



"Seize New Opportunities as the World Changes"

MEDIA KIT

EMANCIPATION CELEBRATIONS 2009

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Members of the Media:

Welcome to **E**manicipation **C**ommemorations 2009

Emancipation Greetings to you all:

On behalf of the Emancipation Support Committee, I would like to thank you for your continued support and coverage of the Emancipation activities over the years. 2009 will see a magnificent array of educational, spiritual and cultural activities and events which seek to strengthen the consciousness of Trinidad and Tobago.

We invite you to join us as we celebrate Emancipation 2009, with our theme “Seize New Opportunities as the World Changes”. We invite you to attend and provide coverage of the Emancipation activities, in particular:

- ***Enjoy COBA – A Collective of Black Artists.*** This group will return to Trinidad and to the ***Opening Night*** of Emancipation celebrations, July 29th, at 7:00 pm to thrill us with their own brand of African and Caribbean dance, drama and music.
- ***The Pan-African Concert*** on Friday, July 31st at 8:00p.m. will feature the Washington D.C. based ***Senegalese dance troupe, KanKouran.*** KanKouran has been entertaining audiences all over the world for the past 20 years.
- ***The Annual Trans-Atlantic Trade and Investment Symposium,*** Friday 31st July, 8:00 am to 4:00 pm at the Hilton Trinidad & Conference Centre. Prime Minister of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, the Hon. Ralph Gonsalves will address the gathering.
- ***The Forum on Africa and the Diaspora*** takes place on Sunday, August 2nd at Queens Hall at 5:00 pm. Featured speakers include ***Mr. Mel Foote, Founder, President and CEO of the Washington D.C. based Constituency for Africa, along with the Executive Director of the Pan African Movement, based in Kampala, Uganda, Ms. Grace Kabayo.***

There are many other activities, visiting performers, the market place where traders from the African continent showcase their authentic clothing and craft, also there are, youth empowerment workshops, art exhibitions etc. Please see the Calendar of Events attached for your review.

Please feel free to contact me at 674-2555 or 310-1608 for additional information or to arrange interviews.

Warmest regards,

Roxanne Colthrust

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Media relations contact for the Emancipation Support Committee

Emancipation 2009: Calendar of Events

Sunday 26 July

6:00 p.m. Blessing of the Ground (Eastern Corner of the Savannah)

Wednesday 29th July

7:00p.m. Grand Opening of the Lidj Yasu Omowale Village (Pan, Dance, Folk Choir, Calypso)

'Let Loose the Spirit of Liberation'

- COBA – Dance Troupe from Canada
- Chalkdust
- Twiggy
- Sheldon Blackman
- Signal Hill Choir
- Jopackia Steel Ensemble
- Malick Drummers
- Kaisoca Moko Jumbies
- MC: Dara E. Healy, Kelly Green Orchestra

Tickets: \$150 Special reserved, \$100 General

Tickets available at Cleve's One Stop Shop, Crosby's North and South and Emancipation Support Committee – 628-5008

Thursday 30th July -Youth Day:

10:00a.m. Workshops (Storytelling, Dance, Capoeira, Stilt Walking, Cultural Performances, plus African History Quiz and Spoken Word Competition.)

3:30 – 5:00p.m. **Youth Steelband Concert**

- BpTT Renegades
- Earl Phillips and his Electric Pan

7:30p.m. - Pan /Jazz Night

- Skiffle Bunch
- Arima Golden Symphony
- Cordettes
- Phase II Pan Groove
- BpTT Renegades – Junior Band
- WITCO Desperadoes
- Jazz Artiste, Shakeela

Friday 31st July

8:00a.m. – 4:00p.m. Trans Atlantic Trade and Investment Symposium: **Reinventing the Triangle IX** (Hilton Hotel)

10:00a.m. - 2:00p.m. Workshops (Parenting, Youth Empowerment, Film Presentations)

1:00p.m. – 2:00p.m. KanKouran Dance and Drumming workshop

2:00p.m. Cultural Performances (Community Groups)

4:30p.m. – 7:30p.m. **Griot Lime**

- Gypsy and Lingo
- Brother Resistance
- Felix Edinborough
- Ivory
- Damian Whiskey
- Molombo Drummers

8:00p.m. - **Pan African Concert**

'Expressions of Freedom'

- Kankouran West African Dance Company
- I-Sasha / Million Voice
- King David
- Ziggy Rankin
- 12 The Band
- MC - Wendell Etienne

Tickets: \$150 Special reserved, \$100 General

Tickets at Cleve's One Stop Shop, Crosby's North and South and Emancipation Support Committee - 628-5008

Saturday 1st August - Emancipation Day

5:00a.m. Tribute to Ancestors

9:00a.m. Kambule (Street Procession)

