



INSIDE



Skip Marley denied entry into Canada



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Skip Marley denied entry into Canada for Toronto concert

Skip Marley was denied entry into Canada on in late September by Border Agents at the Peace Bridge in Fort Erie. The Grandson of Reggae legend Bob Marley was scheduled to perform in Toronto on Wednesday at Toybox, a local club.

Skip released a video on his Twitter account explaining his regrets at the turn of events and said that he would be working.

“Yo, Skip Marley here, as you can see at the border,” he said as he laughed and pointed at the border in the background. “Unfortunately this time we’ve been turned away but we’re looking forward to rescheduling right at the Toybox. Once again I want to apologize to all the fans. We tried and we will keep on trying but we gon keep on trying until next time so everyone can look forward to that but as of now the rules are the rules...until then one love,” he said in a video.

Marley also added a screenshot of a note he wrote where he explained that the reason for being turned back was that he had not sufficiently complied with all the immigration requirements.

“TORONTO: Unfortunately, tomorrow’s show is being postponed because I was denied entry into Canada at the border. I wish that wasn’t the case – I’ve done everything I’ve been told to comply with immigration requirements, but today it seems like more is needed,” the tweet read.

Skip Marley continued “I know many of you have been looking forward to this as much as I have and I apologize if we have to wait a little longer. We are working on a postponement and I look forward to coming back.”

The note was accompanied by a photo of the denial issued by immigration authorities ordering that he return to the United States. The document also listed the reason for his denial stating.

“You are prohibited from entering Canada by an order or regulation of the Governor in Council pursuant to the Emergencies Act or the Quarantine Act,” it read.

There is another box on the document that was ticked, “You are no longer barred from entering Canada by an order or regulation of the Governor in Council under the Emergencies Act or the Quarantine Act, and an officer may enter



Skip Marley: Bob’s grandson denied entry into Canada

your Consider application to enter Canada.”

Canadian authorities have not addressed the denial, although the country does state that there are regulations for entering Canada due to the pandemic.

According to the Government of Canada’s website, Citizens and permanent residents are allowed to enter Canada, but if they are unvaccinated, they must self-quarantine for 14 days. In the same way, vaccinated international travelers are allowed to enter the country but foreign nationals who aren’t fully vaccinated are required to meet an exemption or be traveling for a non-

discretionary purpose.”

Unvaccinated persons who are allowed to enter will have to show via the ArriveCAN app or website their 14-day quarantine plan and a Covid-19 symptom self-assessment.

In the meantime, Skip Marley’s stop in Canada is just the second on his Change Tour that started this week. The reggae artist’s next stops are in North Adams, MA, then onto New York, Washington, DC, with several stops in California in early October before heading to several Southwestern states and ending in Vermont at the end of October.

Tenant problems and wild spending

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Q: Dear Di, My issue is my landlady is playing me as a pawn with her tenant upstairs and now there is a war between her tenant and myself. I do not want to move, nor does he. It started with some repairs in the bathroom upstairs that took her brother almost 10 months to fix for she is too cheap to hire a professional. It is still not completed and there was water damage to the basement. The other tenant and I were friends, and at first I shared a space with him. We've had words over this bathroom issue. Our landlady comes to me behind his back and to discuss things about him and he has been living there for over eight years. What should I do because I do not want either of us to get evicted? – D.M.

A: First of all I am so sorry to hear that this is happening to you both. Being a tenant is not easy for many people and I am sure there is more to the story than you shared. Your landlady seems to be playing you against each other so she does not have to deal with anything herself.

One of the things I do know about life is that when you are too nice people suck you into their drama, use you for their own gain and spit you out by taking advantage of your niceness. You sound like a mature person and you have to be the mature party here and stop the drama with him and with her. The long and short it is that you are a tenant and you need to know your place. In these times you do not know what another human being is going through and we are here to help and support each other and not get caught up in another person's drama. Stay in your lane.

2.Q: Dear Di, My son is very young and is spending his hard-earned money on crazy expensive items in online shopping. I cannot speak with him to make

him understand that money does not grow on trees. All he does is yell and talk back. He lives on campus and although his grades are good he is always stressed and I am paying for his education. What can I do? – K.P.

A: Hello KP, I can understand your frustration. The generation of today has a totally different concept of life and what it means to be responsible. Please know that this does not apply to everyone however it does to more than we want. They are an entitled group and we want to keep them safe and protected which is our job of course however we are not here to smother them. In my own case, my kids worked to put themselves through school so they would be financial and personally independent. As a result, they could not goof off and



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sit on their butts and do nothing, or spend wildly. Now they're on their own, they can spend however they want. But they also have their own expenses like rent, so they have learned quickly how to balance their expenses.

I think you have to put boundaries and be firm about certain things in life with them from this age. I would suggest that from now on they put their school fees in their yearly budget and if they need help with residence and survival then sure, you can help, but they need to learn to work for what they want.

Spending habits can be due to a lack of self-confidence, self-love, self-image, and more. Young people, as well as adults, have many personality issues and we are fully aware of this. The younger ones simply love to put adults on guilt trips which is why we tend to smother them.

So what I suggest you do is that you wake up and decide how you are going to play this. This is not only about your kid, this is also about you as parents. I am not saying to be the mean parent and your spouse be the good parent for I know it happens when one is not supporting the other in decisions. What I am saying is that enabling and entertaining this behaviour is not going to help you or them today and definitely not in the future. Make the sound decision as the parent in regards to the spending habits, they will wake up in due time I am sure. For what goes up must come down and that is a gravitational fact! All the best to your family.

Share your questions and responses by sending an email to info@TheExperientialCoach.com All the best!

Kalonji Faces Backlash After Girlfriend's murder

Trinidad artist Kalonji Arthur has come under fire by some people for what they perceive as his insensitive remarks following the violent death of his girlfriend, 25-year-old Bridget James.

The 25-year-old artist of Delaford, Tobago, has seemingly recovered following the shooting incident and, according to a post he made on Instagram, is already focusing on new music. The message, which apparently came from his team, acknowledged the young woman's death but also stated that he was already looking to get back into music. For many, it seemed that his period of mourning was too short.

