

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I stand here in wonder this afternoon why it is only the second time that I am bringing greetings of behalf of the Department of Creative and Festival Arts and the wider University of the West Indies. After all, as a lecturer in that Department I have been well aware of the fine work that SanFest has been producing during my own fifteen years at the University of the West Indies. I have been aware officially through the many press clippings that I have seen over the years as well as the various CV's that have crossed my desk when persons have applied to be a part of the Department musicals and other, and I have been unofficially aware when my night rehearsals of the UWI Steel and the UWI Arts Chorale have been absented by the dedicated teachers who text a message "Mr. Murray, I am not able to make rehearsal this evening...San Fest!"

It is through the foresight of Mr Fofi George, himself a graduate of the University of the West Indies, that the DCFA came on board. Mr. George met me two years ago and requested that the Department of Creative and Festival Arts become a part of the organisational structure of this venerable Arts Festival. In my capacity as Head of the Department and recognising the training in performance that this Festival was affording young persons, I committed the Department to be a part of this Festival. Our first efforts last year were confined to the offer of the East venue for the Preliminaries (which will occur this year at the Open Campus Auditorium) and eventually at the Departments own concert hall to be completed over the next 3 years. During the past year we gave advice on the realignment and streamlining of some of the competitive classes, and finally, the crucial work in progress: an overhaul of the adjudication system. Two weeks ago, due to the difficulty of my own schedule, we held the first adjudication workshop here at the Creative Arts Centre.

The results of this workshop in the short run, will aid in a more transparent adjudication of the performance works of this festival. Time does not allow one to elaborate, but we hope that competitors and their associated teachers/coaches and all important parents and guardians,

will note some of the tangible benefits of this adjudication workshop. Already, I have proposed (and there is agreement amongst the adjudicators) that for SanFest 2016 that the entire system of adjudication points system should be changed and made simpler. The Department of Creative and Festival Arts is making a public commitment to the completion of this process in time for the new syllabuses along with other suggested changes.

As I close, I am delighted to view the influence of my own Department and that of the greater UWI on the progress of this festival and of course the future. Paul Massy, the representative of the Ministry of Education is a graduate of the UWI; Khion De Las, who performed earlier, is a graduate of the San Fest programme, a graduate of the Department of Creative and Festival Arts and now a lecturer there; we have already heard Tiana Chandler, a member of the UWI Arts Chorale, and a graduate of the UWI, and I confess with shock that I was not aware feature speaker Makesi Peters, the current President of the Guild of Students at the UWI, had featured in the honour role of Mr. SanFest. No doubt that experience there assisted in propelling him to high office at the UWI!

The Department of Creative and Festival Arts looks forward to assisting with the development of current and past participants of this NGC SanFest. We believe that our Department, 30 years old next year, offers competitive education, high- quality training and well-regarded certification in the arts offered at San Fest: music, dance, theatre arts and visual arts.

We are delighted to be a part of the NGC SanFest for a second year and wish all of the competitors success in their performance endeavours! Bravo to you all.

Thank you.