

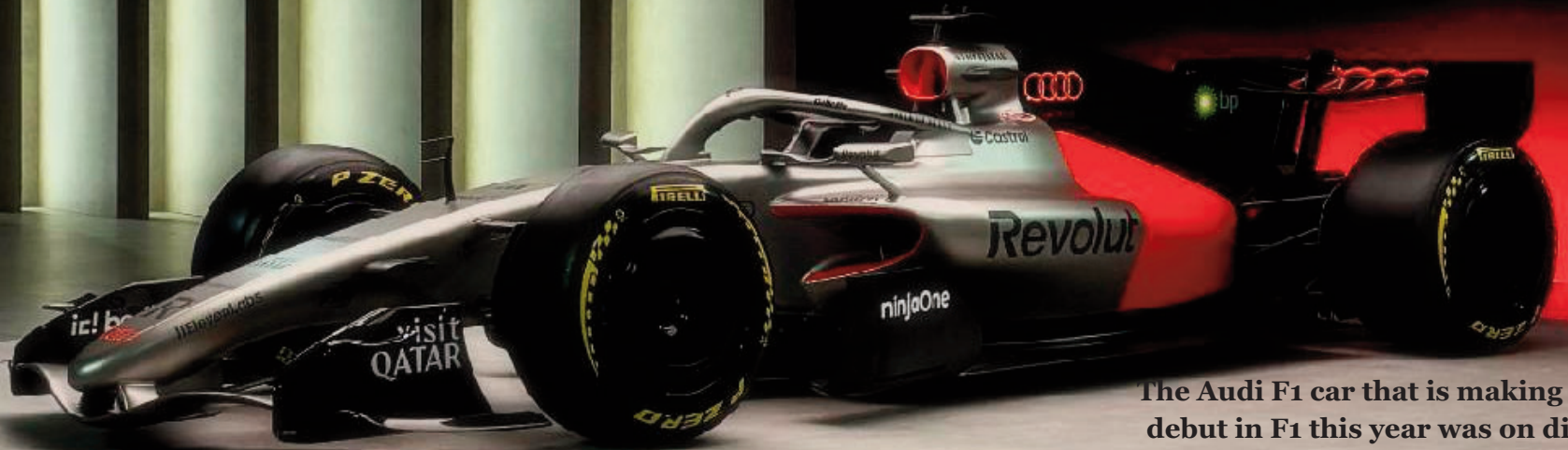


OMAIAH HALL
Meet Guyana's Road March Queen as she prepares to take on the world

Inside: Two page special photo essay of Canadian Auto Show



AUDI GETS SET TO SHINE AT 2026 F1 SEASON



The Audi F1 car that is making its debut in F1 this year was on display at the Canadian Auto Show

PHOTO BY MILAN MAHARAJ



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BEST VIDEO

Trinidadian producer gets the Grammy for Doechii's 'Anxiety'

Trinidad and Tobago-born producer Jolene Mendes was among the winners at the 66th Grammy Awards, accepting the trophy for Best Music Video on February 1 in Los Angeles for Doechii's "Anxiety."

Mendes was recognized as one of the producers behind the award-winning visual, which has been widely praised for its emotional depth, striking imagery, and avant-garde approach. While Doechii and the video's director, James Mackel, were not in attendance at the ceremony, Mendes accepted the Grammy on behalf of the team.

"As a producer, it makes it the best job in the world when we get to work with incredible creators like them," Mendes said while accepting the award. "They are both once-in-a-lifetime talents. This, of course, could not have been done without the 200 people that worked on it, so thank you all."

Released in April 2025, "Anxiety" quickly became one of the year's most talked-about music videos. The visually layered exploration of selfhood is set to a track that pays homage to Gotye and Kimbra's 2011 hit "Somebody That I Used to Know." The video has since amassed more than 62 million views on YouTube and earned widespread acclaim for its raw vulnerability and bold creative vision.

Mendes previously worked with director James Mackel on Schoolboy Q's "YEERN 101," a collaboration that led to their reunion on "Anxiety." In an interview last year, she reflected on the production process.

"I produced Anxiety with my business partners Sophia Sabella and Pablo Feldman through



Trinidadian Jolene Mendes, left, accepting the Grammy for Best Music Video

our company, More Avenue," Mendes said. "James had such a clear and beautiful vision for the video. It was a fast-moving production, but the process was deeply intentional and collaborative, which made it special."

Though she now divides her time between the east and west coasts of the United States, Mendes continues to represent Trinidad and Tobago on the global stage. She credits her up-

bringing for shaping her creative instincts and storytelling sensibility.

"Growing up, I was always in awe of films and series and the way they made me feel," she said. "Now I try to pay that forward through the stories I choose to produce."

"That sensibility always finds its way in," Mendes added. "I'm drawn to stories that feel deeply specific yet resonate universally."

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BE COMFORTABLE WITH Movement

Last time we spoke, we talked about clarity. About getting honest with yourself. About setting intentions that are not rushed, not borrowed, not based on pressure, but rooted in what actually matters to you. That kind of clarity changes things. It creates a quiet strength inside you. But clarity alone is not the finish line. It is the doorway.

