

## Sounds of Britain Royal Mail's next special



### Technical details

**Printer** Cartor Security Print

**Process** Lithography

**Stamp size** 37 x 35mm

**Sheets** 25 and 50

**Perforation** 14 x 14.5

**Phosphor** Screen

**Gum** PVA

**Gutter pairs** Horizontal

### Plates and colours

**All values** C1 silver ● C1 yellow ● C1 magenta ● C1 cyan (blue) ● C1 black ● C1 phosphor

FIVE STAMPS featuring the cultural diversity of music in the UK will be available from Post Office branches and philatelic outlets and from Royal Mail Tallents House Edinburgh from 3 October. The stamps feature: 1st class Asian Sitar; 42p Caribbean Bass Player; 50p Latin American Maracas; 72p Irish Fiddle; and £1.19 Black American Blues. The stamps were designed by CDT Design using photography by Paul Smith.

The Europa theme for 2006 is Cultural Diversity, and Royal Mail has chosen to explore it through the universal language of music. The UK has long been a melting pot for musical ideas and British musicians have taken these influences, modified them and put them together again to create their own sounds.

The stamps will be issued to Post Office branches in sheets of 25. However, sheets of 50 with gutter margins will be available from selected Post Office outlets and Royal Mail Tallents House. The year of issue '2006' is printed in micro-text and positioned amongst the smaller characters in the designs. The 1st class and 50p stamps include the EUROPA symbol used on Europa issues since 1993.

The presentation pack (shown opposite) was written by Ken Hunt, and designed by CDT with illustrations by Laura Carlin. Tracing the history and development of a rich mixture of musical styles, it provides a concise guide to modern British music.

**FIRST DAY FACILITIES** The FDC, designed by CDT, features musicians and dancers, with the design extending onto the flap and reverse of the envelope. Orders for serviced FDCs must reach Tallents House (address below) by the day of issue.

Collectors may send stamped covers on the day of issue to: Royal Mail, Tallents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB (Tallents House postmark), or to one of Royal Mail's Special Handstamp Centres (Rock, Kidderminster, Worcs postmark), marking the outer envelope 'FD 0635' (Tallents House), or 'FD0536' (Rock).

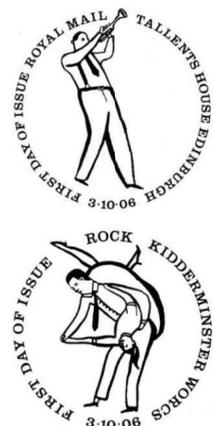
For details of other special postmarks see the *British Postmark Bulletin* – available on subscription from Tallents House (£12.25 UK/Europe; £24.95 elsewhere). For a free sample copy write to: The Editor, British Postmark Bulletin, Royal Mail, 148 Old Street, London EC1V 9HQ ●

# issue captures a melting pot of musical ideas



### Sounds of Britain prices

Set of stamps	£3.15
Presentation pack	£3.65
FDC envelope	£0.30
Serviced FDC (UK customers)	£4.18
Serviced FDC (overseas customers)	£3.56
Stamp cards set	£1.50



**B**ritain is a four-dimensional cultural collage, a society that has even more cultural strata and accretions than those of an archaeologist's dream dig or a galeau-obsessive's fantasy layer-cake. How we talk and sing, eat and dance has been fed by cultural borrowings and convulsions galore. We are today familiar with so many culinary and cultural sensations that are beyond our grandparents' uttermost fantasies. We communicate in languages that would fox our great-grandparents. Food and music, travel and technology have transformed our tastes and our cultural references. However, when it comes down to the influences that will have most revolutionised our palates, music and food must surely tie for joint first.

**T**his once, let's not start at the very beginning. After all, we are talking about the 'Sounds of Britain' not 'The Sound of Music'. Back in February 1945, even music critics and record collectors championing calypso, jazz, blues and these islands' very own folkong were working with the smallest resources, operating at the outer limits of their knowledge. Subsequent years saw not only rationing and rebuilding, they also bore witness to new post-Imperial patterns of immigration and emigration plus new musical dynamics. Why faced and undernourished music still dominated the soundscape of most people, but music's complexion was changing dramatically.

**W**hen the Trinidadian solo-pianists Lord Kitchener (Aldwyn Roberts) and Lord Begginer (Egbert Moore) arrived in Tibbury in 1946, people had been hearing the cry 'London Calling' for time out of mind. However, Kitchener singing *London is the Place for Me* on the Empire Windrush remains an iconic moment, reminding us of how potent the Motherland's 'brand name' was.

#### CHRISTINE WELLS

**M**In 1950 Humphrey Lyttelton and Cyril Blake, a wartime Trinidadian bandleader who played West Indian and Cuban dance fare, topped the Mardi Gras billing in London. The Trinidad All-Steel Percussion Orchestra was amongst the Festival of Britain's attractions in 1951. But when Princess Elizabeth and Prince Philip got 'snapped' cutting a Square Dance rug in Ottawa that October, the press went bug-eyed and it launched a new social dance craze. That decade, Nigerian highlife and South African kwela also made inroads, while Elias Levski and his Zig-Zag 'Prince' Jim Hart was kwela's first international hit, re-jigged by bandleader Ted Heath over here.

