

ADVERTISEMENT

✓ HAVE you ever faced a Panorama stage... hands sweating, heart pumping, eyes steady on the amber lights, awaiting the count?

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**G**od what a feeling. Just to appear on that Queen's Park

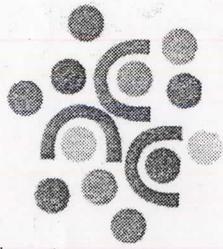
Savannah stage on a Panorama final night is worth all the hard work necessary for the final presentation.

And when the rendition is over and the patrons in the North and Grand Stand, noisily show their appreciation, it is ecstasy.

Nothing matters then, not even the results really, for only winners row would justify that all out effort.

It's this feel which keeps pan men and women coming back on an annual basis. Panorama ... the mecca of pan. The pinnacle of pan competition and the main source for its development.

Nobody, none the least the early pioneers, like Ellie Mannette, Winston "Spree" Simon, Carlton "Zigilee" Constantine, members of the immortal Alexander Rag Time Band or even those survivors from Hell Yard, who witnessed the transformation from bamboo to steel could have ever foreseen the outcome. It



tle and spoon with hub caps, dustbins and empty biscuit drums was made simply because they allowed easier movement on the road and created a louder sound. It was about rhythm.

And although, pan had made significant strides, both in terms of the development of the instrument and its music by 1963, when the National Carnival Committee's inaugural Panorama competition was held, the last 33 years have been remarkable in both aspects.

The instrument is now at a point close to standardisation, while competition has grown to such an extent, that composers, particularly for the occasion.

When St. James North Stars won the inaugural competition in 1963 with the Mighty Sparrow's "Dan is the man in the van" an (Ellie Mannette



# The Evolution Of Pan

and five-bass were on individual stands.

Today we are at the stage of six, nine and 12-bass and quadrophonics. We have also seen the introduction of tenor-bass, triple guitars, drum sets, four-cellos and double tenors, plus canopies, invented by Highlanders in 1964 to save the instruments from the elements by Harmonites in 1968, who discovered canopies enhanced the sound.

After Harmonites' overwhelming victory with Kitchener's "The Wrecker" all other bands followed their example, including those from south, who at first were reluctant to copy from their northern counterparts.

The tenors moved up to 31 notes in the 1960s and went back to 28 or 29 in the 1980s, the Anthony Williams fourths and fifths (Spider web) styling, now considered standard.

These are being used by all bands except Desperadoes, Renegades, Trinidad All Stars, Tokyo and Jay Notes.

North Stars leader Williams was the man

his example and during the next 15 years Len "Boogsie" Sharpe, Michael "Pentamat" Cupidore, Godwin Bowen, Clive Bradley, Earl Rodney, Ken "Professor" Philmore, Robert Greenidge and Jit Samaroo emerged as composers.

Sharpe was the first to make the breakthrough with "This Feeling Nice" in 1987, sung by Denyse Plummer, and followed the next year with "Woman is Boss." The only other composer/arranger to win was Greenidge with "Musical Volcano" as played by Desperadoes in 1991 and "Fire Coming Down" by the same band in 1994.

Meanwhile the scenario shifted to effects in the latter 1980s moving into the 1990s. Sharpe introduced a tassa drum sound on tenors during Phase 11's rendition of "Pan Rising" in 1986, which finished runner-up to Leon Smooth Edwards' arrangement of David Rudder's "Hammer" where Smooth created the effect of a

(Unknown Band/Leon "Smooth" Edwards); 1982 — Renegades (Pan Explosiiion/Jit Samaroo); 1983 — Desperadoes (Rebecca/Clive Bradley); 1984 — Renegades (Sweet Pan/Jit Samaroo); 1985 — Desperadoes (Pan Night and Day/Beverly Griffith and Robert Greenidge); 1986 — Trinidad All Stars (Hammer/Leon "Smooth" Edwards); 1987 — Phase II Pan Groove (This Feeling Nice/Len "Boogsie" Sharpe); 1988 — Phase II Pan Groove (Woman is Boss/Len "Boogsie" Sharpe); 1989 — Renegades (Somebody/Jit Samaroo); 1990 — Renegades (Iron Man/Jit Samaroo); 1991 — Desperadoes (Musical Volcano/Robert Greenidge); 1992 — Exodus (Savannah Party/Pelham Goddard); 1993 — Renegades (Mystery Band/Jit Samaroo); 1994 — Desperadoes (Fire Coming Down/Robert Greenidge); 1995 — Renegades (Four Lara Four/Jit Samaroo).

