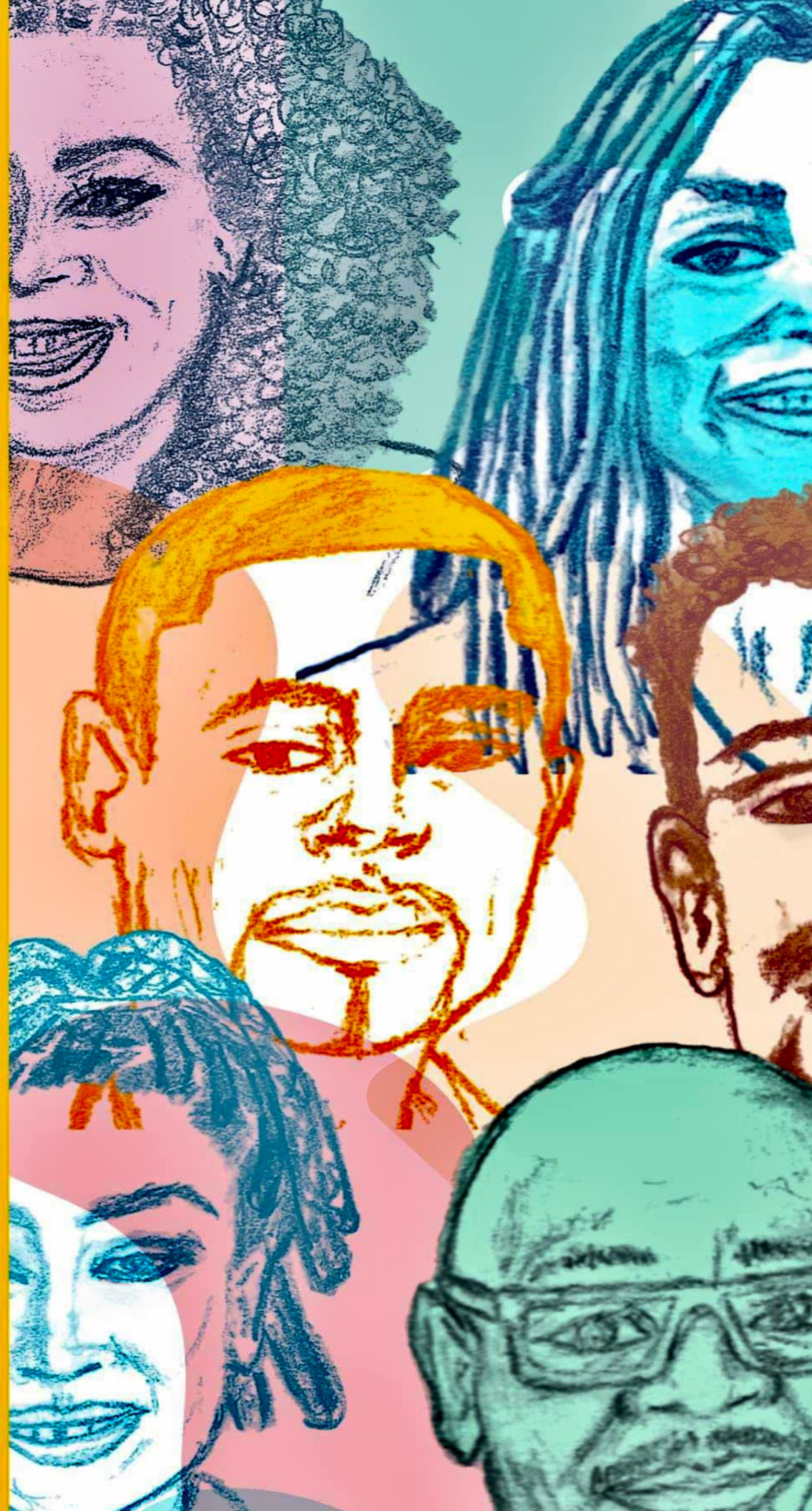


VOL. 2 ISSUE 1

# GLAMAZZINE



# Editorial

This holiday season, we at Glamazine extend the gift of encouragement. It's been a trying year (or rather, couple of years) for many, so we decided to share stories that inspire hope—encouraging readers to step into the new year determined to claim their dreams.

We celebrate the enduring strength of Caribbean creatives whose sheer willpower and collaborations carved their own unique path. Take Nova Lorraine, for example—the Jamaican visionary behind the digital

couture design 'SuperNova,' which was transported to the moon! Accepting her calling, Nova seized unique opportunities and gained critical acclaim for her innovative work.

We also highlight Jumo Primo, a Guyanese musician who entered the music scene at a time when becoming an artist was frowned upon, as many believed it wasn't a viable career. But with faith in himself, Jumo persevered, later launching a successful solo career that has left a lasting impact on Guyanese and fans all over the world.

That unrelenting spirit is celebrated throughout this issue, for instance, in stories featuring young filmmaker Ancil Harris, social media coach

Jermaine Peart and multifaceted life coach and author Chantaeu Munroe.

Our international feature spotlights Estrela Lourenço, whose animation career included working on popular tv shows like "The Amazing World of Gumball" on Cartoon Network and "Wander Over Yonder" on Disney XD. The mother of two now focuses on illustration for children's literature, with her latest work being "Merry Christmas, Dear Mars" by Penny Parker Klastermann.

This issue is also special because it captures a full-circle moment—a moment where I salute my dad, Leon Brathwaite, who has mastered the art of making roti skins. As my greatest supporter, he always encouraged me to draw and sign my artwork, and for the first time, I am presenting my artwork to the world. Growing up, I was often told to become someone everyone could be proud of, but now I realize my dad has been the true inspiration and success story all along.

Merry Christmas to everyone!!

*Leanne Tasher*



## GLAMIZINE *Originals*



COMING SOON

WWW.GLAMIZINE.COM

# Contributors

## Naomi Parris

A lover of the arts, especially poetry, my writing journey began at the back of my high school notebook, scribbling words together for my own personal collection. Now, at 24, I am a career journalist based in Guyana and while most of my daily work tasks see me tracking the current affairs of my home and the Caribbean, I always find the time to share the lighter stories of the everyday Guyanese.



## Dianne Mendes

Dianne is a seasoned freelance creative content writer and editor dedicated to fostering inspiration and engagement through the art of storytelling. With a passion for helping others, she has dedicated significant time to assisting friends and colleagues in reviewing, editing, and crafting various forms of written content.

Dianne has adeptly navigated various writing projects, ranging from webpage copywriting and email campaign development to academic paper editing, children's stories, inspirational articles, marketing blogs, and autobiographies. Beyond work, Dianne finds solace and enrichment in personal pursuits, including creating her own fiction writings, learning new languages, and creating beautiful cross-stitch designs.



## Candice K. Stewart

Candice K. Stewart is a Jamaican writer who predominantly specializes in producing riveting, fascinating, and compelling features about people, businesses, lifestyle experiences, and climate justice. Her writing has been published in local print and digital media, as well as in international publications. Despite her growing accolades, Candice's greatest personal achievement is her registered trademark entitled, The Suburban Girl JA®, which is also the name of her unique blog. The blog shares her life lessons and features stories about entrepreneurs and their business journeys.



## Symone Frazer

With her toes in the sand of Jamaica's pristine beaches, Symone Frazer pens engaging stories and content. This talented freelance writer creates imaginative picture books and crafts compelling website copy. Symone draws on her business savvy and self-publishing know-how to bring her words to life. When she's not behind her desk conjuring up delightful prose, you can find her immersed in her latest side hustle and dreaming up her next written adventure. Symone's passion for the written word shines through in every tale she tells.



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Design by Nova Lorraine



# CONTENTS

December 2024

- 4 Nova Lorraine's Supernova Fashion
- 8 Ancil Harris: A Champion for Sci-Fi Film
- 12 Gift or Grab Featuring Beatus Home & Accessories
- 14 Jermaine Peart: The Social Media Coach with Roots like the Willow Tree...
- 18 Leon Brathwaite's Recipe for Resilience
- 22 Sweet Melodies or Sour Notes: Exploring Steelpan's Cultural Perception
- 25 Jumo Primo: The Unshakeable Voice of Soca
- 28 Chantaeu Munroe's Heart for Healing
- 32 Estrela Lourenço's Colorful Worlds


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# NOVA LORRAINE'S SUPERNOVA FASHION

*By Symone Frazer*

*Headshot image by  
Vital Agibalow  
for Hensel*

“ This journey... is a  
testament to dreaming  
big and breaking  
barriers. ”



Fashion designer and futurist Nova Lorraine is the epitome of astronomical talent. In fact, her vibrant career has now surpassed conventional runways, with her avant-garde creation making a historic landing on the moon! Nova's design embarked on the lunar journey as part of the Lunaprise Museum on February 22, an art preservation initiative curated by Space Blue in collaboration with BitBasel. However, this groundbreaking feat is just the beginning for Nova, whose ambition knows no bounds.

