

**Spotlight —
Signature
awards
for pan
composers**

By TERRY JOSEPH

THE composers of music specially designed for the steelband were brought into public glare last Monday evening, when the Exodus Steel Orchestra and The Signature Collection presented them with the 1999 Glitterwood Awards.

For the second year running, the awards function, titled Celebrating the Composers, took place at the Exodus Pan Theatre. Pat Bishop, herself the celebrated musical director of The Lydians and a friend of the steelband, delivered an address at the function.

Bishop described the initiative by pan music composers as "an example of great importance for national development". She said that with increasing social and economic difficulties, "urgent national need is to look to ourselves, our environment and our ways to do things, as new bases for productive effort. "And if we pursue these paths diligently, we shall find the tired and jaded world out there relieved to hear the new songs which we can offer and more than that, they would be happy to pay us for them.

"The steelband movement, the development of its drums, its refinements in the design and tuning of the instruments, the continued experiments with racks and mobility, are all part of our way of doing things," she said. "It is only logical that music which speaks specifically to the particular qualities of the steel drum should also emerge.

"In other words," Bishop said, "Boogie Sharpe and Pelham Goddard have begun a certain process by electing to play their own melodies which is essentially the only path forward for colonised people; if they want to escape the oppression of debt and dishonesty inherent in any notion that progress can be achieved by the so-called transfer of technology."

Acknowledging the

Mh 1040 Express Feb 12, 1999. 19. Sect. 2

Celebrating the composers at the Exodus Pan Theatre

work of UWI's Derek Gay and earlier initiatives by Ray Holman, Bishop warned that "these developments will not be permitted to flourish in an environment which continues to be ignorant of itself and dismissive of its values."

She identified a role for the media in sensitising this population to a genuine understanding of its true worth and suggested that a good way to start is for the media to sensitise itself which, she said, should be done through self-education.

"When we consider the lack of opportunity for performance," Bishop said, "the story becomes bleak indeed. Where is the funding for musicians, the environments for efficient work, the facilities for recording and the strategies for marketing? Occasions like these are rare and I would be failing in my duty, if I did not make it clear that our record of public support for the artists, actors, musicians, public support for the arts has been honoured in the

breach and most certainly not in the observance.

"The persistent dismissal of that which is inventive and indigenous makes nonsense of our efforts at progress and development," Bishop said.

"Let us therefore use this occasion to reflect upon the state of our country and begin to take serious strides along the road to creative and original development."

Following her well-received address, the awards were distributed under the chairmanship of radio personality Phil Simmons, who himself received a trophy for his contribution to the furtherance of the form. The trophies were designed by her sister Gillian and made by craftsmen at the Signature Studios.

Performances were had from Grandmaster Kitchener ("Toco Bandæ) and The Mighty Sparrow, who did "Document Pan" and "Play My Music".

Trophies were awarded in two categories. Steelband music arrangers, who compose music specifically for the panorama competition for conven-

tional bands and whose music is played in the competition, at least as far as the preliminary round, comprise the first category.

The second category recognises non pan-nists, who have made compositions, the lyrics of which notice and celebrate the pan and which have resonated so powerfully with the pannists themselves, that they have chosen

to play those selections in the panorama competition.

The principal design element is the sign of the treble-clef, sculpted from sheet brass and brought to a high polish. It bears in its belly the familiar motif of the face of a steelpan, pierced in brass and held aloft by a base of hand-rubbed, oiled Trinidad teak.

The Signa-

ture/Exodus joint awards ceremony has expanded upon an initiative by the Signature Collection, that recognised only arrangers of steelband music who composed pieces especially for pan.

THE COMPOSERS:

Kitchener—Toco Band
Blackie—Ting Tang
Brian Griffith/Alvin Daniell—Trini Know How

Oba—In My House
Len "Boogsie" Sharpe—Sweet and Sexy
De Fosto—Tune for Pan
Andy Narell—Coffee Street
Ken "Professor" Philmore—Carnival is We
Earl Brooks—In de band
Bally—Pan is No 1
Hollis Wright—Pan Charade
Mark Loquan & Andy Sheafe—Glory
Micky Frederick—Magic of Pan
Alan "Nikko" Nicholas—Ah

Hearing Pan
GB—Pan is Magic
Roland "Moose" Joseph—Pan Fanatic
Rootsman—Boomerang
*For Lyrics:
Ting Tang—Andrew Ferreira
Alvin Daniell—Trini Know How, Sweet and Sexy et al
*Special Awards
The Mighty Sparrow — Pan Lifetime Award
Anthony "Juggy" Rose — Rookie Composer
Phil Simmons—Media services to pan