

Wednesday, October 25, 2017  
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# life

Peace Drums in concert at the Congregation Rodeph Shalom in Philadelphia.



The Peace Drums Project features separate steelbands which come together to play and perform as one steelband in the spirit of peace and cross-cultural understanding. The band's director, Trinidadian Brielle Scott, is second from right in the back row.

## Peace Steelband shines a light in the troubled Middle East

RAY FUNK AND ANDY MARTIN

In the Galilee region of Israel, steelband is bringing together Arab and Jewish youth to form a truly global steelband. The Peace Drums Project, as it is known, features separate steelbands which practice in their respective schools but then come together to play and perform as one steelband in the spirit of peace and cross-cultural understanding.

The instructor of the Peace Drums Project steelbands is San Fernando's own Brielle Scott, who recently returned to Israel for her second term of directing this unique music ensemble of secondary school kids. In only a few short years of existence, the Peace Drums Project has performed with the Haifa Symphony, toured the United States, and is gearing up for a tour to Vienna, Austria.

The whole idea of the Peace Drums Project started, strangely enough, in Delaware where professor Harvey Price, director

of Percussion Studies at the University of Delaware, had a vision. His vision was based on the tried and true idea that music brings people together, so why not use it to promote peace in the Middle East. Not through political diplomacy, but through musical diplomacy of steelband. "Teaching musical composition, improvisation, form, theory and performing skills to any group of people brings into focus a shared human identity," notes Price. Music is a universal language and he hoped steelband could be a catalyst for starting a new dialogue.

Price's idea marinated for a time and the Peace Drums Project did not get off the ground until he presented his vision to the Delaware Churches for Middle East Peace about five years ago. With their support, backing for the Peace Drums Project expanded to a coalition including rabbis at local synagogues and more recently to the area's Muslim community. Price initially targeted two schools in the Haifa area and

the program has now expanded to three schools. Through the work of Price and the coalition of supporters, two sets of steelbands for ten players were delivered.

To those who know Harvey Price, it came as little surprise that he would dedicate his boundless energy, curiosity, and devotion to music and arts to the Peace Drums Project. Price is a career percussionist and music educator who has run a steelband at the University of Delaware since 1999. He is a serious student of steelband and over the years he has brought several groups of his University of Delaware Study Abroad students down to experience Carnival and perform with steelbands in Trinidad such as Supernovas.

He also brought leading steelband educator Dr Jeannine Remy from UWI to the University of Delaware in November 2016 for the first ever Woman in Rhythm as part of the university's Master Players program to recognise her exceptional work in steelband.

This past spring 2017, Price came down to Trinidad for a residency at UTT with his wife Linda Henderson. But his primary focus now is to make the Peace Drum Project a self-sustaining entity.

In April 2016, the Peace Drums Project toured the United States performing in Philadelphia, Wilmington and Newark, Delaware, Mt Kisco, New York and in New York City in order to raise awareness and funds for the band's mission. Through this tour, many long time supporters of the steelband got to meet firsthand the kids they had been fund-raising to support and local religious leaders got to talk with the students in the spirit of dialogue and peace about their efforts.

When Price founded the Peace Drums Project, he knew that finding the right instructor for the program would key to its long-term success. In Brielle Scott, Price knew he had a person with the dedication to steelband and education to take the Peace Drums Project forward. Scott earned her undergraduate degree at UWI in Music and then her graduate degree in percussion performance at the University of Delaware before going to work with the Peace Drum Project in Israel. Prior to her work with the Peace Drums Project, Scott toured Israel with the University of Delaware Steelband in 2015 and was fascinated with the country. When presented with the opportunity to instruct the Peace Drums Project steelband, Scott jumped at the chance and began teaching in Israel in September 2016.

For Scott, the work is very rewarding and she is particularly interested in utilising steelband's ability for fostering cultural awareness through the culture of T&T. "I absolutely love my home country and its culture," notes Scott. "I looked at this project as an opportunity to share that culture first-hand with the kids." Getting to know the students of the individual steelbands on a deep and personal level has been a central element of the

Peace Drum Project steelband and a core component of Scott's teaching.

"The kids are really invested in the project. It is simply magical to witness. They share a bond for playing music together and they have a mutual love for the steelpan." For many parents, seeing their child happy and engaged in learning is rewarding; yet, the impact of the Peace Drum Project moves beyond the kids and trickles back their parents. According to Scott, "When the parents see and hear their kids making music on an instrument with such a unique timbre, it is something that opens up their hearts and minds."

One might think that a Trinidadian directing a steelband comprised of Jewish and Palestinian students would present challenges in terms of finding suitable repertoire. Not so, says Scott, who teaches music from a variety of genres and cultures including Trinidadian, Arab, Hebrew, and American music. "The kids are exposed to so much diversity in their own culture that they are extremely interested in playing music of any genre," said Scott. Her teaching methods, too, are diverse in their delivery and Scott balances traditional Trinidadian rote learning and teaching on music literacy. "It is very important for the kids to learn and comprehend music theory because with this knowledge, they can begin to compose and arrange music on their own and have a better understanding of the music they are playing."

The Peace Drums Project Steelband are in Vienna, Austria to help that city celebrate the 500th anniversary of the establishment of the Lutheran Church. The band will perform today at the Musikverein, one of the most prestigious concert halls in all of Europe. The concert will feature the Peace Drums Project steelband performing alone and joining forces with a local symphony orchestra. In addition to this

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# Equus gallops ahead

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**T**he Players Workshop's production of Sir Peter Shaffer's acclaimed *Equus* is riveting as it is intense. Staged in collaboration with The Actors Lab-Trinidad and having Gregory Mc Guire as its executive producer, the play premiered last week Wednesday and ran for five nights at The Little Carib Theatre in Woodbrook.

