



# Facilities

in Trinidad & Tobago



# Introduction

Facilities in Trinidad and Tobago were the subject of this research. Survey questionnaires were used to gather information on facilities in various categories. Representatives of the organisations were interviewed.

Facility categories included:

- Amphitheatres
- Archives
- Art Galleries
- Community Arts Organisations
- Heritage or Historic Sites
- Libraries
- Museums
- Parks and
- Theatres

## **The Sample**

The survey sample included facilities in North, South, East and West Trinidad, and Tobago.

Facilities were chosen to reflect facilities at different status levels: high, mid and low-profile, as well as in urban, rural and semi-urban environments.

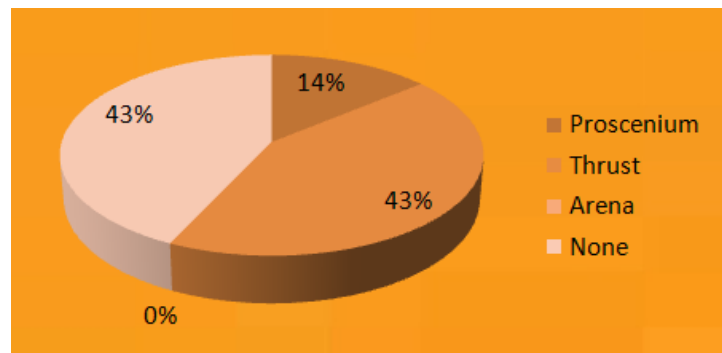
# Amphitheatres

Amphitheatres surveyed included:

- **NALIS**, Port-of-Spain
- **St James**, Western Main Road
- **Harris Promenade**, San Fernando
- **St. Stephens College**, Princes Town
- **Maloney Shopping Mall**, Maloney
- **Naparima Bowl**, San Fernando
- **Exodus**, Eastern Main Road, St. Augustine

## 1. Stage type

None of the amphitheatres surveyed have arena stages, as all are semi-circular. More than 40% have no stage at all.

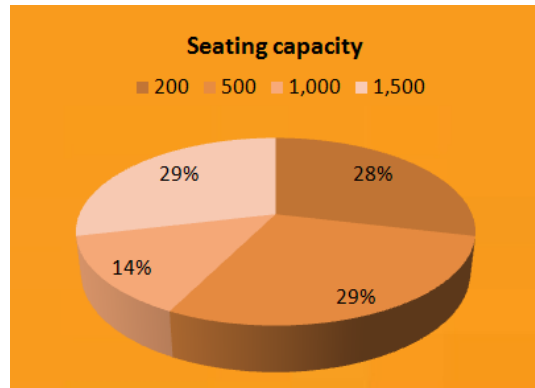


## 2. Seating type

Only one amphitheatre surveyed (Maloney Shopping Mall) has fixed seating. The others use rented chairs for events, or operate without chairs.

## 3. Seating capacity

Seating capacity ranges from 200 (Harris Promenade) to 1,500 (Exodus). Using chairs decreases the seating capacity.



#### 4. Stage dimensions

Stage dimensions range between 5 and 15 metres. Stages were semi-circular, with one exception: the St. James stage, which is a circle. The average stage width is 10 metres.

#### 5. Amenities

Most amphitheatres have on-site power, lighting, water and audience washrooms. Some have change facilities as well. But two of them, Harris Promenade and the St James amphitheatre, lack the basic amenities that would make them more easy to use. They have no washrooms or changing rooms, and Harris Promenade has no water.

Naparima Bowl, St. Stephens and Maloney are best-equipped.

AMPHITHEATRES	Rain-protected stage	On-site lighting	On-site power	On-site water	Audience washrooms	Change facilities	Fixed food stands	On-site parking	Vehicular access
Exodus	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓
Harris Promenade			✓						
NALIS			✓		✓	✓			
Naparima Bowl	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
St. James		✓	✓	✓					
St. Stephen's College		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Maloney		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	

#### 6. User groups

Most amphitheatres surveyed generally have fewer user groups than indoor theatres.

The average number of user groups is 16, with the highest two at 50 and 20, and the lowest at 1 and 2.

## 7. Total annual audience

- 42% of the amphitheatres surveyed have an average annual audience of 3,000.
- 42% average 9,000 in annual audience.
- St. Stephen's is used daily by the school population for assemblies, but it is not used by other groups.

## 8. Wheelchair access

Only one amphitheatre surveyed (Maloney) does not have wheelchair access.

## 9. Rental charges

Rental fees are very flexible, with several factors influencing rates charged.

Factors include:

- Technical requirements
- Nature of user

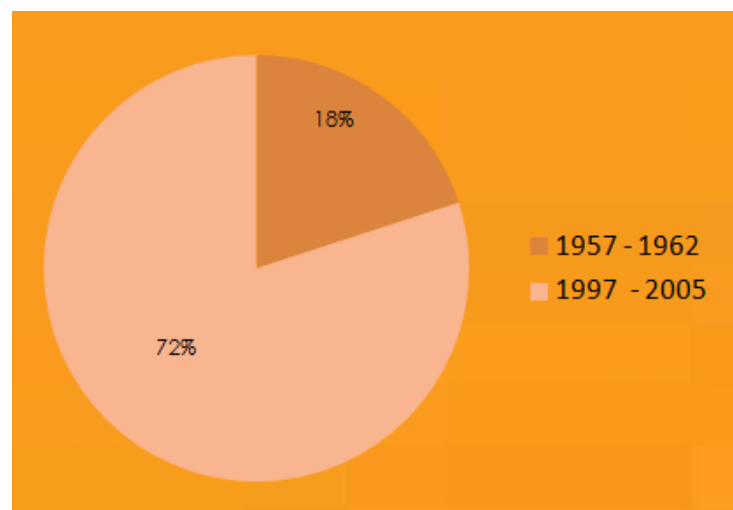
Some do not charge rent their facilities.

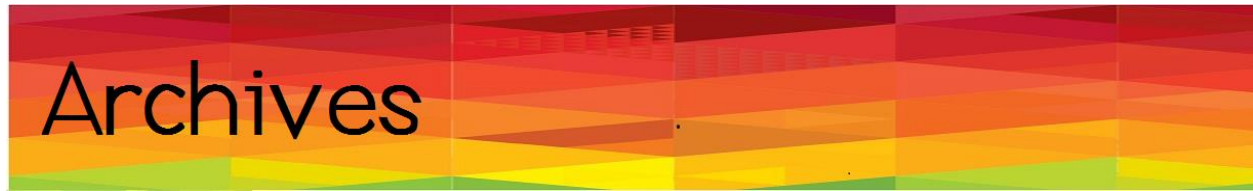
## 10. Purpose built

All the amphitheatres surveyed were purpose-built.

## 11. Year constructed

72% of amphitheatres were built between 1997 and 2005. Two (18%) were built in 1957 and 1962, in south Trinidad.