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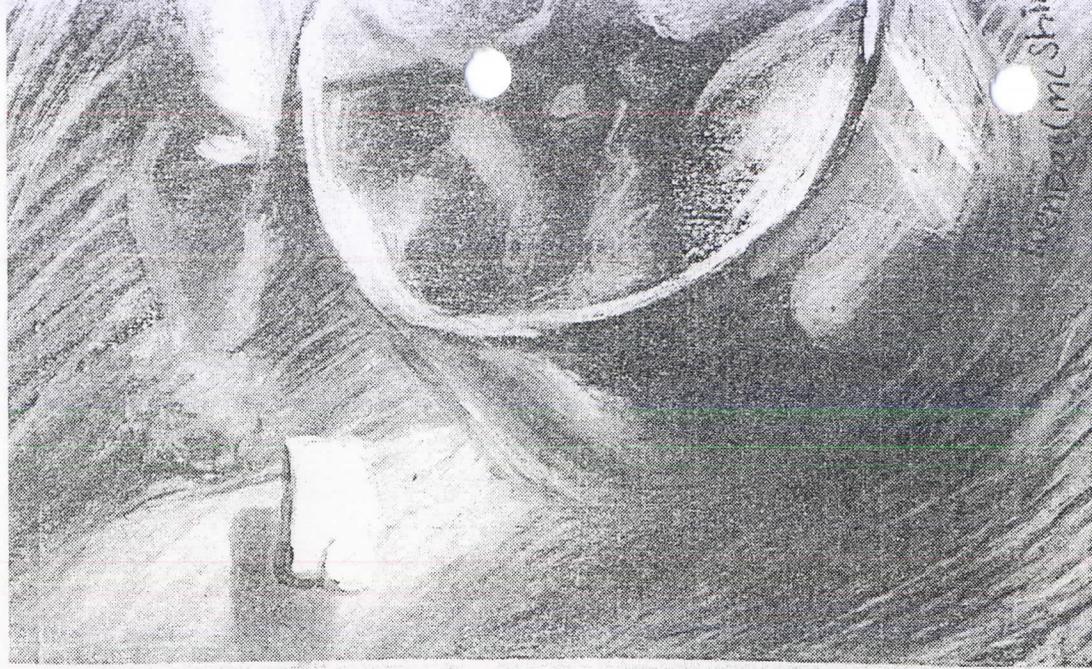
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Nobody, none the least the early pioneers, like Ellie Mannette, Winston "Spree" Simon, Carlton "Zigilee" Constantine, members of the immortal Alexander Rag Time Band or even those survivors from Hell Yard, who witnessed the transformation from bamboo bamboo to steel could have ever foreseen the outcome. It was magical!

The move to replace the bamboo bamboo and bot-

made significant strides, both in terms of the development of the instrument and its music by 1963, when the National Carnival Committee's inaugural Panorama competition was held, the last 33 years have been remarkable in both aspects.

The instrument is now at a point close to standardisation, while competition has grown to such an extent, that composers, now create melodies, particularly for the occasion. When St. James North Stars won the inaugural competition in 1963 with the Mighty Sparrow's "Dan is the man in the van" an (Ellie Mannette styled) tenor pan contained 23 notes, while double seconds guitars



composer/arranger to win was Greenidge with "Musical Volcano" as played by Desperadoes in 1991 and "Fire Coming Down" by the same band in 1994.

The tenors moved up to 31 notes in the 1960s and went back to 28 or 29 in the 1980s, the Anthony Williams fourths and fifths (Spider web) styling, now considered standard. These are being used by all bands except Desperadoes, Renegades, Trinidad All Stars, Tokyo and Jay Notes.

North Stars leader Williams was the man responsible for most of the early innovations. He was the one to first put pans on wheels and also created racks so that pans could roll in formation, what is regard by bands today as conventional.

