

Art Music by Caribbean Composers: Trinidad and Tobago

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INTRODUCTION

Trinidad and Tobago are the southernmost of the Caribbean islands, reaching almost to the coast of Venezuela (Dudley, 2005). Trinidad was originally colonized by Spain, but Spanish “settlement on the island was never extensive” (Brown, 1990, p. 83). In the 18th century, Trinidad welcomed a large number of settlers from the French West Indian colonies. Trinidad also received a number of refugees following the French and Haitian Revolutions. “These influxes immediately infused the island with the morals, customs, and language of the ‘French Creoles’” (Munro, 2005). The annual carnival is one such cultural tradition derived from the island’s French influence (Munro, 2005).

European colonists established plantations, manned first by African slaves, and later, after the abolition, by East Indian indentured labourers. Most of the modern population of Trinidad and Tobago descends from these two groups of labourers, making Trinidad and Tobago one of the most diverse nations in the Caribbean (Dudley, 2005). Trinidad and

Tobago achieved independence in 1962 and became a republic in 1974 (McDaniel, 1998).

Musical traditions derived from the East Indian roots of the population include tan singing and chutney (Manuel, 2008). However, Trinidad and Tobago is most famous for its indigenous musical traditions, calypso and soca, and, of course, as the birthplace of its national instrument, the steelpan. Steelbands are widely popular among other Caribbean nations as well as in Caribbean-diaspora communities, but the steelpan originates from Trinidad (Dudley, 2013). A wealth of steelpan competitions exist, including the national events “Panorama” and “Pan Is Beautiful”. Music of all genres, from classical to popular, are arranged for steelbands and performed at these events (McDaniel, 1998).

The island of Tobago is home to tambrin (derived from the word “tambourine”), a unique local musical tradition:

Tambrin bands feature three or more flat frame drums played with the hands (similar to both the Irish bodhran and the frame drums used in the Jumbie Dance of

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Montserrat), a leading melody instrument (typically a violin), a triangle, and sometimes other percussion (Bilby & Neely, 2009, p. 251).

The “Tobago reel”, believed to be of Scottish origin, is a popular song style of tambrin bands. Other tambrin bands have “broader repertoires that include other European-derived dances, such as jigs, waltzes, ‘marching pieces,’ heel and toe polka, and various figures of the quadrille, as well as entirely local forms, such as bell and calypso” (Bilby & Neely, 2009, p. 251).

Since 2003, the music curriculum for schools in Trinidad and Tobago includes steelpan performance and instruction (Remy, 2011). An examination program for steelpan, now used internationally, assesses students’ proficiency, technique and musical literacy. Much of the music composed expressly for the steelpan are examination pieces (Remy, 2011).

The University of the West Indies offers both a Certificate in Music and a BA in Music Arts. The College of Science, Technology and Applied Arts of Trinidad offers an AA in Music (Remy, 2011). The Academy for the Performing Arts, part of the University of Trinidad and Tobago, offers various certificates in music performance as well as a BFA in the Performing Arts which includes a music specialization track. Birdsong Academy in Tunapuna has for many years incorporated brass and woodwind tuition and performance into its music programme which is otherwise centred on steelpan. In recent years there have been moves to emulate this model in panyards across the country (A. Walters, personal communication, May 25, 2013).

The Classical Music Development Foundation of Trinidad and Tobago provides support for both classical musical training and performance. The Music Literacy Trust provides financial assistance and sponsorship to musical education programs and to students pursuing music education both in Trinidad and

abroad. The Trust is also working to fund efforts to archive pan compositions and scores (Remy, 2011). Calabash Foundation for the Arts, established in 2012, provides funding and support for the development of the arts in Trinidad and Tobago (A. Walters, personal communication, May 25, 2013).

The National Steel Symphony Orchestra (NSSO), formed in 2007, performs a wide classical, contemporary and original repertoire arranged or composed for the “G” family of steelpans. The NSSO also conducts workshops and other training sessions to improve musical techniques and standards in the country. Several [members of the NSSO](#) are also composers.

