

C E L E B R A T I N G



SANFEST

NATIONAL JUNIOR ARTS FESTIVALS

An Explosion of Talent



THE NATIONAL GAS COMPANY
OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO LIMITED



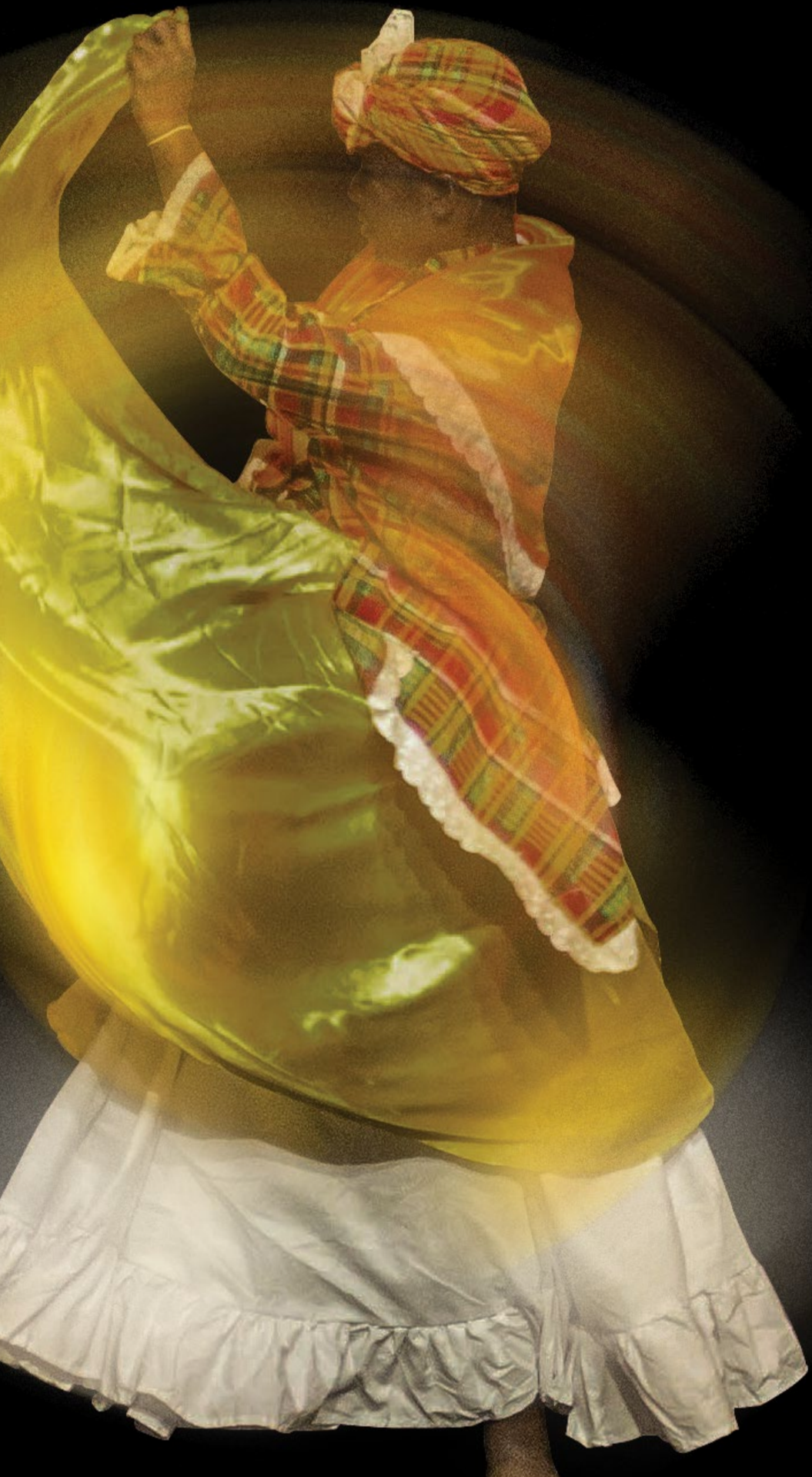
SAN FERNANDO
ARTS COUNCIL



Department of Creative
and Festival Arts, UWI



**VISUAL ARTS,
LITERARY
& ARTS
PERFORMING
ARTS**



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VISION

Sanfest has placed young people at the heart of our vision which includes nurturing and establishing performing, literary and visual arts within schools; encouraging their greater participation in the arts; providing experiences that will assist in students' holistic development and providing a forum for the exploration of creative abilities.



