

Come lime with me

Francis Mundangepfupfu

Do your band members have a nick-name for you?

No

When did you begin to play steelpans?

As a 10 year old in primary school

What made you decide to play steelpans?

By chance, we had a steel band at my school. There were no other bands we could join. I don't feel I was taken aback by the sound of the steel band instruments, I think I just loved music and wanted to play what was available. As a kid I remember liking the band because the music sounded very full and like my some of my computer games.

Which steelpan instrument do you play?

I usually play the tenor, that's where I excel, but I would like to think I am a great all rounder.

What do like about this instrument?

I don't, particularly. My favourite sound comes from the cello voices.

I'm great at playing two or three voices at once, in classical solos for example (not just playing a melody and a harmony in a chorded way - if that makes sense). Somehow I have enough rhythm and musical sense for it, and so the tenor pan suits because all of the notes are close together.

How often and for how long do you practice?

Lol. I don't practise. I learn it, then play with pitch and what I can remember. I often make 'mistakes', but I just call it playing it differently. Only the band notice. I'm very lazy. I like the thrill of not knowing the music properly when I get on stage. It keeps you on your toes and keeps your pitch working. You also have to know your music to know how you can 'style it out'. I think it's how I entertain myself when we have 3 gigs a day. I'd get bored otherwise.

What style of music do you enjoy playing the most?

Music with heavy chords and changes to solo through.

How often do you perform at gigs?

Six or seven times a week during the summer

Do you get nervous before a performance?

Usually I don't, but when I do, it's always a show where I'd least expect to find myself nervous. I don't find many opportunities to do solo performances with the kind of jobs that we do, but I would like to, and that would make me nervous. I'd like to think I could still excel under pressure. I've never really had the chance to find out.

Have you played at carnival?

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Nope

Tell me about your favourite performance and where it was?

We only usually perform as a trio nowadays, so it was probably back in the day when I was part of a youth orchestra still coming up, around players older and more experienced than me, and in a big band of 20 or so.

Who is your favourite steelpan musician?

Len Boogsie Sharpe, obviously.

What is the name of your favourite steelband?

None really, I don't follow a particular band, and I think the panorama songs in Trinidad are getting worse and worse musically. There's far too much going on and you can't hear any of it. I know the arrangements are great though, like I'd lose it if I was at the panyard and hearing a small section, like the cellos and the basses together.

What is your favourite steelpan tune?

What's a steel pan tune? Pan can play anything.

Do you play any other musical instruments? No.

What do you like to do in your spare time?

Party, drink, dance, socialise. I like astronomy. I speak 5 languages and I like to practise those and travel.