Other groups offering support for art-music performance, appreciation of and education in Trinidad and Tobago include the National Symphony Orchestra, Trinidad and Tobago Youth Philharmonic, the St. Augustine Chamber Orchestra and the newly formed National Philharmonic Orchestra (under the auspices of the Ministry of the Arts and Multiculturalism, A. Walters, personal communication, May 25, 2013).

Prolific composer Ray Holman has composed in a variety of styles and his “sense of style is firmly rooted ... in the rhythmic sensibility he absorbed” from his years playing and arranging for his steelband, the Invaders (Dudley, 2001, p. 189). Holman composed “[Waltz for Iris](#)” in memory of his mother, Iris, who passed away in 2003 (R. Holman, personal communication, June 7, 2013).

Dominique Le Gendre, based in London, is one of many prominent Trinidadian composers and musicians who live and work outside of Trinidad. Her composition “[Riff](#)” for string quartet and percussion, was premiered in The Bahamas as part of the *International Symposium on Composers of African and Afro-Caribbean Descent*. [Le Gendre](#) originally composed “Riff” for a battle scene in a radio drama, but she re-arranged it to give

it a more relaxed dance feel (Cariclassical, 2013).

Liam Teague is Associate Professor of Music and Head of Steelband Studies at Northern Illinois University. Through his compositions, he seeks to highlight the beauty, versatility and profundity of the steelpan. This effort is evident in his four-movement piece for steelpan, “A Visit to Hell.” The piece was inspired by a teenaged nightmare of the composer. In the third movement of the piece, “Fanfare for the Devil”, the steelpan is played with three mallets and evokes the sounds of brass instruments “heralding the arrival of the Devil” (L. Teague, personal communication, August 17, 2013).

Adam Walters, originally from the United Kingdom, teaches at the Academy for the Performing Arts, part of the University of Trinidad and Tobago. Since his arrival in Trinidad, he has drawn upon aspects of Trinidadian culture in his compositions. Of particular interest to musicians, Walters’ Chaconia Music catalogue provides access to scores from composers from throughout the region.

Arranging for steelpan orchestra is a highly respected craft in Trinidad and Tobago and, with many new pieces created each year for performance at Panorama, the repertoire is extensive and continues to grow further still. Many arrangers, such as Leon “Smooth” Edwards and Len “Boogsie” Sharpe, demonstrate such virtuosity in the techniques of counterpoint and motivic development that their art can be considered a form of composition in its own right (A. Walters, personal communication, September 27, 2013).

The steelpan has a very large presence in musical life in Trinidad. Using a variety of styles, including classical styles, a wealth of composers write and arrange for the pan. Steelpan music almost defies definition; the instrument lends itself to many playing styles. Steelpan music is a living tradition in Trinidad and efforts to document this tradition continue. Owing to the unique depth and breadth of the steelpan musical tradition in Trinidad, this entry is only able to include a sample of art musical works composed for the pan.

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COMPOSERS

Damyon Alexander (1979-)

Winnifred Atwell (1914-1983)

Shelton Besson

Patricia Allison Bishop (1940-2011)

Kareem Brown (1979-)

Charles Brunner

Patrick Stanislaus Castagne (1916-2000, born in Guyana)

Earl Caruth

Cary Codrington (1957-)

Geraldine Connor (1952-2011, born in London)

Felix Cross (1953-)

Meta Davis-Cumberbatch

Khion "Khadence" De Las (1988-)

Nigel Diaz (1979-)

Ozzie George

Pelham Goddard (1946-)

Hugh Goodridge

Mia Gormandy (1988-)

Robert Greenidge (aka Greenwich, 1950-)

Vanessa Headley (1989-)

Ray Holman (1944-)

Dominique Le Gendre (1960-)

Akua Leith (1982-)

Vernon "Birdie" Mannette (1929-1999)