Commitment and Arduous Work

TO HAVE WITHSTOOD THE TEST OF TIME OVER FIVE DECADES HAS REQUIRED COMMITMENT AND ARDUOUS WORK FROM MANY FORMIDABLE TEAM PLAYERS, ALL WHO HAVE A LONG-TERM VIEW OF HOW TO GROW AND SUSTAIN THE FESTIVAL, WHICH HAS EMERGED AS THE MOST SUCCESSFUL PROJECT OF THE ARTS COUNCIL.

The Arts Council was energetically supported over the years by an illustrious cast of cultural icons including Mr. Torrance Mohammed, Ms. Joyce Kirton, Mr. Eric Butler, Mr. Eugene Joseph, Mr. Walid Baksh, Mr. Willi Chen, Mr. David Sammy, Mr. Reynold Bassant and Mr. David Banks, among many others.

The committee that worked in the early years to develop the Festival included Ms. Jean Rees, Ms. Lettice Ross, Ms. Annette Hunte-Lessey, Mr. Hollis Clifton, Ms. Pauline George, Ms. Alva Ferraz, Ms. Charmaine Thomas, Mr. Zeno Constance, Ms. Lynette Stapleton, Ms. Claris Innis and Mr. Carlton Ferreira.

Many persons also worked tirelessly to ensure the success of the Festival. Among them are Ms. Irma Dyer, Ms. Gemma Merrique, Ms. Patricia Ballah, Ms. Gemma Alexander, Mr. Franklyn Philip, Mr. Errol Blackett, Ms. Gloria Edwards-Seeberan, Ms. Margaret Hudson-Barca, Ms. Lydia Cleghorn, Ms. Hillary Vieruel and Ms. Lucille Mc Cloud.



Despite a Pandemic, the Arts Council Looks Towards a Bright Future



SAN FERNANDO
ARTS COUNCIL

Having achieved the epic milestone of 50 years and surpassing expectations, we are looking forward to writing the next chapter of NGC Sanfest's rich history and influencing the arts, culture, and entertainment realms of Trinidad and Tobago.

Over the last five decades, this festival has emerged as the premier showcase for exceptional creative performance by the young people of Trinidad and Tobago, who play an important role in the sustainability of our heritage. In support of our country's cultural and creative industries, we intend to seize upon this milestone anniversary to build upon the immeasurable success of the past half

century and to continue enriching the lives of youth.

The reality of the COVID-19 pandemic has, however, propelled our organisation into adapting to a new direction of innovation, creativity and transformation. The pandemic has forced the San Fernando Arts Council to become more creative and adapt to the evolving 'new normal'. In this regard, we have planned major changes for the 2021 NGC Sanfest which include having a virtual Festival while categories will be condensed, revised, and in some cases, postponed to a date to be determined based on the guidelines pertaining to gatherings.





Among our plans are the reintroduction of Tobago into the festival and opening new categories that will reflect the unique culture and art forms of the sister island. Providing a welcome space for young talent, we are proud to continue our support, engagement and inclusion efforts for the arts and culture as we encourage young people to adopt a lifelong love of the arts.

It has been a delight to witness our youth excelling in the arts, whether through dance, music, singing in choirs or as soloists, with many having gone on to achieve international success and fame.

The success of NGC Sanfest could not have been accomplished without the support of the business sector, including companies such as Royal Bank and S.M.

Jaleel and individuals (friends of the Arts, members of The Arts Council and family members). Our special gratitude to The National Gas Company of Trinidad and Tobago Limited (NGC) for its close to 30 years of sponsorship and support to the committee and the Festival.

The San Fernando Arts Council looks eagerly towards the next 50 years of the journey to carry out an important mission: nurturing and developing young people and continuing our support and commitment to arts and culture.



Greetings

FROM THE FESTIVAL DIRECTOR

'I would like to leave behind a sound of freedom and unity and a message that believing in yourself and tapping into your soul is key.'

– Nailah Blackman, former NGC Sanfest participant

The San Fernando Arts Festival has enriched the lives of thousands of participants over the past 50 years. Values as strong as those emoted by Ms. Blackman, have been instilled in our participants who have graduated to be successful in the arts and other professions.

Only recently, a young attorney reflected on the positive impact the festival had on his determination to achieve his dream. Many similar accounts are echoed by those in the business community, public sector, medical field, and other areas of our wider society. NGC Sanfest has successfully provided a platform for the development of talents in our youth, but equally important, has benefitted the personal and overall growth of its participants.

NGC Sanfest is a cultural staple for all aspiring artists in almost all fields, including art, drama, music and dance. The festival throughout the years has enjoyed brilliant support from scores of



dedicated volunteers and experts who have always committed to this labour of love. Such yeoman service has resulted in the Festival growing from strength to strength.

