

Ebony Captures their
15TH PANORAMA TITLE



Notting Hill Carnival's theme for 2006 was **ASPIRING AND ACHIEVING IN UNITY**. A quick look around the pan yards made you realise that the teamwork and diligence displayed by pannists were the perfect examples to promote this theme. Nine steel orchestras with over 600 pan musicians who practiced for hundreds of hours played thousands of pan instruments on the night

Ebony Steel Orchestra captured their 15th Panorama **'Champions of Steel'** title when the UK Pan Community celebrated the 28th anniversary of this renowned competition. The evening was blessed with sporadic torrential showers before the start of the competition but this did not deter anyone from attending this highly fuelled national steelband musical battle. **Eternity Brass, the champions of the Battle of Drums competition at the 2006 Rotterdam Carnival opened the show with some energetic drumming accompanied by choreographed dances.** Their appearance at this year's Panorama



competition was made possible through an exchange program brokered by the British Association of Steelbands and the organisers of Rotterdam Carnival, Ducos, in Holland. In return, Ebony Steel Orchestra will appear as a guest band at the 2007 Rotterdam Carnival.

Over the past four years the UK pan community has seen an influx of young 'local' pan arrangers enter this competition. Kyron Akal, the winning arranger of the 2004 competition. Real Steel's, Leroy Clarke, who has attained third and fourth positions in the past four years. The talented Brent Holder who took Stardust to second place last year. Paul Dowie of Croydon Steel Orchestra who joined this competition in 2003 and has instilled a great sense of competitiveness in his band of young pan musicians and a new entrant this year in the likes of Chris Storey who steered Pantasia Steel Orchestra to success in the BAS Pan Explosion competition in 2005/6.

Ebony played Destra's, 'Colours Again'. Yet another musical masterpiece by Anise 'Haffers' Hadeed, the World panorama champion arranger who has chalked up another victory and led them to amass a grand total of 259 points to capture their 15th 'Champions of Steel' title. In second position with their musically arranged rendition of 'This One's for U Bradley' by World champion soloist, Brent Holder, was Stardust Steel Orchestra with 243 points. Brent and Stardust are a successful combination. In third place with 238 points was Southside Harmonics with a Eustace Benjamin's musical arrangement of Skatie's, 'Musical Treat' filled with enthusiasm and vigour. Eustace an established UK arranger has consistently developed great musicianship in his youthful pan musicians. Fourth place was awarded to Metronomes Steel Orchestra who played 'This One is for U Bradley', musically arranged by Ken 'Professor' Philmore. Their energised and harmonious delivery was awarded 233 points.

Glissando Steel Orchestra captured fifth place with 229 points. World-renowned Rudy 'Two Lef' Smith's melodic arrangement was certainly a treat to pan connoisseurs on the night. Rudy's 'soft touch' is just so inspiring. Sixth position was awarded to the Plymouth based band Real Steel who attained 215 points. Their vibrant delivery of Leroy Clarke's arrangement of Eunice Peters', 'High on Pan' saw players feeling the music and showing it in their performance. Mangrove Steel Band captured seventh place with 202 points. Kyron Akal's arrangement of De Fosto's 'Soca Warrior' was certainly a great effort from a young and talented arranger. In eight position was Croydon Steel Orchestra playing a Paul Dowie's musically arranged rendition of Denyse Plummer's 'Good Times' with 193 points. Paul continues to instill a great sense of competitiveness in his band. Pantasia Steel Orchestra attained 190 points with Chris Storey's arrangement of Destra's, 'Max It Up'. Their flag bearers treated the audience to some energetic flag waving as they accompanied Pantasia's delivery that was filled with tempo. Nine outstanding steel orchestras fully entertained the audience on the evening with a wealth of steelband music and equally great teamwork personifying the 2006 Notting Hill Carnival theme - Aspiring and Achieving in Unity.

The British Association of Steelbands now look forward to their 29th Champions of Steel competition in 2007 and are already in the process of sourcing a more suitable venue which will attract an entry fee and where patrons will be more comfortable.

1. **Ebony Steel Band** - Colours Again - 259 points
2. **Stardust Steel Orchestra** - This One's for U Bradley - 243 points
3. **Southside Harmonics Steel Orchestra** - Musical Treat - 238 points
4. **Metronomes Steel Orchestra** - This One's for U Bradley - 233 points
5. **Glissando Steel Orchestra** - Colours Again - 229 points
6. **Real Steel Orchestra** - High on the Pan - 215 points
7. **Mangrove Steel Band** - Soca Warrior - 202 points
8. **Croydon Steel Orchestra** - Good Times - 193 points
9. **Pantasia Steel Orchestra** - Max It Up - 190 points