12:00p.m. - 6:00p.m. Cultural activities all day in the Village

7:30p.m. Flambeaux Procession (from the Savannah to All Stars Pan Yard, Duke St, POS)

Sunday 2nd August - Family Day in the Village

11:00a.m. – 2:00 p.m. Food Fair

1:00p.m. **Rhythms of the People**

- Defence Force Steel Orchestra
- Tamboo Bamboo Rhythm Section
- North West Laventille Cultural Performers
- D'Tunapuna Vibration Engine Room
- Workshops with KanKouran and COBA

5:00p.m. Forum of Africa and the Diaspora (Queens Hall)

5:00p.m. – 7:30p.m. **Vintage Calypso**

- Composer
- Valentino
- Rootsman
- Luta
- Explainer
- Lady Paula
- Gary Cordner
- Young Creole

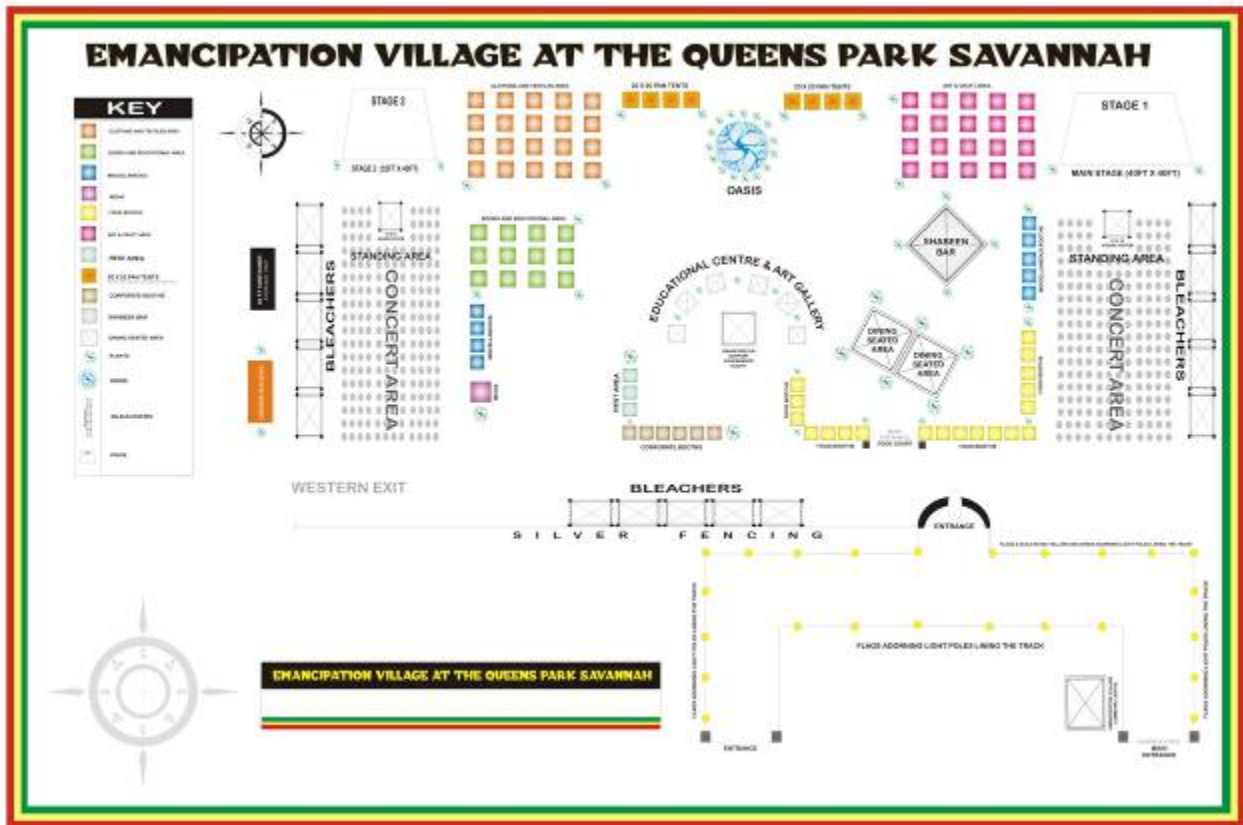
8:00p.m. **Youth Concert**

'Youth Voices for Liberation'

- Brother Resistance
- Ziggy Rankin
- Simba
- Roger Johnson and Wallerfield Folk Performing Company
- Curious Ringo
- Sister Ava
- Winner of the Spoken Word competition
- Orlando Octave

10:00p.m. Village Closes

Emancipation 2009: Back to the Savannah ~ Bigger and Better!



