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*DREADNESS: The Mystic Power, Philosophy and
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“WE REAL DREAD! EVERYBODY IS SOMEBODY”

CONVOIS



Joanne Haynes, Zeno Constance, Aiyegoro Ome & Robin Foster

Moderated by Omari Ashby

OMARI ASHBY

Welcome to the *convois* section of Dreadness: the Mystic Power, Philosophy, and Performance of Shadow. We are rounding out the talking part of the day with the topic: “We Real Dread: Everybody is Somebody.” We are trying to look at Shadow's body of work, the dreadness, as a way of life, really a coping mechanism, a form of joy, relief, and as means of resistance. To take us through this we have some esteemed guests with us.

Zeno Constance a playwright, author, teacher, artistic director of the Fyzabad Connection Theatre Company, Calypso historian and lectures at the Calypso Unit, the Calypso course at The UWI. He is also an archivist, and a collector. He is the person that I (and most people) will turn to anytime we're looking for a song- a Calypso, he will be ready with it all the time.

Robin Foster, another stalwart in his industry, and one of the founders of The Engine Room in the late 80s and early 2000s. The Engine Room was about sound, but it was also a foundational space for artists, where you will hear the stories from the elders and the not so elders and youth and everybody would mingle. you passed through The Engine Room, and through Robin Foster's hands, you're solid in the game. Robin would have worked with TTT (Trinidad and Tobago Television), Video Associates etc. By and large if you see it on TV, and it's sounding good, Robin Foster would have been the man behind it.

Joanne Haynes is an award winning author and creative facilitator from Trinidad and Tobago. Her work is inspired by her Trinbagonian heritage, while reaching to connect with a modern, global world. She is a former teacher and lecturer with a career spanning ten (10) years. She has published three books: *The Coral's Tale*, *Walking* (a novel), and *Sapotee Soil*. Her presentations in academia include *Myths and Legends* (published in *The University of Trinidad and Tobago Pedagogy*), *Re-Imagining Ourselves Through the Eyes of Papa Neeza*, presented at The UWI's Literature Week, *Sleep Tobago* (*MaComère Journal*). To date, her artistic achievements include a lifetime award for literature, a finalist in the Commonwealth short story competition. She is also a winner of the Derek Walcott Prize for Children's Literature for *The Sapotee Soil*, which was used as a text in secondary schools. *Walking* is used as a text in UTT's Growing Up in the Caribbean course. Her debut film, *Legends Revisited* was selected for the Cannes Pan African Film Festival in 2016 and was an official selection of the Trinidad and Tobago Film Festival in 2016, and was nominated for the People's Choice Award.

Aiyegoro Ome, founder of The SINUHE Centre established in 2016, which is dedicated to providing studies and publications on issues pertinent to African and Caribbean culture as well as facilitating charitable works in Trinidad and Tobago. He is the former chairman of the Trinidad and Tobago National Committee on Reparations. He was educated in primary schools in North and South Trinidad. He attended Trinity College Port of Spain, and he won a scholarship to the University of the West Indies at St. Augustine in 1967, and read English Literature, History and Sociology. He is a foundation member of the National Joint Action Committee (NJAC) founded on the 26th of February 1969 at the University of West Indies, in St. Augustine. He was an activist in Trinidad and Tobago's Black Power Revolution in 1970, led by NJAC, and was imprisoned and charged for sedition during the 1970s state of emergency. He graduated with honours in 1970, having sat his exams while in prison. After his release, he taught History and Spanish in the Arima Government Secondary School. He has been the president of three NJAC institutions, including the National Action Cultural Committee, the Caribbean Institute of Race Relations, and the Caribbean Historical Society. He is a spiritual elder, having officiated African rites of passage, as well as other functions at the NACC Council of Elders. He also authored three books: *The Story of Emancipation*, *I*

Am a Young King, and Light A Candle Say a Prayer Play a Drum Towards the Emancipation Day Ritual. He's a former columnist for The Trinidad & Tobago Guardian and remains a contributor of letters to the editor for the daily newspapers. He has also received The Chaconia Medal (Silver) for distinguished service in culture.

