

Guyana Cultural Association of New York Inc. on-line Magazine

GUYANA FOLK

And Culture

Mar. 28
2015
Vol. 5
Issue 3

**FOLLOWING
IN THE
FOOTSTEPS
OF
STRONG &
TALENTED
GUYANESE
WOMEN**

I am Charisse

IN THIS ISSUE

PAGE 3-4: Happy Easter

PAGE 5 - 10: Happy Phagwah

PAGE 11-14: Burrowes School

40th anniversary

PAGE 15-22: Celebrating Guyanese

Women

PAGE - 23 - 25: Steelband in Guyana

PAGE 26- 28: Maestro Fresh Wes

PAGE 30 - 31": Guyana National Sound

PAGE 32:: Sigma Alpha tragedy

PAGE 33 - 34: Dis Time Nah Lang Time

PAGE 37: Cultures Endure

Gail A. Nunes- March Editor

Cover Design - Claire Goring

Copy Editors-

Edgar Henry & Lear Matthews

Layout and Design by

Claire A. Goring & Ashton Franklin

Contributors:

Lear Matthews, Derry Etkins
Dion Matthews Carlyle Harry
Errol Brewster Charisse Webb
Gail Nunes Margaret Lawrence
Roy Geddes Clairmont Chung
Pride News of Canada
Urbanology

Photographs

Demerara Waves, Errol Brewster
Pride News of Canada
Clairmont Chung Vidur Dindyal
Urbanology

GCA Media Team

Ave Brewster-Haynes (Chairperson),
Juliet Emanuel, Edgar Henry,
Lear Matthews, Claire A. Goring,
Gail Nunes, Ashton Franklin,
Margaret Lawrence,
Francis Quamina Farrier.

Please join our Facebook group,
Website: www.guyfolkfest.org

GCA Secretariat
1368 E.89 Street, Suite 2
Brooklyn, NY 11236
Tel: 718 209 5207

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

For those who experienced it, this was easily one of the harshest winters in North America. And inasmuch as we welcomed spring just a few days ago, the temperatures linger determinedly at cold instead of warming. Did Mother Nature have it in for us this time around or is this merely a change in weather patterns to which we will ultimately become accustomed.

In complicity with the weather is the plethora of sadness and turmoil confronting our world: horrific deaths and tragic losses abound, not the least of which was the recent airline disaster. It forces us to acknowledge with gratitude, much of what is generally taken for granted.

But here we are nevertheless, anticipating the "crispness" of the new season and the accompanying burst of color. And as we await, we also look forward to our "Spring Renewal", a season of hope and promise.

On this month's cover, our beaming Charisse is the epitome of that promise. At eleven years old, her inspiring essay and metaphor about "The Caged Gorilla" demonstrates remarkable intuition from someone so young. We wish her continued success.

In celebration of Women's History Month, we laud the achievements of Guyanese women whose phenomenal work within the diaspora has made a difference.

The joyful season of Phagwah which we celebrated this month is depicted characteristically with splashes of brilliant color. We acknowledge Vidur for his essay on the history of this Hindu celebration.

Congratulations to the Burrowes School of Art and the new Head, Ivor Thom, on the occasion of the school's 40th Anniversary. Thank you, Errol Brewster for your in-depth exposé on the school's history.

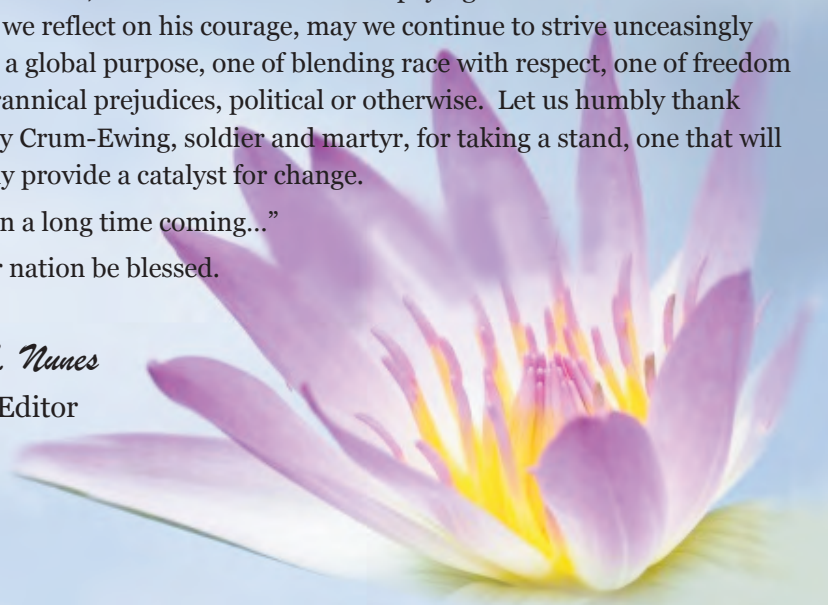
There is a resonant message in the call for the resuscitation and sustainment of indigenous music by musicians Roy Geddes and Derry Etkins. Both contributions inspire us with hope that we can experience this rebirth.

Finally, readers, I could not close without paying solemn tribute to a brave soul. As we reflect on his courage, may we continue to strive unceasingly towards a global purpose, one of blending race with respect, one of freedom from tyrannical prejudices, political or otherwise. Let us humbly thank Courtney Crum-Ewing, soldier and martyr, for taking a stand, one that will hopefully provide a catalyst for change.

"It's been a long time coming..."

May our nation be blessed.

Gail A. Nunes
March Editor





Blessings for the Easter Season!

*Easter symbolizes the renewal of life,
love, and happiness.*

*May you find the renewal of hope,
health, love and the spirit of God.*

**HAPPY EASTER TO YOU
AND YOUR FAMILY**

THE GUYANA CULTURAL ASSOCIATION OF NEW YORK, INC.

Hot cross buns are traditionally baked for lent, the 40 days before Easter. In the Christian tradition they start on Ash Wednesday, the day after Fat Tuesday. Their greatest day is Good Friday as they are served to commemorate Christ's suffering on the cross. However, the bun acquired mythical properties during the centuries, generally now forgotten. Early literature reveals that the hot cross bun was better known as the Good Friday Bun. Pepys referred to it in his diaries of 1666, and Boswell included it in his Diary for Good Friday in 1778.

The most famous story says the hot cross buns origins date to the 12th century when an Anglican monk was sent to have placed the sign of the cross on the buns to honor Good Friday.

Throughout history, the bun has received credit for special virtues, among them that of ensuring friendship between two people sharing a bun. An old rhyme states, "half for you and half for me, between us two good luck shall be".

Another tradition holds that a Good Friday bun should be kept hanging from the kitchen ceiling for one year to another to ward off evil spirits. Healing properties were also attributed to it. Gratings from a preserved bun were mixed with water to provide a cure for the common cold.

HOT CROSS BUNS

From solidifying friendships to driving evil spirits away, legends abound about these sweet dough balls

Legends:

They stay fresh for a whole year.

If you hang a hot cross bun from your kitchen rafters on Good Friday, legend has it that the bread will remain fresh and mold-free throughout the entire year. This harkens back to the body of Christ, which, according to the Bible, did not show any signs of decay after his crucifixion and prior to his resurrection. The bun should be replaced each year on Good Friday. Later in the year, the buns were sometimes broken up, mixed with water and treated as a medicine,

They expel bad spirits.

Due to the blessed cross on top, hot cross buns hung in the kitchen are supposed to protect from evil spirits. They're also said to prevent kitchen fires from breaking out, and ensure that all breads baked that year will turn out perfectly delicious. Likewise, taking hot cross buns on a voyage at sea endows the boat with some protection from shipwreck, according to legend.

And cement friendships.

Those who share a hot cross bun are supposed to enjoy a strong friendship and bond for the next year. A line from an old rhyme captures this lore, says Irish Central: "Half for you and half for me, between us two, good luck shall be."

They're too sacred to eat any old day.

In 1592, Queen Elizabeth I decreed that hot cross buns could no longer be sold on any day except for Good Friday, Christmas or for burials. They were simply too special to be eaten any other day. To get around this, FoodTimeline explains that people baked the buns in their own kitchens—although if they were caught they had to give up all of the illegal buns on their premises to the poor.





Phagwah Greetings

From the Guyana Cultural Association of New York, Inc.



**Young
Beauties...
with a positive attitude**

Holi Hai

A spring of unbounded fun and frolic!!



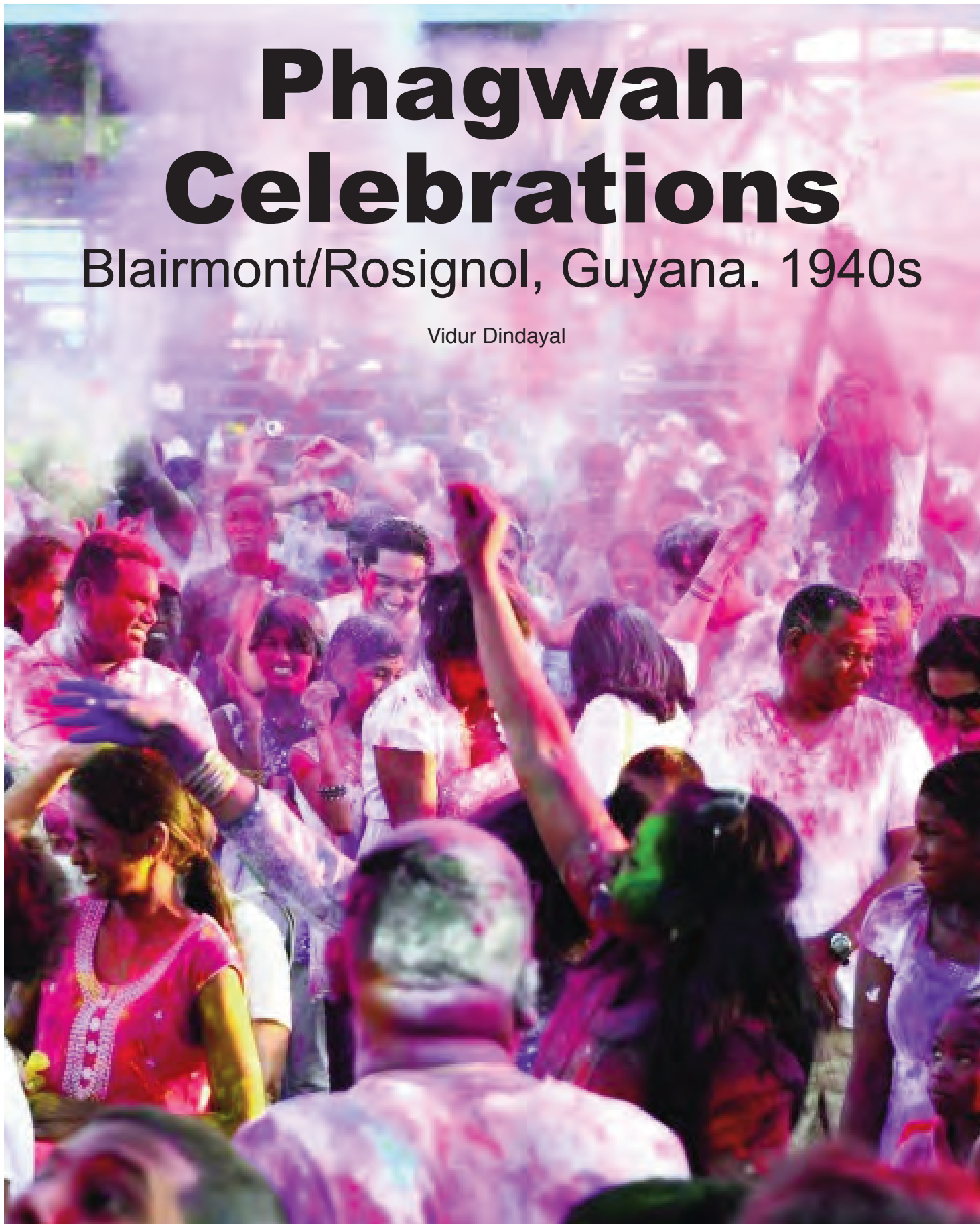
*Gulal - red, green, yellow and countless
A day's canvas - a riot of colors
Lively crowd running hither and thither,
Rainbow of colors,
dashing from every nook and corner
Disregarding their woe, despair fervent folks,
rejoicing at the marvel of colors.
A day filled with luster and gaiety,
A day to smear our dreams-
With a splash of vibrant frenzy colors
Holi Hai!
A spring of unbounded fun and frolic!!*



