

PASIC & Ray Holman

In the fall of 2006, Matt Ehlers became the director of the Knights of Steel. A graduate of the University of North Texas and alumni of its 2 o'clock steel band, Matt was able to step right in where Brian had left off. In November 2006, the advanced steel band performed alongside CJ Menge's Inside Out Community Steelband at the renowned Percussive Arts Society International Convention (PASIC). Their performance featured special guest artist Ray Holman and his compositions along with Phil Hawkins on drumset.

And Chicago

Using Holman's "Sockin it with Steel" and "Hangin' in There," McCallum recorded an audition CD for the prestigious Midwest Band and Orchestra Clinic held annually in Chicago, Illinois. Behind Holman's great music, the Knights of Steel were invited to perform at the 61st annual Midwest Clinic, held in December 2007. They presented a 50-minute concert featuring Josh Jennings on percussion and CJ Menge on tenor pan. Their concert showcased all original music written for pan, much of which was written by Austin, residents Darren Dyke, CJ Menge, and Matt Ehlers. Knights of Steel also featured Holman's "Sad Song for a Pan Man" and Narell's new expanded version of "Appreciation" from his recent album, Tatoon. **The concert was answered by a standing ovation from the large crowd of music educators from around the world.**

Coat tailing their success in Chicago, excitement for the program grew even more with enrollment for the 2008-2009 year reaching 46. A third class was started, allowing the bands to be split into beginning, intermediate, and advanced groups. In November 2008, the Knights of Steel had the great privilege of hosting the Golden Hands steel orchestra (San Fernando, Trinidad) and the University of the West Indies Percussion Ensemble (St. Augustine, Trinidad), who traveled to Austin to perform "The Rainmakers" at PASIC. This was a great opportunity for the McCallum students to meet and learn from students of similar age from Trinidad.

Pan Program for 62

Other highlights from this past school year include the advanced band performing Len 'Boogsie' Sharpe's complete panorama chart "Pan Rising," and the intermediate steel band performing CJ Menge's full transcription of Camille Saint-Saens' "Danse Bacchanale." With the program generating so much excitement through frequent community performances, enrollment has jumped to 62 students for next fall. The Knights of Steel has placed an order with Toronto based builder/tuner Earle Wong for five new instruments, bringing the total number of instruments to 18. This will allow the program to accommodate next year's new members.

McCallum's steel band curriculum emphasizes developing student's technical skills and musicianship along with exposing them to the unique history and culture that surrounds the steel pan. Students are taught to read music and are encouraged to try their hand at improvising, composing, and arranging. The bands are occasionally taught by rote to develop the student's ears and give them a taste of the way many steel bands across the world learn.

The city of Austin is very fortunate to have two world class builders/tuners in residence: Darren Dyke and Emily Lemmerman (Barracuda Steel Drums). Both Darren and Emily have played an active role at McCallum, not only giving multiple building/tuning clinics but also rehearsing and performing with the bands on a regular basis. CJ Menge's presence as Artist-in-Residence over the years has given McCallum many unique performance opportunities. CJ has hosted numerous guest artists and coordinated mass steel band performances integrating students and community members from the greater Austin area. Past guest artists included: Ellie Mannette, Andy Narell, Ray Holman, Liam Teague, Tom Miller, Leon 'Foster' Thomas, Ras Inginga and Phil Hawkins.



In Demand: Knights of Steel

With more than 30 public performances each school year, McCallum's dynamic Knights of Steel have a reputation throughout Austin as one of the City's most sought after performance groups.

More information about the Knights of Steel and the greater Austin, TX. steelband community can be found at: www.austinschools.org/campus/mccallum/fine_arts/index.htm

www.austinschools.org/campus/mccallum/fine_arts/steel-drum/Knights-of-Steel.htm

www.insideoutsteelband.com, and on Facebook (Knights of Steel)

Matt Ehlers is the director of percussion studies, and assistant director of bands at the McCallum High School Fine Arts Academy in Austin, Texas. He is an active performer and clinician throughout Texas as well as a published composer through Drop6 Media and Inside Out Steelband Music.

Mr Steel

A different style of steel

Mr. Steel is the stage name of Trinidadian born steel pannist Kenneth Goddard Jr. As a boy he made his first steel pan from empty tin cans, eight cans each with a different tone, together forming the scale of C, on which he played his first songs. At the Christmas fair of his primary school he surprised everyone by playing a repertoire of Christmas carols on his home made instrument.

He auditioned for the famous Hatters steelband and was immediately selected for their stage side, the twenty five (25) best players of the entire orchestra. Here he received musical coaching in traditional Caribbean music, but also in classical and pop music. **Together with his brother, Andy, they were known as 'the double tenor brothers', because of their groovy dance moves and funky flicks.** As members of the Panorama winners, Hatters steelband, playing alongside Ken 'Professor' Philmore, they toured through South America, Canada and the United States.

His idols were Earth Wind and Fire and Motown artists like Stevie Wonder, Marvin Gaye and Smokey Robinson. The arrangements of Stevie Wonder were his favourites because they presented such a musical challenge. Mr. Steel migrated to Holland in the mid seventies (70s) and signed a contract with the Dutch Rhythm Steel and Showband. Touring through the whole of Europe, he performed with artists like Boney M, Hot Chocolate and James Last. He also performed for the Royal family of Monaco, and did a guest appearance at the Eurovision song contest in The Hague. He left the Dutch Rhythm Steel and Showband and founded, 'Steeletto'. With Steeletto he introduced a **DIFFERENT STYLE OF STEEL**, a combination of soul, steel and funk. He performed at festivals with the likes of Third World and Manu Dibango. He also did the music for a promotion video for KLM Royal Dutch Airlines on the Dutch Antilles. Mr. Steel can be contacted as a solo artist 'unplugged' or with his live band.

Kenneth Mr. Steel Goddard recorded with the Hatters Steelband, Dutch Rhythm Steel and Showband, Steeletto and Sundance. As a studio musician he has worked with Boney M, and top Dutch artists like The Dolly Dots, Albert West, Normaal and Herman Finkers. With 'Popcorn', his first CD as a solo artist, **Mr. Steel got to number 70 in the Dutch top 100 charts. In May 2009 he released his first solo album, 'Hotel Nederland'.** If you want to know more about Mr. Steel then please visit www.mrsteel.nl or email him at mail@mrsteel.nl.

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