

# I Found a Home Here: Networks, Scenes, and Safe Spaces in Junior Panorama

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## Abstract

**S**ince its development in the 1970s, the youth steelband scene in Trinidad and Tobago has been dependent on a series of networks established between school bands, community youth bands, and community adult bands from across the two islands. While these networks are present throughout the calendar year, their influence is developed and strengthened during the Carnival season. During Carnival, Junior Panorama, a youth-focused steelband competition, is one performance outlet where the networks established within the youth steelband scene are fully on display. Originating in 1976, Junior Panorama currently comprises three separate categories—primary schools, secondary schools, and under-21 community ensembles—and in recent years has seen upwards of seventy bands competing across said categories. In this article, I use the concept of music “scenes” as defined by Bennett and Peterson (2004) to theorise the development of networks surrounding the Junior Panorama competition and their impact on both youth steelpan culture and steelpan culture at large in Trinidad. To do so, I analyse the various networks at play in youth steelband spaces, with a focus on the relationships between school and community ensembles as well as youth and senior community ensembles, emphasising the exchange of material demands and cultural expertise within these networks. I will argue that beyond the expansion of resources and knowledge, the networks established between school steelbands, community youth steelbands, and community senior steelbands have led to the development of a music scene in which panyards are the centres of their various communities. As such, I also argue that as these networks have developed across the youth steelband scene, panyards have become safe spaces for youth, establishing an outlet from growing gang violence in Trinidad. I blend youth perspectives and theoretical analysis to argue that networks between adult and youth

are fundamental to both the success of steelbands across Trinidad and the larger wellbeing of Trinidadian youth, solidifying the need for further research into youth steelband practices.

## Introduction

On a blistering hot February afternoon, I sat on the bleachers in the Renegades Steel Orchestra panyard<sup>1</sup> in Port of Spain, Trinidad, talking with a member of the Renegades Youth Steel Orchestra about the recent Junior Panorama competition and her development as a young pan player. We began discussing her future within the steelpan community and I asked if she would ever consider playing with a large steelband that was not Renegades. Before I could finish my question, she jumped in:

***“No, no. I dare not, I cannot. I would play with a different medium band, or a small band, but large band and junior band goes to Renegades. I can’t see myself doing that, I’m sorry... I find it disrespectful to the best band to go play with somebody else, respectfully. I found a home in Renegades; they fill my needs. Anytime I go to another band, I feel some sort of tendencies, so I’m not going to go, I can’t.”*** (Theresa in discussion with the author, 23 February 2023)

Theresa, like many other youth pannists that I interviewed, felt a deep loyalty to their parent organisation. This deep loyalty, and feeling of home, is a direct result of the development of a youth steelpan scene that has expanded thanks to the annual Junior Panorama competition, a growing mainstay of Trinidad and Tobago’s Carnival season.

Since its development in the 1970s, the youth steelband scene in Trinidad and Tobago has been dependent on a series of networks established between school bands, community youth bands, and community adult bands from across the two islands. These band-to-band networks have continued to develop over the past fifty years, even as additional support for the youth competition from both the Trinidadian government and private corporations has grown. While these networks are present throughout the calendar year, their influence is developed and strengthened during the Carnival season. During Carnival, Junior Panorama, a youth-focused steelband competition, is one performance outlet where the networks established within the youth steelband scene are fully on display. Originating in 1976, Junior Panorama currently comprises three separate categories—primary schools, secondary schools, and under-21 community ensembles—and in recent years has seen upwards of seventy bands competing across said categories.

There has been little research that has explicitly analysed Junior Panorama. Junior Panorama is briefly discussed in both Stuempfle’s (1996) and Dudley’s (2008) landmark texts on the steelpan; however, both authors only highlight Junior Panorama in regard to their discussions on the role of women in steelpan history, stressing that women played critical roles in the steelpan movement of the 1950s and 1960s as they taught steelpan in schools. Similarly to Stuempfle and Dudley, Munro (2016) also discusses

<sup>1</sup> Panyards are spaces in Trinidad where steelbands are housed and rehearse. They are often converted from empty lots and feature large open spaces for instruments as well as seating for audience members. Larger steelbands also incorporate kitchens and bars into their panyards.

