

Sweet TNT

MAGAZINE

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Issue #12 October 2014

Our special wedding

Ashook and Felesha Parboo pose for a photo at their Hindu wedding ceremony after they were given Aashirvad which means blessings from the family. The guests showered the newlyweds with flowers and rice to wish the couple a long, happy marriage. See page 5

Photo by A Williams Photography

Arima drifters

Artist 'nails' it!

Poem: Righteous Robbery

Chicken foot souse

Tableland's food fiesta

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Sweet TnT
MAGAZINE

Lifestyle
Creole Language
Food
Places

Trinidad and Tobago culture for so!



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Coconut man in St Augustine

Coconut vendor at the intersection near the University of the West Indies, St Augustine. See more scenes outside UWI campus on page 27

Editor's note

Celebrations have been hitting T&T one after the next and *Sweet TnT Magazine* has been keeping up with them thus far. The October issue brings readers a Hindu wedding in T&T as the bride and groom will be celebrating their first Divali on October 23. There is a quiz for readers to take based on Republic Day which was celebrated on September 24. Also, we share some Independence Day action from our Facebook album posted on August 31.

As usual, our contributors continue to entertain readers with the great happenings in T&T. In the Lifestyle section there are stories on mendi, a family trip to Matelot, drifters in Arima, a boat cruise experience, and interviews with two artists, a painter and a nail tech. The Creole section has some interesting poems, a short story, and a humorous commentary on the signs found in maxis. In the food section, a proud chef shares his passionate story, readers get a little taste of some souse and soup, and see what is happening at Tableland and their food expo. Take a tour in our places section with some scenes outside the university in St Augustine, an experience at the Oval and interesting sights on Wrightson Road in Port of Spain.

We thank our writers, interviewees and advertisers for making the October issue possible. Also, thanks to our fans for clicking "like", "follow", "share", and commenting on our social networking sites. You motivate all of us to keep bringing the sweet news of T&T to you.

Enjoy!

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Sweet TnT
MAGAZINE

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Republic Day quiz

By Nadia Ali

On September 24, Trinidad and Tobago celebrated its 38th Republic Day which occurred in 1976. What do you understand Republicanism to really mean? Take my quiz and find out?

1. To date, how many presidents have there been?

- A. Five
- B. Seven
- C. Four

2. Which college has produced two presidents?

- A. Fatima College
- B. Presentation College (San Fernando)
- C. Naparima Boys' College

3. How long is a president's term in office?

- A. 6 months
- B. 5 years
- C. 4 years

4. The name of the Queen of Trinidad and Tobago before it became a Republic was?

- A. Queen Elizabeth II
- B. Queen Latifah
- C. Queen Victoria

5. How do you address the president?

- A. Your Worship
- B. Your Highness
- C. Your Excellency

6. When was the official date of Republic Day in 1976?

- A. September 24th
- B. August 1st
- C. August 24th

7. How many years does this Republic Day mark T&T being a republic twin island?

- A. 50
- B. 52
- C. 38

8. Why is Republic Day celebrated on September 24th and not August 1st?

- A. It's because the Red House was under renovation
- B. It's when the first Parliament met under the Republican Constitution
- C. The first Parliament resolved that it was too close to Independence Day.

9. What does national patriotism mean?

- A. Devotion to one's country
- B. Devotion to one's parents
- C. Devotion to one's patriarch

10. What is the word given to a nation that means supreme power by which an independent state is governed?

- A. A calypso nation
- B. A sovereign nation
- C. An independent nation

ANSWERS

1. Five – Sir Ellis Clarke, Mr Noor Hassanali, Mr ANR Robinson, Prof. George Maxwell Richards, Justice Anthony Thomas Aquinas Carmona.
2. Naparima Boys' College – Noor Hassanali and Justice Anthony Thomas Aquinas Carmona
3. 5 years
4. Queen Elizabeth II
5. Your Excellency
6. August 1st
7. 38th year
8. The first Parliament met under the Republican Constitution
9. Devotion to one's country
10. A sovereign nation

Snake petting!



Aadam Ali poses with a snake at the Emperor Valley Zoo, Port of Spain. The zoo has a programme that allows the public to interact with the animals in the presence of a trained handler. Photo by Marissa Armoogam-Ali

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Kanyadaan is performed where the bride's father Kenrick Subadar, third from right, gives the hand of the bride Felesha Parboo, second from right, during the wedding ceremony to the groom Ashook Parboo, partly shown. The bride's brother Anand Maharaj, left, pours pure water while the sanalp is read which means the relationship between the bride and the groom will remain pure and unbroken as the water which is poured on their hands, a sacred gift. Felesha's mother Gomatie Subadar, right, assists. Photos by A Williams Photography



The Sindoor is applied to the wife Felesha by her husband Ashook at the time of marriage to imply that she is now protected by her husband and anyone who dares to harm her in any manner will have to face the husband's wrath. A sheet is placed over the bride and groom to place the Sindoor on the bride's head and her oldest sister Marsha Subadar Rambally must fix the Sindoor on her head to be there for her too.

Our special wedding

By Felesha Parboo

I left Boston approximately three years ago to be with my love Ashook Parboo.

Every day I thank God for the great life that he has provided for me.

Our wedding date was set for December 15, 2013. It would give us just the right amount of time to prepare for our big day. It was so hectic. From deciding what colour schemes to the flavour cake we wanted. My husband-to-be didn't want to be so much involved in the preparations. He just agreed to what he thought was needed.

We decided to do a traditional Hindu wedding. It just seemed so much more intriguing. I prepared day and night with his family and mine. Everyone helped out and everything fell into place.

Our colour scheme choices were blue and lilac. I simply had to get a red velvet wedding cake. We went to Priya's Creation for the clothing for our wedding ceremony and decided to have a reception after which we purchased a wedding dress and suit. Everything was actually going to happen.