I want to start off by giving a quote from one of my favourite Shadow songs where he says: "Nowadays you enter a strange land. They call you an alien. You have to explain to immigration, what is your intention? Columbus didn't have to do that. It just didn't make no sense. His authority was a cork hat and his passport? Violence." If that isn't dreadness then I don't know what is. Now we will take an opening statement from all of you on what you interpret the topic to mean, what you interpret "dreadness" to mean, and then we'll take it from there.

JOANNE HAYNES

We have so many philosophers here in our place and it's time for us to pay attention. When I was invited to present at this symposium my first thought on dreadness was, has the word "dreadness" ever been used before Shadow named his 1976 album *Dreadness*? I don't know. Maybe the other panellists could tell me that. But the brilliance of Shadow to me is that he was a kind of guerilla artist. You're talking about casuality and you couldn't find somebody who had a more down to earth vibe about him. Shadow would take the simple, relatable everyday concepts and just slam it home. I just think of Shadow as a genius because you see that using that one word or that one phrase to slam home a punch, and you take something simple and you dig up all inside it? You know we always talk about this Shakespeare quote: "If music be the food of love play on", but I hearing Shadow saying: "Music is the great equaliser! Everybody could dingolay!"

Shadow is about a Caribbean identity, a very wide Caribbean identity in the sense that he never told you what to think about his work, or about himself. He said what he had to say, and he done with that- you take it or leave it, you interpret it how you want. And I find that that ability to take the simple and frame it into so many different ways, and layer ideas on top of ideas, bring deep messages and philosophies in simple ways, misleading lines that just speak of everyday people. But when we dig inside it, it's so deep, it's so wide, it's so profound. I see it as a kind of guerilla strategy.

OMARI ASHBY

I like the idea of that guerrilla strategy. That's a nice point to deal with as we get into it. Zeno Constance. What do you think of dreadness and Shadow?

ZENO CONSTANCE

Well, the word "dread" became popular in the mid 1970s for two reasons: when we were on campus, in the mid 70s, the search for Rastafari began. They were always on the periphery of our world. But after the heady demonstrations of the streets and so on, and whole NUFF¹ in the hills, there was a kind of searching for Rastafari, and we all turned to the book called *Dread* in which that word came at us; the dread. Not only fear inspiring, but I suppose it different. And we use the word "dread" meaning it could be a hostile thing against us. I could remember Daaga saying: "This state of emergency is a dread kind of thing you know!" meaning that it's something that you had to fight; something want to fight you. And I suppose in that context, Shadow would have began to call himself dread.

I'm not sure, obviously, which of those two things I talk about there, the Rastafarian dread, or the use of dread that came out of the movement². And the situation of the times he took, and like Joanne said I think in maybe 1976 or '77 he first used the word "dread" to describe himself. I suppose he might have been doing it, as I think Omari did explain once, in a kind of anti-hero sort of way, Like how Leroy Clarke used to call himself an obeah man, meaning allyuh saying obeah bad, but I is ah obeah man and I going to give you the best out of that and that is your business how you take it. So he might have been

¹ The National Union of Freedom Fighters (NUFF) was an armed Marxist revolutionary group in Trinidad and Tobago.

² The Black Power Revolution (also known as the February Revolution) which gained strength between 1968 and 1970 was a series of mass protests, strikes, and demonstrations to demand substantive social, political and economic changes in Trinidad and Tobago. It is considered by many to be one of the most enlightening epochs in the post-independence history of the nation.

saying "I dread" within the context of not simply the Rastafarian who were the outlaws from the society elite but from the way the society saw that whole movement of the '70s. The whole Black movement. I will find out one of these days, but I think somewhere there is where we get the dread.

OMARI ASHBY

Yeah you gave us plenty to deal with there. In not knowing, we end up knowing plenty, right? At this point in time, I want to bring Aiyegoro into the conversation in terms of what you would interpret that dreadness or what you see it as in terms of Shadow's perspective, or maybe even yours as it relates to Shadow and music, and maybe even the time.