"Grateful For all the continuous support, condolences & prayers also wanna send condolences on my behalf to Bri's family and my sincerest apologies last but not least I wanna thank God for another opportunity @ Life and for keeping stable my mental status can't wait to b back to being able to doing things I love especially my music @bri_xo1 love you always bbg. On behalf of me and the entire team @fully8recordz_ Thank you again."

The shooting happened at the beginning of September as he and his girlfriend were celebrating her birthday. According to police reports, the couple was in the car park of the Brix hotel in Port-of-Spain Trinidad, sitting in a silver-grey Toyota Carolla at around 2:16 pm when another car approached.



Kalonji and his girlfriend Bridget James in happier times

Two gunmen exited and fired at them, hitting them both. They were rushed to the Port of Spain General Hospital, where Bridget sadly passed away.

The "Run Up" artist, who has over six million views for various songs on YouTube, was wounded and said to be fighting for his life at the time.

Bounty Killer performs in Caymans after ban lifted

Bounty Killer is elated that he is finally allowed back in the Cayman Islands after being banned 16 years ago. On Thursday, the "No Doubt" artist shared that he is performing at CayJam Fest 2022 for the first time in 16 years.

A video from the Cayman airport shared by the artist saw him announcing his return to the island as he promised fans a performance to remember at the end of September.

On Instagram, he shared a message of gratitude for being allowed in the country.

"Time is always the master after 16yrs of being barred from entering the Cayman Islands the time machine decided its that time again Jah bussing all chains and bandages from di GAD-ZILLA my greatness can never ever stop," he wrote.

In the video at the airport, the artist spoke



about what fans can expect from his performance, as he also addressed the fact that he will be facing at least two generations of younger people.

"I don't try to perform for Cayman or for Ja-

maica, or for Barbados," Bounty was heard telling the small group. "I perform for the fans. Whether I am in Jamaica or I am in Barbados or in Cayman Islands, it's gonna be the same thing. And then to be here after 16 years, I know what I have to reignite, remind dem what I does and what I brings. So this will have to be extraordinary, because I have to remind the younger ones who never know me and see me before. So this is like working to suit a next generation, because I missed one generation... So it's a generation gap. Yes, tomorrow really gonna be exciting for me. I don't know about nobaddy else. I am back in my place."

Bounty Killer was refused a work permit to perform on the island in 2006. At the time, the artist's violent music lyrics were cited as the reason for him being denied entry to the island.

Rihanna tapped for Super Bowl half-time show

Rihanna is set to perform at the NFL's Super Bowl Halftime in February next year. This would mark the Roc Nation artist's first public performance since giving birth earlier this year.

Rihanna's return to the music stage is also an important milestone for the NFL as it ushers in its new sponsorship deal with Apple Music. The Halftime show was previously sponsored by Pepsi. The show is scheduled for February 12 in Glendale, Arizona.

"We're excited to partner with Rihanna, Roc Nation and the NFL to bring music and sports fans a momentous show," Oliver Schusser, Apple's vice president for Apple Music and Beats, said.

The Halftime Show appearance would be the first time in four years since Rihanna performed publicly. Her last performance was at the Grammy Awards in 2018, as the singer's appearances decreased over the years after the launch of her Fenty Beauty brand in 2017.

In the meantime, the Halftime Show is being produced by Jay-Z and Roc Nation after the two signed a deal for the rapper to be its live music entertainment strategist. Jay-Z's employment came after the NFL received backlash following the Colin Kaepernick controversy that saw him being dropped by teams in the NFL. There was consequently a boycott from artists in support of the quarterback who made headlines for kneeling during the national anthem to protest police brutality against African-Americans.

Under the management of Jay-Z, the Halftime show has significantly grown in stature, with the show earning an Emmy award for the 2022 staging that saw hip hop icons Dr. Dre, Snoop Dogg, Kendrick Lamar, singer Mary J. Blige, and Eminem.

Eminem also showed support for Kaepernick's protest when he knelt after performing his track, "Lose Yourself," which was approved by NFL officials.

In his statement on Rihanna's upcoming Super Bowl halftime performance, Jay-Z calls the Bajan singer a once in a generation talent.

"Rihanna is a generational talent, a woman of humble beginnings who has surpassed expectations at every turn," the Roc Nation founder said. "A person born on the small island of Barbados who became one of the most prominent artists ever. Self-made in business and entertainment."

Rihanna recently welcomed her first child, a baby boy, with her boyfriend A\$AP Rocky. She is under pressure from her fans to release new music. It will be interesting to see her song lineup for the Super Bowl since she has a vast catalog of mega hits. RiRi has not released any new solo music since 2016 and has been rumored to be working on her ninth album since around 2019.



Gospel singer puts T&T on the map

Music is the most beautiful pathway to one's soul, and singing for the Lord makes music even more gratifying. One teenage gospel vocalist is using music through ministry to make her dreams come true.

At just 15 years of age, Alyssa Joseph is already a champion. She recently copped the Junior Grand Champion of The World title at the World Championships of Performing Art 2022 (WCOPA). The competition featured singers, dancers, instrumentalists, actors, models and a variety of artists from over 70 countries.

Alyssa loved singing since she was a child and her parents took notice of her passion. At the age of four, she was enrolled in vocal training to further develop her talent. She took her training very seriously and was eager to reach a stage where she was comfortable with her vocal range. She had enough confidence in herself to start participating in small competitions, even winning a few. Alyssa released her first single 'Cry for Peace' at the age of nine. Her second single 'You Fill Me Up' was released at the age of 12 and was written by Alyssa. She now has ten original songs. The teen vocalist became known for singing gospel, but Alyssa also had a desire for opera. She rehearsed and fine-tuned several operatic pieces, adding them to her repertoire of music.

Alyssa has always dreamed of performing on an international stage, and that dream came true recently at the WCOPA competition in Los Angeles. She was encouraged to enter the competition by her mother when one of her fans told them about the event. Alyssa's mother looked into it and decided that she would be a great candidate to enter.

John Michael Thomas helped her prepare for two of the songs she performed at the competition. Four songs later, with a final operatic piece, Alyssa Emerged Junior Grand Champion of The World and Division Winner for Vocal Opera Solo.