"This journey from humble beginnings to making a mark on the moon is a testament to dreaming big and breaking barriers. Let's inspire and be inspired to push the limits of creativity and innovation for a better world," Nova noted in a celebratory post on LinkedIn. Nova, though, is not your ordinary fashion designer sketching with graphite pencil and canvas; her vision is much vaster and her creative techniques, future-facing. The AI specialist crafts her fashion line digitally, seamlessly using Generative AI tools to produce new concepts in couture. Nova has garnered notable acclaim for her artistic and tech acumen, including the Web3 Creator Future Award, Metaverse Champion Award, and the LAMINA1 NFT Artist Award. Yet, these accolades merely skim the surface of her accomplishments. We interviewed Nova to uncover the woman behind powerful movements and learn the origins of her talent and inspiration.

With her relentless pursuit of purpose, Nova redefines what's possible through a plethora of ventures – as an author, Metaverse Advisor, and Founder of House of Nova (H.O.N.). Evidently, intricate life experiences prepared the Jamaica-born from Savanna-la-Mar, Westmoreland, for supernova success, even before she realized its impact. For instance, Nova draws inspiration from her diversely



*Nova Lorraine design entitled 'SuperNova' was transported to the moon*

talented family, who migrated to Connecticut, USA, when she was very young. As one of six children, she observed her siblings' passions, ranging from skilled dancing to engineering and entrepreneurship. This fostered an environment steeped in creativity and ambition.

Nova's multifaceted talents were undoubtedly shaped by her parents as well. She emphasized the musical heritage of her paternal family, who are exceptional musicians and singers. She added that her father plays the guitar and harmonica, and also sings. It's no surprise that Nova developed a profound interest in music, which she dapples in behind the scenes. She even hopes to produce songs with her children in the future. On her mom's side, however, were talented stylists and patternmakers who meticulously crafted patterns and garments from scratch. Nova chuckled while

reminiscing on her mom and aunties' sewing skills, as it likely served as a driving force behind her calling in fashion.

Nova's appreciation of the arts encompasses a love of language, viewing it as a powerful medium of communication, which can take the form of written text, textiles, color, shape, or music. In 2007, she launched Raine Magazine, which was established to inspire creative entrepreneurs. In her capacity as Editor in Chief, she interviewed revered talents such as Kendall Jenner, Priyanka Chopra, Sean Kingston, and Mark Cuban.

From an early age, Nova exhibited an entrepreneurial spirit, embodying qualities such as tenacity and responsibility. This served as another impactful experience that perhaps influenced her career path.

"I have always had it in me to become an entrepreneur," Nova shared. At around seven years old, she was hired by her two older brothers as an assistant for their paper route – her very first job that she was elated to have. "We had to wake up early," she recalled, "between five and six o'clock each morning. Whether it was raining, dark or cold, our job was to make door to door newspaper deliveries."

"I was happy doing the paper route," she disclosed, noting she was even more excited when she received the opportunity to start her own paper route at eleven years old, an accomplishment she was very proud of. Nova prioritized excellent customer service, and in doing so, she was rewarded tips in uncapped commissions. She believes that showing up for work helped to instill core values in her, especially that of entrepreneurship, which was detailed in her first book, 'Unleash Your Supernova.'







As a high school student, Nova was drawn to the field of psychology as a career as a way to help people live a better life. After completing her undergraduate studies, Nova earned a full scholarship to fund her PhD studies in clinical psychology at the University of Connecticut (UCONN). However, while in the clinical psychology program, she got an overwhelming feeling that she was destined to pursue a different discipline. The spiritual revelation, which she termed a 'divine download,' redirected her focus towards helping others through her fashion designs, prompting her to later enroll in the Fashion Institute of Technology (FIT) in New York City. In her own words: "At first, I tried to resist the urge, brush it off and ignore what was happening, but after a while, I could no longer avoid my calling."

This spiritual epiphany signifies Nova's relationship with God and is not surprising, given her upbringing in church. Today, the married mom of four does not think about professional labels that much; she simply feels inspired to educate, empower and do all the things she's called to do. Apart from her wonderful family, her best achievements so far include her 'Haute Couture' Designer of the year award which she earned from her debut fashion collection, her two Rising Star nominations from Fashion Group International, her designs landing spots in major magazines like Forbes and Italian Vogue, in film and on television, the launch of Raine Magazine, her award-winning podcast: 'Unleash Your Supernova,' and, of course, the historic moon landing.

Ultimately, Nova wants the world to know that the House of Nova will continue to impact in the areas of fashion, art, emerging technologies and well-being, while improving, inspiring and presenting achievements that were once seen and declared as not possible.



*Charity gala in Monaco (Photo by Nicolas Teboul)*

# HARRIS



“

I think we need to show the rest of the world that we could do different genres...

”

## A CHAMPION FOR SCI-FI FILM

*By Leanne Tasher*

**N**ative to the notorious region, Laventille, one Trinidadian youth battled grave odds to seize his destiny in film. Ancil Harris, armed with modern tech and a fearless crew, now shoots convention-defying supernatural scenes, ushering in a new movement of Caribbean sci-fi cinema. Finding solace in otherworldly landscapes, he reframes the 'tropics' with lightsaber-like ambition, zapping through obstacles to expand his production company, Ville Ventures Universe.

Dubbed "the home of Caribbean superheroes and sci-fi characters" like Magnolia and Vaser Claw, Ville Ventures Universe pushes the boundaries of Caribbean film. While many regional filmmakers lean toward documentaries, comedy, or drama, Ancil dares to tackle atypical projects that are cinematically challenging, showcasing the varied talents within the Caribbean.

"Netflix doesn't have one genre of films, they feature multiple genres. I think we need to show the rest of the world that we could do different genres, that we could actually come out of the box and create diverse films like the big studios," Ancil explained.

Ancil's latest film, *Tamia: The Last Battle Gen*, demonstrates his evolution as an executive producer—in fact, he described it as his "most ambitious film" yet.

"I think this is the first time we actually put video effects (VFX) like robots, droids, and spaceships within a live scene. For me, this was a big deal. I wanted to push myself to a different level and see how far we could go with a small or no budget. I aimed to replicate the kind of work seen in *Star Wars* and *Star Trek*," he said, noting that he incorporated distinctively Caribbean elements.

The sequel tells the story of *Tamia*, played by Ambika Boodhu, who is orphaned by the murder of her family, and trains to avenge them as the first Capernaum super soldier. Set on Planet Irin, the film's team used various tools such as computer-generated imagery (CGI), special effects makeup, and costuming to depict the alien world. The result is an experimental work that both reflects and deviates from traditional science fiction tropes.

Like mainstream sci-fi, the film presents a futuristic setting with energy-based weapons, artificial intelligence, spacecraft, high-tech medical machines, and non-human beings like robots and aliens. To survive, the hero, *Tamia*, forms alliances and faces conflicts, often defeating menacing opponents on desert landscapes. In reality, the location was a disbanded quarry in Trinidad, which effectively creates an extraterrestrial setting. These scenes offer a fresh take on how Caribbean landscapes can be framed beyond sea and sand. Additionally, other elements, such as dialects and casting, defy the norms of both Caribbean film and traditional sci-fi.

Despite featuring local actors, the dialogue is primarily in an alien language, with English subtitles provided. The fictional language is arguably used more prominently than in most sci-fi films, with some actors being multilingual. The cast, which includes Isabella Williams (*Young Azera*), Charli Griffith (*Commander Loucinda*), Alana Duprey (*Lona Dopet*), Resha Hamid (*Young Tamia*), and Jenelle Karamath (*Acuna*), effortlessly embody alien races that aren't customarily portrayed by Caribbean people.

On the surface, Ancil's films seemingly reflect his appetite for challenge and adventure. However, they truly represent a deep-seated passion for his craft; His career in film can be traced back to childhood when, at just two years old, he began drawing original comics. Ancil, now 39, recalled being a "big fan" of the art form while growing up in the heyday of Marvel Comics in the 90s. By primary school, he was already selling his creations, and in 2005, he self-published his first comic book, which was sold in bookstores and showcased at an expo in Barbados.

Ancil's comics quickly gained a loyal following, but while the artform was appreciated in the Caribbean, it didn't have the same widespread appeal as it did in the United States or Europe. He eventually transitioned to film, realizing that his storytelling could reach a broader audience on screen. What's even more intriguing is that his original comic characters are incorporated into his sci-fi films, bringing the 2D world he imagined at age two to dynamic sets.



"Most of my characters and the storylines are from my comics. When I create a film or a series, I go back to my old drawings to reread the original story. If I decide to go with that story or tweak it a little bit, then I'll adapt it. I also redesign and modernize the characters' appearance," he shared.

Before sharing his heroic characters, however, Ancil first had to defend his own future, showing resilience as he embarked on his film career. His pursuit began modestly, with early works shot on a simple DSLR camera. After meeting Hollywood filmmakers, he was inspired to elevate his work, investing in better equipment through lucrative freelance work, such as documentaries and music videos. During this time, he also launched Caribbean Mix, an online interview series that ran for three seasons, which featured well-known guests like Gyptian and Christopher Martin. Over time, he felt compelled to return to "scripted work," shifting his focus to film in the 2000s and, later, to the sci-fi genre specifically.

