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Lime

Monthly Lifestyle & Entertainment Magazine



THE 6TH BEATLE

UK mural honours the forgotten Trinidadian behind the pop supergroup

DIDDY vs DUDUS

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LEGENDARY

Ronaldinho brings Brazilian magic to Jamaica for '98 Reggae Boyz tribute

Brazilian football legend Ronaldinho will headline a four-day visit to Jamaica from December 3-7, with an exhibition match, a tribute to the historic 1998 Reggae Boyz World Cup squad and engagements with the island's music fraternity among the planned activities.

Dinho Promotions announced the visit in a press release, outlining a program designed to celebrate both the Brazilian superstar's illustrious career and the Jamaican team that made history at the 1998 FIFA World Cup in France.

A highlight of the visit will be a tribute dinner on Friday, December 4, where Ronaldinho will be honored and will join in recognizing members of Jamaica's 1998 World Cup squad.

Organizers said the former Reggae Boyz have not reunited as a group since their appearance in France. Most members have already indicated that they intend to attend the event.

The celebrations will move to the National Stadium in St. Andrew on Sunday, December 6, when a Ronaldinho and Friends XI faces the Jamaica Legends, a team made up primarily of players from that landmark squad.

The day's program will begin with an All-Manning versus All-daCosta schoolboy football clash, staged in cooperation with the Inter-Secondary Schools Sports Association. Several other prominent personalities are also expected to participate.

Ronaldinho's visit will extend beyond the pitch, with organizers expecting him to connect with members of Jamaica's music industry.

The 2002 World Cup champion is known to be a reggae fan and operates his own music label, Tu Música. He recently collaborated with Jamaican dancehall star Sean Paul on "Lead," a track from his CAMISA 10 album, which also features several Latin artists.

Dinho Promotions said the visit would give Jamaicans a rare opportunity to experience the "Magic of Ronaldinho," pointing to the joy he brought to football as well as the humility and generosity he has displayed throughout his career.

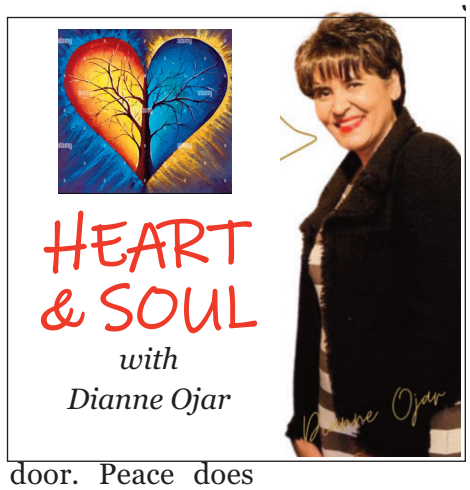


Ronaldinho will pay tribute to the legendary 1998 Reggae Boyz team

Ronaldinho enjoyed success with several leading European clubs, including Barcelona, Paris Saint-Germain and AC Milan. He reached the pinnacle of international football with Brazil's 2002 World Cup triumph and won the Ballon d'Or in 2005.

His appearance in Jamaica will bring together two football stories: the global appeal of one of Brazil's most celebrated players and the enduring legacy of the Reggae Boyz who took Ja-

WHAT ARE YOU Still Carrying?



Have you ever cleaned out a handbag or a drawer and found things you forgot were there? Old receipts, keys that no longer open anything, papers you meant to throw away, little items that kept adding weight without you noticing. Emotional weight can be like that. We carry old hurts, disappointments, anger, guilt, shame, and conversations that ended years ago, but somehow they are still taking up space inside us. I know what that feels like. You may think you have moved on, then one name, one memory, or one familiar situation brings the whole feeling back.

Sometimes we say we are fine because life kept moving. We worked, took care of people, handled responsibilities, and did what needed to be done. But moving forward on the outside does not always mean we released what happened on the inside. You can keep functioning while still carrying something heavy, and still feel the ache when you remember.

I do not say this to make you dig up every painful moment. I say it because what we carry quietly can shape how we live now. An old betrayal can make it hard to trust someone new. A past rejection can make you expect another one. Guilt can keep you punishing yourself long after everyone else has moved on. Anger can become the wall you use to keep from being hurt again. The moment may be over, but the weight can keep travelling with you.

Think of carrying a suitcase everywhere you go. At first, you know it is heavy. After a while, you adjust and stop noticing how much effort it takes. Then someone says, why not put it down? And you realize you had forgotten that putting it down was even an option. That is how emotional pain can become part of everyday life. We adjust around it and start calling the adjustment normal.

Sometimes we hold on because we believe letting go means saying what happened was acceptable. It does not. Letting go does not make the hurt right. It does not erase responsibility. It does not mean you have to trust the person again, invite them back, or pretend it did not matter. It means you are deciding that what happened will not keep taking the same amount of energy from you every day.

That can be difficult because anger sometimes feels like protection. It can feel as though staying angry keeps you strong, keeps you alert, or proves that what happened mattered. I understand that. There are times when anger gives us the energy to set a boundary or finally say, enough. But anger was never meant to become a permanent home. It can deliver a message, but living inside it starts taking from us too.

Resentment can be especially heavy because it keeps replaying the same conversation. The monkey mind loves to rewrite the scene, replaying what you should have said and what they should have done. It can hold a full argument at two o'clock in the morning with someone who is not even in the room. I have been there. The mind thinks it is solving something, but often it is reopening the wound.