Phagwah Celebrations

Blairmont/Rosignol, Guyana. 1940s

Vidur Dindyal



Phagwah. Blairmont/Rosignol, Guyana. 1940s

Phagwah in the 40s at Blairmont, Rosignol and neighbouring villages, in Berbice, Guyana was a festival lasting over a week. The real fun for us children was freedom to play and play Phagwa with our friends like our parents did with their friends and family. Play included eating sweet things -gulgulla, mithai, gulaab jamoon, and jilay-bi, and savoury things -baara, phulowrie and channa, all washed down with sweet pine drink. There was merrymaking, non stop. Everyone seemed to belong to one big happy family.

We learnt the story of Phagwah – Holi, in lessons at the Hindi School. It celebrated the triumph of the godly son Prahalad over his father the demon King Hiranyakashyipu. It also celebrated the spring harvest festival at Phaalgun, the Hindu month.

The most enduring memory of Phagwah for me was the way our parents, uncles and aunties (we children called all of our parents' friends and family uncle and aunty) seemed to abandon work and all cares and enjoy each others company. They visited each and every home, embrace one another, sing and dance and drench one another with abeer, magenta coloured perfumed water. For abeer throwing they used a pitchkaari, a pump which they filled with abeer and forced through like a garden hose spraying abeer on all several yards away. Food was laid on in every home, to enjoy after a hearty session of singing chowtal.

The grown ups in a chowtal group, singing phagwa songs, go from house to house, street to street. Everywhere a big welcome awaits you. A group comes down the road from Blairmont. You hear the drums beating, and as they get nearer you hear the fast tingling, jingling, clanking sounds of jhaanj -brass cymbals, each person with a pair of jhaanj making music. They get near to your house and the sound gets louder. You hear loud hails in between of 'Holi Khele Raghubeer, Holi Khele Raghubeer '. They reach home and you greet them with a drenching of abeer, big embraces and sweet

'Holi Khele Raghubeer, Holi Khele Raghubeer '.

Vidur Dindayal

drinks.

They settle down to serious chowtal singing. I watch at first, but as the singing goes on, I get into the spirit of it, and chime in. When the chorus comes I give it all I've got, singing my heart out. It's a good feeling.

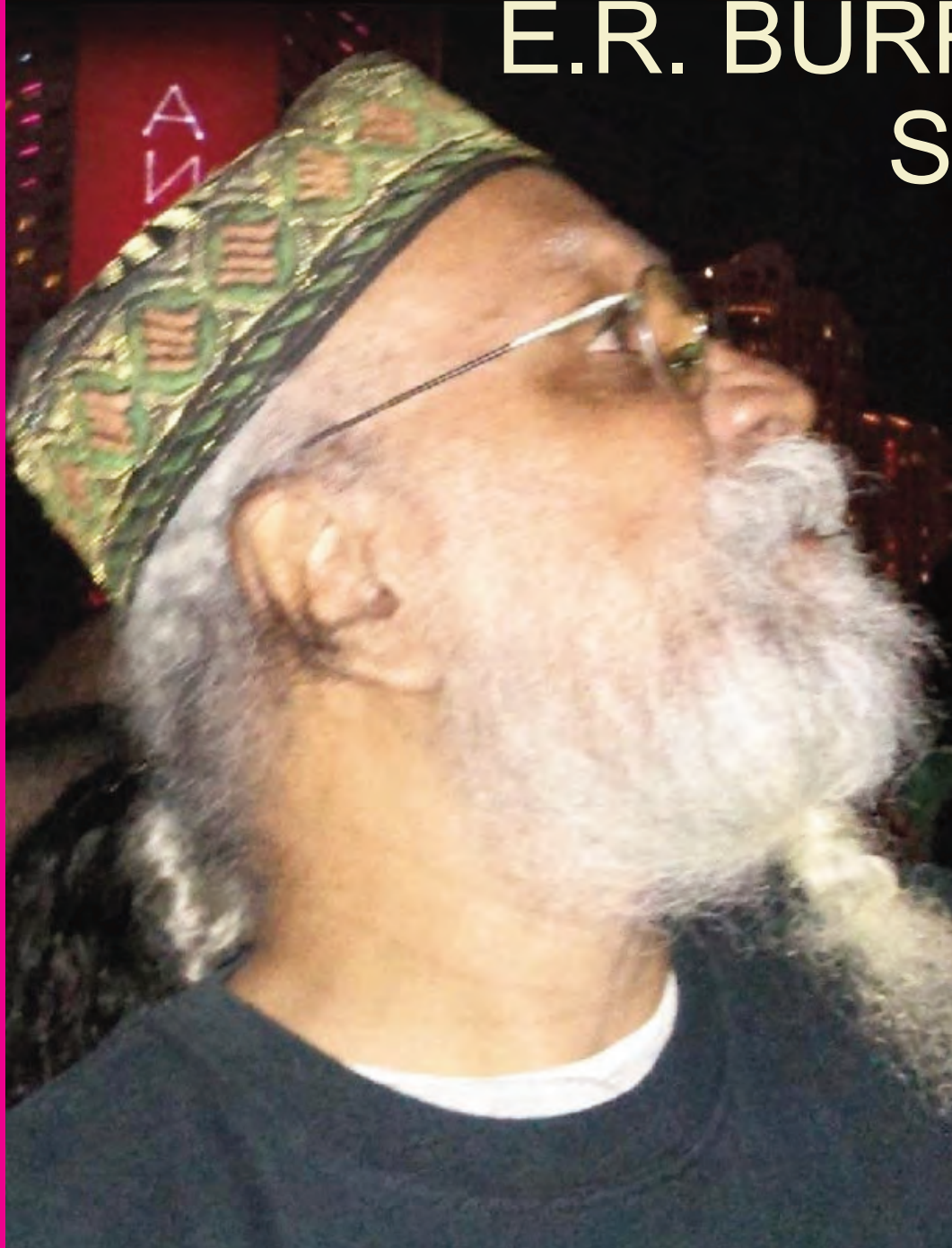
A contest is exciting. The best singers in two groups sit opposite each other. One starts off with a chowpai -verse; the rest join in; the other side takes it up, till both groups sing themselves to a frenzy. Then the group opposite takes turn to lead. After a good hour or so of hard singing it is break-time. Prasad is served -blessed food made with ghee, flour, sugar and milk, plus water melon, bananas, sweet drinks, followed by a hearty meal of daal and rice, aloo curry, sometimes roti or puri and other delicacies.

After good wishes we set off for the next house singing. Every house is visited from Cotton Tree to Rampur. A house not visited that day would be called on the next day. Phagwah was real bliss. It was fun to see our parents enjoying themselves and we too joined in the fun. Happy Phagwah!

GUYANESE ARTIST

Errol Brewster

CELEBRATING 40 YEARS OF THE
E.R. BURROWES
SCHOOL
OF ART



Transcript of his never before released video taped interviews from almost a generation ago with former tutor, external examiner, long time friend and on going associate of the school, **Stanley Greaves, Dr. Denis Williams** - Founder of the school and with **Ivor Thom**, then one of the students in the 1st batch of BSA graduates, and Administrator of the school now.

CELEBRATING 40 YEARS OF THE E.R. BURROWES SCHOOL OF ART

Errol Brewster

Transcript of his never before released video taped interviews from almost a generation ago with former tutor, external examiner, long time friend and on going associate of the school Stanley Greaves, Dr. Denis Williams - Founder of the school and with Ivor Thom, then one of the students in the 1st batch of BSA graduates, and Administrator of the school now.

DR. DENNIS WILLIAMS

"I would banish the word 'STUDENT' completely! I think the word carries a kind of dependency which we would like to get rid of. The person coming into the BSA depending on a school Master to bully him and to admonish and so on, I think that I would like to get rid of this because that person is not taking on any responsibility at all. That person is coming into the school to be carried along and has nothing to give back."

Evidence of talent and a dream of how to develop and use it should be the most important considerations in determining the suitability of entrants to the school, nothing else. Anything more is extra, anything less and you're out, simple!

Slade School of Art in London. I have taught there and in Africa. I think it is very wrong. I think that they have something to do at the university which is separate from the school of art.

What it would be advantageous for them to do at the University of Guyana is to have a faculty of Cultural Studies with a clear and focused concentration on Caribbean culture.



a drawing from the 1950's
by Dr. Denis Williams.

More than art appreciation, which is what the UG Dept of Creative Arts was set up for, the Cultural Studies programmer could examine all of the nuances of Caribbean culture with all the sociological tools available in an academic setting such as a university, and then graduates of the BSA would have something additional to do which would extend on the studio practice programmed which is the strength of the art school.