Now comes the part that matters most. Movement.

I want you to imagine we are sitting across from each other right now. No noise. No distractions. Just a real conversation. I would look at you and ask one simple question. What have you been putting off, even though you know it is time?

Do not answer me out loud yet. Just sit with it for a moment.

There is always something. A decision. A conversation. A step you know would change the direction of your life if you took it. Most people do not stay stuck because they do not know what to do. They stay stuck because movement feels uncomfortable. Movement asks you to leave the familiar, even if the familiar is no longer working.

Here is what I know to be true, both from my own journey and from walking alongside others for years. Nothing changes until you move. Not perfectly. Not fear free. Just honestly.

This is where many people hesitate. They wait for confidence to arrive first. They wait for certainty. They wait until the timing feels better. But confidence is not the starting point. Action is. Confidence follows movement, not the other way around.

Think about your own life for a moment. Every meaningful shift you have ever made started with a step that felt uncertain. You did not

know how it would turn out, but you moved anyway. And here you are. Stronger than you realize.

That is not an accident.

Movement does not mean doing everything at once. It does not mean burning yourself out or forcing results. It means choosing not to stay frozen in place. It means deciding that even a small step forward is better than standing still.

I see this clearly in my own work, in my own growth, and in the creation of *The Strategic Goal Seeker's Handbook*. That book did not come together because everything felt easy. It came together because I kept moving, even when things felt heavy, even when clarity came in layers, even when I had to adjust and recalibrate along the way.

And that is exactly what I want for you.

Movement can be simple. It can look like making one phone call you have been avoiding. Writing down one honest goal instead of ten vague ones. Blocking time on your calendar for yourself and protecting it. Saying yes to something that stretches you. Saying no to something that drains you.

It does not have to be loud to be powerful.

What matters is that it is intentional.

Let me share something with you gently. You do not owe anyone perfection. You do not owe the world an explanation for your pace. You owe yourself honesty. And honesty often whispers, it is time to move.

So take a breath right now. Slow it down. Feel your body settle. Ask yourself, what is one step I know I can take next?

Not five steps. Not the whole

plan. Just one.

This is where transformation becomes real. Not in the thinking, not in the planning, but in the doing. This is where your intentions begin to breathe.

There is a quiet confidence that comes from keeping promises to yourself. Every time you move forward, even in a small way, you reinforce trust within yourself. You begin to believe yourself again. And that belief changes how you show up everywhere else.

I have watched people shift their entire lives by making one clear move at the right moment. Not because it was dramatic, but because it was aligned. Because it came from truth.

You already have that truth inside you.

The danger is not moving too slowly. The danger is convincing yourself that you will move later, while time keeps moving without you.

You are not behind. You are not late. But you are being invited to participate more fully in your own life.

This is what moving forward really means. It means choosing yourself without needing applause. It means acting even when the out-



HEART
& SOUL

with
Dianne Ojar



come is not guaranteed. It means trusting that you will figure things out as you go, because you always have.

And you do not have to do it alone.

Everything I share, everything I create, including *The Strategic Goal Seeker's Handbook*, exists to support this exact moment. The moment when clarity turns into action. When intention turns into momentum. When you stop waiting for permission and start responding to what you already know.

So let me leave you with this.

If nothing changes, nothing changes. But if you take one step today, everything can begin to shift.

You matter enough to move.

And if you want support as you do, you already know where to find me.

*If you feel called to go deeper, explore *The Strategic Goal Seeker's Handbook* by Dianne Ojar and the guided tools available at master-yourshifthypnosis.com. This work is here to support real movement, real clarity, and real change. When you are ready, take the next step.*



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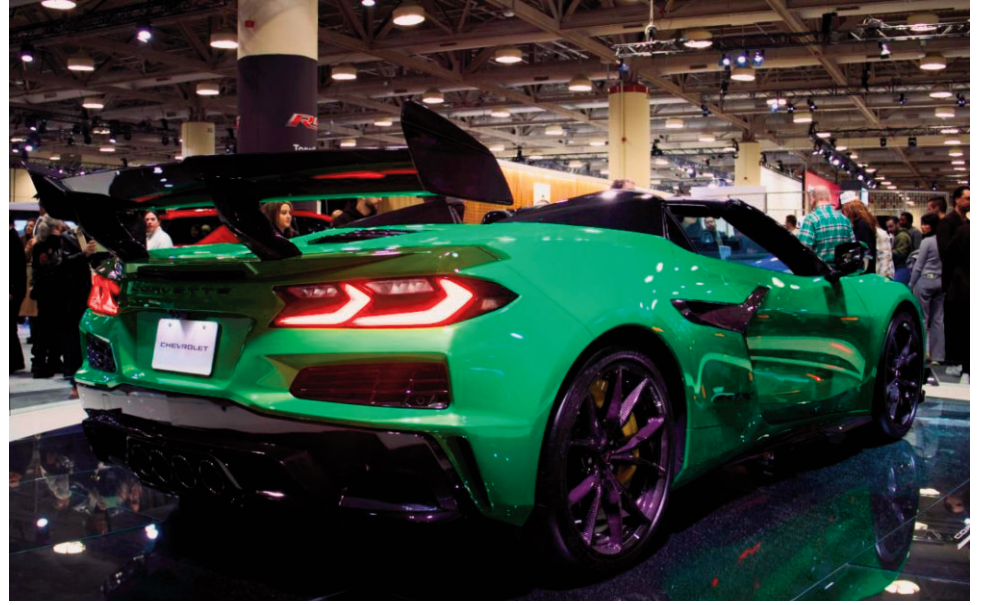
BEST OF AUTOSHOW 2026

