into believing that panmen were guaranteed certain sums of money for appearing at Panorama competitions.

It was also a year of controversy for Black Stalin who won the Monarch title with *Caribbean Man* and *Play One*. Stalin was accused of being racist in his first song in which he did not mention the East

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Indian or other ethnic groups.

But it was a year Peter Minshall made a killing.

The name of Minshall's band was *Carnival of the Sea* which won the People's Choice. Queen of the band, Sherry Ann Guy portrayed *Splash* and copped the Queen of the Band title. That costume also won her Female Individual of the Year.

Minshall's band also won Band of the Year in the large band category. Taking the titles in the medium and small band categories respectively were Neville Aming's *Legends of the Mayans* and Albert Bailey's *Brilliance of the Kikiyu*.

Leroy Calliste, the Black Stalin took the Monarch title and it was Poser's *Ah Tell She* that took the

road march of the year.

The male Individual of the Year was won by John Balkaransingh who portrayed *Creature from the Black*. King of Carnival was won by Peter Samuel with *Devil Ray*.

Bands of the Day on Carnival Monday were *Dancers of the Universe* (small band category) by Stephen Derek; *Sea Spectrum* (medium) by Raoul Garib and Associates and Wayne Berkeley took the title for the large band with *The Ritual*.

Antique Silver was adjudged the Band of the Year in the Lucky Jordan Competition at the corner of Prince and George Streets, Port of Spain. Second was Julian Boulden's *Feather Fantasy* and third was *Panorama*.

Organisers of the Lucky Jordan competition tried desperately to get in touch with a couple who impersonated the Prime Minister and Senator Marilyn Gordon. They won the top prizes in the J'ouvert competition but though they paraded they were not registered.

Chief Judge was Martin Hill who said, "Their portrayals were very good so we allowed them to take part in the competition. But we don't have their real names."

About one week later, the couple was found and



Black Stalin was named the Calypso Monarch for 1979

the King was identified as Randolph Greenidge, 69, known in the caypso world as Lord Artist, president of the Calypsonians Association.

Greenidge played Prime Minister Eric Williams but said later he was in fact registered as number 19 but no one could find his number.

Irvin McWilliams' *Our Famous Recipes* which won the City Council's Downtown Contest, was voted People's Choice at Lucky Jordan.

Owen Hinds won Band of the Year in San Fernando. He later complained that he received \$2,500 as his prize as opposed to the Port of Spain Band of the Year which received \$7,280.

Ahoy Chai's *Arima and Surroundings* won Band of the Year in Arima and *Signs of the Zodiac* led by Saga Ramroop won in the Tunapuna area.

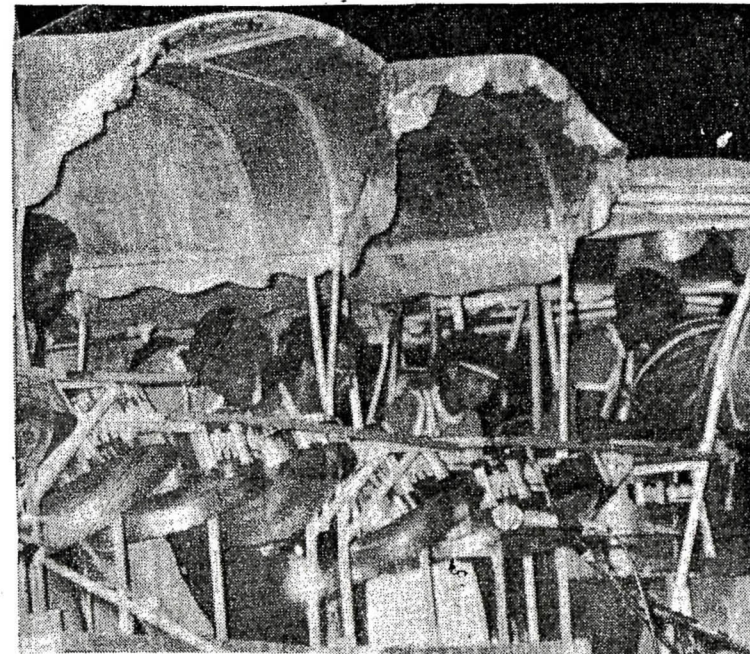
Calypso Rose (McCarthy Sandy Lewis) won a Carnival Development Committee (CDC) award for her contribution to calypso with her song *Fire Fire*.

The Best Beating Steel Orchestra was given to Carib Tokyo and L. Ravello's *Trinidad Jumbies* was voted Best Ole Mas Band.

The then chairman of CDC, Jack Lewsey commented later that from 1969 to 1979, \$10 million in subsidies have gone into Carnival.



Hazel Simonette played *Spell Bound—Hocus Pocus* in the Kings and Queens competition semi-finals at the Savannah.



Despers challenged Pan Trinbago and took to the stage for Panorama 1979