AIYEGORO OME

Yes, thank you very much Omari for the kind introduction that you gave. And I want to thank The UWI for having invited me to this *convois*. I recently wrote something about "convois". *Convois* was a term that was used by the French Creole speaking Africans for their secret societies. It is they who led the struggle in 1805, when they wanted to poison all the white people in Trinidad and Tobago, and they had several names for their *convois*. I can't go to all the names now. But those *convois* were really mutual aid societies that later converted into radical groups to deal with the oppression that they were suffering.

Now, when it comes to the question of dread or dreadness, I first learned the term dread when I was on campus in '67. Gordon Rohlehr was doing a lot of commentary on the question of what was happening in Jamaica at the time. And we apply the concept of dread to the Jamaican Rastafarians; Rastafarianism hadn't fully developed in Trinidad at that time. And we used to hear the term in music like Prince Buster's song, Judge Dredd. I don't know how many of the younger persons here possibly with the exception of Zeno, who remember that song from Prince Buster. And part of it: "Order! Now my court is in session! Would you please stand? First allow me to introduce myself. My name is Judge 100 years. Some people call me Judge Dredd. Now, I have come here to whoop you, to try all you rude boys for shooting Black people. In my court only me talk

because I'm vexed. And I am the rudeboy today!" And he starts to run down the names. Well fictional names of some *rudeboys*. We didn't have *badjohns* in Jamaica, we had *rudeboys*. Over here is bandits or whatever names we tend to use. The thing about it is that dread was associated with those young Black men in Jamaica. So it got transformed. When the term was used in Trinidad it represented the question of, you know, things very bad; things dread.

Strangely enough, the word dread now is associated with *padna*. So you're talking about "meh jed". And it is strange coming down the lines from a term that was- because people did fear the *rudeboys*- the term came right down now to a more comforting term, when you speak about "yuh jed". So that is how I understand dread. But Shadow himself became dread because of how he approached Calypso. And I don't think he used the term "dread" himself until sometime in 1979 when he had that song *Dread Wizard* "poverty dread/ misery dread/ and I was born in them/ so I must be dread/ Dread dread real dread/I am the wizard who was born dread."

OMARI ASHBY

That's a good place to start. I don't know if he had it written in a song before that. But he had an album which I think was done in '76, Zeno if I'm wrong you can tell me, which is where we got the name of this thing from dreadness. But I don't think there was a song that referenced dreadness, the album itself was called "Dreadness".

Robin Foster this is your chance to come in and give we something.

ROBIN FOSTER

This morning the first thing I tell my wife was what's the first thing you think about when I say "Shadow"? She said look, I still sleeping so don't ask me nutten. I say no now is the best time. Now that you're not thinking too much, just give me something out of your guts. She said "simidimi". I say right! That's it, because when you think of it, that whole idea, right? Most people don't know that Shadow never called himself "The Mighty Shadow". It was just "The Shadow" and his people because of tradition gave him "The Mighty Shadow. I remember falling in love with him since *Bassman* in my early teens, and after *Bassman* I remember that Carnival everybody just standing up and

jumping on one spot to the *Bassman*. It was the first time I'd ever hear- like, you would only hear *Bassman* on the street. He came first and second. He came first with *Bassman*, and second with *I Come Out to Play*. That year too I think that they rob him for the crown, because they gave it to Sparrow.

In those days, a lot of people used to believe that if you're not singing some kind of high philosophical something, that it wasn't what you'd call a "Savannah song". I remember people telling me Shadow couldn't win because he was singing shit, because *Bassman* and *I Come Out to Play* wasn't some philosophical thing. But if you look at the imagery and the lyrics and everything Shadow clearly, I would say, won. But what he did win was for the first time in those years '74, '75, '76, he was, I would say, the first Calypso person who became popular for the entire year. I remember, he started to release songs (sings) "Man could change my destination". He released those things, mid-year and they were big hits; monster hits. And it was the first time I remember, they had a lot of foreign shows. A lot of foreign superstars would come to perform. Mainly I think the Savannah was the main place in those days, Spektakula and they started having big shows. And they would have Shadow as the guest artiste, and Shadow would flatten the place! It was hard for the foreign person to come and to and keep up with that.