Junior Panorama in regard to women's role in steelpan and highlights the work carried out by Ester Batson and Merle Albino de Coteau at these institutions. Munro expands on Stuempfle's and Dudley's work by further arguing that there are greater opportunities for young women to participate in school settings and that girls outnumber boys in junior bands. Perhaps the most extensive published discussion of Junior Panorama is Munro Smith's 2013 chapter in *The Oxford Handbook of Children's Musical Cultures*. Here, Munro Smith considers Junior Panorama as part of a larger analysis of children's engagement with Trinidad's Carnival arts. Notably, Munro Smith notes that many school steelbands have close relationships with the community steelbands and that many students transition from their school steelband to their community steelband as they grow.

In this article, I theorise the development of networks surrounding the Junior Panorama competition and their impact on both youth steelpan culture and steelpan culture at large in Trinidad. I argue that beyond the expansion of resources and knowledge, the networks established between school steelbands, community youth steelbands, and community senior steelbands have led to the development of a music scene in which panyards are the centres of their communities. As such, I also argue that as these networks have developed across the youth steelband scene, panyards have become safe spaces for youth, establishing an outlet from growing gang violence in Trinidad.

### **Methodology and Ethical Considerations**

The research on which this article is based incorporated both ethnographic fieldwork and textual analysis. To complete my ethnographic fieldwork, I completed three trips to Port of Spain, Trinidad, over the course of a year and a half – the first in November 2021, the second in April-May 2022, and the final and longest trip in January-March 2023. During these trips, I conducted in-person interviews and attended a plethora of youth steelband rehearsals. Further, during my 2023 trip, I attended a wide variety of Carnival-related events, including both the preliminary and final rounds of the Junior Panorama competition. During my time in Trinidad, I also visited two archives – the Heritage Library of Trinidad and Tobago and the National Archives of Trinidad and Tobago. At both archival sites, I was able to search their newspaper collections dating from 1964-2014. Outside of my three trips to Trinidad, I conducted a series of interviews via Zoom. Through both my in-person and Zoom interviews, I interviewed a total of forty-five music directors, arrangers, youth members, parents, administrators, and government officials. I then analysed these interviews and textual sources were through vivo coding and thematic analysis.

Throughout this research, I spent a considerable amount of time considering my own whiteness as an ethnomusicologist studying a historically Black musical culture. The legacies of colonialism impact all aspects of Trinidadian society, but are particularly prevalent within educational and youth settings, as I will discuss later in this chapter. As such, understanding my role within this legacy was critically important. I, as a British American woman, have unconsciously but directly profited from the legacies of British colonialism

that have caused significant harm in my field sites. While as an individual I cannot overhaul the inequalities within academia and scholarly research in the face of colonialism, I can continue to critique my own whiteness and biases in the research process. I acknowledge that the process of confronting my own biases is ongoing and will continue beyond this project.

As I was conducting my research, it was critical for me to acknowledge that while I was a researcher, I was by no means the singular expert on Junior Panorama or other youth steelband practices in Trinidad. I carried out this research because of my love of the steelpan, my fascination with youth settings, and my growing relationships with Trinidadians and members of the West Indian diaspora. I recognise that while my own experiences provide me with a unique perspective, these stories are not inherently mine to tell. As such, in this project, I have sought to prioritise the voices and needs of my interlocutors throughout every stage of the research process. In my interviews and fieldwork, I strove to clearly articulate my interests in this research and my goals for the project, being as transparent as possible. I also sought to ensure that my interlocutors understood the process of consent, and have adhered to their preferences when it comes to confidentiality and anonymity. Many of the interlocutors requested that their names be affiliated with their voices; some chose to remain anonymous; and a few more asked to remain anonymous when discussing sensitive topics. As such, their names have been altered in this article. All the youth members have remained anonymous.

## **Networks and Scenes**

Within academic literature, researchers across disciplines have discussed the social and cultural ramifications of network building within and across communities. Much of this research focuses on the individual actors involved and the locations in which certain activities take place. By researching the connections between individuals and the spaces they inhabit, scholars can track the exchange of information, resources, and services (Cummins-Russell and Rantisi 2012; Bottero and Crossley 2011). In studying these networks and the flow of resources between them, social scientists can address larger questions regarding cultural movements. At the core of their work, network analysts believe strongly that "social structure is network structure" (Crossley 2019: 4). With the concept that social structure is network structure, the possibilities for network analysis research expand exponentially. Utilising network analysis strategies to approach a wide range of social and cultural areas allows researchers to gain a deeper understanding of how these systems work and the relationships that have developed because of them.

