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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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

July 23rd, 2009: Emancipation 2009 will kick into high gear on Wednesday, July 29th when a slate of top international and local artistes get set to perform at the Lidge 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.



Photo: Nneghwina Anderson

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.





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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 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.

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