Our stakeholders understand the incredible value of this Festival envisioned by the late James Leewah, the late Torrance Mohammed and many others. In these challenging times, it is increasingly important for us to observe our past to draw strength and purpose as we position to plunge forward. The NGC Sanfest 2021 team shares in this appreciation and celebration of 50 years of a tremendous vision becoming a reality.

We celebrate major success and invaluable contributions of thousands of participants throughout the years. Despite all odds, we are resolved to soar out of these difficult times stronger, bigger and better with an unquenchable hunger to serve the youth through our Festival.

MR. JOEY HARRYNANAN
NGC SANFEST FESTIVAL DIRECTOR

Greetings

FROM THE SAN FERNANDO
ARTS COUNCIL CHAIRMAN



Scientists believe that a star is created when dense gas and dust clouds in the cosmos implode because of gravitational forces and produce bright spots of energy.

The actual moment of formation cannot be predicted or controlled, but the result of this event cannot be reversed, nor can it be ignored for its intensity and brilliance.

This 'big bang' theory may appear to be the stuff of science fiction.

However, for those of us involved in the work of NGC Sanfest, we have borne witness to this particular phenomenon. We have seen that moment when all the forces of nature collaborate to ignite a spark of high heat and light, resulting in the birth of a formidable talent that could not be fathomed prior to its creation.

We can state without hyperbole or dissent that NGC Sanfest is 'where stars are born.' Our examples are numerous and varied: from Machel Montano, Kees 'Kes' Dieffenthaler and Nailah Blackman in the soca arena; to Liam Teague on steelpan, Richard Lessey in Belgium doing dance, and Sherma Andrews in New York singing, just to name a few.

We are proud to be the litmus test for great performers. We aim to continue to offer a platform for training, development, mentoring and entertainment in our local traditional performing, visual and literary arts. NGC Sanfest continues to be where the big bang occurs.

Congratulations and thanks to the NGC Sanfest teams over the years. Your journey continues to be one of love and commitment. To the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Community Development, Culture and the Arts, we greatly appreciate your support and dedication.

We express our gratitude to our partner and sponsor, The National Gas Company of Trinidad and Tobago Limited (NGC), who continues to be an annual impetus for The San Fernando Arts Council to successfully host our prestigious NGC Sanfest. We consider ourselves privileged to receive your continuing support and trust.

Thank you for your investment in the talents and dreams of our future stars.

MR. JAMES SOLOMON
CHAIRMAN, THE SAN FERNANDO ARTS
COUNCIL

Greetings

FROM THE MAYOR OF
SAN FERNANDO



NGC Sanfest has played a critical role in shaping the cultural landscape of our beloved city.

Your contribution over the years would have moulded several young performers who have gone on to make a name for themselves. In this regard, commendation must go out to your founding fathers who are no longer with us but had the vision for this cause.

This year, although extremely different to years before, I have no doubt that we will see the birth of many more stars who will light the way and inspire others to participate in NGC Sanfest for years to come.

Congratulations on your 50th anniversary and may you continue to grow from strength to strength.

HIS WORSHIP THE MAYOR
ALDERMAN JUNIA REGRELLO



Appreciation

The San Fernando Arts Council and The Sanfest Committee wish to take this opportunity to thank The National Gas Company of Trinidad and Tobago Limited (NGC) for its generous sponsorship provided to Sanfest.

Your commitment to the Festival began in 1982 when you presented the Sanfest Committee with trophies and financial assistance. In 2003, you became the principal sponsor of Sanfest and The Festival was rebranded 'NGC Sanfest.'

Your unwavering and selfless support made it possible for The San Fernando Arts Council and The Sanfest Committee

to achieve their goal which is to provide a stage to showcase the talent of our youth in Trinidad and Tobago.

We also appreciate your non-financial support and we extend a heartfelt thank you to your staff who volunteered their time in the areas of adjudication, hospitality and front-of-house operations at various venues. Their service was invaluable. We thank you for your guidance, encouragement and patience.

It is our sincere hope that NGC will join us once again in 2021 and beyond when we create an even bigger and better Sanfest.



Response to the Pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the way the world does business. The arts and culture industry is distinctly one industry that has been adversely affected. However, this crisis has propelled organisations into a new direction of innovation, creativity and transformation. The San Fernando Arts Council (Arts Council) understands this development and is committed to adapting to the changing times.

In 2019, the Arts Council decided that the Festival, Sanfest, should be rebranded. The Sanfest Committee was mandated to develop the new look of NGC Sanfest. This was achieved and a draft proposal was completed and presented to The Executive of the Arts Council. However, in March 2020 as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, there was a nationwide lockdown except for essential services. Schools were closed and this disrupted the well laid plans of the Arts Council and The NGC Sanfest Committee and prompted the cancellation of Sanfest 2020.