Photo essay captures the stars of the Canadian Show held in February

Photos by Janahan Harikrishna and Milan Maharaj



Two retro 911s, one of which was built by Singer



Corvette ZR1X, 1260hp. Fastest Corvette ever made



Recreation of Gilles Villeneuve's Ferrari for the "Gilles Villeneuve—Rise of a Champion" documentary



Aston Martin Valhalla, a car that was designed in conjunction with their F1 department, Fernando Alonso in particular



Cadillac debut F1 car with the demo livery



McLaren-Mercedes SLR - One of just 12 on Earth

BEST OF AUTOSHOW 2026

Photo essay captures the stars of the Canadian Show held in February

Photos by Janahan Harikrishna and Milan Maharaj



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Koenigsegg Jesko Attack



Mercedes CLE53 (blue one) Mercedes GT55 (grey one) show off their sexy rear ends



The Pfaff display including the McLaren P1, HDK SLR, and Singer 911



BMW's EV display, consisting of the BMW iX and i4 M40



Bugatti Mistral, 1 of just 99 produced

Reggae Meets Soul

Beres Hammond to headline Mother's Day show in New York

The Jamaican-born King of Lovers Rock Beres Hammond will headline the "Reggae Meets Soul" Mother's Day celebration at the UBS Arena in Elmont, New York, on Saturday, May 9.

The UBS Arena, located at 2400 Hempstead Turnpike, on the grounds of Belmont Park, sits on the border of Queens and Nassau County, making it easily accessible from New York City and Long Island.

Anthony "ER Guru" Turner, the Jamaican-born, New York-based entertainment publicist, told Caribbean Life on Monday, Feb. 23, that Hammond, who, for the past two decades, has embraced New York "like family," will "return the love when he headlines the Mother's Day Experience on Mother's Day weekend 2026."

Jammins Events CEO George Crooks, promoter of the UBS Arena event, said, "The

lineup raises the emotional stakes with the addition of Romain Virgo, legendary soul songstress Stephanie Mills, and Lady Da Flame, who will join Hammond on stage."

Crooks said that Hammond has been a "one-man wrecking army, delivering sold-out performances at festivals, theatres and major arenas that fans say feel like reunions.

"His catalog is filled with timeless love songs, heartbreak anthems, and uplifting reggae classics that every reggae lover knows the words," he said.

Jamaican-born, Brooklyn resident Marie Johnson, who attended Hammond's UBS concert last year with Sean Paul and Shaggy, said, "Beres doesn't just sing to you, he sings with you." She said the addition of Romain Virgo will complement Hammond's set, which features his growing catalog of contemporary love songs.



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Singer Nesta Nelson (c) and her dancers after winning the recent Dancehall Monarch competition in Georgetown, Guyana

JUST THE BEGINNING

Guyanese Mashramani Dancehall Monarch is focused on the future

For Guyanese-born artist Nesta Nelson, winning the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport-organized Mashramani Dancehall Monarch title in Georgetown is a moment she will cherish for the rest of her life.

“It feels great because being a woman in a male-dominated competition,” she told Caribbean Life after winning the competition on Sunday night, Feb. 15. “I had to level up triple times more to earn that title.”

The East Coast Demerara native took the top prize thanks to her popular dancehall single “Ride”, a song she deliberately chose to push herself beyond her Soca comfort zone.

“I wanted to step outside my comfort zone and pay homage to a genre that is bold, confident and expressive,” she said, describing the move from Soca to dancehall as a natural evolution.

The strategy worked.

“Ride had the best crowd response based on the marketing

strategy my team and I used to make the song popular,” Nesta said.

When asked what set her apart from the other competitors, her answer was simple and assured: “My vision for creativity and artistic expression.”

Having won the Junior Calypso Monarch titles in 2007 and 2008 as a child prodigy, Nesta was elated with winning the dancehall competition in 2026, declaring the victory carried deep meaning.

“This is the result of discipline, setbacks and unwavering belief,” she said.

As Guyana’s first female Dancehall Monarch, Nesta is already focused on the future.

“Creating more great music that resonates with fans across the globe is what I intend to do,” she said. “This title is just the beginning.”



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ROAD MARCH QUEEN

Guyana's Omaiah Hall eyes expanding her presence on the soca circuit

Guyana's reigning Road March Queen, 24-year-old Omaiah Hall, is working to build regional connections and expand her presence on the Soca circuit.

Hall, who placed third in the Senior Soca Monarch competition last year, says Guyanese Soca artistes must have a deep love for the genre to remain authentic. Though she is now firmly rooted in Soca, Hall admitted her musical journey did not begin there.