There is also the weight of guilt. Maybe you made a decision you regret. Maybe you stayed too long, left too soon, trusted the wrong person, or did not speak when you wish you had. It is easy to judge the person you were then using the knowledge you have now. But you did not know then what you know now. You were making choices from the awareness and resources you had at the time. That does not remove responsibility, but it allows room for compassion.

You can take responsibility without sentencing yourself for life. You can say, I wish I had handled that differently, and still decide to learn from it. You can apologize where an apology is needed. You can make amends where that is possible. You can change your behaviour. But endless self-punishment does not repair the past. It only keeps the pain active in the present.

Sometimes what we are carrying is not anger toward someone else. It is grief for the life we thought we would have. A relationship that ended, a dream that did not happen, time we feel we lost, or a version of ourselves we miss. That grief can be hard to explain because there may be no single event to point to. You are grieving an expectation, a possibility, or a future you had already pictured.

If that is where you are, please be gentle with yourself. You do not have to rush into a lesson. You do not have to pretend everything happened for a reason before you are ready. Sometimes the honest place to begin is, this hurt, and part of me is still carrying it. Naming the weight can be the first step toward putting it down.

So how do you begin releasing what you have carried for so long? Not by forcing yourself to forget. Not by pretending you no longer care. Sometimes it begins by allowing yourself to tell the truth without building a home inside the story. This happened. It affected me. I did not deserve that. I wish it had been different. And now I want to stop carrying it in the same way.

You may need to write what you never got to say, even if no one else reads it. You may need to cry, pray, sit quietly, speak with someone you trust, or finally admit how deeply something affected you. You may need a boundary, not another conversation. You may need to forgive yourself before you can even think about forgiving anyone else. Releasing looks different for each person.

Forgiveness is another word that can make people uncomfortable. To me, forgiveness is not pretending the wound did not happen. It is choosing not to keep drinking from the same cup of pain. It is saying, I may remember, but I do not want this memory to control how I love, trust, choose, and live. Forgiveness can be a process. It may happen in layers. Some days you feel lighter, and another day something brings the feeling back. That does not mean you failed. It means healing is not always a straight line.

You are also allowed to release someone without reopening the door. Peace does not require access. You can wish someone well from a distance. You can stop carrying hatred and still keep the boundary. You can understand why someone behaved the way they did without accepting the behaviour. Letting go and letting back in are not the same thing.

As you think about what you are still carrying, try not to turn it into another reason to criticize yourself. We hold on for many reasons. Sometimes we were waiting for an apology. Sometimes we wanted justice. Sometimes the pain became connected to our identity. Sometimes we were simply trying to survive and did not have the space to process it then. There is no shame in being ready now.

Ask yourself gently, what is this costing me to carry? Is it costing you peace, sleep, trust, joy, energy, or the ability to receive something new? You do not have to drop everything at once. Sometimes you loosen your grip little by little. Sometimes you put one piece down, then come back for another. The important thing is remembering that the weight is something you are carrying. It is not who you are.

You are more than what happened to you. You are more than what you regret. You are more than the person who hurt you, the opportunity you lost, or the chapter that did not end the way you hoped. The past may be part of your story, but it does not need to sit in the driver's seat.

Dianne Ojar is an author, speaker, transformational guide, Kuan Yin Lineage Holder, and author of The Strategic Goal Seeker's Handbook, with professional credentials through the American Board of Hypnotherapy and the American Board of Neuro-Linguistic Programming.



Apu will now be voiced by Indian American actor Hari Kondabolu after Hank Azaria quit the role

THE RETURN OF APU

Beloved shopkeeperback on The Simpsons with new voice after race row

The Simpsons character Apu has returned to the show voiced by a new actor, after almost a decade away amid accusations of racial stereotypes.

Apu Nahasapeemapetilon - to give the much-loved shopkeeper his full name - re-appeared in Sunday's episode on US network Fox, titled The Revengening, but now voiced by India-born, US-raised actor Sunil Malhotra.

The Kwik-E-Mart owner has been seen but not heard around Springfield since the October 2017 episode The Serfsons, and his big return to action had reportedly been a closely guarded secret.

Malhotra said in a statement posted on Instagram that it feels like a reclamation. "It truly is his homecoming," he said.

The character, who has been part of the long-running American animation series since 1990, was previously voiced by a white actor, Hank Azaria, putting on a heavy Indian accent.

Indian-American comic Hari Kondabolu made a documentary in 2017, titled the Problem With Apu, saying the character - a South Asian convenience store clerk - was founded on racial stereotypes.

The following year, an episode of The Simpsons addressed the controversy surrounding the Indian character for the first time, making a nod to the accusations but some viewers found it insufficient.

Others defended the show and said all its characters were stereotypes.

Azaria first announced he was stepping down from the role in 2020, and he later told Dax Shepherd's Armchair Expert podcast: "Part of me feels like I need to go around to every single Indian person in this country and personally apologise."

Speaking to Variety ahead of the weekend's latest episode, Azaria's replacement Malhotra explained: "When my agent called me about a Simpsons audition, I knew exactly what role it was for, and the idea actually made my stomach sink.