The Executive of the Arts Council reconvened to discuss the way forward for the Festival. It was decided that the entire 2021 Festival would be conducted virtually. Some of the usual categories of the Festival will be condensed, revised and in some cases postponed to a

date to be determined as we monitor the pandemic and the ever-changing guidelines pertaining to gatherings.

The categories targeted are:

1. **Creative Writing**
2. **Visual Arts**
3. **Solo Dance**
4. **Monologue**
5. **Solo Vocal**
6. **Story Telling**
7. **Solo Instrument**

All categories will be individual submissions. These submissions will be pre-recorded by the participant and uploaded to the Arts Council website or designated platforms. These entries will be screened by a panel of judges and the top scoring entries will be invited to resubmit their pieces with necessary adjustments. The performances will be packaged and aired on television and social media platforms.

The pandemic has forced us to become more creative and adapt to the rapidly evolving 'new normal.' The 2021 Festival will not facilitate crowds and audience gathering. Though nothing can replace live and in-person events, the Arts Council and the Sanfest Committee are prepared to work diligently to ensure that Sanfest 2021 is an unforgettable one.



SEVEN

Who's Who of NGC Sanfest

Without a doubt, the San Fernando Arts Festival has provided a welcome space and support for numerous young participants to recognise their potential through the arts and achieve excellence on both national and international stages.

As we commemorate this 50th anniversary, there is much to celebrate. As part of its history and legacy, Sanfest has served as a primary platform for many of our young people to enhance their creative and artistic skills while passing on the culture and arts to the next generations.

Among past participants who have launched their musical and artistic careers are Machel Montano, Kes Dieffenthaler, Liam Teague, Nailah Blackman, Aaron Duncan, Atiba Williams, Michael Zephyrine, Faye Ali Bocas, Vaughnette Bigford and Shakuntala Ramsingh.

We have highlighted just a few past Festival participants who took their creative work to the national and international stages and enriched lives with our remarkable culture.



Who's Who of NGC Sanfest

Machel Montano

Machel Montano is one of the most recognised artistes emerging from Trinidad and Tobago and the Caribbean. Long before he attained his international fame, Machel performed at Sanfest in 1983, a year after he launched his illustrious singing career. The following year, he formed his band, Panasonic Express, and by 1985, released his debut album 'Too Young To Soca', earning him rave reviews.

Throughout his career, Machel has chalked up dozens of national, regional and international awards in recognition of his outstanding work. Machel's passion is successfully

ushering soca into the realm of mainstream music

and into the international market. No doubt, Machel has greatly contributed

towards the music

industry of Trinidad and

Tobago and the Caribbean while spreading soca music through various

collaborations with

best-selling

international artistes.





Who's Who of NGC Sanfest

Professor Liam Teague

Professor Liam Teague, described as the 'Paganini of the Steelpan', has been hailed as the most versatile and accomplished pan musician in the world today. Through his exceptional musical abilities, he has taken steelpan throughout every corner of the world. He is Professor of Music and Head of Steelpan studies at Northern Illinois University (NIU), where he also directs the renowned NIU Steelband.

Professor Teague has won notable global competitions and has performed with many diverse ensembles worldwide. The world-renowned pannist has recorded numerous albums and has composed several pieces of original music for pan. Professor Teague has encouraged highly accomplished composers such as Jan Bach, Ben Wahlund, Grammy Award Winner Libby Larsen, and Pulitzer Prize winner Michael Colgrass, to compose original pieces for the pan, thereby increasing its appeal to and scope with international audiences.



Who's Who of NGC Sanfest

Kees Dieffenthaller

Kees Dieffenthaller is the front man for Kes the Band, which has performed in major cities throughout the Caribbean, USA, Canada, UK, Belgium and China. Growing up in Trinidad, the melting pot of people, flavours and sounds, has helped the band develop their own unique blend of calypso melodies, rock riffs and island beats.

This fusion, along with the band's high-energy performances, has taken them from a Caribbean band to one that tours the world. Kes the Band has opened for international artistes, including Usher, Maroon 5, Lifehouse and Buju Banton. Kees has also shared the stage with Will Smith, Sean Paul, Barrington Levy, Tessanne Chin, Ne-Yo and R-City.





Who's Who of NGC Sanfest

Nailah Blackman

Nailah Blackman has been carving out a name for herself since emerging on the musical scene just a few short years ago. It can be said that music is part of Nailah's DNA as her grandfather, the legendary late Ras Shorty I, was the creator of Soca while Nailah's mother is the well-known calypsonian and musician, Abbi Blackman. Nailah is a prolific songwriter and composer and is an accomplished player of several instruments, including the guitar and keyboards. Nailah has attracted numerous regional and international nominations, including being nominated in 2018 for the best new international act at the BET Viewers' Choice Awards.