She was surprised and elated when her name was announced for the titles, and calls it an experience of a lifetime.



Alyssa Joseph is the Junior Grand Champion of the World at WCOPA

The gifted vocalist is desirous to continue pursuing her dreams of becoming an international singer and producer. She reminds herself to keep grounded as she grows from strength to strength and includes God in the process. She said when writing new songs, she starts by praying about it so that God will allow the lyrics and ideas to flow. Then she listens to the beat and creates a story to fit into the beat. Sometimes she creates lyrics and fits them into the beat. For performances, Alyssa goes on a dairy-and-oil-free diet one week before, avoiding any adverse effects on her voice.

She has a vigorous rehearsal schedule but still takes time to enjoy some of her hobbies such as dancing, crafting, acting, cooking and cosmetology.

Alyssa is inspired by Gospel Artists Tasha Cobbs, Sinach and Whitney Houston. These renowned women with powerful voices have inspired her to write powerful songs with a positive message. She wants her words and her actions to be an inspiration to her peers.

Her message to young people is "Go for your dreams and work hard because hard work pays off. You have to focus on your dreams and don't allow anything to distract you and shift your focus."

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SOCA AT BARCLAYS CENTRE: Soca superstars Machel Montano and Superblue are pictured on stage at New York’s iconic Barclays Centre on September 5, where they performed for a 100% capacity crowd at the venue’s first ever Soca concert. The event, billed as Soca Kingdom – 40 years of MM, saw Montano perform a litany of his biggest hits after he arrived on stage in a self-driving Tesla with custom “MM 40” plates. The event was timed to coincide with New York’s famed Labour Day Mas.

From Lord Nelson to Dr Nelson

Soca and calypso legend Lord Robert Nelson, mas band leader Rosalind Gabriel, CARPHA executive director Dr Joy St John, former TTMF managing director Ingrid Lashley and several others will be receiving honorary doctorates from the University of the West Indies come October.

In a statement, the UWI said it will welcome 16 outstanding global citizens to its graduation stage this year. It said in keeping with annual tradition across the five campuses, the University Council has approved the conferral of the 16 at The UWI’s 2022 Graduation Ceremonies.

The honorary graduands, recognised for their contributions to several areas, including Sport, Culture, Law, Business, and Science, will join the 2022 graduating class in person this year, as a majority of campuses return to face-

to-face ceremonies. However, The UWI Open Campus will retain the hosting of a virtual graduation ceremony.

The UWI added that the 2022 Graduation Ceremonies take place between October 8 and November 5. It said this year’s honorary graduands join the ranks of a prestigious list of fewer than 500 persons who have been awarded since 1985.

The 2022 honorees include Dr. Shakuntala Haraksingh Thilsted for contributions to Agricultural Science and Nutrition – Doctor of Science (DSc); Ms. Ingrid L-A Lashley for her work in Corporate Banking/Finance – Doctor of Laws (LLD); Ms. Rosalind Gabriel of Trinidad and Tobago for her work as a Band Leader/Entertainer – Doctor of Letters (DLitt) and Dr. Wayne A. I. Frederick for contributions to Surgical Science – Doctor of Science (DSc)





Jamaica rebounds

Post-pandemic visitors expected to top 2.6M in 2022

After the pandemic, Jamaica's tourism sector is driving the recovery; its economy grew 5.7 percent in the year's second quarter.

Tourism and hospitality have contributed significantly to such economic growth, according to the latest report of The Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ).

In Jamaica, not only have international arrivals already far exceeded the figures for 2021 but, according to figures from its tourism board, the length of stay has returned to 2019 levels of 7.9 nights and, more importantly, the average expenditure per visitor has increased from \$168 per person per night to \$182.

Minister of Tourism, Edmund Bartlett, has confirmed that "the tourism sector is generating more foreign exchange per visitor, so there is more money circulating in the economy in general, and this benefits several actors in the industry."

Likewise, Jamaica is experiencing, this year, the highest number of arrivals of international visitors in comparison with any summer period in the history of the Caribbean country.

This summer brought 5,000 more visitors than in 2019, a record year. In addition, the country's tourism profits have increased by 20 percent over the previous year.

"This is the best summer tourism has ever experienced in Jamaica's history," Bartlett said at the welcoming ceremony of the 18th Annual U.S. Travel Advisor Golf Tournament at Sandals Ochi Rios Beach Resort in St. Ann.

He mentioned that the tourism sector had projected for 2022 the arrival of 2.6 million visitors, not including cruise passengers, and \$4.2 billion in profits, figures before the Covid-19 pandemic Jamaica expected to reach by 2025.

The minister stressed that Jamaica's economy has registered up to five consecutive quarters of growth, led by the tourism sector.

He exemplified with 5.7 percent economic increase registered in the April-June quarter of 2022, which the tourism and hospitality sector led, contributing 55.4 percent of the rise.



A visitor enjoys one of Jamaica's popular beaches

Jazz for the Cathedral

Etienne Charles leads charge for \$70M restoration fund

Trumpeter Etienne Charles heralded the start of fundraising for the restoration works on the Holy Trinity Cathedral in Port of Spain at the National Academy for the Performing Arts (NAPA), Port of Spain, on September 17.

The United States-based jazz maestro was back on the islands to lead a stellar cast of local music icons, all lending their talents to the cause, at the Jazz for the Cathedral restoration showcase.

American-based jazz double bassist David “Happy” Williams, ace pianist/arranger Dr Ray Holman, veteran music producer Leston Paul, jazz guitarist Theron Shaw and jazz singer Vaughnette Bigford, among others, committed to the fundraising concert.

Charles, a former pupil of the Anglican board’s Bishop Anstey Junior School, says it was both “an honour and privilege” to be asked to give back to such “an important project”.

“I was contacted by the restoration committee. As a proud alumnus of Bishop Anstey Junior school and someone with a keen interest in historic Caribbean architecture it’s an honour and privilege to be able to lend my voice to supporting the restoration project,” Charles told the Express yesterday.

The Juilliard School, New York, graduate says he has a personal connection to the cathedral, having attended Mass there several times as a child.