On the Thursday before the wedding, I had to go home in La Romaine to do my part at the ceremony. It began on Friday with saffron being rubbed on my skin by five little girls up until Sunday morning. Tassa music was enjoyed all throughout Saturday night. It turned out to be a handful and sadly I missed out on my husband's side for the previous nights when I was not there. I heard they had a lot of fun.

My husband-to-be and I were not allowed to talk to

each other between Friday and Sunday. When I saw him at the temple he looked absolutely breathtaking. After all, I didn't see him for what felt like eternity. We performed our rights and were blessed by our pundit.

After the ceremony, we were allowed to change into our reception clothes. It took a while in between all the rush from the temple to the reception hall. We enjoyed ourselves to the fullest despite a few mishaps. I wouldn't change anything if I had the chance to do it again.

We are officially married and loving it!

Sweet TnT Magazine team would like to congratulate Ashook and Felesha on their marriage and hope they enjoy their first Divali celebration together as a married couple.



Ashook and Felesha Parboo at their wedding reception. This is a huge formal party with lots of music to celebrate the successful wedding. This is the first public appearance of the bride and groom together as a couple. There are no formal traditions at the reception.



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Photo by Nadia Ali

Mehndi

Yesteryear's body art of today

By Nadia Ali

Art appeals to the eyes that see a creation on canvas expressed from the mind of an artist's imagination. But what if we could have temporary imagery painted onto our skin? The centuries-old art of mehndi does just this. It creates a painting on the skin in intricate henna-coloured designs.

It is a tradition born in the east that originates from the crushed Henna plant grown in Africa, India, Morocco, Pakistan and the Middle East. It was initially used by people in the desert by rubbing the paste over their sun exposed skin to serve as a sun block. Then it developed to being used as an adornment to decorate the body by both the rich and the poor.

The green leaves and twigs of the plant are picked and crushed into a fine powder. This is then mixed with water or oil to create

a paste which smells of an intense mint/rosemary fragrance. It is applied to the body as a temporary art form.

The paste is available for purchase as pre-packaged, small cone-like shape product ready for use known simply as "Henna". But many people still opt to go to one of many mehndi artists found in the twin isles. Just ask any girl where they go to get their hands painted and many will tell you that they have one mehndi artist who they go to every year without fail. One of the main reasons is because of the quality and colour of the mehndi which most professional artists make for themselves giving a deeper colour and longer staying power than the ready-to-use henna product.

Besides weddings which have seen a growing trend amongst brides to use the services of a professional mehndi artist. The occasions of Divali and Eid are very popular times

of the year where girls engage the service of mehndi artists to have their hand and feet painted. The popular mehndi artists often have a stream of people coming and going for the days preceding the festive occasion. Schools also celebrate Divali and Eid and although they do not hire professional artists they tend to nominate one or two girls to create mehndi designs on the hands of their fellow students.

A natural art form, some mehndi artists will develop the design as they go along according to the client's hands and personality while others work with set patterns. Part of its appeal, besides that it is painless, is that it has a tattooed appearance which wears off in about three to four weeks.

So, as Eid has ended and Divali is coming, once again the beautiful art form will make an appearance on the hands and feet of girls in sweet T&T.

A rustic family adventure to Matelot!

By Nerissa Hosein

This year my family decided to take a vacation down to Bacasa Beach House in Matelot. I had really never been down on that side of the island so it was an adventure. The drive to the beach house was almost four hours from our home in San Juan. I must say the scenery was gorgeous. It fascinates me how different the air is once you get away from civilisation and start really heading back into nature. It was a welcomed change. The views were beautiful passing through Toco, Salybia and Shark River. We stopped a couple times to take in the beauty.

When you live in the smog and the noise, you really learn to appreciate the quiet serenity that is nature. It was a wonderful feeling.

On arriving at our destination it was a bit surprising. The house was a little more rustic than we first thought. But it had an amazing pool, was clean and a great view of the ocean so we were happy. We cooked, unpacked and then all jumped into the pool. It was so refreshing. I knew it was going to be a great week!

The night however was a bit more rustic than us city people were used to. Because of the open nature of the house we found ourselves sharing the living room with a number of flying

and crawling visitors. We had a good laugh though at the kids running from grasshoppers and moths! Then the current went! Not so much fun anymore! I, being the paranoid one in the group, was a bit unnerved by this development, especially when I could swear I felt something crawl up my leg! Yikes!

So our first night was spent by the fire side, yes there was a fire side! We kept each other's company and hoped for the current to return. It did return, the next day.

So after that our vacation continued along

"No air condition, no television and not much between us and nature. But my kids thought it was such an awesome adventure! The pool was breathtaking"

Keeping
T&T sweet!

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without too many bumps. We cooked, we swam, we walked down to the beach and even did some fishing. The area was so quiet and peaceful. Our nights were spent playing cards and other games, watching the bugs and other creatures trying to avoid us invading humans.

It was certainly not the vacation for the faint of heart! No air condition, no television and not much between us and nature. But my kids thought it was such an awesome adventure! The pool was breathtaking and kid friendly so what else could they need right?

I think it was just what we needed. No video games, no distractions, it was such a slow pace from all the stress our regular life contains. It reminded me of my childhood and I was glad my kids got to experience a week without technology and play board games and cards like what we used to do before they invented PlayStation and Wii.

All in all it was a great week with family, quality time and a swimming pool! I could not ask for more!



Zayn in his water wings and Eshan in his life jacket!



Arima drifters

By Marika Mohammed

Arima is famous for so many things, great customer services, horse racing and now drifting. If you're thinking fast and the furious, then you're absolutely right. These guys know how to tear up the road and their tyres. It is definitely what you would expect – smoke, speed and screech. It is definitely an adrenaline sport for the strong of heart.

While on the sidelines one has to be

careful of getting some smoke from the tyres, so asthmatics beware, pieces of tyres getting into your face because of the speed. Watch what you're eating and screeching from the engines; not for the easily spooked. It is quite fun, however, especially for those who get the opportunity to ride with these drivers on the track. Going more than your legal speed limit, how is that not fun! These guys, unlike the rest of us, are trained in this profession. Yup, they're the only ones who are capable of drifting without losing control or their lunch.