"But admittedly, part of me was also curious. It had been eight years since Apu had spoken on the show, and it got me thinking: Did the writers' room look different now?"

The Grey's Anatomy and The Legend of Korra actor continued: "Could they bring him back in a way that acknowledged and apologised for past mistakes?

"Could I make the character my own, and reclaim him in some way? And could they achieve all of that in an unmistakably Simpsons way that didn't disappoint fans?"

'Beautiful Backside'

Trump praises Nicki Minaj as rumours put her as the new WH Press Secretary

Rapper Nicki Minaj appeared with Trump at a recent rally in Michigan, where he made a comment about her "beautiful" and "hard to miss" butt. Now there's even talk of a possible job at the White House for the MAGA-loving rapper.

Could the woman who rapped "maybe it's time to put this pussy on your sideburns" and "You a stupid hoe, you a, you a stupid hoe (repeat ad nauseam)" soon become the new White House Press Secretary?

Nicki Minaj, the rapper who has fallen from grace following her switch from Barbz to MAGA princesss, has once again shared her support for Donald Trump.

The 'Super Bass' and 'Anaconda' singer joined him at a campaign rally last weekend in Michigan, where the president gave her a shout-out for attending the event. Trump also acknowledged her "beautiful" backside and "hard to miss" buttocks, before calling her on stage to speak.

Taking to the stage, Minaj claimed that Trump has "changed the energy of the country" and "given us a future to look forward to". She added: "It is an honour to stand with you every single time. And I will continue to support you forever and ever. If you run again, I will support you again."

Minaj had previously proclaimed herself as "probably the president's No. 1 fan" and described Trump as "handsome, dashing".

Following her speech in Michigan, White House Communications Director Steven Cheung shared a video of himself on Air Force One talking to Minaj.

In the clip, Minaj explains why she is an avid supporter of Trump, saying that Trump "knows what to do" when it comes to the country and its economy.



Trump embrances Nicki Minaj on stage in Michigan

Posting the clip on X, Cheung quipped that she would be fit to work alongside him, writing: "Ladies and gentlemen, I think we may have found the new White House Press Secretary!"

Trump advisor Alex Bruesewitz also seemed to be on board, commenting: "Hey Barbz, what do we think about this idea??"

Interestingly, Minaj's political advocacy does not establish her eligibility to vote. The rapper previously said she was not a U.S. citizen, then announced she was working toward citizenship.



Racist or funny?

Sacha Baron Cohen reboots Ali G



"This is the biggest gathering of cultural appropriators in history," Sacha Baron Cohen tells the camera in his parody of a street accent.

Behind him, hundreds of fans cram onto a London Underground escalator, all wearing Ali G's trademark yellow shell suit and skullcap. Baron Cohen shouts the character's catchphrases through a megaphone, with the crowd enthusiastically finishing each one.

Earlier this month, more than 300 fans attended an official Ali G lookalike competition, ferried around London on an open-top bus that stopped at landmarks including Big Ben, Leicester Square and Covent Garden.

The stunt was promotion for an upcoming sequel to 2002 film Ali G Indahouse - called Ali G: Who iz I? - which hit cinemas at the end of October.

But not everyone is excited about the return of Baron Cohen's comedy character.

Critics have long accused the actor of perpetuating racial stereotypes with Ali G, and criticism of the upcoming sequel has gained traction online, with social media posts from comedians, content creators and film fans attracting thousands of likes and comments.

Among them is Labour MP Paulette Hamilton called the character racist. She said she believed Baron Cohen would not get away with portraying any other racial group "in the way he has done with the black community".

Has Ali G passed his sell-by date? Or are racial stereotypes, and those who believe them, the true butt of the joke?

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WALK GOOD!

Veteran Jamaican deejay Lieutenant Stitchie dies at 60

Veteran Jamaican dancehall and gospel reggae artiste Lieutenant Stitchie has died at age 60 after a career spanning more than four decades.

Stitchie, whose given name was Cleveland “Cleve” Laing, died at a hospital in Kingston one day before his 61st birthday. He had been ailing since suffering a debilitating stroke in September 2024 and had been receiving care at a medical facility.

The Spanish Town, St Catherine, native leaves behind a musical legacy that took him from the classroom and competitive sound system circuit to the international stage and, later, Christian ministry.

A former athlete and schoolteacher, Laing graduated from GC Foster College of Physical Education and Sport and was a past student of Tivoli Gardens High School. Before pursuing music full time, he worked as a high school teacher, teaching biology, physical education, English and history.

He began making a name for himself on the competitive sound system circuit in Spanish Town in the early 1980s, alongside fellow aspiring deejays including Papa San, Wickerman and Major Worries.

His mainstream breakthrough came in 1986 with Wear Yuh Size, a humorous track that showcased the rapid-fire delivery and witty wordplay that would become hallmarks of his style. He followed it with Natty Dread, another popular song that helped establish him as one of dancehall’s distinctive voices.

Stitchie, who became known as “The Governor,” released his debut album, Great Ambition, in 1987. He signed with Atlantic Records in 1988 and released three albums with the label, including the well-received Wild Jamaican Romances.

His career took a significant turn after a 1997 car accident, when he became a born-again Christian. He subsequently transitioned into gospel reggae and released a series of inspirational recordings, including To God Be the Glory in 1999 and Real Power in 2000.

