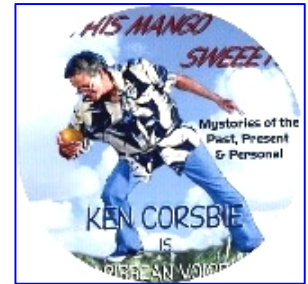


Ken's Choice #5.. Jan.1.2006

Hail to the New Year

This is the fifth of an irregular series of e-mail "newsletters" with what I think are interesting cultural events, ideas, artists and productions throughout the Caribbean and its diaspora – the type that don't get widespread publicity. I will be sending them out as "Ken's Choices" to my friends and associates who have agreed to receive them.



There is an endless number of websites run by hard working almost nameless West Indians. Many of them are "national" in that they publish mainly events of their individual countries, but there are some that reach out to a wider market. It is impractical to name all, so I have chosen just seven that I think are noteworthy for the diaspora to look at for cultural/arts information and comment. My choices are limited by my own limited acquaintance with sites that are not of Guyanese origin. All of the following have excellent links to the wider Caribbean.

1.. www.ecaroh.com is my first choice. This is the gateway to the tandem sites of PANONTHEWEB and BOURDAMARKETPLACE, two of the most interesting Caribbean cultural/arts outlets. Pan offers the most complete array of steelband cd's you could find anywhere else, and Bourda is chock full of calypso, chutney, spoken word, news, comments, bio's, sound bites. It is colorful, complete, comprehensive, accessible and up to date.

Ron Lammy (Guyanese in Boston) is one of the masterminds behind it. If you want the best of Caribbean music or find out

about some of it's foremost artists, then look no further. Look at www.panontheweb.com and www.bourdmarketplace.com . See the pictorial review of the 7th annual Cayman Islands GIMISTORY FESTIVAL – http://sweetsoca.com/bmp/relax/2005gimistory_review.htm and click on the PDF download for the original.



2.. www.caribarts.org is the ultimate Caribbean site for news and commentary of arts and cultural events and artists of all the disciplines – music, dance, graphic and fine art, theatre, literature, poetry.. Site manager **Marina Taitt** (Guyanese in Barbados) scours newspapers, other sites, magazines and also welcomes inputs from anybody anywhere for interesting stories. She runs it as a work of love having studied theatre and lived in Jamaica for some time and has seen the need for more information about arts and culture accessible for a single source. The cost of managing caribarts.org is offset by a reasonable membership fee, and it's well worth it if you're at all interested in the wider Caribbean.



3.. www.caribvoice.org is Guyanese **Annan Boodram's** (Brooklyn) comprehensive site that offers a wider palette of news and information, but gives good coverage of the arts and culture. Annan works hard and succeeds in keeping it updated and relevant. He broadcasts a weekly email to registered (free) members.

4.. www.theartsjournal.org.gy is a literature arts and does it thoroughly graduate who, as far back as I Caribbean literature. A website like publication of literature commentary and about the very best of our



recent addition to the arts scene. It leans towards the and intelligently. **Ameena Gafoor** (Guyana) is a UWI remember, has an intense love and understanding of this has been needed for decades and brings the into the 21st century. It already has had articles of, from writers.

5.. Trinidad's www.pancaribbean.com leads you into an impossible private tv station – almost 100% Caribbean or Caribbean related content, run by two Trinidad hotwires – Television director/producer **Christopher Laird** and actor/comedian **Errol Fabien**. It will lead you into www.banyan.com and more importantly into GAYELLE TV! You can actually watch Gayelle through the attendant www.homeviewtnt.net. I was one of lucky ones who more than two decades ago was part of the very first of the Gayelle series which went on to produce hundreds of arts/cultural programs, and three years ago morphed into a full fledged television station. The first and only of its kind in the region. It's archival resources come from hundreds of video programs made by BANYAN which was Christopher's production studio from 25 years ago.

Since 1974, Banyan has distinguished itself as a producer of innovative and entertaining programs which aim at the same time to inform and reflect Caribbean people and culture. This mixture of entertainment and social comment so akin to the Calypso, the folk song form originating in Trinidad, has become identified as the Banyan style and is applied in the hundreds of productions Banyan has presented in the last 29 years.



In 2004 Banyan started a community television station called [Gayelle:THE CHANNEL](#) which creates 14 hours of original programming every day and is the first over the air television station in the region to transmit 100% local and regional programming.

6. http://www.caricom.org/isp/community_organs/cohsod_culture.jsp is **CARICOM'S CULTURE PAGE** (Caribbean Community Secretariat) headquartered in Guyana. The page is not easy to find from the home page but this URL goes straight to it.. There is a long comprehensive paper on CARIFESTA (Caribbean Festival of the Arts) and on Globalization as it affects the arts. Carifesta (August) will be in Trinidad for the third time!



7.. <http://kykoveral.blogspot.com/> is run by **Jonathan Bratt** out of Toronto and gives us Caribbean poetry, literature bio's and comment by artists like Derek Walcott, Kamau Braithwaite, Marc Matthews, Grace Nichols. A new site that deserves everybody's full support, particularly by those who proclaim undying love of country and home and who say that W.I cricket is the lifeblood of ALL West Indians and we should all "Rally round the West Indies".

If you find any sites that fit the bill – particularly those that cross boundaries – please let me know.

To view KEN'S CHOICE #4 – pictorial review of the 7th annual GIMISTORY FESTIVAL in the Cayman Islands – http://sweetsoca.com/bmp/relax/2005gimistory_review.htm