“I went to Mass a few times there when in primary school and have played a few services at the cathedral. It is a crucial part of the city’s skyline and one of the important historic buildings in T&T,” Charles said.

Restoration work on the Holy Trinity Cathedral is estimated to cost TT\$70 million, said chairman of the Anglican Diocese Fundraising Committee Selby Browne. The building remains closed to the public.

Browne said that figure was established by the Urban Development Corporation of Trinidad and Tobago (UDeCOTT) in June 2021, following a surveyance of the damage to the iconic structure by a magnitude-6.9 earthquake on August 21, 2018.

The Cathedral is the Anglican Church seat of Bishop Claude Berkley and all bishops before him. There are three living retired bishops of the Anglican Diocese of T&T, including Bishops Clive Abdullah, Rawle Douglin and Calvin Best.



Etienne Charles: honoured to be asked to kick off the fundraiser

“His Lordship Claude Berkley Bishop of the Anglican Diocese of Trinidad and Tobago launched the Holy Trinity Cathedral Restoration Fund Appeal on Sunday, November 14, 2021, for contributions to successfully undertake work to the roof, walls and interior fixtures that will protect and return the cathedral to its grandeur. The question remains (for the public), will you keep the lights of the cathedral alive, will you keep the bells of the cathedral pealing?” Browne said.

Browne said the cathedral, which was con-

secrated on May 25, 1823, will celebrate its 200th anniversary next year. The historic building survived earthquakes in 1825 and 1918 prior to the 2018 quake, Brown added.

“It has a glorious history as a historic edifice and architectural gem, that stands majestically in the heart of the capital city of Trinidad and Tobago. There is substantial cracking and damage to walls, the steeple, and chancel roof, as well as the destruction of several stone pinnacles, which today must be undertaken in this major restoration project,” Browne said.

Merciless tribute

Spragga Benz joins mourners at late Dancehall singer's memorial

Thousands of fans showed out to bid late dancehall legend Merciless a final farewell.

The clash icon, whose real name is Leonard Bartley, died in July of this year of an apparent heart attack. Merciless' death left a lot of his peers mourning, including Spragga Benz, who was at his funeral on Saturday at the St Gabriel's Anglican Church Hall in May Pen, Clarendon. Spragga, who is himself a legend in dancehall, was a close friend of the late deejay. He gave an emotionally moving performance.

"So all a me friends who gone through before I sing, may your spirits rest in peace, rest in eternal peace," Spragga Benz sings. "And I know that one day we all shall meet and reason pon glory street, but sleep wid angels may your every dream come through, until my likkle heart stop beat, there will always be a place for you."

Spragga Benz received a huge round of applause from the church congregation for his moving tribute.

"Your memories will flash through my brain like the clear blue sky, some make me happy some make me want cry, oh why what would I be living in this empty space that is so hard to fill, but we affi accept a the almighty will, so we nah watch no face we a carry on still, but we must meet again my friend so until then," Spragga sings.

Merciless passing left a void in dancehall clash culture, especially with the return of Sting stage show this year. Sources say he was recording new music in the weeks leading up to



Merciless: died of a broken heart?

his death, which means he likely died leaving a catalog of unreleased music.

Merciless, 51, was found dead on July 19 at a hotel in St. Andrew. He was complaining about not feeling well in the hours leading up to his death. While his autopsy remains inconclu-

sive, his former manager believed he died of a broken heart.

Singer Bounty Killer later revealed that Merciless died from a drug overdose, after he was knocked for not attending the fallen singer's funeral.

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The new look Bounty Killer without his trademark cornrows

Bounty Killer cuts his hair for the first time since 1996

Bounty Killer debuts his new look after cutting his hair for the first time in decades.

The dancehall icon was wearing cornrows up until last weekend when he and Beenie Man jetted to Malta for Dream Weekend. Bounty Killer revealed that he has not cut his hair since 1996 and has not been in a barber chair since 1998. So you can imagine how barber English Williams felt when Killer gave him the honor of cutting his decades old locks.

“A who this ppl episode50Caliber Brand New Original Me Get Familiar,” Killer wrote on IG while sharing a selfie showcasing his new look. “Since Upper Cut days the last time I trimmed was 1996 from 1998 I never seen a barber chair nor share @kirk.willi the man who did the barbering.”

Bounty Killer, who recently lost his official Instagram account due to a video he shared, got

some reaction from fans, and most seem to love the new look.

“Rodney PRICE has arrived yesterday PRICE is not today’s PRICE @1unogeneral NEW PRICE RANGE,” one fan wrote. The dancehall legend’s real name is Rodney Price, so you get where this fan is going.

At the time of this post, most of the deejay’s fans were giving him thumbs up and dropping fire emojis. “The haircut have a buzz me general is a good look,” another fan wrote.

Bounty Killer is currently getting ready to drop his new album *King Of Kingston*. Perhaps the new look signals a new era for the deejay, who is widely regarded as one of the greatest to ever take up the mic in Jamaica. While we don’t yet have a release date for the project, we’re anticipating its arrival by the end of the year or early next year.

Despite not dropping an album in years, Bounty remains very relevant in the genre with several new singles out, including a new song with his longtime partner in crime, Baby Cham. The song “Blood Clxxt” was produced by legendary Madhouse producer Dave Kelly.

The trio is currently working on a joint project due sometime soon. Killer and Cham recently joined a host of other artists, including Beenie Man and Spragga Benz, on stage at Reggae Sumfest for a Dave Kelly tribute segment.

Killer also appeared on DJ Khaled’s number one album, *God Did*, alongside Skillibeng, Capleton, Buju Banton, and Sizzla. He also joined forces with Michael Star on “7 O’Clock” and another song with 9-Y-O Canadian actress Jazmin Headley, who is a huge fan of the dancehall deejay.



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This intergenerational project has been ongoing for the past 70 years with Aleeyah as Founder / President of the Foundation for 23 years. The name Phoenix Paws & Claws was recently made public.

All funds collected will go towards facility upgrades for the animals.

