

REMEMBERING QUINCY

Stars pay tribute to music
legend who died Nov 4

TOP CALYPSOES FOR 2024

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Remembering Quincy

Stars pay tribute to music legend Jones who passed in early November

Stars including Will Smith, Oprah Winfrey and Stevie Wonder have paid tribute to Quincy Jones, who died on November 4, aged 91.

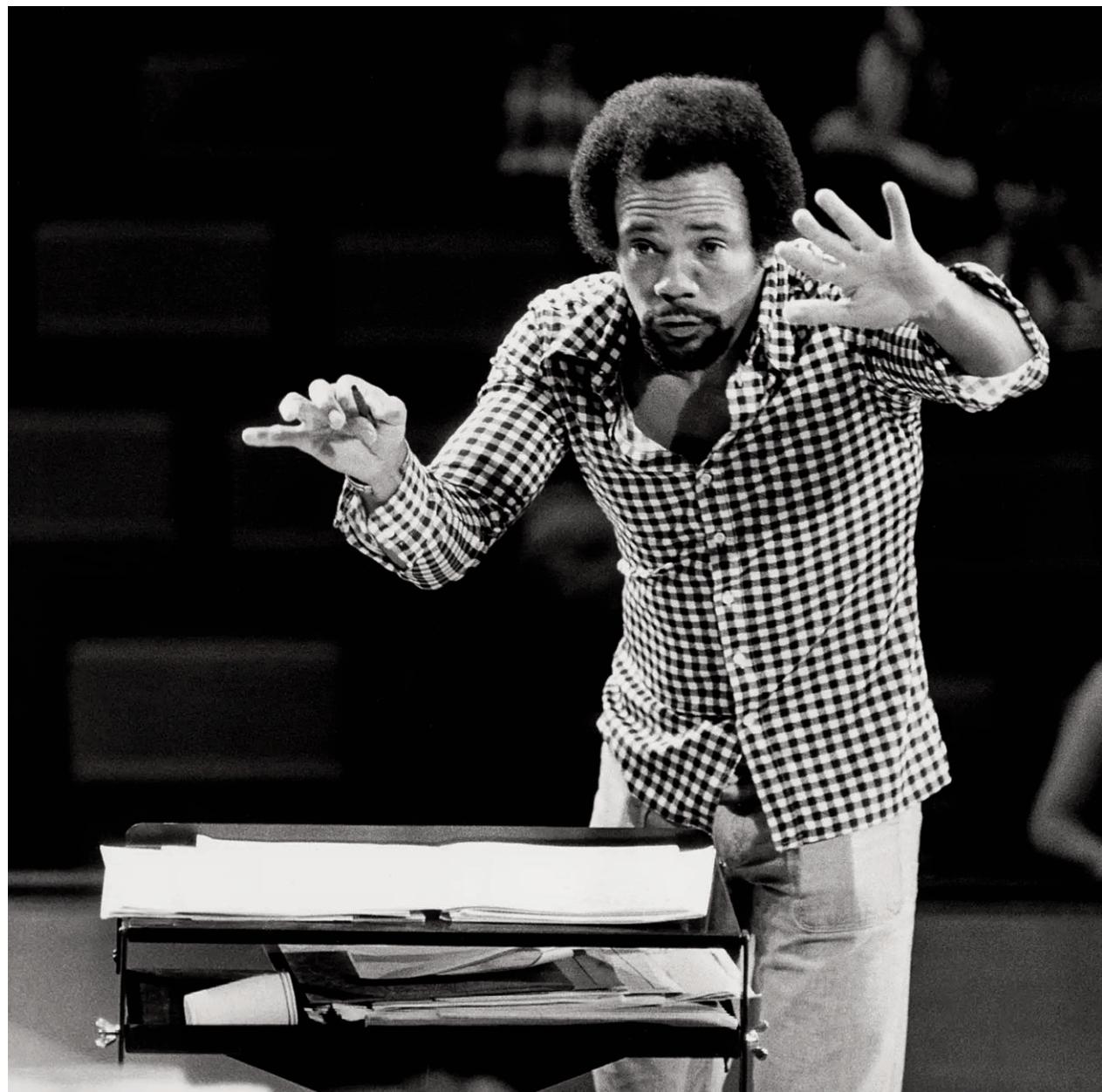
Following a career as a producer, multi-instrumentalist, conductor as well as a film producer, in 1990 Jones produced the sitcom *The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air*, which gave Smith his first ever acting role. Jones brokered the casting in an impromptu audition by Smith – then known purely as a rapper – to NBC executive Brandon Tartikoff at a party at Jones's home, with a contract drawn up that night.

"Quincy Jones is the true definition of a mentor, a father and a friend," Smith wrote on Instagram. "He pointed me toward the greatest parts of myself. He defended me. He nurtured me. He encouraged me. He inspired me. He checked me when he needed to. He let me use his wings until mine were strong enough to fly."

The sitcom was a huge success, running for 148 episodes across six seasons until 1996. It was a launchpad for Smith as a leading man in Hollywood, ahead of hit films such as *Independence Day*, *Men in Black* and *Hitch*.

Winfrey also acknowledged Jones's hand in her career, after he recommended her for her first acting role in *The Color Purple*, which he co-produced and wrote the music for. "My life changed forever for the better after meeting him," she wrote. "I had never experienced, nor have since, anyone whose heart was so filled with love. He walked around with his heart wide open, and he treated everybody as if they were the most important person he'd ever met. He was the Light. No shadows. He was love lived out loud in human form and he was the first person I ever loved unconditionally."