CELEBRATING 40 YEARS OF THE E.R. BURROWES SCHOOL OF ART

Errol Brewster

STANLEY GREAVES

"Burrowes' approach was a pretty freewheeling one. In the first instance, as a member of the Guyana Art Group, he felt that the members of the GAG constituted a certain element in the Guyanese society, and he felt that art was not restricted to levels of society. It was for everyone, and that's how he started the Working People's Art Class in 1945, which was really to get art to the masses, so to speak.

So he went into the streets, literally, and got together shoe-makers, carpenters, housewives, stevedore workers, whoever, to come and join the art class. In that class he was teaching Principles of Design to needle workers and tailors, and things like that. For people who were doing art "proper" we were introduced to scraper board, lino printing, mono printing, painting and drawing, and for some of us - sculpture. I got into sculpture because I used to carve things in wood with a pen-knife blade that I sharpened as a chisel, and when I showed Burrowes what I was doing he immediately got out from under his bed a cardboard box with about six carving tools which he promptly handed over to me.

I think that is one of the most significant gifts I've ever been given. It started me on my course of carving."

Vision and conviction, and the capacity to lead, and to execute, to transfer skills, to facilitate younger artists and to provide for them to the fullest extent of one's ability, and to be an inspiration to others is what Burrowes, from all accounts, had, and is what is needed to effectively carry forward this school named for him.

His group was actually formed in 1948 and not 1945.

"At the Burrowes School of Art, our major problem has been trying to cater towards the areas of history, history of ideas, history of art, interests of people, what is happening in the world of science and how it relates to artist. I feel the problem was getting staff. This is precisely what I used to do. This was precisely my area of working. I worked with students in leading them through the history of ideas as related to the history of art at certain levels, so that they now can go and initiate their own specific areas of interest, if they so wish. One would see among students that there wasn't an interest in these areas, and this was something that disturbed me, to the effect that students would sometimes accuse me of preaching because I was not dealing with techniques. I was dealing with ideas, the history of ideas, the way in which particular philosophies, whether they be materialistic or spiritualistic philosophies, have influenced artists and vice versa. This was my thing, because I felt that one cannot be working in the 20th century and be totally ignorant of what has been achieved all over the world - the art of China; the continent of Africa; the art of the Eskimo; the feather craft of the North American Indians; basketry. One cannot be unaware of these things. IT'S VERY IMPORTANT!"

For this very reason, it was mandatory that the entire student body, and the teaching staff attend these scheduled, once weekly lectures given in what I liked to think of as The Denis Williams Lecture Theatre and Drawing Room. They were given by myself and various leading luminaries on a variety of topics which included architecture, archaeology and anthropology, women's studies, Indian, and African cultural practices and a variety of other art related topics for which I could find people in the wider society willing to give freely of their time for the rounded development of our students. The students, for their part, gave every indications of interest, asking compelling and searching questions, and requesting print-outs of the presentations.

If this programme is not now still current, they should be reintroduced and the room in which they're given formally named for Dr. Williams, as part of the honouring of his legacy in Art Education during the celebrating of this significant anniversary of the school.



IVOR THOM

"When I was a student at Burrowes, we started as the 1st batch of students, and we hadn't the qualified tutors that Burrowes has now. There were not the amount of materials. I remember my first piece of work that I did at Burrowes - I got it from an old tamarind tree and with tools that I fashioned myself. I remember other students who fashioned tools and did work because there were no tools available. So I think that the art student who claim that because of insufficient material he or she can't work, I think that student is in the wrong field.

My advice to students at BSA is whatever you do, get seriously involved in it, and always strive to achieve your best. Art for me is a subject like any other subject, but is a jealous one. If you are going to be an artist then you got to be at art all the time. There is no part time artist. Those student who complain about what the school lacks...I feel that student is in the wrong field, because art is all about creativity. If you try and there is scarcity of something, then use your creativity, use your imagination and create something else.

What I learned from Philip Moore is, above everything, to overcome disadvantages."

CELEBRATING GUYANESE WOMEN

YOUNG, GIFTED AND GUYANESE

15



My name is Charisse Elizabeth Deon Webb. I live with my mom and dad and sister in High River, Alberta. I am eleven years old, and am in the 6th Grade. My favourite subjects are Social Studies, mathematics, Science and writing. I love to play the trombone, and my favourite sport is gymnastics. Recently, for the second time, I have been selected to represent my school at the Young Authors Conference to be held in my home town. I will get to meet established writers from all over Canada, and I will be able to learn from them. They will also get to see my work. I like to write descriptive pieces about things that touch my emotions. Such things may include freedom, grief, love and inspiration. My teachers often read my work to my classmates, who appear to like it, as they usually ask for more. I have attached a piece that I have written about a gorilla held in a small cage in a small circus. I hope that I am able to show how this animal feels.

Charisse Webb:

STUDENT, WRITER

The caged gorilla

This cage is not only holding me back, but it also puts my potential and talent behind a glass screen. The pureness of my heart was once there, but now all I am is an empty shell of a mighty, powerful gorilla. The glass is strong. It has managed to keep out love, kindness, respect, and joy. The corners of this jail cell seem to hold the sombre, insidious presence, that lashes out at me every time I plead to be released. My soul is emotionless and dead. I no longer have the ability to build consanguinity with another. It's so quiet that even my breath pierces the silence.

There's a piece of glass missing from the glass wall, like how a piece of my life is missing. People look at me like a monument, a statue, or a work of art. If they don't do so, I seem to lurk in the dark just like all the other non-existent matter. Dust cloaks the ground in many layers. This domain is a filter. It lets in all the evil, and pushes out the good. Lying, hatred, and agony are caged inside. I can't help but show evil on my face.

When the human eyes are absent from my presence, nothing even acknowledges that I'm here. Everywhere I look it is dingy. Humans murmur, as they come and go. The money spent on me is about as much as you would spend on a candy bar. Humans are always degrading things that seem less than them. Yet I can still taste a kaleidoscope of different flavours. Usually, I can taste when my meal is dowdy and dull. The worst is some type of mush, like pureed beef.

CELEBRATING GUYANESE WOMEN YOUNG, GIFTED AND GUYANESE



DR. SULAN FUNG

Dental surgeon, Lecturer, fellow of American Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry and International Congress of Oral Implantologists, Pageant Producer

Sulan Shimelle Yvonne Ayanna Fung was born on the coast-land of Guyana and raised in David Street, Kitty. A task initiated by both parents Patrick Tyrone Fung and Ingrid Jennifer Richards Fung was courageously carried on by Ingrid due to the passing of Patrick when Sulan was just two years old. Sulan is the youngest of their closely knitted five children and the only girl.

**Visionary
Guyanese
women & their
extraordinary
leadership**

Her scholastic career began at Stella Maris Nursery at the tender age of three. She subsequently earned a place at The Bishops' High School. There she received annual achievements of best debater, best actress, elocution prizes and was always a top achiever in her academics. After five years there she gained 5 Distinctions, 3 grade Ones and 2 grade Twos at the CXC exam which placed her as the top performer of the school earning the Anne Blue Scholarship along with many other awards. She furthered her secondary education at Queens College for two years earning passes in Biology, Chemistry and Mathematics at the London's Edexcel and CXC's CAPE exams. She was then able to attain a place at the University of Guyana, School of Dentistry. Sulan graduated from that University with credit and is now a fully qualified and registered Dental Surgeon.

The importance of Continuing Dental Education has driven Sulan to invest much time and effort to be a part of Dental XP, American Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry and International Congress of Oral Implantologists. She is also a part time lecturer at Texila American University School of Dentistry as well as University of Guyana School of Dentistry. Presently, she holds an Associate position and practices General Dentistry at a state-of-the-art dental clinic in Georgetown Guyana- Dr. S SenGupta & Associates.

Sulan has been involved with pageantry from a very young age. Today she holds the position of Producer on the Supa-Stylistics team when hosting the annual Mother and Daughter Pageant.

Sulan enjoys Sunday Mass, family life, poetry, drama, interior and exterior designing, basketball and laughter with friends.

CELEBRATING GUYANESE WOMEN OF CHARACTER, COURAGE & COMMITMENT



Visionary Guyanese women & their extraordinary leadership

Gail A. Nunes

Urla Barrow

Founder & CEO
Hyacinth's Place,
A Stepping Stone for Change

Urla Barrow is the Founder and CEO of Hyacinth's Place, The Institute of Urban Living, a 15-unit affordable residence for women located in the northeastern section of the District of Columbia. This non-profit community agency which was named after Urla's beloved aunt is committed to providing affordable housing and support services for the homeless and mentally ill, while also nurturing the coping and survival skills necessary for enhancing their quality of life.

"Our 15-unit affordable residence for homeless women and women at risk for homelessness is a stepping stone towards going back to work or finding a vocation, reuniting with family members/children and eventually acquire their own individual home. Hyacinth's Place fosters a community where women can focus on their wellness and recovery within a supportive environment; while enjoying the social interaction found there." www.hyacinths.org

Urla is an ardent advocate for underserved groups and is committed to working with the community's neediest residents.

Over the span of her career, she held numerous public and mental health appointments including community volunteering with incarcerated women from the prison systems of Massachusetts and Maryland. Her experiences as Executive Director in several states were invaluable in Urla's quest towards the formation of her own project. A graduate of the University of Wisconsin in Green Bay, Urla also earned a Masters Degree from the School for International Training in Brattleboro, Vermont. In December 1999, she received an "Outstanding Alumni of the Year" award from the University of Wisconsin. Ms. Barrow also completed a one year Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Fellowship. This Fellowship which was sponsored by the National Association of Community Health Centers and the Johns Hopkins Hospital/University presented an opportunity to travel to Health Centers throughout the U.S, to analyze practices and techniques that were successful in serving low-income families, and to lobby politicians on Capitol Hill for changes in Health Care policies.

Hyacinth's Place was also featured in a Washington, DC's NBC CHANNEL 4 video: "Changing Minds" program.

Urla enjoys reading, dancing and spending time by the ocean.

CELEBRATING GUYANESE WOMEN

OF CHARACTER, COURAGE & COMMITMENT



Dawn Y.H. McDonald

**Director of Technology Development,
Associated Press**

Dawn Yvonne Heather McDonald inherited the Mathematics gene from her father, William McDonald, and refers to herself as a “Mathematician-turned-Technologist.” Her affinity for Computer Science developed while studying Math at Howard University. This led to a 30-year career in high tech, working on core technologies such as operating system design to leading edge applications including Data Warehousing, Data Mining, and Analytics. In her current role as Director of Technology Development at the Associate Press, she leads a

team of software engineers, developing cloud based technology to deliver news in all formats to media companies around the world.