Among Ancil's greatest achievements are having his films shown in major cinemas, broadcast on TV stations, and embraced among youth, who often request autographs from their favorite characters. He noted that a significant aspect of his work is creating role models for young audiences:

"...We introduce the characters to kids, and they love these characters. That is our audience, and we always teach kids about being positive, that a hero means protecting those who can't protect themselves. I grew up with Batman and Spider-Man, and they were always heroes, always saving people. Showing this to kids now is a big deal, so they have someone to look up to."

Glamazine caught up with Ancil to gain further insights into his career and latest film through the following Q&A.



**Q: Is it surreal to walk amongst your comic characters on set?**

A: Yeah, it's so amazing. I think what amazed me first is seeing people willing to and excited to play your character, you know, and embodying the characters as their own. They fall in love with the characters, and people fall in love with them. So to me, it is a surreal feeling.

**Q: What inspired the design for Tamia's costume?**

A: For Tamia, with her helmet and her suit, I actually sat down with a designer. He does cosplay as well and so I sat down with him and I was like I want something mixed in between Mandalorian and slightly Robocop. Instead of using black, we went with a kind of dirty gray so that it looked like a real warrior.

**Q: Did you cast trained actors?**

A: Some of them are. But no, these are not all trained actors. In all, you probably will get one or two trained actors. Everybody, like when I met them the first time, shared that this is what they wanted to do... They were just passionate about being a part of this, being a part of something historic.

**Q: What guidance did you provide to help actors embody their character?**

A: Well, I basically tell them the background story of the character, so I tell them everything about the character—how they think, how they feel, the motives, the objectives, what they would do in certain scenarios—and let them embody that...I think the main thing is having the actors as comfortable as possible, letting them understand the characters, and letting them embody the characters from their perspective.

**Q: What's the core reason that about what you do?**

A: A lot of my family and close friends encourage me to keep going and encourage me to keep going because I had from small, and so I always felt this dream fulfilled. My family has been motivating and pushing me to do better.

**Q: What advice would you give to Caribbean filmmakers?**

A: First things first, never give up. Listen to what people have to say, especially the negative comments... Not everyone is going to love what you put out or what you do, but that shouldn't deter you from continuing. You just have to stick with it. Keep improving, and eventually, you'll get there.



**you're passionate**

My friends motivate me to go. I'm really into it's a dream that I always want to see my friends have and I want to excel and

**give to aspiring**

Give up. Don't study especially with the everybody will like you have to offer, but from creating. You never give up, keep you will get there.

**Q: What is the legacy you'd like to leave as a filmmaker?**

A: I want to show the next generation that whatever they decide to do, whether it's sci-fi or horror—genres that aren't too popular on this side of the world—they can achieve anything.

The Ville Ventures Universe captures remarkable characters on screen, but is also powered by an incredible team off camera. To bring the story of Tamia: The Last Battle Gen to life, Ancil collabed with skillful creatives like cinematographer Joshua J. Lewis, writer Angelia Byron, costume designer Torrell La Borde, and makeup artist Marina. Fortunately, their hard work is already being honored; The film, which is available on the GT Network, has been officially selected for the CIM Sueca Film Festival 2024.



## “Gift or Grab”

# FEATURING BEATUS HOME & ACCESSORIES

*By Leanne Tasher*

Holiday gift shopping is a cherished tradition often centered around commercial products. However, regionally produced creations can make truly unique and special gifts that also deserve a place under the Christmas tree. This year, consider supporting Caribbean creative entrepreneurs like Sharlene Charles, a Vincentian artisan and the owner of Beatus Home and Accessories. In this special series, we showcase Sharlene's exquisite craftsmanship and versatility by spotlighting her stylish fashion bags, though her diverse collections also include beach dresses, cover-ups, passport holders, and coasters—all made from eco-friendly materials like macrame, burlap, and leatherette.

In an interview with Glamazine, Sharlene shared why her handmade pieces make perfect presents and offered exclusive styling tips. Her attention to detail and intricate designs reflect the joy she finds in her craft. “Creating my pieces allows me to tap into a side of myself that has developed over the years,” she explained. “I love designing and making things, and it's so rewarding to see people satisfied with the quality and image of the brand.”

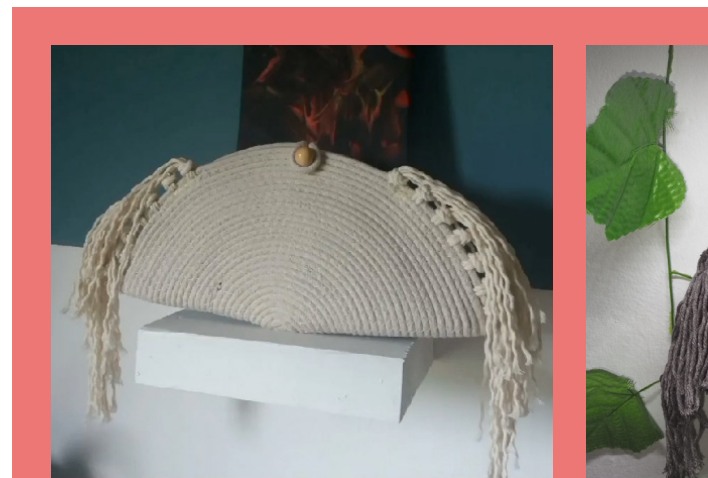
The name “Beatus”, derived from the Latin word for “blessed,” complements Sharlene's vision for her business and customers. “When someone buys my product, I want them to feel blessed, fortunate, and prosperous. I want everything to go well for them. I hope that whatever they're going through, things will work out in their favor,” she said.

Founded in 2022, Beatus Home and Accessories offers unique, exclusive designs that stand out. Many of Sharlene's pieces blend traditional and modern elements, bringing high fashion flair to natural, earthy aesthetics. Her bags' distinct and timeless appeal encourages consumers to choose authentic, well-crafted designs over fast fashion. Both locals and tourists are drawn to these intricate styles of wearable art, which remain collectible year-round. Customers can also pre-order and customize pieces, adding a personal touch that makes each item truly one-of-a-kind.

So, what makes these bags particularly wonderful for the holiday season? We explore five of Sharlene's best-selling bags as inspiration for the perfect gift—or to keep for yourself. Ultimately, we found that all the pieces were versatile, making it easy to mix and match pieces to complement your personal style. So, let these fashion tips merely inspire you as you decide which of these styles you would “Gift or Grab!”



This style macrame an intricate constructi gathering instantly s the marke everywhere Sharlene n and sturdy



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## Macrame Bags

is available with the metal handle or handle. This popular piece, featuring the knotting technique and durable material, is perfect for parties and special occasions. The rarely used macrame material sets it apart from typical options on the market. "It's not a bag you're going to see everywhere, and it's not a design you can rush," the designer noted. With its careful craftsmanship and quality materials, this bag is built to last.



### Glitzy Circle Rope Bag

If you love a bit of glitz and glamor, this bag is for you. Made from rope with a glittering exterior, it strikes a balance between simplicity and style, making it ideal for a casual outing. This style is particularly popular among young girls, who are drawn to its small size and shape, and is perfect for carrying their little treasures. Its handle, made with strong cotton fabric, offers durability, ensuring that the bag has the necessary support and structure. This top-seller proves that the smallest details can make a big impact.



### Rope Design with Tassels

Make a statement at a family dinner with this conversation piece, available in various earth-toned colors. Crafted with precision, this bag is a rare beauty suitable for both semi-casual and elegant occasions.

is perfect for special functions and spacious enough to hold your phone and other essentials. An alternative version of this bag includes handles, and it's secured with a wooden bead, keeping the aesthetic natural and effortlessly elegant.



### Basket-Shaped Bag

The largest of all, this bag offers exceptional functionality, making it perfect for a picnic or a day at the beach. Its basket shape allows you to carry more items than your average bag, and it works great as either a casual or statement piece.



### Burlap Bag with Rose Accent

This bag has a vintage appeal due to its rustic charm, making it great for church services, e.g. as a standout accessory for a linen outfit." The burlap material has a nostalgic quality that reminds people of their childhood," Sharlene explained. This classic style, while sentimental, is given a modern twist; dainty gold handles add a touch of elegance, while the 'burlap rose' completes the soft, refined look.





*Photos by Stacy Ann Brown*



# JERMAINE PEART: THE SOCIAL MEDIA COACH WITH ROOTS LIKE THE WILLOW TREE...

*By Candice Stewart*

Like the roots of a willow tree, Jamaican entrepreneur Jermaine Peart is firmly anchored in her purpose, allowing her to bend without breaking during life's storms. As the founder and CEO of The Creative Willow, she has recently transformed her passion for empowering businesses into a thriving career. In a bold move, Peart left her 9-to-5 job as a digital media strategist at a long-standing media house in the last quarter of 2023. Resilient and adaptable, she set out to help others build and further develop their brands in the social media and digital space.