In a long tribute speaking to *Rolling Stone*, Wonder said: "He's touched every single genre. It brings tears to my heart to think about how and where he came from and to know that he was able to grow through all of it. When I look at life every day and I think about how ignorant and irresponsible that people who don't get it can be, I'm motivated to continue to talk about life, sing about it, and write about it, because that's what Quincy did. He connected with people who had those great talents, and he was able to bring out of them the



Quincy Jones during an early stage of his career

best ... Quincy should be remembered as one of God's greatest gifts to the world."

Other stars adding their tributes to Jones include Paul McCartney, who worked with Jones on the Michael Jackson duet *The Girl Is Mine*, from *Thriller*. McCartney said Jones had "a twinkle in his eye and had a very positive, loving spirit which infected everyone who knew him ... His long career stretches back to the early days when he was a trumpet player, then a band leader, then a producer of many great records. But it is as a friend I would like to remember him."

The Weeknd simply described him as "The Reason", with another post saying: "My fans know how important Quincy was to the fabric of my music ... Let's celebrate his life today."

Elton John wrote: "Nobody had a career as incredible as Quincy Jones. He played with the best and he produced the best. What a guy. Loved him." Lenny Kravitz wrote: "What a life. What an expression of authenticity. What a teacher. I am humbled that I was given the gift of your openness and friendship."

Earlier tributes came from the likes of Joe Biden, who called him a "musical genius who transformed the soul of America – one beat, one rhythm, and one rhyme at a time ... Quincy Jones solidified Black culture as American culture". Barack Obama also celebrated his life and work, additionally acknowledging how "Quincy paved the way for generations of Black executives to leave their mark on the entertainment business".

Embracing Gratitude for the Holidays

As the holiday season arrives, many of us feel a mix of excitement and stress. The holidays can bring about a whirlwind of activities—gifts, meals, gatherings—and it often seems like we are pulled in many directions. How is the season feeling for you right now? Are you experiencing joy and warmth, or is the pressure to meet expectations weighing you down?

I understand that feeling all too well. There was a time when I, too, found myself caught up in the rush to make everything perfect. Over time, I learned that the essence of the holidays lies beyond the tasks and to-do lists. It is about something much deeper—finding connection and presence in our lives.

As we approach the end of the year, it is a natural time for reflection. What have you experienced over the past year? What challenges have you faced, and what moments have made you proud? Recognizing your journey, even amidst difficulties, is important. Sometimes, growth happens in unexpected ways.

Personally, I find it helpful to focus on the small things I am grateful for—whether it is a kind gesture from a friend, moments of peace, or even lessons learned from tough situations. What are you grateful for this year? Shifting our focus to gratitude can trans-

form our perspective, making stress seem smaller and revealing the beauty in our lives more clearly.

The holidays offer a unique opportunity to connect deeply, not just with others but with ourselves. Reflect on past holiday seasons: were your most cherished moments the ones that were perfectly planned, or were they the spontaneous, heartfelt ones? For me, it is the laughter shared, the meaningful conversations, and the quiet moments of reflection that truly define the season.

Consider reaching out to loved ones, especially if there are relationships that have become distant. The holidays can be a wonderful time to reconnect with family, friends, or even with children and grandchildren who may have drifted away. Maybe there are people in your life with whom you wish to spend more quality time or find new ways to nurture those connections. It is an opportunity to bridge gaps and rekindle bonds that matter to you.

Let us remember that the holidays are not about achieving perfection. They are about being present with ourselves and those we care about. It is about savoring the love and joy around us. As we reflect on the past year, think about what you want to carry forward. What intentions or hopes do

you have for the new year? Perhaps you wish to spend more time with loved ones, reconnect with family members, or explore new ways to nurture yourself. What are your hopes for the future?

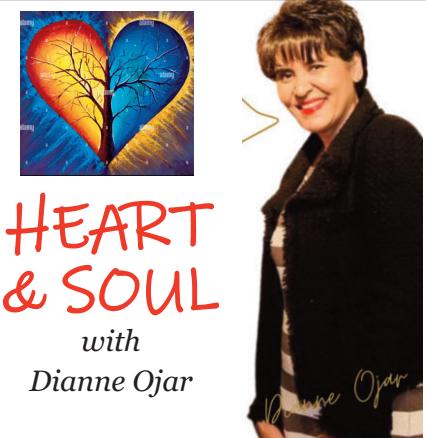
The end of the year invites us to reset. It is a chance to let go of what no longer serves us and to set the stage for what we wish to create in the coming year. It is about envisioning the person we want to become and the life we want to lead.

The holiday season can easily become stressful, especially when trying to meet everyone's expectations. However, I have learned that we have the power to choose how we experience the holidays. Instead of focusing on what we "should" do, perhaps we can ask ourselves what we want to feel this season. For some, it may be peace and connection. For others, it may be finding quiet moments to relax. Whatever resonates with you, let that guide your experience.

You do not have to do it all. Letting go of some stress can create space for what truly matters. Sometimes, the most meaningful experiences come from the simplest choices.

As we navigate this season and look ahead to the new year, consider what you want to bring with you. Is there something you wish to leave behind from the past year—perhaps a habit or a way of thinking that no longer serves you? This time of year is about renewal and making room for new possibilities.

