

12 entries received for pan innovation contest

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THE BEST steelband invention for the year will be known tonight when the winner of the first ever Rudolph Charles Pan Innovation Award is announced during the finals of the Steelband Music Festival.

The award is for the most useful and cost effective steelband invention and is a means of discovering innovations to ease the problems related to preparation and performance of music on the pan.

Several steelband inventors have entered the competition to test their creativity and skill. Each will be judged on ingenuity, cost effectiveness, relevance to the steelband movement and ease of application with a maximum of 25 points awarded in each category.

Judges are Anthony Williams, Richard McDavid, Supt. George Scott and Jit Samaroo.

The twelve entries in this year's competition have been on display at the Jean Pierre Complex since September 29.

Elton Williams, leader of the Belmont Philharmonic steelband, has entered his vibapan which he invented earlier this year.

Tuning Easier

The vibapan has no groovings, instead splits are made at intervals around the rim of the pan to achieve a sustained sound with more volume. It also makes tuning easier.

Another innovation is steelpan covers, created by Percival Black of Witco Desperadoes. The covers are made of leatherette with foam padding, lining in brown cotton, piping cord and a zipper.

Mr Black decided to design the covers after observing that other musical instruments were carried around in cases. It is supposed to make it easier to carry around a steelpan.

From Carib Tokyo's Brian Copeland comes the electric bass pan, an easier method of amplifying bass pans for open-air performances.

Phase II Pan Grove's tuner, Denzil Fernandez, has entered his bore pan. On this pan notes are shaped-out lined

areas, susceptible to a wider range of frequencies than those engraved.

Bore pans are easier to tune because of the partial separation of the notes.

Mr Fernandez's other entry is the denrill pan — a steel drum from which musical sounds are generated by a "free-reed" which is made up of wood, sponge and foam.

Learie Harrigin, tuner/adviser with Sound Specialists, has entered his fiddle pan and its accompanying "U" stand—a more compact tenor ensemble that is cheaper and easy to transport.

Another interesting entry is the invention of Jimi Phillips of Claytones—the electric acoustic bass. This is an 18-inch pan with a sealed base and a sound hole for amplification.

Mr Phillips has also entered his collapsible pan stand which can be adjusted to the height of the player and a pan measure.

Catelli All Stars Fitzgerald Jemmott

has entered his oboe pan which is a low tenor starting from B flat. As its name implies this instrument captures the sound of the oboe used in conventional orchestras.

All Stars has also submitted as a joint entry a cello and guitar stand, a metal structure for transporting pans and improving their acoustic quality.

Jemmott himself has also submitted his music written for pan musicians to the competition. In this method conventional musical notes are replaced by letters of the alphabet, although the rhythmic structure of the score is maintained.

This system was implemented in 1968 and is now available in manuscript form.

The competition, organised jointly by WITCO and Pan Trinidad, will be a bi-annual event with the awards presented on the final night of each steelband festival.