Archives surveyed included:

- National Archives
- Lloyd Best Institute
- Banyan
- National Trust
- Carnival Institute
- Gayelle
- Citizens for Conservation
- National Sporting Archives
- Trinidad & Tobago Field Naturalists

## **1. Mandate**

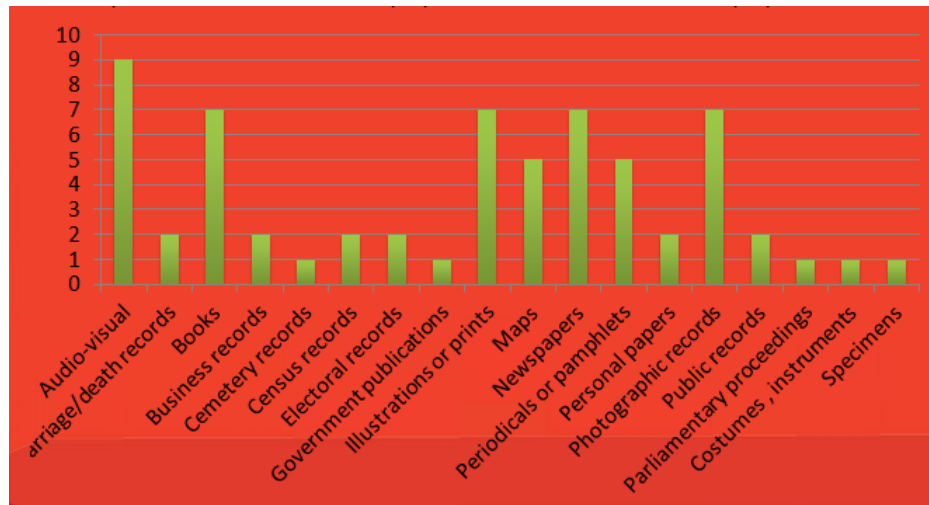
Archives operate with the intention of preserving aspects of the cultural heritage of T&T, although in most cases they do not have written mandates.

Chief goals include:

- Development
- Conservation
- Information preservation
- Protection of public record
- Protection of private legacy

## **2. Nature of holdings**

Holdings range over a wide spectrum of materials, including maps, photographs, specimens and audio-visual records.



## 2. Number of holdings

Holdings vary widely in terms of quantity. They range from under a hundred to thousands.

Notably, most archives surveyed did not have a record of how many holdings they have, and had to provide estimates.

## 3. Special holdings

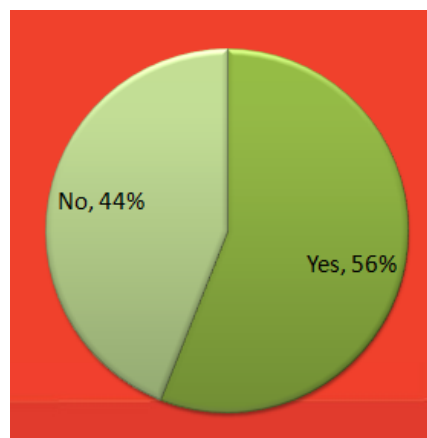
One-third of archives surveyed have special collections. The focus is generally on the main body of the archive.

## 4. Annual membership

Most archives surveyed do not have memberships, but serve as a resource for the general public — or for specific segments of the populace.

## 5. Special events

Among archives surveyed, a slim majority host events.



## 6. Wheelchair access

Half the archives surveyed have wheelchair access.

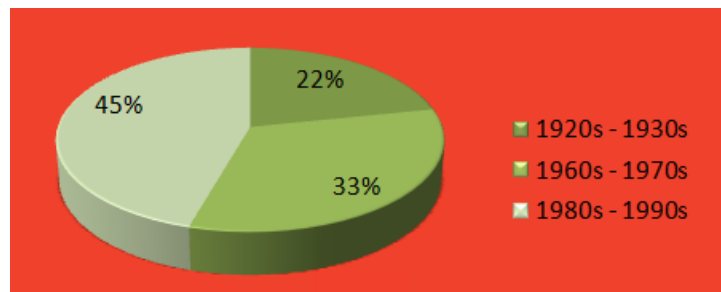
## 7. Purpose built

Most (78%) were not purpose-built as archives.

Some are housed in private residences.

Archivists said they wanted government help to house their holdings. Some had appealed for assistance in the past.

## 8. Age of facility



Surveyed buildings where archival materials are stored were built during the 1920s and '30s; the 1960s and '70s, and the 1980s and '90s.



Art galleries surveyed included:

- **Medulla Art Gallery**, Fitt St, Woodbrook
- **Y Gallery**, Taylor Street, Woodbrook
- **Soft Box Studios**, Alcazar St, St. Clair
- **Horizons Art Gallery**, Mucurapo Rd, St. James
- **Art Society of Trinidad & Tobago**, Federation Park



- **Suede Molte**, St. Joseph
- **UWI Visual Arts**, Gordon Street
- **Central Bank**, Port-of-Spain
- **Tobago Arts**, Scarborough

### 1. Mission/mandate

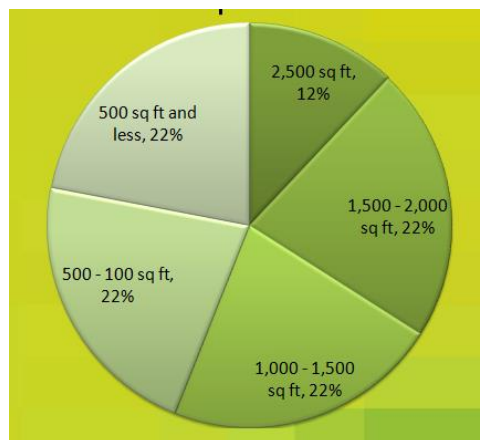
Art galleries see themselves as providing support for artists, artistic education for the public and development for the art industry.

### 2. Nature of space

Most visual art spaces surveyed are galleries. Alternative spaces include a cocoa house at a private home, and a studio/residence.

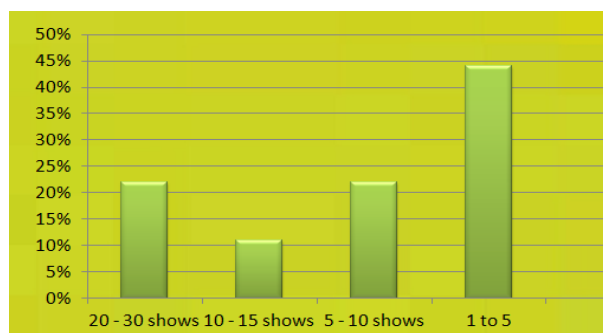
### 3. Size

Exhibition spaces tend to be small. All of those surveyed were 2,500 sq ft (762 sq m) and less.



### 4. Number of shows per year

77% of art galleries surveyed have fewer than 12 shows per year (one per month).



## **5. Permanent collections**

33% of galleries feature a permanent collection of works. These are usually works of a single artist.

## **6. Touring shows**

Only 22% of galleries surveyed feature touring exhibitions.

## **7. Special collections**

33% feature their own special collections.

## **8. Annual show**

66% stage an annual event.

## **7. Competition**

None of the galleries surveyed stages a competition.

## **8. Educational activities**

66% offer educational activities. These include:

- Art education classes
- Lectures
- Discussions
- Art instruction

## **9. Membership**

Only one gallery surveyed (Art Society) has a membership classification, though most members were said to be “not active” (i.e., not attending meetings).

The Art Society has 500 members (approx). The society is regarded as the official registry of artists in T&T.

## **10. Wheelchair access**

Only 22% of art galleries surveyed have wheelchair access.

## **11. Purpose built**

33% were purpose built as art galleries.

Most of the others were built as homes and converted.