What are you hoping to create in the coming year? Maybe it is a deeper sense of peace, more quality time with loved ones, or reconnecting with family, including children and grandchildren. The key is to approach these hopes with kindness and intention. The new year offers an opportunity for



gradual growth and setting meaningful intentions.

Ultimately, the holidays invite us to be present—to fully engage with the moment, ourselves, and those around us. When we embrace presence, we open ourselves to the magic of the season. Stress diminishes, and we experience the true essence of the holidays.

So, as you move through this season, take a moment for yourself. Whether it is a few minutes of reflection, a heartfelt conversation, or simply a deep breath, give yourself the gift of presence. When we allow ourselves to be present, everything else seems to fall into place.

A Note from Me to You

"As this holiday season unfolds and a new year approaches, let us remember that the holidays are not about perfection but about presence. It is a time to reflect, let go of stress, and embrace gratitude and connection. As we step into a new year, let us do so with grace, intention, and an open heart. This is your time to reflect, renew, and move forward with love."

Let us embrace the true meaning of the holidays together—by letting go of stress, connecting with gratitude, and stepping into the new year with excitement for what lies ahead. Happy Holidays!

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TOP 20 FOR '24

NACC releases list of top calypsoes for the year

The National Action Cultural Committee (NACC) has announced the top 20 calypsoes for 2024, which were chosen by its panel of judges, a media release has said.

Among the top 20 are the Road March and the calypso queen winners: DNA by Mical Teja Williams, and Dem Advisors by Naomi Sinnette, which won her the 2024 National Women's Action Committee (NWAC) National Calypso Queen title.

Also on the list are Carnival Contract by Ian "Bunji Garlin" Alvarez; How Ah Livin – Darryl Henry, aka Farmer Nappy; Olatunji Yearwood's Inventor; and Market by Nadia Batson.

The NACC said the Top 20 Stars of Gold and Calypso of the Year Awards will take place on December 18 at the Central Bank Auditorium, Port of Spain.

The calypsoes, in alphabetical order:

Ah Doh Want to Do It – Dawren Greenidge (Pharaoh)
 All Ah We is Calypso – Errol Ballantyne (Bally)
 Carnival Contract – Ian Alvarez (Bunji Garlin)
 Character – Aaron Duncan
 Charlesie – Roderick Gordon (Chuck Gordon)
 Dem Advisors – Naomi Sinnette
 DNA – Mical Teja Williams (Mical Teja)
 Focus – Duane Ta'zyah O'Connor
 Here in T&T – Rivaldo London
 How Ah Livin – Darryl Henry (Farmer Nappy)
 Inventor – Olatunji Yearwood (Olatunji)
 Market – Nadia Batson
 No Excuse – Karena Asche
 Representing We – Helon Francis
 Respect The Tribe – Stacey Sobers-Abraham (Stacey Sobers)
 Soul of Calypso – Machel Montano
 Straight From the Heart – Caston Cupid
 The First Investigation – Kurt Allen (The Last Badjohn of Calypso)
 Trinidad is not a Real Place – Bruce Hammond (Slick)
 Useless Inventions to T&T – Devon Seale



Mical Teja Williams, whose hit DNA was Road March



Naomi Sinnette (top) and Karena Asche, left



Etienne Charles receives his award from Raphael Trapp, Consul General of France in Miami

TOP FRENCH AWARD FOR ETIENNE

France celebrates Trini musician with Chevalier de L'Ordre des Arts

TRINIDAD-BORN Etienne Charles received the French honour on November 20 of being made a Chevalier de L'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres (Knight of the Order of Arts and Letters).

Charles was awarded by Raphael Trapp, consul general of France at his residence in Miami, Florida.

Charles said, "I'm overcome with gratitude and humility for this recognition. It's incredibly warming to be celebrated by France for my work and I'm grateful for the opportunities they've presented me over the years of my career."

Trapp said, "Tonight we recognise Etienne with one of France's most distinguished honours, the title of Chevalier Des Arts et Des Lettres. This award was created in 1957 by the founder of the French ministry of culture. It is given to individuals who have made significant contributions to the enrichment of the arts, not only in France, but across the world. Etienne Charles embodies this spirit in every way."

He added, "Dear Etienne, you were born in Trinidad, and you carry rhythms, melodies and stories of your heritage with talent and grace. You are a gifted trumpeter, a composer, a storyteller and an entertainer. You dedicate your life to uncover the narratives of marginalised communities and to shed light on the interconnectedness of our global cultures ... Through crusading rhythms and vivid melodies, you connect the African diaspora to its roots, while creating music that is both a tribute to tradition and a bold step towards modernity."

Trapp said Charles's artistry goes far beyond performance.

"Your commitment to education and cultural preservation is equally inspiring."

"As a professor at the University of Miami Frost School of Music, and through residencies and workshops worldwide, you have mentored the next generation of artistes while deepening audiences' understanding of music's power to unite. Your dedication extends to your home-

land of Trinidad, where you have formed Carnival bands that revived the past ten traditions of vintage calypso and soca."

"Your 2013 album Creole Soul beautifully illustrates the shared heritage of the French Caribbean and the broader Creole world, blending jazz with influences from Martinique, Guadeloupe and beyond. This is also particularly obvious in your latest album, Creole Orchestra."