Perhaps one of the more well-known examples of research examining music networks is the work surrounding music scenes. While the concept of music scenes primarily developed in journalistic spaces, it was first used in academic discourse in Will Straw's 1991 work 'Systems of Articulation, Logics of Change'. Straw's definition of a music scene can be understood as:

**that cultural space in which a range of musical practices coexist, interacting with each other within a variety of processes of differentiation, and according to widely varying trajectories of change and cross-fertilization.** (Straw 1991: 373)

According to Straw, music scenes are more fluid and complex than other variations of music networks. The concept of a music scene was further expanded in the 2004 edited volume *Music Scenes: Local, Translocal, and Virtual* (Bennett and Peterson). Bennett and Peterson define a music scene as:

**a focused social activity that takes place in a delimited space and over a specific span of time in which clusters of producers, musicians, and fans realize their common musical taste, collectively distinguishing themselves from others by using music and cultural signs, often appropriated from other places, but recombined and developed in ways that come to represent the local scene.** (Bennett and Peterson 2004: 8)

This definition more explicitly defines the individuals involved in these processes and the impact of their actions. Other scholars working within this area agree that such scenes often include diverse groups of people and ideas to be successful (Spring 2004; Becker 2004). While initial work on music scenes sought to conceptualise the networks within scenes (Hesmondhalgh 2005; Bennett and Peterson 2004; Straw 1991), more contemporary research in this area seeks to expand these networks so as to understand larger patterns within society (Bennett and Rogers 2016). In a way that mirrors social network analysis, music scene theorists are beginning to use networks to understand larger cultural phenomena. I approach Junior Panorama as a music scene as I seek to critically consider the resources and knowledge that move through these spaces, and their impact on larger steelpan culture. Throughout this article, I will contemplate these networks and discuss how the various resources and knowledge that have developed in youth steelbands prioritise the importance of local understandings of these networks.

### **Network Building between School and Community Steelbands**

While Junior Panorama is one performance outlet where networks and scenes are displayed, the work undertaken to build and develop these networks occurs year-round. Historically, these networks have primarily existed between school and community steelbands. In the 2023 competition, Naparima Combined Schools practised with the community steelband Skiffle Bunch, Pleasantville Secondary at Fonclaire, Queen's Royal College at Pandemonium, St. Mary's College at Desperadoes, South East Port of Spain Secondary at Silver Stars, Bishops Anstey and Trinity College East at Arima Angel Harps, El Dorado East Secondary at Fascinators Pan Symphony, and St. Joseph's Convent at birdsong. For some of these schools, these relationships are long established:

**Fonclaire's CEO Darren Sheppard said Pleasantville and Fonclaire have had a long history. In Fonclaire's heyday in the late 1980s and early 1990s, when they scored a second-place hattrick, all of their music was done in Pleasantville Secondary during their lunch hour and brought out to the panyard in the night. "So it is a wonderful feeling to be able to host Pleasantville for the last couple of months. It is going to be a long-standing relationship. It's like family come back together. I am Pleasantville, the captain and vice captains, arranger, are all Pleasantville. We also have a host of players who have Pleasantville links, so this is home."** (Webb 2023)

For Fonclaire, despite the band having a youth band of its own, continuing this connection is important to the larger organisation. These ties are seen throughout Fonclaire as the personnel for the two groups have become intertwined.

One of the primary reasons schools seek to establish partnerships with community ensembles is a need for practice space and instruments. Throughout my fieldwork and accompanying interviews, many interlocutors highlighted the lack of infrastructure provided for school steelbands; community ensembles are well placed to fill these needs. In a discussion on the needs of her ensemble, director of Bishop Anstey, Port of Spain, explained to me:

