

## FEATURES



Social activist Hazel Brown



Andrew Marciano (Lord Superior)

# Hazel Brown, Joker, Lord Superior to get honorary UWI degrees

The University of the West Indies will confer 12 honorary degrees at its 2017 graduation ceremonies, recipients at the St Augustine campus being social activist Hazel Brown, Soca/calypso composer Winsford Devine (Joker) and Andrew Marciano (Lord Superior).

Jamaica author Olive Senior (Mona) and Haitian writer Edwidge Danticat (Open campus) are also among the list of recipients.

The UWI awards honorary degrees to individuals of eminence in the arts, sciences and other fields of intellectual endeavour, as well as to persons who have made outstanding regional or international contributions.

New Chancellor, Robert Bermudez, will preside over the ceremonies and confer the degrees at the October 26-28 graduation ceremonies at the St Augustine campus. The Open Campus ceremony will take place on October 14 while the Cave Hill campus will host its graduation ceremony on October 21 and the Mona campus on November 3-4.

In a brief bio on Brown, a release from the university noted that since 1969, Brown has been professionally involved in research, social development, and community organisation, with a focus on poverty eradication, consumer affairs and gender equity. Brown has been in the forefront of educational and awareness-raising activities, often in collaboration with government, CARICOM, the Commonwealth and UN agencies.

Her passion for her work in the field has seen her working with women's organisations and leaders in all Commonwealth Caribbean countries on



Soca/calypso composer Winsford Devine

consumer affairs, politics, development, and gender equity issues. She is a founding member and co-ordinator of the Network of NGOs of Trinidad and Tobago for the Advancement of Women, formed in 1985 to present the position of women in Trinidad and Tobago at the End of Decade Conference in Nairobi. A past Secretary General of the Commonwealth Women's Network, she has been engaged in Commonwealth activities since the first Commonwealth People's Forum at the Caribbean Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in Harare in 1991.

Her publications include *A Study of Diabetes and Hypertension in Women 25 years and over in Trinidad and Tobago* and *Annual Women's Diary 1977-2016*. She also co-authored the *Role of Working Women in Early Childhood Education in Trinidad and Tobago*.

The UWI bio on Devine noted that music, particularly steelband music, has entranced him since the age of ten. It signalled a prolific career as a composer and arranger that spans

more than 40 years and in excess of 500 calypsoes. In the early days, Devine would write a tune using his tenor pan, play it over and over until the melody was fixed in his mind, after which he would try to find the words. Later, during the 1980s, he averaged some 40 calypsoes per season. He would strum two or three chords on the guitar and a melody along with at least one verse and chorus would simply emerge.

Also known as the 'Joker', a sobriquet Winsford Devine gave himself when he considered performing in the calypso tents, many of his compositions are now considered classics. These include most of Sparrow's calypsoes of the 1970s and 1980s, including, *Rope*, *Capitalism Gone Mad*, *Phillip My Dear*, *Saltfish*, *Marajhin'*, *Survival* (which won Sparrow's last crown); *Baron's Feeling It*, *Jammer*; and *Machel Montano's* early hit, *Too Young To Soca*. He still considers *Progress* as one of his very best creations.

In 1988, his talent was recognised when he received the Trinidad and Tobago's Humming Bird Medal (Silver) for Music and the Arts.

If you look for Andrew Marciano's Twitter handle @LordSuperior, you will see his self-description: "I am the longest performing Calypsonian in Trinidad and Tobago (the Land of Calypso) and very likely the planet". For more than six decades, Marciano has embodied every aspect of the calypso art form; a lyrical genius, brilliant musical composer and producer, charismatic performer who is a master of extempore, a visionary and entrepreneur, a truly outstanding Trinidad and Tobago cultural icon.

He has always gone beyond the traditional path of calypsonians

and chosen a multi-faceted path. The first calypsonian to produce his own hit on his very own label (La Carib), his calypso classics include *Coconut*, *Spread Joy*, *San Fernando Carnival*, *Saga Ting*, *Standardise Pan*, *Respect Calypsonians*, *Long Live Calypso*, and *Cultural Assassination*. Later, he would be the first calypsonian to perform at Madison Square Garden in New York in 1968. In 2001, he was co-producer of the award-winning documentary, *Calypso Dreams*, which chronicles the art form of calypso in Trinidad and Tobago.

In 2015, Trinidad and Tobago awarded him the Hummingbird Medal of the Order of the Trinity (Silver) for Culture and the Trinidad and Tobago Publishers and Broadcasters Association presented him with a Media Pioneer Award for his role as a radio liberalisation advocate.

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