He said Charles's work with communities from children's homes to schools and prisons exemplifies his belief in music as a force for social uplift and transformation.

"Dear Etienne, your art, written in a deep respect for heritage while being innovative, aligns with the values France holds dearly and it is truly a privilege to honor your contribution to the arts in your role as a bridge, as a bridge between countries. So dear Etienne, for all those reasons in the name of the Republic of France I confer on you the title – Chevalier des Arts et des Lettres."



Celebrating Men's Day

November 19 marked the 25th anniversary of International Men's Day globally and the relaunch of its 8th year in Canada under IMD Canada.

The event, hosted at The Republic of Trinidad and Tobago Consulate in North York, Canada, celebrated this year's theme, "Positive Male Role Models." It was an inspiring gathering that emphasized the importance of uplifting and recognizing men and boys as vital contributors to communities, families, and society.

Pictured are Irshaad Ali and Aryan Doorga (L), young leaders and hosts of the evening, listening attentively to Anthony Batchelor, who spoke about his mentor, Constable Curtis Celestine from the Toronto Police Service (TPS).

For more information about IMD Canada and future initiatives, visit www.IMDCanada.ca.

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Rita's Garden

New Art Exhibit Paying Tribute To Rita Marley Debuts In NYC

On Friday, November 15th, 2024, the highly anticipated art exhibit, "The Garden That Rita Grew" was unveiled at the Jamaican Heritage Awards by the Consulate General of Jamaica in New York City.

Curated by actress/filmmaker Donisha Prendergast, the eldest granddaughter of Rita and Bob Marley, this compelling collection of paintings, photographs, and personal reflections offers an intimate look at the profound and transformative impact Rita Marley has had on her community and the world.

The exhibit celebrates the indomitable spirit of Rita Marley—a woman whose legacy continues to inspire through her cultural contributions and her unwavering commitment to social change. Curated by Prendergast's nonprofit organization, Humanity Ova Vanity, the exhibit was open at the Consulate Headquarters from November 15 through November 20.

"The Garden That Rita Grew" is more than an art exhibit—it is an artistic celebration of a woman who has created a legacy of strength, culture, and community, and who inspires others to do the same. In a poignant gesture of giving back, proceeds from the sale of the artwork will benefit the Rita Marley Girls Center in Trench Town, Jamaica. This vital initiative, supported by the Bob Marley & Rita Marley Foundation and the Ghetto Youths Foundation, provides young women with mentorship, skills training, and life-changing opportunities.

The exhibit featured a VIP event on November 18, with a live performance by Zion Marley and a silent auction of select pieces, with proceeds going directly to the Rita Marley Girls Center.

Said Pendergast about the exhibit, "This exhibit is an act of cultural preservation, an act of rebe lion, a stride towards generational healing that has sent me on a journey through my family's history.

"This exhibition is a collection of moments and memories that have propeled us into this future. It is a metaphorical and multifaceted exploration and experience of Queen Rita Marley through my lens as her eldest grandchild - a filmmaker, activist and cultural curator.

"Beyond the scope of being the legendary Bob Marley's wife, she is My Grandma Rita; a powerful and visionary Queen of Development recognized through her works in Africa and the diaspora."



Rita and Donisha Prendergast, the eldest granddaughter of Rita and Bob Marley



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The Scrap Heap

Here are some beloved cars that are being discontinued for 2025

Inventory turnover in the new-car business is an annual event, with brand new or fully redesigned models replacing what will soon be the previous model year's goods. No matter how strong or weak the economy may be, one can expect a fleet of fresh cars, trucks and SUVs to debut each year, while those that have lost their luster or become technologically dated are relegated to the scrap heap.

Usually, a given vehicle is discontinued because of declining sales, but shifting consumer preferences can also cause existing models to fall from an automaker's lineup. The new-car industry continues to slash its selection of passenger cars tremendously in recent years to the point of near-extinction as it follows the trends. Buick and Lincoln, for example, are now SUV-only brands, while Ford and Chevrolet have all but gotten out of the car business, with the Mustang and Corvette, respectively, being their lone autos remaining for 2025.

On the plus side, crafty consumers can expect to garner terrific discounts and generous incentives to help move the metal while dealer inventories are still relatively flush. Here's a quick look at the most prominent models being driven off into the sunset this year:

Audi R8: Audi's low-slung V10-powered sports car was fast, but not furious, able to accommodate a daily commute without punishment. The car was reportedly pegged to be dropped at the end of the 2023 model year, but a late sales flurry gave it a reprieve for another go-round.

Chevrolet Camaro: Chevy axes the venerable Camaro coupe and convertible that originally debuted for the 1967 model year as an answer to Ford's Mustang. It's being offered in a Collector's Edition for 2024 as a farewell offering to fans.

Chevrolet Malibu: The brand's final sedan takes its last laps before being discontinued for 2025. The name has been a staple in Chevy's passenger-car line off-and-on for the past 60 years and has sold nearly 10 million Malibus during that period.

Dodge Durango: This three-row SUV won't exactly fade away, but will rather be revamped and renamed Stealth.

Ford Edge: The automaker's two-row mid-size crossover SUV has been rumored to be on the chopping block for the last few years despite



Chevrolet will no longer make the Malibu

decent sales. Ford finally says goodbye to the Edge for 2025.