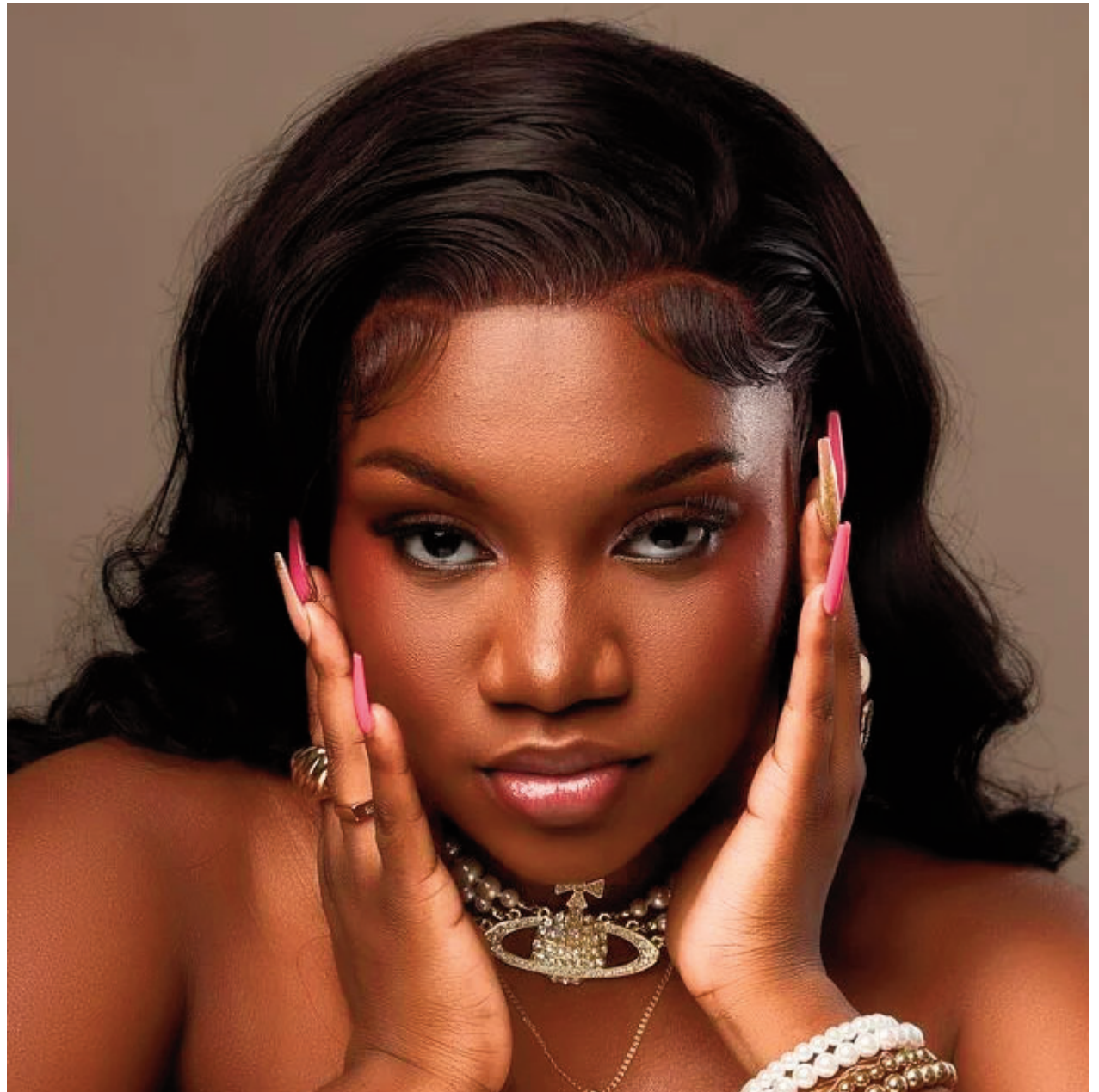
"I was never a person who sang Calypso or Soca music. My father is a pianist and jazz musician. I just never found an appeal for being on stage and wining up," she said. Her passion, she explained, was originally R&B.

Hall's perspective shifted after she won the Junior Calypso Monarch competition in 2020 during Mashramani, Guyana's annual Republic Day festival held on February 23. A few years later, she began experimenting with Soca music, and by 2023, she said the genre had completely captured her.

"In 2022, I realized I only wanted to do Soca music. Soca found me!" she said.

That transition quickly paid off. Hall released "We Fetting" in 2023, followed by "R" in 2024, both of which gained strong local traction. "I was booked and busy and one year later in 2025, I won the Road March title, with 'Breakway' — dethroning Melissa 'Vanilla' Roberts, who had been the Road March Queen for a decade," she said.

As she continues to build her catalogue, reputation and fanbase, Hall has released a 2026 Soca track, "Happy Feeling," which she says has been receiving strong support in Trinidad and Tobago. She has also released a second single, "Foreva," accompanied by a music video, which



Omaiah Hall

she has positioned as her Road March contender for Guyana Carnival 2026.

While Guyana's official Carnival takes place annually in May, Hall believes both Guyana's festivities and Trinidad's Carnival offer unique experiences. "Guyana is becoming more open to Soca now because of the younger generation's involvement in the genre," she said.

