

PANORAMA CAN'T

**Downtown
mas judging
tomorrow**

PAY ITS WAY

Mc1060.

THE Downtown Carnival Committee and the National Carnival Commission will judge individuals in the traditional mas categories at Independence Square, Port of Spain, on Sunday.

The show is scheduled to start at 9 a.m. Registered individuals are requested to be there on time.

By TERRY JOSEPH

PANORAMA will cost \$4 million this year, but revenue is not expected to exceed the 1994 gate receipts of \$9 million. The shortfall for this and other Carnival shows will be paid on a hire-purchase basis over the next ten months.

The shows are losing patronage and costs are increasing,

according to Chairman of the National Carnival Commission (NCC) Alfred Aguiton, who devised the pay-later plan.

"Fewer people are coming out to the shows and the cost of staging them is steadily escalating," Aguiton told the *Express*.

"In the circumstances, we had to find a way to pay our contractors and all of the persons and agencies that we have hired have agreed to the new arrangements."

The plan is called the "System To Ensure Acceptable Drawdowns Year-round" or "Steady" payments. Money owed to contractors will be paid in ten equal instalments for money owed to contractors, with the first payment due at the end of March.

Last Saturday, the first day of Panorama at the Queen's Park Savannah, the NCC was disappointed by the North Stand crowd, which totalled 1,000. The stand has a capacity of 8,000.

In addition, there was massive storming and scalpers made money out of re-selling tickets which had been discarded by patrons after entry.

"The cost of beefing up security will simply increase the price of staging the show," said Aguiton, "so there are serious problems to be solved here."

In addition, nearly 1,000 passes are given out by the Commission by Carnival Friday. This further reduces revenue.

"The Calypso Fiesta (the semi-finals of the Calypso Monarch competition) is the only NCC show which makes a profit," said Aguiton, "but even so, the surplus it generates cannot service even the Commission's own calypso tent."

In 1994, the Fiesta grossed \$518,000 but cost \$230,000 to produce. On the other hand, Dimanche Gras cost \$434,000 and could only draw \$37,000 at the gates.

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