## 12. Year constructed

Suede Molte .....	1910
Soft Box .....	1965
Art Society .....	1966
Y Gallery .....	1960s/70s (est.)
Horizons .....	1960s/70s (est.)
Central Bank.....	1986
UWI Visual Arts .....	2000
Medulla .....	2010
Tobago Art .....	2010



Community Arts Organisations surveyed included:

- **Alice Yard**, Roberts St, Woodbrook
- **Bohemia**, Murray St, Woodbrook
- **Exodus Pan Theatre**, St. Augustine
- **Garden Jewellz**, Point Fortin
- **Pamberi**, San Juan
- **Studio 66**, Barataria
- **Propaganda Space**, Belmont

## **1. Mission/mandate**

Most Community Arts Organisations do not have a formally stated mandate.

They seek to serve their own segment of the artistic community – their work is the practical manifestation of their mandate.

This is often flexible, adjusting to internal and external factors.

## **2. Uses**

Community arts organisations are used by members for a multiplicity of purposes. These include:

- Theatre performances 38%
- Dance performances 86%
- Music performances 100%
- Literary readings 43%
- Visual arts exhibits 72%
- Best Village competitions 14%
- Rehearsals 86%
- Classes 100%
- Artist studios 72%
- Meetings 100%
- Series, festivals or special events 100%
- Special annual event 43%

Other uses:

- Mas camp
- parties
- Weddings
- Funerals
- Product launches

- Open mic shows
- Plant shows
- Counseling
- Workshops
- Yoga
- Pre-publishing

## 2. Top uses

Music performances 86%

Visual arts exhibits 43%

Rehearsals 43%

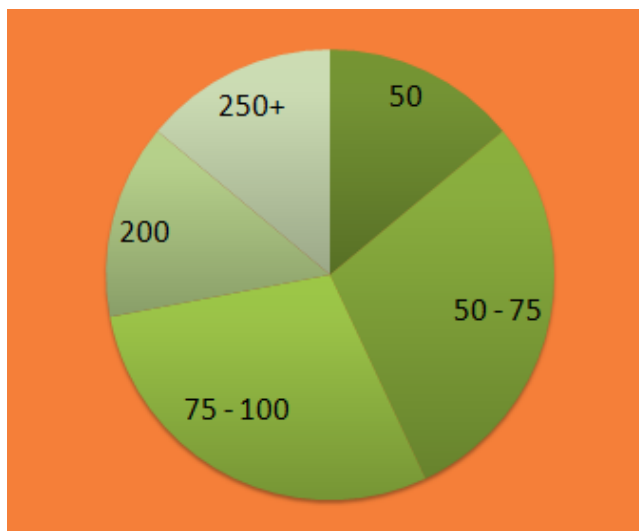
Meetings 43%

Series, festival or special events 43%

## 3. Number of times used per year

Usage varies from about once per week to about five days a week.

Most are used about twice per week on average.



#### 4. Wheelchair access

All the facilities surveyed reported wheelchair access, though in a few cases was only partial.

#### 5. Available for rent

All the facilities – or specific areas within them (e.g. bandroom) – are available for rent.

#### 6. Competitions

72% of community arts organisations surveyed stage competitions.

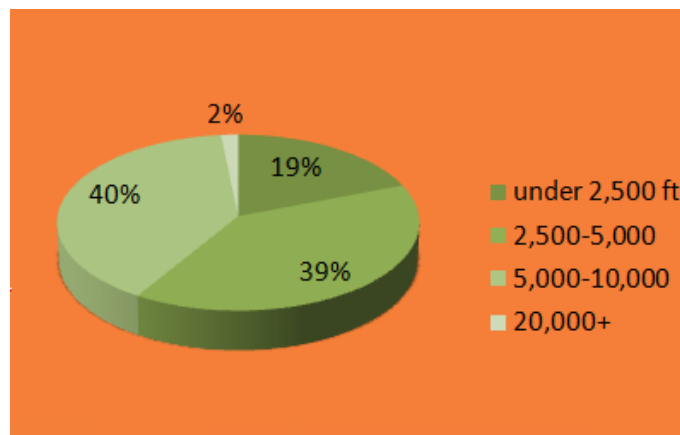
#### 7. Educational activities

72% Offer classes or educational activities.

#### 8. Size of facility

Dimensions varied, as well as features. Some are basically an empty, enclosed space or room.

Some have specialised rooms (e.g.art gallery, office, apartment) and more than one level.



#### 9. Purpose built

58% of community arts organisation facilities were purpose built.

#### 10. Year constructed

There is a ninety-nine-year span between the oldest and newest community arts organisation facilities surveyed.

- Bohemia 1913
- Alice Yard 1930

- Pamberi 1965
- Propaganda Space 1973
- Exodus 1986
- Studio 66 1995
- Garden Jewellz 2012



## 11. Heritage/Historic Sites

Heritage sites surveyed included:

- Temple in the Sea
- St Joseph RC Church
- Lopiote Estate
- Hanuman Murti
- Fort George
- Carib Centre
- Mystery Tombstone
- Knolly's Tunnel
- Fort King George

## **1. Mission/mandate**

Heritage sites exist with a view to preserving a specific aspect of the cultural legacy of Trinidad and Tobago.

## **2. Government listing**

The Government is in the process of listing the properties surveyed in Trinidad, among 18 other sites “of interest”.

## **3. Listing authority**

The National Trust is in the process of listing the properties surveyed.

TDC does not have a listing of heritage sites.

The Tobago House of Assembly has listed the sites surveyed in Tobago.

## **4. Property type**

Survey included:

3 Places of worship

1 Industrial structure

1 Archeological site

2 Forts

1 Estate

1 Indigenous people’s centre

## **5. Year constructed**

- |                       |       |
|-----------------------|-------|
| • Fort King George    | 1780s |
| • Mystery Tombstone   | 1783  |
| • Fort George         | 1804  |
| • Lopiot Estate       | 1805  |
| • St Joseph RC Church | 1817  |
| • Knolly’s Tunnel     | 1898  |
| • Carib Centre        | 1976  |



- Temple in the Sea 1995
- Hanuman Murti 2003

## 6. Public access

All sites surveyed are accessible by the public.

## 7. Public tour

At most sites (67%), visitors take a self-guided tour.



## 8. Plaque or marker

There is a plaque at most sites surveyed (although in one case, Knolly's Tunnel, it has been removed/stolen or fallen off. There is a secondary sign at this site.)

At the Carib Centre there is no plaque, but a sign.

## 9. Annual visitors

Figures for visitation of the sites were generally unavailable.

- No attendant
- No system for recording visits

## 10. Events

56% stage events. 44% do not.

### **11. Educational activities**

33% conduct classes or educational activities. 66% do not.

### **12. Merchandise**

Only 11% of heritage sites sell merchandise. (Carib Centre)

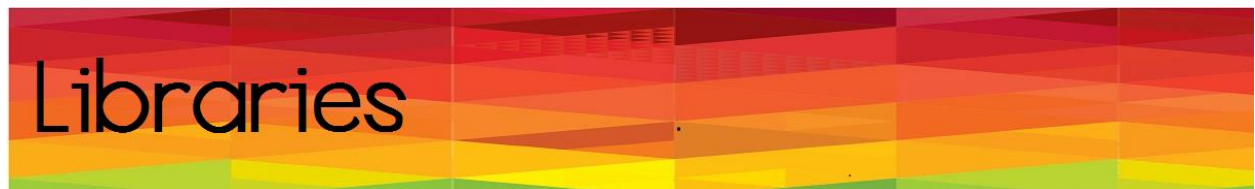
### **13. Membership**

And 11% offer membership.