I think he was very instrumental in popularising what David Rudder calls the middle of the year Road March. He was the king of that. Right? What intrigued me about him and why he became one of my favourite artiste from since those days, is the whole idea of that whole dreadness, The Shadow. In those days, I realised he didn't like too much light on him. He liked to be in the dark; he wanted to be a shadow. His storytelling about the dreadness, but what a lot of people don't understand is that he was one of the most humorous Calypsonians to ever sing. He was at Spoiler's level. If you would listen to an entire Shadow album, like I did, you would know that the songs that didn't play on the radio were some of the funniest songs, and Shadow's entire album would be good.

And a funny thing too, we had the same birthday: we were both born on the fourth of October. After I opened my studio and I recorded a couple of jingles with him, we got to know each other. He would call me every time to say happy birthday, or he would come and bring a bottle of Johnnie Walker Black, drink some, leave half the bottle and

say “Right you drink the rest and go, right?” (laughs). We became friends and he told me a lot of things, which we will get into as we as we go along. He was a very funny guy, trust me.

OMARI ASHBY

And we will try to extract some of those things, at least the things that we could talk about and in an open forum (laughs). We continue to consider this energy of dreadness. Shadow is part of my Holy Trinity of Calypsonians, so sometimes you have to step back and look. So, when they say dreadness, I started to look at it again and perhaps what I could think of that I could pull from that. I think it was a positionality of listen, this is me, and you have to deal with it. I didn't come to try to fit into your thing: this is me, and you have to deal with it. And I think perhaps when people apply that kind of attitude in certain spaces, it could make everybody uncomfortable- including themselves- everybody could end up saying “Boy, that man funny boy!” That was one of the major things that people used to say about Shadow, because any minute if you talk to him, you just stand up on the wrong side of Shadow you could get a bouf³ eh, and you don't know why. I feel that that kind of fed into the idea of disrupting the space.

Joanne I know you did a close look at *Bassman*, and had you had some thoughts on it.

JOANNE HAYNES

I was eight years old when *Bassman* came out. And that *pum pa ti pum pum* just stick inside me. I was *pum pa ti-ing* all over the house that Carnival. I get slap from my mother for *pum pa ti-ing* down the stairs on Ash Wednesday, because you're not supposed to sing- much less dance to Calypso then. I couldn't get that tune out of my head. But at eight years old I heard a wail in Shadow's voice that tells me that *Bassman* wasn't just a happy song. When he says “I don't know how this thing gets inside me” - there are these lines that just reach inside to a place of connection and emotion. And I still feel today

³ Strong reprimand

that, in my humble opinion, that Shadow is underestimated. I see Shadow as a philosopher, but in such a Caribbean way that we maybe take it for granted because we colonialise and we formalise our education system, and we feel when you're talking this serious talk that you have to talk a certain way, and you had a move a certain way and you have to look a certain way. Shadow was outside of that, and it reminds me of how the steelpan just come about: this is how Caribbean people learn. We kind of have a freedom. We are expansive, we're creative, we're dynamic, and we don't really follow them rules because those rules were not made for our personality.

So I would [put] Shadow on the same level, in terms of philosophy, as Rudder. It's just that he brings it differently. I'm still today fascinated with *Bassman*. What I see is a simple idea of wanting to escape one's life which we all feel at different points in our life: "I was planning to forget Calypso/ and go and plant peas in Tobago" Everybody at some point feels the yearning to run from the responsibility, the work, the doing, just retire, escape, forget it or let it go. And yet he take[s] this simple idea and complicated it with the *Bassman*, because the bassman would not let him go. The *Bassman* represents for me destiny. You might have one desire, but your destiny will decide for you. The *Bassman* represents the Master. Destiny ruling you, not what you really want to do. He can get rid of this thing inside his head. The *Bassman* represents conscience. He gone to Dr Leon to get rid of this thing in his head, but Dr. Leon is saying it is his imagination- but I know I hearing a bassman.

That idea of conscience: who are we listening to? They of the world, or the noise of yourself; that noise inside you. What is imagination? What is reality? If you listen to them, you will go mad. In that one simple line, "Dr. Leon saying is my imagination/ but I know I hearing a bassman", to me that is philosophy about following your own truth. What is your self-truth, what guides you and who you listen to at the end of the day. These simple rhyming lines are what I call loaded lines, because I find this artiste with the ability to create so much thoughts sends such a powerful message beyond what you actually just hearing if you were to really dig up inside it, it is a whole big message, you know.

