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# Festival test pieces launched

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MOTHER Nature smiled on the organisers of this year's steelband music festival when torrential mid-day showers cleared, making way for sunny skies for the launching of Test Pieces for the festival. Staged jointly by Pan Trinbago and the Royal Bank of Trinidad and Tobago Limited at the Hollows, Queen's Park Savannah, last Sunday,

the launching was attended by officials of both organisations with its highpoint being the presentation of plaques to the composers of the Test Pieces — Ovid Alexis and Earl Caruth.

The programme included addresses by Pan Trinbago president Arnim Smith and Royal Bank officials Randy Halfhide and Bruce Aanensen; and the playing of the Test Pieces by Trinidad Nostalgic pan-

round-neck steelband and The Stars (a combination of Trinidad All Stars and Silver Stars).

The pan-round-neck Test Piece, entitled *Before These Days*, was composed by 28-year-old Berkley College of Music graduate Ovid Alexis, with the Test Piece for conventional orchestras — *Pan Waves* — being the work of Brooklyn Conservatory of Music graduate Earl Caruth.

In all, 10 composers, including Pat Castagne and Jit Samaroo, entered test pieces for *Pan is Beautiful Five* — A World Steelband Festival. This is the first international steelband festival attempted by Pan Trinbago and local orchestras are expected to be joined by seven orchestras from Europe, North America and the Caribbean. The Festival's theme is *Is the Pan in We*.

The Festival begins on October 20 and runs until November 6. Preliminaries for conventional bands will be held on October 20-24, with the soloists having their preliminary on October 27. Semi-final dates for conventional bands are October 28-30, and November 1 and 4 are the dates scheduled for the soloists. The solo preliminary and semi-final will be held at Spektakula Forum. The grand final will be held at Jean Pierre Complex on November 5-6.