### **14. Wheelchair access**

77% of heritage sites are wheelchair accessible.

This is partly because they are mainly outdoors.



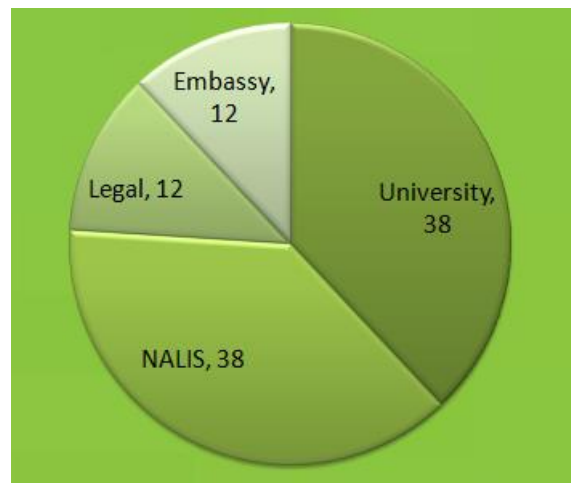
Libraries surveyed included:

- Carnegie Free Library
- Supreme Court Library
- Heritage Library
- NALIS, Port-of-Spain
- US Embassy Information Centre
- Forde Library, USC
- UWI Medical Library
- Alma Jordan Library, UWI

## 1. Mission/mandate

The libraries surveyed aim to serve their client populations with access to (sometimes specialised) information.

## 2. Type of library



## 3. Total holdings

Total holdings were as follows:

- 2,000
- 7,500
- 21,000
- 40,000
- 50,000
- 242,479
- 700,000

## 4. Public lending

Universities and libraries serving institutions do not allow public lending. Public (NALIS) libraries lend to the public.

## 5. Public reference

Members of the public can write to request access to university libraries, on a “one-off” basis. The public is not allowed to access the Supreme Court Library. Public libraries allow public reference.

## **6. Special collections**

75% of libraries surveyed have special collections. These are of cultural, religious or other significance.

## **7. Borrowers**

University libraries serve many thousands of borrowers. Their data tends to be structured to show how many books are borrowed, as opposed to how many people (e.g. UWI had 240, 000 lendings).

NALIS could not provide data on the number of borrowers.

The US Embassy library does no lending at all.

## **8. Events**

88% of libraries surveyed stage events.

## **9. Educational activities**

75% offer classes or educational activities. These include instruction in use of the library itself.

## **10. Wheelchair access**

25% of libraries do not have wheelchair access.

## **11. Custom built**

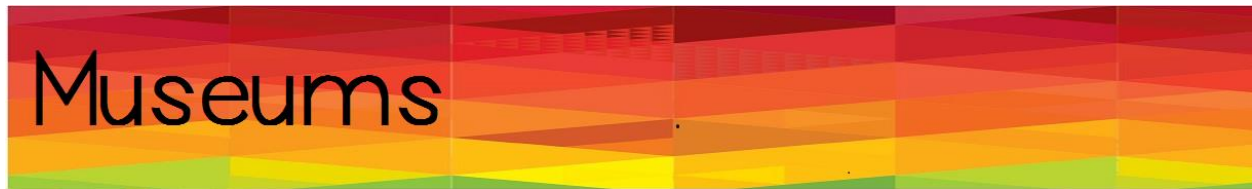
88% of libraries surveyed were built for the purpose.

## **12. Year constructed**

Libraries surveyed were built in:

- Carnegie 1919
- NALIS 2003
- Heritage Library 2003
- Forde University 1972
- Supreme Court 1930
- Alma Jordan, UWI 1975

For two libraries (US Embassy and UWI Medical Library), no date was available.



Museums surveyed included:

- Military Museum
- Indian Caribbean Museum
- Money Museum
- Angostura Museum
- Police Museum
- National Museum
- Tobago Museum
- Pitch Lake Museum

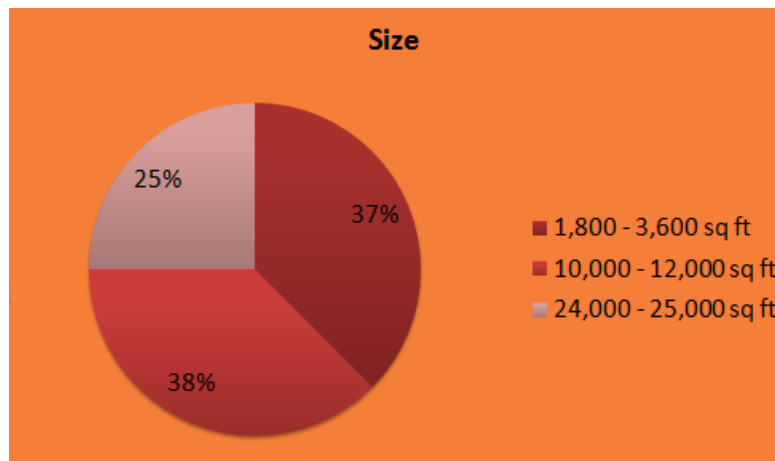
### 1. Mission/mandate

Museums are focused around two main goals:

- preservation and
- education.

### 2. Size of exhibition space

Size of exhibition space ranged from 18,00 sq ft (548.64 m) to 25,000 sq ft (7620 m).



### **3. Conditions**

Most museums had some form of condition control.

Temperature controls (air-conditioning only) 63%

Humidity controls 12%

Lighting controls 63%

Only one museum had none at all.

### **4. Exhibits per year**

Most museums surveyed feature the same exhibition every day. They are open:

- 4 days a week 25%
- 5 days a week 63%
- 6 days a week 12%

### **5. Collections**

Collections across the museums surveyed are diverse, including:

- photographs,
- machinery,
- commercial products,
- money, paintings,
- cooking utensils,
- tools,
- war medals,
- weapons,
- clothing,
- models,
- vehicles,
- aircraft,

- documents and
- human remains.

## **6. Artifacts**

Most museums interviewed could not give figures for the number of artifacts in their holdings.

They gave averages, ranging from 300-600 to “over a thousand” and 10,000.

## **7. Special collections**

Most museums (63%), while focusing on specific themes, maintained a general overview of their topic areas without specialisation.

Only three had special collections:

- Butterfly collection (Angostura)
- works of Cazabon (National Museum)
- Criminal register from 1880s (Police Museum).

## **8. Membership**

13% of museums surveyed have special membership for individuals or groups.

## **9. Visits per year**

- 10,000 - 62,400 25%
- 2,000 - 6,891 38%
- 56,700 - 23,400 25%

## **10. Events**

Half of museums surveyed stage events, while the other half do not.

## **11. Wheelchair access**

63% have wheelchair access

## **12. Special tours**

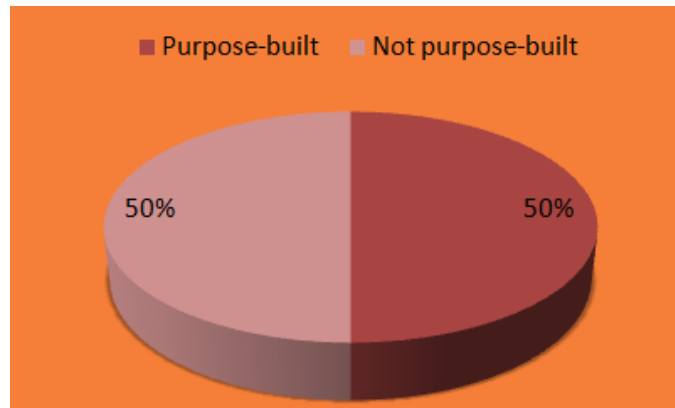
**25%** offer special tours

### 13. Educational activities

75% offer classes.