Emancipation 2009: A Scintillating Experience of Culture, Education and Spirituality

This year's Emancipation celebration is aptly themed, "Seize New Opportunities as the World Changes." The five-day Calendar of Events features an exciting, eclectic mix of culture, art, education, spirituality and entertainment. Get ready for a whirlwind week unlike any other!

A WHIRLWIND WEEK OF ACTIVITIES:

Wednesday, 29th July – Grand Opening

The festivities kick off with the auspicious Grand Opening: 'LET LOOSE THE SPIRIT OF LIBERATION' at the Lidj Yasu Omowale Emancipation Village at the Queens Park Savannah from 7:00pm.

A feature of the Opening will be the presentation of the Henry Sylvestre Williams Awards to two (2) awardees at the formal event.

This year we will feature **COBA – Collective of Black Artists**. This dynamic performance troupe returns for another Emancipation celebration to enthral us with their unique style of storytelling, music and drama, woven into dance and drawn from West African and Caribbean Indigenous Folk traditions.

Joining COBA will be one of the best folk choirs in the western hemisphere, our very own **Signal Hill Alumni** choir fresh off their 25th Anniversary concert series – Jubilee! And just as they thrilled audiences across Trinidad and Tobago with Jubilee!, expect this choir to hit all the right notes as they deliver favourites from their vast repertoire which includes Folk, African, Reggae, Gospel, Negro Spirituals and of course, Calypso renditions.

Opening night will feature other great local entertainers including the 2009 Calypso Monarch, **Chalkdust**, 2009 NWAC Calypso Queen, **Twiggy the Malick Folk Performers**, **Sheldon Blackman** and **Jopackia**. Brother Khafra Kambon, Chairman of the Emancipation Support Committee, will convey formal greetings and the Honorable Marlene McDonald, Minister of Community Development, Culture and Gender Affairs is also expected to attend.

About the Performers:

COBA

Collective of Black Artists - COBA's - mission is to preserve the cultural traditions of Africa and the African Diaspora through education, research and public performance. The Collective thus presents traditional West African dance, music and folklore; Caribbean Indigenous Folk dance, music and rituals in their purest forms possible for the theatrical stage, while also creating contemporary works developed from an Africanist movement aesthetic that reflects African social realities in a global context.

Founded in 1993 by Junia Mason, Charmaine Headley, BaKari E. Lindsay (formerly Eddison B. Lindsay) and Mosa Neshama (formerly Kim McNeilly) COBA filled a void on Toronto's arts scene. For the past 14 years, the driving force behind the Collective has been the creation and production of works that reflect Africanist social themes and perspectives of movement. Using storytelling, music and drama interwoven with dance, COBA shares life wisdom with audiences and future generations.

SIGNAL HILL ALUMNI CHOIR

Founded in 1984, this internationally acclaimed group from Tobago has grown to be a cultural institution and an icon of Tobago's heritage and T&T culture. Signal Hill Alumni Choir (SHAC) evolved from the Signal Hill Senior Comprehensive School Folk Choir, which dominated the Folk Category of the Trinidad and Tobago Music Festival in 1982 and emerged as undisputed National Junior Folk Champions. Having reigned over the National Music Festival during the 80s, the choir retired from local competition in 1990.

Internationally recognized and acclaimed, the choir is famous for its performances in the folk style, but its repertoires and renderings of genres vary. The SHAC, as many refer to them, sing and perform Caribbean Folk, World Music, African Folk, Gospel, Reggae, Christmas songs, Calypso, and Soca. Their signature is defined by choreographed movements for each song which enhances every performance. The magic of Signal Hill Alumni Choir is to see them as well as hear them. They sing intricate and unique arrangements, with great harmonies - six parts...and use dynamic, energetic moves which leave everyone spellbound.

For their achievements, the Signal Hill Alumni Choir has received a number of significant awards, and also have an enviable collection of music.

CHALKDUST

The 2009 Calypso Monarch of Trinidad and Tobago and eight-time winner of the title, Hollis Urban Liverpool, aka Chalkdust began singing calypso in 1967 and has recorded over 300 songs. In addition to being a calypsonian, Chalkdust is also a teacher, historian and writer. In 1993, he received his Ph.D. in History and Ethnomusicology from the University of Michigan. Liverpool also served as Director of Culture in the Trinidad & Tobago Government's Ministry of Culture. In the fall of 1999, he spent 5 weeks in residence at the Center for Black Music Research, Columbia College Chicago, Illinois, USA. Liverpool has performed and lectured extensively in the Caribbean, Europe, and North America.

