

Pan JAZZ UK



Pan Jazz UK held its inaugural concert at the Hackney Empire in East London on Sunday 8th November 2009. The concert featured pan ace Andy Narell along with Caribbean Jazz Trumpeter, Etienne Charles, but the star of the show was really Calypso super-master, Relator. **The audience of over 700 patrons was treated to a performance that has not been seen in the UK for several years. Both halves of the show were ushered in with Andy Narell playing pure Pan Jazz pieces accompanied by his Paris based band which included the legendary Moroccan/Senegalese drummer Moktar Samba.** Andy then introduced Relator who performed various calypso classics that included Lord Kitchener's Nora and Lord Melody's Steel Band Music. The show was punctuated and significantly enhanced by the bright sound of Etienne Charles on trumpet who performed various solo routines as well as supporting both Andy and Relator's selections.

Relator proved his title as one of the greatest and most respected calypsonians by entertaining the audience with a repertoire of music that provided humor, crowd participation and impersonations. Perhaps the highlight of this wonderful evening was when Relator summoned one of his lifetime colleagues from the audience the London based calypsonian, Winston 'De Alberto', to perform an ex-tempo banter with him. They definitely left the Pan Jazz audience on a high. Pan Podium understands that CDs of all three featured performers on sale were snapped up by the end of the evening, the sign of a true endorsement of a wonderful evening.

As it was a Pan Jazz evening, **Andy Narell used the evening to demonstrate the versatility of the instrument playing a double tenor in various modes of solo skills, musical blending with the other traditional Jazz instruments on stage, and supporting both Relator and Etienne. His mastery of advanced tonal control and musical thrills was evident during his performance of own compositions 'Coffee Street' and 'Sugar for Pan'.**

The show was attended by a number of dignitaries such as the High Commissioners of St Lucia and Trinidad and Tobago, as well as representatives of the Belize and Grenadian High Commissions. Notable musical legends such as Courtney Pines and Steel pan pioneer Sterling Betancourt were also in attendance. The audience was a good mix of young and old. Many first-time Pan Jazz goers were very pleased with the evening's entertainment of Calypso, Steel pan and Jazz all in one. Within the Steel pan fraternity there were people from, London & the Home Counties, Leicester, Birmingham, Portsmouth and Bath.

After the show Pan Podium spoke to one of the organizers, Wendel Clement of Caribbean Events Management Company Poison UK about how he felt the show went. "I was very pleased with the outcome" said Mr. Clement. "We have set out to develop Pan Jazz as a musical genre in itself here in the UK. Despite its popularity in the Caribbean and the US, it has been somewhat of a kept secret within the Caribbean community for several years here in the London. We intend to share this musical phenomenon with the rest of Europe." In collaboration with Carnival Village, Pan Jazz UK will be hosting a series of monthly Caribbean Dinner Jazz evenings at the Tabernacle in Notting Hill. These events will feature UK based pannist and other Jazz performers of Caribbean origin. These events will also feature top Caribbean Chefs such as Hassan De Four who was featured on UKTV Food Channel on the Rhodes across the Caribbean Series.

Abstract Entertainment, founders of the six year old Pan Jazz US show which is held at the Lincoln Centre in Manhattan, New York City are also partners of Pan Jazz UK. "Our joint venture with Poison UK here is the start of an international venture that will bring the excellence of the steel pan and Caribbean Jazz to other parts of the world" said Abstract's CEO Ralph Ramsey.

Speaking about the future, the organisation is already working on Pan Jazz 2010. This event entitled "Folklore" will be held in New York in June and London in November will feature a number of international pannists as well as theatrical performances directed by the award winning carnival designer Brian Macfarlane. The event will also be hosted by Miss Universe 1998 Wendy Fitzwilliams.

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