David Marcellin (1955-2011)

Irene Umilta McShine

Lennox "Bobby" Mohammed (1942-)

Clarence Morris

Mungal Patasar (1948-)

Alma Pierre

Lennox O. Pierre

Edgar "Junior" Pouchet (1936-2012)

Anthony Prospect (aka Guillermo Antonio Prospect, 1928-2000)

Ron Reid

Jeannine Remy (1961- , born in United States)

Shea Remy (2001-)

Aldwyn Roberts (aka, Lord Kitchener, 1922-2000)

Jit Samaroo (1950-)

Sule Sampson (1977-)

Satanand Sharma (1964-)

Lennox "Boogsie" Sharpe (also spelled "Sharp," 1953-)

Nigel Smith

Lenor Snider

Liam Teague

Olive Walke

Adam Walters (1972- , born in U.K.)

Rudolph F. Wells (1937-)

Atiba Chike Williams (1990-)

Anthony Williams (1931-)

Orville Wright (1944-2012)

COMPOSITIONS, by composer

Alexander

Movement in steel

Panology

Atwell

Jubilee rag

Besson

A blue crescendo

Bishop

Dalinda and the swamp (opera for steelpan)

Voice and steel (folk opera)

Brown

Tempest (for solo pan)

October showers

Brunner

Steelpan concerto

Caruth

Pan waves (1988, test piece)

Castagne

Forged from the love of liberty (National anthem, Trinidad and Tobago)

The fugitive

Connor

Carnival messiah

Cross

The evocation of Papa Mas

Mass Carib (1987)

Moon on a rainbow shawl (theatrical score)

De Las

Ukishizumi [Ups and downs] (2012, for steelpan ensemble)

Diaz

By degrees (2005, for tenor steelpan)

The call of steel (2007, for tenor, double tenor, double seconds, guitar, cello & bass steelpans; drum set)

Fis dur e moll (F# major and minor) (2005, for tenor steelpan)

Inspiration (2004, for tenor steelpan)

Measure 50 [Ghost notes] (2005, for piano)

A musical journey (2002, for tenor, double tenor, double seconds, guitar, cello & bass steelpans)

A musical journey: The next episode (2004, for tenor pan 1, tenor pan 2, double second pans, guitar pan 1, guitar pan 2, bass pans)

A musical journey: The final chapter (2004, for tenor pan 1, tenor pan 2, double second pans, cello pan 1, cello pan 2, bass pans)

Not quite done (2003, for double tenor steelpan)

OH!!! (2003, for tenor steelpan)

A simple solo in C (2002, for tenor steelpan)

Steelpan rondo (2007, for tenor steelpan & piano)

Steelpan sonata (2008, for tenor steelpan & piano)

Steelpan sonata in D: Andante (2009, for tenor steelpan & piano)

Traffic jam (2006, for tenor steelpan & piano)

Two notes (2006, for tenor steelpan)

Two-part invention (2005, for tenor & double seconds steelpan)

Goodridge

Tropical waltz

West Indian serenade (1962, test piece)

Gormandy

Nostalgic appreciation

Greenidge

Fire (1994)

Musical volcano (1991)

Headley

Blue butterfly (2011)

Dream in colour (2011)

Dusk (2010)

Encore (2010, for cello pan)

A gift from above (2007)

Us (2004)

Holman

Changing time

Sad song for a panman

Waltz for Iris (2006)

Le Gendre

Agua donde vas? (song for soprano & piano, based on poetry by Federico Garcia Lorca)

La belle et la bête (2011, opera)

B. D. Women (TV score)

Bird of night (2006, chamber opera, for flute, bass flute, clarinet, bassoon, horn in F, harp, percussion, violin, viola, cello, bass, lyric soprano, mezzo soprano, tenor, baritone, SATB chorus)

Birthday fanfare (2006, chamber music, for horn, B-flat trumpet, tenor trombone, bass trombone, tuba, percussion)

A bitter pill (TV score)

Body of a poet (film score)

Booker Prize '93 (TV score)

Burial at Thebes (2008, drama per musica, for flute doubling with bass flute, oboe, bassoon, 2 horns in F, B-flat trumpet, percussion, soprano, mezzo soprano, tenor, high baritone, baritone)

The burial of Miss Lady (dance opera, for cello, djembe, singers)

Calling, speaking (2010, chamber music, for , trombone, French horn, 2 conch shells, double bass, percussion)

The complete Arkangel Shakespeare.