They know what they're doing.

To these guys drifting is a responsibility, and thus drives responsibly on and off track. But the real question is what made these guys so involved in the sport? To them it's relaxing and thrilling all at the same time. There's no big money prizes, no NASCAR dealership or perks, just good old fashion, blood boiling rest and relaxation. Some people find joy in shopping or video gaming but these guys enjoy this unique hobby while gaining driving experience and comradery.

It's a boat cruise kind of life

By Annisa Phillip

Partying on a boat has become quite popular in sweet T&T leading to a boat cruise craze. Granted leaving land and stepping onto a boat may not be favoured by many who have a boat or sea phobia or those who suffer from severe motion sickness for the sake of a party, boat cruises are “vibes!” In actuality, when you are thoroughly enjoying yourself you tend to not realise you’re moving.

My epic experience was with a group of friends on the First Lady for the cooler edition of Insanity. When I say epic, I mean epic to the point where most of us were dripping in the air conditioned room. Armed with the glow bands and jello shots we received upon entering the dock – and the cooler of course – we readied ourselves for a night of balance.

First thing first, we found our spot on the boat and marked the territory with the cooler and a couple “guards”, then we went on a mission for food. We

trekked to the dining area and satisfied stomachs while chatting, preparing ourselves for the ensuing action. A little later as the boat started sailing, we started partying. From singles who coupled off to couples who took a wine on someone else and that one friend who had to wine on everyone. The night was freedom-filled and worry-free creating a casual atmosphere ripe for disregarding the concerns of the previous week.

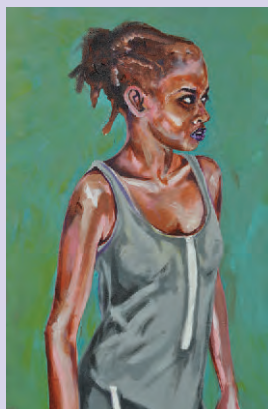
Take a few hours and leave land for a while, float, party on a boat.

Saying goodbye to Port of Spain while heading out to sea on a boat cruise



Artist Richard Rampersad:

I breathe life into an image



Strategic Disengagement



Desperate Dreams



But Who Care



Consolation in Isolation

I am 24 years old and currently a full time practicing artist. I am the recipient of a first class honours degree in Visual Arts from the University of the West Indies (UWI) and possess certified knowledge in Graphic Design from the School of Business and Computer Science as well as Mehndi from UWI.

I have been engaged in art-making at around age 10 and have always felt a creative impulse resonated in my consciousness. I specialise in figurative painting and ceramics, and also experiment with other media such as wire, fabric, paper and natural fibres.

My imagery responds to the realistic and/or abstract nature of an idea or narrative. My fascination for anything I see, feel or experience propels me to do what I do and informs how I do it, as my art is a true mirror to my mind. I take pleasure in doing what I do and I believe my conceptualisations deduce more than what meets the naked eye.

My art delves into the deepest recesses of the human heart and soul. As a composer in the visual realm, my motivation to breathe life



Richard Rampersad

into an image comes from a variety of things or an aspect of one entity, interrogated heartlessly. I am not bound by realism and being a non-linear thinker drives my art-making and creative decisions.

These are some questions posed about my art: Does the somewhat incompleteness in some pieces expresses an unfulfilled longing by the women? Are they helpless and fragile? Are they presented as if they are caged and struggling for nurturance? Does the physics of my light distribution on the figures corre-



Love, Hate Disintegrate

spond and function as it would in reality, and what narratives can be derived from such treatment?

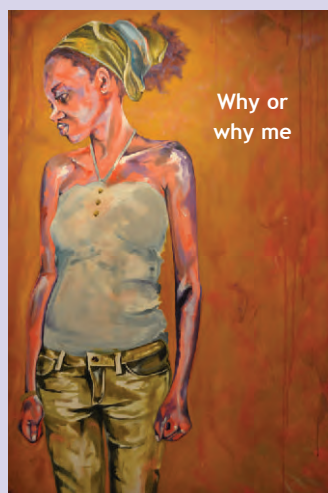
My most memorable experience from my last exhibition was the support that I received from my mentors, family and friends as well as the impact and conversations (physical and emotional) the work made on those who came to the show.

I love my country and its rich and intricate woven tapestry of cultures. Cliché? I think Trinidad and Tobago is really the place to be! The versatility of the people and our energetic culture is appealing to me. I sometimes take my cues and inspiration from our landscape and its inhabitants.

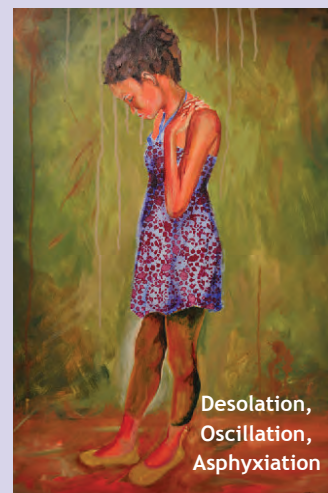
In my attempt to give back to society, I also teach art allowing persons to engage in this practice and in the process I present young persons with an alternative other than delinquency which helps create a positive outlook for my country.



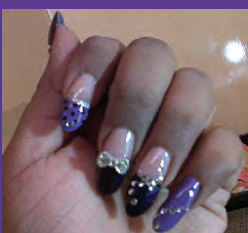
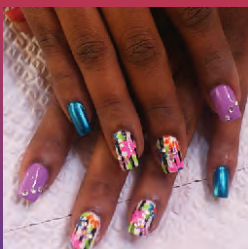
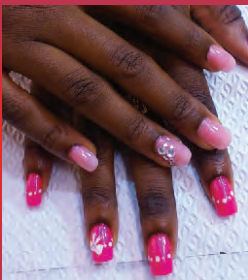
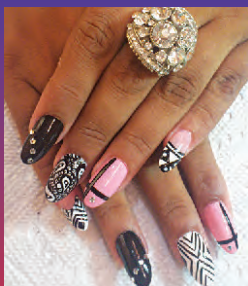
Colours fade, but some scars don't



Why or why me



Desolation, Oscillation, Asphyxiation



Sommer nails it!