Ford Escape: The popular Escape compact crossover SUV has been a mainstay in Ford's inventory since 2000, and was most recently redesigned for the 2023 model year. At that it's reportedly leaving the line to clear production capacity for a new electric vehicle to be introduced down the road.

Jeep Cherokee and Renegade: Two of Jeep's smallest crossovers failed to make the cut for 2025, which will leave the Compass as the brand's most affordable model. One or both of them could resurface down the road with electric power, however.

MINI Clubman: More than a car but not quite as much as an SUV, the brand's oddball three-door wagon-like model (five doors if one counts the vertical opening split tailgate) is being discontinued later this year with no replacement said to be in the works.

Mitsubishi Mirage/Mirage G4: Often ridiculed for its tepid acceleration and back-to-basics equipment, Mitsubishi is pulling the plug on its downright cheap subcompact sedan and hatchback combo as Mitsu becomes an all-SUV brand in the U.S.

Nissan GT-R: It was just announced that the "Godzilla" of sports cars, the Nissan GT-R, will go out of production this fall after a 17-year run. Nissan will mark its passing with a pair of

commemorative models, the T-spec Takumi and Skyline Editions.

Nissan Titan: Nissan tried valiantly to chip away at the domestic brands' dominance among full-size pickup trucks with the Titan, but only managed token sales over the past two decades.



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Skinny's Fabulous!

Vincy soca star riding a wave of success into Trinidad Carnival

Riding a wave of success that has been both humbling and exhilarating, Soca artist Skinny Fabulous is stepping on the gas, promising to deliver more of what fans crave: hard-hitting Carnival anthems.

The St. Vincent and The Grenadines-born entertainer, whose real name is Gamal Doyle, is preparing for a busy season. Before releasing his highly anticipated album at the end of January, Skinny is rolling out new Soca singles each week, starting with the high-energy track "Find Out."

The single, which shares a riddim with Bunji Garlin's popular "Thousand," amps up the intensity with a fast-paced, electrifying beat that's expected to ignite the Carnival crowds. Produced by St. Lucia's Stratosphere Music, the same team behind Ricky T's 2024 Road March winner "Look Something to Talk About," the song is poised to be a major hit for the 2025 Carnival season. "I heard it in St. Lucia and immediately liked it," Skinny explains. "I knew it was the perfect track for me, so we started working on it right away."

"Find Out" isn't just a song—it's a statement. Skinny describes it as a celebration of the authentic revelry found in the heart of Carnival. The track speaks to the fearless partygoers who embrace the true spirit of fetes, from Grenada to Jamaica, Trinidad to St. Lucia. "In the islands, whether in uptown parties or in the heart of the Carnival, people are about getting down, having fun, and 'mashing gas'—no pretense, no show. That's the vibe of this song. If you step into that space, you're gonna 'Find Out,'" he says with a laugh.

The song's no-holds-barred lyrics, which Skinny admits are a little edgy, are already sparking conversations. "It's one of those songs you don't have to listen to four times to love.



Skinny Fabulous: newest hit is "Find Out"

You like it right away," he says. "I know it will stir some opinions, but I'm all for pushing boundaries. So far, the feedback has been overwhelmingly positive."

Skinny Fabulous, who has long been a key figure in the Soca scene, is also known for his collaborations. His upcoming album, which promises to be more ambitious and experimental, will feature contributions from a wide range of writers and producers from across the Caribbean and beyond. "I'm just one part of a larger movement. Soca is global, and we all have a role to play in taking it to new heights," he explains.

The album, set to blend African, Jamaican, and Trinidadian influences, will offer a fresh take on the genre, incorporating new rhythms and sounds while staying true to its roots. Skinny describes the album as "risky and ambi-

tious," but believes it will connect with a diverse fanbase.

As the 2025 Trinidad and Tobago Carnival draws near, Skinny is set to keep the momentum going, releasing new songs every week leading up to the event. "In Soca, it's a race to stay relevant. We don't have the luxury of resting on one album like some other genres," he reflects, citing artists like 50 Cent who can tour with the same material for years. "For us, it's about constantly delivering fresh sounds and staying connected with the people."

With "Find Out" marking the start of a busy Carnival season, Skinny Fabulous is ready to show the world what he's made of. If the early reactions are any indication, his upcoming album and slew of new releases are set to make waves throughout the Soca world.

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Natasha's Cookin'!

YouTube is taking Trini star to new heights around the world

In November, Trinidad and Tobago's Natasha Laggan had the honour of attending her first private YouTube event in Miami, coinciding with the 25th anniversary of the Latin Grammy Music Awards.

Laggan was among a group of influencers personally invited by YouTube to take part in its Creator Collective Meetup, a highlight of the YouTube Music Party in Miami. The event took place on November 12, at Club Graza in Wynwood, Miami.

At 41, Laggan, widely known for her channel Trini Cooking with Natasha, has become a household name for food enthusiasts worldwide. Originally from Couva, she moved to the US in 2009 after marrying.

Today, she is celebrated not only as a home cook but as a cultural ambassador for TT's rich culinary heritage, driven by her mission to document, recreate and share authentic flavours with a global audience.

Reflecting on her invitation to YouTube's private event, Laggan shared her delight: "When I got the invitation, I was really excited. Every week, YouTube sends us opportunities to attend events across the US.

"One of them was an all-expenses-paid trip to the Paris Olympics, but I couldn't go, because it was during my son's school time. When the invitation came for the Miami Latin Grammy Music Awards party, I said I definitely had to go.

