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# Pan Ensemble new Ramajay champions

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**LINCOLN Enterprises Pan Ensemble, is the new Pan Ramajay champions and Jason Baptiste, king of the pan soloists. Both entities were crowned shortly before 2 a.m. yesterday.**

Culture Minister Dr Daphne Phillips was among the thousands who attended the grand finals of the seventh edition of Pan Ramajay on Saturday night at the National Flour Mills compound on Wrightson Road in Port of Spain.

At precisely 8 p.m, seven year old Atiba Williams raised the curtain on the pan competition by playing the national anthem. Some six hours later, Jason Baptiste was pronounced the best soloist in the land. Baptiste, who was beaten into second place at Thursday night's semi finals by last year's champion Duvonne Stewart, delivered his promise to cop the title at the finals.

Of the five finalists in the soloist category, only Baptiste picked the same tune that he played in the semis (Sparrow's "Jane"). He played at position four, the slot that followed immediately upon a break in the show, taken for another final—Ato Boldon's run in the men's 100 metres race at the Olympic Games.

Before the break, Liam Teague had opened the soloists contest with David Rudder's "Bahia Girl", followed by Duvonne Stewart's version of Brother Marvin's "Jahaaji Bhai", then there was Karlon Harewood with Kitchener's "Flag Woman". After Baptiste came Kurt Edwards.

The large crowd and the judges were in harmony with the announcement of Pan Ensemble as the winning group. The band's rendition of David Rudder's "Calypso Music" (into which they infused lines from several vintage calypsoes) met with thunderous applause. They also played Herbach and Kern's "All The Things You Are"; both songs arranged by Sydney Joseph.

Earl Brooks and Friends, another hot favourite for the Ramajay crown came in second with Ken 'Professor' Philmore's arrangement of Grover Washington's "Just the Two of Us" and Shadow's "I Come Out to Play", arranged by Brooks and Pelham Goddard.

In the short interim between the final performance and the announcement of results, St Lucian saxophonist Luther Francois performed with Pelham Goddard's trio, which had earlier backed the soloists in their competition. Francois, a founding member of the West Indies Jazz Band also played here for the inaugural Pan Jazz Festival. In St Lucia, he arranges music for an all female steelband called the Allegro Pan Groove.

This year's Pan Ramajay honoured five national heroes who have brought international attention to Trinidad and Tobago. Unfortunately, none of them could be present for the finals, but Janelle Commissiong-Chow and Giselle La Ronde-West both received commemorative plaques on Wednesday evening as the finalists drew for playing positions at the Textel Building.

The other persons being honoured were Brian Lara for his international cricket records, Hasely Crawford for his copping gold at the 1976 Olympics and pan pioneer Ellie Mannette who was that very night receiving another award as he celebrated his fiftieth anniversary of tuning a tenor pan.

#### FINAL PLACINGS

##### Soloists:

1 Jason Baptiste (273.5), 2 Liam Teague (272), 2.. Kurt Edwards (272), 4 Duvonne Stewart (264), Karlon Harewood (248).

##### Pan Ramajay:

Lincoln Enterprises Pan Ensemble (561.5), 2. Earl Brooks and Friends (550.5), 3. Hillside Symphony (550), 4. Phase II Pan Groove (543.75), 5. Caribbean magic (542), 5. T&T Defence Force (542), 7 Siparia Petrotrin Deltones (540.5), 8. Tropical Angel Harps (536.75) and 9. San Juan All Stars (508.5)