By Kielon Hilaire

Some people do their hair, some do their makeup, some do their eyebrows, noses, lips and other parts of their bodies that some think ought not to be done. But Sommer Bugros does things differently to help bring more joy to some people's lives.

Sommer Bugros is a professional nail technician/tutor who owns and has managed the Sommer Naturals Nail Studio business for the past 11 years, which is presently located in Port of Spain. She is highly passionate about art in all of its forms, especially when it is capable of drawing out the purest form of beauty from within one's heart.

Because of her passion for the craft, even while running her business, teaching others the trade, pursuing further artistic courses and

doing it all while being a single mother of two children, she never feels like she is actually working; this is what can happen when you simply choose to do what you love.

Like many great pioneers in life Sommer started off from humble beginnings. She used to paint her finger nails with all sorts of random designs as a way to express her mood. Eventually people began to take notice. Not the kind of notice where they would mumble, "I wonder what's wrong with her" or "She's probably just going through a phase right now" but the type that caused her friends to beam with excitement every time they saw her fingernails.

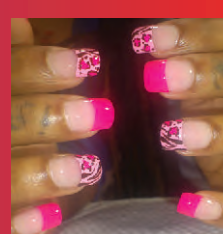
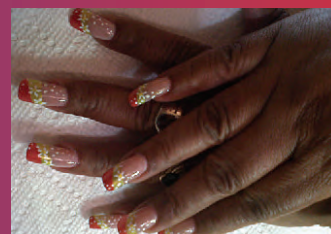
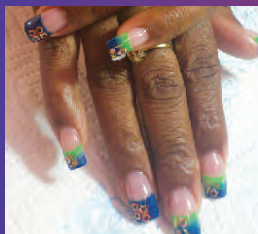
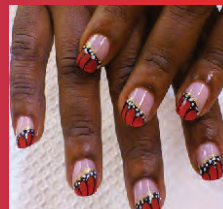
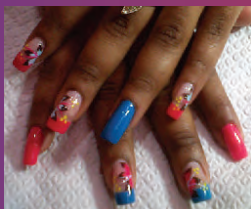
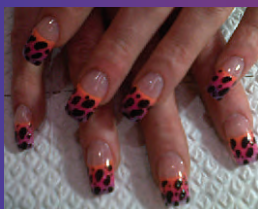
Having always wanted to start her own business, Sommer jumped at the opportunity and never regretted it. She pursued vocational courses in nail technology and became certified with Young's

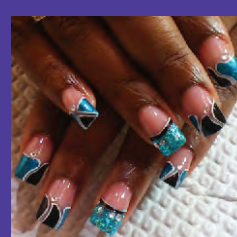
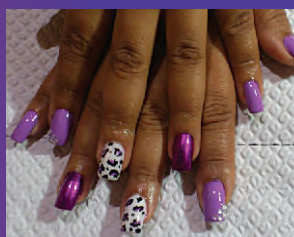
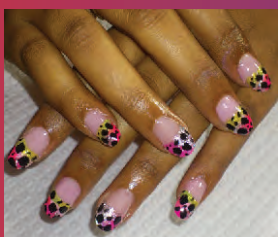
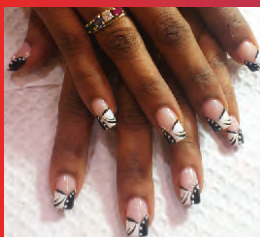
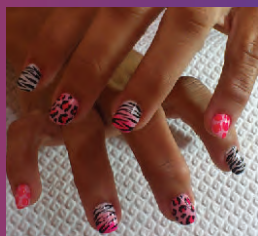


Sommer Bugros

Educational System. From there the head tutor, Gail Young, later hired her as a tutor at her school where she was able to gain a vast amount of experience. Sommer would then eventually take flight on her own.

"I love using my skill to make people happy. Like I always say: when you look good you feel good. So just having your nails done can





really give you a lift. I am here to help my clients relax and to get quality nail services that bring a smile to their faces.”

Sommer claims that all of her designs are hand-painted and that many clients challenge her with designs they feel will be too difficult for her to paint; however, she never turns down challenges as they offer her avenues to further explore and expand her artistic abilities.

One of Sommer's primary selling points as a nail technician is that she offers the most natural looking enhancements that stand the test of time.

Her acrylic nails are not thick and wide (they are thin and well tapered) and she ensures that they are never overdone or gaudy, unless of course the client is into that sort of thing.

The bottom line is that her clients always get their money's worth. This is what makes her stand out among many other nail technicians in T&T.

She was asked how do Trinbagonians generally relate to the craft. She said that nail technology is still a growing industry but a lot more people have begun showing interest in the field, possibly because people

today feel the increasing need for that extra perk and that there is a special sort of “me time” luxury that having your nails done allows.