Dawn chorus fanfare (2007, chamber music, for flute, oboe, B-flat clarinet, bassoon, horn, B-flat trumpet, timpani)

Disabled lives (TV score)

Dreamwinds I (2009, chamber music, for vibraphone, violin 1, violin 2, viola, cello, double bass, mezzo-soprano, soprano)

4 arms 2 necks (song, for mezzo-soprano / soprano & guitar/piano)

Fragments I (2011, chamber music, for clarinet, trombone, double bass, percussion)

The general (2010, opera, for flute, harp, soprano, baritone)

Le genie humain (2013, string quartet)

The healer (TV score)

How I wonder (2007, song cycle/music theater, for piano, guitar, flute, clarinet, violin, viola, cello, mezzo-soprano, tenor, countertenor)

I is a long memoried woman (2006)

In a different light (2006, dance suite for Kathakali dancers & chamber orchestra, for flute, cor anglais, trumpet in C, trombone, violin 1, violin 2, viola, cello, double bass, percussion, SATB chorus)

In my own home (song, for countertenor & piano)

The inventor (2009, opera, for clarinet, piano/keyboard, mezzo-soprano, baritone)

Jab Molassie (2013, music-theatre, libretto by Caitlyn Kamminga, for tenor, soprano, baritone & mezzo-soprano, clarinet, tenor saxophone, trumpet, trombone, double tenor-steelpan, percussion [2 players], violin, & double bass)

Kaiso for July 27 (TV score)

La petite valse (film score)

Ragga guyls d'bout (TV score)

Riff (2013)

Rio Manzanare dance suite (2005, co-

composed with Celia Reggiani, for cuatro, classical guitar, harp, piano, alto flute, B-flat clarinet, bass clarinet, violin, viola, cello, double bass, percussion)

Room 11 (film score)

Seven go mad in Peru (TV score)

Sixth happiness (film score)

Song of Orpheus (for alto/countertenor & lute/guitar/piano)

Synchro (TV score)

Tales of the islands (2005, chamber music, for oboe, B-flat clarinet, alto & tenor saxophone, bassoon, horn in F, snare drum, 1st & 2nd violin, viola, cello)

Leith

A cry for revenge (for pan orchestra)

Clash of the tritones (for pan & piano)

Mannette

Birdie's mambo (1959)

McShine

Barbara Ann (test piece)

People of the islands (1962, test piece)

Mohammed

Gallopade (1966)

The revelation from beyond (1967)

Morris

In the past

Patasar

Dreadlocks

Pierre

Christmas mento

Early spring

Flowering almond tree

Quiet rain

Pouchet

Guitar man

Jule's overture

Prospect

Calypso for tenor pan

Intermezzo in E flat (1966, test piece)

Maracas Bay (1975, test piece)

The right and the wrong (film score)

Reid

Caribbean eye (TV score)

The dish ran away with the spoon (TV score)

Gayelle (TV score)

Morral (TV score)

The rig (TV score)

Who the cap fits (TV score)

Remy, J.

Amnicon Falls (2013, test piece)

The attacks and aftermath of September 11, 2001 (for steel orchestra)

Calypsitize (2013, test piece)

Caught in a loop (2013, test piece)

Double diddy (2009, test piece)

Funky grooves (2013, test piece)

Grandma's antique clock (2013, test piece)

Jonathan's piece (2009, test piece)

Just a little calypso idea (2013, test piece)

A little bluegrass (2013, test piece)

The little cloud

My cool tune (2013, test piece)

My first double stops (2013, test piece)

No pretty laces

One time blues (2013, test piece)

Pan clichés (2009, test piece)

Pan hoe down (2013, test piece)

Rainforest: A musical postcard from Trinidad

Show pan waltz (2013, test piece)

Tropical moods

Waltz with me (2013, test piece)

Remy, S.