TWIGGY

Ann Marie Parks Kojo, aka, Twiggy is the 2009 NWAC Calypso Queen. Dubbed 'Twiggy' by Calypso veteran, Lord Superior, Parks Kojo began singing calypso in 1974. In 1979 she was 1st runner up in the Calypso Queen competition in San Fernando and the first NWAC Calypso Queen in 1985. She has been touring the world and sang on stage with Roy Cape and Black Stalin. In 2009 she placed eighth out of sixteen finalists in the National Calypso Monarch competition - her first time making it to the finals in that arena, singing her hit song entitled "One for Obama."

MALICK FOLK PERFORMERS

The Malick Folk Performers began as a performing ensemble for the Prime Minister's Best Village Competition more than 30 years ago and continues to be one of the most dynamic performing groups in Trinidad and Tobago. They have won numerous awards and continue to take top honors at Best Village.

SHELDON BLACKMAN

Sheldon Blackman - band leader, accomplished composer, arranger, singer and musician, has accumulated an extensive collection of work delivered in his family's trademark style "Jamoo". Considered one of the most promising talents to come out of Trinidad and Tobago in recent times, his rich and varied rhythms, the feeling in his music, and lyrics that expounds understanding of the crises, hopes and visions of the masses makes him popular among the youth.

Mature audiences appreciate the relevant content of his material, the range of his messages and the originality of delivery of his music. Sheldon Blackman has been called "artiste extraordinaire" by both peers and critics, his musical style described as unique and haunting.

Well known in the Caribbean and the Caribbean Diaspora internationally, this young performer has been on the cutting edge of the musical culture and has performed in the USA, performing in New York, Washington D.C., North Carolina and Atlanta. In the UK, he has appeared in venues in London like Cargo, Momo's and performances during the Notting Hill Carnival. He was also chosen to represent Trinidad and Tobago at "Edutainment a Multicultural Exchange Program held in Oslo, Norway first in 1998, then in 2001 and 2002. In 2006 Sheldon was invited to perform during Afrikan History Week and the great Mela festival in Norway.

THURSDAY 30TH JULY

YOUTH DAY

Parents and youth alike will be delighted with this unbeatable summer event - the Youth Day, jam packed with performance theatre, workshops and activities between 10:00am to 3:00pm. You can expect exhilarating, outdoor fun with presentations that explore a range of cultural and oral traditions from: Capoeira, an Afro-Brazilian martial arts and dance combo – by Sekhetned Amunwah, Stilt Walking by Neesha Charles, Story-telling by Theodora Ulerie, Origami by Roger Highly, Drumming by Brinsley Smith and Dance by Annette Thompson. The Drumology offers a unique opportunity to experience powerful African drumming and the Brown Cotton Ensemble will treat the audience to attention-grabbing performance theatre.

Look forward to a riveting Storytelling session, in true griot tradition, the most natural and pure form of passing information from the elders through generations; Rapso – a uniquely Trinidadian contribution to world oral traditions, originated by our own Brother Resistance.

The Youth Steel Orchestra Concert takes place from 3:30 – 5:00 p.m.

PAN AND JAZZ IN THE VILLAGE

Come ready to groove to the sweet sounds of Pan and Kaiso by some of the greatest Panorama winners to grace the big stage. Featuring steel orchestras from North, South and East – with 3 past panorama winners. Great entertainment as some of the country's best pan and jazz musicians fill the big stage from 7:30 pm.

FRIDAY 31ST JULY

The Trans Atlantic Trade and Investment Symposium: Reinventing the Triangle IX has become an important forum for the creation of trade and investment linkages across the Diaspora. This year's event takes place at the Trinidad Hilton Hotel and Conference Centre from 8:00am to 4:00pm. His Excellency, **Dr. the Hon. Ralph Gonsalves, Prime Minister of St. Vincent and the Grenadines**, will be the featured guest speaker and our own Minister in the Ministry of Finance and Minister of Trade and Industry, **Senator the Honourable Mariano Browne** will also address the gathering.

Other panelists at this year's symposium include:

Hon. Mr. Kahinda Otafiire, Minister of Tourism, Trade and Industry, Uganda

Mr. Sani Dawop, President of the International Institute for Training Research and Economic Development, Nigeria

Mr. Mel Foote, Founder, President and CEO of the Constituency for Africa, Washington D.C.

Mr. Stephen Otheino, Liaison Officer of the Pan African Movement, Kampala, Uganda

Mr. Andrew Jupiter, President (Ag.) National Energy Corporation, Trinidad and Tobago

Mr. Charles Percy, Managing Director and CEO, Methanex Trinidad Ltd.

Delegations from Nigeria, Ghana, Uganda and the United States will also be in attendance.

MID ATLANTIC
ARTS FOUNDATION



The Pan African Concert: 'Expressions of Freedom,' which starts at 8:00 pm, promises to be an unforgettable experience with the **KanKouran West African Dance Company** taking the spotlight.