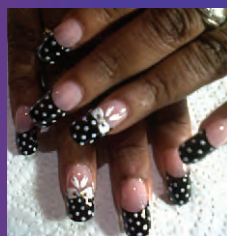
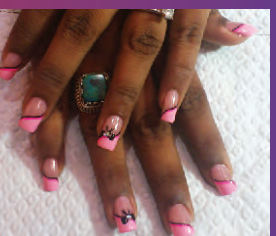
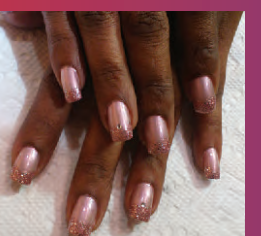
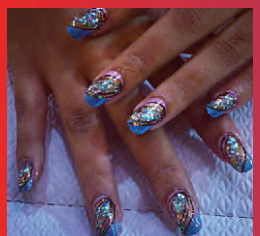
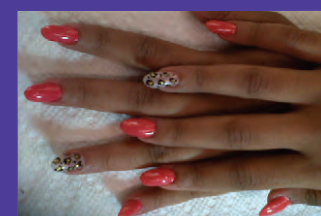
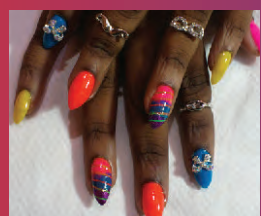
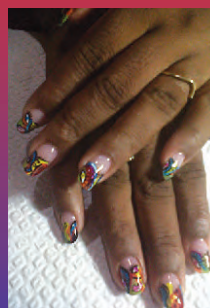
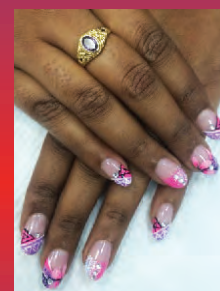
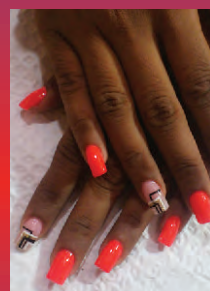
Sommer naturally has a vision to expand her business and to increase her clientele but she has an even bigger dream. That dream is for more people to realise just how talented and valuable Trinidad and Tobago is as a nation.

She also expressed that no matter what your talent is you should never keep it hidden forever as the world always has a place for positive and creative people. As she said, “If you can at least enhance the life of a few people then your life would not be in vain. God gave us special gifts for a reason.”

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Independence Day

August 31, 2014 celebrations



I Cannot Swim My Dear

By Irtha Daniel

I have not swam in my ocean
Since that time with you
I cannot
Now I only sit,
close to the shore
And let the waters flow over me.
Hopefully I can wash away
This loneliness invading my life
Since you've left me
Unable to swim in my oceans
Anymore.

The tides high and low
Come... and I just sit
On the shore;
It would seem unaware
But I feel sometimes
The waves, lacy at my feet
Or the air, dry and hot
And still I cannot swim

So I sit

Awaiting your return
Like a ship
It's anchor buried
And forgotten in that ocean it cannot explore
For you are gone.



Righteous Robbery

Their conscious killing
Their righteous slaughter
Their gods filled pillage and plunder.

Our gold dem mining
And telling we

Dat we living in poverty.
Still
Well yeah, after yuh take all de gold
and gem stones

Yeah, we go be poor
Is allyuh only robbing we!
Robbing we ah we treasure
Robbing we ah we place and name in true history
Yeah, well tanks for giving we
Dis air of mystery.

Their concious killing
Their righteous slaughter
Their gods filled pillage and plunder.

Our families dem annihilating
and telling we

Dat we practising brutality
Still
Well yeah, after dey kill we
Dey not even putting we body in a cemetery -
"just throw it in a ditch or by the wayside,
It don't mean a shit to me!"

Yeah, we go be brutzl
Is allyuh only killing we
Killing we lifeblood an we hope
Killing we belief in our own God
An telling we bout some pope.

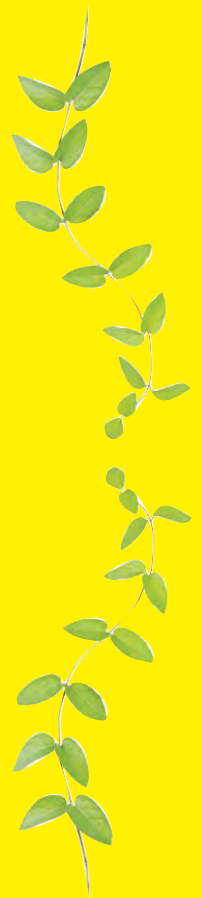
Their concious killing
Their righteous slaughter
Their gods filled pillage and plunder.

Our souls dey damage
and telling we

Dat we is savage
Still
Well yeah, after yuh rape meh modder
An meh sister in front meh eye
An like yuh try
To make meh realise
Dat I ent worth nothing
Well yeah, ah mus come down on yuh like yuh is sewage -
Is allyuh only raping we!
Raping we ah we treasure
Raping we like is dey only pleasure
Raping we ah we identity
An making me feel like dis cyah be de right livity.
Yeah, dem eating away at meh sanity.

Their concious killing
Their righteous slaughter
Their gods filled pillage and plunder.
It always eating away at meh sanity.

- Irtha Daniel



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By Omilla Mungroo

I can't recall where I was going, but the driver of the taxi was light brown in complexion, slim build, had a cool air about him, but I had never seen him before, which was strange because I never travel in a car where I don't know or recognise the driver as a PH or taxi driver in my area. The car, however, was heading up to Maracas Valley, instead of to Curepe, where I would normally take a taxi to head out from home.

In a flash I saw the man get out of the car in an area I don't know. He somehow had me get out the car too, and I was standing. Out of nowhere a very black man with shoulder length matted dreadlock hair, appeared. They spoke to each other in an accent I did not know at all. It sounded Caribbean but it definitely was

The dream

not Trinidadian, nor Tobagonian.

I then looked around to see about ten young women, all dressed very neatly, with black knee length skirts, crisp white shirts, shiny pump-heeled shoes and their hair all combed, slicked back in neat buns away from their faces. They stood in a semi-circle facing the two men and me.

The very black man turned to them, as I faced them too, and he told them, "Watch." He then proceeded to cut me with a knife. I didn't see what he was doing, nor did I feel anything, but I saw his face – evil-looking and expressionless, as all the women's faces were too, while they looked on.

Next thing I saw was a body lying on the ground, and a pile of

what looked like my insides, at the side of it. For the love of God I had no feeling, and no voice, yet I knew it was my body. I was dead.

The men then ordered the women to remove the body. They dragged it off and some picked up the insides and bagged it, leaving the place very clean.

All I saw was the women dragging off the body to the back of the car, and I woke up!

That is the end of the dream. Thank God!