"The Creative Willow is a boutique social media agency that allows small and micro businesses to find their 'aha' moments. In my capacity, I consider myself to be a coach and tutor for my clients. It is through The Creative Willow that I take pride in teaching and guiding my clients or students to tap into the full potential of what their business can achieve," she told Glamazine.

Peart, who spent many years working in corporate, had held various roles in business process outsourcing, finance, and media. She now relishes each of these experiences, as they have all contributed to her entrepreneurial growth and development. She noted, for instance, that her media position offered the opportunity to build her company's brand. This role also allowed her to engage directly with a variety of businesses, determining their market performance and offerings.

"After doing this for a little over two years, I took a step back and focused on building my own brand so I could help others do the same. That's the reason I consider myself a tutor, so that I can help my clients to better position themselves for better media opportunities or customer reach and engagement, or even just to become more acquainted with the tools in traditional and digital media to help further their brand," she explained.

## **The Roots of Peart's Passion**

But where did Peart find her passion for entrepreneurship? Believe it or not, her story goes back to her childhood, and is influenced by a combination of factors like volunteering, relationship-building and family traits.

## **Volunteering: A Catalyst for Creativity**

Peart's drive for social media strategy was ignited by her involvement with the Optimist International Caribbean District.

"Social media and the digital space chose me," she explained. "One night, I watched the movie 'Robots' and a specific quote stood out to me. It said, 'See a need, fill a need.' It inspired me so much that I stayed up all night preparing a presentation for the Optimist organization.

"After presenting, I convinced other members to incorporate social media plans into their overall plans for the Optimist Year. It worked wonderfully. In just 30 minutes, I established myself as the subject matter expert for all things social media within the district, and over the next two years, my responsibilities grew from being a member to becoming the social media team lead for the Caribbean District."

Acting on her impulse to 'fill a need' opened many doors for Peart, allowing her to host Instagram Live events for mental health awareness, create her own series called 'Big Bold Conversations', and design training sessions for people who are eager to learn. These experiences widened her horizons, motivating her to invest in digital marketing courses, communication studies, and a postgraduate degree. She further honed her skills by preparing and presenting marketing plans, which offered real-world opportunities to showcase her expertise and continually evolve into the best version of herself.

## **The Value of Relationships**

Oxford scholar Theodore Zeldin is quoted as having said, "Conversation is a meeting of minds with different memories and habits. When minds meet, they don't just exchange facts: they transform them, reshape them, draw different implications from them, and engage in new trains of thought. Conversation doesn't just reshuffle the cards: it creates new cards." This philosophy perfectly captures Peart's appreciation for conversation and how it has shaped her path.

For Peart, a love for conversing and building relationships is an invaluable trait, one that she credits her family with instilling in her and her siblings. "Watching my grandparents, parents, and other relatives build on conversations which led to relationships and teachable moments has played a big part in my worldview and how I handle the business of The Creative Willow," she pointed, noting that insightful dialogue helps her understand her clients and audiences.

### A Legacy of Entrepreneurship

Peart's entrepreneurial spirit is attributed to her paternal relatives' business prowess. She recalled her father's and grandfather's ability to see and capitalize on gaps in the market: "[A business mindset] appears to come naturally and easily for them... My grandfather was one of the top dairy and cane farmers of his time. They called him 'Cash Money' and from what I remember, he was always occupied and gainfully employed in some way."

Peart also noted her father's constant drive to create and sell products, a trait that left a lasting impression on her. "I've always appreciated that drive to 'see a need and fill a need'. So, from that, I would always try to tap into my innovative side. My grandfather and father created their legacy, so now I am creating my own," she shared.

### The Inspiration Behind 'The Creative Willow'

Raised in Trelawny, Peart describes herself as a country girl with a deep love for nature—often grounding herself in its elements to feel rejuvenated and anew. Due to its symbolic significance, her connection to nature has played a major role in naming her business.

"Over the past five years, after my grandmother's passing, I have found myself just loving trees so much more. I recall referencing a breadfruit tree at her funeral as even when you cut that tree down, its roots would have spread so far and wide that it didn't cease to exist.

"Additionally, I identify with trees so much that another brand I have, 'Ital Reasons'... is represented by a tree as its logo. So, the willow tree felt like a great inspiration for my business name. It represents change, growth, and new beginnings while creating and curating a space for the clients I have as we work on their social media presence, impact, and reach," she said.

As a reflection of Peart's core values, The Creative Willow is committed to adding value to small businesses, enhancing their brand identity and by extension, their customers' experience. Although new to entrepreneurship, Jermaine Peart stands tall and self-assured, drawing from her wealth of experience and academic achievements to offer a service that truly makes a difference.



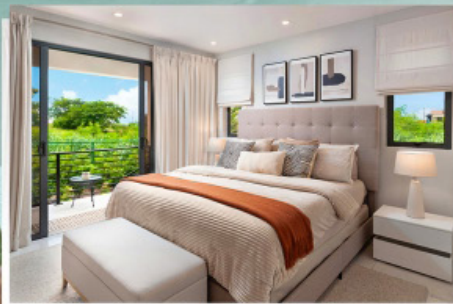


With a passion for transforming spaces, Melissa Browne, Managing Director of MDesigns Interior Services, brings a fresh perspective to interior design.

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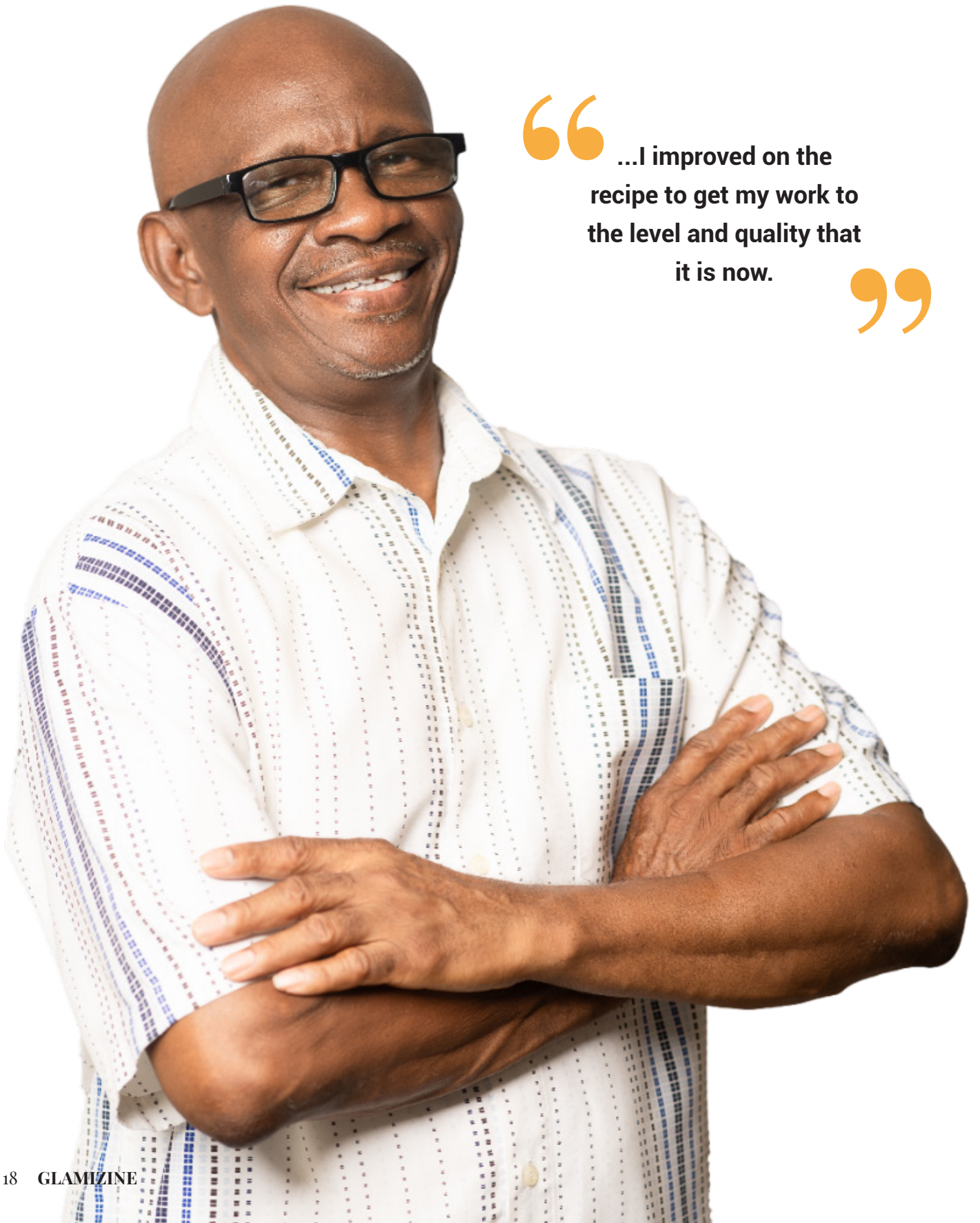
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INTERIOR SERVICES

# LEON BRATHWAITE'S RECIPE FOR RESILIENCE

By Leanne Tasher

Photos by Akira Joseph



“ ...I improved on the recipe to get my work to the level and quality that it is now. ”

*Daybreak gradually coats the cozy kitchen and discovers him — already on his feet, kneading dough. His nifty hands mix and move, effortlessly folding and pressing ingredients, as if guided by muscle memory. Allowed time to settle and rise...*

Roti maestro Leon Brathwaite has garnered five-star praise for his specialty, renowned for its distinct flavor and expertly balanced texture. Perhaps it was fate, but mastering the craft and starting a roti business was not his initial ambition. It was his defiant will to overcome hardship that forged his career, and helped form his resilient, yet "contented attitude." While turning bitter experiences into savory success, he not only developed a beloved roti product, but also gained a deep compassion for others.