She noted, however, that Dancehall remains dominant in Guyana, prompting Mashramani organizers to introduce a Dancehall Monarch competition over the past three years. "Guyana is all dancehall. Many say Soca music is too happy of a genre," she said, adding that artistes such as O.K.C, Pahjo and Vinel Hinds have consistently represented and popularized Soca in the country.

During Trinidad and Tobago Carnival, Hall

has appeared at Nailah Blackman's concert in January and also performed at A-Team Fridays, Vice Nightclub and the Eye Slam concert series.

"When it comes to my music, and my performance style, I'll say, Omaiah Hall will always bring vocals. Added to that, I'm a strong performer. I will wine up!" she said.

Those attributes, she said, may have contributed to her being named Guyana's Female Soca Artiste of the Year in 2025.

Hall credits several regional artistes for inspiring her career, including Machel Montano and Trinidad and Tobago's Fay Ann Lyons. "I love Fay Ann. I have been compared to her many times. She is powerful—the way she commands the stage, the way she is unapologetic about who she is," she said.

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SHE'S A MONARCH

Savita Singh is the first woman to take top Chutney title in T&T

In 31 years of the competition, no woman had ever taken the title. Last Sunday night at Skinner Park, San Fernando, that changed. Singh's performance of "The Ring" took the title, a \$400,000 first prize, and a place in the history of a genre that had never fully made room for a woman at the very top.

Singh, who flew to Auckland, New Zealand, on Friday to perform on Valentine's Day yesterday, says the weight of that reality is still settling in.

"Any artiste in that similar position would probably tell you that until you actually hear your name called out publicly in front the audience, only then does it register legitimately and confirm," she shared over WhatsApp. "I asked myself, 'wait is this real, did he just announce my name?' You really do go blank for a few seconds questioning if this is true."

She remembers the surge of feeling as the scale of what she had achieved sank in. Her team lifting her. Her heart racing. The rush of thoughts that came all at once.

"My heart immediately started to thump quickly and my team grabbed and hoisted me into the air in celebration. I still feel so excited and nervous as I think about it now," she continued.

"I experienced probably every possible emotion simultaneously, recalling the long nights we worked, the tireless early mornings of rehearsals, and my 30 years of hard work and musical travel tours away from my loved ones suddenly felt like it made sense."

Her thoughts turned inward almost immediately as she considered the unconditional support of her family over the years. A seasoned performer, Singh has spent years carrying her music far beyond local stages, performing across the United States, Canada, the Caribbean, Europe, India, Dubai and as far as Fiji, steadily building a reputation as one of the genre's most travelled voices.

"My eyes filled with tears and I thought of my family. How proud I just made them," she said. "Then I thanked the Supreme being, closed my eyes, tears ran down my cheeks, and acknowledged what he just did for me. Honestly, it



Savita Singh — first woman to win the Chutney Monarch crown

was a divine and spiritual moment for me."

Singh is thoughtful about the kind of music she chooses to make. Even before "The Ring" was written, she knew what she wanted her chutney soca to stand for.

"I've always been strict about my musical deliverance relating to positive, conversational, uplifting and socially acceptable compositions," she said—"that are enlightening, topical, and not degrading to our society".

The idea for the song grew out of everyday life. Conversations. Relationship talk she kept hearing around her. "The Ring" tells the story of a married man leaving his wedding ring at home

every time he goes out to party.

"I'm sure listeners have dealt with a similar issue," she said with a smile. "I'm inspired daily meeting people, couples, and the occasional banter of relationship issues. I picked up that 'The Ring' would be a clever theme to expound on musically."

There was also intention behind the sound. Savita wanted something that felt modern but still connected to the genre's core.

"I believed the song contained modern musical elements of both chutney and soca present in it, and decided to use it as my choice to challenge," she said.

NEVER CHANGE

Nessa B goes for heart and resilience with new single

Reggae and Dancehall artist Nessa B returns with *Never Change*, a heartfelt song rooted in resilience, spiritual grounding, and unwavering determination.

Nessa B has partnered with industry powerhouses Temps Music and AfroWorld Music — the same dynamic duo behind Terry Ganzie’s acclaimed project “We Rise,” known for crafting uplifting and cross-cultural productions (Jamaica Observer). Together, they deliver a timeless and emotionally charged record. The single is out now, giving fans a sincere sonic experience that amplifies the song’s message of strength and perseverance. An equally compelling video is on its way.

Never Change opens with a reminder that true power lies in rising after the fall. Anchored by its moving chorus — “Even if you fall, find your strength and start over... Never change your heart” — the song highlights Nessa B’s gift for inspirational storytelling and emotional connection, showcasing her musical versatility on full display.

Nessa B continues to stand out as one of the most relatable emerging voices in Reggae and Dancehall. Her music captures real-life struggles, triumphs, and inner battles — the same challenges faced by listeners everywhere. From personal growth to spiritual gratitude to overcoming adversity, her authenticity is unmistakable, allowing her to connect deeply with audiences across backgrounds.

