



*The fullness of joy is to behold God in everything.
God is the ground, the substance,
The teaching, the teacher,
The purpose, and the reward for which every soul labours.**

IN MEMORIAM

In 2000, Pat Bishop presented NGC with her interpretation of what we do. "I have no knowledge of technology at all" she wrote, "but I knew that gas which used to be wasted by being flared was now being compressed and transported by pipeline for useful purposes."

A woman of prodigious talents, and a profound 'thinker', this interpretation could have taken any form: a musical composition for voice, pan or other instruments; a dance; a metaphysical treatise. Pat, describing herself as a painter whose principal hobby is music, grappled with the concept through art. The result? A triptych in acrylic, gold leaf and wood, which seizes your attention as you enter NGC's front doors. You move closer to read Pat's written description...an element which accompanied every piece she painted. It was never enough to simply show. She also needed to tell.

Pat named the piece *Keeper of the Flame*. It cemented a long-standing relationship between NGC and Pat and, in fact, became somewhat of a motto for NGC. Over the years, NGC acquired pieces of Pat's art, preserving another precious, natural resource. It made our sponsorship of the Lydian Singers for the last 20 years an easy marriage, and through 40 or so concerts, 6 operas, and numerous other cultural events, gave us a great deal of pleasure.

We also learned. The Lydian Singers, Steel and Tassa repertoire under Pat's leadership was always about stretching the boundaries when pushed relentlessly by a determined woman with an imperious voice and a baleful glance that one did not want to attract!

When the Lydian's sang *Verdi's Requiem* at The Holy Trinity Cathedral, someone in the audience said, stunned, afterwards: "I have never seen this performed before where the choir has not read from the libretto!"

But then Pat never resorted to a libretto herself. She knew what she had to do in life with every cell of her T&T being. And if she could play a role, by heart, in many events, small and large and simultaneously, what was so difficult about the choir learning the words and music by heart to a lengthy mass, or anything that they ever sang? And sing they did, from one end of the country to the next, eschewing major venues and playing in churches and small arenas, often for free. Do you remember, citizens, the Lydian Singers in full regalia in Tamarind Square, on a clear Christmas night, singing for the homeless? Or the pan ringing out at another Christmas concert at Couva's Inshan Ali Promenade?

The *Keeper of the Flame* is a metaphor that reflects NGC's custodian role as manager of T&T's valuable natural gas resource, ensuring it is used for the great benefit of the country. It seems to be a fitting metaphor for the life and works of Pat Bishop, TC. "The painting would be worth making," she said, "if it could remind us that being a 'keeper of the flame' is a considerable national responsibility."

There is not any one definition for this woman, but *Keeper of the Flame* comes close to that quintessential heat, so vital for bringing about the transformation that Pat sought for her country, and which, to her last, still burned fiercely.

We sympathise with those who love Pat at her passing.

**Julian of Norwich, (1342-1416), English mystic and recluse, whose revelations were published in the first book written in the English language known to be by a woman. Pat liked to quote from her.*