



Caribbean born musicians who are also well established in the international world of music. The steelpan is used in conjunction with the bass, piano, saxophone and drums on this album and six of the tracks are composed by Halfers. The other two tracks are composed by Clive 'Zanda' Alexander and Russ Henderson. Halfers has shown his talents in this production that will take you on a journey through the versatility of his music. The album also gives the rich diversity of his musical expressions.

Annise also composed and arranged the music for the songs, 'Ramajay' in 1990, 'Fresh' in 1991 followed by 'Showtime' in 1992 which were all sung by calypsonian, Gregory 'GB' Ballantyne for Trinidad Carnival/Panorama. In 1996, Annise was part of the Paris based **DJOA Claude Sommier Sextet**, which produced the CD entitled *Calalou*. In the same year he arranged, 'Mind Yuh Business' for **Phase 11 Pan Groove** in the Trinidad Panorama preliminaries as Boogsie was unable to do it. Annise was asked to do the musical arrangements

with only ten days to the event and saw them qualify for the next round among the first five bands, without his intervention they would not have participated in that year's panorama. In 1997, he did the musical arrangement of 'Misbehave' for **Hydro Agri Skiffle Bunch** who were eventual winners of the South Zonal Panorama. They also placed fifth in the National Panorama Finals which was their greatest achievement as a conventional steel orchestra in that competition at that time. He also arranged their 1998 tune, 'Behave Yourself'. From 1999-2001 and in 2008, Annise did the musical arrangements for **PCS Starlift**. He then arranged for the **Merry Tones** steel orchestra from Diego Martin, Trinidad for 2002-3. Annise has also toured extensively in the Caribbean, USA, Canada and Europe.

Asked if he had a preference for any particular pan, he replied, "Every individual pan has its part to play in an orchestra. Each one is important as the other, but I work with the double seconds because of the range

it can produce. It gives a 'warmer' sound in the low notes but is capable of achieving the high ones when you need to." Halfers' musical tastes are broad. He stated, "I appreciate so much music it is impossible to narrow down my preferences but jazz is my greatest love and of course true calypso." **He sees the future of the musical instrument, the pan, as being dictated by the involvement of different bodies in its varied uses. He said, "Nature will take its natural course for the pan. You must remember that it is the twentieth century's only new acoustic musical instrument. It is still in its infant stage in relation to other known and established 'conventional' instruments."**

The awesome gift possessed by this talented musician is truly an inspiration to all of us. Halfers has made great strides with the steel pan as his chosen instrument on the international music circuit. His actions have led to the wider acceptance of this 20th century and the steelpan culture as a whole.



WEST HILL PRIMARY SCHOOL STEELBAND

➤ Since April 2006, a Hednesford Primary School has been fortunate to be able to offer a very unique musical opportunity for its young learners. From the wide range of genres of music on offer, the school secured external funding and purchased its own set of steel pans.

From the moment of the delivery of eighteen 55 gallon oil drums, direct from the Caribbean, the school was aware that the impact upon its pupils and community would be great!

In almost two years, five teams of pupils have been formed and receive weekly tuition from a visiting teacher, John Baugh and their head teacher, Shaun Miles. In addition to this, the school has created a rota enabling the young musicians to perform before school, break times, lunchtimes and after school each day.

Head teacher, Shaun Miles said, "The impact upon our school has been very

positive. Not only has the introduction of steel pans excited and enthused our pupils, it has given a tremendous opportunity for our young musicians to learn, to succeed and to perform together. It has provided a superb introduction to performing as an ensemble and has resulted in our young musicians having many, many opportunities to perform at some notable venues. The involvement of our pupils has certainly improved their self-discipline, dexterity, coordination, self-esteem, thinking skills, listening skills, creative abilities and personal expression. A number of our pupils who had not previously been interested in learning a musical instrument have since shown a great appreciation of what playing an instrument means. Links to other subjects such as Geography & History have been made through the connections to the Caribbean and the roots of Caribbean music. We have been fortunate in having visits from two steel pan players who are known both nationally and internationally and have influenced our young musicians further.

Overall, the experience has been one which has been very worthwhile and one which we continually invest in."

The young musicians sat an examination conducted by the London College of Music in December 2006. **They were the first pupils in the entire county of Staffordshire to take such a Steel Pan Ensemble examination and the school were thrilled when not only did they receive a Distinction, they received the highest result in the UK for such a music examination.** During 2007, they have received numerous bookings, performed widely throughout Staffordshire, appeared on BBC TV and have made their very first album. Already the band has a number of engagements for 2008 and look forward to sharing their music with wider audiences. This group of talented young musicians has certainly set some high standards that will see the steel pan culture excel far into the future.

By **John Baugh and Shaun Miles**