In a crowded musical landscape, Nessa B distinguishes herself with empowering and intentional artistry. Her ability to blend Reggae soulfulness, Dancehall style, and melodic honesty has defined her creative identity, while past releases reveal her skill in offering everything from upbeat motivational tracks to reflective, storytelling-driven selections. Her range makes her one of the most dynamic rising artists in Caribbean music.

Driven, sincere, and endlessly dedicated to her craft, Nessa B is an industry mover and shaker whose music and hustle move in perfect rhythm. Her determination continues to earn admiration throughout the Caribbean and beyond as she forges her path with purpose.

Never Change is available now on all digital streaming platforms.



Nessa B — blends reggae with soul and dancehall

KES ON TOUR

Top T&T Soca band taking their music to Canada, the USA and Europe

Following the overwhelming response to their recently announced UK and European run, KestheBand has officially expanded their 'Roots, Rock, Soca' Tour with newly announced dates across the United States and Canada. In addition, the band has added a second show in The Netherlands and a brand-new stop in Belgium – further solidifying their growing international footprint.

The North American leg will see the Trinidad and Tobago-born collective bring their electrifying live experience to major music capitals across the US and Canada, continuing their mission to share Caribbean culture on some of the world's most celebrated stages. This exciting announcement follows KestheBand's groundbreaking, sold-out Summer-Stage Shows at Central Park in 2025 and their historic January 2026 headlining performance at the Unity Jazz Festival at Jazz at Lincoln Center.

What began as a three-city European run has quickly expanded in response to demand, signaling a defining global moment for the band and for the Soca music genre at large.

"Taking Soca to legendary music cities around the world is deeply meaningful for us," said Kees Dieffenthaler, lead vocalist of KestheBand. "These are places that have shaped global music history for generations. To bring the sound of Trinidad and Tobago – the spirit of Carnival, the rhythm of our ancestors, the joy of our people – into those spaces is powerful. Soca belongs on those stages. It belongs in every conversation about world music. This tour is about continuing the journey with music lovers from all walks of life and planting that cultural flag with pride."

The 'Roots, Rock, Soca' Tour represents the full spectrum of KesTheBand's diverse identity and seismic evolution. Roots honours calypso traditions, African rhythms, and an-



Kees Dieffenthaler leads the collective known as Kes the Band

central storytelling. Rock embodies growth, experimentation, and global fusion. Soca remains the heartbeat – a vibrant, contemporary expression of Caribbean freedom and celebration. Together, they form the unmistakable sonic signature that is etched into the hearts of fans and has propelled the band into the international spotlight.

Presented in partnership with WME and Live Nation, the tour underscores the surging global demand for Kestheband's dynamic live performances. Each show promises a high-energy, immersive experience: blending beloved anthems with fresh arrangements that reflect the legendary band's continued artistic evolution.



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Queens of the 2000's R&B scene, Brandy and Monica, will perform at the festival between April 30 and May 10

QUEENS OF R&B

Brandy and Monica set to headline St Lucia Jazz and Arts Festival

R&B fans, get ready — Brandy and Monica are officially heading to St. Lucia.

The iconic hitmakers have been announced as part of the St. Lucia Jazz and Arts Festival, running April 30 to May 10, with the songstresses set to headline the festival's final event, The Ultimate Celebration, on Sunday, May 10. The reveal was made by Chairman of the St. Lucia Tourism Authority, Thaddeus M. Antoine, during a media engagement at Sandals Regency, instantly igniting excitement across the island and beyond.

Following their successful joint tour of the United States, Brandy and Monica are adding St. Lucia to their list of international stops, bringing one of R&B's most beloved collaborations to the Caribbean. The tour, which celebrates their time-

less catalog and historic partnership, has been selling out venues and drawing rave reviews, proving that the queens of '90s and 2000s R&B still command the global stage.

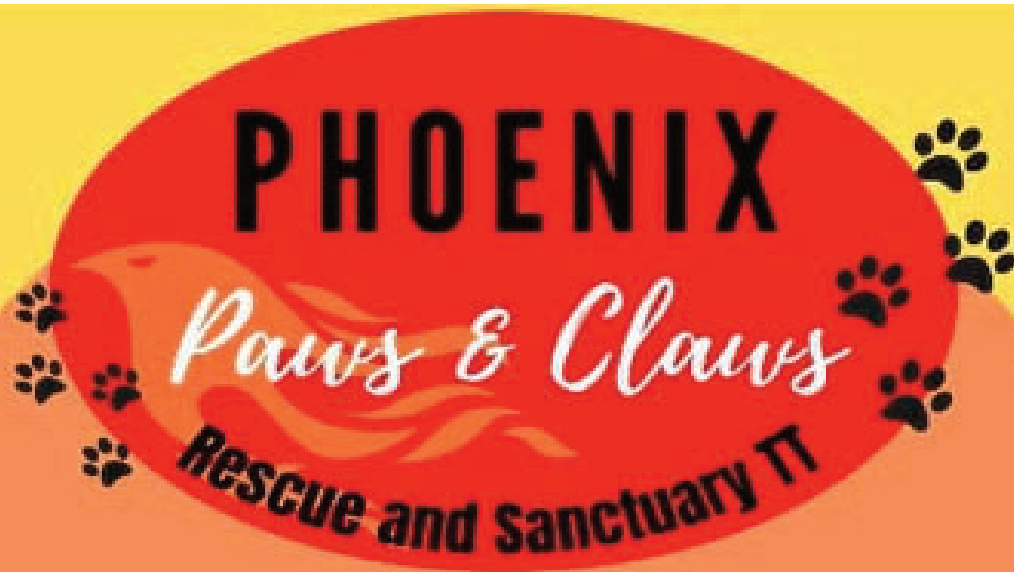
Their appearance is set to be one of the festival's biggest moments, as fans can expect a night filled with chart-topping hits, powerful vocals, and undeniable nostalgia, all against the backdrop of St. Lucia's world-class scenery.

