

Barbados - Music industry says good-bye to Aubrey Cummings



Allison Bohne (left) and Ahamad Rasheed Boodhoo having a look at some of the art produced by the late Aubrey Cummings, during yesterday's funeral.

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ENTERTAINERS turned out in their numbers yesterday to pay their last respects to late Guyanese-born singer and guitarist Aubrey Augustus Cummings.

Calypsonians, steel-pan players, guitarists, singers, music arrangers and music promoters were among the close to 200 mourners at the funeral service, where most mourners wore white as requested by Cummings' family.

Mighty Gabby, Richard Stoute, Tony Grazette, Invader No. 3 (Joseph Hughes), Carole George and Richard Layne were at the gathering for the 75-minute morning funeral at the Coral Ridge Memorial Gardens, Christ Church.

Guitarists Willie Kerr, rhythm poet Aja, Norman Barrow of A & B Music Supplies, Calypsonian Pee Wee, music arranger and calypso tent manager Adrian "Boo" Husbands, singer/ bass-player Ricky Aimey, keyboardist John Roett, bassist Philip Forrester and music producer Derry Etkins were among those paying their last respects.

Delivering the eulogy, Etkins said Cummings, his "teen idol", was misunderstood by many people.

He called him "a basically shy, almost insecure man, who would only let those close to him see behind the facade".

He added: "To some he came across as haughty, to others as arrogant, to some others as cold and aloof - all of this to hide the soft, deeply passionate and sensitive person inside." He also said Cummings was a painter who produced a large volume of impressive works - two of them on display during the service.

Close friend and Guyanese Association of Barbados member Elsie Yong, in a tribute read in the chapel, described Cummings as a caring person who paid attention to detail and planned for contingencies.

Highlights of the service included George's rendition of the song No Tears In Heaven, steel-pan music and some of Cummings' music.

Delivering the sermon, Catholic priest Father Clement Paul said people did not fully appreciate the work of entertainers. He said they "touch people at the core of their being" and should be seen by churches and other groups as "spiritual people", he told the gathering. (TY).