"...I know what hunger feels like," the Guyanese native revealed. "My first consideration, apart from the quality, was that the average person out there would be able to purchase my product. That experience of hunger motivated me to take that into consideration, so that the average person can eat."

Leon, who migrated to Barbados at age 22 in 1980, found himself grappling with the financial hardship on the island. Amidst a global recession and widespread downsizing, he was cut from his motor mechanic job after one year, due to a 'last one in, first one out' policy. Following the abrupt dismissal, his life became a wearisome routine of scanning job listings and walking extensively in search of work, sometimes catching the bus and realizing, "I only had bus fare to go back home."

#### **A Fresh Start**

For days, Leon's grandmother, Dora, observed his ongoing frustration. She was staying at his home in Cave Hill, St Michael at the time, where she offered him encouragement and a way out. "She suggested that I sell roti wraps and showed me how to make it once. Over time, I improved on the recipe to get my work to the level and quality that it is now. The portion and texture of the dough mix played an important part," he recalled.

**...the fermenting dough expands. Next, he portions it into small balls, coating them with flour so they remain pliable but not sticky. They're rolled and placed on a hot cast iron griddle, forming air pockets before quickly...**

"I guess it was just the urgency," Leon added, explaining why he had grasped the recipe after seeing it demonstrated just once. Determined to progress, he diligently refined his skills, creating a product worthy of enterprise and referral. Rotis, introduced to the Caribbean by indentured Indians in the 19th century, had already become a culinary staple. This flatbread, typically filled with curried meat and potato or channa, offered portability and convenience, making it a popular lunch choice. But, although the meal was familiar to consumers, Leon encountered a steep learning curve as a startup business. He was, for instance, tasked



with building clientele, establishing his brand, generating demand, and creating a unique flavor that would set his product apart. Undeterred, he boldly approached various establishments, offering samples of his signature dish and seeking permission to sell on their premises. With each successful negotiation, his business expanded.

Repeat customers would huddle around Leon's vehicle, initially a Vauxhall Viva and later a Suzuki Alto, as he conducted business from Hindsbury Road in Christ Church to a construction site behind Sandy Lane on the West Coast. Patrons' hearty endorsement of his tasty grab-and-go menu signaled a promising future for the business. However, rather than relishing this upward trajectory, he tackled a new challenge.

After five years in operation, Leon noticed increased competition in the roti business, as many viewed it as a viable income stream. When other vendors appeared in prime commercial areas, he was prompted to reconsider his business approach. He recounted an eye-opening experience at a construction zone where, despite his early arrival and wait, the workmen gravitated to a new competitor — two curvaceous ladies sporting tights and aprons, who arrived in a Suzuki van thirty minutes later.

"The way how these guys were coming down the side of the building, looking like Spider-Men, just crawling down the whole side of the building, I said to myself 'Look, this is where now I got to be doing something else,'" he said, erupting in laughter. While regaining his composure, the 66-year-old added that he applauded the success of his peers in the trade.

Another timely suggestion from a friend gave Leon clarity and a new direction for his business. He was asked, "Why don't you, because the roti skins taste good and are good quality, package them for the supermarket?" Acting on this advice, he stopped making seasoned fillings and running

his mobile vendor route. This transition to a business-to-business (B2B) model, exclusively delivering packaged roti skins, gave rise to the L. Brathwaite Roti Skins brand.

The entrepreneur, who had always relied on 'street smarts' to grow his business, intentionally gave his packages a timeless and understated appeal. Displayed in clear, sealed bags, packs consisting of ten roti skins graced the chiller aisles of supermarkets across Barbados, including Carlton and the now-defunct Rick's, before extending to locations such as Jordan's and Massy.

*...flipped to the other side. He briskly rotates the roti on the pan as it cooks, eventually becoming golden brown. A warm bread-like aroma rises from the stacked skins he has set aside — each one consistently thin, tender, and fluffy thanks to his...*

#### Technical Skills

Growing up in Agricola, one of the earliest villages in Guyana, Leon spent leisurely afternoons playing football and cricket. Beyond sports, he also used his free time to learn a trade. As a young teen, aged "13 plus," he was already working at a friend's mechanic shop as an apprentice—a four-year experience he credits to his "survival." This early professional training followed his withdrawal from Agricola Methodist School in third standard, which, in hindsight, was due to a lack of academic mentorship.

When Leon pursued a mechanic position at the Guyana Transport Service at 18 years old, the encounter incited a jarring realization. During the job interview, he was asked to present his certifications, but misunderstanding the manager's request, he sincerely handed over his birth certificate.

"He didn't expect for me to show him my birth certificate, but that's all I had at the time, and that's all I really knew

about," he shared. "I saw the manager, all of a sudden, look as though he wanted to laugh. He was trying his utmost best to hold it back and that really confused me for a moment. It really impacted me as well, because that is when the whole reality about school leaving certificates caught my attention."

That year, Leon joined the Guyana Police Force, where he served as a driver mechanic until 1980, when he migrated to Barbados, his father Lionel's birthplace. Lionel had ventured to Guyana for employment and lived there for 26 years, during which he married Dolly and started a family. When Lionel decided to return to his homeland, Leon relocated with him, along with his mom, sisters Marcel, Monica, and Marjorie, and brothers Lester, Leroy, and Leslie.

#### Lessons Learned

In the throes of major life changes — such as securing a mechanic job in Barbados and later being abruptly laid off — Leon never lost hope. His career path shows that challenges, whether posed as educational setbacks, rejection, or job loss, are not permanent. Through faith in God, courage, and adaptability, he overcame these trials and emerged as an even stronger and profoundly humble man.

Leon's experiences also highlight the value of a supportive circle, as life-changing encouragement and insights often came from family and friends. Today, apart from his masterfully blended ingredients, it's clear that the true recipe behind the L. Brathwaite brand is resilience. It's no surprise, then, that Leon offered this advice to aspiring entrepreneurs:

"You have to make the first step... When you start, that's the first step to making many more steps in the growth and development of your business. It seems like the hardest, but you realize that's the simplest thing—but only when you make that first step."



“

I think in any business that any person wants to go into, it's just to make the first step.

”

# SWEET MELODIES OR SOUR NOTES

## EXPLORING STEELPAN'S CULTURAL PERCEPTION:

*By Dianne Mendes, MSc*

*Artwork by Leanne Tasher*

When I think about the steelpan, it brings me back to my cherished childhood memories—memories of late-night practices that saw me home after 2 a.m., the rhythmic knocking of sticks against steel before the start of each melody, a stern instructor who drilled us on musical phrases until we mastered them, and organized chaos of moving pans in preparation for Carnival events. But most of all, I remember the joy and excitement we shared on stage—our hard work and dedication over the months finally recognized through the cheers and 'whoop whoops' of our supportive audience...

Oh, what I would do to experience more days like these! The truth is, my fervor for the steelpan is often confined to annual events which are often overshadowed by the popularity of Soca performances. As such, the question arises: Where exactly does the steelpan stand in Grenada's cultural narrative? And considering the uniqueness of this instrument, forged under Caribbean sunshine, how can we elevate its prominence beyond the confines of Carnival? These are the questions I hope to unravel as we explore perceptions surrounding the steelpan and what can be done to increase its appreciation.

### Understanding the Steelpan Stigma

David 'Peck' Edwards, a prominent figure in Grenada's steelpan community, has significantly increased youth involvement in pan playing, despite being raised by parents who opposed his love for steelpan and even beat him daily for it. It makes one wonder, what is it about the steelpan, an original and spectacular instrument in its own right, that would have some people so against it? Mr. Edwards' childhood scoldings highlight deeper societal perceptions of the steelpan, which may be rooted in its history of rebellion.

After slavery was abolished, colonial authorities banned African drums and other traditional instruments, fearing they could be used to incite rebellion. In response, the newly

freed citizens repurposed discarded materials, such as old oil drums, to create new instruments. This act of defiance led to the creation of the steelpan, which became a symbol of resistance. Although the steelpan has evolved and gained widespread acceptance today, remnants of this past stigma remain.