The May 10 grand finale is shaping up to be a showstopper, with Brandy and Monica sharing the spotlight with an all-star lineup that includes Billy Ocean, Beverley Knight, and Mervin Wilkinson and Friends. The night promises a rich mix of R&B, soul, jazz and Caribbean rhythms, delivering a fitting close to one of the region's most anticipated festivals.

Adding to the excitement, organizers have announced that early bird tickets are now available at 10% off, giving music lovers a limited time to secure their spot at a discounted rate.


The St. Lucia Jazz and Arts Festival continues to build its reputation as a premier cultural event, bringing together international icons, regional favourites, and local talent across multiple stages over 11 days. The festival also celebrates art, fashion and culture, making it a cornerstone of St. Lucia's entertainment and tourism calendar.

With Brandy and Monica now officially on board, expectations are soaring for a festival edition that promises star power and unforgettable performances, all culminating in a grand finale already being billed as unmissable.



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Reggae Half-Time

After Bad Bunny, could Jamaica's music get the World's biggest platform?

This year's Super Bowl halftime show wasn't just a performance. It was a cultural referendum when Latino superstar Bad Bunny graced the stage in California. The truth is, he wasn't just entertaining 100,000 fans in a stadium — he had the attention of a global audience numbered in the hundreds of millions.

In past Super Bowl halftime shows, we've witnessed Michael Jackson freeze in silence for nearly two minutes in 1993 while 100 million people screamed. We cannot ignore the performance of Prince as he charmed fans with his biggest hit "Purple Rain" in actual rain. These were moments in time forever etched in our minds and music folklore.

Madonna turned it into a Roman Empire spectacle. It was also the stage where pop star Rihanna revealed her baby bump; where Kendrick Lamar delivered cultural commentary and Compton pride. Years earlier, Shakira and Jennifer Lopez delivered a Latin music showcase. Then came Bad Bunny in 2026.

He didn't attempt to out-dance Michael. He didn't try to out-musician Prince. Instead, he represented the social media generation. He represented Spanish-speaking America and global youth culture. Bad Bunny performed in Spanish — no crossover English chorus, no diluted verse for American radio comfort. America crossed over to him as he declared, "This is who I am."

Is reggae/dancehall in the conversation?

Jamaican and Caribbean audiences are asking: why hasn't reggae or dancehall had a defining feature on the Super Bowl halftime stage? It is a big ask, but the music's global impact is undeniable. Reggae king Bob Marley remains one of the most influential musicians in world history. Others like Jimmy Cliff, Peter Tosh, Bunny Wailer, Toots Hibbert and riddim twins Sly & Robbie have shaped the global music space.

Modern crossover success is just as evident. Sean Paul has delivered multiple Billboard hits, while Shaggy has produced diamond-selling songs that still dominate stadium playlists. Dancehall and reggae sounds from Vybz Kartel,



Cat Coore — a cultural ambassador

Chronixx, Popcaan and OMI have shaped hip-hop production and pop songwriting over the past decade. Jamaican cadence runs through global charts.

There has been at least one historic touchpoint. Dancehall icon Bounty Killer appeared during the 2002 Super Bowl halftime show as a guest with No Doubt, performing their hit collaboration "Hey Baby." While not a headlining or featured Jamaican segment, the moment marked the first time a dancehall artist appeared on the halftime stage before a global audience. Yet a Jamaican-led feature performance has never commanded the show.

Why? Is it market size? Industry politics? Lack of sustained U.S. radio dominance? Or branding strategy? Which Jamaican dancehall/reggae artist could break through? Realistically, the most logical candidate remains Sean Paul. His catalog is deep. The Grammy credibility is there. The crossover history is proven. Shaggy? Sure. He has multi-generational appeal

and global recognition. From the younger dancehall recorders, Vybz Kartel and Popcaan carry streaming power and international affiliations, while Spice brings mainstream visibility and strong brand presence.

Imagine a Jamaican-centered halftime five-minute feature performance inspired by Bob Marley and Jamaican culture that includes dance and much more, with Sean Paul, Shaggy, Stephen, Ziggy and Jr. Gong, a reggaeton headliner to pay homage to the role that reggae has played in the genre, and a hip-hop collaborator like Drake or Lauryn Hill. That wouldn't just entertain — it would propel global dancehall/reggae recognition.

And for Jamaica, the larger question remains: when will reggae and dancehall receive that platform? The influence of our music is undeniable. The global audience exists. Perhaps the only thing missing is an invitation from halftime show producer Jay-Z and the NFL to the halftime shindig.