**"[Junior Panorama is] a huge production, because as I said, we're a small school and we wanted to play with fifty players, we don't have fifty pans, at best we have twenty pans and a drumset. So we have to outsource, so it was literally me begging everyone I knew. So, I begged a couple of pansides, I used some instruments from the UWI steel orchestra, a panside, Starlift I think it was, and then a couple of the girls who were already affiliated with pansides, so we had a couple of pans from Renegades and so on because they played in those Junior bands so they were able to lend a couple pans. So, we were able to reach the number, we eventually got up to the fifty players and of course, we are next to the Savannah, but in order for us to cross the stage we need to have racks. We don't have racks. So, we also borrowed racks from, I believe it was Starlift down in Mucurapo"** (Tamara Martin, in discussion with the author, 4 May 2022)<sup>2</sup>

In 2023, Bishop used racks from Roadblock Steel Orchestra; members borrowed pans from other youth bands such as Invaders and Renegades; and additional pans were provided by Highlanders Steel Orchestra, as can be seen in Figure 1. Schools such as Bishop Anstey pull from numerous ensembles, creating a more elaborate network of ensembles, resources, and people. As bands establish their own youth ensembles, and as I will discuss more in the next section, the ability of bands to provide pans and practice space for school steelbands becomes more difficult:

<sup>2</sup> Here, Tamara mentions racks as one of the needs of her school ensembles. In Trinidadian steelpan spaces, racks are the metal structures that hold the steelpans. These racks are on wheels and are used to easily move steelbands in parades and in Panorama when steelbands need to move quickly on and off the Queen's Park Savannah stage. Schools, even those that may have some steelpans, rarely own racks and are dependent on community ensembles to provide them.

**“Because a lot more conventional bands are developing junior bands, those junior bands usually practice after school, whereas you would have had the access to the panyard because no one was using it now, you now have to have some bands junior bands practice at the same time. I look at bands like St. Mary’s College, they use Desperadoes, but I know Desperadoes has a youth band that may practice at the same time..”** (Joshua Joseph in discussion with the author, 28 January 2023)

Senior community ensembles provide resources to school steelbands, but school steelbands frequently give back to the organisations that help them. One of the primary ways in which schools contribute to community ensembles is by recruiting members. Senior bands are acutely aware that allowing schools to use their panyards opens up a new line of recruitment:

**“Another thing that I should mention that works in our favor here at Silver Stars, as compared to the other large bands, because we don’t have a junior band, what we do, we lend secondary schools our panyard that they could practice in for the Junior Panorama. So, they may not have all the instruments in their school so they can come here; they will learn the music, they will use our pans, perform in the competition, and return. Just that exchange alone that we did, by the time they are finished rehearsal, and we start rehearsal, there are one or two persons lingering around, and by the time they hear what we play, they enjoy it, so they’re like daddy, mommy, I want to play here, and they end up right here.”** (Marcus Ash in discussion with the author, April 28, 2022)

Directors of senior bands want these students to stick around to gain an interest in their ensemble; directors of school steelbands also encourage members to stay behind after rehearsals to observe and learn from the older players.

### **Network Building between Community Youth and Community Senior Steelbands**

While the networks between school and community ensembles have existed for decades, the networks between youth community ensembles and their senior counterparts are significantly newer. As compared to school steelbands, the rise of youth community steelbands has only occurred in the past fifteen to twenty years. However, unlike school steelbands, which need to continuously work to grow and sustain their networks, the networks between youth and senior community bands are far more self-sustaining as a large majority of these youth community ensembles developed out of their parent organisations. Through these relationships, a network of reciprocity has been established.

One of the critical ways in which senior ensembles provide for youth ensembles is by producing and maintaining the necessary infrastructure for a steelband. Kygel Benjamin, director of All Stars Youth Orchestra, explained to me all the ways in which the senior band has helped the youth band:

**“The senior band has to provide a space for the youths to practice. They allow us to use the pan yards some hours before their rehearsals ... The band also has to provide the pans, the instruments, for the youths to use ... And then there’s tuning. So pans need to be tuned before competition so that’s something the senior band also assists with. In terms of assistance, anything financial, the senior band would usually assist with that. The Junior Band is allowed to raise their own funds and to manage their own funds and that comes with its challenges as well because there is always something that needs to be worked out, but these are all the things that are possible. They assist with uniforms, sorting performances, these are things that the senior band would help with.”** (Kygel Benjamin in discussion with the author, 21 November 2021)

While the junior band is an independent ensemble, most of its needs are covered by the senior bands. Large bands, such as All Stars, can easily cover these needs thanks to their substantial sponsorships from companies such as First Citizens Bank, Massy Investment Holding Company, British Petroleum (bp), Shell Oil, and Trinidad and Tobago Electric Company. Other bands have smaller sponsorship agreements and need to be strategic with how they spend money in relation to the youth ensemble. The wealth of the senior band is apparent within Junior Panorama, as bands like bp Renegades have special outfits produced, impressively decorated racks, and plenty of confetti to use during their performances. Smaller community bands in the under-21 category who do not have this support from senior bands struggle to provide these extras.

