

Express 28/11/94 p. 20

Pan is not in danger at UWI

THE EDITOR: This is to clarify any misconception that may arise from the statement made by Ms Bishop in her address at the recent university graduation ceremony that "not one single graduate of 1994 has qualified in any serious steeldrum concern."

To anyone who does not know the university as well as Ms Bishop does, the impression may be conveyed that there is no steelband on the university curriculum. This is in spite of her telling qualification "serious". In fact, the Creative Arts Centre offers (a) undergraduate courses in pan and (b) a two-year certificate in music with pan as the principal instrument.

Designed in consultation with Pan Trinbago and the Ministries of Education and Culture, the certificate is geared to satisfy the needs of tertiary level music training. Lecturers on the programme are among the finest music educators and musicians in Trinidad including Mungal Patasar, Jerry Jemmott, Harold Headley, Merle Albino-De Couteau, Newman Alexander, Satanand Sharma and Narriman Hosein.

The first graduates of the programme who were addressed by Ms Bishop comprised music teachers, members of the Police and Fire Services Bands and pannists—including two members of Ms Bishop's Desperadoes. The Co-ordinator of the music programme is Dr Anne Osborne.

This effort is of course miniscule in comparison with what has to be done, but it does exist and those who may be inclined to misquote Ms Bishop and revel in negativity should know of its existence.

We take this opportunity finally to congratulate Ms Bishop on the honorary doctorate conferred on her by the University of the West Indies assured that she has always spoken and acted in the best interest of the art.

RAWLE GIBBONS,
Director, Creative Arts Centre.