Despite the change in musical direction, Stitchie retained the energetic delivery and lyrical dexterity that had defined his dancehall career, becoming one of Jamaica’s better-known gospel reggae performers.

In 2012, he received an honorary doctorate, and in 2014 he published his autobiography. He was awarded the Order of Distinction in the rank of Officer in 2021 for his contribution to music.

News of Stitchie’s deteriorating health had drawn concern from supporters in recent days.

On Sunday, his wife, Sophia Laing, confirmed to The Jamaica Observer that Stitchie was receiving a blood transfusion after his blood count fell. She appealed to close friends, family members and members of the church community to donate blood, saying doctors expected to release him once his treatment was completed.



Lieutenant Stitchie — died the day before he turned 61

His death marks the end of a career that bridged Jamaica’s dancehall era of the 1980s and the country’s gospel reggae movement, while spanning music, education and Christian ministry.

Prime Minister Andrew Holness paid tribute, saying: "Clive Laing, better known as Lieutenant Stitchie, was one of Jamaica’s greatest DJs of the dancehall genre. However, he could very well have been described as one of Jamaica’s best storytellers and humourists. His discography forms part of the soundtrack of the 1980s and 1990s. I recall fondly attending a concert at my high school at which he performed. In the latter part of his career, he would also make his mark in gospel music. My sincere condolences to his family and loved ones. May his soul rest in peace."

Opposition Leader Mark Golding also expressed sadness at the passing of Stitchie.

“I am deeply saddened by the passing of Lt. Stitchie, a beloved son of Jamaica whose talent and music touched lives at home and across the world. His contribution to Jamaican music and culture will forever be remembered, and his legacy will continue to inspire generations. I extend heartfelt condolences to his family, friends, loved ones and those in the music fraternity mourning his passing. May his soul rest in eternal peace. Walk Good!,” Golding said.



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ROYAL SANDALS

Cruise line buys stake in Jamaican hotel chain for US$3 billion

Royal Caribbean Group is moving into the all-inclusive resort business with an agreement to acquire a 50% equity stake in Sandals and Beaches Resorts for approximately US$3 billion.

The deal will create a joint venture between the two companies, bringing together Sandals and Beaches' more than four decades of experience in Caribbean hospitality with Royal Caribbean Group's cruise and vacation businesses.

Royal Caribbean Group operates Royal Caribbean, Celebrity Cruises and Silversea, along with a portfolio of private destinations and a new river cruise business.

The companies said the partnership will include Sandals and Beaches' collection of all-inclusive resorts across the Caribbean and will provide opportunities to expand the brands' reach and accelerate their growth.

For Royal Caribbean Group, the deal also expands its business into another part of the global vacation market.

Jason Liberty, chairman and CEO of Royal Caribbean Group, said the agreement builds on the company's efforts to expand the ways it serves travelers.

“We have been building a vacation platform that brings joy to millions of people around the world and creates meaningful relationships that last with our guests,” Liberty said.

“Our partnership with Sandals and Beaches Resorts is an important next step on that journey — bringing together two iconic leading vacation companies to further strengthen and grow one of the most admired resort portfolios in the world.”

Sandals Executive Chairman Adam Stewart said the agreement builds on the vision of his father, company founder Gordon “Butch” Stewart, who established Sandals in Jamaica in 1981.

“My father, Gordon ‘Butch’ Stewart, founded Sandals Resorts with the belief that a company built in the Caribbean could stand on the world stage alongside the most respected names in hospitality,” Adam Stewart said.

“Today is proof of how far that vision can go.”

Stewart said the deal will give Sandals the ability to grow faster while working with a partner that shares its focus on hospitality, long-term investment and established brands.

“Together, we will introduce more guests to Sandals and Beaches Resorts while creating even more extraordinary experiences for those who have made our resorts part of their lives for decades,” he said.

Stewart will retain a leadership role as executive chairman of Sandals and Beaches Resorts and will help guide the company's long-term strategic growth.

The joint venture will be governed by a board under the shared leadership of Stewart and Liberty.

Existing reservations, loyalty programs and resort operations will continue as usual, the companies said.

The US$3 billion transaction represents a forward EBITDA multiple of approximately 10 times. Royal Caribbean Group has secured committed debt financing from Morgan Stanley to fund the investment.

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Christopher “Dudus” Coke, left, and Sean “Diddy” Coombs

DIDDY VS DUDUS

Singer reportedly injured in prison fight with Jamaican drug lord

American music mogul Sean “Diddy” Combs reportedly sustained a head injury during a fight with convicted Jamaican drug lord Christopher “Dudus” Coke at a federal prison in New Jersey, according to US entertainment outlet TMZ.

TMZ reported Wednesday that the confrontation occurred Friday, October 9, at the Federal Correctional Institution (FCI) Fort Dix, where both men are serving prison sentences.

Citing sources inside the prison, the outlet said the altercation stemmed from anger among inmates over reports about Combs’ alleged privileges behind bars, including access to contraband items.

Combs was reportedly taken to an outside medical facility early Saturday, October 10, for treatment of a head injury. TMZ had initially reported that he was transported from the prison following a medical emergency, without identifying the cause of the injury.

The outlet subsequently reported that the fight involved Coke and that both men were placed in the prison’s Special Housing Unit for two weeks as punishment. The circumstances surrounding the alleged confrontation have not been independently verified.