2022 Wishlist

- Chainlink Fencing
- Green Coated 1/4" x 1/4" wire
- Gravel
- Cement
- Animal crates: wire or plastic
- Ply Wood
- Paint
- 6 yards blue stone

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Outrage follows tweet over Jamaicans' work ethic

Stefflon Don and Razor B are among members of the entertainment community who reacted to a viral tweet from @peterissaja Twitter account that has since been deleted.

The statement on Twitter has since gone viral and has led to the person behind the account perhaps deleting the tweet and the account altogether following a backlash “If Jamaicans worked as hard as they do when they go overseas while they were in Jamaica they wouldn’t need to [go] overseas,” the tweet reads.

The tweet went viral immediately, with many pointing out a well known Jamaican business person of the same name as the Twitter handle, saying he is out of touch. The majority of people who viewed the tweet called out the businessman for not only being privileged but being obtuse to the realities of poor people in the country who continually work but cannot afford to buy 30 million dollar apartments, much less afford the best schools and healthcare for themselves and their families.

Among those who responded to the tweet was Stefflon Don, whose family immigrated from Jamaica to the United Kingdom and whose mother also moved the family to Holland, where her parents worked to raise the family.

“Jamaican people do work hard, they just don’t get paid the salary they deserve in Jamaica,” Stefflon wrote in a comment on the trops. “Which is sadly purposely designed that way so they remain a third world country,” she added.

Many Jamaicans at home and in the diaspora on Twitter reacted to the tweet. “Part of the reason you and your family are successful is the low wages you pay your employees. Pay folks livable wages. Most ppl live paycheck to paycheck in [Jamaica] your comment is very out of touch are we?” one person responded.

Another added, “You’ve deleted your tweet now but this is disgusting. You weren’t getting flamed enough for my liking – just out here peddling the lazy Black people narrative as that is what you meant.”

Amid the Twitter backlash, Restaurant of Jamaica which owns the KFC franchise on the island is in the hot seat after an alleged August 2022 employee contract was leaked online. The contract allegedly pays employees JM\$20,000 or U\$131 per hour for 40hrs work weeks. The salary also includes \$130 per hour (less than 1 USD.)



Stefflon Don defended Jamaicans, saying they work hard

Managing Director of ROJ Mark Myers recently stated that the company paid the highest salaries in the QSR industry. Still, some of the company’s employees disagree with his statement.

Entertainer Razor B also chimed in on the debate incited by the tweet saying, “Lets talk money !!! Start paying better wages and I am sure the people of jamaica will work just as hard as any jamaican oversea.”

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Shenseea and Drake?

Jamaican singer ready to collaborate with Canadian rapper

Shenseea says she is fully open to collaborating with Drake.

Last year while everyone was gossiping about Shenseea and Drake, the Jamaican singer was busy honing her craft; she didn't let the noise distract her. Fast forward several months later, she delivered her first body of work, *Alpha*, to critical acclaim. While there was no Drake collaboration on the project, she was still in the headlines along with the Canadian rapper.

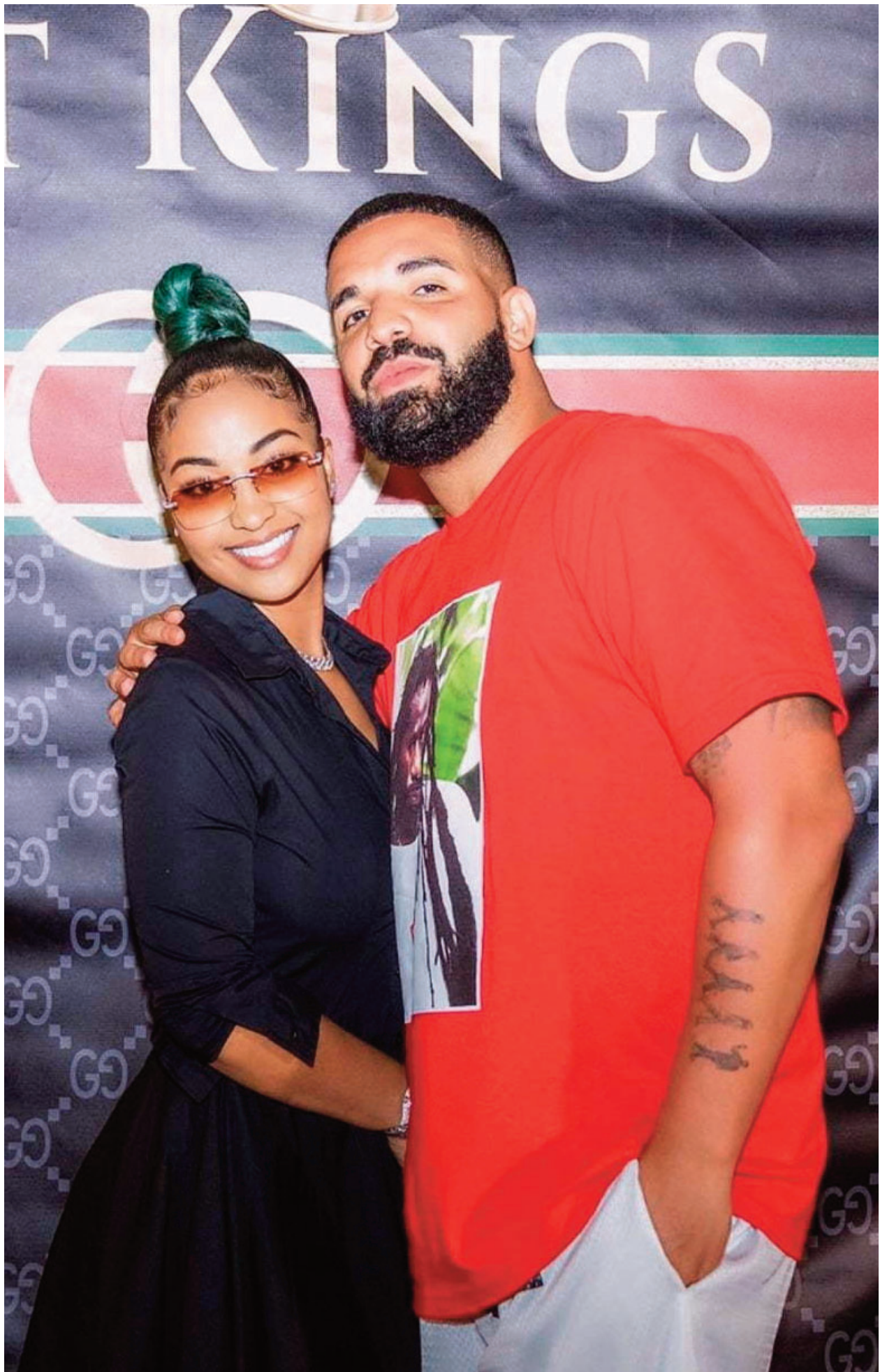
During his press run for her album, Shenseea eventually addressed the rumors, which was some months after she denied ever being pregnant for Drizzy. In July last year, she spoke about going through a period of depression triggered by her mother's sudden passing. In the same IG Live, she made it clear that the pregnancy rumors were totally fabricated by an unnamed blogger who spread other rumors about her.

