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PHOTO: CALDEO SOOKRAM

Lennox Jordan rehearses his Panorama tune on the tenor.

Lennox Jordan Pan man with big dreams

Caldeo Sookram

SEVEN years ago, Lennox Jordan had a big dream.

He wanted his band, the Fascinators Pan Symphony Steelband, to make it the Panorama finals.

To date, the band has made it to Panorama finals on three occasions—placing a respectable fifth, sixth and eighth, and earning accolades for their performances.

Jordan is both tuner and arranger of the band. He tunes the entire range of pans, from tenor to bass.

He learned the rudiments of the art from his illustrious father, the late Aldwin "Madman" Jordan, whose pioneering works in the

steelpan movement of the 1940s, '50s and '60s are well-known.

Fascinators Pan Symphony will compete in the Small Band category, as they have done in the past, said Jordan.

"We have progressed over the years, but we have a big problem. We still don't have a sponsor," he complained.

"You know, it kinda real tough out there when a band don't have a sponsor," he added.

The Fascinators Pan Symphony Steelband represents a merger of two bands—Nocturne Fascinators and Pan Symphony.

A colourful mix of the elderly and youth make up the band's membership. In fact, more youth make up the pan players, said Jordan.

The band is based in El Dorado in east Trinidad.

"This band is like a family band since most of the players are the children of ex-players," said Jordan.

This year the band will be playing the tune "The Sounds of Pan", sung by calypsonian Skatie.

Last year the band played "A Musical Treat" composed by Diamond.

When not tuning pans or arranging music for the band, Jordan makes overseas trips to promote the artform.

Last year he visited Australia, where he took up duties as tuner, arranger and player with the band Pantastics.

The band comprised two Trinis, one Bajan, one Antiguan and four Aussies, he said.

They toured cities like Brisbane and Sydney, playing in concerts and social engagements.

Jordan also visited Switzerland, where he was invited to work in a steelpan factory.

There, he performed with the steelband Panch. "I returned last September and expect to leave soon again," he advised.

"You know, you can make some money out there. In Trinidad, people don't even buy my pans. It's people out there who buy my pans," he said.

Many of Jordan's pans are exported to countries like Australia, England, the USA and various places throughout Europe and the Caribbean.

"Just imagine—they have more than 400 steelbands in Switzerland and they have more tuners out there than in Trinidad," he emphasised.

As tuner and musical arranger of a small steelband, Jordan said he would like to make it big one day.

Today, Jordan has another big dream—not Panorama finals, he insisted.

"I would like to put in place a proper structure for this steelband.

The accommodation for the steelband is a bit small at present. "I want to build a two-storey structure with offices, recording rooms and a concert hall," he said.

"I want to bring people from abroad and teach them pan. That is my big dream right now," he said.

Carnival
Khichree
A Hindi word
for a one-pot
multi-ingredient
dish.