The reported incident follows an NBC News report about Combs’ alleged living conditions at Fort Dix, including claims that he had access to alcohol, cellphones and other prohibited items, as well as assistance from fellow inmates with household tasks.

According to TMZ, prison officials conducted raids and confiscated contraband, including cellphones belonging to inmates. The report said the searches contributed to tensions among prisoners.

Combs, the founder of Bad Boy Records and a Grammy-winning artist, is serving a 50-month federal prison sentence after being convicted in July 2025 on two counts of transportation to engage in prostitution. He was acquitted of racketeering conspiracy and sex trafficking charges.

His projected release date is March 2, 2028, according to recent media reports citing federal prison records.

Coke, meanwhile, is serving a 23-year sentence in the United States following his 2012 conviction in a racketeering case. He pleaded guilty to racketeering conspiracy and conspiracy to commit assault with a dangerous weapon in aid of racketeering.

Coke was the leader of the Shower Posse, an international criminal organization linked to drug and weapons trafficking. His extradition from Jamaica to the United States in 2010 triggered days of violence in sections of Kingston, particularly Tivoli Gardens, where security forces launched an operation to apprehend him. More than 70 civilians were killed during the operation, according to official accounts.

Coke was sentenced in October 2011 and subsequently transferred to federal custody to serve his prison term.

The Jamaica Gleaner reported in May 2026 that his projected release date had been moved to January 29, 2028, following reductions in his sentence. The latest reports of the alleged altercation have not established whether the incident will affect his release date.

SPARROW GRANDSTAND

T&T honours legendary calypsonian by naming landmark for him

Trinidad and Tobago has bid farewell to calypso legend Dr. Slinger "Mighty Sparrow" Francisco, celebrating his more than seven decades of musical contributions with a ceremony attended by two prime ministers and prominent Caribbean entertainers.

The three-and-a-half-hour celebration took place Friday at the National Academy for the Performing Arts (NAPA) in Port of Spain, where hundreds gathered to honor the Grenada-born singer, who died in New York on Sept. 27 at age 91.

During the ceremony, Trinidad and Tobago Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar announced that the grandstand at the Queen's Park Savannah would be named in Sparrow's honor. She also pledged to refurbish the facility, a landmark venue for the country's cultural celebrations.

Persad-Bissessar said the renaming would ensure that Sparrow's legacy remained part of Trinidad and Tobago's cultural landscape for generations.

"There can be no more appropriate place to inscribe his name permanently than at the Queen's Park Savannah," she said, noting the venue's longstanding role in the country's cultural life.

"Today, we ensure that one of the greatest names in our culture will forever stand there at the Queen's Park, Savannah. I am therefore deeply honored to announce that the Grandstand at the Queen's Park, Savannah will bear the name of Dr. Slinger Francisco, the Mighty Sparrow."

Sparrow, who won eight Calypso Monarch titles, eight Road March crowns and two Calypso King of Kings competitions, was remembered for using music to reflect Caribbean society, politics and identity.

His daughter Karen Francisco paid tribute to him with a rendition of Frank Sinatra's classic "My Way," while Michele Francisco delivered the family eulogy, recalling her father's ability to connect with people.

She said one of his greatest lessons was that "you don't have to let your circumstance determine your dreams."

His granddaughter Ashley Hutchinson also paid tribute, declaring that "birds don't die" and asking, "How do you silence a sparrow whose music is everywhere?"



The official funeral for the Mighty Sparrow in Port of Spain

The ceremony featured performances of songs from Sparrow's extensive catalog by artists from across the Caribbean and beyond. Former Trinidad and Tobago presidents Anthony Carmona and Paula-Mae Weekes were among those in attendance.

"This is not a funeral, we are celebrating the life of the Mighty Sparrow," one performer said.

Barbados Prime Minister Mia Mottley urged Caribbean leaders to ensure that Sparrow's music and its historical significance are passed on to younger generations.

Mottley said Sparrow used calypso to challenge colonial attitudes, comment on politics and affirm Caribbean identity, helping define the region's cultural expression in the post-independence era.

She said she would encourage fellow Caribbean Community (CARICOM) leaders to advocate for Sparrow's song "Slave" to be included in the Caribbean Examinations Council curriculum, arguing that students should understand both the pain and the message conveyed by the composition.

Mottley also praised Sparrow's ability to use satire and picong — the sharp, teasing verbal exchanges central to Caribbean culture — to expose political and social contradictions.

Drawing a comparison with jazz, which helped popularize Black American improvisation around the world, she said Trinidad and Tobago had introduced the world to picong, with Sparrow its foremost musical exponent.

She described the calypsonian as a genius whose work extended beyond entertainment to offer commentary on governance, economics, democracy and Caribbean society.

BLACK IDENTITY

Brother Valentino, 'The People's Calypsonian,' dies at 85

Brother Valentino, the veteran calypsonian whose music championed Black identity, equality and the struggles of ordinary people, died on October 20, at age 85.

Born Emrold Anthony Phillip in Cherry Hill, Grenada, on July 7, 1941, Valentino moved to Trinidad and Tobago as a child and went on to become one of calypso's most prominent voices of social and political commentary.

Known for his uncompromising style and willingness to challenge authority, Valentino built a career around songs that confronted racial inequality, poverty and political injustice while celebrating Black consciousness and the dignity of working people.