A year later, Shenseea is still being asked about the rumors, but she is very much aware that it comes with the territory of being famous. Shenseea appeared on *The Shade Room's 'Keep It 100'* podcast yesterday (September 16), where she again denied dating Drake and whether she would collaborate with him if the chance arises.

"I would make a record with Drake. He's pretty talented," Shenseea said, adding that she is passionate about music there is no bad blood between them. "So of course why not. I'm passionate about my music so when it comes on to stuff like that, as long as we don't have any bad blood, let the public talk. I don't have no problem with Drake."

Shenseea also revealed that she and Drake have chopped it up before, but nothing remotely close to what the rumors suggested. "We've had conversations before," she added. "But to the point where they're talking about us doing whatever? I swear on my life—no. That's what got me mad 'cause like, don't play with my vajayjay like that."

Shenseea was also put on the spot about whether or not she has ever cheated on her partners. Surprisingly, she did admit that she cheated, even though she didn't reveal the name of her boyfriend with whom she cheated on. The 25-year-old artist is rumored to be dating London On Da Track.



Future collaborators? Shenseea and Drake



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Bago Jam: Tobago does mas

IF Bago Jam is a precursor to the inaugural Tobago carnival, then Tobago is in for an unforgettable time.

A massive crowd, young and mature, flocked to Shaw Park carpark on September 17 for the official launch of Tobago carnival, scheduled for October 28-30.

Traditional carnival characters such as moko jumbies, jab jab, gorillas and baby dolls greeted patrons, who began arriving well before gates opened at 5pm.

The cast gave the crowd enough of a taste to leave soca lovers wanting more.

Former soca monarch Tobago's Shurwayne Winchester, who is blowing up the airwaves with his latest song To Be Gonian, on the Scarborough riddim, had the crowd eager to time-travel seven weeks forward to experience the festival.

Other performers included Tobago's Adana Roberts, who is also on the Scarborough riddim alongside Zan.

She posted a clip of her performance on Twitter on Sunday and said: "Was such a beautiful experience seeing my fellow Tobagonians totally immersed in the spirit of carnival. The launch was nothing short of amazing. Cannot wait to meet y'all in the events and on the road come October. Tobago carnival 2022 will be one for the books."

Other performers included Iwer George, Kees, Farmer Nappy and Kernal Roberts.

Tobago carnival calendar of events

September 25 – Soaked at Roxborough

October 1 – Dream at Shaw Park Cultural Complex

October 22 – The Hideout at Argyle Waterfall

October 23 – Revel on Harbour Master

October 24-28 – Tobago Festival of Music, Arts and Culture (Burna Boy)

October 26 – Waddap Wednesday at Canoe Bay

October 27 – Pink Brunch (venue to be announced)

October 28 – Pan in the Gayelle

October 28 – Floats and Bikinis on Harbour Master

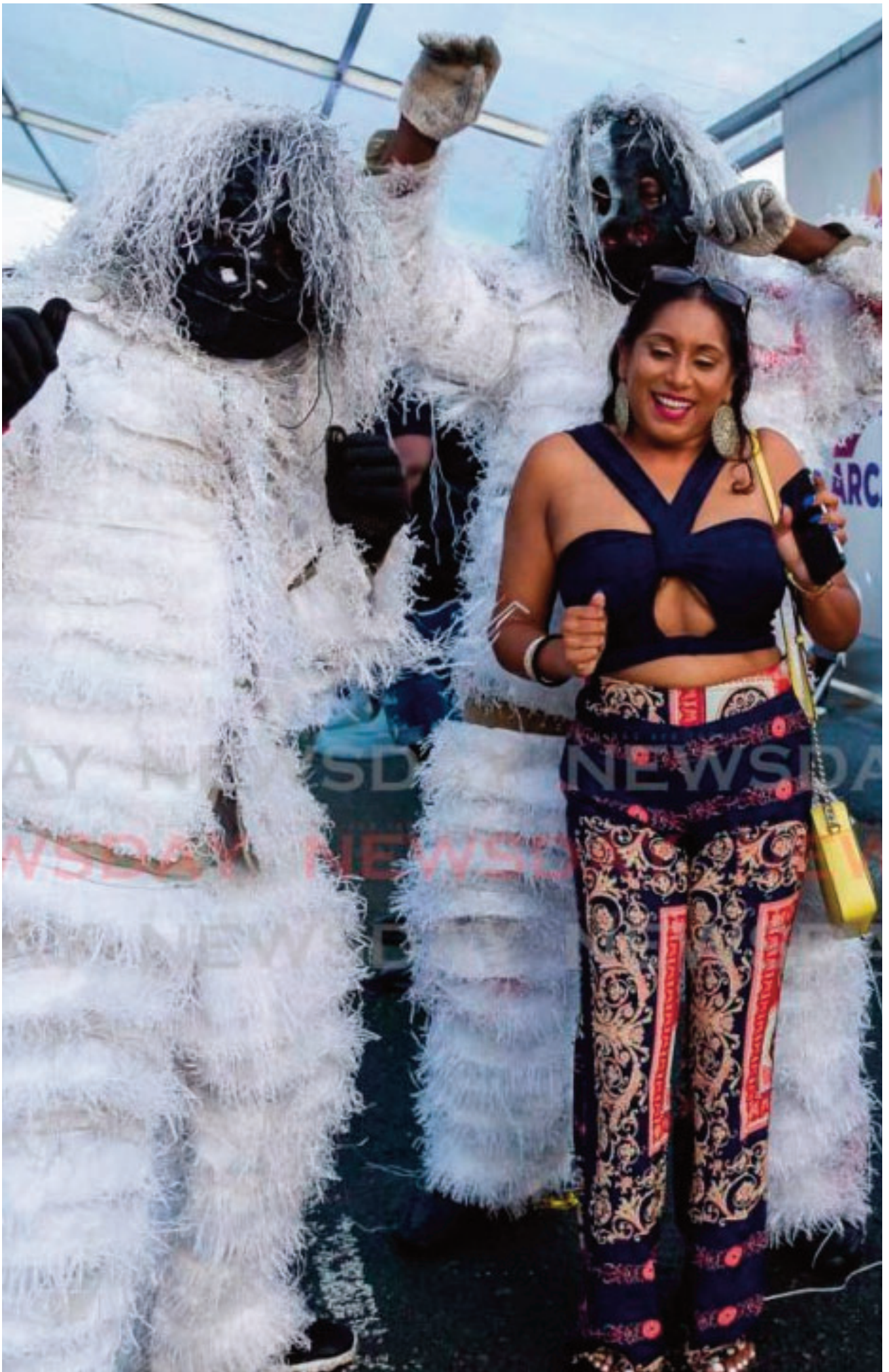
October 28 – Daylight (venue to be announced)