NGC's Support for Arts and Culture – Sanfest Sponsorship

ARTS AND CULTURE AT THE CENTRE OF CIVILISATIONS



ARTS AND CULTURE HAVE ALWAYS BEEN AT THE CENTRE OF CIVILISATIONS; THEY TELL RICH STORIES ABOUT PEOPLE, THEIR LIFESTYLES AND FROM WHERE THEY CAME.

Cultures, through time, have left behind important arts, artifacts and reminders that give a snapshot into how civilisations lived in past eras, from the rudimentary cave paintings during the Stone Age to the treasures of pottery from the First Peoples of Trinidad and Tobago.

These are stark reminders that civilisations may have passed on centuries ago, but they are survived by their art and

culture, which seamlessly weave together the past, the present and the future.

We at The National Gas Company of Trinidad and Tobago Limited (NGC), view arts and culture as important to human development. There are well-established connections between arts and culture with education, discipline, perseverance and other personal development qualities that help young people grow confidently. It is important to us that young people should be encouraged to engage in the arts and develop into creative professionals in different career fields as well as become future musicians, poets and filmmakers to continue telling our stories that will live on through generations.



NGC has developed a rock-solid relationship with Sanfest over 20 years and we hope to continue this long-standing association because of the Festival's instrumental role in developing the country's diverse national culture and the arts ecosystem through the youth of Trinidad and Tobago.

Our early relationship with Sanfest began in 1982 when the energy company presented the Sanfest Committee with trophies and financial assistance. Later, in 2003, we began another level of association with Sanfest when Mr. Hasely Crawford, Corporate Communication Officer at NGC, reached out to the Arts Council after they made a public appeal for sponsorship for cash and tangible prizes, such as drums and keyboards, for the Festival. In 2009, we deepened our involvement and commitment in Sanfest by becoming the title sponsor of the Festival. The Festival then became known as 'NGC Sanfest'.

We recognise the value of the arts and cultural resources and their ecological

relationship with well-being and quality of life in individuals and society. Hence, it is important that the arts and culture are nurtured in young people from an early age. This has been the unique mission of Sanfest for half a century. The Festival has indeed delivered tremendously towards enhancing and inspiring our students in an atmosphere of joy and friendship with an everlasting shared memory.

Sanfest is a natural fit with NGC's corporate social responsibility ethos, supporting a wide range of initiatives throughout the country with a focus on socio-economic and human development. By paying special attention to nurturing skills among youth that promote cultural legacy in events such as Sanfest, it is NGC's hope that its support will impact positively on the country's social fabric.

Our support is not only an investment in the arts. It is about creating the conditions for our young people to excel and flourish on the national and international stage to keep our rich arts and cultural traditions safe and alive.









The Story of SANFEST 1970–2020

San Fernando Arts Council – a non-profit organisation – was founded in 1969. In 1973, it was incorporated by an Act of Parliament. In 1975, the organisation received a National Award, The Medal of Merit (Gold) for Meritorious Service and in 1976 it was decreed a charitable organisation.

The San Fernando Arts Festival had its genesis in The San Fernando Arts Council, which originally sought to gather senior artistic groups and artistes from the southern region under one umbrella to develop, foster and promote the arts in all its forms. The Festival was conceived by the late Dr. James Lee Wah (Hon.D. Lit UTT) as a replacement for the defunct National Arts Festival. The council promoted its campaign in primary and secondary schools in San Fernando to encourage students to explore their artistic capabilities and help them discover their passions and in some cases, push their talent to a higher level.

NINE

The Festival began in 1970 with schools participating in visual arts, creative writing, drama, music and dance. Ms. Joyce Kirton was the first director of Sanfest and conceptualised the idea of the name Junior Sanfest to separate it from Senior Sanfest.

1970
to
1980

In the early 1970s, a Building Fund Committee headed by the then Member of Parliament for the San Fernando West constituency, Mr. Errol Mahabir, assisted the group in the acquisition of the land located on Circular Road, Mon Repos, San Fernando for the construction of the Creative Arts Centre where the Festival is held.

1980
to
1990

In 1982, Mr. Eric Butler became the Festival Director and under his 20-year stewardship, he progressively transformed the Festival into a national event. In 1983, Mr. Butler extended the Festival to include schools in Victoria and environs. The following year, the St. Patrick district was added. In 1985, the South-Eastern district was integrated into the Festival, followed by Caroni in 1986; Port of Spain and environs in 1987; St. George East in 1988 and the North-Eastern district in 1989.

The Festival categories were expanded to include monologue, national/patriotic song, limbo, pan solo and steelpan. A Mr./Ms. NGC Sanfest Teen Talent Competition designed to focus on talent, intelligence and speech was also introduced.