In 1997, Dawn received the Top Women in Sciences Award from the National Technical Association. And in 1998, she was honored at the Women of Color Technology Awards Conference as one of 50 Who Make A Difference.

Dawn’s commitment to volunteering is as fulfilling as it is rewarding. She is Coordinator and Math Tutor for the Plainfield Grassroots S.A.T. Prep Program. This Saturday morning program is staffed by a dedicated group of volunteer tutors with a goal to helping college-bound high school students master this important test. Initially created to serve one New Jersey town, news about the program’s success with the high test scores of its students, now

brings students from near and far. Graduates of the program have been accepted to Harvard, Yale, Princeton, MIT, Columbia, Brown and other leading universities. Dawn’s unwavering dedication earned for her the 2014 Outstanding Service Award from the Plainfield Grassroots Community Development Corporation.

Dawn works for her church and the Episcopal Diocese of New Jersey with equal vigor. She is on the St. Mark’s Vestry, chairs stewardship, and manages the church’s website. Dawn was elected to the Diocese’s Disciplinary Board, and served on a small team that recently defined a new vision for the Diocese. St. Mark’s awarded her its Harley V. B. Picou Outstanding Service Award in 2005 and the Spirit of St. Mark’s Award in 2012.

Dawn credits much of her professional achievement to her early education at St. Ambrose Anglican and Bishops’ High Schools in Georgetown, Guyana. She is married to Gladston Hackett and is the mother of one son, Thabo. She and her family live in Scotch Plains, New Jersey

Visionary Guyanese women & their extraordinary leadership

Gail A. Nunes

CELEBRATING GUYANESE WOMEN

OF CHARACTER, COURAGE & COMMITMENT

19



Gem Madhoo Nascimento

Founder of the Theatre Company,
Owner Manager of GEMS Theatre
Productions & GEMS Youth Theatre

Visionary Guyanese women & their extraordinary leadership

Gem Madhoo Nascimento started her theatrical life in 1973 with the PSU Drama Group, and continued it with outcomes of significant proportions when she joined the Theatre Guild of Guyana a few years later. It was as a member, and an executive officer of the Guild that she honed and developed her own craft in the theatre and began a career that was to contribute to the growth of the professional theatre in Guyana and the training and development of several others on the Guyanese stage.

A former banker with training in accountancy, she used these skills to become a pioneer in professional theatre. Gem has been able to guide many amateur performers into becoming paid professional artistes, since 1981 with the formation of The Theatre Company. In partnership with Ron Robinson, she co-founded and managed The Theatre Company, the first professional performing company which opened doors, thus contributing substantially to the definite development of the modern era in the local Guyanese stage. She has been jointly responsible for The Link Show the longest running, most popular and most successful production in Guyanese theatre

and has managed several overseas tours to the Caribbean and North America.

Today Mrs Madhoo-Nascimento owns and manages GEMS Theatre Productions and GEMS Youth Theatre. She has used theatre to raise funds for many charitable and sporting organisations, staged productions in recognition of International Women's Day, given visual artists exposure through theatrical productions and harnessed a young group since 2007 into 'edutainment' in a number of schools and performing venues regionally. She has participated in and received training from international fora and workshops such as the Eugene O'Neill Theatre, and has contributed regionally to Theatre Information Exchange of the Caribbean.

Gem brings to the theatre industry over 40 years of experience and in excess of 200 productions on a Guyanese stage whose high profile, prolificity and professionalism she has helped to build.

Among her awards have been the 2002 YWCA's 'WOMEN OF DISTINCTION' Award 2006 Guyana Folk Festival Award – 'In recognition for outstanding contribution to Guyana's Culture & Heritage'.

CELEBRATING GUYANESE WOMEN

OF CHARACTER, COURAGE & COMMITMENT



Anande Trotman-Joseph

Attorney-At-Law, Former Solicitor General of Grenada, Social Justice and Empowerment Advocate

Anande is the Managing Partner of the law firm of Joseph & Joseph and the Founding Partner of Chapman & Trotman.

She is admitted to practice law at the Bars of Grenada, Guyana, Trinidad & Tobago and the British Virgin Islands. She is a former Solicitor General, Grenada

Visionary Guyanese women & their extraordinary leadership

Gail A. Nunes

Anande is presently a member of the UN Women Civil Society Advisory Group for the Caribbean, a board member of the Caribbean Institute for Women in Leadership, and the Deputy Chairperson of the Grenada Integrity in Public Life and Anti-Corruption Commission.

In 2014, she represented Caribbean women for the Women's Major Group on gender issues at the UN in New York and the UN Global Conference on Sustainable Development Goals in Samoa. As a result, she is about to embark on work with Caribbean Policy Development Centre, as a Focal Point for the Caribbean, on issues of sustainable development

She has distinguished herself through organizational life and service, having served as the President of the Guyana

Association of Women Lawyers and President of the Bar Association, of Guyana; was elected by women's organisations in Guyana as a Commissioner of the Constitution Reform Commission of Guyana, was President of the Tourism Association of Guyana, and co-Chair of the NDI sponsored Women's Millennium Caucus.

Since emigrating to Grenada, she has served as the Chairperson of the umbrella organization: The Grenada National Coalition on the Rights of the Child (GNCRC), Chairperson of the Adoption Board of Grenada, Commissioner of the National Telecoms Regulatory Commission, Executive Member of the Child Welfare Authority of Grenada, Executive Member of the Grenada Bar Association and remains a member of GNCRC, the Grenada National Organisation for Women and is the President of the Grenada Guyana Friendship Association.

She has stood as a national candidate for the Alliance for Change in Guyana's 2006 general elections, and is passionate about racial equality and harmony, violence free homes and societies, social empowerment, rule of law issues, women's empowerment, child rights and opportunities for youth.

Anande has worked on projects for USAID, UNICEF, OAS, UNIFEM

CELEBRATING GUYANESE WOMEN OF CHARACTER, COURAGE & COMMITMENT



Dianne Madray

Chief Operations Officer &
Program Director of CADVA,
Caribbean Global Coordinator
for One Billion Rising
Movement

Dianne Madray is the Chief Operations Officer and Program Director of CADVA (Caribbean American Domestic Violence Awareness) organization based in the USA. Dianne holds a Masters Degree in Community Mental Health and has dedicated herself to helping women and children, especially the youth in providing them with the tools to create a positive contribution to community development through volunteerism and public speaking platforms. Dianne is also the founder of

an educational and recreational center for under-privileged children called I.M.R.A.R.C. in Cane Grove, Guyana-South America. Additionally, Dianne has also worked extensively on women empowerment programs developing a framework for changing the cultural mindsets of the community to include a mental health component when combating the violence women and children face and dealing with residual effect from the Trauma of Abuse .

**Visionary
Guyanese
women & their
extraordinary
leadership**

The mission of CADVA, INC. is to provide a safe environment where individuals and communities can share and receive information to help combat domestic violence. We do this by building the platform for our Caribbean communities through dialogue forums and breakout sessions against domestic violence through education and public awareness campaigns not only in the USA but across the Caribbean.

She is also the Caribbean Global Coordinator for the One Billion Rising Movement.

<http://www.cadva.org/our-team/>

<http://www.onebillionrising.org/?s=Guyana>

CELEBRATING GUYANESE WOMEN OF CHARACTER, COURAGE & COMMITMENT



Visionary Guyanese women & their extraordinary leadership

Amanda V.M.I. St. Aubyn

Country Manager, Scotiabank Guyana

Amanda started her career at Scotiabank some 31 years ago as a Senior Ledger Clerk. She progressed to a Senior Teller, then to Senior Accounting Clerk, Credit Assistant, Credit Officer, Account Manager and Manager - Commercial Banking.

In 2007 she was appointed Country Manager, a position she held until March 2015. During her 7-year tenure as Head of Scotiabank in Guyana, Amanda developed and led a team who implemented a number of initiatives geared towards better serving our customers, improving operational efficiency and giving back to the community.

Some of the milestone achievements of her leadership are, to name a few, the:-

- Launch of the Scotiabank Bright Future Programme - our corporate initiative through which we give back to the community, offering funding and employee volunteer time towards programmes benefiting children and the under-privileged.
- Mobile and Telephone banking - channels that enable ease of banking for our customers.
- Implementation of Small Business banking and the capacity building tools to help our customers grow their business.
- Expansion of the two Georgetown branches.

Amanda's success as Country Manager is not only evident in the number of initiatives implemented but is manifest in the financial performance of the Guyana operations to date. In 2007, profit before tax stood at just over \$1.6 billion. In 2014, profits doubled to \$3.5 billion. Total assets moved from \$33.2 billion in 2007 to \$66.2 billion in 2014.

As a result of the Bank's financial performance and corporate social responsibility achievements, Scotiabank in Guyana has won numerous awards, locally and internationally. These include:

- Bank of the Year in 2008, 2009, 2011, 2013 and 2014
- Guyana Business Coalition on HIV/AIDS Award for Community Investment in 2009, 2010, 2012, 2013, 2014 and Workplace Programme in 2008
- Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and Industry Corporate Citizenship Award for 2009 and 2012
- Global Finance Magazine Best Consumer Internet Bank 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014
- Global Finance Magazine Best Corporate Internet Bank 2013

Apart from successfully managing the Bank's operations in Guyana, Amanda was also an active member of the Guyana Association of Bankers, the Guyana Business Coalition on HIV/AIDS and the Rotary Club of Georgetown, serving in various leadership capacities over the years.

In order for young people to be successful they must form good habits and we, the older ones, must set good examples. The greatest factor is the power of example.

We are in need of philosophy because we, as a people, are in a lot of trouble: spiritually. The lack of family life, the absence of the foundation must affect you: the child.

This is the Roy Geddes Pan Museum. Here I try to tell the history of the steelband art form from the time the steelband started in Trinidad and Tobago and then Guyana. As you can see there are names of persons who made tangible contributions to the steelband art form over the years: persons like Cedric Williams from Quo Vadis Steelband, Bertram Devarel from Tripoli Steel Orchestra, Phil Solomon of Atlantic Symphony, and Dan Sandiford from Invaders. There is Marsden Adams a one-time top pannist in Guyana, known as Patsy, from Chicago steel Orchestra. We also honor the man who is said to have made the first musical note on the pan, Mr. Winston 'Spree' Simon.