According to the Ministry of Culture and Community Development, Valentino's interest in calypso began in childhood, when his parents listened to the music and collected records by performers including Lord Kitchener and Lord Cristo.

After his father's death interrupted his education, Phillip tried several trades before pursuing music. He later recalled that listening to calypso on the radio while working in a tailor shop helped transform his interest into a calling.

Inspired by Mighty Sparrow, he began performing in the early 1960s. At an audition for Lord Kitchener's Caravan tent, he arrived without a stage name. Kitchener gave him the name Valentino, which would become synonymous with socially conscious calypso.

The 1970 Black Power movement in Trinidad and Tobago further shaped his artistic direction. His 1971 song "No Revolution" brought him wider recognition as a voice for Black consciousness, while subsequent works established his reputation as a fearless commentator on Caribbean society.

Among his best-known songs were "Life Is a Stage" (1972), "Barking Dogs" (1974), "Dis Place Nice" (1975) and "Stay Up Zimbabwe" (1979), an anti-apartheid anthem that carried his message beyond Trinidad and Tobago. Other notable recordings included "Birds That Fly High" (1982), "Time and Space" (1986), "Calypso in Trouble" (1992), "Time to Love Again" (1996), "The Radio" (2001) and "Where Kaiso Went" (2004).



Brother Valentino — life is a stage

Valentino's artistry extended beyond recorded music. In 1975, his solo production "Poet and Prophet" sold out eight shows. He toured and performed in the United States and appeared alongside fellow calypsonian Black Stalin in "Blood Brothers."

He also became a founding member of Kaiso House, contributing to the preservation of the calypso tent tradition and the genre's role as a platform for public debate.

His achievements included the 2005 Veterans Calypso Monarch title for "Where Kaiso Went," a Sunshine Award, recognition for 50 years as a performer.



100 MILES

Country Speng turns pain of ICE detention into No. 1 hit song

Veteran Jamaican dancehall DJ Country Speng, aka Speng Beng, has reportedly spoken about the heartbreak he felt when he was detained by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and deported to Jamaica in June, after spending five difficult months in U.S. immigration detention.

But instead of allowing the experience to break his spirit, the former Sting performer turned his pain into a hit song in South Florida. His song "100 Mile," inspired by his ordeal, has climbed to No. 1 on Mikey B's South Florida chart on WAVS radio, giving the entertainer a much-needed boost as he rebuilds his life and career in Jamaica.

"We not stop till the song take the road and it make it own market," he said confidently.

For the veteran entertainer, reaching No. 1 represents more than musical success. It is a chance to rebuild, reclaim his place in dancehall and turn one of the most painful experiences of his life into something meaningful. The song is also his way of speaking out against what he believes is the unfair treatment of immigrants.

"They are just randomly picking up people and people who work so hard for them status and all," he said during the interview. "They are randomly just taking our people's lives, taking our people's freedom, taking our people's everything."

"At the end of the day, we are just human," he reiterated.

Country Speng said his ordeal began on Jan. 6, when ICE detained him in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. He subsequently spent time at facilities in Miami and at Alligator Alcatraz before being deported to Jamaica on June 11.

"It wasn't nothing nice," he recalled.

He described repeated searches and conditions that left him feeling as though he were in prison.

"They'll search you. And when they come back and search you again, they give you dinner, they'll search you. They send you back to bed, they'll search you," he explained.

Although he held a green card, Country Speng never became a U.S. citizen. Still, after arriving in Florida in 1997 and establishing strong family and community ties, leaving was painful.

"I've been in America for 29 years," he said.

"I was born Jamaican, man," he declared.



Country Speng — challenge of starting over

Long before his immigration troubles, Country Speng was making a name for himself on Jamaica's competitive dancehall circuit.

His recording career dates back to the early 1990s, with songs including "Black Awareness," "Not Every Day" with Colin Roach, "Shot Too Dear," "Mi Belly Full Now," "Cherry Pie" and "Intellect & Charm."

He recalls performing at Sting approximately five times.

"I do Sting from I was living there in Jamaica, man," he said.

He also recalled his close association with veteran Sting promoter Isaiah Laing.

"Laing used to be my manager, you know," he said.

After moving to Florida in 1997, Country Speng continued recording, performing and building a loyal following among Caribbean music fans.

"Me bust a Florida," he declared, recalling the days when supporters followed him to parties and performances.

Now back in Jamaica, Country Speng faces the challenge of starting over in a music industry that has changed considerably since he left.

He admits the transition has been difficult but insists he has no intention of depending on relatives or friends for financial support.

"Me not put no pressure upon nobody," he said.

"Me not go sit down because nothing come easy."

The success of his latest recording in South Florida has given him fresh encouragement.

"It feels great," he said of reaching No. 1.

His next challenge is getting the song heard in Jamaica and beyond.

"We still have to work. We can't just say it's a number one tune in Florida," he explained.

He believes the song's message can resonate with people of different nationalities who have experienced immigration detention, deportation or family separation.

"We are leaders because we have fans and people who follow," he said.

Rather than chasing a short-lived hit, he wants the recording to grow steadily and remain relevant.

"It's not a rush. It's a building process," he explained.

After surviving the fierce competition of 1990s dancehall, nearly three decades in the United States and five months in immigration detention, Country Speng is determined to make this new chapter count.