And at the end of the day, he never told us how he resolved the noise in his head, versus getting rid of it, or not being able to- he never tell us, we just know [that] he didn't go and plant peas in Tobago. That to me is classic Shadow as well that you bring a journey to the people, you're not bringing up how to do this; how to fix that, and wrong with the system. You're not doing that; you're bringing an experience. You're bringing a connecting factor. I see *Bassman* as a commentary on the complications of escapism. In the final analysis, "I was planning to forget Calypso/ and go and plant peas in Tobago". So, for him planting peas was escape. For the farmer planting peas is not an escape. That's the same hard work that he trying to run from, that same frustration, the same doing that wants to retire from. For me that big question in *Bassman* is you want to escape? Where are you going? At the end of the day, something inside you will keep you doing, keep you moving, keep you pumping. It's either you listen to the people out there and they say as Robin said earlier, you're singing shit, or, you're doing your thing. What is your self truth?

ROBIN FOSTER

You know what ironic about that? "I was planning to forget calypso and go and plant peas in Tobago." I don't think there are two more famous lines in calypso than that. I think those are the two most famous lines in calypso ever. What is ironic about that is that before this he was just like a regular little tent calypsonian. You hear about him, The Shadow, but from that *Bassman* made him a superstar. In other words, if the *Bassman* didn't happen, I might have really had to go and plant peas in Tobago. And that is the song, ironically, that made him.

OMARI ASHBY

He is declaring a kind of frustration, but he's also admitting that all the frustrated he is frustrated, that he has to listen to that drumbeat. He have to come and do the work, and have to make the music because that is what he comes to do. So, he's also kind of resigning himself to doing what he has to do too.

JOANNE HAYNES

That is a loaded line, “Dr. Leon said, is my imagination/ But I know that I am hearing a Bassman.” It's like you're saying that you are haunted. You know that there is this thing inside, and you can't give it up. And I think that's a big artistic statement too: the angst of creating and lows of creating that artists sometimes want to run from. The craft, and the isolation and loneliness that you feel.

AIYEGORO OME

Shadow began to transform the music of calypso, and it started with *Bassman*. He put the bass very strategically into the music, so much so that the very tenor of the music began to change. And I remember going up to Shadow's home in Mount Hope with the late Chief Servant, Makandal Daaga, and we were seeking to tell him that he had to find a name for what he was doing. He laughed at us! He said “What you want me to call it? The shaddy waddy?” And to my surprise, I saw “shaddy waddy” on something on YouTube recently about Shadow and his music. You see, a lot of people have not appreciated the nuances that are there in calypso. Shadow was able to bring out one of the nuances, which is the bassline. And there's another thing that began to be looked at, which Omari began to touch on: Shadow's stagecraft. Shadow was a persona in himself. And when he walked through the streets, you did have the feeling of look- that's a dread man coming down there. So, I would have liked us to look at those two aspects of Shadow in this *convois*: one, his musicianship and two, his stagecraft/ his persona.

OMARI ASHBY

Zeno, I follow you online religiously, because every week or month we could look forward to some kind of series from you. And there was a series that you did on the Shadow where you kind of broke up his situation into a couple different stages. I know you can't give us everything because it's plenty, but if you could speak on how you approached it perhaps?

ZENO CONSTANCE

Let me say that I am confident that Shadow wasn't going to plant no peas in Tobago. I think that that is a metaphor for “I'm going to try again”. It comes from *The Threat*, *Trouble in '72*, and *Obeah Man*. And that was a phase that gave birth to Pharrell, an

interesting character, because Pharrell controls Shadow. Now, it does not control Winston Bailey, but it controls Shadow, and Shadow has over seven calypsos in which Pharrell is there confusing him. So, I think he created a character in his mind, and the character came to life, and that character controlled him. There is a big difference between the calypsonian and the person who makes that calypso. So Shadow was coming down that line, and I think that the frustration of *The Threat* when he didn't get the kind of success that he wanted- in fact, I wrote a scene about that in *The Roaring 70s*- and then he did in *Trouble in '72*. There is an interesting thing in *Trouble in '72*, because he does say that, "Listen to the bass/ is music in de place/ And that will be bacchanal for the carnival". And I say that because in a few year's time the bass will become, to me, and I suspect to other people out there, a central motif that would create the soca.