### 14. Purpose built

50% were built as museums



### 15. Age of buildings

Tobago Museum	1777
Police Museum	1876
National Museum	1923
Indian Museum	1952
Money Museum	1986
Military Museum	1991
Pitch Lake Museum	2009

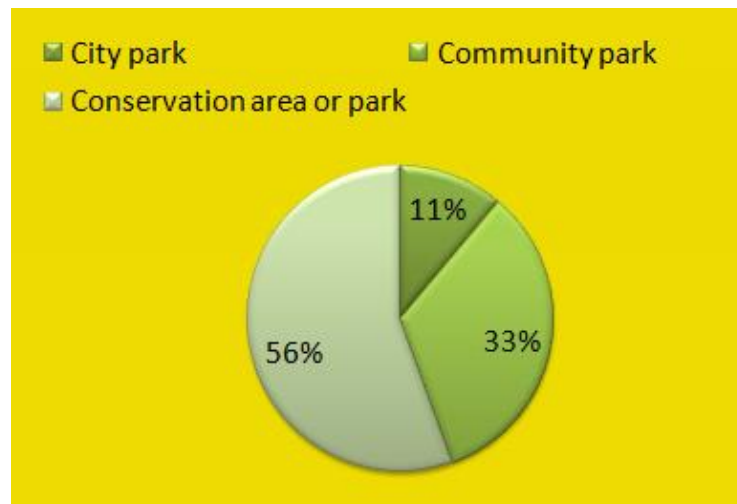


# Parks

Parks surveyed included:

- Woodford Square
- Asa Wright
- San Fernando Hill
- Fun Splash Park
- Harry's Water Park
- Nickey Trotman Park
- First Capitol Park
- La Vega
- Auzonville Park

## 1. Types of parks



## 2. Natural amenities

Natural amenities at parks surveyed occur thus:

	Asa Wright	La Vega	San Fernando Hill	Fun Splash Park	Harry's Water Park	Woodford Square	Auzonville Park	Sandy Hill	Nickey Trotman Park	First Capital Park
Pond or lake		✓		✓						
River or stream	✓				✓					
Swamp										
Woodland	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓		
Open field			✓				✓			
Scenic outlook	✓		✓		✓	✓			✓	
Other						Large trees				Large trees

## 3. Facilities

Facilities are diverse and occur as such:

	Asa Wright	La Vega	San Fernando Hill	Fun Splash Park	Harry's Water Park	Woodford Square	Auzonville Park	Sandy Hill	Nickey Trotman Park	First Capital Park
Amphitheatre										
Cooking pits			✓		✓			✓		
Beach										
Boat launches										
Benches	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Shelter	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					
Children's play area		✓	✓	✓					✓	✓
Flower gardens	✓	✓	✓						✓	
Food stands	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					
Running paths										
Swimming areas	✓				✓					
Washrooms	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	
Other	Cabins, nature trails	plant nurseries, shrine	Conference rooms	emergency room, change rooms, pools, water slides	pools, water slides	Bandstand, picnic tables, fountain, paved footpaths	paved footpaths		pavilion, sport courts, exercise equipment	Picnic tables, paved footpaths

#### 4. Other facilities

- Cabins
- Nature trails
- Conference rooms
- Emergency room
- Change rooms
- Water slides
- Bandstand/pavillion
- fountain  
sport courts
- Exercise equipment

#### 5. Activities

Park activities include

	<u>Asa Wright</u>	<u>La Vega</u>	<u>San Fernando Hill</u>	<u>Fun Splash Park</u>	<u>Harry's Water Park</u>	<u>Woodford Square</u>	<u>Auzonville Park</u>	<u>Sandy Hill</u>	<u>Nickey Trotman Park</u>	<u>First Capital Park</u>
Camping		✓		✓						
Fishing	✓				✓					
Hiking										
Nature programme	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓		
Swimming			✓				✓			
Wildlife viewing	✓		✓		✓	✓			✓	
Water sports						Large trees				Large trees

Other activities at parks surveyed include:

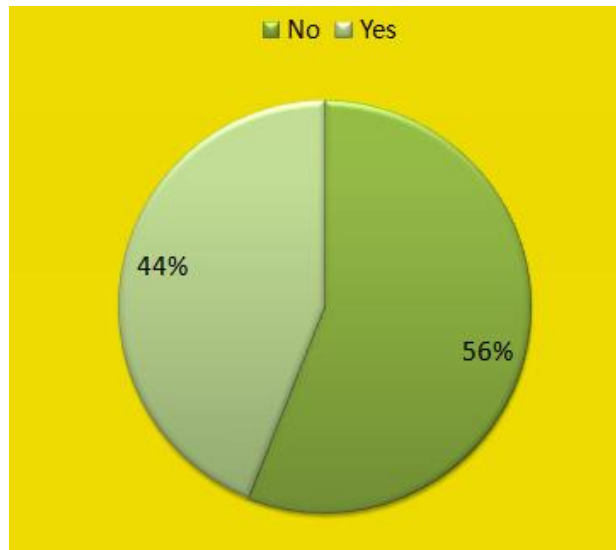
- Pedal boating
- Kayaking
- Weddings

- Events
- Workshops
- Tours
- Film screenings
- Seminars
- Political meetings
- Concerts
- Horse rides
- Tractor rides
- Golf
- Sport: cricket, football, basketball

## **6. Size of park**

- Woodford Square - 3 acres
- Asa Wright - 1500 acres
- San Fernando Hill - 200 sq m
- Fun Splash Park
- Harry's Water Park 30 acres
- Nickey Trotman Park 4 acres
- First Capitol Park 2 acres
- La Vega 250 acres
- Auzonville Park 1 acre

## 7. Entrance fees



## 8. Parking

**55%** have on-site parking.

All private parks have parking.

## 9. Operating times

**44%** are open 24 hours.

The others close by 6:30pm

(except for overnight guests in the case of camping or cabin-renting.)

## 10. Year established

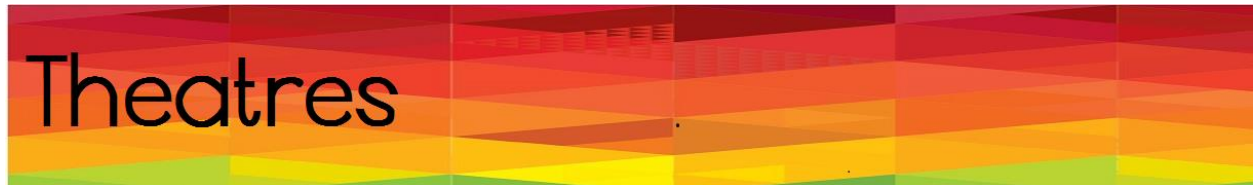
Dates of establishment are as below. For older community parks, no dates were available.

- Woodford Square - 1917
- Asa Wright - 1967
- San Fernando Hill - 1980
- Fun Splash Park - 2008
- Harry's Water Park - 2008
- Nickey Trotman Park - ?