In 1982, NGC's relationship with the Festival began when the company presented the Sanfest Committee with trophies and financial assistance.

1990
to
2000

In 1991, Mr. Butler invited Tobago to join the Festival, completing his vision of making the Festival national in scope. The Festival was then renamed The National Junior Arts Festival. Mr. Butler held the reins as Director for 20 years and resigned in 2002 due to pressing duties in his substantive job at the Ministry of Culture.

In 2002, Mr. Walid Baksh became Festival Director.

In 2003, NGC again supported Sanfest when Mr. Hasely Crawford, Head, Community Relations at NGC reached out to the council after they made a plea for sponsorship for cash and tangible prize, such as cassettes, drums and keyboards. NGC's Communications Department under Manager Mrs. Jeanette Elias, along with Ms. Wynda Chandler - title, Ms. Christine Punette - title and Mr. Crawford embraced the Festival and pledged support.

2010
to
2020

Mr. Bramble continued directing the Festival until 2017, when Ms. Avion Crooks assumed the role. In 2018 and 2019, Mr. Sherid Mason directed the Festival. Under his directorship, he introduced a new aspect of the Festival called Young Stars, which focused on students from the primary schools as The Mr. & Miss Sanfest Teen Talent Competition was open exclusively to secondary schools.

2000
to
2010

In 2009, NGC deepened its involvement and commitment in Sanfest when the energy company became the title sponsor of the Festival, which became known as the NGC Sanfest. The timely intervention by NGC to generously support and sponsor Sanfest has undeniably aided in Sanfest's phenomenal growth and improvement over the years.

In 2010, Mr. Winston Bramble took over as Director and introduced two new categories - spoken word and dramatised speech. He entered a Partnership with Mr. Jessel Murray of the Department of Creative and Festival Arts, The University of the West Indies, to assist/guide in the formation of a rubric in the various categories to be used by the judges.

Mr. Murray also offered the use of his department to host the preliminaries of the St. George East Education District. Additional categories were added, such as monologue, national/patriotic song, limbo, pan solo and steelpan ensemble.

Sanfest Snippets

Newsday • Saturday 8th November, 2014

Express • Friday 7th November, 2014

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Guardian • Sunday 26th October, 2014

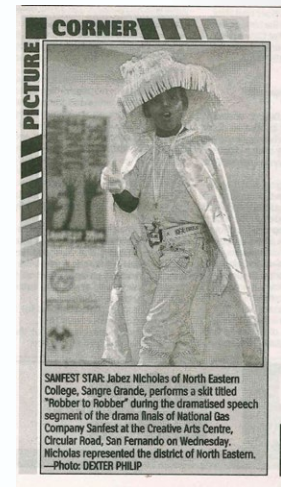
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Newsday • Tuesday 27th October, 2015

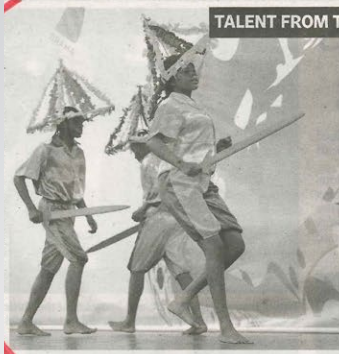
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TALENT FROM TABAGUIE

Students of Tabaguite Secondary school perform in the drama category of the 46th Annual Junior Arts Festival NGC Sanfest at the Creative Arts Centre, San Fernando. PHOTO: TONY HOWELL

Master drummers of Nelson Street Boys'



The talented drummers of Nelson Street Boys' School, who are also known as the 'Nelson Street Boys' Drummers', are performing in the instrumental ensemble category of the National Junior Arts Festival at the Creative Arts Centre, San Fernando. PHOTO: LINCOLN HOLDER

IRIE IERE VIBES



LEAP OF CLASS: Shipharah Lewis of Arima North Secondary performs in Class 28 (Local Folk Interpretive Dance) yesterday at SanFest at the Creative Arts Centre in San Fernando. PHOTO BY LINCOLN HOLDER



MUSICAL STRINGS: Violinists of the San Fernando Girls Government School perform on Tuesday in the instrumental ensemble category of the National Junior Arts Festival at the Creative Arts Centre in San Fernando. PHOTO BY LINCOLN HOLDER



Students shine at SanFest

For several weeks now, the talents of students from across the country have been shining at the San Fernando Arts Council National Junior Arts Festival (SanFest). This year's SanFest was held at the Creative Arts Centre, San Fernando, on Monday, October 28, 2016. The festival was a huge success, with students from all over the country showcasing their talents in various categories. PHOTO: LINCOLN HOLDER



