



Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

Ministry of Trade and Industry

Opening Ceremony of the RVRB Experience

ADDRESS

SENATOR THE HONOURABLE PAULA GOPEE-SCOON
MINISTER OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY

SEPTEMBER 29TH, 2021

SALUTATIONS:

- Chairman, CreativeTT – Mr. Calvin Bijou
- Chairman, MusicTT – Mr. John Arnold
- General Manager, MusicTT – Ms. Melissa Jimenez
- Specially Invited Guests
- Members of the local, regional and international Music Community
- Members of the Media
- Ladies and Gentlemen

Good morning.

It is my distinct pleasure to address you today at the Opening Ceremony of the RVRB (pronounced reverb) Experience Music Conference 2021, hosted by the Trinidad and Tobago Music Company Limited (MusicTT). It is no secret that you, members of the music fraternity and by extension the Creative industries, have been terribly affected by the global pandemic. Despite the disruptions to your livelihoods whether it be the inability to perform and have concerts, cancelled shows, a decline in revenues or general uncertainties within the sector you have certainly weathered through the storm. Your presence here today attests to your resilience and ability to innovate and adapt. These very characteristics are why I believe that the theme of today's conference is so aptly reflective of what is to come; the future is surely bright.

This event is born from the success of previous RVRB webinars and MusicTT's desire to ensure that there are continuous progressive and informative offerings for members of the music industry. Following the structure of past RVRB Webinars and panel discussions which focused on educating a spectrum of music stakeholders about relevant niche music business topics, RVRB Experience will go a step further to facilitate networking and showcase talents.

I am advised and quite pleased that this RVRB Experience Music Conference is carded to be an annual event, as MusicTT aims to expand the conference into a brand that will eventually become recognized globally, rivalling music conferences and festivals like The Music Imbizo, South Africa; MIDEM, France and SXSW, USA to name a few.

As we continue to make Trinidad and Tobago a hub for the music industry in the region, it is envisaged that RVRB Experience will be the event that music professionals attend to learn about Caribbean music, discover Caribbean artistes and musicians and network with Caribbean music professionals.

The Government is cognizant that the Creative and Cultural Industries are an engine of growth and development and an important driver of innovation and productivity particularly in developed countries. In this regard, the sector is being targeted through the Roadmap to Recovery Report as a pillar for

economic diversification and export growth to boost competitiveness, productivity and employment in Trinidad and Tobago. The industry is multifaceted, with a multitude of avenues and opportunities which can be used to educate, build capacity, promote social integration, values and culture and stimulate economic activity in communities and the wider local economy.

Ladies and gentlemen, let me assure you that the Government is aware of the changing landscape in the music industry, with words such as metadata and digital earnings becoming the new buzz words. In order to leverage the creativity of the sector, the Government has prioritized several initiatives to support stakeholders which include:

- Promoting/providing support for intellectual property protection, which is an integral part of the creative industries development; and
- Promoting the development, use and eventually the export of locally created content.

The organization of this 3-day conference highlights appropriate themes which are very conscious of the current music industry. Of particular note is day 3's theme of festival culture. There exists great opportunity in this particular area outside of Carnival. As it stands there are currently 10 or so national, community and religious festivals inclusive of Divali, Phagwa, Paramin Parang and La Divina Pastora to name a few. Each of these have music, food, costuming, intellectual and creative offerings that are unique to Trinidad and Tobago. The opportunities to tap into these festivals to promote culture, music and Trinidad and Tobago are endless. In the same way that persons have created interest in Carnival the opportunity exists, perhaps, not on the same scale but with the correct business plan the possibilities are endless and beneficial to all stake holders.

As we stand here today, the global music industry is exploring and embracing new ways to monetize music consumption and enhance the capabilities of technological platforms. We must continue to keep abreast of these opportunities and ensure that we remain up-to-date to be able to navigate and succeed in the changing music industry.

In closing, I wish to congratulate MusicTT on the introduction of the RVRB Experience and commend them on all the initiatives they continue to execute to ensure that they drive the music industry and equip music professionals with the necessary tools required to be globally competitive.

Let me also convey my appreciation to all partner entities from the local and international private sector that have collaborated with MusicTT for this event: Kin Sound Studios, Koru Green, Digipreneur FM, Motif Music Services, Caribbean Ideas Synapse, New Fire Festival and Sound Diplomacy. Your contributions have been invaluable.

To all present today, music conferences, like this one, can be instrumental in enhancing your craft, bouncing off ideas, learning and increasing your export potential. Therefore, I urge you to take this opportunity to immerse yourself in networking with these established professionals and connecting with other international artistes.

Ladies and gentlemen, I thank you.