

'Fun Da Mental' stir at Pan Jazz festival

By FULTON WILSON

THE TALKING point at last Saturday's Pan Jazz festival was without doubt the British based group "Fun Da Mental".

Their performance was not what many expected at a jazz show. They combined Asian music with rap ragga and hip hop. Perhaps it could be called alternative jazz, if jazz at all. They described it as "extreme" jazz.

The organisers may have included the group to encourage the younger generation to listen to jazz.

While they were well received by those who did not mind hearing something different, the older folks became visibly restless when the band went on and on and on.

One patron eventually resorted to wearing earplugs. But Saturday night was by far the most successful of the three nights in terms of attendance and the decision to hold it at Pier I to create that special ambience succeeded.

Despite the drizzle, the open air atmosphere was perfect for jazz, despite a late start which MC Alfred Aguiton said was due in part to the transfer of equipment and props from Spektakula Forum and sound checks.

Allan Balfour and Avni Joy Dookie of the Trinidad Theatre workshop Dance Co opened the show with a dance choreographed by Carol La Chapelle to Raf Robertson's interpretation of Kitchener's *Mango Tree*.

Feedback problems and a short power outage marred part of Phase II Pan Groove's otherwise good performance. The crowd was unable to hear all of Mavis Elcock's vocal contribution to the band's performance of *Lady is a Tramp*.

Phase II was joined by Edwin Doyle with his unique "Fo Fo" trumpet, Boston based Oliver Griffith on soprano sax and Gloria Barry and Wayne Bastide on violin.

Monty Alexander and his quartet who took the stage after "Fun Da Mental", changed the mood with a series of old standards including *Renewal*, *Concherto de Aranguez*, *Mac the Knife* and *S.K.J.*

The band was later joined by US-based Derek Dicenco on steelpan who held his own much to the crowd's delight. Yellow Jackets closed the show with a scintillating performance.

Their repertoire included *Red Sea*, *Tribute to Miles Davis*, *Dreamland*, *The Chosen* and *Jackattack*.

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