REACHING HIGH: Felicity Presbyterian Primary School performing in Class 19A for religious choirs at the San Fernando Arts Council National Junior Arts Festival (SanFest) on Monday at the Creative Arts Centre, Circular Road, San Fernando. PHOTO: TREVOR WATSON

Young talent shines at NGC Sanfest



Adon Boodram of San Fernando TML performs in the solo final category at the NGC Sanfest finals at the Creative Arts Centre, San Fernando on Monday. PHOTOS: TONY HOWELL



DANCING IN HARMONY



Shanika Khan, left, and Isabella Edgar of Harmony Hall Presbyterian School perform a local folk dance. PHOTO: TONY HOWELL

KUNG FU DANCE



Pupils of Arima Boys' Government Primary School during their performance in the local folk dance category of the 46th Annual Junior Arts Festival NGC Sanfest at the Creative Arts Centre, San Fernando. PHOTO: TONY HOWELL

STALWART in the Arts

Tribute by WALID BAKSH

TORRANCE IQBAL MOHAMMED HAD AN INNATE PASSION FOR THE ARTS, SO MUCH SO THAT HE FOUND IT DIFFICULT TO DIVIDE HIS TIME BETWEEN HIS PERSONAL LIFE AND CULTURAL PURSUITS.





HE DEVOTED MOST OF HIS SPARE TIME TOWARDS THE DEVELOPMENT OF ARTS AND CULTURE AND ITS PRACTITIONERS.

It was this passion that drove him to combine forces with artistic luminaries, including James Lee Wah, Beryl McBurnie, Joyce Kirton and Leonard Attzs to create the San Fernando Arts Council (Arts Council). The main purpose was to represent the artistic personnel and groups, provide proper training for their members, and above all, create a space where they could meet, rehearse, train and produce shows.

Together they struggled to acquire a home for the artists, and with the assistance of the dynamic Errol Mahabir, were instrumental in acquiring the land on which the Creative Arts Centre now stands. In the beginning, it was a crude but accommodating theatre space which has cumulated in the building it is today.

Torrance served as Chairman after James Lee Wah. His service as Chairman was briefly interrupted at various stages by terms of office by Joyce Kirton, Eric Butler, Sherid Mason, Marlon Espinoza and finally, James Solomon. In the 51 years of the Arts Council, Torrance had served over 35 odd years as Chairman. He remains to date the longest-serving Chairman and member of the Arts Council.

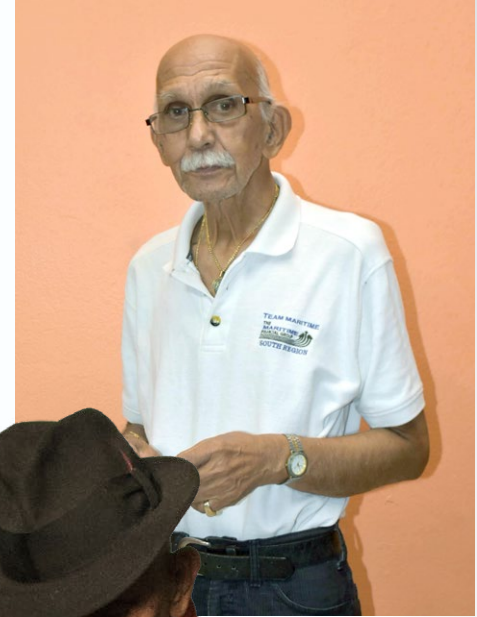
During his tenure as Chairman, he was devoted to increasing the membership of the Council and encouraging the use of the Creative Arts Centre by members and member groups, opening avenues for workshops in dance and drama by special interest groups like Best Village. His pet project was the San Fernando Festival, (the original SanFest), which was initiated to coincide with the celebration of San Fernando's Municipal Week.

That Festival was an annual showcase of talent of the various arts groups in south Trinidad and featured productions of plays, dance and music programs at the Naparima Bowl by groups, such as Southernaires, Arawaks and Drama Guild, among others.



He lamented the fact that after a few years, the Junior Festival took precedence as the feature event of the Arts Council and the Senior Festival petered out. Nevertheless, he tried to re-establish Senior Sanfest and in 2012 appointed Ms. Lucy Margaret Regis as Senior Sanfest Director. In 2015, Torrance was named the Honouree for the Senior Sanfest's show, Euphoria, which featured a special segment called A.S.K. Torrance. Torrance led by example by participating in all the shows where he showcased his dancing skills.

Torrance was an ardent supporter of The Junior Arts Festival. He encouraged and supported the directors and producers of the Junior Festival at every turn and was the chief consultant in every aspect of the Festival, especially in the area of dance, where he was considered choreographer extraordinaire. He made it his duty to visit venues in each district to witness the talents on display, especially on the days when dance was carded. At times, he also served as chief judge for dance.