October 28 – Finesse on board Embassy.

October 29 – J'Ouvert

October 29 – Night Mas

October 29 – Emerge Carnival Masquerade Gala



Revellers enjoying the preview of Tobago Carnival

October 29 – Mud Festival in Crown Point
October 29 – TUCO Tobago Lime at Tropi-
kist Hotel

October 29 – Soiree (venue to be announced)
October 30 – Parade of the Bands

Maria, Maria

Live Experience's hit single is not about 'horn', says writer

Simba Amani (real name Kurtly Ravello) and The Live Experience aroused curiosity among fans in August when they released *Maria*, a distinctively original track with a captivating hook, complete with somewhat ambiguous lyrics and music video.

Few have expected an upbeat song about a "horner woman" from the humble, multi-talented musician/teacher from Cushe Village, Rio Claro.

That's because it's really not, said Amani, who wrote the song.

The incredibly catchy melody embeds itself into the memory and is supported by lyrics with a far deeper and less run-of-the-mill theme than just infidelity.

Amani encourages listeners to dig a bit beneath the surface to discover the substance of often misinterpreted analogy.

"(Lyrics aside) the video was slightly misunderstood in that the director tried to piggyback on one of the lines and make it the essence of the video," Amani explained to *Newsday*.

"So the part when I said, 'Wifey stress me out, and you are holding me up,' it looked as though the woman in the video was a horner woman."

The track is primarily about a substance with healing and pacifying properties, providing support to the right user or one that is undoubtedly harmful when abused, depending what one interprets from the science.

For Amani, it's partly about a love bordering on obsession, and its negative repercussions – something he knows all too well about.

The one holding him up was, in fact, cannabis; a long-time clutch the performer has mostly distanced himself from in recent times because it held him up until it couldn't any more.

"I never came out and admit it on radio but I does take my little pull ever so often," he said. "I was going through a depressed mode which was pronounced to the point where the substance itself was making it worse. I've eased up a lot.

"It was a means of escape but in the long run it turned out a bit toxic."

"The story is about 'Maria-juana'," he spelled out, "but it can also be about alcohol, it could be about anything that has the potential for abuse."

Additionally, the song also represents a break-away from the restrictions that limited



Multi-talented artiste Simba Amani seated in his element — the bush

Amani's expression for years as an artiste.

"Being a teacher and being able to write about some subjects publicly always felt like taboo," Amani said, be they themes of sexuality or cannabis use, for example.

"Apart from all that, I've been going through things that made me realise I don't want to be a people-pleaser. That's not to say you need to be irresponsible or reckless with your lyrics but at the same time, when it comes to my freedom of expression, I don't want to put myself in a box; I want to be able to talk about anything."

Maria's melody blends Afrobeat, Latin and reggae, with a few other sub-genres under world music, and their typical instruments. Those, combined with a mesh of Spanish and English lyrics, make for a distinctively unique sound.

So the genre isn't immediately clear. But it is a considerable shift in the pattern of his and The Live Experience's previous releases. It certainly underscores Amani's versatility as a writer and performer although some have told him that

they think they've found his niche. But Amani doesn't necessarily agree, since the word "niche" implies being situated in a comfort zone with less room for flexibility, which he's not about.

Though relatively new, the song was yearning to be completed.

Aquil Arrindell and Neville John led The Live Experience's production of the track over a year ago.

Amani is a Spanish teacher at Rio Claro West Secondary, so the Spanish lyrics naturally roll off his tongue.

The video was directed by Oluwa Pierre and starts with a shot of Amani outside the popular Bodow Roastfish and Oysters in Mayaro.

Tragically, Andre Ross, a budding entrepreneur, who had taken up interest in photography/videography just before filming for *Maria* started, died along with his girlfriend, Reanne Nayan, in a car crash in Debe last year just one week after shooting the first take. Both Ross and Nayan were just 22.

DJ Bravo on the ball

Cricketer releases 47 Riddim with Iwer George

Eighteen months after launching his 47 Production music studio, Dwayne Bravo aka DJ Bravo will be releasing the first track from his studio.

The former West Indies cricket captain, who is now heavily invested in the music industry, was extremely excited about the project as it will be the first song, Champion Bam Bam, he produced for himself using his studio. The song also features top soca entertainer Neil "Iwer" George.

Bravo said, "It's no secret I launched my music studio about a year and a half ago. It's fully open for business and, if not the best, it is certainly one of the best studios the country ever experienced." Bravo told Newsday the studio is about giving opportunities to unknown talent while using the strengths of others.

"I called my friends in the music industry to be a part of it.

