

FEATURE/

PCW to benefit as members share new knowledge

OUR COMMUNITY



by Omowale Elson

Training boost for drama group

THE EMPHASIS will be on drama — all forms of it. That's the kind of training members of the Pinelands Creative Workshop (PCW), a leading community-based theatre group, can now look forward to.

This stems from the recent experience of two of its members at a theatre training workshop held in Trinidad and Tobago from July 16 to August 25.

Hamilton Lashley, the group's public relations officer, and Shelly Small, a dance instructor, were the two who benefited from a six-week scholarship in folk dance and production management. The scholarships were provided by Tatil Insurance of Trinidad and Tobago.

It was the first time the Pinelands players had attended the Vocation School In The Arts of the St. Augustine Campus of the University of the West Indies, and shared in a cultural exchange with 334 students from other parts of the Caribbean and as far away as Sweden.

According to the Bajan participants, the programme was as wide as it was exciting, embracing areas like . . . experimental theatre, jazz dance, stage lighting, sound, ceramics, pottery, glass blowing, interior decorating and photography.

Unfortunately, time did not allow one person to take in several courses, although there were times when you could observe other sessions in progress.

Hamilton Lashley was especially grateful for this. It broadened his scope and gave him tools to solve production problems which the PCW had previously encountered.

He now has a better understanding of budgeting, putting organisational structures in place, preparing flow charts and evaluating their efforts as well as those of others.

Those who are familiar with the work of the PCW over the years, will appreciate the development emphasis of this group in the community. It was because of this progressive attitude that a tie was established with the Trinidadian theatre group The Malik Folk Performers. Both groups have conducted exchanges in their respective countries and it was out of this relationship that the scholarships resulted.

In fact, only last May 23 to 31, the Pinelands dramatists took a troupe to the Land of the Humming Bird to perform a multi-media piece called Village Life at the Little Carib



HAMILTON LASHLEY, (left) PCW public relations officer, and Wayne Riley, assistant co-ordinator.

Theatre.

In a show of co-operation, PCW and Malik got together and did a dance called Fusion. But the Trinidadian audience was in for even more.

Indeed, PCW, in creating a balance to Malik's Caribbean Journey, presented a skilful version of an indigenous dance movement, the Landship.

Judging from Hamilton Lashley's report, they did themselves proud, as well as their country. In this regard, they were given the opportunity to dance with their Trinidadian counterparts at the World Cup preliminary qualifying match between Trinidad and Costa Rica at the Trinidad National Stadium.

They did six pieces: Culture, Tassa, Carnival Children, Spiritual, African, and Landship before a crowd of 35 000.

With these achievements, and expectations to be met for continued high standards of performance, the PCW intends to sponsor three members per year at the Vocation School In The Arts.

Already, Shelly Small has imparted some of those newly acquired skills to the children's section of the workshop. And, other training workshops are being planned for next January to equip members for more challenging up-coming productions.



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