"It was amazing to see and meet so many influencers – especially Latin influencers. It was so nice of YouTube to host that event. I totally loved it; it was such a great experience."

Laggan is also part of exclusive content creator groups on YouTube and TikTok, where she participates in boot camps, training sessions, and other activities to refine her craft.

"I get weekly opportunities, but cannot attend all of them due to personal commitments."

Laggan had a childhood love for cooking, inspired by shows like Caribbean Flavours with Newsday contributor Wendy Rahamut and B Smith with Style.

"I always loved cooking and wished to be like them one day," she said.

In October 2015, encouraged by her friends Jamie and Lisa, who often sought her recipe guidance, as well as her cousin Richard, who suggested YouTube as a platform, Laggan



Natasha Laggan: invited by YouTube to appear at events worldwide

launched her channel, intentionally crafted to focus on cooking and lifestyle, drawing inspiration from the shows that captivated her during childhood.

In November 2015, just after starting it, Laggan discovered she was pregnant. Despite the challenges, she persevered.

"When my son was born prematurely and in the NICU (Neonatal Intensive Care Unit), I spent every day at the hospital for a month. At night, I'd come home and still record. Even after he came home, I kept going. I'm a driven, hard-working person and a big dreamer."

Initially, her channel was named Cooking with Natasha, but she later added "Trini" to emphasise her roots. "Someone suggested using the word 'Trini' to make it easier for people searching for Trini content to find me. It was a brilliant

idea – it worked!"

Though growth was slow – 1,000 followers in two years – her passion kept her motivated.

"I just loved what I was doing."

Today, with over 297,000 followers and over 2,000 videos, her persistence has led to collaborations and recognition on an international scale.

Her first video was of making pone, where she didn't show herself on camera.

"At first, I thought I had to show myself, but then I saw videos where others didn't, so I tried that," she recalled. Gradually, she began appearing on camera, though it took years to build her confidence.

Laggan is known for seasonal recipes for occasions like Easter, Eid, Divali, Christmas and Thanksgiving.

ANOTHER RUDDER IS TOPS

David's son awarded Rhodes Scholarship

Noah Adisa Rudder, 21, youngest son of calypso icon David Michael Rudder was recently named among 11 Canadian students awarded Rhodes Scholarships to study at Oxford University next year.

A fourth-year student from Ajax, Ontario, studying at Victoria College, University of Toronto, Noah is pursuing a double major in Peace, Conflict and Justice, and Drama.

A November 18 release from the Rhodes Trust stated: "Eleven academically accomplished and civic-minded young Canadians have won the prestigious Rhodes Scholarship for Canada this year, continuing an extraordinary legacy that began in 1903."

Noah and peers "join a class of over 100 scholars worldwide to attend Oxford University next year, who stood out for their diversity of backgrounds and interests, exceptional academic achievement, inspiring leadership and civic engagement. Scholarships were awarded after a competitive selection process."

The Rhodes Scholarship is the world's preeminent and oldest graduate fellowship. The rigorous selection process aims to choose young people with proven academic excellence, exceptional character, leadership skills, and a desire to use their talents towards solving humanity's problems.

Noah hopes to pursue a Master of Public Policy and a Master of Fine Arts while at Oxford.

The one-year public policy master's programme at Oxford "offers a distinctive approach to learning about public policy; a transformative opportunity to current and future leaders with a commitment to public service," and the one-year master's in fine arts, is "an intensive studio-based programme in the practice of contemporary art."



Noah Rudder: will pursue a double major at Oxford University

Noah's achievement is being celebrated by the Rudder family which includes parents David and Christine and siblings.

David said he feels blessed. He recalled that for Noah's 17th birthday, he referred to him as Mr Enchanted and encouraged him to "keep on being clear and magical."

Explaining his decision to pursue two fields of study, Noah said: "It is what I know, the family I was born into and the culture I come from."

Noah, a writer and actor, is writing a play and has performed in the Toronto Fringe Festi-

val and University of Toronto productions, including the Bob Sketch Comedy Revue.

He worked with the Office of the President of Victoria College to implement the Scarborough Charter on Anti-Black Racism which was signed in February and won the Crescam Serviendo Student Leadership Award and Bader Opportunity Award for leadership and academic excellence.

Noah also did research with the World Bank's Office of the Chief Economist with a focus on knowledge generation in African nations pre-2009.



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The flights to Guyana from Amsterdam's Schiphol Airport will begin the June 2025

Holland to Guyana

KLM announces direct flights from Amsterdam to Georgetown

Get ready to fly from Amsterdam to Georgetown, Guyana! KLM has announced the launch of its Amsterdam-Georgetown route, set to begin on June 4, 2025. This new addition is part of KLM's expanding intercontinental network.

Starting June 4, 2025, KLM will operate two weekly flights from Amsterdam to Georgetown, with a brief stopover in Sint Maarten on the way. The route will use an Airbus 330-200 aircraft, offering 18 seats in World Business Class and 246 seats in Economy Class. Flights are scheduled for Wednesdays and Saturdays, departing Amsterdam Schiphol Airport at 10:00 and arriving in

Georgetown at 16:35 local time.

KLM's Georgetown route is aimed at meeting growing demand from the rapidly developing Guyanese market, reflecting the airline's commitment to serving dynamic and emerging destinations worldwide. With these new flights, KLM opens up more travel options for passengers while fostering closer connections between the Netherlands and South America.