Now, I don't want to say that he created the soca of Maestro etc, but he created the soca that Shadow had, because ultimately that bass would be there. Shadow does an interesting thing when it came time to do Soca Boat. There's a bass line in Soca boat, a guitar run that never stops. It is not there in the new version, but in the first version it is there (he demonstrates the melody by singing). I think that that bass is a message to say; "That is my bass, so what you talking about that is your soca?" So in an interesting kind of way Shadow created a character who would control him, and that is because that is how the author creates and the character grows into life and become so big that it tells him where to go. So Pharrell lead him all over the place. But I think Shadow was just going into his fourth phase of trying to get past the establishment in terms of calypso and maybe didn't realise that the way craft things made him successful to us, and not to the judges. And that is exactly why Shadow did not get past 1994 with *Poverty is Hell*. Because I could take pen and paper and mark down next to that lyrics and so on. The sacrifice of lyrics, the imagery, they couldn't understand on a piece of paper. And that I think would have caused some serious trouble.

ROBIN FOSTER

I'm really glad Zeno and Aiyegoro brought this up because we have a couple of things to deal with here. Before *Bassman*, it could be because *Bassman* was about bass it could have happened but before that, calypso just had the walking baseline (he sings to

demonstrate) which followed the chords, what Pelham Goddard would call “chord symbols”, because the song was the first song with a bass line and that was the first phase. The second phase that Zeno mentioned that *Soca Boat* was the beginning of the heavier bass, which came into the rapso and the various fusions into other things: hip hop, dub, and all those things. Another interesting thing is that that *Soca Boat* baseline was basically the Tobago reel and jig fiddle put on the bass (sings to demonstrate), and he played it on the bass (sings to demonstrate). Also, what Zeno was pointing out there about not for the judges but for us, Shadow had a certain poetic licence that nobody else had. If anybody else sing: “So the cat had a chicky chung/ he dash for the chicky chung/ but the poor little chicky chung/ flew away like a chicky chung” they would have been pelted off the stage.

OMARI ASHBY

And there is a thing that you have to look at when you're speaking to Shadow and his lyrics, which is economy of language. When you look at who could string an idea, sometimes a whole story in two or three lines- there are a couple of people who are good at that. Shadow is definitely a master of simplicity drawing you in. If you start off a song with “A little boy named Corduroy”, well, I have to hear the rest now!

ROBIN FOSTER

You want to hear the rest from Shadow! Were it someone else, you would have told them to get off the stage! (laughs)

OMARI ASHBY

And the reason for that, again, was because it was Shadow. Aiyegoro alluded to his stage presence and his performance, and that was a big part of the thing too that could have possibly given him some of that licence that you were talking about Robin. We know when this man comes on the stage, we are not expecting the usual thing. If you see Shadow move, it was like a reward. Where a calypsonian would come on stage and he would be dancing all the time, if Shadow opened his jacket and give you two waist the whole crowd gone mad (panel laughs) so, it is that idea of the persona. Again, perhaps powered by Pharrell, Zeno, that is onstage that now gives you this giant, almost

constantly mythmaking in terms of what he is giving to us. I always tell people that if you want to hear the best opening lines, “spreading joy in La Romaine...”

ROBIN FOSTER

“I bounce up hard face Jane!”

OMARI ASHBY

Right? It’s over from there! You have to listen! But inside of that and what I want us to look at is how that gives us an entry point to deal with ourselves as well. Shadow almost tackled every topic. Who hasn’t asked themselves at one point in life “What’s wrong with me?” He always gives you a way to work things out. From the mundane to the larger things like *Columbus Lie*, he treats with life like a philosopher- like Joanne indicated- he is our philosopher and gives us these gems to hold on to, and to work through a lot of things.

