

Resume

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1949 - Michael Oliver Stanley Boothman was born in Port of Spain on 17th November 1949. He went to Tranquillity School from an early age and continued through to his teenage years. Michael showed an aptitude for music and formed his first Band while still at Tranquillity. He learnt to sing in the school choir under the tuition of the late Mrs Piers. Initially, he studied piano under the late Mrs Roberts and Cello under the late Mr Miller, but his passion lay with a very different instrument – The Guitar.

The renowned musician Fitzroy Coleman recognised Michael's potential and persuaded Michael's father to support his son's musical ambitions. Many years later, both Michael and Fitzroy performed together at the Silver and Gold Concert in Queen's Hall to mark their 25th and 50th anniversaries in music as celebrated Trinidad and Tobagonian musicians.

Musician Joe Lewis who recognised Michael's unique talent convinced Michael's father to buy him his first electric guitar and later became Michael's mentor.



The Rockafellas performing at a Gala in the Trinidad Hilton

1963 - At the tender age of 14, whilst still at school, Michael formed the Band known as the Rockafellas. The Band performed at Galas, Fetes, Concerts and Parties.

1964 - Music Teacher Schofield Pilgrim invited Michael to join the QRC Jazz Ensemble. Whilst there, he also received private guitar lessons from Sonny Denner and was introduced to Shango Baptist rhythms through field trips with the Ensemble, which set the course of his future direction of creative travel.

1970 - Michael formed the Family Tree Band with; Wayne (Barney) Bonapath, Raul Mitchel and David Boothman. The Band was small, but other musicians would join for concerts and events when required. This Band was innovative and had a particular sound as Michael played a synthesiser guitar.

Michael's first single, "TABU", is recorded and released with the Family Tree. He worked with his brother David Boothman, Andrew Bedo, Earl Edwards and Michael 'Meggie' Clark and others. "TABU" features Andre Tanker on the flute.

During this decade, Michael commuted between Trinidad and the USA where he worked as a session musician and played in some of the country's most prestigious venues.

- 1972** - To celebrate Trinidad and Tobago's 10th year of Independence, a festival was held on the Queen's Park Savannah, which included a Band's competition. Michael Boothman's Band Family Tree entered and won the contest. Shortly after this event, "Len Boogsie" Sharp joined Michael's band. To support Boogsie's ambitions and advancement, Michael's Band played fundraising concerts to help finance the establishment of the Phase 2 Steel Orchestra, touring places like Cat Whiskers in Barbados and other local venues.

The Right Hon. Eric Eustace Williams commissioned Michael's band Family Tree to perform on the occasion of his daughter, Erica Williams' 21st birthday. Michael is still in possession of the letter of recommendation Erica Williams wrote following that performance. In the letter, she describes Michael's Band as; "a group of highly talented musicians and performers, dedicated to promoting Trinidad and Tobago's culture".

Ebony Magazine photographer flew to Trinidad and Tobago to photograph Michael Boothman for their centre spread.

- 1974** - Michael became the resident musician and consultant at the famous KH Studio in Port of Spain. He played, arranged and supported up-and-coming Trinidad and Tobagonian artists such as the late great Maestro, working on his 'Fiery' and 'Bionic Man' productions.
- 1975** - A second single is released by Michael Boothman – "Diego Shuffle". The release of this single coincided with the dance of the same name, introduced by Boothman. The song became one of the longest standing local chart hits, remaining at number 1 for many weeks. It attracted the attention of music industry icon Clarence Avant who flew to Trinidad to sign Michael to his new label Tabu Records.
- 1976** - Michael Boothman's "Say it with Music" was pressed and re-released in the USA.
- 1977** - "Heaven" - One of the first albums by a Trinidadian artist signed to an international record label, Tabu Records, is released and distributed worldwide through RCA Records.
- 1978** - Michael produced Lord Nelson's pivotal album "Hot, Sweet and Jumpy", considered by many to be the foundation and forerunner of Soca music.

Michael played on recordings for Mavis John and Dave Elcock on their 'Come By Here' and 'you are what love is' productions. He also worked with; Andre Tanker, Arrow, Ann Marie Inniss, Jonny Braff, and on all of Clive Bradley's records.

- 1979** - The two Michaels meet! The Jacksons visit Trinidad and Tobago to Perform. The tour promotor (Claude Martin) arranged for the Jackson's to share the Boothman's rehearsal space. As a result, Michael Boothman met and persuaded Michael Jackson to try a local song. This led to the iconic moment that is now part of Trinidad and Tobagonian folk law – When the Jacksons performed "Sugar Bum Bum" and Lord Kitchener walked on stage to help the Jacksons finish the song.
- 1980** - Michael Boothman released the US Billboard hit single "Touch", which introduced local Trinidadian singer Charmaine Forde who featured on both songs "What You Won't Do For Love" and "Waiting For Your Love" (lyrics penned by Carl Jacobs).

This single was hugely successful as one of the first non-Calyпсо hits produced out of Trinidad and Tobago. Original pressings have become highly sort after collectors' items among vinyl collecting enthusiasts across the globe.

During this period, Michael Boothman, or 'Mike Boothman Sound' as he was known during this period, continued to perform at venues and music festivals across Trinidad and Tobago, the wider Caribbean and the USA. He performed regularly at venues such as; Rolls Royce, the Underground, on Frederick St. and Palava Place. As well as the Blue Haven, Mount Erwin Hotel and Cowboy Jacks Club in Tobago. Michael also performed for the Martiniquais Government and he was commissioned to play for Philippe, Baron de Rothschild at a global convention in the French Alps.