In my efforts to further unpack these perceptions, I chatted with people, both within and outside the steelpan community. Two prevailing views emerged:

1. The steelpan is noisy and uninteresting.
2. The steelpan is associated with delinquency.

The notion that the steelpan is noisy, unfortunately, doesn't surprise me. A quality steelpan, if played well, produces beautiful, almost other-worldly, music. However, you find that many pan players today tend to strike the instrument with excessive force, resulting in a harsh metallic sound that rings out over the sweetness of the notes. This unpleasant sound can be further exacerbated if the quality of the pan is not up to par. Furthermore, the upbeat rhythms of Calypso and Soca, often associated with steelpan, can lead to forceful and careless playing, further intensifying the harsh sound. Additionally, the repetitive, monotonous nature of some Soca songs when played on pan without vocal accompaniment, can add to the perception of it being uninteresting and even a little annoying if the sound comes across as raucous and unpleasant, rather than soothing to the ear.

While the steelpan's association with delinquency no longer reflects reality, the stigma prevails, especially among conservative circles, despite the fact that individuals from all walks of life both play and enjoy the instrument.

This misconception is compounded by the steelpan's frequent use in Calypso and Soca music, which limits its appeal to audiences who may prefer different genres.



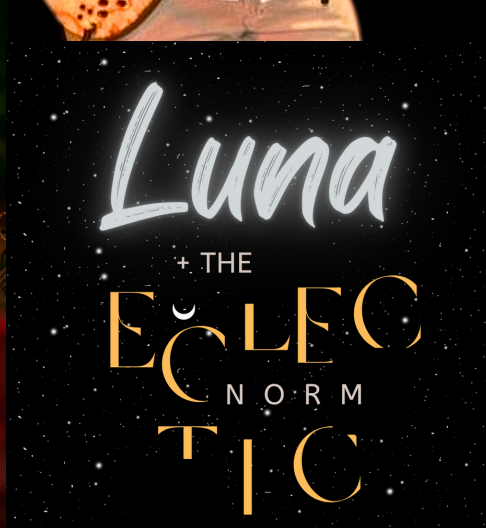


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Some of these viewpoints, while understandable, hinder the steelpan's growth as a versatile instrument that could be as beloved as the piano or guitar. It is high time we do away with these outdated views. However, to achieve this, we must first confront the underlying factors that unintentionally reinforce them.

### Factors Perpetuating Perceptions of Pan

#### The Media

The media, as a powerful arbiter of public opinion, has considerable influence in shaping perceptions. It is, therefore, the perfect catalyst for promoting and enjoying steelpan. Yet, its portrayal of pan is often limited to the Carnival season, after which it is rarely mentioned. Although the steelpan is a well-known cultural instrument across the Caribbean, why, then, does it continue to be overshadowed by more mainstream instruments?

"Steelpan isn't portrayed well enough in media, probably because of the ignorance of people in media itself [who] still see pan as a calypso instrument," stated Regan Mendes, a musician and iconic figure who formed the first women's steelpan band in Grenada.

Media outlets are selective, promoting content only when they believe it offers education and entertainment to their audiences. While many are aware of the steelpan, there is still a lack of understanding about its importance in our culture, which explains why it is hardly promoted outside the Carnival season. Even then, recorded steelpan music broadcast on TV and radio is often marred by poor sound quality due to poor acoustics and improper miking, thus making it even less appealing to listeners. Now, imagine how this situation could be improved with media support through positive portrayals of the steelpan all year round.

#### Lack of Proper Management Amidst the Steelpan Community

There is an expression I've come to appreciate, which aptly describes the state of affairs within the steelpan community: "Hustle beats talent when talent doesn't hustle."

Though steelpan groups play a crucial role in shaping social attitudes towards pan, they can also act as barriers to its broader appreciation. For instance, while many members possess exceptional talent, they often lack the business mindset necessary to take their musical prowess beyond events like Panorama. As Chrislyn Lashington, a successful marketer and exceptional pan player, put it:

"I think that with almost any aspect of the creative industry, there are the challenges of management. If you take a musician, a soca artist, or a painter, they're great at what they do. But then when it comes to the business aspect of it, their skills are not as developed as they need to be or they do not

have the support...Sometimes you need to swallow your pride and have someone else do those aspects."

You will often find, however, that founding and long-standing members of steelbands prioritize retaining control over the band's welfare. They are seemingly unwilling to hand over the reins of power to younger, more business-savvy members who could bring fresh ideas and propel the band forward. This highlights the need for improved management structures within steelbands. Rather than a dictatorship, the steelpan community needs a democratic approach if it is to thrive and gain the respect and appreciation it deserves.

### Changing the Perception

To bring about change, we must first address the root cause of why it is needed. Now that we have a better understanding of the way steelpan is perceived and why, we can focus on proactively shifting these negative views.

A great starting point would be to increase the visibility and versatility of steelpan throughout the year. Rather than solely performing Soca, bands could organize events that feature genres like reggae, jazz, and classical music. This approach would attract a wider audience with varying musical tastes and help dispel the notion of steelpan as a one-dimensional instrument.

Educating young people about the steelpan from an early age could also help to change the existing narrative. With the government's assistance, we could implement mandatory school programmes that expose children to steelpan, laying the foundation for a generation that values and promotes it alongside more traditional instruments.

### Conclusion

Broader acceptance of the steelpan begins with us. By raising awareness, we can gradually reduce its stigma and encourage authorities to take action. As a pan lover, I dream of greater support and community engagement, from extensive media coverage to multi-genre performances and school programs. Until then, lingering biases remain nothing more than sour notes—waiting to be tuned out by the sweet melodies of the steelpan, finally revered as a world-class instrument.



# JUMO PRIMO

“

I think because of the love and the connection I had with the audience

## The Unshakeable Voice of Soca

*By Naomi Parris*

A seven-time crowned Soca Monarch with an electrifying presence both on and off stage, Jumo Primo has become a household name in Guyana. His career in the local entertainment industry spans over 30 years, earning him numerous accolades for his skills in composing, songwriting, and stage performances. However, his journey to building a name for himself was not an easy one.

Reflecting on his humble beginnings, the Guyanese soca king shared his inspiring story, revealing how a lad with a dream created a space for not only himself but also others to thrive. At an early age, Primo began working alongside his father, who bought and sold bottles—a simple trade back then. Primo, who accompanied his father on daily routes around the city, was the boisterous voice advertising the business—composing catchy jingles, rhymes, and raps about their offerings that unwittingly helped him develop his musical skills.

**that's what made  
me start to love  
soca.**

”



Throughout his late teens, Primo continued to work with his father, though in a different capacity. As the family business evolved, he transitioned to working as a minibus conductor while his father drove. During these daily trips, Primo often received compliments when he sang along to songs playing over the speakers. After several words of encouragement, he took a leap of faith and decided to pursue a career as an artiste, but his entry into the entertainment scene did not quite go as planned. At that time, a career in the arts was not seen as a sustainable way to make a living.

Despite the perceived risks, Primo pursued his music career, seeking out a spot in local bands to perform. Believing that his big break was near, he set his sights on joining the Aruba Singers, a well-known musical group in Guyana. Bold, yet a bit reserved and shy, Primo had approached one of the members and shared his interest in becoming a performer. He was tasked with rehearsing a song by Sanchez, and after months of practice to perfect the song to his liking, he was told that he was not quite ready for the role. Though disappointed, he kept going, and was eventually urged to try a different sound—soca, a genre that was not his forte as he had preferred reggae and dancehall.

Reluctantly, Primo began rehearsing soca classics in hopes of successfully re-auditioning for the Aruba Singers. "At that time, soca wasn't really prominent in Guyana, and I never really liked it," he noted. However, determined to prove himself, Primo personalized Edward Yearwood's hit "Pump Me Up,"

the first of many soca songs he would go on to perform. As he perfected his setlist, he included tunes from the other legends, like Machel Montano and Alison Hinds.

"I sing the songs and I see how these people enjoying themselves and I started singing the 'Rubber Waist' song by Machel and I started doing the movements and I saw people were just getting crazy and I myself was shocked because I didn't know anything about this world. Dancehall was different so when this actually happened I was like 'Wow!'" Primo said, describing his first live performance.

A prolific entertainer, Primo headlined many local and regional stages, and although this was becoming customary, he was always in awe of how soca music would bring life to a crowd. He noted that his uniqueness and creativity was part of his appeal:

"I would always put my own spin to the soca songs, according to how I feel it. And I think because of the love and the connection I had with the audience, that's what made me start to love soca. It wasn't about violence; it was just about making people feel good. People were just jumping, waving and wining."