A TRIBUTE TO JIMMY

Montego Bay to erect statue of late singer at entrance to Jimmy Cliff Blvd

The municipal corporation in the western parish of St James Parish has approved a resolution to erect a statue of late reggae icon Jimmy Cliff at the entrance to Jimmy Cliff Boulevard in the resort city of Montego Bay.

The resolution, which will be submitted to the Ministry of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sport for review, was presented and unanimously approved by councillors at a recent meeting of the municipal body.

The move comes two months after Government Senator Charles Sinclair called for Cliff's home in Somerton, also in St James, to be converted into a museum and for a statue of the celebrated entertainer to be installed along Jimmy

Cliff Boulevard.

Presenting the resolution, Councillor Darnion Brown of the Montego Bay West division cited previous efforts to honour Cliff's contribution to the parish and Jamaica, including the March 2019 renaming of Jimmy Cliff Boulevard, formerly Gloucester Avenue.

"Whereas Jimmy Cliff has, in his chosen vocation, achieved local, regional, and international acclaim, and has contributed to the recognition and development of Brand Jamaica, and has done so in a manner which has been inspirational and dignified... be it resolved that this honourable council collaborate with the honourable Minister of Sport, Entertainment, and

Gender to commission and erect a statue at a suitable location at the entrance to Jimmy Cliff Boulevard," Brown said while reading the resolution.

He added that the council also intends to work with Cliff's family to establish a museum in his honour at an appropriate location in St James. "Be it further resolved that this council, in collaboration with the family of Jimmy Cliff, establish a museum in his honour at an appropriate place in the parish of St James. Be it further resolved that the resolution be sent to the honourable Minister of Culture and to the municipal corporations, for action and support," Brown said.



Machel on the road during Trinidad Carnival in February

Road March King

Veteran calypso and soca star Machel Montano on Wednesday cemented his legacy in Caribbean music history, becoming the all-time Road March record holder in Trinidad and Tobago after winning the 2026 title at the close of Carnival celebrations.

Montano secured his 12th Road March victory with his hit Encore, moving ahead of late calypso legend Lord Kitchener (Alwyn Roberts), with whom he had been tied following his win in 2025. The Road March title is awarded to the song played most frequently across judging points during Carnival's parade of the bands.

In a statement on social media, Culture Minister Michelle Benjamin praised the achievement, describing it as a historic milestone that reflects Montano's consistency, talent and enduring influence on Carnival culture. She noted that his music continues to unite the nation and raise the bar each year.

Montano's Encore dominated the two-day judging period, being played 171 times. He finished ahead of Aaron 'Voice' St. Louis, whose song Cyah Behave was played 127 times, and Bunji Garlin, whose Still a Road Man recorded 97 plays.

In other Carnival results, Lost Tribe, part of the Tribe Carnival Group, captured both the Large Band of the Year and overall Band of the Year titles with its presentation Island Circus. The band had recently faced criticism from Jason Gordon over the distribution of sex toys in goodie bags to female masqueraders.

Second place in the band competition went to Trinidad All Stars Steel Orchestra with Sailors Ashore in Japan, while Papparazzi Carnival secured third place with Elope: Destination I Do.

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CHIEF POPCAAN

Singer conferred traditional title of chief during ceremony in Ghana

Dancehall star Popcaan has been conferred with a traditional title in Ghana, where he is now being addressed as Nana Okofo Akro Kese following a ceremonial recognition during a recent visit to the West African nation.

The entertainer shared photos and videos from the event on Instagram, showing moments from what appeared to be a traditional ceremony in Ghana's Central Region. Captioning the post, Popcaan wrote, "Nana is Grateful!!! Love and respect to my people. Together we push #KESE."

In one clip shared online, a speaker highlighted the significance of the moment and the expectations attached to the role.

"We don't do this for the fun of it. We do this because we believe in you, that you can lead us," the speaker declared.

"So, Nana Okofo Akro Kese, now you have a big responsibility to lead the youths, not only in Central Region, but in the whole of Ghana as a chief. There are no small seats for a stool. You make it bigger or smaller. So now you are a chief, duly recognized by our people, so it's up to you to make it smaller or bigger. Congratulations, Nana."

Images from the ceremony show the dancehall artiste standing before a towering warrior statue and later wrapped in vibrant traditional kente cloth while seated indoors. Other clips captured drumming and cultural performances as members of the community gathered around him.

The title, "Nana Okofo Akro Kese," has been described as loosely translating to "great" or "mighty warrior chief."

Popcaan has visited Ghana several times in recent years, including in 2019 during the country's Year of the Return, which encouraged members of the African diaspora to visit. During that trip, he also toured Cape Coast Castle, where he laid a wreath in honour of his ancestors who were enslaved and transported to Jamaica and other parts of the world.

Fans quickly flooded the comments section with congratulatory messages, praising the entertainer for strengthening cultural connections between Jamaica and Ghana.

In 2025, Popcaan released his fifth studio album, *Nothing Without God*, a 14-track project reflecting themes of faith, resilience and spiritual growth.



Popcaan will now be known as Nana Okofo Akro Kese



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