I was born in ’72, so I am not sure how any of the revolution⁴ impacted on Shadow, what happened, if he took anything with him, or if there is any kind of intersection there that you, Aiyegoro, could shed some light on.

AIYEGORO OME

What I can say is that he always remained very close to us, and we close to him. In fact, he appeared in the very earliest calypso concerts that were ever held in this country, a series called *The Black Traditions in Art*. We would interact a lot with him. But when you talk about the persona and the stage craft, every time I hear *Poverty is Hell*, I hear rapso. I could be wrong about it, but I hear rapso. When you look at any video of Shadow singing *Poverty is Hell*, you will see him actually crying. There is a moment on stage when tears comes to his eyes because he describing the situation of the average catch ass man. And some of these situations, we may find them very humorous now. I always

⁴ The Black Power Revolution, also known as the Black Power Movement, 1970 Revolution, Black Power Uprising and February Revolution, was an attempt by a number of social elements, people and interest groups in Trinidad and Tobago to effect socio-political change.

liked the part about the cockroach that went into the condensed milk. That is a very real situation because condensed milk at times was a luxury item in homes, even in the home that I came from. I came from a family of teachers. You could not waste condensed milk, and if you let a situation develop a cockroach getting the condensed milk you will get so much and so much and so much of licks. Those are very graphic statements about life here, and that is one of the powers that Shadow had: rapso/calypso was about life.

Same thing with the with the song *Dingolay*. I remember a very senior classical performer from Guyana who is trained in the European classical tradition, and she says that *Dingolay* is her all-time favourite piece of music. Essentially, he is saying that music is for everybody. So when we when we speak about Shadow, we have to remember all these different aspects of life that he touched on. I only wish that this could have been done years ago, even before The UWI honoured him with the honorary doctorate. The fact when I heard he was getting a doctorate, I was a bit upset because I knew he was in hospital and that he was very ill. So we need to take those other aspects of Shadow: the persona on stage, his musicianship, and we have to look at the fact that from a philosophical point of view, he touched on almost everything in the life of Caribbean and Trinidadian and Tobagonian people.

OMARI ASHBY

Robin, have you have you ever recorded Shadow outside of a jingle or anything like that?

ROBIN FOSTER

Only live.

OMARI ASHBY

Because I want to bring to people to understand how loyal he was to this *jumbie*⁵; this vibe. Shadow would be in the studio, and he would tell you mix the song for me, and this is with the intention of the engineer coming back and doing another mix, right? But if Shadow liked that original mix, that was it. He didn't want to hear you have to go back

⁵ Spirit

and fix that. He had a belief that the first thing that you do that sounded right, that was it!

ROBIN FOSTER

I could tell you that every year for a few years, when he finished an album- before he mastered it or anything- he would come to the studio and we would go in the room, and he would play it and ask me what I thought. I remember one time listening to it I told him "Shadow, this eh sounding like it finish." He said "No! That is how it supposed to sound!" I said "Shadow, yuh ask meh my opinion, and ah give yuh my opinion, right?" And then he would say "Robin, how much hit you had? Eh? Let meh hear yuh!" (panel laughs) But the funny thing is what ever I told him he would argue with me down to the end, but he would always go back and fix it. It would always sound better when he came back.

OMARI ASHBY

Well, we only have seven minutes left, so I want to give everybody a chance just to get in a final say on this discussion. So we can end how we started, with the lady first. Joanne?

JOANNE HAYNES

I just love Shadow, and my love is that I find Shadow sees "we" and "is we" and plays for we, and sings for we. This ability to teach without teaching, to share without being pedantic, to include, connect, to bring big, big philosophies and ideas in simple lyrics that everybody could relate to, and ensure that he making us move while we doing it? To me, that's the Caribbean way: a very decolonised kind of approach to sharing and education and learning and so on. The man was a real genius, a wordsmith, teacher, a philosopher, and making us jump up more than almost 50 years later.