(This engagement is supported by the Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation through USArtists International in partnership with the National Endowment for the Arts and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.) This Senegalese dance troupe hails from Washington D.C and has been in

existence for more than twenty years. The company, whose members were born in the United States, Africa and the Caribbean, is dedicated to preserving and sharing the culture of Africa. KanKouran functions much like a traditional African community, where given the communal nature of African culture, each individual understands his or her role in maintaining the oneness of the community to the benefit of the entire community, and each individual is encouraged to contribute and participate to the extent of that person's talents and abilities.

Assane Konte, a national of Senegal, West Africa, is the Founder and Artistic Director, Choreographer, Costume Designer for KanKouran West African Dance Company. Mr. Konte began his dance training at age 12, and studied with many prominent traditional dancers and musicians throughout West Africa. His career as a professional dancer began at age 15 with the "Ballet Africaine de Diebel Guee" of Dakar, Senegal. In 1978, Mr. Konte came to the United States to pursue a career as an independent performer and worked with numerous organizations, as musical arranger, and choreographer. He founded KanKouran in 1983.

Over the years, KanKouran has been fortunate to achieve overwhelming success for professional presentations and has received numerous prestigious awards as a result. Most notably, the company has been the recipient of the D.C. Commission on the Arts and Humanities "Outstanding Artist in an Artistic Discipline Award", and the company's Artistic Director was named "Outstanding Immigrant of the Year" by the Immigration Lawyers Association.

To the beat of drums, this group will bring to life African arts and culture in a way that will thrill and electrify those fortunate enough to witness their performance.

Joining KanKouran will be a slate of top local artistes, including King David, singing duo I-Sasha and Million Voice and 12 the Band. Keeping the show moving and the crowd entertained will be MC Wendell Ettienne.

KING DAVID

David Nieves, aka King David, is a son of the soil who hails from Arouca. David has taken it upon himself to be a musical ambassador for the voiceless, spreading positivity to the masses. While growing up he always knew that reggae music was his calling. After attending high school, he obtained a job at Unilever Caribbean where he worked for seven (7) years. In 2005 the reggae industry in Trinidad and Tobago began to flourish and David decided to follow his dream and travel to the United States, leaving his job, determined to improve on his musical career.

King David is a versatile artiste and is known to deliver to various genres of music, whether it is Reggae, Dancehall or Soca. He is a devoted member of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church and this is reflected in his music. David's style of music not only comes from within, but from real issues that he sees around him.

David has inspired many young people through his music and has been an example to the ghetto youths worldwide. David has performed at many prestigious institutes in Trinidad and Tobago. He received two awards for his song "Life" which was recorded with the St Xavier's Prep School children's choir. He has visited Jamaica for recording purposes, has toured North America, St Croix, St Vincent and most of the Caribbean. David has produced two albums entitled "Rebirth" and "Livity" and is currently working out of his studio and producing more music.

I-SASHA AND MILLION VOICE

Brendon and Kevin Young aka I-Sasha and Million Voice are brothers from La Horquetta, Arima and a hit on the local reggae scene. Claiming influences from reggae greats such as Beenie Man, Beres Hammond and Glen Washington, the brothers – each a solo artist in his own right - often share the stage in unifying Trinidadian youths and covering topics such as poverty, crime, love and the solution to retribution.

12 THE BAND

12 the Band is a musical collaboration founded in 1999 by singer and songwriter Sheldon Holder. 12's permanent members are Sheldon Holder, Brendon Moore, Nigel Irish and John Hussain.

12 has toured Britain playing in some of the prominent night clubs on the Central London music scene. Within recent times 12 has had the distinguished pleasure of being captured in the BBC 2 radio documentary on Caribbean life and music, as well

as being published in the London Telegraph, receiving kudos as "one of the great undiscovered talents of the Caribbean".

In June 2008, the Band completed its debut album Streets and Avenues and performed live at the prestigious Caribbean Fashion Week in Jamaica, accompanying one of Trinidad and Tobago's finest designers, Robert Young of the Cloth.

ZIGGY RANKIN

Musical superstar Khorri Francis aka Ziggy Ranking took the stage at an early age, singing at his local church in the Sunday school choir. Later as a teenager, he tested his ability in battle at local "blockos" where he won many chanting competitions. His skills were honed and developed further, after migrating to New York to attend Queens College. After graduating with a BSC in Music Technology, Ziggy returned to his native Trinidad, to continue developing his skills as a singer/entertainer.

To date Ziggy's hits include Miserable Life, Zion Train, Girl Next Door and many more. He has done several collaborations with local acts Blazer and H2o Phlo and Arista Records soul artiste Angie Stone. Ziggy's wide vocal range, his ability to write and produce his own music and his lovable personality, has gained approval from an ever growing fan base.

