

# hello...

2007 has been a very memorable year for BAS and its UK steelband communities. The move of the National Steelband Panorama, 'Champions of Steel' competition, the UK's premier pre-Carnival event, from Kensal Road into Hyde Park, at the heart of the world's most diverse capital was the biggest transformation of this competition since its inception. It is envisaged that the opportunities Hyde Park offers will be maximised for the benefit of the bands and for pan in general.

'In days of old he was looked upon as a hooligan, today he is recognised as a pan musician'. This statement epitomizes the struggle of recognition for the instrument and its musicians. Pan Podium continues to actively support and promote the unselfish efforts of pannists, arrangers, tuners and management globally to its world audience ensuring that the struggle is always at the forefront with the global pan family reaping the fruits of their labour. 'Music is the Food of Love' and Pan Podium's mission is to ensure that this love reaches the

world by spreading the gospel according to Pan.

Having arrived in the UK since the 1950s, the steel pan artform continues its upward trend of establishing itself into British culture through the creation of numerous bands and more importantly, the significant increase in young pannists ensuring its continuity. BAS's member bands continue to promote steelband music through their numerous events in the UK and abroad whilst BAS's annual events add to this promotion with our ninth successful annual Awards event bringing the curtains down on 2007.

Pan Podium magazine and website continues to keep abreast of changes ensuring that they are both effective, efficient and continue to be a world leader. Pan Podium continues to work closely with our global media partners to ensure that we are aspiring and achieving in unity. Pan 4 Life!

## Robbie J

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# Billy Ocean ON TOUR WITH EBONY

**Ebony Steelband, the 2007 Notting Hill Panorama Champions supported the international singer, Billy Ocean, on his recent UK tour. For over three decades, Billy has captivated his worldwide audiences with his songs including his global hits 'Caribbean Queen' and 'When the going gets tough'. In 1996, Ebony had the opportunity to support Billy at his concerts.**



repertoire also included solos from a percussionist, guitarist and a saxophonist. Ebony's manager, Albert Faustine, said "Our performance was exceptional and there were people who did not know about steelband music and we showed them what we are capable of. As a group of young people we showed them our talent and our versatility as we got them involved in certain tunes by singing along and dancing."

Billy and Ebony went on to perform at Wolverhampton, Essex and Manchester. In all their concerts female patrons could be seen shouting hysterically, 'we love you Billy' whilst extending their hands for Billy to bring them on stage.

Sean Clarke, a pannist from Ebony said, "It was a great experience. Every performance was slightly different. It gave us the chance to show the versatility of pan playing to a larger audience." **Billy confirmed,** "I am glad that I was able to do a concert with Ebony again but it would be nice for us to do a collaboration where they play along as I sing. I would love for us to perform together all over the world."

Ebony also supported Billy at his concert on December 16<sup>th</sup> 2007 in Hackney. For further information, log on to [www.billyocean.co.uk](http://www.billyocean.co.uk).

**By Kayleigh Lewis**

Eleven years later Ebony was again able to be supportive to the singer at his concerts during his 2007 UK tour. This time around, with three number 1 hits, Billy Ocean and Ebony started the tour with their first concert at the Hammersmith Apollo in London to an audience in excess of 5000. Ebony's half hour set drew rapturous applause from the patrons initiating the start of a very successful tour. Augustine 'Pepe' Francis, Director of Ebony, stated, "Billy has

helped Ebony when they needed it so being a support act was the least we could do."

**Billy in his percussive music mode has played 'Iron' in Ebony's 'engine room' for over twelve years. He also played the tenor pan with them at the 2002 World Steelband Festival in Trinidad.**

Ebony's repertoire was arranged by world panorama champion arranger, Annise 'Halfers' Hadeed and included songs like, 'Bahia Girl' and 'Ain't Nobody'. Their

