



**The Association of British Calypsonians**  
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**ASHTON “Mighty Tiger” MOORE, 1940 – 2017**

Ashton “Mighty Tiger” Moore was the President and one of the founding members of the Association of British Calypsonians (ABC), the only body in the UK and Europe that promotes the art, culture and ethos of Calypso. When he arrived in the UK from Trinidad & Tobago in 1971, he was already a seasoned professional Calypsonian, having cut his teeth in the Southern Brigade as the “Young Tiger”. From there he moved on to Lord Kitchener’s Calypso Review Tent and then decamped to the Victory Tent singing with all the Calypso Greats. He toured the UK with The Mighty Sparrow and Paul Keens Douglas before getting involved with the Notting Hill Carnival. Despite the paucity of opportunity in London in the early 1970s he remained devoted to his craft, and by 1974 he had proved himself to be more than capable of flying the flag for Trinidad & Tobago culture, performing whenever and wherever possible.

In 1975 he won his first British Calypso Monarch title in Hammersmith and went on to win the crown a further nine times, retiring from competition as the undefeated UK Calypso Monarch. His enthusiasm and devotion to Calypso resulted in him getting together with like-minded fellow Calypsonians in 1991 to form the Association of British Calypsonians (ABC) in an effort to promote the artform and to protect vulnerable Calypsonians from unreliable promoters and various forms of exploitation

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in the music industry, and then to launch the London Calypso Tent in 1992. The ABC's overall aim is to create and provide Calypso music of the very highest standards and Ashton worked tirelessly to produce the annual London Calypso Tent in an effort to educate the young and all lovers of music with the aim of increasing the popularity of one of the greatest Carnival artforms.

As the ABC grew in strength and stature, the Mighty Tiger continued to work unstintingly to ensure that Calypso is recognised, appreciated and enjoyed by as diverse an audience as possible. Perhaps one of his greatest triumphs was to approach the Trinidad & Tobago government almost 20 years ago to form the Calypso Youth Exchange Programme. In essence, he saw that to encourage British youths to sing and enjoy Calypso he had to prove it was a young people's music and over the years he organised workshops with children all over the UK. In conjunction with the T&T Ministry of Culture, the winner of the T&T Junior Monarch Calypso Competition came to London to perform and it is now fair to say that the impact of this Calypso Youth Exchange Programme is greatly responsible for the growth and popularity of Calypso in the UK today. He also founded the Black History Junior Calypso Monarch Competition in order to encourage children of Caribbean parentage to sing about their Black heroes. He also forged links with the Trinbago Unified Calypsonians' Organisation (TUCO) enabling UK Calypsonians to perform in Tents in T&T and vice versa.

The Mighty Tiger became the Calypsonian's representative on the Board of the then Notting Hill Carnival Limited and held the distinction of being the longest serving member on that Carnival body, always remaining fervent about his duty to promote Carnival and Calypso in London and throughout Europe. Ashton was also very actively involved in the Yaa Asantewaa Arts and Community Centre, London's leading centre for Black Cultural Arts and was a founding member of the innovative Carnival Village Project, playing an instrumental fundraising role in the creation of an appreciative space for the cultural artforms of Carnival in the UK.

Ashton Moore was honoured over the years for his work both in Trinidad and the UK.

#### AWARDS RECEIVED:

- 1986 (UK) The Notting Hill Carnival Award for work in Calypso and Carnival
- 1998 (UK) Barber Green Committee for Contribution to Calypso and Soca
- 2001 (UK) The ABC Award at their 10th Anniversary
- 2001 (T&T) The ABC Trinidad & Tobago Award for service to Calypso in the UK
- 2002 (UK) Hackney Mardi Gras Award for Calypso Music
- 2004 (UK) G & H Promotion Community Award for Calypso
- 2004 (UK) Trinidad & Tobago High Commission Cultural Award
- 2005 (UK) British Association of Steel bands Award for Carnival and Calypso
- 2006 (UK) Yaa Aasanteewaa Achievement Award
- 2007 (UK) Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea Mayors Award for Culture, Calypso and Carnival

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2008 (T&T) - The Fyzabad Improvement Committee 1983 in collaboration with PetroTrin Oilfields Tubal Uriah 'Buzz' Butler Par Excellence Award for Culture, Local and International



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The ABC was formed in the spring of 1991 and offered itself to a culturally conscious and curious public in 1992 through its London Calypso Tent which has become the premier annual cultural precursor to the Notting Hill Carnival.

The ABC's first home was the Yaa Asantewaa Arts Centre for many years. Together with Yaa, the ABC founded what is now known as Carnival Village working alongside two other cultural organizations – Ebony Steel Band and Mangrove Masquerade and Steel Band – to offer varied aspects of the Carnival Arts.

The ABC's aims and objectives include:

- Promoting the culture of Calypso originating from Calypsonians based in the United Kingdom to audiences in the UK, Europe and worldwide.
- Educating and encouraging the development of the Calypso tradition by establishing workshops for training in all aspects of the production of Calypso and ensuring that Calypso is promoted to its best advantage.
- To enter into agreements with administrators, researchers, authors, composers, producers, artists and/or any other persons in regard to the furtherance of the aims of the ABC and the talents of its members.
- Making itself open to schools, colleges, universities and other public educational forums for workshop participation.

Over the past years the ABC has formed links and/or worked with Arts Council England, Westminster Council, The Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea, Luton Carnival Arts Centre, Organization of Calypso Performing Artists of Canada, Trinidad & Tobago's Unified Calypsonians Organization, the BBC and WACK Radio of Trinidad & Tobago.

The Executive Committee remains passionately committed to the role that the ABC plays in making known the relevance of the art form that is Calypso music.

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