- First Capitol Park - ?
- La Vega - 1986
- Auzonville Park - ?
- Sandy 2013

## **11. Wheelchair access**

89% are wheelchair accessible.



Theatres surveyed included:

- Central Bank Auditorium
- Learning Resource Centre
- National Academy for the Performing Arts
- Queen's Hall
- Naparima Bowl
- Southern Academy for the Performing Arts
- Scarborough Community Centre
- Trinidad Theatre Workshop
- Little Carib Theatre

## **1. Type of theatre**

89% of theatres surveyed are purpose built facilities.

One is a community centre which functions as a theatre.

## 2. Type of stage

89% of theatres surveyed have proscenium stages. One has a thrust stage.

## 3. Stage dimensions

THEATRE	Stage Area (m)	Height (m)
Central Bank Auditorium	300	1
Learning Resource Centre	200	.5
NAPA	500	11
Naparima Bowl	150	1.5
Queen's Hall	115	6.7
SAPA	480	1
Scarborough Community Centre	18	1.5
Trinidad Theatre Workshop	24	0
Little Carib Theatre	168	3

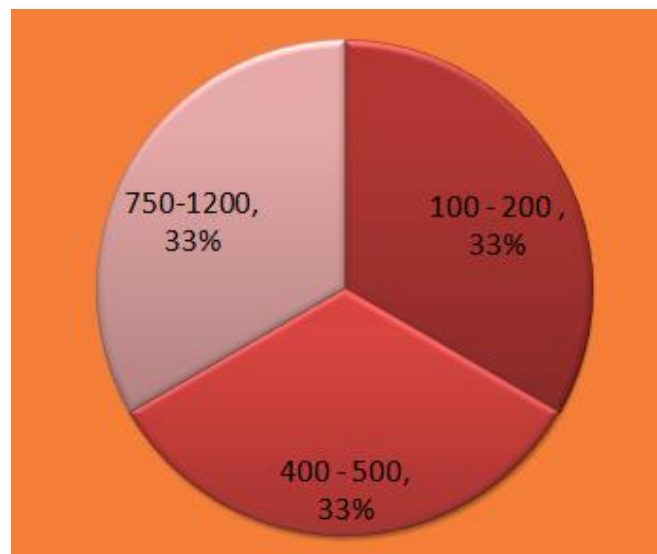
## 4. Fly gallery

44% have fly galleries.

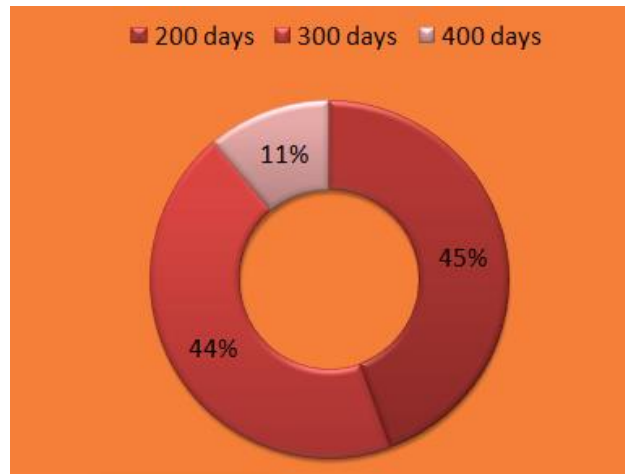
## 5. Orchestra pit

44% have orchestra pit.

## 6. Seating capacity



## 7. Days in use



## 8. User groups

10 – 15 groups	22%
40-50	33%
100-200	33%
500	11%

## 9. Performances per year

10 and under	11%
100	22%
40 – 70	33%
150	33%

## 10. Average house

The average house is at 75% across the board – except in Scarborough, where it is over **90%**.

## 11. Resident companies

33% have resident companies.

## 12. Wheelchair access

The same **22%** have no wheelchair access.



### **13. Year constructed**

Theatres were constructed in:

- TTW 1905 (est).
- Little Carib 1948
- Scarborough Centre 1955
- Queen's Hall 1959
- Central Bank 1986
- Naparima Bowl 1988
- LRC 1997
- NAPA 2008
- SAPA 2011

# Summary & Recommendations

## Amphitheatres

Amphitheatres in T&T are in most cases very aesthetically pleasing in terms of design and/or locality, offering the charm and atmosphere of the outdoors. They also offer flexible staging areas that could theoretically host a large variety of cultural/entertainment shows, such as music concerts (steel band, parang, calypso, jazz, etc) plays and pageants, as well as non-entertainment events like community rallies.

However, in comparison to indoor facilities, amphitheatres are severely underused.

Vulnerability to bad weather, lack of general infrastructure (including lighting water, toilet facilities, etc.) and the perception that crime is a threat to the public are some of the factors contributing to this.

The vulnerability to rainy weather is a real concern. This can be addressed by introducing lowered “dry season rates” during the first half of the year, when rain is less likely. These rates would encourage users and generate more use for these facilities, at least for half of the year.

A systematic programme of improving amenities at amphitheatres should be embarked upon. Providing affordable and effective security to user groups would help to address the crime issue.

These improvements should be advertised to the public and targeted to cultural groups and practitioners. The rental costs at amphitheatres should be kept low, thus attracting more use by greater numbers and more diverse groups of users. Publicity should be geared so potential users know they have options, instead of feeling that their only choice is to use prohibitively-priced conventional theatres – or else not produce shows at all.

## SWOT

**Strengths:** Open air atmosphere, low rental, flexibility to accommodate diverse kinds of shows

**Weaknesses:** Vulnerability to weather, lack of basic infrastructure, perception of crime, traditional reluctance of user groups

**Opportunities:** Dry season rates, with security included, and general upgrades to facilities would likely see increased usage of amphitheatres.

**Threats:** Crime, competition with traditional theatres

## **Archives**

Archives are of crucial value to the legacy of T&T's cultural heritage. Despite their importance, they have been largely left to develop independently, without guidelines or assistance. As a result, they operate in an ad-hoc manner and do not have proper records. Their holdings are inadequately documented and are not properly stored or catalogued.

Because they are often undertaken as a labour of love by one individual or small group of interested persons, without proper funding or storage facilities, these precious records tend to be at risk of being damaged and lost. Records are already being lost.

Bodies which manage and keep archives should be offered incentives to properly catalogue their collections, as a matter of urgency. It would be an advantage if trained assistants could be provided to guide them in this process, either for free or at a reduced and affordable charge – as these groups often operate on a shoestring budget.

## **SWOT**

**Strengths:** Motivated by passion, not money. Commitment is real.

**Weaknesses:** Lack of proper record-keeping, lack of know-how, funding

**Opportunities:** Need for archiving is urgent. Assistance and training can be provided

**Threats:** Heritage is being lost. Better storage methods needed.

## **Art Galleries**

Galleries are still centred mainly in Port-of-Spain. They are generally privately owned and show the works of established artists whose work is more saleable.

In communities outside of Port-of-Spain, there are almost no art galleries. At the same time, there is a large community of artists who are seeking exposure and who have not yet made the connection with the top galleries and their audiences.

By opening up visual art spaces outside of the capital, more artists can gain exposure and garner the benefits of public audiences. At the same time, communities outside of Port-of-Spain can be exposed to more visual art. For these reasons, more emphasis should be placed on showing visual arts in other parts of the country.