- 1987** - Michael performed with the late great guitarist Fitzroy Coleman at Queen's Hall in Port of Spain in a production called 'Strings of Silver and Gold' to celebrate 25 years in the music industry.

Michael appeared with the Don Cherry Quartet, an American jazz quartet at the Holiday Inn, Trinidad. This was an event organised by the US Information Agency.

During this time, Michael supported other musicians and performers such as Blue Boy, latterly Super Blue at the Culture House Tent as musical director.

- 1988** - Toured 35 European Cities with entertainer Taj Mahal, on this occasion playing bass guitar, representing Trinidad and Tobagonian musicianship to audiences across Europe. Whilst in Norway Taj Mahal dubbed him Mr. Sunshine because of the way he brought a Caribbean spirit to the stage. Through Michael's influence, Taj Mahal, went on to record one of his biggest hits, a cover of the Mighty Shadows, 'Every Body Is Somebody' which became each concert's closing song.

On this tour, Michael performed at some of the most prestigious venues and festivals in Europe including Glastonbury, Montreux and the North Sea Jazz Festivals.

- 1989** - Michael led his Jazz band Kysofusion at Caribe Musicale 2 produced by The Florida Inter-American Scholarship Foundation in Tallahassee, Florida.

- 1990** - Michael was invited to participate as a Judge at the National Steel Band Panorama Competition.

- 1994** - At the Barbados Jazz Festival, Michael appeared with Kysofusion at Jazzin It Up at Heywoods, St Peter; Jazz On The Strip at Dover Convention Centre and Jazz International at Wildey Stadium, Barbados.

- 1995** - Michael took his Band Kysofusion to numerous Caribbean venues playing for Governments and Corporations as guest artistes.

- 2000** - Michael developed the concept of the World Beats Festival which took place at the turn of the century and went on to develop and produce the Caribbean Latin Jazz Festival in Trinidad which featured artists from Jamaica, the Netherlands, Martinique, Curacao and Venezuela alongside bands from Trinidad and Tobago.

- 2001** - Caribbean Jazz Colours Caribbean Colours CD, a recording of the live performances from the Barbados Jazz Festival is released in Barbados. The album features Michael Boothman's Spain and Bluesette compositions.

- 2003** - Relaunch of album, "Heaven" and continued to perform as the opening act to many internationally renowned artists.

- 2005** - As part of the Master of Arts in Carnival Studies Degree at UTT, alumni produce the widely circulated and acknowledged dissertation 'KAISOMETRICS' exploring the Influence of the Electric Guitar on Calypso and Michael Boothman's contribution to music in Trinidad and Tobago is highlighted throughout this dissertation.

2009 - Michael Boothman arranged 'First in de Line' for Starlift Steel Band. His unique arrangement took them through to the Finals.

2010 - Michael took up a regular spot at the Jazz & Fusion Tuesdays at La Casa de Ibiza, Port-of-Spain.

2011 - Michael was contracted as a Musical Director, and engaged by the top Hotels, to ensure that guests experienced the very best musicality Trinidad and Tobago has to offer.

Jazz'N Barbados: Michael performs at the Jazz'N De Trees event in Barbados. After the event Michael was ferried to perform at the mecca of live music in Barbados, St. Lawrence Gap for the Jazz'N De Gap event.

2016 - In the UK based Vinyl Factory's 100 greatest disco 12"s of all time, as voted for by international DJ's, 'Waiting For Your Love' and Michael's rendition of 'What You Won't Do For Love' comes in at number 23 in the charts, ahead of musical giants such as George Benson's 'Give Me The Night', Marvin Gaye's 'A Funky Space Reincarnation', Luther Vandross's 'You're The Sweetest One' and Earth, Wind & Fire's 'Let's Groove'. Source <https://thevinylfactory.com/features/the-100-greatest-disco-12s-of-all-time/>

2019 - Alumni at the University of California, Berkeley, produce the dissertation on 'Sounding the Transnational: Caribbean Jazz in Trinidad and Tobago' which sites Michael Boothman's influence on Caribbean Jazz.

Music educators also use Michael Boothman's compositions as examples of good song structure. ZZOUNDS in the USA (Elements of a Song) has published an online dissection of Michael's composition of "Touch", featuring Charmaine Forde', to educate and inform aspiring song writers.

2021- Michael released an album in commemoration of Independence Day celebrating also his independence as a musical artiste.

The "Songbook" album is a compilation of musical genres with jazz, Latin vibes, and most importantly, the national instrument, the steelpan. The album brings together a host of established Trinbagonian musicians such as the late Orville Roach, Clarence "BUNNY" Charles, Conrad Roach, Simon Mendoza, Danial Bishop, alongside modern contemporary artists and producers such as (NISA) Genissa St. Hill Aire, Omari 'SOCO' Wright, Isa "ISSA" Abdullah, Joshua "SUPAYOUTH" Salcedo, and Stefan Boothman.

Songbook is featured in the Caribbean Airlines inflight play list.

2022 - Michael is awarded the prestigious Humming Bird Gold for Arts & Culture. The medal is awarded for loyal and devoted service beneficial to the state in any field, or acts of conspicuous gallantry or other outstanding humane action.

To mark this auspicious occasion, Michael released his iconic "Heaven" album, remastered for streaming platforms and making this work readily available to global audiences for the first time. The album is released on Friday 18th March 2022, exactly 45 years to the day of the original release on Clarence Avant's TABU records in 1977.

Michael remains devoted to the advancement of the arts in Trinidad and Tobago. He continues to create his own music whilst mentoring the next generation of Trinbagonian artists to break musical moulds and explore their creative potential at his Poui Tree Studio in Port of Spain; the birthplace of TriniBad music.

