

Panazz Players concert mesmerises audience at Central bank

By DAVID CUFFY

DURING the interval at the concert presented by Panazz Players on Friday night at the Central Bank Auditorium, many patrons were in agreement that at that point they had already received their money's worth.

This was indeed an accurate assessment of the outstanding first half performances by

one of Trinidad and Tobago's leading pan ensembles in its first live public concert. Its name, Panazz, is a union of pan and jazz, and is indicative of the musical style of the ensemble.

"Panazz Live," the title of the programme, opened promptly at 8 pm. From the first selection, the group succeeded in mesmerising patrons with a showy display of dexterity on

their instruments of choice.

Tenor players, Dane Gulston and Sheldon Webster showed off breathtaking skills, but nevertheless did not overshadow the superb talents of the rest of the group, comprising Sean Richards on tenor; Yohan Popwell and Natasha Joseph on double seconds; Barry Bartholomew and Nigel Williams on guitars;

Glen Sweene, Felix Walcott and Donell Thomas on basses; Keith Coombs on percussion; Richard Joseph on drums; and Sean Blackman on congas. Their individual playing styles, together with a combined flair for showmanship, resulted in spontaneous bursts of applause springing from the audience throughout their performances.

The first guest artiste, vocalist Danica Daniel, backed by the ensemble, worked hard on her selections, "Love Is Here To Stay" and "Fly Me To The Moon." Coming

on stage from amidst the audience, Curtis Lewis on soprano saxophone offered "Take Five," and "Girl From Ipanema," then switched to the flute for "El Dorado," in the process showcasing his unique style and approach to the instruments.

After the interval, the four-times winner of the Pan Ramajay Competition combined their talents with those of cuatrist Robert Munro and his group of versatile musicians to present an interesting version of "Tico Tico."

The band then dedi-

cated "Shadow Of Your Smile" to a lady named Maria who, we heard, came in from her home in Miami especially for the opening performance of the two-nights concert.

Panazz showcased a wide range of selections on the highly entertaining two-hour programme.

Among them were: "Pull D Bull," "Carmen," "Passion Fruit," "Iron Man," "Portrait of Trinidad," and "Misty," the selection with which the ensemble won its first Ramajay championship in 1992.

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