SATURDAY 1st AUGUST - LET THE SPIRIT OF EMANCIPATION MOVE YOU.

On **Emancipation Day**, as dawn chases dusk from the skies, the auspicious day's events will commence at 5:00a.m, with an 'Opening of the Way' - prayers and libations to the ancestors at the Yoruba Village (Culture Park). This will be followed at 9:00a.m with the annual Kambule or Street Procession from the Brian Lara Promenade to the Lidj Yasu Omowale Emancipation Village, at the Queens Park Savannah. The Kambule comes highly recommended. Feel a part of history, march in solidarity with pride and respect for Emancipation!

KAMBULE – THE STREET PROCESSION

Kambule – Kambule is Kikongo (language of the Congo) for Street Procession. The Kambule pays Homage to our African Ancestors, our forefathers, who commemorated the end of slavery by processing through the streets. The Kambule is a powerful manifestation of our commitment to the protection of our legacy of culture, spirituality, beauty, royalty, pride and growth, which can positively impact on the development of our younger generations.

PROCESSION ROUTE

From 5:00 a.m.: Drum Call at the Yoruba Village, cor. Besson and Piccadilly St. Port of Spain.

From 9:00 a.m.: The Street Procession moves from the Treasury Building, East along the Brian Lara Promenade, North onto Piccadilly Street, West on Duke Street, then North onto Frederick Street, onto the Queens Park Savannah.

Kambule Points of Reflection:

The Drum Call – Yoruba Village: Located at cor. Besson St. and Piccadilly St.

The Treasury Building: Slavery was brought to an end in the British West Indies with the Emancipation Bill of 1833. In Trinidad, the Emancipation Proclamation was read on August 1st 1834 at the Treasury Building site, but the system of enslavement legally ended on August 1st, 1838.

All Stars Pan Yard: This pan yard was the site of the 1881 Kambule riots. The colonial military attempted to stop the procession of stick fighters from proceeding along the streets. The stick fighter/kalenda ensemble remained defiant as they gathered together that day in 1881. The military charged with their bayonets expecting them to retreat, but the stick men stood their ground and retaliated with "Bois"! The colonial forces were defeated that day.

Queens Park Savannah: The oldest recreation ground in the Caribbean, and the focal point for recreation, culture and entertainment in Trinidad and Tobago – from Carnival celebrations and Steelband competitions, to the Independence Day Parade, international concerts and sporting events. The Queens Park Savannah also is an historically symbolic location for Emancipation having formerly been a sugar estate on which Africans lived and laboured during slavery.

FLAMBEAUX PROCESSION

As the sun sets on Emancipation Day 2009, join us for the final event of the day – the Flambeaux Procession - which takes place from 7:30 pm. This procession with lighted torches will take us from the Queens Park Savannah to the All Stars Panyard – as we walk we will reflect on the struggles our ancestors endured to secure our liberation from enslavement.

SATURDAY 1st AUGUST - EMANCIPATION DAY 2009

Schedule of Events

5:00 a.m.	Tribute to Ancestors	Yoruba Village
9:00 a.m.	Kambule – The Street Procession Formal programme at the Treasury building to begin the procession.	Meet at Treasury building, proceed to the Queen's Park Savannah
12:00 noon - 6:00 p.m.	Cultural Programme – Queens Park Savannah Community groups from throughout T&T gather and showcase their talents. Welcome from the Chairman of the Emancipation Support Committee, Khafra Kambon. Greetings from prominent visitors from across the Diaspora	Emancipation Village - Queens Park Savannah
7:30 p.m.	Flambeaux Procession	From Queens Park Savannah to All Stars Panyard.

SUNDAY AUGUST 2, 2009

Families are invited to come out in their numbers to the final day's events at the Lidj Yasu Omowale Emancipation Village. Plan on spending the day at this the culmination of the Emancipation celebrations. Enjoy the delicious fare of African and Caribbean cuisine while grooving to the beat of the African drums and Caribbean music at the Rhythms of the People concert, which begins at 1:00 pm.

The Forum on Africa and the Diaspora takes place at Queens Hall, 5:00 where prominent local and international speakers will explore the way forward. The Forum will feature two specially invited speakers: **Mr. Melvin P. Foote** has worked on African issues for more than 35 years. He is the Founder, President and CEO of the Constituency for Africa, a 16 year-old Washington, D.C. based network of organizations, groups and individuals committed to the progress and empowerment of Africa and African people worldwide. Joining him will be **Grace Kabayo**, the Executive Director of the Global Pan African Movement, based in Kampala, Nigeria.

