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MUSIC

Promoting TT's national instrument — the pan

“PANMAN PAT,” born Pat McNeilly, is a performer, an author and a teacher of the TT national instrument (the pan) in Canada.

Panman Pat has been teaching steelband as a curriculum course with the Etobicoke Board of Education in Toronto for the past 12 years and is currently on a one-year sabbatical with plans to spend most of this year in Trinidad to “rejuvenate” culturally.

He holds an Ontario Teachers' Certificate and a Diploma in Education from Queen's University as well as qualifications in Computers and English as a Second Language from York University, Toronto.

According to a release from the Naparima Alumni Association of Canada, Panman Pat is looking forward to exploring the issue of curriculum development and teaching of the steelband as a curriculum course in the high schools of Trinidad and Tobago and will be available for workshops, lectures and performances.

“As a teacher, Panman Pat was responsible for building the best steelband in Canada — The Pantastix Steel Orchestra — which recently released its first steelband recording on CD entitled *Pantastix — A Touch of Class*.

Panman Pat has also made



PANMAN PAT MCNEILLY.

significant cultural contributions to the Canadian mosaic for which he was awarded the Raphael Passey Award in 1993. In 1995 he received the Republic Day Cultural Award (from current Chief Justice for TT Michael de la Bastide) for his promotion of the steelband and calypso in Canada and another for his contribution to culture at the Mas In The City Awards.

He has performed extensively both in calypso (winning the Canadian Monarch Title in 1983 and 1985) and steelband, including television appearances on the Super Dave Osborne series. Panman Pat has also co-authored two books, *Caiso*, *Caiso — The Story of Calypso Brought to Life* and *Hands On*

Steelband. He has also recently released his own steelband CD entitled *Pan Ramachez*.

As well, he is the tutor and musical arranger of the Naparima Alumni Steel Orchestra which recently performed for Prime Minister Basdeo Panday while he was in Toronto.

Mr Panday was reported to have expressed his admiration for “Panman Pat” in standardising the instrument (pan) in Canada to allow reading from sheet music.

Panman Pat currently holds membership in the Toronto Musicians Association, the Ontario Steelband Alliance, the Naparima Alumni Association and is a founding member of The Calypso Association of Canada (OCPA).