ZENO CONSTANCE

Two little things: one, it shouldn't be amazing that every Shadow calypso has beat or rhythm makes you either dance, or nod your head, unlike so many other calypsos that are include in competition finals- but I won't pursue that (panel laughs). I will also tell a short story of how Omari and Shadow set me up one day, because I asked him for Shadow's number because I wanted to write a book on Shadow. I called him and introduced myself and told him that I wanted to write a book on him. He gave me one *bouf* and told me "people always feel that they know me better than me- that is why my book win arredy!" I just quietly bowed out in the face of the master and kept my tail quiet. This was the only time that I ever spoke to Shadow, or got close to him. It was a nice experience- even though I got a *bouf* from a master.

AIYEGORO OME

I have a comment that is a bit contrary to what we have been discussing. I am perpetually concerned about how we take care of our ageing artistes. We take care of them while living, and even in the stage when they are in their decline. I am very worried about it. I know a number of calypsonians who are not well, and I have pleaded with TUCO⁶ to please establish that convalescent home for the artistes, and I am hoping that we don't have to go through this kind of convois again after the man dies. He died at the public hospital, Mt. Hope hospital, and even when The UWI was contemplating to offer him the honorary doctorate I was aware that he was in decline. I think we need to put a stop to those situations. I can't call the names of the calypsonians who are not well right now, but we need to pay some attention to this.

ROBIN FOSTER

Well, let's end on a happy note with me right. One of the funniest things Shadow ever said to me, he said "This is the last days boy, the last days". I asked him what he meant. He said "Yuh ent see what going on? They send AIDS to kill man, millibug to kill tree, and they send these lil boy with these drum machine to kill music!" (panel laughs) He

⁶ The Trinbago Unified Calypsonians' Organisation (TUCO) is a professional body which serves as the governing body for calypso in Trinidad and Tobago.

said “since I small, I know musicians does play music. Now I get big this size they telling me it have music that men who making it is not musicians. I say that if the men that making it is not musicians, then it cannot be music!” So I asked him what ‘it’ was. He said “I does call it ‘dat ting’!”

OMARI ASHBY

We have a question from Mistah Shak. He says “I think Shadow used his music in his professional persona of The Shadow as a coping mechanism of sorts to address, navigate and in a sense conquer the things that mortal Winston Bailey was fearful of, or apprehensive about. Things like the occult, infidelity, advantage, injustice etc etc, so in a sense his whole embracing of dreadness was almost like a suit of armor to run in and tackle these things. What is the panel’s view on these things?”

ROBIN FOSTER

Yes, I would say that I appreciate that because he had a whole thing about horning. Besides Yuh Lookin’ For Horn, Tan Tan, Janet etc. He would go, and the man would come home, and all those kinds of dread song, but they would have such funny lines in them. It was really an armour as he said.

AIYEGORO OME

I am very concerned that from the philosophical point of view that we didn’t adequately understand Shadow. I think what Shak says is quite true, and I think that we have to apply that now to a lot of other calypsonians who may have similar concerns and hurts, and how they deal with them.

OMARI ASHBY

I am also seeing in the chat a comment: “The late Louis Regis shared a thought with me many years ago. Shadow is in the business of distilling folk wisdom.” And I think that this is a good note on which to end.

I want to thank Robin Foster, Zeno Constance, Aiyegoro Ome and Joanne Haynes for joining us today. Your input was critical and important, it was a good rounding out to

this section of the formalities of the day. In about two hours we have the virtual Dingolay Dance Party from 6 – 7 with three DJs: Kabuki, John Gill, and Honey Colada and they will be playing some of Shadow’s music. At the end of the day all this talking would have gotten Shadow vex; he would have liked to deal with some music. So we will end the day in a nice way with the music.

Thank you very much to the panelists, the people who logged in, The UWI, the technical staff, The Groundation Foundation team led by Dr. Burke, the Film Unit and everyone who made these two days possible. I invite you all to join us at six to have a good session. Thank you folks.

WORKS CITED

Haynes, Constance, Ome and Foster. Moderated by Omari Ashby. *We Real Dread! Everybody is Somebody Convois* from the Dreadness: The Mystic Power, Philosophy and Performance of Shadow Symposium by The Groundation Foundation & The University of the West Indies St. Augustine Campus. 4th March 2022. Online: Zoom.