Festivities continue at the Emancipation Village with the Vintage Calypso Concert and the Youth Concert, 'Voices for Liberation,' starting at 5:00 pm and 8:00 pm respectively. The celebration of Emancipation 2009 will wind down with the Closing Ceremony at 10:00 pm.

THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS:



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Artist information for this document was obtained, in part, from the following websites, which can be visited for additional information:

<http://www.cobainc.com/>

<http://www.kankouran.org/>

<http://www.signalchoir.org/>

<http://www.sheldonblackman.com/>

<http://www.bestoftrinidad.com/calypso/chalkdust.html>

<http://www.myspace.com/isashaandmillionvoice>

<http://12theband.com/>

<http://www.trinipulse.com/music/profile.php?id=3> (Ziggy Rankin)



Media contact – Colthrust PR Ltd – 674-2555 /310-1608

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Henry Sylvestre Williams Award of Excellence

Presentation of the Henry Sylvestre Williams Awards to two at the Grand Opening of the Emancipation Village

July 23, 2009 - The Emancipation Support Committee (ESC) is pleased to announce that two individuals will receive the 2009 Henry Sylvestre Williams Award of Excellence. Named for the great Pan-African pioneer, this award seeks to honour those distinguished individuals who by their actions make a positive contribution to the unity and upliftment of Africans across the Diaspora. These two individuals have been recognized for outstanding contributions in the fields of science and music and will be publicly lauded during the Grand Opening of the Village on the Opening Day. This year's honourees are Dr. Shango Alamu, Agriculturalist and Environmentalist and Dr. Leroy Calliste aka Black Stalin, Calypsonian.

Dr. Shango Abayyomi Alamu hails from the scenic and unspoiled Caura Valley and describes himself as a, "an eco-student pursuing a continuous educational experience in Mother Nature's school of environmental studies, towards the attainment of a harmonious existence with the Natural Environment." Dr. Alamu obtained a doctoral degree in Tropical Agriculture at The University of the West Indies and has been a practising farmer for the past thirty years. As a member of the Caura Village Farmers Association he has spearheaded research in the development of alternate farming strategies based on the philosophy of Ecological Crop Management.

In 2004 Dr. Alamu was given a "green leaf award" by the Environmental Management Authority for his contribution to the protection, preservation and enhancement of the Caura Valley. He was again nominated for a "green leaf award" in 2007 and was given a champion of the environment award by SWMCOL in 2008. Dr. Alamu is also a performing artist who has dedicated his message to the transformation of attitudes towards the appreciation and care of the natural environment, the development of sustainable lifestyles and the promotion of positive relationships among all peoples.



Dr. Leroy Calliste, the Black Stalin, is one of this country's most talented and prolific calypsonians, having been in the business for almost fifty years. Dubbed 'Black Stalin' by another veteran of calypso, Blakie, Stalin uses his talent almost exclusively to bring messages of social and cultural awareness and black consciousness to the nation and the world. He has been the calypso monarch of Trinidad and Tobago six times. In 1987 Stalin was awarded the Hummingbird Medal, Silver, for his contributions to culture

and on October 31, 2008, he became Dr. Leroy Calliste when he was conferred with an honorary doctorate from the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine for his tremendous dedication and contribution to Calypso music and culture in Trinidad and Tobago.

Since its inception in 2000, the Henry Sylvestre Williams Award for Excellence has sought to honour some of the most eminent personalities from across the Diaspora. This year is no different. These individuals have each left an indelible mark on their respective fields, but more than that, they have also contributed, by their efforts, to the improvement of not only African people, but society as a whole.

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Media contact – Colthrust PR Ltd – 674-2555 /310-1608

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**TOP LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL PERFORMERS FOR GRAND
OPENING OF THE
EMANCIPATION VILLAGE**

July 23 2009: Emancipation 2009 will kick into high gear on Wednesday, July 29th when a slate of top international and local artistes gets set to perform at the Lidj Yasu Omowale Emancipation Village at the Queens Park Savannah. The opening concert entitled, 'Let Loose the Liberation Drums,' will start at 7:00 pm and usher in five days of continuous celebrations of African art, music and culture culminating on Sunday August 2nd. Opening night will feature performances from the COBA Dance Troupe of Canada, the reigning King and Queen of Calypso, Chalkdust and Twiggy, Signal Hill Choir, the Malick Folk Performers, singer Sheldon Blackman and the jazz ensemble, JOPACKIA.

Headlining the opening night will be the Canadian dance troupe, **COBA – Collective of Black Artists**. The troupe was formed some 14 years ago with a



mission to preserve the cultural traditions of Africa and the African Diaspora through education, research and public performance. COBA uses music, drama and storytelling interwoven with dance, in the West African and Caribbean traditions, to entertain while raising social consciousness. This is COBA's second visit to Trinidad and Tobago, having electrified the crowd with a spectacular



performance during the 2008 Emancipation festival.