THE NEXT BOND

Final James Bond screen tests to take place soon

Callum Turner, Jack Lowden and Josh O'Connor are among the actors thought to be taking part in final auditions to play James Bond, according to reports.

Screen tests are said to be taking place this weekend, possibly as early as next week, according to the Hollywood Reporter, with between three and five actors understood to have reached the last stages of the process.

The finalists are said to be taking part in auditions with three components - stunts, camera presence and dialogue.

Deadline reported the screen tests had been due take place in early October, but had been delayed by scheduling conflicts, while Variety said Turner and Lowden "appear to be in the mix" to replace Daniel Craig.

British actors Aaron Taylor-Johnson and James Norton were previously connected to the role, while Irish actor Paul Mescal's name had also been thrown into the mix.

Other actors now appear to be in the frame, but reports on the current casting situation vary.

Variety suggested Slow Horses star Lowden may now be edging ahead, while Masters of the Air star Turner was speculated about earlier this year, with some fans suggesting his wife Dua Lipa could sing the Bond theme song.

Sources told Deadline that at least four final screen test offers have been made, and while unconfirmed, "three of the four expected to test are Jack Lowden, Callum Turner and Josh O'Connor".

O'Connor is best known for playing Prince Charles in The Crown, and for starring in 2025's Wake Up Dead Man: A Knives Out Mystery, with Craig.

Jack O'Connell had been thought to be in the mix, but sources said this may no longer be the case, while Euphoria and Wuthering Heights Star Jacob Elordi is not thought to be testing.

Other stars who were previously linked with the role include The King's Man star Harris Dickinson, along with SAS: Rogue Heroes' Jack Barton.

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That's All, Folks!

Toronto's Eric Bauza, voice of Bugs Bunny and Daffy Duck, dies aged 46

Eric Bauza, the voice artist behind Looney Tunes characters including Bugs Bunny, Daffy Duck and Porky Pig, has died aged 46.

A statement from the Emmy award-winning star's family posted on Instagram said he had died "suddenly".

A Toronto native, Bauza had voiced a number of characters in this summer's animated hit Coyote vs. Acme, and appeared in the recent release Forgotten Island.

Variety reports that the cause of death was hypertensive cardiovascular disease and that Bauza died at home on October 25.

In a 2021 interview with NBC News, Bauza, who was born in Ontario and was of Filipino descent, said he grew up a huge fan of the Looney Tunes characters and used to copy the voices as a child.

"Looney Tunes transcends all languages and all cultures," he said. "It doesn't matter what part of the planet you're from. You get the comedy."

He voiced Daffy Duck, Porky Pig, Elmer Fudd and Foghorn Leghorn in 2021's Space Jam: A New Legacy before reprising those roles and that of Road Runner in Coyote vs. Acme.

He also played the part of Toad General in 2023's The Super Mario Bros. Movie and its sequel The Super Mario Galaxy Movie, the fifth highest-grossing film internationally this year.

Between 2022 and 2025, he won three Emmy awards for outstanding voice performance in a number of TV series.

In a statement reported by the Hollywood Reporter, Channing Dungey, the chairman of Warner Bros. Television Group and US Networks, said: "Eric Bauza was a unique voice talent who brought joy and laughter to millions around the world.

"He followed in the footsteps of giants like Mel Blanc. Eric said that carrying on the legendary legacy of the Looney Tunes was among the greatest honors of his life."



Eric Bauza voiced modern day Bugs Bunny and Daffy Duck





Chris Brown (left) and Omololu Akinlolu were sentenced at Southwark Crown Court on October 26

UK BACKLASH

Chris Brown given suspended 8 month prison sentence over nightclub attack

US singer Chris Brown has avoided jail after striking a man twice in the head with a glass tequila bottle in a London nightclub.

The R&B star was given an eight-month prison sentence, suspended for 12 months, over the attack at private members' club Tape in Mayfair, in the early hours of 19 February 2023.

Brown's vocal coach, rapper Omololu Akinlolu, who joined the attack, was sentenced to four months' imprisonment, suspended for 12 months. Both men, who had pleaded guilty to affray, were also ordered to pay £1,500 costs.

Judge Tony Baumgartner said Brown's use of the glass bottle to hit the victim twice over the head "was plainly dangerous", adding that the violence of the attack was "intense".

The sentence means Brown will not be imprisoned unless he commits another offence during the 12-month period of suspension.

The court heard Brown's attack on music producer Abraham 'Abe' Diaw left the victim in need of hospital treatment for his injuries.

In sentencing, Judge Baumgartner said: "The repeated use of a glass bottle in that way, especially aimed at the head, was plainly dangerous, it carried the risk of delivering a more serious injury than was ultimately sustained."

CCTV footage was shown where Brown struck Diaw four times with the bottle, connecting twice with his head, and then hitting his shoulder.

Sentencing Brown, Judge Baumgartner said: "This was not planned violence. It was nevertheless serious violence by two people in a crowded nightclub."

The judge told Brown: "Violence of this kind in a crowded nightclub is serious, it creates an obvious risk, not only to the person against whom it is directed, but also to others nearby."

He added that Brown's conduct was "particularly dangerous" and that he had to be "physically pulled away" from the attack.