ROY "Pele" GEDDES

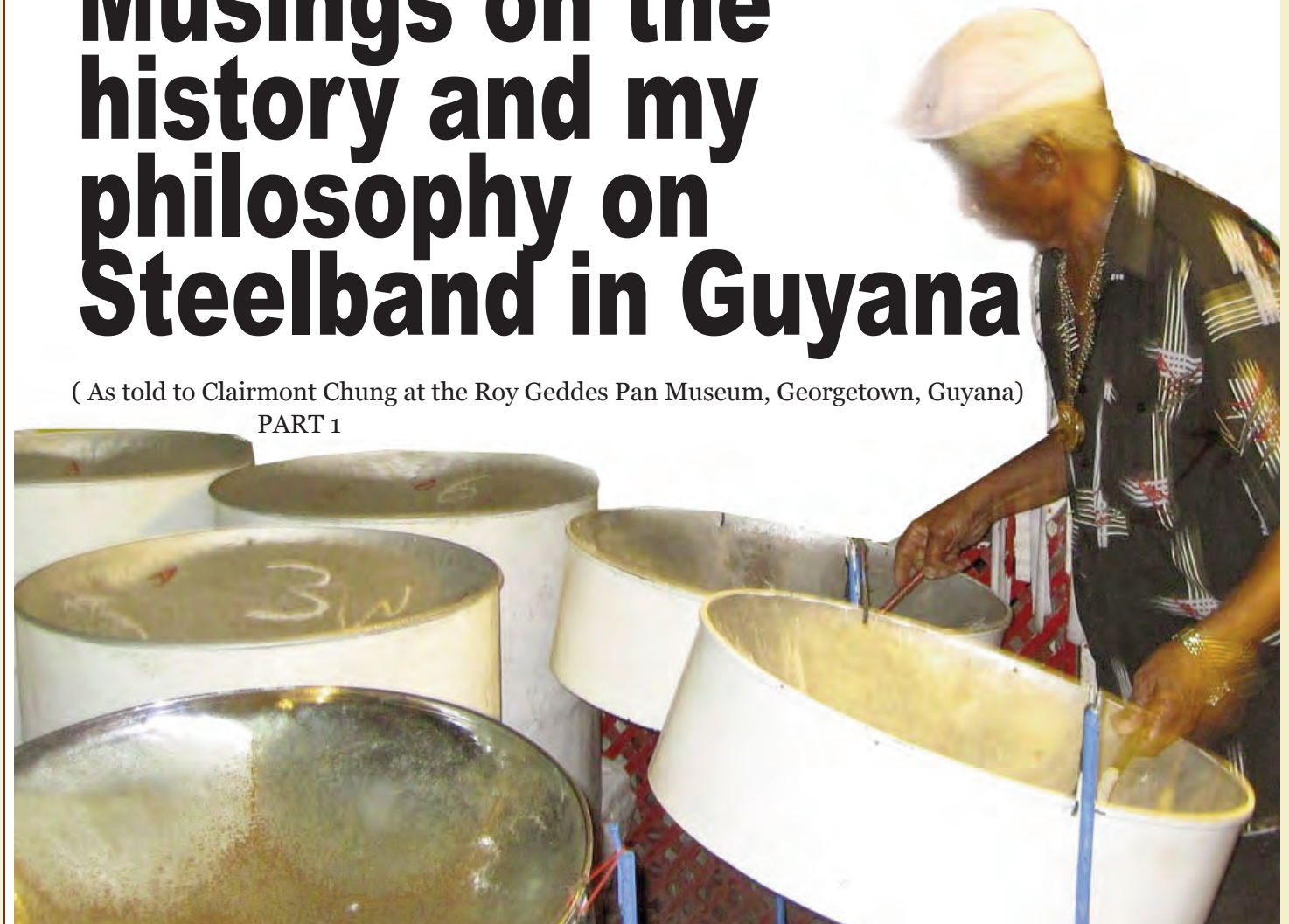
Musings on the history and my philosophy on Steelband in Guyana

(As told to Clairmont Chung at the Roy Geddes Pan Museum, Georgetown, Guyana)

PART 1

You must know my mission and passion is the beautiful Black art form of steelband: to ensure the commercialization and the respectability of it. Pan music is just a small part of it. Talent is only a small part of it. A big part is leading a disciplined life. What I mean by discipline is living clean. Discipline is living with restrictions and imposing strict guidelines on yourself. Pan men and women must be musicians, but we must also be responsible. Being a responsible person means we must be able to distinguish between right and wrong, act and think rationally, be dependable and also reliable. No struggle could be meaningful unless directed to change. The change must be a sober one for development and not only to the art form but to the people. It is the people who bring about development.

This pan yard is not about playing pan and music alone. We have beautiful slogans here; to uplift the minds of the young people.



“Animals are industrious. They are not honest. They steal, deceive and refuse the rights and property of others. They are animals and always will remain animals. Civilization really dates from the time people began to respect the rights and property of others”. “A man who has no sense of history is a man who has no eyes and ears”.

Present day youth lack a sound political direction and leadership. The leadership I am speaking about is leadership by example.

The History

I have read widely and experienced much. I am speaking from direct experience because I am a product of a single parent household. When I was eleven years old, before I was out of school, I was working in a blacksmith shop. But it was a blessing in disguise because when I came to the steelpan I already knew how to use the hammers, chisels and groovers.

My involvement in pan is from 1953 with the Casablanca Steel Orchestra. It is one of the old recognized steel bands in Guyana. The leaders were part of a joint leadership: Mr. Oswald Phillips and Mr. Sonny Austin. The tuner was Marsden Adams. As a matter of fact, they also employed a tuner, one year, from Trinidad who came over here and made some pans. His name was Crappy and this was in 1952/53. I was thirteen or fourteen then.

Casablanca practiced in High Street opposite Carnegie (School of Home Economics). There was a hotel there by the name of Riggs Hotel. We would practice under there: just by the alley.

The steel band started in the ghettos: the poor tenement yards. It was like the scenes from *Porgy and Bess*. They were often around blacksmith shops and near alleyways because of the noise pollution. In the construction of the pan there is a lot of noise. We had such large bands we would make a lot noise as we practiced. In the colonial days noise was permitted in certain areas only. Before you go to the street you had to get a permit to tramp and so on. I stayed with Casablanca for about 7-8 years. Then I went on to Tripoli. Then I went on to Invaders. Those were real recognized bands in Guyana at the time.

I also played in the National Steelband of Guyana (British Guiana then). That was 1962-63. They (Government) formed a band to go to Trinidad for Trinidad and Tobago's independence in 1962. They selected the best players from the various bands to represent Guyana: the best players. It was a great experience. It was my first time going to the land of pan. We learned so much in a short space of time. Pan Am North Stars was the champion band of Trinidad and Tobago.



PAN DESERVES TO BE TREATED AS A BUSINESS



One of the good things about our band, we were the first steel band to play the Trinidadian National Anthem. Remember, they got independence in 1962 and got a new anthem. So we had to learn the anthem ahead of the trip. But the Trinidad band, I don't think, had enough time to learn the anthem. Pan Am (North Stars) tried to play the anthem on stage and buss (but couldn't). So we were well received. But Trinidad, it really is the home of pan.



I then played with a band named Radiation. A fella (fellow) named Freddie Massay was the arranger. When I came back from Cuba he asked me to join his band and play for him. We went to Cuba to play, the government sent the National Steelband, in 1963. This was the time of the blockade and the cyclone: serious times. Then, in 1964 Freddie Massay and myself formed Silvertones Steel Orchestra. Independence was in the air. They held a national steel band competition. The winner would be asked to play for the Queen during her visit. Silvertones Steel Orchestra won that competition. It was the first competition that my band won. There were fourteen bands competing. Bands played a tune of their own choice and a 'classic'. In those days you were asked to play a classical piece and you could play a folk song, calypso, or other tune. Freddie Massay was the arranger at the time. Mr. Dunston Holder, was the gentleman that arranged the classical piece. He was organ-master for St. George's Cathedral.

We honor steelband personalities from throughout the Caribbean; people who made tangible contributions to the development to pan in Trinidad, Guyana and around the Caribbean. The list includes those involved in tuning steel pans, making steel pans, not just the playing, but the building and playing of steel pan. In Addition to 'Spree' Simon, we honor Ellie Manette, Bertie Marshall, Anthony Williams, Neville Joes, Lincoln Noel, and Rudolph Charles. These men worked tirelessly, and sometimes without a cent, to help keep the art form alive: not only alive, but to a standard.

Cedric 'Pemya' Williams contributed a lot to pan in this country. He was a tuner. He was a costume designer: beautiful costumes. He was a boxer. He represented Guyana as a boxer. He also represented Guyana as a Calypso Monarch. He was very talented. Freddie Thornhill was another. Freddie was 'my boy' another stalwart panman with us in Silvertones.

The historian Dr. Walter Rodney would visit from time to time and one of my artists painted a portrait of

Rodney for me. He was someone who would pass and give us words of encouragement to continue to keep the environment clean and words of encouragement.

I received two National awards for my contribution to the art form: Medal of Service 1971, Arrow of Achievement 1996.

We had professional bands and non-professional bands. Texicans won the 1954 competition. They were considered a 'class' band: a band of decent boys.

We have steel band tuners, and then we have arrangers and leaders. It is not the same. You could be a leader but that does not mean you can tune. You can be an excellent pannist but unable to tune. You learn by practice and you have to have love because it's a lot of hard work. It calls for concentration, real dedication. There are no halfway measures in tuning. You have to sink the pan 8 to 9 inches in depth. You also have musical conductors like Mr. Sproston, Edith Pieters, and men like Mr. Frank Pilgrim. These people arranged classical pieces for the steelband, Mr. Edward 'Eddie' Rogers, Mr. Barney Small, from the Guyana Police Force Band.

This information should be made available in Trinidad. Boogie Sharp cried, The Professor too, when he came here to the museum. A few people know them in Trinidad but no one seem fit to preserve and honor them in a museum. **No one seems interested in preserving the history of the art form. Soon the old guys will die out.** Anthony Williams is now in a wheelchair. Bertie Marshall I believe is gone. Those are men who worked hard, tirelessly.