The black anaconda (2013, test piece)

Chinese dragon appearance (2013, test piece)

Shea's jam (2006, test piece)

Roberts

Sonata variations on "Pan in A minor"

Samaroo

Canary's call

Coleman's jam

Festival of voices

Jaago [Wake up] (1997, steelpan)

Pan patterns (1985, steelpan)

Pan parranda

Milap (meeting) (1995, steelpan)

Song of Lopinot (1987, steelpan)

Utsav-ki-awaz (Festival of voices) (1995, steelpan)

Sampson

Glory (2004, for pan orchestra)

Le conteur fantastique

Sharma

Alla Debussy

Amandina echo

Calypso rag

Chaconia dream

Frenetic

Improvisations

Paradise lost

Quick changes

Searching for something

Something old, something new

Study on a vamp

Survival suite

Toccata

Two Indian dancers

Two part invention in C

Two stick shuffle

Where the bee sucks

Sharpe

Dance

Dance of the douens

Moods

Ocean rhapsody

Rainforest

Short and sweet

Sunset

Smith

The creature waltz (for steelpan)

Snider

Child's play rondo (2013, for solo pan, graded examination piece)

Kiskedee and me (2006, for solo pan, graded examination piece)

Teague

Calypsonata (for tenor, double tenor, double seconds, cello, & bass steelpan)

Cell o'vibes (for cello steelpan)

The honeybee (for tenor steelpan)

Impressions (for tenor steelpan)

Love (for tenor steelpan)

Raindrops (for tenor steelpan)

El rio (for tenor steelpan)

Spickle (for solo/tenor/double tenor/double seconds/cello-quad/bass steelpan)

Trying ah ting (for tenor steelpan)

A visit to Hell (for tenor steelpan)

Walke

Every time ah pass

Walters (composed in Trinidad)

Highway (2010, for horn in F, trombone & tuba)

Little red riding hood (2011, for clarinet, trombone, double bass, xylophone & percussion)

The old yard: Carnival portraits from Trinidad (2012, for flute doubling piccolo and alto flute, horn in F, trombone, 2 violins, viola, cello, double bass, steel pan/vibraphone & percussion)

Temple in the sea (2013, for solo percussionist [vibraphone & tassa drum], voice and pre-recorded tanpura drone)

Three pieces for beginner recorders and professional string quartet (2010)

Wells

Allegro in A major for pan quartet (1994)

Alvin's dream (1994)

Before the coup (1990)

Coup d'état (1990)

Dance of the pannists (1990)

Dawn of a new millennium (for steelband)

The elusive kisskidee (1994, for steelband)

Moonlight in paradise (1994, for steelband)

Pan duet for tenor & cello (aka, *Mi diese*, 1994, for steelband)

Pan in the meadows (1993, for steelband)

Pan Orpheus (1993, for steelband)

Pan symphony in C minor (1991)

Le petit scherzo pour les enfants (1992)

Shades of Port-of-Spain (1989)

Steel & brass (1994)

Trinidad, my beloved (1990)

A voice inside (1994, for steelband)

Williams

Alice in Wonderland (for piano, 8-part choir, soprano, alto & tenor)

How doth the little crocodile

Twinkle twinkle little bat

A whiting and a snail

Speak roughly

'Tis the voice of the lobster

Soup of the evening

She's all my fancy painted him

Arpeggio and trill study in F (for tenor or lead pan)

Bagatelle (for piano)

Damien's tango (for piano)

Duino (piano quintet)

Family (unfinished, for piano)