In addition, visual arts fields that are attracting younger participants, including animation and film, should be heavily invested in. If facilities for exposing these types of visual art are incorporated in art galleries, they will attract enthusiastic users, whether in or out of Port-of-Spain.

## **SWOT**

**Strengths:** Enthusiastic communities of artists and audiences in Port-of-Spain

**Weaknesses:** Main art community is PoS-based. Many lesser-known artists are on the “outside”

**Opportunities:** Foster visual arts showcases in outlying areas to support up-and-coming artists and foster appreciation outside of “town”. There is particular potential for touring exhibitions. Opportunities for international/regional art exchange. Diversify visual art emphasis to include film and animation.

**Threats:** The art-buying community, at the top level, is very small. Attitude that art is exclusive.

## **Community Arts Organisations**

Community Arts facilities are filling a crucial role in the development of the arts in T&T. These are some of the most used facilities, and they are highly multi-functional.

These spaces are flexible and adaptable, with activities that respond to the needs of participants as well as the outside environment. The leaders of these organisations are often well attuned to the changing needs of their organisations and the opportunities available to them. However, funding is a constant concern, one which often imposes artistic and logistical limitations.

These practitioners are key cultural resources, at the heart of strong community networks, and should be engaged and supported through grants, training and assistance. They should be assisted in applying for such grants and support, which they should qualify for based on track records of cultural work in their communities.

## **SWOT**

**Strengths:** Multi-functional, passionate, adaptive. Community networks. Repositories of knowledge.

**Weaknesses:** Under-funded, operating without external support systems

**Opportunities:** Massive potential for artists, networks and communities

**Threats:** Limited by funding in all aspects. Can go under without key resource people.

## **Heritage Sites**

Heritage sites are physical markers of the shared historical and cultural past, with resonance for the present and future.

But some heritage sites are like forgotten relics of the past. They are under-staffed, under-maintained and under-documented. Many sites surveyed do not keep records of how many people visit – information that could inform maintenance schedules and staffing.

Better systems should be in place to record visitation patterns. Personnel should also be available, both on-site or and at phone/internet resource centres, to provide visitors with information. Information display should be kept updated to reflect ongoing research, publications, etc.

A programme to revitalize heritage sites would see on-site, uniformed staff armed with relevant information, handouts and souvenirs for the visiting public, both local and from overseas.

## **SWOT**

**Strengths:** Established sites. Good wheelchair access

**Weaknesses:** Under-regulated, no records. Taken for granted.

**Opportunities:** Merchandise sales, including books and videos, hold great potential for branding T&T tourism sites. Heritage sites can be better marketed outside of the communities where they are located.

**Threats:** Crime. Competition with indoor recreation.

## **Libraries**

Libraries are thriving educational resources – especially within universities.

Especially for groups that require specialized knowledge, libraries remain important banks of information.

Although most libraries are operating with modern technology for tracking holdings and borrowing, most do not keep a full record of either the exact contents and numbers of their holdings, or their borrowing patterns.

Such information should be recorded as a matter of course.

Outside of specialized collections, libraries face heavy competition for sustained audiences, mainly from the internet as an information resource.

For this reason, social activities, including workshops, demonstrations, talks, films and lectures should be used to create communities around libraries to ensure they continue to thrive.

### **SWOT**

**Strengths:** Libraries offer a necessary service

**Weaknesses:** Record keeping needs to be improved upon

**Opportunities:** Opportunity for outreach through social activities: educational films, workshops, etc

**Threats:** Public libraries competing with other forms of information resources

### **Museums**

Museums, like heritage sites are important repositories of history and culture of T&T's past.

However, they must not become mired in the past, but their displays and information must be kept alive and relevant to the present. Some museums have not changed significantly in decades.

An emphasis must be placed on updating information and reflecting any new information in the fields of concern. Books and films on related should also be available for sale.

Museums are under-staffed, under-maintained and under-documented. Better systems should be in place to record visitation patterns, as well as holdings. These institutions should be offered incentives to catalogue and organise their collections. Assistance should be offered in terms of trained staff.

### **SWOT**

**Strengths:** Museums are recognised as providing an important and culturally significant cultural service

**Weaknesses:** Poor records of holdings. Poor records of visitation patterns.

**Opportunities:** Opportunity for educational outreach. Incentivise catalogs

**Threats:** Lack of proper conditions can cause loss.

## **Parks**

Private parks seem to be taking off and establishing a thriving niche for outdoor family entertainment in T&T.

While community parks are sometimes neglected or used seasonally, several private parks have opened in the last decade, offering a variety of recreational activities.

Privately funded venues tend to be equipped with amenities – including but not limited to the basics like toilets.

Public parks do not tend to be as well equipped. Neighbourhood parks often have no amenities whatsoever. Public toilets that are well maintained would be a worthy investment in infrastructure.

Public parks tend to be well-lit, and could be more frequently used for cultural events. However, perceptions of the threat of crime seem to have led to underuse. Providing security on a regular basis could help to create a culture where these facilities are more readily utilized by the public.

## **SWOT**

**Strengths:** Provide space for family recreation. Private parks gaining popularity.

**Weaknesses:** Public parks neglected, lack facilities. Underused,

**Opportunities:** Atmosphere of security can be fostered.

**Threats:** Perception of crime.

## **Theatres**

Major theatres are well-used. Most of them enjoy frequent bookings. (However, in the case of NAPA, the theatre is so large that although it is frequently used, patronage cannot fill the theatre.)

Theatres are used not just for dramatic presentations but also for music concerts and dance shows.

The price of renting theatres is prohibitively high for some users. For many of these groups, use is limited to once a year or less.

These high costs mean that companies must charge high ticket prices. They also stand to face losses if patronage is poor. This means that groups take fewer creative risks, often presenting shows in limited genres that are more likely to score large audiences. Sex comedies are very popular, but more experimental, dramatic or serious plays are rarely staged.

Most theatres do not have resident companies, but are used as performance facilities by user groups. Resident groups could offer workshops and classes, etc, encouraging a more vibrant culture around the theatres themselves. They could have special “seasons” during which they presented their own productions at lower rates to audiences. This would add to the development of theatre in T&T, allowing for experimentation.

## **SWOT**

**Strengths:** Thriving sector – includes music concerts, dance shows and plays.

**Weaknesses:** Prohibitive pricing for some user groups. “Too-large” spaces – too big for many shows; under capacity shows.

**Opportunities:** Resident companies to deepen theatre culture. Support for more experimentation

**Threats:** High costs – poor patronage leads to losses. Limited tastes among theatre-going audiences

## **Conclusion: Need for Funding and Support**

Facilities in T&T provide the space for cultural expression. They function within environments of underfunding, lack of regulation, lack of training, poor security, lack of maintenance, and within a culture of still evolving public tastes.

Across the board, facility representatives interviewed reported a need for more support from Government in fulfilling their goal of helping to preserve and encourage the development of the arts in Trinidad and Tobago.

This support can take the form of:

- Requirements of standardisation,
- Training for staff,
- Providing security,
- Providing resource personnel,
- Improvement of facilities,
- More amenities.

From an administrative viewpoint, the larger picture shows both a need and opportunity for positive interventions that stand to make valuable changes. Current successes can be built upon, while problems, many of them glaring, can be remedied, as long as there is the will to do so.



# Case Studies



## Case Study: Alice Yard

### Background

Alice Yard is a community arts space located in the backyard of a house at 80 Roberts Street, Woodbrook, Port of Spain.