Flight Details for Amsterdam-Georgetown Route:

Outbound Flight (KL789):

Departs Amsterdam Schiphol at 10:00, ar-

riving in Sint Maarten at 13:00.

Departs Sint Maarten at 14:20, arriving at Georgetown's Cheddi Jagan International Airport at 16:35 local time.

Return Flight (KL789):

Departs Georgetown at 17:55, arriving in Amsterdam Schiphol the next day at 09:15 local time.

This new route not only adds convenience for travelers between Europe and Guyana but also supports the economic growth and global connectivity to the South American CARICOM nation.

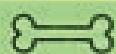
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Not Vybzining (again)

Planned Vybz Kartel performance during Trinidad Carnival faces backlash

A promoter in Trinidad & Tobago has sought to clarify details of a Carnival Friday concert featuring Vybz Kartel after an earlier announcement of the event, featuring the Jamaican dancehall superstar during the country's annual cultural festivities, sparked immediate backlash in the twin island republic.

Critics of the concert accused the promoters and Kartel of disrespecting Trinidadian culture on a day traditionally dedicated to spotlighting the top soca artistes.

In one video making the rounds on social media, a T&T actor/comedian addresses Kartel directly, telling the 'Worl Boss' to "Put some respect on our Carnival season".

"Vybz Kartel, now everybody respects you because of your legendary history, but you see what you're doing there, planning to have your own concert on 'Fantastic Friday', the Friday before Carnival, I don't think too much people is going to agree with that," the entertainer popularly known as Starks said. "So, please, before things get hectic, go back to the drawing board, because if it is one thing about Trinidadians, you see when it comes to our Carnival season, we don't want to hear nothing else."

In a statement, promoters One Caribbean Music Festival sought to clear the air, noting that the event "features a stellar cast of superstar performers from across the region representing 80 per cent soca and 20 per cent other genres of musical performances.

"The One Caribbean Music organisation con-



Soca artiste Yankey Boy is protesting the planned Vybz Kartel concert in Trinidad

sists of a group of individuals with a deep love for all Caribbean music. We are following the long tradition of well-loved events that have invited performers from all over the world to participate in the greatest show on earth," the organisers

said.

Kartel, real name Adidja Palmer, was freed from a murder charge earlier this year after spending nearly 13 years in prison.

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West Indies and Guyana cricket legend Alvin Kallicharran (right) with co-author Tony McWatt

COLOUR BLIND

Cricket legend Alvin Kallicharran releases autobiography

West Indies and Guyanese cricket legend, Alvin Kallicharran, has officially unveiled his autobiography.

The 75-year-old former batting inspiration, has released Colour Blind, a compelling look at his journey in cricket and the role the sport played in bridging racial divides. Launched at the Oasis Cafe in Georgetown, Guyana, the book highlights Kallicharran's personal experiences as a professional cricketer and serves as a guide for aspiring young players.

Kallicharran, who earned the title of Wisden Cricketer of the Year in 1983, achieved over 20,000 runs in his illustrious nine-year career and shared at the event that cricket opened countless doors for him, inspiring his desire to give back to the sport and to his homeland,

Guyana. Reflecting on his humble beginnings, Kallicharran spoke of the values of "hard work, perseverance, hunger, and passion" that carried him from Port Mourant, Berbice to international fame. He also credited iconic figures like Basil Butcher, Lance Gibbs, Rohan Kanhai, and Sir Gary Sobers as mentors who guided his path.

"The game has been so good to me, from the village to the international world. Hard work, perseverance, hunger, passion and the desire to play this sport," he said. "I believe it's my time to give back to Guyana and Berbice, because without patience you achieve mediocrity."

Kallicharran, who averaged 44.43 in 66 Test matches, including 12 hundreds and 21

half-centuries, spoke of how he became involved in cricket. "The life journey, mixing of races, the journey started with Basil Butcher giving me my first cricket bat. Lance Gibbs was one of my greatest mentors, Rohan Kanhai and Sir Gary Sobers are a big part of my life and we're all different colors. Going to England playing cricket and making money off the white man, how can I turn back and say it prejudice, so it's about bringing oneness to us as a people," said Kallicharran.

The event also featured the book's co-author, Tony McWatt, and remarks from Dr. Ritesh Tularam on behalf of Minister of Education Priya Manickchand, underscoring Colour Blind as both a memoir and a call for unity through sports.



Legalize the 'erb

Junior Gong Marley calls on all Caribbean nations to decriminalize marijuana

A Grammy-winning reggae artist is urging all Caribbean governments to decriminalize marijuana.

Reggae artist Damian "Junior Gong" Marley, son of the late reggae great, Robert "Nesta" Marley, is emphasizing its medicinal benefits and cultural significance. Appearing on October 26th at the World Creole Music Festival in Dominica, Marley urged more nations to follow in the footsteps of countries that have eased restrictions on cannabis.

A long-time advocate for marijuana use in both personal and religious contexts, Marley highlighted the plant's healing potential, performing his hit song "Medication" alongside his brother, Stephen Marley. During the performance, Marley recited a poem celebrating the

therapeutic and industrial uses of cannabis, underscoring the scientific and cultural support for decriminalization.