While senior bands provide their youth bands with the necessary resources, youth ensembles also give back to their parent ensembles. For some bands, such as Shell Invaders, their youth steelband is considered to be more successful in Junior Panorama than their senior band is in Senior Panorama. After the youth band’s 2019 Junior Panorama victory, Invaders manager Michael Dinchong highlighted the importance of the youth band winning:

**Since [the beginning of Panorama] we never won. The youth band started the ball rolling for us. We have been in Panorama for 50 years and never won. The youth band did well. They have us on a high.** (Quoted in Espinet 2019)

While talking with members of both Invaders senior and youth ensembles, I was frequently told about the youth band’s 2019 victory, and with the victory, the narrative that the youth ensemble was accomplishing something the senior band could not. When junior bands win Junior Panorama, senior bands frequently try to capitalise on their win to glean motivation for the upcoming Senior Panorama.

Further, youth steelbands serve as an important recruitment and training tool for senior bands. Throughout my interviews, my interlocutors frequently noted that members of the youth ensemble would eventually transition into the senior band, sometimes at quite a young age:



**“And you do see more of the teenagers in the secondary and community [bands] coming into the senior band, and because the senior bands now all have a junior band, the majority of them have a junior band, it’s like a nice filter system. So okay, you’re the youngest of the senior band for Panorama, but you are a core of the junior band. So, when you’ve finished your time, when you “graduated” from this junior band, you kind of have an unspoken place in the senior band, whether it be solely for Panorama if you’re seasonal, or you joined the stage side, you know, you go through.<sup>3</sup> And, of recent, I’ve been seeing a lot of the younger ones from some Junior bands graduating into the stage side, because they want to keep that relationship, and then you automatically, if you earn a place in the stage side, then you earn a place in Panorama because you’re a core member, 24-7 member, of this group, of this band, a representative.”** (Joshua Joseph in discussion with the author, 24 January 2022)

<sup>3</sup> Steelbands in Trinidad often have two performance groups. The larger group is their Panorama ensemble who only perform during the Carnival season. The stage side group is a significantly smaller group that plays year-round. The stage side ensemble is considered to be the core of the organization.

With the development of youth programmes, senior bands now have a solid pool of players from which to recruit. Further, knowing that these younger players will eventually transition to the senior band, band leadership looks to the youth bands to train members on new skills and values, hoping that these skills will eventually transfer to the senior band.

Younger members are also aware of these networks and understand their trajectory in the organisation. I began this article with a quote from a youth pan player displaying her fervent dedication to her parent organisation. This loyalty to the larger organisation is now being established at a young age. Many youth players dream of the day they will be able to transition into the senior band and will not consider playing with a different ensemble. Other youth members selected their youth ensemble carefully, knowing that playing in a youth ensemble establishes a trajectory into the adult ensemble. Young players are acutely aware of the networks that have been established and how they as individuals fit into this system.

Connecting with both youth community ensembles and school ensembles, members of the steelband community have created a music scene that is related to but separate from its senior counterpart. It is because of these networks and connections that Junior Panorama has grown so substantially in its history, developing from a competition with just two bands to one of the largest Carnival performances, involving weeks of preliminary performances and a finals day lasting upwards of twelve hours. These networks between ensembles are particularly notable given the lack of networks among senior bands due to the steelbands’ territorial history. In this way, this growing music scene, driven by youth musicking, is different from any other musical practice within Trinidad.

