

LEON ELRID SAUL

Publisher/Writer & Producer/Director

OBJECTIVE

To utilize my skills as a publisher/writer and producer/director, along with my acquired expertise as an international media practitioner to create and chart programmes, plus new strategies to disseminate relevant information towards improving relations in a developing multicultural society.

As a writer my knowledge, expertise and experience in government information and cultural services; and my ability as a cultural operative in the community afford me the opportunity to work towards harmony, along with political, social and cultural development in the society.

I also function as a marketing specialist, TV and radio talk show host, music producer/promoter, editor, performing artist and band percussionist. But most of all, I consider myself a team player.

I have more than 30 years experience in TV, film, video, radio, printed media and stage productions. I have also done reportorial, editorial and production work with Toronto community newspapers such as *Contrast*, *Share*, *Equality*, *Caribbean Camera*, and *Rainbow News*; while I have worked with *The Guyana Chronicle* and *the Guyana Broadcasting Corporation (GBC)*.

I have done volunteer work at the Toronto community radio station CIUT 89.5 FM, and the community organization – Tropicana Services, in Scarborough.

I started my first newspaper in Toronto - *Culture Times International* in 1989, then *Uprising International Newspaper Inc.* - a monthly cultural organ was published from 1993 to the present. I have also been editor-in-chief of the *Caribbean Feedback* newspaper, which is now *Caribbean Uprising* newspaper.

I have also been able to express the spoken word by performing dub poetry and being an MC and DJ at numerous stage and radio shows in Toronto from 1986.

I have written, directed and produced music videos, radio serials, stage dramas, music cassettes, vinyl records and CDs, TV programs and a collection of poetry. I have also acted in many stage and radio plays, plus appeared in several movies in 2007, including “The Incredible Hulk”, “Love Guru”, “The Time Traveler’s Wife” and “Repo Mambo”. I was also the principal in the Pioneer commercial as “The Jazz Trumpeter”.

WORK

- 2008 **WRITER/PRODUCER** – “*Sweet, Sweet Karaila*” stage play at Palmerston Library Theatre, Toronto from July 17 to July 25, 2008; North York Memorial Hall, Toronto July 30 & 31, 2008; and at De Great Iron Pot, Scarborough, August 10 & 15, 2008.
- 2006 - 2007 **WRITER/DIRECTOR** – “*Curse of Ham*” stage play at Theatre Centre, Toronto from Jan. 18 to 21, 2007 and the Toronto Centre for the Arts from Feb. 27 to March 11, 2007. (ACTRA Credit).
- 2006 to Present **ARTISTIC DIRECTOR** – Roots International Arts Theatre Inc. (www.rootstheatre.com)
- July 2005 to Present **PUBLISHER/EDITOR-IN-CHIEF** - *Caribbean Feedback* and *Uprising International* newspapers, Toronto.
- September 2003 to March 2005 **PRODUCER/WRITER/DIRECTOR** - Carib Feedback Stage & TV Company, Guyana.
I coordinated and conducted two three-month acting courses involving more than 50 young people and adults.
I wrote, directed and produced two stage productions – *For Better...For Worse* Feb. 2004) and *In Search of Happiness* (Sept. 2004) at the 2000-seat National Cultural Centre. The plays were documented and serialized on local TV stations.
I was also **PRODUCER** and **HOST** of the weekly cultural TV programme – *Caribbean Feedback* broadcast Saturdays at 2.30 p.m. on CNS-6 and several other TV channels.
- December 2002 to July 2003 **PRODUCER/WRITER/DIRECTOR and HOST** of the weekly one-hour TV programme – *Caribbean Feedback* aired on CHEX TV in Peterborough, Ontario, Canada.
- April 1993 to November 2002 **PUBLISHER/EDITOR-IN-CHIEF** of the monthly community newspaper Uprising International Newspaper Inc.
- 2002 **PRODUCER/WRITER/DIRECTOR** of six-week radio drama series on CIUT 89.5 FM radio.
PRODUCER of my two CD albums – “*Up Mighty Race & Bamboo Fire*”.
- 2001 **PRODUCER/WRITER/DIRECTOR/ACTOR** – “*For Better...For Worse*”, a three-act play for the first-ever Caribbean Theatre Festival, Fairview Library Theatre, Toronto.
- 2000 **PROMOTER** of a Canadian theatrical production - "*Two For Two*" at the National Cultural Centre, Georgetown, Guyana plus several musical shows.
PRODUCER of weekly half-hour TV program - "*Live Act*" on GTV Ch. 11, and NBTV Ch. 9 (Guyana).
PRODUCER and **NARRATOR** of half-hour radio series –

