

## INTRODUCTION

The Literary Competition sponsored by the National Cultural Council, a body inaugurated by the Government of Trinidad and Tobago to foster the Arts in the country, is the basis of this study. This paper isolates one category of this competition. It will endeavour to look at the drama component of the competition over the period 1973 to 1979. Its aim is to make an analysis of the prize-winning plays in the competition.

The level of craftsmanship over the period has not seemed to move upwards but has plunged lower and lower with the passing years. A major factor in the decline appears to be the incentives offered by the Council in the form of prizes, which have declined in value over the years.

The response to the competition has also fallen off with the progress of time: an evidence to the fact that the efforts made by the National Cultural Council to encourage and foster the literary arts in this genre, need to be reconsidered urgently.

Before going into the study, a brief history of the Literary Competition will be presented in Chapter One. Emphasis will be placed on the drama component, highlighting what impact the competition has been making on the writers of the nation in this genre, especially with regards to how many of the writers of the nation have been responding to the literary competition.

Chapter Two will give a general assessment of the prize-winning plays.

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This will be followed by a more detailed study of selected plays showing potential in Chapter Three. The study ends with the Appendices which will give biographical information of each of the prize-winners in the drama section of the Literary Competition and a list of the prizes offered over the years of the competition 1973 to 1979.