### **Youth Steelbands and Youth Welfare**

Throughout my research, interlocutors frequently described the ways in which panyards serve as community centres, providing a range of activities beyond steelband rehearsals. These activities are often cross-generational and provide ample opportunities for youth to be involved in their organi-

sations beyond playing pan. In expanding beyond steelpan, panyards become spaces for youth to inhabit more frequently, creating spaces for youth to learn from their elders:

**“Well, for a lot of these children, the panyard is like a second home, and you will learn a lot. You learn about respect, even about how to deal with situations, time management, sometimes you may have people in your section that you have to work with. You learn about teaching the younger ones, how to speak to younger ones, how the young ones speak to the older ones, and so on. It’s really like a whole, it’s like a holistic learning aspect when it comes to the panyard, because it’s not just coming to learn pan, you learn a lot of life skills here, as well. So, I would say definitely, including me, I started off young, in school there, and I ended up being part of the management, being secretary of the band. You learn new things, you learn how to manage a band. It’s like a second home and you learn organization, education, you learn everything there.”** (Atiya O’Neil in discussion with the author, 3 June 2022)

For Atiya, who grew up in it, the panyard has been essential to her development. This narrative of the panyard as a home or community centre is becoming more commonplace within discussions of youth bands. In a newspaper interview in response to their 2023 victory, manager of Tropical Angel Harps Youth Steel Orchestra, Clarry Benn, emphasised the importance of the panyard for their youths:

**He described his panyard philosophy by explicit reference to the words of Pan Trinbago’s current president, Beverley Ramsey-Moore, that “the steelband yard is a sacred space – a place for nurturing the youths”. Mr. Benn added in respect of the steel orchestra that “we don’t see it as only a steelband but as an institution aimed at developing the myriad talents and skills among our youths”. He described some practical things, such as having a homework center, music classes and other activities catering to children from eight to seventeen as “inroads towards creating more positive and well-grounded citizens”.** (Daly 2023)

Youth steelbands on their own may not have the necessary resources for such secondary programming with the ensembles; however, by connecting with larger organisations, they can provide substantially more help to their members. A key part of this programming is the notion that if children and youth consider the panyard to be their second home and community, they are far less likely to be pulled into other more violent paths.

Violence in Trinidad, and specifically gang violence, is often discussed in regard to the Laventille neighbourhood of Port of Spain, the birth place of the steelpan (Pawelz 2018). Gangs in Port of Spain attempt to fill the void left by the lack of government support and programming, and gang leaders often see themselves as important community liaisons (Adams et al. 2021). Due to their social role, gangs have gained a significant amount of power, leading to a national crisis (Pawelz 2018). Violence has pushed into youth areas, and school violence has also become a major concern for local communities (Louis 2020; Williams 2013). The increased gang

violence over the past twenty years has severely affected Laventille and surrounding regions of Port of Spain, and:

**due to the persistent threat of violence, many streets, playgrounds, and community centers are deserted. To ensure their children's safety, parents opt to keep their children inside at all times, even when school is not in session.** (Adams et al. 2021: 554)

Panyards have sought to combat this threat of violence by becoming safe havens for communities in Port of Spain. More specifically, panyards and steelbands have become a haven for youth in these communities. When I asked my interlocutors why the youth steelpan was important, many jumped right to the notion of the pan being an escape:

**"I feel as if it's important because, especially since some of our youths in Trinidad end up in the wrong company, and I know that we have some people, some youth band members, who turn into senior band members, who have said if it wasn't for the steelband, I would have ended up on the street with my brother or with my cousins. Because, they literally have people who live with siblings who are on the streets doing illegal stuff. So it is an avenue, in addition to all these other things, an avenue to help avoid crime. To me, if our corporate world, our government, anybody who is the position that they are in can make a change, more emphasis should be put on these youth bands, because the bands have saved many kids' lives. They otherwise end up shot dead somewhere, as an example. I think there's a lot that people can get from being in the youth band. Also, our youth band helps with homework. So when, if you come that period, for example our youth band practices between 4:00 and 6:00, what happens between 2:30-4:00? Schools finish at 2:30, some schools at 3:00, depending on which level school you're at. When you come to the panyard, you get help with your homework... I remember I was on a youth band committee, and one of the youth band committee members said they banned, not banned but took away a performance from a boy, because his grades weren't good. In [this student's] mind, I didn't realize that I have to do well in school to be able to perform in the youth band, and that was a big thing for them, I need to be able to perform. So it's like ok, now I have to do well in school. It keeps the kids focused, it helps them to do well in their formal education in school as well, so there's so much that I think kids can get out being in a youth band."** (Mia Gormandy in discussion with the author, 3 May 2022)