Also performing will be the **2009 National Calypso King, Chalkdust and Calypso Queen, Twiggy**. Both entertainers thrilled audiences during the Carnival season with their



brilliant renditions – ‘Ah Not in Dat,’ and ‘One for Obama,’ respectively. For calypso veteran, Chalkdust, it was his eight time winning the competition. He also holds the record for the most years as a National Calypso Monarch finalist. With his penchant for political and social commentary that is hard-hitting and humorous, Chalkdust never fails to entertain the crowd. Calypso Queen Twiggy first won the NWAC Calypso Queen title back in 1985, the first time the competition was held. She has been singing on the calypso circuit since 1974 – always with songs that educate and uplift.



Sheldon Blackman, son of the late, great Ras Shorty I, will perform the late entertainer’s eclectic ‘Jamoo’ style of ‘Roots, urban, Caribbean, conscientious heartbeat music.’ Calypso, folk, jazz and pan will also be featured from other top performers – **Malick Folk Performers**, **the Signal Hill Alumni Choir** as well as the pan-jazz ensemble **JOPACKIA**.



Emancipation celebrations will begin with the traditional Blessing of the Ground on Sunday July 26th at 5:00 pm at the Savannah – the public is invited and admission is free.

Tickets for the Opening Night which takes place on the 29th are \$150.00 and \$100.00 and are available at Cleve’s One Stop Shop, Crosby’s North and South and the Emancipation Support Committee.

For more information, please contact Colthrust PR Ltd – 674- 2555.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

UNFORGETTABLE EXPERIENCE IN STORE AT PAN AFRICAN NIGHT

July 23, 2009 – Without a doubt, one of the most highly anticipated concerts of the Emancipation celebrations has to be the Pan-African Spectacular featuring great acts from across the Diaspora. Last year, Lebo M, one of the four principal composers of the original Disney animated feature film *The Lion King*, performed. This year will be the turn of the Senegalese dance troupe KanKouran. Joining them will be top-class local entertainers Ziggy Rankin, King David, singing duo I-Sasha and Million Voice and 12 the Band. This year's show, "Expressions of Freedom," gets underway on Friday, July 31 at 8:00p.m. at the Lidj Yasu Omowale Emancipation Village at the Queens Park Savannah

Special guests for the 2009 Pan African Spectacular will be the **KanKouran West African Dance Company**. *(This engagement is supported by the Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation through USArtists International in partnership with the National Endowment for the Arts and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.)* Based in Washington DC the dance troupe was founded sixteen years ago by Assane Konte, who is the troupe's Artistic Director and Abdou Kounta who was the group's former musical director.



ASSANE KONTE – ARTISTIC DIRECTOR KANKOURAN



Assane Konte, a national of Senegal, West Africa, began dancing at the age of 12 with many prominent traditional dancers on the Continent. By age 15 he joined his first professional ballet - "Ballet Africaine de Diebel Guee" of Dakar, Senegal. He came to the United States in 1978 to pursue a

career as a performer and founded the dance company in 1983.

Today, the company whose members were born in the United States, Africa and the Caribbean, is dedicated to preserving and sharing the culture of Africa. KanKouran functions much like a traditional African community, where given the communal nature of African culture, each individual understands his or her role in maintaining the oneness of the community to the benefit of the entire community, and each individual is encouraged to contribute and participate to the extent of that person's talents and abilities.

ZIGGY RANKIN



Sharing the stage with KanKouran will be popular local entertainers, Ziggy Rankin, well known in Trinidad for his hits, *Miserable Life*, *Zion Train* and *Girl Next Door*; King David, the versatile artiste known for his dancehall, reggae and soca stylings; singing brothers I-Sasha and Million Voice – each a solo artiste in his own right but coming together to inspire particularly young people with their songs of poverty, crime, love. 12 the Band is



a musical collaboration founded in 1999 by singer and songwriter Sheldon Holder. 12's permanent members are Sheldon Holder, Brendon Moore, Nigel Irish and John Hussain. They perform music that they describe as a, "conscious fusion of the indigenous music of Trinidad and Tobago, primarily Calypso, with other popular forms of music such as Reggae, Rock, Soul, and Jazz to create a sound affectionately called Neo Calypso."



Million Voice & I-Sasha



12 THE BAND

The ESC invites the public to what promises to be a truly dynamic concert. Tickets priced at \$150 Special reserved and \$100 General Admission are available at Cleve's One Stop Shop, Crosby's North and South and Emancipation Support Committee

For more information, please contact Colthrust PR Ltd – 674- 2555.