The property passed down through four generations of the family of Alice Yard director, Sean Leonard.

Alice Yard is administered and curated by architect Sean Leonard, artist Christopher Cozier, and writer and editor Nicholas Laughlin, with the help of a growing network of creative collaborators. Alice Yard is a non-profit organisation incorporated under the laws of Trinidad and Tobago.

Sean Leonard was interviewed for this report.

Leonard defines Alice Yard as a space for creative experiment, collaboration, and improvisation. The space hosts book launches, visual arts exhibitions, discussions, film screenings, musical performances and workshops.

There is an open yard, an enclosed gallery, band room and a two-storey open space. There is an apartment, as well as a rooftop area.

Leonard said: "We have access to resource – a space. We asked ourselves, how can it be used to facilitate development of art practice" He noted that the different managers have different interests,

straddling many creative disciplines. He said a lot of the development of the space has been guided by requests and inquiries for the space. "This process keeps taking us to next level. It's a continuous work. "

## **Funding**

Alice Yard is free for the directors to use –Leonard says "That's a big financial burden we don't have to worry about. We charge a nominal fee (\$50 an hour) for the use of the band room. We're also funded by donations from individuals who appreciate what we do, and artists in residence who give a contribution."

Leonard's architecture firm, CO-RD Architects, supplies incidental funding, as well as some major infrastructural investments. "It's not expensive to run. Cleaning etc are inexpensive. The biggest expenses are when we want to buy equipment, like – amps, chairs, or a projector. There are moments where we do need investment. But it's not onerous, and development has been very slow. Any investment increases the inherent value of property.

## **Governance**

There are three directors, with three main areas of responsibility: artist Chris Cozier (curatorial), writer Nicholas Laughlin (communication) and Sean Leonard (infrastructure). There is also a band room manager. Leonard says the fact that directors come from different disciplines has been very helpful. "The combination allows for a multidimensional perspective. We have access to different kinds of information."

## **Collaborations**

Amsterdam Arts Organisation

Bocas Lit Fest

Thembe Studio, Suriname

## **Unique success factors**

Leonard says the network of people (mainly artists) who frequent the space is what makes it successful. "Through being there, they give it presence and foster accessibility to others. This is the most important – not the physical space. The real Alice yard is the network of people who use it and who come to the space. These individuals also have projects and we are on board to help them make it happen and provide what is needed." He said Alice Yard acts as a conduit for the transfer of expertise from one person to another. "That's happened a lot and I think that's the strength of the space."

He also feels that owning the space and the equipment means low overheads.

## **Challenges**

Leonard says Alice Yard has been a Non-Profit Organisation for 3 years and that dealing with the formalization process has been challenging. Accounting is also an ongoing challenge as they have not been able to afford a proper administrative staff. "We are working out how to afford that. We know it's necessary. When it comes to getting notices out, or giving info and assistance to artists in residence, we need someone for that role. But we want it to be a natural fit, to happen organically. That's how the initial collaboration happened. There's a kind of commitment that comes out of a real desire to be part of something. We're waiting for that to happen."

## **Take-aways**

"Communication is important. The more scenarios we can create for interaction and communication to happen, the better. Major institutions evolve that way. We also recognise the responsibility for the public / people outside the organisation to lend support. This can be by donating food, a scholarship, money, any support. These community arts spaces provide a real way for crucial interaction and artistic development to happen."

Alice Yard does not approach the Government for assistance.

He adds that time is important: "There can be an anxiety that things aren't happening quickly enough. But we have to let it happen and allow ourselves to grow, allow time to shape things.

A lot of things around seem to be rushed and that often does not lead to success.



## Case Study: Trinidad Theatre Workshop

### Background

Trinidad Theatre (TTW) was founded in 1959 by Nobel Laureate, Derek Walcott, Roderick Walcott, Beryl Mc Burnie, Errol Jones, Fred Hope, Eunice Alleyne and others. It has been active in local theatre for five decades.

Several of TTW's plays are considered classics of local theatre, such as *The Joker of Seville*, *Ti-Jean and His Brothers* and *Dream on Monkey Mountain*.

Assistant Managing Director Timmia Hearn Feldman was interviewed for this report. Hearn Feldman is a recent addition to the team, and she has been charged with re-invigorating the company.

She has overseen several productions, the initiation of acting classes for young people and other activities.

### Activities

Ongoing activities at TTW include plays, concerts, conversations, classes, art exhibits and more.

Trinidad Theatre Workshop provides platforms for people of all ages to train in the theatre arts. Training activities include:

- School for the Arts Training Programme
- Children's Theatre Workshop Summer Camp
- Teens Acting Workshop
- New Actors Workshop
- New Playwrights Workshop

## **Funding**

TTW earns revenue through staging productions, training activities and space rental.

Hearn Feldman says currently the main source of funding is earned income (ticket sales, rental), but there have been interventions. “We got a grant from the Ministry that allows 7 actors to be on payroll.” TTW also makes appeals for and receives sponsorship from individual patrons.

She says there is a need for more corporate and individual funding: “We want to fix the space. We want to raise money to replace lighting and sound. Don’t have the money for it. Ministry subventions are not enough.

Staged productions tend to break even. Because of the reputation of the company, many people in the industry are willing to work for lower salaries, and designers etc do not charge the full amount.

“It’s not a government funded institution. A patron staged a fundraiser last year that got them out of debt.

## **Governance**

TTW has an Advisory Board which does not have executive power. Executive power rests with the Artistic and Managing Director, Albert Laveau, and with his assistant Hearn Feldman. She is also resident director and manager of TTW’s school for the arts.

## **Collaborations**

TTW has partnered with various international companies for international performances including: New York Shakespeare Festival Company, Negro Ensemble (NY), Boston Playwrights Theatre, Arena Stage (Washington DC), National theatre Festival (Singapore), Caribbean Festival (Rotterdam), The Inaugural Caribana Festival (1967, Toronto).

More recently, TTW partnered with Stella Adler Studio of Acting from NY, the Ministry of Education and BG TT, to conduct workshops for the teachers of CXC Theatre Arts, who were preparing for the new CXC Theatre Arts curriculum.

TedX Port of Spain

Tony Hall (playwright workshops)

## **Challenges**

Hearn Feldman says the main challenge is to restructure the company.

“We are moving toward a more systematic structure. Because we’ve always been underfunded creates a problem with creating a sustainable management structure. Albert has been managing since 1989. We have a constitution and articles of incorporation but a lot is on an-ad hoc basis. Little seems to be written down. There is more of a family atmosphere. Moving from old world institution to a modern one is very challenging.

## **Unique Success Factors & Take aways**

Unlike most theatre spaces surveyed, TTW has a functioning company, as opposed to just the theatre space.

Hearn Feldman says: “TTW is the oldest still existing company in T&T. It has an archive of works, and a strong legacy. Young people can feel part of that history. There is so much to learn, so much amazing work. The archive is available to the students. We are working to digitize these works and make them more widely available.”

She adds that unlike many arts institutions, “It does not only exist because of one person. When Walcott left it did not die. There is a vision for the company outside of any one individual.”

She says another strength is that it has survived so long. “People tend to cut down old institutions and start new without the legacy to draw on and the knowledge to avoid mistakes already made.

“People are inspired by TTW. It has a name that is internationally recognized.”

Also, she says, “the workshop element is unique. It’s not just the product but the process. It’s attention to the quality of the work, and building a repertoire of work.