Usually when I dream scary stuff I wake up feeling fear. I woke from this dream with no feeling whatsoever. I was just very numb. I couldn't say a word. All I thought of was the men's faces and the women's somber look. Then I wrote briefly

what I saw in the dream, while I thought I was hearing someone say, "You will write it."

I found myself writing about it to a friend right after, and the following words came out...

"Please pray that God will save this country from crime. People are killing people just to show others how to kill. It's gone beyond the help of law. I feel as if I am Trinidad and Tobago and I was killed."

I cried then, and continued writing.

"If Trinidad cries in the morning something is wrong because God's Word says, weeping may endure for a night but joy comes in the morning."

Now, as I write this I fear our beloved country might be a target for use by criminals in high places of the outside world.

Nevertheless, it is a call to prayer without ceasing. Sweet T&T must be saved!

Signs you find in maxis

By Jamie Gangoo

Setting down house rules becomes somewhat important when customers may consist of persons with various temperaments, quirky habits, hungry bellies and aggressive behaviours. For maxi drivers, these rules are mostly printed, laminated and stuck at strategic points in their maxis, that make for places the eyes can comfortably rest upon (as opposed to naturally resting on the back of someone's head).

Of course there will always be the persistent rule breakers who take advantage of drivers' averted eyes and sneak bites of pies, roti and KFC, despite the shiny "No Eating" sign before them. However, the presence of signs makes it easier for a driver to press the eject button without bothering to offer an explanation. In the process of trying to maintain orderliness to their liking, some drivers take a humorous path that may be riddled with sexual innuendos, others make you question their experiences, while others can be considered, well, a bit rude.

Upon entering a maxi, one may find standard signs such as "No slamming" and "No eating, drinking or smoking". However, some drivers have a tendency to elaborate on these as shown in the following list of common maxi signs:

- No loud cellphone music. (Understood.)
- No sleeping. (Difficult, but also understood.)
- No love making. (Make war instead!)



East West Corridor maxi taxis
at City Gate, Port of Spain

- No obscene language. (...with the exception of the driver.)
- No eating of nuts. (Clearly, this driver is traumatised.)
- No clipping of nails. (May I file them, then?)

Some drivers also find it necessary to simplify the "no cellphone music" rule to a simple equation (since youth like shortcut): Cellphone music + Maxi music = Noise. Yes, I agree, while also acknowledging that some maxi music alone falls under the category of "noise".

The "no sleeping" sign can also come in various forms, such as "If yuh sleepy, doh sit in front" and "Sleep before you come, don't come here to sleep!" Of course this is under-

standable, as you can get pickpocketed or miss your destination while sleeping. However, things become ambiguous when considering the sign that specifies that a passenger should not be seated in front if he/she is sleepy. Why address these passengers in particular? Perhaps the driver is one of The Talkatives, who constantly share their opinions on every current affair and bacchanal to the person at their sides, despite the person's disinterested face and on-the-cue grunts.

The reason may also be that these drivers feel disrespected – like personal chauffeurs who drive sleeping passengers around, whilst fighting sleep themselves. Or maybe they just don't want to hear your snores over the sound of their music. Whatever the reason, I am



Diego Martin maxi taxi, South Quay, Port of Spain

guilty of sleeping the time away on numerous occasions.

Stuck behind the driver's seat, one may also find the sign, "Doh pull on meh seat" or "Doh poke meh, nah". The latter might ward off some passengers, but completely be overlooked by others who become confused/angry when the driver remains insolently silent as they jab his shoulder to pay him. I dutifully obey that sign, after an incident that occurred on the main road that seriously made me rethink my strength. As the maxi stopped to let a passenger out, I moved to the seat right behind the driver to pay him, as I had almost reached my destination. I, God help me, poked the man (in my defense, there was no sign indicating otherwise).

Driver (in vex voice): "So yuh come in front to hit meh?"

Me (confused): "No, ah was giving yuh money..."

Driver (while glaring at me through the

rearview mirror): "So yuh does hit people when yuh giving them money? Yuh boss does hit yuh when he paying yuh?"

Wha... what? The man then proceeded to suck his teeth, wring up his face and refuse to take the money until I told him I would be getting out now, thank you.

Moving along, here is a list of a few more signs I have encountered on my maxi adventures (some paraphrased):

– "One bell – stop, two bells – right here... but, but, if you want to play with a bell, play with yours and leave mine alone!" (No problem, Sir.)

– "Don't call me 'Drive'. My name is Bryan." (Should I add "Mr" to that too?)

– Don't bawl in my beepin' head! (Fix your beepin' bells!)

– Buckle up, it's the law... and it also makes it harder for the aliens to abduct you. (Well, when you say it like that.)

– This is not a plane. Leave earlier. (Shux

and I was expecting a meal soon.)

Yes, maxi drivers have come up with humorous ways to maintain some order and cleanliness in their maxis, with some also attempting to address pet peeves and ego issues. No doubt, we, the passengers, might disagree with some, while finding others totally unreasonable (how can I not fall asleep on a journey from Port of Spain to Arima after work?). However, the driver did clearly state where he/she stands, which leaves us with three options:

Ask politely if you may break the rules. (e.g. "O gawd Drive, ah walkin' with meh belly in meh hand. Leh meh just take a bite nah. I ain't go make no mess.")

Silently grumble.

Hit the exit.

No, sneaking bites is not an option. There's enough disrespect going around, without us adding to it by breaking drivers' rules in their own maxis. Ent?



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Chef Kel on satisfying clientele with his teams locally and internationally:

Hospitality is our foundation along with great food!

My name is Kervel Emmanuel known as Chef Kel. I am a chef by profession nine years now and love what I do. I am a past student of the Trinidad and Tobago Hospitality and Tourism Institute where I studied Culinary Arts and now at the open campus in the completion stage of my studies in Human Resources Management.

I work both internationally on the Disney cruise line and locally in many of the large production kitchens. At present, I am an offshore chef.

Working as a chef means early hours, late nights, and to add, rocky seas at times. What pushes me? Love, dedication and a will to bring hospitality to a new level.

