



Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago
Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts

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MEDIA RELEASE

Full House for Classical Music Concert in Celebration of the 60th Anniversary of the Elysée Treaty

Close to 2,000 patrons comprising members of the diplomatic community and the public were treated to an evening of riveting and commemorative classical music featuring the National Philharmonic Orchestra at the National Academy for the Performing Arts (NAPA) yesterday January 25, 2023. The event was a collaboration among the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts, and the French and German Embassies in celebration of the 60th Anniversary of France and Germany signing the Elysée Treaty.

German Ambassador, Her Excellency Ute König reminded that the Elysée Treaty was signed by West German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer and French President Charles de Gaulle in 1963, after 3 wars and centuries of antagonism between France and Germany, marking the end of enmity between the two countries. Sixty years later, the two missions celebrated continued peace and friendship through the arts.

Commenting on the initiative, Senator the Honourable Randall Mitchell, Minister of Tourism, Culture and the Arts said, “The Ministry relished this opportunity to collaborate with the missions in the execution of this special event. We are indeed proud of the talent pool within the National Philharmonic Orchestra, and Trinidad and Tobago by extension, and we are very happy to share it with the world.”

In his speech, French Ambassador, His Excellency Didier Chabert, sincerely thanked Minister Mitchell for his integral role in making the event possible. He also commended the exceptional work of the musicians and the leadership of the National Philharmonic Orchestra. “This orchestra is a source of pride for Trinidad and Tobago and a symbol of the excellence that characterises Trinidad and Tobago’s performing arts sector,” he said.

These sentiments were echoed by Her Excellency Ute König who added, “Tonight, we want to use the international language of music to celebrate.” She spoke heartily of the National Philharmonic Orchestra’s performance which featured music of French, German and Caribbean influence in celebration of the special bond among the nations.

The festivities also featured the celebration of music’s ability to promote nationalism, communal values, reconciliation and peace. Local musicians Muhammad Muwakil and Alicia Jagessar were honoured for using music to promote peace and tolerance to local and international audiences. Muhammad Muwakil is a Trinidadian poet and musician best known for his work with Freetown Collective while Alicia Jagessar has contributed significantly within the Parang industry as a member of Los Alumnos de San Juan.



Ambassador of Germany to Trinidad and Tobago, Her Excellency Ute König (left); Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and the Arts, Ms. Simone Thorne-Mora Quinones (centre); Ambassador of France to Trinidad and Tobago, His Excellency Didier Chabert (right) standing together in honour of a night of peace, friendship and the arts.



Trinidad and Tobago's National Philharmonic Orchestra, led by conductor Dr. Roger Henry, performing a riveting classical number paying tribute to this significant moment in Franco-German history.



Awardees Muhammad Muwakil (right) and Alicia Jagessar (left) taking pride in the awards they were given for their contribution to the arts, peace and reconciliation.

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