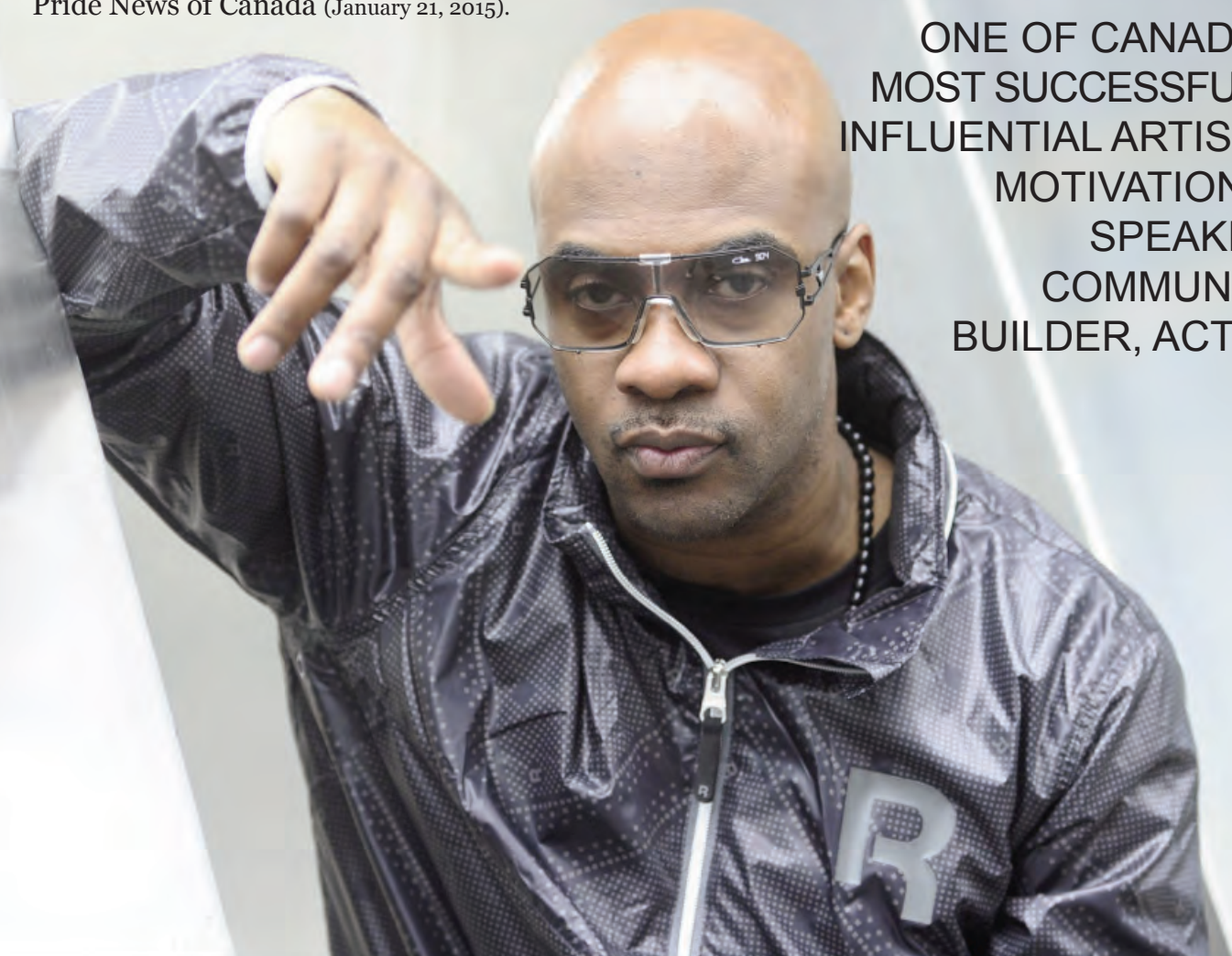
Pan came here from Trinidad around 1947. There was travel back and forth between the islands and panmen would return with information. Casablanca was not the first band. We had a man we used to call 'Goadies' from Sun Valley Band. Men like Bertram Darrel had bands. This was around 1947.

Today pan deserves to be treated as a business. It is a business; like Cricket is a business. Everything has gone to a new level. People play cricket everyday, now. It's not like before waiting for test cricket: seasonal. Why pan should be seasonal? Mashramani and Panorama, then you get a little stupid gig here and there, now and then. Somebody call you to play for just a few friends from abroad. I must make this point. This is important. This is serious. Somebody should record this because some of the young panpeople may want to know whether there were others who had these kinds of serious ideas. It is not just about pan and not just the best pan and best player: Boogie or The Professor. Its about the history and the philosophy. It is serious.

GUYANESE CANADIAN AUTHOR, ACTOR & HIP HOP STAR
MAESTRO FRESH WES
RECIPIENT OF ART ENTERTAINMENT AWARD

Pride News of Canada (January 21, 2015).

ONE OF CANADA'S
MOST SUCCESSFUL &
INFLUENTIAL ARTISTS,
MOTIVATIONAL
SPEAKER,
COMMUNITY
BUILDER, ACTOR



*“Black lives matter. No, they really do.
I hear the preaching. But I see no change.”*

This is the first line of a timely social commentary by Maestro Fresh Wes (whose real name is Wes Williams) the godfather of Canadian Hip Hop, in his newest single, *I can't breathe*.

*“Hands up for the
descendants
of the middle passage,
too strong to use the
past as a crutch”*

“Black lives matter. No, they really do. I hear the preaching. But I see no change.”

This is the first line of a timely social commentary by Maestro Fresh Wes (whose real name is Wes Williams) the godfather of Canadian Hip Hop, in his newest single, *I can't breathe*, Produced by Tore Mason, the single features Toronto's King Reign on the hook.

Strongly inspired by the Eric Garner story in the US, and motivated to release it immediately after hearing of the new year's eve shooting of Director X, who directed his 1998 video, *Stick to Your Vision*, *I Can't Breathe* speaks of how both external and internal forces are stifling the Black community, so that members of the community are part of the problem and part of the solution.

In the wake of his newest single and his impressive and voluminous portfolio of work as an entertainer, actor, author, motivational public speaker and community builder, Williams – who is of Guyanese heritage – received the African Canadian Achievement award (ACAA) for excellence in the arts and entertainment.

The prestigious gala event took place on Saturday, February 21st. at the Jane Mallett theatre, inside

the St. Lawrence Center for the Arts, 27 Front Street, East Toronto.

As one of Canada's most successful and influential artists, Williams was selected to be the guest speaker for Michelle Jean, Canada's former governor general, at the summit on Urban Arts, when Her Excellency visited Vancouver, BC.

Williams, born on March 31, 1968, has received two Juno awards – Rap Recording of the year and Video of the Year - and his albums have reached gold and platinum status. Hi signature song – *Let Your Backbone Slide* was the first Canadian Hip Hop single to ever go gold.

In 2014, an Olympic-inspired version of his song, *Reach for the Sky*, was included in the *Road to the Olympics*. Originally released on Maestro's album *Orchestrated Noise*, the song was re-recorded with lyrics recoded by the athletes' journey, their perseverance and dedication to their sport. Performed by Maestro Fresh Wes and featuring Blue Rodeo and Classified, it debuted in the one-hour special and was heard during coverage of Sochi 2014 as a soundtrack of a montage on CBC's Olympic Primetime with host Ron MacLean.

Williams – who appears as Paul Dwyer in the CBC television series, Mr. D -- is one of the finest actors in the country, says award-winning, Canadian film director, Gail Harvey.

An inductee into the Scarborough walk of fame, Williams is also the recipient of the 2003 Reel World Film Festival Trailblazer Award.

He appears alongside an all-star cast, including Linda Hamilton (The Terminator) and Sharon Lawrence (NYPD Blue), in George F. Walker/Dani Romain HBO Canada drama series, The Line.

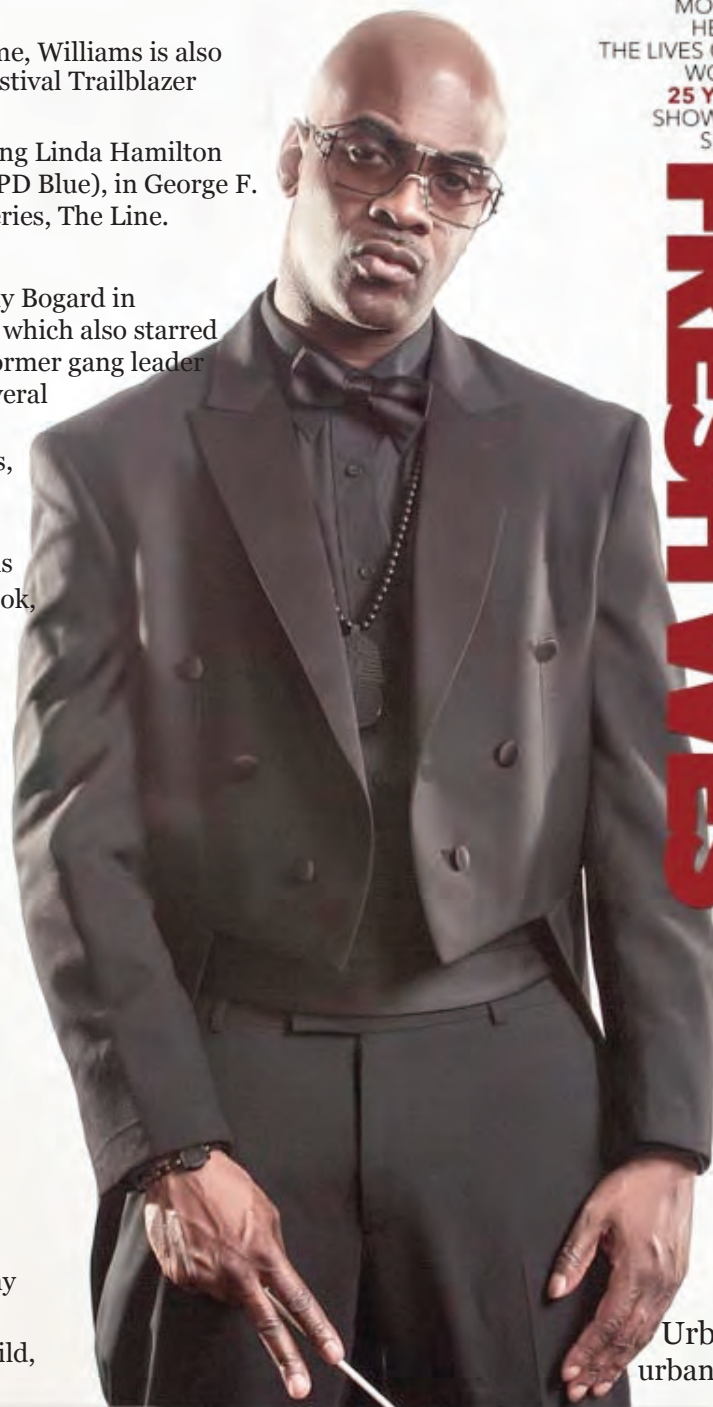
Williams was praised for his portrayal of Tony Bogard in Redemption: The Stan Tookie Williams Story, which also starred Academy-Award winner Jamie Foxx as the former gang leader Nobel Prize nominee. He has appeared in several other film and television projects including Poor Boy's Game, Instant Star, Four Brothers, Soul Food and Paid in Full.