- “*Caribbean Folklore*” on CKLN 88.1FM (Urban Space) and the Guyana Broadcasting Corporation's (GBC) Radio Roraima and Voice of Guyana channels.
- 1995 **AWARD** of \$2,500 development grant by the Racial Equity Fund for feature-length screenplay “*For Better...For Worse*”.
- August 1990 to March 1993 **ARTISTIC DIRECTOR, PRODUCER and PLAYWRIGHT-IN-RESIDENCE** – Roots International Arts Theatre – I was responsible for accessing grants and other funding, while writing, directing and producing “*Repatriation*” – a full-length play staged at Bathurst Street Theatre, funded by the Toronto Arts Council and the Ontario Arts Council. The play was aired on CIUT 89.5 FM for Black History Month 1992.
- 1986-1993 **WRITER/DIRECTOR/PRODUCER/ACTOR** of Roots International Arts Theatre Company. I was the founder of this cultural organization, which produced three of my own stage and radio productions: “*For Better...For Worse*” (1987 - Theatre Centre and St. Michael’s Theatre, University of Toronto); “*Berbice Uprising*” (1988 - Bathurst Street Theatre); and “*Repatriation*” (1992 - Euclid Theatre, Bickford Centre and serialized on CIUT 89.5 FM radio - funded by the Ontario Arts Council and the Toronto Arts Council).
FOUNDER of the *Freedom Drums* percussion and performance group.
- December 1989 to July 1990 **EDITOR and CO-PUBLISHER** of Culture Times International Newspaper promoting artists.
- January 1987 to November 1989 **ASSISTANT EDITOR** of *Contrast* community newspaper - the first Black community newspaper in Toronto.
- 1986-1992 **ACTOR/WRITER/BROADCASTER**. During this period I was freelancing for several ethnic community newspapers in Toronto, including *Share*, *Contrast*, and *Equality* newspapers. I also produced and narrated a series of 10-minute dramatizations of poetry and stories from the Caribbean called “*Caribbean Folklore*”, aired three times weekly on CHIN radio and weekly on CIUT 89.5 FM radio.
PRINCIPAL ACTOR in “*The Twins*” (a CBC TV series - Inside Stories). I participated in other Hollywood movies such as “*Three Men and a Baby*”, “*Cocktail*”, “*T & T*”, “*Lady Killers*”, “*Diamonds*”, “*The Brain*”, “*After Foods Of The Gods*”, “*Nothing Happens*”, “*New Life*”, “*Around The Corner*”, and the 1988 Coca-

- Cola Olympic commercial, among others.
- 1982 **FOUNDER/DIRECTOR** of the N/A Roots Theatre, Recording Studio & Publishing House Ltd. – New Amsterdam, Guyana.
- September 1977 to April 1981 **SENIOR REPORTER** for the Guyana Chronicle Newspaper – Guyana National Newspapers Ltd. (GNNL).
- January 1975 to August 1977 **INFORMATION OFFICER**, Ministry of Information & Culture, Guyana.
- 1972 **TEACHER** at Rosignol Primary School, Ministry of Education.
- 1974 **ACCOUNTS CLERK** at Ministry of Health.

BOARDS

- 2006 to Present Board Member of the Conservative Party’s Scarborough Guildwood Electoral District (Federal) and a Board Member of the Scarborough Agincourt PC Party (Provincial).
- 2002 – 2003 Secretary of the non-profit community organization Marcus Garvey Centre for Leadership & Education in Toronto.
- 2003 Secretary of the non-governmental organization – Guyana Rastafari Council.
- 2002 Vice-President of Toronto non-profit community organization – Caricom-Canadian Cultural Foundation.

EDUCATION

- September 2001 **CERTIFICATE OF ACHIEVEMENT** from the YMCA Self-Employment Program.
- 1999 Participated in the **DIPLOMA IN BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION** course at the Toronto School of Business.
- 1998 Attended the Trebas Institute, Toronto to study Multimedia.
- 1997 Awarded **DIPLOMA IN FILM & T.V. PRODUCTION** (*Top student - Cum Laude*) from the Trebas Institute, Toronto.
- 1996 Awarded **CERTIFICATES IN DESKTOP PUBLISHING & COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY** (*with Honors*) from the Academy of Learning, Toronto, Canada.
- 1977 **DIPLOMA IN PUBLIC COMMUNICATION** from the University of Guyana (*Pass with Distinction*).
- 1972 Earned six **General Certificate of Examination (GCE) “O” Level** subjects from Queen’s College, Georgetown, Guyana.
- 1966 Passed **Common Entrance Exams** at St. Aloysius Roman Catholic Boys’ School, New Amsterdam, Berbice, Guyana.

SPECIAL SKILLS

My special skill is being a good communicator, whether it is written, verbal, musical or visual. Because of my newspaper and theatre background, I could be regarded as a team player. But I have the ability of a natural leader, coordinator and being able to see projects through to completion on budget and on schedule.

AWARDS

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| 2006 | The <i>Guyana Press Association Award</i> (Guyana) for contribution to the development of media in Guyana. |
| 2006 | The <i>Guyana Folk Festival Award</i> (New York) for contribution to the development of Guyana's culture. |
| 1998 | The <i>AfriCan Food Basket Award</i> – to my newspaper <i>Uprising International</i> for supporting the Toronto community. |
| 1996 | The <i>Peter Tosh Award</i> – from the Canadian Reggae Music Awards for my contribution to the promotion of reggae music. |
| 1993 | The <i>Bob Marley Family Award</i> – from the Toronto Bob Marley Day Committee for promoting Rastafarian way of life. |
| 1977 | The <i>Victor Forsythe Communication Award</i> – for top student in the Public Communication course. |

ORGANISATIONS

Apprentice Member of ACTRA
 Member of SOCAN
 Member of BEEFCAN

REFERENCES

On request.