Lizandra

Leeanna

Impressioni di Inghilterra (2007-08, for tenor or lead pan)

Last thoughts (2006, test piece, for double second pan)

Night of sadness (2006, test piece, for tenor or lead pan)

Overture (for steel orchestra, orchestra)

Pan sunrise (2006, test piece)

Sonata for piano and double second (unfinished)

Sound of sight (2006, test piece)

Toccata in D (for organ)

Waltz (for violin & piano)

Waltz (for piano)

Waltz for piano and pan (2006, test piece)

Anthony Williams

Dance Matilda dance (2006, test piece)

Trini waltz (2006, test piece)

Wright

Pan history

FILM and TV SCORES

Le Gendre

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- Rees, A. [Director]. (2000). *A bitter pill*. Discovery Channel.
- Reggiana, M. [Director]. (1984). *La petite valse*.
- Solomon, F. A. [Director]. (1998). *I is a long memoried woman*. Leda Serene Productions.

RECORDINGS

Caruth

Trinidad world music [CD]. (1996). Port of Spain, Trinidad & Tobago: Rituals Records. Track 11. *Pan waves*

Castagne

Complete national anthems of the world: vol.8, Taipei, Chinese - Zimbabwe [CD]. (2005). Slovak Radio Symphony Orchestra; Peter Breiner, conductor. Hong Kong: Marco Polo. Track 12: *Forged from the love of liberty* (1:12)

Millar Brass Ensemble. (1996). *World anthems* [CD]. Sonoma, CA: Delos.

Track 18. *Forged from the love of liberty* (1:12)

Ros, E. (2002). *Sing and swing/Sing and dance* [CD]. Watford, England: Dutton Laboratories/Vocalion.

Track 12. *The fugitive* (3:32)

Holman

Holman, R. (2006). *Changing time: original steelband compositions of Ray Holman* [CD]. Woodbrook, Trinidad and Tobago: Woodbrook Music.

Sand Point reggae (6:08)

Playa larga (5:09)

Changing time (7:31)

Waltz for Iris (3:53)

Heroes of the nation (9:37)

Socking it with steel (4:10)

Holman, R. (1994). *Steelband paradise: Tribute to Ray Holman* [CD]. Sonoma, CA: Delos.

Ray's medley (4:25)

My band (10:36)

Steelband paradise (9:19)

Special brew (13:55)

Pan woman (10:21)

Carnival is for woman (12:00)

Panic [reprise] (13:16).

Le Gendre

Brill, C. [Director]. (2003) *The complete*

Arkangel Shakespeare. Auburn, CA:
Arkangel Productions. ISBN 978-1-932219-24-1

All's well that ends well. (3 discs, 157 min.)
ISBN 978-1-932219-02-9.

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As you like it. (2 discs, 149 min.) ISBN 978-1-932219-04-3.

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King Lear. (3 discs, 203 min.) ISBN 978-1-932219-18-0.

Love's labours lost. (2 discs, 147 min.) ISBN 978-1-932219-19-7.

Macbeth. (2 discs, 139 min.) ISBN 978-1-932219-20-3.

Measure for measure. (2 discs, 149 min.)
ISBN 978-1-932219-21-0.

The merchant of Venice. (2 discs, 137 min.)
ISBN 978-1-932219-22-7.

The merry wives of Windsor. (2 discs, 135 min.) ISBN 978-1-932219-23-4.

A midsummer night's dream. (2 discs, 139 min.)

Much ado about nothing. (2 discs, 132 min.)

Othello. (3 discs, 181 min.) ISBN 978-1-932219-26-5.

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Song of Lopinot (3:39)
Utsav-ki-awaz [Festival of voices] (4:55)
Jaago (Wake up) (3:35)
Coleman's jam (4:41)
Pan patterns (4:30)
Milap [Meeting] (3:13)

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Track 10. *Birthday party*

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Emotions of steel [CD]. (1996) Available from http://www.panontheweb.com/pan/liam_teague_emotions_steel.htm
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