Williams also introduced the changing of keys, playing his winning 1964 arrangement of Kitchener's "Mama Dis is Mas" in three keys, a system still used by conventional bands today.

However, Williams' style had a classical base and when Bobby Mohammed's Cavaliers blasted their way to victory in 1965 with Lord Melody's "Melody Mas" Williams became disenchanted with the competition and North Stars never entered a Panorama competition again.

Ironically, despite their superior ability, both at calypso and classics, North Stars survived just about six more years then folded like so many of the top bands of the yesterday.

In fact, of the 21 bands which participated in the inaugural Panorama, only

Sharpe); 1989 — Renegades (Somebody/Jit Samaroo); 1990 — Renegades (Iron Man/Jit Samaroo); 1991 — Desperadoes (Musical Volcano/Robert Greenidge); 1992 — Exodus (Savannah Party/Pelham Goddard); 1993 — Renegades (Mystery Band/Jit Samaroo); 1994 — Desperadoes (Fire Coming Down/Robert Greenidge); 1995 — Renegades (Four Lara Four/Jit Samaroo).

Meanwhile the scenario shifted to effects in the latter 1980s moving into the 1990s. Sharpe introduced a tassa drum sound on tenors during Phase 11's rendition of "Pan Rising" in 1986, which finished runner-up to Leon Smooth Edwards' arrangement of David Rudder's "Hammer" where Smooth created the effect of a pan tuner sinking a drum on his double seconds. All Stars won by one point.

Clive Bradley had Pandemonium playing with the rubberless end of the sticks in 1988 to Mighty Trini's "Sailing", which brought the effect of rain' while "Professor" Philmore had the entire Grand Stand blowing away with his "Pan By Storm" for Fonclaire in 1990.

It is left to see what further changes pan arrangers can come up with. Pan continues to develop through trial and error and those involved, tuners, arrangers and the players themselves keep striving for excellence.

Over the 33 years only three veterans, who have played in a 32 Panorama competitions are known by this writer. If there are more I am unaware. These are: Percy Pitt of Starlift, "Tash" and "Pijou" of Desperadoes.

Over the years they have witnessed winners from (bands, tune and arrangers): 1963 — North Stars (Dan is The Man in The Van/ TONY WILLIAMS); 1964 —

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In fact, of the 21 bands which participated in the inaugural Panorama, only four... Renegades, Starlift, Desperadoes and Invaders entered all 32 previous competitions, although the latter did not participate in 1965 due to some unknown problem.

Three others... Merry-tones, City Kids and San Juan All Stars have been revitalised while City Syn-copators, Wonderland of Chaguanas, Cross Fire, Casablanca, Cross Winds, Dixie Harps, Nocturne Fascinators, City Symphony, Prodigal Harmonics, Wonderland of Belmont, Modern Sunland, Sundowners, Sputniks, Steel Stylers, Tropical Harmony and Metronomes have all faded into oblivion.

Yet the competition has grown to magnificent proportions and is now considered the official curtain-raiser for the carnival.

By 1966 jazz had been introduced. Desperadoes took the title with Sparrow's "Obeah Wedding" and a new era had arrived.

Ray Holman made another change in 1972 when he entered Starlift with the first tune composed by an arranger in "Pan On The Move."

Other arrangers followed

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Harmonites (The Wrecker/Earl Rodney); 1969 — Starlift (The Bull/Ray Holman); 1970 —

Desperadoes (Margie/Clive Bradley); 1971 — Starlift (Queen Of The Bands/Ray Holman)

tied with Harmonites (Play Mas/Earl Rodney); 1972 — Harmonites (St. Thomas Girl/Earl Rodney); 1973 — Trinidad All Stars (Rainorama/Rudy Wells); 1974 —

Harmonites (Jericho/Rupert Mark); 1975 — Hatters (Tribute to Spree Simon/Steve Achaiba);

1976 — Desperadoes (Pan In Harmony/Clive Bradley); 1977 — Desperadoes (Hasely Crawford/Clive Bradley); 1978 —

Starlift (Du Du Yemi/Herschel Puckerin); 1979 — (No Panorama final because of a steel-band boycott); 1980 —

Trinidad All Stars (Woman of the Bass/Leon "Smooth" Edwards); 1981 — Trinidad All Stars

Trinidad All Stars