Directed and designed by Mervyn de Goeas, this second local staging of *Equus* was originally staged at the Royal National Theatre in London in 1973. It subsequently opened on Broadway in October 1974. Shaffer who died last year, won the Tony Award for *Equus* and *Amadeus*. As a play and subsequently as a movie, *Equus* featured some of the world's most renowned actors including Anthony Hopkins, Anthony Perkins, Alec McCowen, Leonard Nimoy, Richard Burton, Daniel Radcliffe and Richard Griffiths.

In the lead role as psychiatrist Martin Dysart, Michael Cherrie was outstanding. His diction and articulation perfect, he played the role quite convincingly. Cherrie meandered through the play's demanding script with the ease of poise of his more illustrious foreign counterparts previously cast in this role.

The small interior of The Little Carib Theatre kept Cherrie up close and personal in the faces of his audience. So compelling was he that one would have heard a pin drop in the theatre throughout the play's almost

The cast of *Equus*, directed by Mervyn de Goeas.



three-hour duration. Also nailing the role of mentally disturbed Alan Strang was young Makesi Algenon. So succinct was this young thespian in his role that off stage it wouldn't be surprising if people approached him tentatively anticipating some manic reaction from him in real life.

Wayne Lee-Sing and Cecilia Salazar were also standouts as Frank and Dora Strang, Alan's parents. Equally strong were Kemion Nero as attorney Hester Saloman, Iyepha Biggot as Jill Mason, Keino Swamber as stable manager Dalton, Andrew Hall as Horseman and Avielle Mc Carthy as the nurse.

Accompanied by five muscle-bound actors as horses, special mention is also deserving of Kameel Ali as the steed Nugget. Without letting too much out the bag, Alan Strang blinds the six horses resulting in him being committed to the Rokey Psychiatric Hospital to be treated by Dysart.

Mervyn de Goeas' *Equus* is



Alan Strang (Makesi Algenon) and Jill Mason (Iyepha Biggot) meet for the first time.

like an oasis in the local theatre landscape, one which seems barren of "serious" theatre. In stark contrast to the deluge of farce-type plays that flood local theatre, *Equus* comes like a gasp of fresh air amidst a flotsam of regurgitated plots.

The Players Workshop,

bleamed to have two exceptional directors through the years in Belinda Barnes and de Goeas continues to attract accomplished actors and produce serious theatre deserving awards. Cherrie is a no-brainer as an early nominee for a Best Actor Cacique Award.

## Pan program brings youth together

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performance, the event will also kick off the start of the latest part of Harvey Price's efforts to use pan to foster peace. Peace Drums Vienna is an initiative launched by the Johann Sebastian Bach Musikschule of Vienna to get youth from the newly-arrived Syrian refugee community paired with local Viennese youth playing in a steelband together.

What began as Harvey Price's hope and vision in the Middle East has clearly turned into a successful program of cultural outreach and understanding in only a few short years. Key to this success is the unique culture and sound of steelbands, and Price believes using an instrument that isn't exclusively tied to Jewish, Arab, Christian, or Muslim culture has been an advantage.

"Everyone is fascinated by the instrument [steelpan], fascinated by the sound and timbre, and the response has been unbelievable." Price and his supporters are keen on expanding the Peace Drum Project into other schools in Israel as well as seeing what the new group in Vienna will produce.

Price and Briele Scott also hope to bring the Peace Drum Project steelband to Trinidad so that the members can experience the home of steelpan and Trinidadians can hear and see how their gift to the world is working to change it for the better.

Ray Funk is a retired Alaskan judge and a Fulbright scholar who is passionately devoted to calypso, pan and mas.

Dr Andrew Martin is an ethnomusicologist, percussionist, pianist, and Professor of Music at Inver Hills College in St Paul, Minnesota.

### REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

#### IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE

In the Estate of HAZEL BENNETT late of Bunt Oak 5 Swallowfields Gillingham Dorset SP8 4US, England and Wales, deceased

NOTICE is hereby given that after the expiration of fourteen days from the date hereof, application will be made in the Registry of the Supreme Court for the Sealing of the Probate of the Will of the Estate of HAZEL BENNETT late of Bunt Oak 5 Swallowfields Gillingham Dorset SP8 4US, England and Wales, deceased, granted in the High Court of Justice, The District Probate Registry at Winchester with Power reserved to the other Executors on the 6th day of April, 2017.

Dated this day of , 2017.

KURT CONRAD VALKRON  
J.D. Seller + Co.  
Attorneys at Law for Steven Michael Paul and Donna-Marie Johnson the lawfully appointed Attorneys of Susan Bernadette Lacey and Fiona Jane Thomas the Legal Personal Representatives of the Estate of Hazel Bennett, deceased.

### NAVIGATIONAL WARNING 043/16 TRINIDAD - GULF OF PARIA CHART BA 475

Pipeline operations by MVs MICHAEL M, KATHY M, KENNETH O and barge WINSTON B, towing pipelines of up to 2000 feet in length in progress between the Guapo Bay Area and the Main Soldado Oilfield will continue until 31st December 2017.

A wide berth and caution is advised.

6th February 2016

Signed  
Ronald Alfred  
Director of Maritime Services  
Maritime Services Division Ministry  
of Works and Transport

1012002

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