Marley commended Dominica for decriminalizing possession of small amounts in 2020, which permits up to 28 grams for personal use and the cultivation of three plants. Since 2014, several Caribbean territories – including Bermuda, Trinidad and Tobago, Jamaica, Antigua and Barbuda, Saint Kitts and Nevis, and the U.S. Virgin Islands – have enacted or approved laws to decriminalize the use of small amounts of marijuana. Additionally, Barbados and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines have legalized medical cannabis cultivation.

As more Caribbean countries consider easing cannabis regulations, including Guyana and

The Bahamas, Marley hopes to see regional governments expand their recognition of marijuana's role in both healthcare and cultural practices, especially for the Rastafarian community.

In 2016, Marley, the youngest son of reggae legend and cannabis cult hero Bob Marley, went into business with the legal weed company Ocean Grown Extracts to convert a 77,000 square foot former California prison into a cannabis grow-op that would cultivate medical marijuana for state dispensaries. In 2017, he was also one of 20 investors who acquired a 60 percent stake in High Times, its digital media platforms and its increasingly popular Cannabis Cup trade shows. His net worth is estimated at USD 20 million.

A LITERARY GIANT

Trinidad-born author Elizabeth Nunez passes, leaving behind a legacy of stories and scholarship

NEW YORK: Caribbean immigrant author and lecturer, Elizabeth Nunez, whose works masterfully explored themes of family, colonialism's lingering effects, and the immigrant experience, has died.

According to the New York Times, she passed away at her home in Brooklyn. She was 80. Her son, Jason Harrell, told the Times the cause was complications from a stroke.

Dr. Nunez was celebrated for her ability to weave the complexities of identity, belonging, and history into her novels, often with sharp commentary on American academia and the New York publishing world.

A Life Rooted in Stories and Scholarship

Born on February 18, 1944, in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, Dr. Nunez grew up in a prominent family of Portuguese and African descent.

Raised under the British colonial education system, she developed an early love for literature, devouring works by English authors like Enid Blyton and Jane Austen. This literary upbringing shaped her identity, even as she sought to move beyond the Eurocentric narratives of her childhood.

Her first novel, *When Rocks Dance* (1986), marked the beginning of her literary journey. Initially planning to write about a modern academic in America, she instead delved into the historical and cultural tensions of her Trinidadian heritage.

Exploring Identity and Belonging

Dr. Nunez's novels often reflected her personal journey as a Trinidadian navigating life in the United States. *Beyond the Limbo Silence* (1998) mirrored her own experience as a young student attending a small Catholic college in Wisconsin, where she confronted her ignorance of Caribbean history and colonialism's harsh truths.

In Grace (2003), she portrayed the challenges of a Caribbean-born professor in Brooklyn, reflecting her own career at Medgar Evers College, where she encountered tensions with Black American colleagues.

Her critically acclaimed *Prospero's Daughter* (2006) reimaged Shakespeare's *The Tempest* in a Trinidadian setting, grappling with themes of xenophobia, power, and cultural clash.

Academic and Literary Contributions

Dr. Nunez earned her Ph.D. in literature



Elizabeth Nunez: authored 11 novels and leaves behind a literary legacy

from New York University and held leadership roles at Medgar Evers College, including chair of the English department and provost. She later joined Hunter College as a distinguished professor of English, retiring earlier this year.

A tireless advocate for Black literature, she co-founded the National Black Writers Conference, directing it for over a decade.

Despite her deep connection to the Caribbean, Dr. Nunez resisted being boxed in as a "Caribbean writer," emphasizing her broader literary contributions. "I don't mind being classified as a Caribbean writer," she told The Miami Herald in 2006, "as long as it's a subcategory in

literary fiction."

Legacy

Nunez authored 11 novels, including *Now Lila Knows* (2022). Her memoir, *Not for Everyday Use* (2014), offered a poignant look at her upbringing and the intricate relationships within her family.

She is survived by her son, Jason Harrell; 10 siblings; and two granddaughters.

Nunez leaves behind a literary legacy that transcends borders, championing stories that resonate with the complexities of identity, history, and the human spirit.



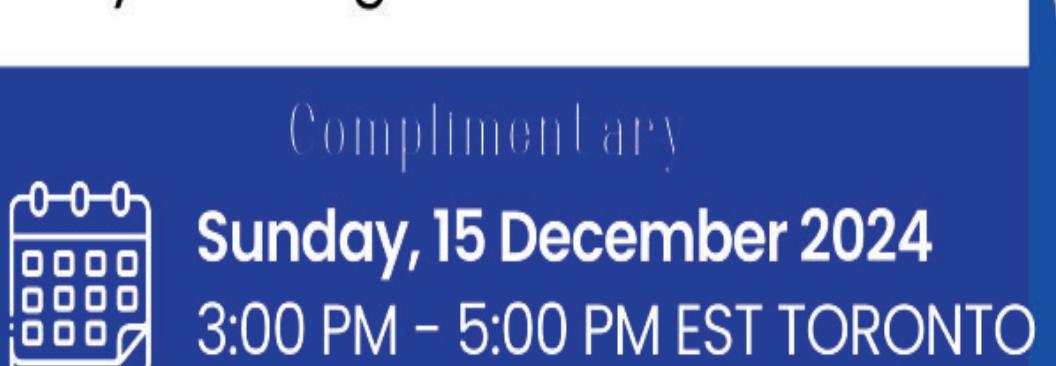
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