#### **Finding His Musical Sound**

Primo eventually joined Byron Lee and the Dragonaires, the renowned Jamaican ska, calypso, and soca band. During his fourteen-year run with the group, he truly came into his



*In his element, 2020 Soca Monarch Jumo Primo brings high energy to winning performance*

*Photo Credit: Guyana Live*

own as a soca performer, touring several states and Caribbean islands. "Soca actually pushed me to be where I am. I don't know what would have happened if I was doing dancehall, but soca became 'me,' and I created my own style," he said.

Between tours, Primo would return home to Guyana, where he formed the group X2 (Times Two) with his friend and fellow musician, Adrian Dutchin. In the early 2000's, the duo became one of Guyana's top-performing acts, with hits like "Krazy" and "Tick Tock" dominating local music charts. Their songs became cultural staples, synonymous with traditional celebrations and festivities like Mashramani. However, the pair parted ways after Dutchin migrated to the United States, paving the way for their solo careers. Though they are no longer a band, Primo believes their contributions have influenced an entire generation of creatives in Guyana.

As a solo artist, Primo wrote and produced numerous hits, many of which he performed at local and regional competitions, earning him prestigious titles such as Soca Monarch and Road March King. His lyrics, filled with relatable puns and zesty punchlines, always struck the right chord with listeners, consistently turning first-time listeners into lasting fans. Known for his energetic and lively tunes—from his 2020 Soca Monarch-winning record, "Trample," to the relatable "Nosey People"—Primo has built a legacy as an entertainment icon and lyrical master.

### **The Business of Music**

While many witnessed Primo's glorious on-stage success, backstage, he confronted a host of challenges, such as being his only financial support and funding many of his own performances. In Guyana's economy, monetizing musical talent can be difficult, thus threatening artistes' survival. Primo explained that he, like most artistes in Guyana, rely heavily on performances to earn, but most recently, there seems to be a preference for international acts on Guyanese stages.

The determined entertainer has, however, delved into entrepreneurship, and while music remains the heart of his career, he now owns an entertainment spot, '592 Bar and Grill'—a venture he describes as security for his family's future.

Primo sees his musical odyssey as a culmination of life lessons, struggles, and successes, having recently celebrated 35 years in the industry. "For me, being able to survive for 35 years is because I have created my own style of music. I sing about things Guyanese people can relate to, so that is a part of my survival. And also being a people person, being accessible and down to earth, those are some of the things that keep your support system," he said.

Even amidst the existing struggle to keep traditional soca alive in Guyana, Primo remains resilient, assuring fans that his enduring voice is far from retirement. With plans to support up-and-coming talent, he aims to champion the unique voices of Guyanese soca, inspiring future generations of artistes to reign.

*Jumo Primo during winning performance of "Living My Life" at 2022 Soca Monarch competition*

*Photo Credit: Delano Williams*



# CHANTAEU MUNROE'S HEART FOR HEALING

*By Candice Stewart*

*Photo by  
Kamar McHugh*



***“What are your aspirations for the future?” This question often leaves children pondering a vast array of possibilities. But for Chantaeu Munroe, her vision was always clear: she wanted to heal. Even at seven years old, a career in medicine felt instinctive and seemed like an obvious choice. As a general surgeon, she pictured, she could mend the hurting and ease their pain—a role perfectly suited to her boundless courage and even bigger heart. Yet, life, with its sudden twists and turns, had other plans...***

In an interview with Glamazine, Munroe, now in her 30s, shared how her dream profession shifted from medicine to becoming a multifaceted Christian life coach, a deeply personal and purpose-driven pursuit. The Jamaican entrepreneur began by recounting early trauma that not only fueled her desire to heal but also deepened her empathy, thrusting her into the role of “protector” and nurturer”:

“At the tender age of seven, I found myself responsible for my two younger sisters. Our hardworking mother made sure we had our basic needs met and attended school, but her demanding schedule often kept her away. In her absence, I stepped into the role of a surrogate mother. It was during those formative years that I witnessed my parents’ first heated argument—a moment that left an indelible mark on my young heart.”

“Protectiveness enveloped me like a shield,” she continued. “I became the guardian of my sisters, standing up against discord and turmoil. Family members soon recognized my ability to bring solace and resolution. Yet, it felt unjust. Why should a child grapple with adult complexities, sacrificing her own needs to maintain peace? The weight of responsibility rested heavily on my shoulders, and I questioned why the adults around me didn’t shoulder their share.”

Amid the volatile environment of dysfunction and abuse, Munroe emerged as the “voice of reason,” bravely navigating these “treacherous waters” with wisdom far beyond her years. Despite her own distress, she tirelessly sought to defuse conflicts, fighting desperately to restore kindness, love, understanding, and lasting peace.

“As I grew older, this newfound sense of duty remained unwavering. In every situation and twist of fate, I carried the mantle of that ‘seven-year-old adult’ for others. Whether in personal relationships or professional pursuits, I continued to embody the torch of healing and protection,” she shared.

In addition to turmoil at home, Munroe faced even deeper, soul-shaking heart aches throughout her life. A survivor of multiple traumatic experiences, including suicide attempts, sexual assault, and early pregnancy loss, Munroe knows the seemingly bottomless depths of emotional anguish:

“...the darkest chapter of my life unfolded when I experienced the loss of twins and battled the precipice of losing my own sense of self-worth. It was through divine grace that I found the strength to overcome this abyss, igniting a fervent desire to use my own journey to guide and empower others who find themselves on the brink of despair.”

This tumultuous past inspired Munroe to found CKM Healing Consultancy in 2024, a company dedicated to transforming lives from brokenness to wholeness. That’s why it is “more than business” for Munroe, “it’s a calling.”

***“My ‘why’ pulses through every space I occupy. As the founder and CEO, I bridge the gap between pain and restoration, offering solace to those in harm’s way.”***

### **The Turning Point**

In 2014, Munroe began her corporate career as a young intern at a financial institution in St. Andrew. During her nearly decade-long tenure, she excelled in various roles, earning impressive promotions and significant salary increases. Her valuable insights and leadership qualities were unmistakable, with both clients and colleagues eagerly seeking her help and advice. Her combination of hard and soft skills, including emotional intelligence and a solution-oriented mindset, set her apart as a star employee, positioning her for continuous upward trajectory. However, despite her professional achievements, Munroe often felt that her strength and willpower were constantly being tested, as the challenges of her job overshadowed its rewards.

Beneath this outward success, Munroe grappled with a deep sense of unfulfillment, feeling as though she was losing sight of her “why”—the purpose that had driven her since childhood. She had always clung to her desire to work in the wellness field, initially envisioning herself as a surgeon. Even after transitioning from loans officer to Sales Advisor in 2018, this vision lingered in her subconscious like a “beacon of hope”. Finally, as she recognized her impact as a personable, trusted adviser and confidante in the office, Munroe had an epiphany:



"I realized that the manner [in which] I wanted to help other people was not by cutting them open and fixing them the way a surgeon would. It had become about me helping them with their mind—healing their mind. So, my goal adjusted from surgeon to being either a psychologist or a psychiatrist."

From that moment, the idea of helping clients become homeowners or renters paled in comparison to facilitating holistic life transformations. Munroe honored her revelation and began planning her exit strategy, officially leaving the corporate world in December 2023. She noted, "I felt like I had spent enough time helping people build their [financial] vision when there are people out there waiting on me to help them transition out of trauma and pain to recognize a healed version of themselves."

To make this professional shift, however, Munroe first had to confront her own "mask of pain and trauma" so that she could help others do the same. As she embarked on her healing journey, Munroe also gained certifications that prepared her for life as a transition coach, including becoming a trained Trauma-Informed Consultant.

Armed with knowledge and experience, Munroe now wears many hats, including team member of a Healing and Deliverance Ministry, Christian Life Coach, and Certified Clinical Trauma Professional. Munroe, also a realtor and content creator, aspires to become a trauma therapist and a best-selling author with her forthcoming book, "Layers of Healing: Discovering Purpose in Pain and Trauma."

### The Consultancy's Commitment

C.K.M Healing Consultancy embodies the core values of communication, commitment, deliverance, freedom, integrity, healing, and trust. The business name, derived from the initials of Chantaeu Kimberley Munroe, reflects her belief that "with a little Care, we can help to Kindle the Mind for healing."

As such, Munroe offers multifaceted support that addresses spiritual, psychological, and emotional traumas that hinder growth. These services include webinars, workshops, motivational speaking, and one-on-one coaching sessions. Packages, which can be booked through the website [ckmconsultancyja.com](http://ckmconsultancyja.com), include:

- **Listening Ears:** A private hour-long session to vent, decompress, and seek non-judgmental guidance.
- **Layers of Healing:** A five-session coaching package that dives deep into trauma and helps clients build healthy habits for personal transformation.
- **Trauma Talks:** A speaking engagement aimed at recognizing and healing trauma, which is tailored for professionals.

Notably, Munroe's Trauma Talks series on YouTube, where she collaborates with mental health professionals, further extends her mission of healing and empowerment.