Torrance had a deep passion for the Creative Arts Centre, treating it as his own home. He made valiant representations to various governmental agencies to assist in the upkeep and renovation of the building. He provided valuable administrative guidance to the running of the affairs of the Arts Council. He had a deep interest in the Junior Arts Festival, seeing it as an opportunity for discovering and developing the talents of our nation's children. Torrance had a keen eye for detecting talent, both leadership and artistic, and never hesitated in using these in the furtherance of the aims and objections of the Arts Council.

His legacy as a choreographer, administrator and mentor will linger on in the minds and works of his students and co-producers alike.



TWELVE

In Their Own Words

**SANFEST ALUMNI
SPEAK ABOUT
THE IMPACT OF
THE FESTIVAL ON
THEIR LIVES.**

The development of youth in arts and culture has been the central tenet of NGC Sanfest with annual themes reflective of empowering and transforming the young people of T&T.

Through the past five decades, the Festival has demonstrated unwavering commitment towards growing a vibrant arts and culture landscape and nurturing a society that values the importance of the arts while preserving culture and strengthening the country's national identity.

While not all past participants pursued a career in the arts, their exposure has, no doubt, contributed towards their empowerment and enhanced their confidence to follow their dreams in any field of work.

In their own words, some past participants of the festival describe the impact Sanfest had on their lives.

VAUGHNETTE BIGFORD
Jazz Vocalist, Band Leader, TV Presenter



Vaughnette Bigford participated in NGC Sanfest from 1982 to 1990 and described the excitement of being part of the Festival.

'I am so thankful for NGC Sanfest. What an institution! I spent a lot of time between the ages of 8 to 17 preparing for performances at this festival. From calypso to drama to chorale speaking, I did it all and it contributed to my development as a creative person.

'We had something to look forward to every year. It was an exciting time for us southerners, more so because the opportunities to showcase our talents outside of NGC Sanfest were so limited. I am eternally grateful to you all and thankful for the platform that the festival provided for so many of us who are now making a living in this creative space.'

AVION CROOKS School Teacher

Avion Crooks participated in the Festival from 1977 to 1981 and was Festival Director in 2017.

'I have been fortunate to see NGC Sanfest from all sides. One of my first stage performances as a young child was at the Naparima Bowl (where I am now the Chairman of the Board of Management since 2017), storytelling on behalf of my primary school in the San Fernando Arts Festival. As a schoolteacher and then curriculum facilitator, I have been involved in the training and adjudicating aspects of the Festival, watching children hone their talents.

'In 2017, I was honoured to function as Festival Director, which came after periods that I served on the Board of the San Fernando Arts Council.

'These experiences have taught me about overcoming challenges, becoming detail-oriented, budgeting and above all, that there is something special and individual in each person that seeks expression, largely through the arts and culture, and this is what builds our humanity.'



PATRICE RICHARDSON
Student

Patrice Richardson performed in the Festival between 2013 and 2018 and acquired invaluable skills and techniques.

'I am currently a student at The University of Trinidad and Tobago, pursuing my Bachelor of Fine Arts in the Performing Arts.

'Competing in the NGC Sanfest competition over the years has given me a better understanding of how to perform and the ability to connect with my audience. Most importantly, it taught me how to develop innovative techniques as well as skills and ideas.'



KENSON LAUDAT

'I am 24 years of age and I am the 2014 Mr. NGC Sanfest winner. The experience was an absolutely great one and I brought the crown home to Moruga and made my community and school absolutely proud. Since then, I have gone on to win Mr. Embacadare in 2015 and Mr. St. Patrick in 2016.

'I have studied at The University of the West Indies. In 2019, I launched my own performing company, Laudat Entertainment Arts Dynasty aka L.E.A.D. where we uplift the next generation through culture. The Mr. and Miss NGC Sanfest Teen Competition opened up my eyes to a world of possibilities and made this young man from 'country' rise up to prove many wrong and gave me a grand stage to excel.'



'NGC Sanfest 2008 was an enjoyable experience – one that I will always appreciate. I was given the opportunity to meet and form friendships with people who shared a common interest in the arts. I was also pushed to improve my skill and in return, I gained more confidence which has had a significant impact on the type of performer that I am now.'

– DR. REX-ANNE BOBB

'The NGC Sanfest competition was a highlight of the school year where my schoolmates and I came together and pooled our creative energies, fuelling healthy competition, collaboration, and friendships to last a lifetime. The Mr. & Miss NGC Sanfest Teen Talent Competition, however, held a special place. This competition developed my leadership, conflict resolution and organisational skills which helped solidify my foundation as an artiste.'

– KEFIM SCOTT, ENGINEER
(NGC SANFEST 2006–2011)