A Gemini Award nominated actor, Williams is also the author of the critically-acclaimed book, Stick to Your Vision: How to get past the Hurdles and Haters to Get Where You Want to Be. Endorsed by Her Excellency Michaëlle Jean, as a plan of action, the book shows individuals how to define their vision, how to achieve it, and what to do once they are there.

The book was shortlisted for the Forrest Reading – White Pine Awards, an annual literature award sponsored by the Ontario Library association (OLA) that has awarded Canadian young adult books since 2002. His desire is to empower his community because his community has empowered him in many ways.

Always community oriented, Williams has made a serious impact on the country in many different capacities. He continues to support several charity organizations such as War Child, save the Children Covenant House, Special Olympics, battered Women Support Services (BWSS), and the African AIDS Society.

Williams' inspiration includes athletes, his community, other artists such as actors and musicians, and anyone who has a vision and the drive to make it manifest. The godfather of Canadian Hip Hop hopes to be the inspiration for many by expressing himself through his music, acting and speaking.



FROM MUSIC TO
MOVIES TO BOOKS,
HE HAS TOUCHED
THE LIVES OF THOUSANDS
WORLDWIDE AND
25 YEARS LATER, HE
SHOWS NO SIGNS OF
SLOWING DOWN

**MAESTRO
FRESH WES**

Urbanology
urbanologymag.com

Lyrics from Williams himself may shed light on his thinking and the reason for his musical success, accolades and awards: "Hands up for the descendants of the middle passage, too strong to use the past as a crutch"

Note: Wes Williams is the son of Guyanese immigrants Michael and Gem Williams who reside in Scarborough, Toronto.



Rafieya Husain

Miss World Guyana 2014

**PREVIEW
2015
DELEGATES**



DJ FLEXX

DESIGNERS Roger Gary
Andrew Harris
Michelle Cole
Fashion Show

APRIL 11, 2015

**MISS WORLD
GUYANA
2015
LAUNCH
PARTY**

Tropical Paradise
1367 Utica Avenue
Brooklyn NY 11203
Doors open: 9:30pm
Admission: \$35



**MISS WORLD
GUYANA**

For Tickets Call
Michelle: 321-442-7631
Petal: 917-667-1844

www.missworldguyana.com | admin@missworldguyana.gy

DERRY ETKINS ANATOMY OF A NATIONAL SOUND



It is my view, that it is the groove that defines a style of music. I define “groove” as “the sum-total of the rhythmic elements in the music”. It is the distinct “groove” that allows us to tell the difference between Reggae, Hip-Hop, Soca and Swing (what we loosely call, Jazz).

Guyana’s musicians can boast of having a variety of rhythmic elements available to them. My limited knowledge of the music of our “First-Guyanese” brothers prevents me from commenting with any authority on that aspect of our rhythmical library, neither can I speak about the potential rhythmic contributions of our brothers from Madeira. I can, however, say with great certainty that between our Indian and African musics, we have a great deal of material with which to work. Having “established the groove”, what next; a melody, maybe? Let’s try that. From whence do we get our notes? Our “Colonial Tour Operators” have left us with major and minor scales, and various other “modes”. The vast majority of our music, whether Folk, “Commercial” or Art, is based on the first two types of scale. The music of our African ancestors incorporates the pentatonic scale as well. Our Indian and Chinese musics, while incorporating the pentatonic scale, have entire libraries of scales and modes of their own. These are worthy of deep exploration!

So, now that we have our melody, what instruments do we use? We have a long list of instruments at our disposal. Apart from those left us by our “Colonial Tour Guides”, namely wind, strings and percussion, we have our various drums from both India and Africa; we also have the harmonium and sitar from India. Our Madeiran ancestors brought stringed instruments as well. They reportedly brought guitars, banjos and mandolins with them.

So, we have our “groove material”, our melodic sources and instrumentation. There is yet another resource, our Guyanese accent/speech pattern. Guyanese have a unique speech pattern; our vocal inflections are different, and there are variations on this from region to region. Where do we go from here?

Technology is a fact of life! Computers have found their place in the music production and generation arena. With this “democratisation” of the music arena, where music generation is no longer the exclusive domain of the affluent, we have seen a decline in the involvement of acoustic instruments. The vast majority of the musical offerings are facilitated through the use of a piano-type keyboard. Guitars, both electric and acoustic, have definitely become a rarity; the concept of multiple musicians playing on a recording is also a rarity, except for projects with large budgets; movies, video games and some live concerts ‘classical’ and otherwise, come to mind.

“Sampling”, in its various interpretations; and “loops”, in its various forms as well, have added to, or depending on who is talking, actually changed the way music is created. Producers can generate quite convincing emulations of various instrumental combinations, using this technology. Synthesizers, both software and hardware, have also become a fact of life, adding to the list of available sound sources. Generally, producers in Guyana tend to focus on modern synthesized sounds, generated or triggered by a keyboard.

DERRY ETKINS ANATOMY OF A NATIONAL SOUND

This is “the going thing”, these days and, with the present world economy, cost effectiveness will override authenticity. Having said that, let me add, that we need to be vigilant, and remember, that even in a keyboard-generated project, it is indeed possible to include the instruments of our heritage. Within the context of a Guyana Sound, I would say, that it is desirable for us to do so.

We know, that Guyanese are an immensely creative people. We have produced Musicals, Operettas, Art Music, Commercial Music as well as our library of Folk and “National” Songs. Over the last decades, however, our musical output has been heavily focused on commercial music. I venture to say, that generally, we have not lost our appreciation for any other music, but maybe, our interest in and ability to produce any other categories. Our children are still encouraged to sing our National and Folk Songs, and they do so with great gusto.

There is need for a more diverse creative output.

How do we resuscitate, foster and facilitate this creativity?

The short answer is, “Proper Music Education”. This is the other half of the equation. Unfortunately, there are many examples of “unschooled” creative people who have created musical masterworks, and many of us use these examples to fuel the argument, “You do not need training if you have talent”. These examples are relatively few and far between. The vast majority of the greats, including those with prodigious talent, were trained; they studied and practised their craft, until they were able to produce the music we listen to and love.

It is my belief, that those who composed our “Art Music”, the music that has stood the test of time, the music that we sing with pride on National occasions, those people were trained in music, if not specifically in composition. I feel very strongly, that talent balanced with training is an unbeatable combination. There are shining examples of this, in our immediate vicinity. There can be absolutely no doubt, that our Brazilian neighbours “South of the border”, have a sound of their own; “sounds” actually. A bit to the North, in the Caribbean, we have Trinidad & Tobago and the French West Indies, and a bit farther West, we have Cuba and Jamaica. Back in South America, the most recently talked about phenomenon is, “El Sistema”, in Venezuela. These are all as a result of tal-

ent meeting study and training, combined with “Cultural confidence”, and a willingness to stand up and be counted as a musical entity. We Guyanese need to apply that formula to our situation!

We are faced with a new chicken-and-egg situation. Is it national pride that will motivate us to consciously work towards our Guyana Sound, or, is it our Guyana Sound that will foster National pride? Which comes first? Can we sit and wait for either? I think not! I would suggest, that our media and advertising houses, and their clients, the business houses, have their respective roles to play in this regard. Instead of insisting on the latest “Dance Hall”, “Hip-Hop” or “Soca” groove when advertising your products and services, commission a piece Guyana-inspired music; and pay for it! See that as part of your social responsibility; see it a moral investment in Guyana. This will add “cultural value” to your products and services, while generating “commercial respect” around the international business community.

So, we now have our groove, our instrumentation, our trained talented musicians. What next? We need “appreciators”. We are quite generous in our use of the word “appreciation”, but are we aware, that there is a difference between that and “enjoyment”? In my view, enjoyment is a more visceral response, while appreciation involves a component of understanding what it is that we are enjoying. This understanding, what I like to call, “Music Comprehension”, is best acquired through knowledge and actual experience in making music; yes, you heard right, EVERYONE should learn to play an instrument and/or sing, and read music to some degree. If we, the audiences are knowledgeable about what we are listening to, everyone wins. The performers will know that mediocrity will not be accepted, and the standard of creative output will be at a very high level. What we take away from the event, whether party, club or concert, will go beyond, “Oh! It was nice!” If we can actually engage the performers in informed conversation and, from that standpoint, be part of the development process; the Society as a whole benefits.

How do we educate our audiences? We teach music in our school system, from Nursery to University.

In the words of the late W.R.A. “Billy” Pilgrim, “Can we do it? YES, WE CAN!”

Let’s make it happen!

The Sigma Alpha Epsilon Racial Tragedy: A View from within

Dion Matthews

My name is Dion Matthews. I am an African American alum of DePauw University in Greencastle, Indiana and a member of Sigma Alpha Epsilon. I have watched, mostly with anguish and trepidation, the various reports on the racist rants and chants of members of the University of Oklahoma chapter of SAE. Their actions are shamefully disgusting and reprehensible and I am delighted that the university administration is at least trying to do their part in punishing the perpetrators. I am curious to see what further action will be taken within the powers of that institution.

That being said, it sickens my stomach and is indeed heart wrenching to be put in a position of defending an organization because of the unwholesome actions of a few. I am a proud member of SAE. I had some of the best years of my life being a part of the Indiana Delta chapter at DePauw University. My time there included nothing but good memories with friends - of all races - and with whom I still keep in touch.

The behavior displayed by those uncouth characters in Oklahoma does NOT define the organization, nor has it changed my opinion or feelings toward my fraternity and the MEN that have passed through it. All that the incident has done is remind me that racism can make its way into just about anything and that we all have to be careful about who we associate with. Are all other SAEs saints? Of course not. However, I will say unequivocally that my experience as an SAE was almost nothing but positive and I can be damn sure that something like this would not have been tolerated in my chapter or at my alma mater.

I have been asked if I believe that fraternities are necessary and if they aren't all just social / party clubs that promote hazing. During pledging, I never did ANYTHING at SAE that made me uncomfortable. It was all good-natured fun-filled activities and I never felt endangered or humiliated. Of course there was partying and as a young man 18-22, it was admittedly a desirable dimension of my college experience. However, I was able to balance extracurricular activities and academics pretty well. I graduated with a decent GPA and have a good job.

I have also been asked if I question my membership, in light of the history of SAE and recent incidents at vari-



ous chapters. My answer is a resounding no; I don't question my membership, because the chapter that I joined did not tout any of the nonsense that we are reading about. Even the Confederate roots of the national organization's origins never seemed to affect the attitude of my chapter members.