"I want to give a huge thanks to Iwer George. He was the first to come on board the 47 Riddim. I have a collaboration with him. It is a big deal for me to do a song with Iwer. He is one of the legends in the music industry.

"I reached out to him at 1.05 am via WhatsApp and by 1.10 am he was in front of my door ready to do the track. The name of the song is...Champion Bam Bam. I am known as the champion and Iwer is known to have several songs with the term bam bam. It's a song for all the beautiful ladies and I think they would love it."

Also on the 47 Riddim are reigning Groovy Soca Monarch and D' All Starz band lead singer College Boy Jesse, Tommy Sanchez and Orlando Octave.

Bravo said the music on the riddim is a mix of soca and Afrobeats. "An unknown on the riddim is Tommy Sanchez. He is a young artist and songwriter and he wrote Champion Bam Bam. His song is called Ting on You."

Sanchez is working under the 47 umbrella. The number 47 represents Bravo's cricket jersey number.

"The only female on the rhythm is Guyanese Timeka Marshall. Her song will send red gyal



Dwayne DJ Bravo teams up with soca general Iwer George

crazy. To be honest, I only reached out about four days ago. She made it happen (by completing her song).

"We have a history. Back in 2012, the first song I did was with her and Beenie Man, (so) it was only fair to reach out to her. Her song is called Stop for Life." Despite his success with the song, Champion, Bravo said he felt no pressure to compete with the popularity of that song.

"No pressure at all. What Champion did, I don't think I might reach that again. I never thought it would be that big. But I do music for the love and passion. I am grateful for how pop-

ular Champion (was) because it opened so many avenues for me worldwide."

Asked whether he was a professional athlete first and then an artiste, Bravo said, "I am both. I am a professional athlete and artiste (who) has gone into the line of music production.

"I did other songs that have eight-30 million views on YouTube, but it's not liked at home. I don't know why it doesn't have an impact at home. I would love to have it appreciated at home. But I'll work where it is loved. This project will definitely be accepted."

King David, the movie

King David is a magical new 25-minute documentary on David Rudder by filmmaker Walt Lovelace that will be featured at the upcoming TT Film Festival on September 24 and 25.

The film focuses on the five songs that Rudder thinks are the ones that have had the greatest impact on his career. With interviews, recent and historic performance clips and background material, these songs, stored in the heart and soul of calypso and soca lovers, gain a new richness and depth.

Lovelace has worked in many aspects of the film industry in TT and the Caribbean for over 30 years. He began with the pioneering Banyan Productions, moving from logging tapes to audio and then camera. Since then, he has worked in many aspects of the industry, both on commercial assignments and his own productions. He's directed a number of classic music videos for Rudder, 3canal, Ataklan and other musicians.

The 2004 feature film of his father Earl Lovelace's short story Joebell and America was a family affair, with Walt director of photography, his brother Che the art director, and his sister Asha the director. Recently he has focused on Carnival traditions and created stunning one-minute shorts on traditional characters.

The concept of this film came about because Lovelace wanted not to do a typical life-story piece, but to hone in on the songwriting process and inspiration, having his subject pick out five key songs and discuss them in detail. The National Gas Company came on as executive producer, and Lovelace is grateful to communications managers Nicola Ghouralal and Lisa Burkett for their help.

The key interviews took place when Rudder came to Trinidad in February to do a show at the new Sound Forge facility in St James. Then Lovelace gathered historic footage from the Banyan archives and the National Archives to recover key articles and ads highlighting Rudder's performance history.

The film focuses first on The Hammer and Bahia Girl, the two calypsoes that overwhelmed Rudder's competitors on Dimanche Gras night in 1986 and made him Calypso Monarch. That night Sparrow proclaimed him King David. Almost any Trinidadian has heard these two songs hundreds of times. But this film offers a chance to go into the evolution of both, to learn how The Hammer started with a catchy melody composed by Pelham Goddard that Rudder transformed into a tribute to Rudolph Charles, the recently deceased leader of Desperadoes; and while Bahia Girl seems so much a Rudder song, he originally wrote it for Crazy (Edwin Ayoung) to sing.

There is footage of his winning performances at Dimanche Gras in 1986 and discussion of the controversy at the time, when some ques-



David Rudder: film focuses on five songs

tioned whether these compositions were calypsoes. For Bahia Girl, it is fascinating to hear Rudder discuss how his concept evolved from a song for Crazy to one for himself and imagining an encounter with a woman, but also a spirit – indeed, a link to the Yoruba roots of both Trinidad and Brazil. It's little remembered, but the Brazilian embassy at the time invited Rudder to go to Brazil, a trip that Banyan filmed and there is a mesmerising clip in the film of him performing with a percussion group that you wish just went on and on. Lovelace was on the trip to Brazil, recording sound for Banyan.

The next two songs offer a look at the struggle of traditional mas to survive and the people suffering from mental illness on the streets of Port of Spain. De Longtime Band is a tribute to the traditional masmakers that Rudder grew up seeing on J'Ouvert morning, especially a dragon, and how a small ole-time band managed to slip through a big mas band to command the Savannah stage.

Lovelace shot the precious footage on Super 8 many years ago of sailors, robbers, devils and more. Of The Madman's Rant, from his 1996 album Tales From A Strange Land, Rudder says, "I have a strange connection with mad people:

mad people like to talk to me. They tell me all kinds of crazy things – but sometimes they make sense."

When mental illness affects so many people, who are often homeless, and there is not enough treatment, a connection to them and respect for their humanity are needed – especially at a time when one can question how many world leaders are offering madmen's rants.

The last song, Song for a Lonely Soul, from his 1989 album The Sound & The Glory, is about emigrants in the cold "who can't come home and want to come, that song is for them"; soca music, this song, can be what brings the traveller back home, back to their roots and love of their homeland, "back to my island."

It is the resonance of these key songs that sweeps the viewer away. Rudder sums up their importance: "These songs are actually my autobiography...part and parcel of what my story is."

There will be two showings of King David, on September 24 at 8 pm at MovieTowne, Port of Spain, and on September 25 at 6.30 pm at NALIS, Port of Spain. Both shows will feature a question-and-answer session with producer Janine Mendes-Franco.

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