## The Vision Expands

Looking ahead, Munroe envisions her name and business gaining prominence within corporate circles, establishing C.K.M Healing Consultancy as the foremost authority on trauma and healing in workplace environments. She also dreams of investing in a holistic space that accommodates diverse therapeutic approaches—ranging from exercise and art therapy to unconventional methods like plate-breaking sessions.

Though her consultancy is still in its infancy, Munroe has been healing all her life. She emphasized that the origins of her work extend far back, as every challenge and trial she faced since childhood served as “on-the-job training,” preparing her for the vital services she now provides.

As a testament to its impact, CKM Healing Consultancy has garnered effusive praise from clients, who highlight the invaluable growth they've experienced in the safe space. One client shared, “The session motivated me to refocus on being forgiving and kind to myself. The atmosphere was calming, non-judgmental, and well-structured.” Another lauded the founder, saying, “You are who creation has been waiting on to make a great impact.” Crediting Munroe for saving her marriage, a client said, “Chantaeu was very instrumental in mending a rough patch between my husband and [me]...She listened, asked questions, and was so patient and attentive with us...”



For Munroe, testimonials like these are merely a glimpse of what's to come. Committed to her mission, she will not rest until sorrowful and shattered souls rediscover their resilience, emerging from the shadows of trauma to embrace their authentic, powerful selves. Although her focus has shifted from mending physical pain to healing inner wounds, her purpose has never been clearer—Chantaeu Munroe, a natural-born leader and well-rounded coach, wholeheartedly declares, “within [my] means lies the catalyst for change, and I stand firm, ready to heal, nurture, and ease burdens.”



*Guest speaker Chantaeu posing with members of the Kencot Christian Fellowship during a wellness event in June*



*Young Estrela always loved to draw*



# Estrela Colorful

*By Symone Fraz*



*Chewie the star of "Walkies"*

Estrela Lourenço is a masterful storyteller, breathing life into concepts not just with words but also through her vibrant illustrations and compelling animation. Driven by an insatiable, lifelong urge to create, she has fearlessly pursued an artistic career that makes the world a more cheery and colorful place.

Estrela, an accomplished animator, author, and illustrator, specializes in creating captivating content for children. With fourteen years of experience in animation, she has excelled in various leadership roles, including Animation Director, Episodic Director, and Storyboard Artist. While she thrives in animation, she recently ventured into children's literature (kidlit), fulfilling yet another dream career.

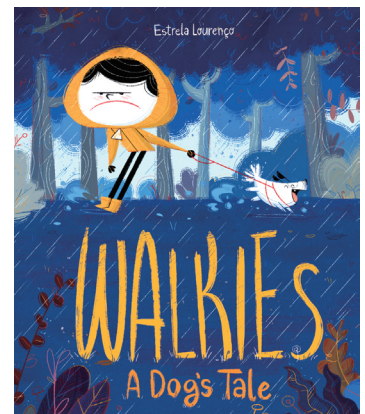
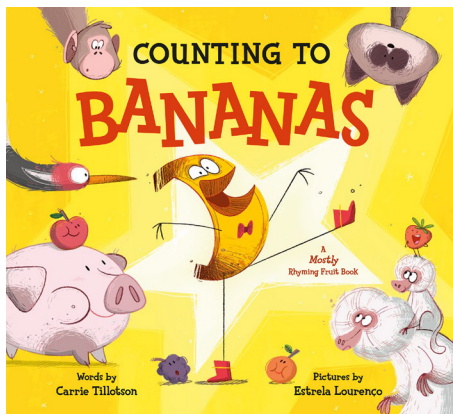
Estrela's impressive portfolio boasts of highly revered and coveted work. She's known for illustrating the picture book "B Is for Bananas" written by Carrie Tillotson and published by Flamingo at Penguin Random House. Additionally, Estrela contributed her animation skills to popular tv shows like "The Amazing World of Gumball" on Cartoon Network and "Wander Over Yonder" on Disney XD. Evidently, it was her relentless belief in her innate talents that shaped her remarkable success.

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# Estrela Lourenço's Two Worlds

by  
Liz  
Gardner

"I was great growing up," Estrela said of her happy, middle-class upbringing in Portugal, where she first realized that she was "crazy about drawing." She reminisced on school going years, characterized by performances in the Lion King and Spice Girls dance groups.

As an adolescent, Estrela's future career came into question. Her mother, who is a doctor, and her father, an engineer, encouraged her to gain a traditional career, explaining that it would provide greater financial stability. Consequently, she studied science "as a chosen specialty" in high school.

"My parents were scared because they couldn't see a way in which I could have a career out of writing or illustration and provide for myself and my family," she said. But, after witnessing her teenage panic attacks, her parents had a change of heart and enrolled her in a professional school that offered Art and Animation and later on, she completed a two-year course of Fine Arts that offered a multimedia component.

After completing college in 2009, amid a faltering economy and a wish to travel, she migrated to Dublin, Ireland.



## To learn more about Estrela's life and fascinating career, Glamizine presented the following Q&A segment.

**Q: After completing your animation studies, what was your first job?**

A: My first job in animation was in Portugal. It was an internship cleaning up and coloring frames on the computer. Later on, I started freelancing in a show that requested various animation shorts [similar to those seen] in Sesame Street.

I was working while finishing my art degree so I could continue to animate outside study hours. I'm very grateful for these first job opportunities because they helped me build my portfolio and landed me the opportunity to later work abroad in Ireland for shows like the Amazing World of Gumball for Cartoon Network and Wander Over Yonder for Disney XD.

**Q: How has your background in animation influenced your work as a children's book illustrator?**

A: I am definitely grateful to be able to bring what I learnt in animation into my work as a children's book illustrator. I think my characters are expressive and consistent in their design throughout each book. Skills like character posing (learnt as an animator) and scene staging, pacing and storytelling (learnt in storyboards) helped me immensely in this new industry I love so much.

**Q: When did you start taking your passion for writing and illustration seriously?**

A: I started Illustrating in 2014. While working a 9-5 job in animation, I decided to start learning all about visual storytelling in the evenings while drawing on my tablet. It was not until 2020 when I met my literary agent James McGowan at Bookends Literary Agency, who discovered me on Instagram, that I realized I could make a career out of my talent.

At first, I thought the email I received from him was spam mail but as soon as I found out it was real, I was elated. I'm, nowadays, even more excited about my debut picture book as an author/illustrator "Walkies - A Dog's Tale" being sold with James. The book was inspired by my long walks with my dog, Chewie.

**Q: Why did you choose to become a children's book author/illustrator?**

A: I chose this path because I felt I had some stories [within] me to tell. At first I was nervous, but then inspiration to follow my path came from me becoming a mom. I was always doubtful about becoming a parent because I was not sure if I would always do things correctly, but after becoming a mom and being inspired by my little one, I realized we are stronger than we think we are, even to pursue our dreams. My upcoming book series, "Peek & Boo" (Sourcebooks), were inspired by a character I drew for my daughter's bedroom and I can't believe it is now soon to become something bigger.

**Q: Were you shy when you initially put yourself and your work out for everyone to see?**

A: No, I was not very shy. And only because I know the more I put out there, the more people will see and get to know me and my work. I try not to be too shy and not be afraid of rejection. Instead, I lean into it. I'm passionate and want to continue creating children's books. In that case I can't be shy. Also, I love people and love to chat!

**Q: What are your self-authored books typically about and what are your messages?**

A: I try to write fun picture books that can entertain little ones during storytime. My main objective is to tell a story that will make little ones laugh and love the act of reading. I find reading together with my little ones as one of my favorite activities to do. We love to cuddle up and read our favorite books.

**Q: Have you gotten a lot of support on your journey as a creator?**

A: Yes. My family are my biggest supporters. We call and speak to each other over the phone everyday. My partner gives me his unwavering support and I have received so much support from my friends and groups in America. My agent is also a great supporter of mine. I also have a just my editor/manager. He offers me support and guidance.

**Q: Since becoming a writer/illustrator, what are some of your biggest accomplishments?**

A: Working with really great writers and established publishing houses like Penguin Random House was my first big accomplishment, then Harper Collins, Henry Holt, PageStreet, Sourcebooks and all the other publishing houses I've had the amazing opportunity to work with.

**Q: Apart from you, are there any other talents in your family?**

A: Yes. My brother is an amazing Cook, Musician and Graphic Designer. My partner, on the other hand, is a way better cook than I am. I think my family is very driven and strong in their beliefs and dreams. My partner has taught me so much over the years.

**Q: What do you hope to gain from your work and what do you hope to be doing in the future?**

A: I hope to network, travel, and meet more people... When our children are older, I would love to visit the Children's Book Fair in Bologna, Italy and the SCBWI New York Conference. For the future, I see myself continuing to write and illustrate my own books and create a series of my own.

**Q: What else do you want the world to know about Estrela?**

A: I love to be approached by people. I enjoy talking to people in the writing and publishing industry, as well as helping students and authors who want to collaborate.

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*Book Spread from Merry Christmas Dear Mars written by Penny Parker Klostermann and Illustrated by Estrela Lourenço*

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