There are several SAE chapters across the country, each one different from the next. The fact is that I went to the number one Greek school in the country, in terms of the percentage of students joining fraternities and sororities (it was close to 90% when I was a freshman) so it was kind of "the thing to do". It may sound like a silly excuse, but as an 18-year-old kid from Brooklyn, NY, I saw a house that was pretty diverse - especially for a "traditionally white" fraternity - whose members seemed like "cool guys", so I decided to join. The house included members that were Black, Mexican, Asian, gay, etc., and this was the most diverse of all the fraternities, at the time. My Caribbean background instilled values of respect and cultural inclusiveness.

The four years I spent at DePauw University were amazing, thanks largely to the support and friendship of the rest of the House. My chapter - or any other fraternity on the campus, never displayed any racism toward me, so I had no reason to judge any of them as such. Am I aware that certain fraternities do insensitive things such as blackface and/or "ghetto"- themed parties. Sure I am. But that doesn't mean I have to condemn the hundreds or thousands of members that do the right thing. Again, I do NOT regret my decision to join the House because my chapter's members have never given me reason to.

Dis time nah lang time! School days on meh mind. From Senior Cambridge and GCE to CXC. With such transformation, ah hope we keepin' up de solid traditional educational foundation. Gone are the days when High School principals cajoled for overdue fees. Government tek over de schools and families get an ease, with help also coming from the Diaspora overseas. Bishops and Q.C. gone co-ed - Who ever thought such a thing would be said? Now-a-days girls playing some serious cricket and football in the inter-school division, giving dem boys stiff competition.

Dis time nah lang time! Remember the Militia Band in splendid regalia, playing in the Botanic Gardens, where you parked your bike with your gyrlfriend for romantic reasons? If you sure 'bout yourself, it was the Seawall or Kings

Ground, even if yo had to ride all de way from Charlestown. You may even "get spot" riding along the Sea Wall on a Sunday afternoon – Oldies blasting from a juke-box through the ocean breeze, playing a familiar oldies tune.

Dis time nah lang time. Remember the West Coast Berbice bus, with names like Queen Elizabeth, Hamlet and Duke of Edingboro, stopping at Maichony, Abary, Belladrum, Litchfield, Rosignol and Eldorado? Overloaded with passengers and oversized market vendor "load" on the roof top tray; wheels kickin' up red dust as they speed away.

Dis time nah lang time! Remember de GDF and GNS, Ayangana and Kimbia? Plenty former soldiers in dis country, while in Guyana, one a dem trying fuh bring sanity back to de society.

DIS TIME NAH LANG TIME - ONE MORE TIME

Lear Matthews



DIS TIME NAH LANG TIME - ONE MORE TIME

Lear Matthews

Dis time nah lang time! Back in de day Forbes and Cheddie start out good, staking claim to the colonial neighborhood. But for ideology and not seeing eye- to-eye they collide, then Walter and Rupert tried. Remember de Cup and Palm Tree? Now we got nuff Party, vying fo de majority from all dem ethnicity - certainly not a parody!

Look how tings change eh? Lang time de Joiner, carpenter, cabinet maker, de Madame (hair dresser), the Worker (seamstress), painter, shoemaker and farmer were essential occupations. Dis time is de computer savvy and politicians dominating de scene and everybody else struggling in between.

Dis time nah lang time! Remember when we had de thriving Bauxite Company? It was true, de percentage share was fifty-two. Rice and sugar were solid for de economy? Now de Chinese and Brazilians gaining a curious foothold in de country. Hopefully this won't compromise economic sovereignty. Yuh tink is de brain drain causing some ah de pain?

In dis time, some ah we doing fairly well, while others ketchin' hell, but we dey in de North American stream – pursuing that elusive dream. To cope wid de stress, some denigrate where dey come from and glorify de land to which they run, even if de weather is a bum. Some even clinging to religion fo salvation. Yo tink we butt-up wid some of de same problems we running from? Put dat in yo pipe and smoke um!

Dis time nah lang time! Former entertainers and Sports personalities used to be publicly supported and recognized. Now it appears as though they are ignored and even despised. Cricket was indeed lovely. Now like de game is all about money. What a pity?

Dis time nah lang time! Remember when Supermarket was Salt Goods Shop, and from de Drug Store yo coulda' get yuh PL and strong cough drop? When Cutex was de only polish for the ladies' nail and de magistrate would order lashes going in and out a jail; In dem days a pourie an' a ball was a good call. Before Phenxic turn Advil and you didn't have to pay no water bill; when pone and cankey were tasty and de Gardens had dem big big manatee; In de "country" after fetchin' water from de roadside, you had to put de sheep in de pen before lockin' up de cock and hen.

These recollections and enduring transformations

imbue an interesting paradox of sustained, yet appreciative hardships of the past, and a sense of nostalgic satisfaction. Many of us embrace the memories to which we are inevitably connected. When you return "home", savor the moments. Make it your conviction to share stories with the generation of dis time – Perhaps it will give them some encouragement and hope, realizing the sacrifices made for them lang time.



Reminisce on great times, relax and laugh



St. Rose's High School International Reunion 2015



- Mass at the Ursuline Convent Chapel
- Garden Party & Fashion Show at the Georgetown Club
- Lime and Jazz Evening
- Back-in-Time Party at the Loft
- Cultural Evening
- Formal Dinner and Dance
- And much more...

- Sunday, June 28, 2015, 10:30am
- Sunday, June 28, 2015, 4:00pm
- Monday, June 29, 2015, 7:00pm
- Tuesday, June 30, 2015, 7:00pm
- Wednesday, July 1, 2015, 7:00pm
- Friday, July 3, 2015, 8:00pm

Nu2u Sale... Business Sessions... Sports Day... Tours

Reacquaint with old friends, reconnect with home once again. Renew your energies in Guyana for the week of celebrations...

Visit www.strosesalumni.org to register and for more information or  St. Rose's Alumni Association

PARBAMEL, Inc

(Paradise-Bachelor's Adventure-Melanie Damishana)

Presents Their Annual Pre-Mothers' Day

Prayer Breakfast Morning Fund-raising Event

Saturday, May 9, 2015

Children
\$10

From 10:00 a.m to 2:00 p.m

Adult
\$25

@ PARISH HALL OF



The Tanger Hillel at Brooklyn College,
located at 2901 Campus Road, Brooklyn

#2 or/#5 train or B41/B44 bus to Flatbush Avenue Junction

Short distance on Hillel Place to Campus Road Enter via Campus Road

Entertainment provided by:

Yonnette Hooper daughter of the late great Eddie Hooper
(Lord Inventor)

The versatile Jeggee / Dave and the Welch Crew

For tickets and information Call:

Floyd Lawrence: 917-579-6695

Avril Hope: 718-235-0718

Claudia Clarke: 718-451-4512

Hilbert McLeod: 347-244-5436

Penny Bascom: 347-829-1753

William Thom: 917-324-8025

Lynette Welch: 718-856-2890

Jolyon Clarke: 347-204-0942

Gary Rodney: 917-416-5344

Ingrid Limrick: 718-693-5564

Upon reading my contribution to last month's issue of the GCA Magazine, a few colleagues and associates enquired how come with general-elections on the horizon in Guyana, I was opting to write about cultural-matters.

I reminded them that political leaders will fluctuate; politicians will come and go; some over the course of time; they will change alliances/affiliations; and governments/oppositions as well as office holders will rotate with the passage of time, but Culture--the way things have been done, or are being done within a society--will remain constant and consistent, and will always be with us. I also use every opportunity to point out the important role that the Guyana Cultural Association is continuing to play in keeping Guyana's cultural occurrences alive, and bringing that nation's cultural history and current happenings to us through avenues like this magazine.



Culture Endures

Carlyle Harry

Guyana's 2015 Soca Monarch, 39 year old Jumo' Rubber-Waist' Primo, in his acceptance speech called upon his fellow artistes to work in unity to promote and develop the industry. Let me give two examples of how the GCA's public relations efforts reap direct and indirect benefits by promoting the culture. A colleague invited me to accompany him to a meeting of his Leadership-Development Group. When the topic of organizational dynamics came up for deliberation, he quoted in an elastic manner from Lear Matthews' book, *English-Speaking Caribbean Immigrants: Transnational Identities*.

In complimenting the guy on his utterances at the meeting, he stated that he was just a humble bus-driver with the Metropolitan Transportation Authority, but that his girlfriend was a Head Teacher, who encouraged him to attend the GCA Literary Hang, where he had purchased the book.

Last month the editor of a popular Daily published in Guyana, publicly admitted in one of his columns, that he was disappointed that applicants for journalistic positions with his newspaper did not do a lot of reading, nor did they know much about Guyanese history and cultural affairs. In addition, when I asked him how he was responding to the discovery, he told me that one of his principal recommendations to the applicants and others, was that they should begin reading the GCA On-Line Magazine and build on those initial readings.

In this regard, Dr. Ken Pugh-President and Director of Research at Haskins Laboratories in his recommendations about reading stressed, "Just like muscles in the body, the brain benefits when it is pushed beyond its normal abilities and reading is a great way to push those limits"

A MOTHER'S DAY CELEBRATION

*Tea Party**Parade of Hats**Fashion Show**Auction**Best Table Prizes**Best Hats Prizes***ST. STEPHEN'S
LUTHERAN
CHURCH**

SATURDAY, MAY 9, 2015 - 4.00 - 9.00 P.M.

Church Hall

2806 Newkirk Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11226

ADULTS: \$20.00 **KIDS: \$10.00** 12 & under**FOR TICKETS**

Parris - 347 247 0001

Juliet - 917 384 8126

Grace - 347 560 3029

E&P PROMOTIONS
 INVITES YOU TO THEIR
6th Annual
Spring Gospel
CONCERT

COME & ENJOY AN EVENING OF SONG & DANCE
SUNDAY, MAY 3rd, 2015 5:00pm - 8:00pm



CHRONICLE ATLANTIC SYMPHONY - CHRISTINE THOMAS
CHRISTINE LEWIS ON PAN - IMPRESSION DANCE THEATRE
JENNIFER FERREIRA-DOUGALL & others

DONATION: ADULTS \$20 - CHILDREN \$10

ST. STEPHENS LUTHERAN CHURCH HALL
2806 NEWKIRK AVE., (BET: E. 28th & E. 29th Sts.)
BROOKLYN, NY 11226

For Tickets Call: JENNY FERREIRA 917.607.6995 - JENNY SEYMOUR 917.224.4068
PHILLIP WRIGHT 908.693.2667 - ERROL LEWIS 718.879.2662

PART OF THE PROCEEDS GOES TO THE SOPHIA LITERACY PROGRAM IN GUYANA EMPOWERING OUR YOUTHS