Youth bands provide opportunities and spaces for youth to take an active role in their community in a way that is seen as productive and meaningful. In more extreme cases, participating in youth steelbands has saved youth lives. It is particularly notable that panyards have become safe havens away from violence given the steelpan's violent history. Early accounts of the steelpan often highlight acts of violence by steelbands seeking to protect their territory (Dudley 2008). While steelbands are certainly still competitive with each other, they are no longer seen as the violently territorial ensembles that they were in the mid-twentieth century. Rather, many in the pan community recognise the positive actions that other

steelbands are doing for their communities. Youth programming and network building is at the forefront of such discussions. For those involved in the developing youth steelpan scene, the networks established may provide resources, knowledge, or personnel, but they also provide opportunities to keep youth safe and away from gang violence. In doing so, the shift towards a focus on youth in steelbands has led to a shift in steelbands being at the centre of violence to being a refuge from it.

## Conclusion

Throughout my research, I often heard the narrative that Junior Panorama was important because of the community and continuity it created in Trinidad's pan world. As I have highlighted throughout this article, panyards have become community centres, with youth development at their centre. For participants, this sense of community is critical to youth steelband scenes:

***“The youth need to be involved in steelpan, because steelpan is a community developing instrument. From my standpoint, of course, I would have served as dean in my secondary school for now six years. I've seen so many students function as individuals and the steelpan community fosters that unity, that love, that togetherness, that real community or village experience.”*** (Kenrick Noel in discussion with the author, 4 March 2022)

As highlighted by Kenrick, the sense of community established in these ensembles has become critically important and powerful to its members. As youth become more involved in these spaces, they develop a network that simultaneously prioritises youth experiences and establishes an intergenerational community.

In addition to the sense of community that is fostered in these spaces, many participants view youth spaces as important because they establish continuity within larger steelband networks:

***“It's the only way we'll have continuity. The older generation can't play all the time, and in order for us to have that constant succession of the actual instrument, players of the instrument participating in competitions for the instrument, we must have that influx, having that culture of learning the natural instrument at a younger age in order to appreciate it at an older age.”*** (Tamara Martin in discussion with the author, 4 May 2022)

Players in these spaces, both young and old, recognise the need to develop a new generation of pan players. In recent years, numerous elders of the steelpan community have passed away, and many active members of the community are recognising that the steelpan as a whole is moving into a new era. With that, many are turning to the younger generation to keep the art form alive. It is important to note, though, that youth steelpan spaces are not replicas of senior steelbands, but rather spaces where youth have an active say in the development of their traditions.

Junior Panorama highlights a series of networks prevalent within both Trinidadian youth spaces and the larger steelband community. Analysing the competition from a network and scene perspective provides a deeper understanding of the competition and its role within cultural network building in Trinidad. As I have discussed in this article, within Junior Panorama, band administrators, teachers/tutors, players, and supporters are all interconnected in a network that is separate from other Carnival arts. School and youth bands rely on senior bands for gaining access to resources such as steelpans and racks, rehearsal space, pan tuners, and arrangers; senior bands provide these resources in the hopes of using these networks as a tool of recruitment and for audience support, in addition to gaining access to additional performance opportunities. It is because of these networks and connections that Junior Panorama has grown so substantially in its history. This research on Junior Panorama and youth steelband spaces can be used to further the discussion on music scenes. Most research that discusses music scenes analyses popular music or music directly connected to the recording music industry (Guerra 2021; Bennett and Rogers 2016; Kruse 2010; Harrison 2009). However, as I have highlighted in this article, the concept of a music scene can be expanded beyond the music industry to new applications, particularly within childhood studies. By applying the concept of a music scene to youth steelband spaces in Trinidad, I have highlighted how cultural knowledge is spread through these networks and has impacted the development of youth musicians. Further, as I have argued, by prioritising youth involvement and needs, the role of the panyard within Trinidadian society has fundamentally shifted from being at the centre of violence to being a safe haven from it. As such, further research is needed on youth steelpan and cultural practice in Trinidad to better appreciate the nuances and complexities of Trinidadian culture and society, as youth continue to find a home in these spaces.

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**Image:** Bishop Anstey practising with Roadblock's racks and Highlander's orange pans. Courtesy of the author.

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