



DUDLEY DICKSON

THE EINSTEIN OF PAN MAKING...

Interviewing this leading pan tuner/manufacturer in Europe, I was not amazed by his modesty, as his general persona oozed a vibrant aura of calmness. Dudley is happy to pursue any avenue in the development of the instrument. His wittiness is awesome; the sheer brilliance of this thinking power is not only revealed in his work but also in his humour.

➤ Dudley got involved in pan tuning in 1965 at the age of fifteen whilst living in Birmingham where he played with the Trinidad All Stars steel band led by Roy Jacobs. He declares that both Roy Jacobs and Victor Phillip of Coventry were instrumental in his tuning career.

When questioned about the logistics of tuning he stated that tone, quality and loudness were important. He has developed a technique of shaping the mass of the note to ensure that the pan holds it's tuning longer. Different masses on the notes allow different colour of sounds. The higher the note is tuned a louder and durable sound is achieved. Dudley maintains the sound levels without fluctuations by the amount of mass used on the note. Every pan is different because of the material used to produce them. Thickness and quality has changed since the move from imperial to metric measures making it difficult to stretch the drum as before. He went on to say that each pan is individual and it is unlikely that the exact note can be reproduced. 'There are some instruments that need to be augmented to attain whole tone scales like the double second, tenor bass, cello and quad pans.' 'Others have to be diminished sevenths or fourths and fifths, mainly used on the three pans like the triple guitar, triple cello or triple seconds.' 'The fourths and fifths formation is also used on tenor and bass pans.' 'You must make