People love my work and the flair that comes with it



Buffet set up



Tuna salad



Butterfly shrimps with sea food
reduction white wine sauce



Sour sauce chicken wrap



Roasted chicken

because where Chef Kel is there must be a show but also great food.

At the start, cooking for John Public wasn't easy, for the demands were high with so many expectations, but it never stopped me from giving my best.

Whenever there was a problem, there was always a solution at hand to correct it and get the show on the road. My best job was cooking with a team of eight young men and a woman preparing in two weeks a total of 14,400 meals that comprised of breakfast, lunch and dinner led by Chef G Lindsay, culinary lecturer and chef consultant that opened and broke us out. It wasn't easy but as a young chef and being new to the industry we did it.

I run my own catering company Chefkel's Kitchen and also provide service staffing. From point to point, improvement has been made to always make it better for clientele. That has always been a satisfaction with my work because we believe the hospitality is our foundation and the service is our pillars.

Trinidad and Tobago is amazing, there is a lot of talent and it is truly a blessed nation. While I have been to other countries and islands I have learned to appreciate and respect my country for its development and the opportunities it offers to us the people.

I enjoy the unity of the blessed island where

I see all creed and race just bonding for that common thing called love.

I will continue to do what I do here because here is mine to take, to develop, to carry a product, a brand, and way of life forward so the world can come here to experience a local love and flavour.

One person is little, but I say the power is in the youth who possess strength in unity and should have will-power, must be fearless and have dreams to act upon. Everyone must find their talent, know it, appreciate it, work on it and share it with the world because with youth and a talent, you can make this world a better place. We as young people are the next generation.



Spicy wings



Edible arrangements



Thai chili chicken salad



The team





By Marissa Armoogam-Ali

Well I find myself once again in familiar waters swimming in an ocean filled with yummy delectable foods. My interest in food has once again led me to another of Trinidad's finest dishes. In fact it is such a tasty treat that when the famous food connoisseur of television Andrew Zimmerman, host of Bizarre Foods, visited Trinidad he showcased this most beloved food treasure. I am talking about souse! You can find a "souse man" anywhere at almost any time in Trinidad.

I know some people just smiled with pure heavenly delight while others squirmed, but of course to each his own preference. Now when I initially tasted this dish as a teenager I instantaneously fell in love with. Back then I was introduced to the one made using the pig's feet. I have since then discovered several other types of the yummy spicy soup if I may call it that.

Recently, I was enjoying a delicious bowl of souse, a friend of mine was a bit sceptical about it, now for those of you who have never had it, please allow me to enlighten you to the marvellous flavours that simmer in this tasty dish. It starts off with a couple pounds of prepared pig's feet – prepared meaning that your butcher would have burnt off any hairs from

Souse!

It's not just
a pork thing
anymore

the feet, cut it up into about three-inch pieces and sold it to you fairly cleaned.

At home you thoroughly wash the meat and remove any hairs that may have been left behind, scrub, scrub and scrub them until you feel that it's clean enough and then wash with freshly squeezed lime juice. The cleaned pig's feet are then boiled in a fair amount of water until tender and the water is drained away.

A blended mixture of shadon beni, chives, garlic, celery and thyme is mixed in with the meat, salt and black pepper to taste and then

boiled again. This time however the liquid is kept as it is used as the body of the souse. On the side peeled cucumbers and onions are thinly sliced, and some water cress sprouts are washed and chopped. These are kept on the side for serving. Once you are ready to enjoy some of the souse you simply add in the chopped ingredients, a couple drops of fresh lime juice and enjoy.

For those of you who are dribbling at this point but cannot partake in this pork dish, there is hope... yay! This recipe can be repeated and you just replace the pig's feet with chicken feet. It is just as scrumptious and delectable and can be enjoyed guilt free since there is not a pig in sight with this version. But what about my vegetarian friends who by this point are seriously contemplating the meat thing... lol... there's a recipe for you too! As before the same recipe but the meat is replaced with green bananas and for someone like me who just loves her meat souse, I have to say it is totally delicious.

So the next time you're in the mood for something light with a little punch to it why not take a drive to the nearest "souse man" or even try making it at home since it is so easy to make. It is a great appetiser as well to the start of a meal for a casual lime with friends and family.

Arima soup and souse man

Joanna Hayde visits her favourite “soup and souse man” in Arima to get her tasty chicken foot souse. She shares with Sweet TnT Magazine readers some photos at the vendor’s location and her mouthwatering cup of souse before she relishes the delicacy.



By Marika Mohammed

In the rural area of Tableland, a variety of exotic fruits were displayed for sampling and purchasing. It was quite a wild ride as the turnout exceeded one's imagination in this small community. It was a tourist hot spot fit for locals. There were so many things to see. The variety for floral both exquisite and rare, fruits and vegetables as big as a toddler with a weight to match and food made from the fruits and veggies displayed.

When entering the first thing one sees is the artistic display made from fruits and vegetables such as the pineapple and the pumpkin. Then the scents of chows, pepper sauces, and other delicacies encapsulate the air.

Locals were educated on the variety of healthy and delicious food grown right here in Trinidad. It was astonishing to see a straw-

Tableland food fiesta



berry bush being grown in Trinidad. A strawberry on a bush, not in a container, before my very eyes! How awesome is that! These farm-

ers are incredible! There is no need for importing foreign products where local is thriving. The possibilities that can be achieved by

supporting local living and living locally.

They demonstrated the immense ways fruits and vegetables can be used. There was even an individual who showed the public how he gets sugarcane juice. It's amazing to even see sugarcane these days. His noisy contraption attracts everyone to viewing how sugarcane becomes sugarcane juice.

It was wonderful to notice how many people come out to show their support to the local farmers as well as enjoying themselves seeing, eating and learning about what our Trinidad has to offer not only to the wider society but to our own communities.