The judge said Brown's fame, commercial success and professional standing "do not entitle you to special treatment - the law applies equally to everyone".

But judge Baumgartner also said he had noted Brown's guilty plea, compliance with bail conditions, and the impact a custodial sentence would have on Brown's children, and said the singer's "risk of further offending is low".

Brown and Akinlolu pleaded guilty to a charge of affray at Southwark Crown Court in July.

The Sixth Beatle

Mural honours the forgotten Trinidadian behind the supergroup

A mural celebrating a musician who has been described as the "forgotten sixth Beatle" is set to be unveiled later by the community he helped to shape.

The artwork in Liverpool's Toxteth area honours Lord Woodbine, a mentor to The Beatles and an icon of the city's Caribbean community.

The Trinidadian calypsonian, steelpan player and promoter became an influential figure in Liverpool's Caribbean music scene and played a role in the Fab Four's early years.

His daughter Carol Phillips said: "We hope it [the mural] will be a catalyst for the celebration and visibility of the Liverpool 8 [district] music scene and the contributions musicians like my Dad made."

Lord Woodbine, whose real name was Harold Adolphus Phillips, arrived in England in 1948 as a member of the Windrush generation after serving in the Royal Air Force.

As a leading light in Liverpool's Caribbean music scene, he introduced calypso and steelpan music to wider audiences through bands including Lord Woodbine and his Trinidadians and the All-Caribbean Steel Band.

He was also known for promoting The Beatles before their rise to fame and driving the band to Hamburg in 1960, where he performed alongside them.

Phillips said: "The mural is for the whole family of Liverpool 8, not just our family.

"Many of them [musicians] played a prominent role in the growth of Liverpool's music scene and on the international stage, yet some of their stories and contributions have remained unsung."

The mural, painted by Liverpool artist John Culshaw, is the latest work commissioned by charity Mandela8 as part of a series celebrating community role models and local heroes from Liverpool's Caribbean and black communities.



The mural in Toxteth featuring Lord Woodbine, Harold Phillips

Previously commissioned murals in Liverpool include Liverpool Football Club's first black player Howard Gayle; photographer and urban griot Leroy Cooper; swimming hero James Clarke, and the first black South African President, Nelson Mandela.

Woodbine preferred modest living over any exploitation of The Fab Four's fame.

Along with his wife Helen, he died in a fire at their home in Toxteth in 2000. He was 72.

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NO FAITH

Family row breaks out over George Michael memorabilia

A family row has broken out over an auction of George Michael memorabilia currently taking place.

The guitar the singer-songwriter performed with in the Faith music video is one of several items being auctioned by Sworders from the collection of Siobhan Bailey, Michael's long-time personal assistant.

Siobhan died in 2014 and the items are being sold by her estranged husband Ian Belcher, who inherited them after her death.

Gerard Bailey, Siobhan's brother, said she "would be horrified at the prospect of the auction being held in her name and that her personal, cherished possessions are being sold off to the highest bidder". Both Sworders and Belcher declined to comment.

Sworders describes the 32 lots as a "remarkable group of memorabilia from the collection of Siobhan Bailey, George Michael's long-time personal assistant and trusted confidante".

Michael grew up in Hertfordshire and shot to fame alongside Andrew Ridgeley in pop duo Wham! He went on to enjoy solo success with hits such as Faith, Careless Whisper, Father Figure, Outside and Fastlove. He died in 2016.

Siobhan was in the process of divorcing Belcher when she died, but was legally still married to him. She did not leave a will.

Her brother claimed she had started to draw up a will shortly before she died, which would have left the items to her nieces and nephews, but it was not registered.

There is no suggestion that Belcher does not have the right to sell the items, because her estate legally passed to him when she died.

Bailey said if his sister had lived a few weeks longer, the items would not have passed to Belcher because he would not have been considered her next of kin.

In a letter to the auction house, Bailey said the rest of the family considers the auction a "breach of [Siobhan's] privacy", adding that the use of her name is "disingenuous" and "wholly unethical".

He told the auction house that Belcher's "misuse of my sister's name" is "frankly dishonourable", and profiteering from the items was "egregiously shameful".



George Michael with his Gretsch guitar, said to be worth over 100,000 pounds

Bailey has asked that the auction should not go ahead, or, if it does, that it be in Belcher's name rather than Siobhan's.

Bailey began working as Michael's personal assistant in 1984, joining him in the year Wham! had their first number-one hit with Wake Me Up Before You Go-Go.

She remained his PA for 20 years, and her brother told BBC News she avoided the limelight and guarded the pop star's privacy, despite the attention of tabloid journalists hoping for stories.

"I think she was one of the few people George trusted and whose opinion he valued," Bailey said.

"She was always honest and straight with him. I guess that's why she stayed working for him for so long through the very, very good and not so good times."

The guitar now going under the hammer was "a gift" to his sister because the singer "thought so much of her", he said.

The instrument had a key role to play in Michael's reinvention from teen pop idol to serious solo artist.

In the 1987 video for Faith, Michael - in ripped blue Levi's jeans, white T-shirt and black leather biker jacket - strummed the vintage acoustic guitar that he reportedly picked up in a shop in Los Angeles shortly beforehand.

Guitarist magazine recently billed it as "arguably the most famous Gretsch Synchromatic in the world".

It has an estimated price tag of between £60,000 and £120,000.

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