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Scenes around UWI

Vehicles entering the tunnel leading to the University of the West Indies campus in St Augustine



U-WEE Doubles business outside UWI campus



Pavilion at the Queen's Park Oval, Port of Spain

By Omilla Mungroo

We were driven to the Oval that morning by my friend's uncle; from the countryside of Trinidad to its capital city, Port of Spain. It was near 4 a.m. when we left home: long winding country roads swerving into a straight highway.

The old man talked almost all of the way, and probably forgot that his windows in his van were down, and stuck, I suppose, since we could not put it up no matter how hard we tried. He did not even notice what we were trying to do, and we resigned ourselves to being mercilessly slapped by the biting cold air that early dawn. Teenagers nowadays would make some noise and have their own way, but we were just thankful he was taking us.

It was still dark when we arrived. The Queens Park Oval lay sprawled, bare, waiting for excitement. I remember seeing small, scattered heaps of people, small families, groups of twos and threes

The Oval

memories of my first visit

and fours, lying around on strewn cushions, along the cycle track where we would view the match from later in the morning. We soon found out that these people were from the south of Trinidad.

Cricket in this country encouraged unity of the many different races of people living here. Even if one had a quarrel with his neighbour in the morning, after a match where the West Indies won, they would be celebrating together. Africans, Indians, Chinese, Syrians, Europeans, mixed races, all became one race at the Queens Park Oval supporting one team.

Unorthodox spectator that I am, I was supporting both teams

because I just love the game. I wore a white t-shirt with two coconut palms on it, and a moss green pair of shorts. The t-shirt supported the West Indies and the green shorts, Pakistan.

It was our first visit to the Oval, and I did not think my friend grasped the significance of this for me. The flood lights were on in the still dark of dawn, but I felt almost enchanted by the ambience that greeted me inside the walls surrounding the oval. I did not think that such quiet could become the noise that lived through a match between the West Indies and the then world champions – Pakistan.

This visit was in 1992, and

Pakistan had already well beaten England to win the World Cup by 22 runs!

The Oval is where I had watched many cricket matches before, but only via television, for all my short life. Now I was actually going to be a part of it. I was also going to see the fastest bowler in the world at the time, Waqar Younis, in person! As the thought flashed through my mind, I reached in my bag to feel the new autograph book that I bought especially for that occasion. Yes, it was in my bag.

I also remembered writing a short piece in my English class about a one-day match where an earthquake had suddenly disrupted the game. It happened when West Indian batsmen Gordon Greenidge and Desmond Haynes were at the crease; both on their way to scoring centuries each! Of course I was looking at the game at home with my grandfather at the time, via live television coverage. So, we felt the earthquake at home too.

My English teacher had actually read my piece for the class and stated that this student must pass English. It was plain to see she

enjoyed reading it. I longed to visit the Oval even since then!

It took us a while to find a comfortable spot. My friend's uncle was a regular at the Oval, and he advised us to sit near the Guinness Stand.

"From here you could see everything!" He told us.

Then the hum began. People streamed inside like schools of fish! It was jam packed before we even thought of breakfast. Excitement rose fast when the players came out to warm up. As we looked for the visitors, Wasim Akram, Inzamam Ul Haq, and Waqar Younis, the sun had risen very quietly, unnoticed, until we felt its sting. The crowd grew quickly and umbrellas went up almost at once. I thought it was the most eerie thing – to see a quiet, empty, near holy place filled to capacity and buzzing with excitement, without even recognising when it happened.

Then we saw them as if for the first time when the match was ready to start. The first person I recognized was Inzamam Ul Haq, as the Pakistanis walked onto the pitch amidst the cheering crowd. Then louder shrieks and shouts blasted through the air as our West Indies team followed.

Brian Lara had not broken a record as yet but I was enthused at the thought of actually seeing him in person. He somehow had the makings of genius even then. I am proud to say I got his autograph long before he broke his first record! I



Back of stands at the Queen's Park Oval

also got the autograph of a debut player for Pakistan, Basit Ali, who did not last very long on the team.

Whistling, clapping, jesting, everyone made some sort of noise, and the first ball was about to be bowled.

I could not help but stand very still when my then bowling hero Waqar was sent to field near the

boundary in front of us! Of course all his young fans in that part of the crowd shouted his name out. My friend was jumping up and down and clapping, screaming his name wildly, her long straight hair hanging crazily about her face.

For a short moment I felt he was looking straight at us and then I froze altogether because although I

was wearing my sunglasses, I felt he could see straight through to my eyes! We stared at each other for a full minute I thought, before he turned his back to us. I felt like the only person he saw in that whole crowd. Then the first ball was bowled.

No doubt, it was going to be a great match!



Stands at the Queen's Park Oval



The Trinidad Theatre Workshop is a not for profit organization and has long been a flagship for theatre here in Trinidad and Tobago, and indeed for the Caribbean.

Trinidad Theatre Workshop has multiple facets. These are:

- Theatre in Education (T.I.E.)
- School for the Arts Workshops (Children Theatre Workshop, Teen Theatre Studio, New Actors Workshop)
- Productions

• **Theatre in Education**

Theatre in Education also known T.I.E. was started in 1991. The concept of theatre in education (T.I.E.) incorporates the elements of education, theatre, and drama.

The benefits to school children and young people, while interacting as members of the audience or as participants of a TTW T.I.E. Company Project, may be put into four basic components:

1. Social Interaction
2. Content
3. Forms of Expression
4. Use of the media – the language of drama

• **School for the Arts**

The school for the arts has three components which are Children Theatre Workshop, Teen Theatre Studio and New Actors' Workshop. These classes teach basic acting techniques, movement and allow students to engage in fully participatory sessions. The January Cycle has already started. The New Cycle begins in April and May.

New Actors' Workshop - Wednesdays 6 pm to 9 pm - Restarting April 30th - \$1600.00

Children Theatre Workshop - Saturdays 10 am - 1 pm - Restarting May 3rd - \$1200.00

Teen Theatre Studio - Saturday 1 pm - 4 pm - Restarting May 3rd - \$1400.00

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