



CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

From left: Michelle Serieux, director of 'Sugar'; Renee Robinson, JAMPRO film commissioner, and Shantol Jackson, lead actress in 'Sugar' discussing the short film after it was screened, in an evening salute to Jamaican filmmakers.

Great Huts hosts Portie Film Festival

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THE USUAL calm and quiet resort called Great Huts Paradise on the Edge, buzzed with activity from August 17-20, as Cinema Paradise Portie Film Festival zoomed in on the eco-friendly, Afrocentric retreat, located at Boston in Portland.

It was the event's seventh annual installation, and after a full-house premiere night on August 17, inside Hope Zoo's Serengeti in St Andrew, the 'Great Hall' of Africana House, the newest and most regal unit at Great Huts, was transformed in a 'cinema' on Friday, August 18 with the screening of *Shashamane*.

Shashamane is about the state of affairs of the 'Promised Land' in Ethiopia. The producer allows some people, including many Jamaicans who have been living there for quite a while, to tell the stories of their challenges, redemption, hopes and disappointment.

After the screening, Steven Golding, president of the Universal Negro Improvement Association in Jamaica, and Ras Rai, independent filmmaker, talked about their



A section of the audience that turned out to see the screening of 'Rasta: A Soul's Journey' inside the Serengeti at Hope Zoon in St Andrew.



A section of the Great Hall inside African House where the full-length documentary, 'Shashamane', was screened.

experiences in *Shashamane* to a rapt audience, including in-house guests and other patrons.

On Saturday the 19th, the dub pool party kept IsetSankofa busy at the turntable on the Mandela Deck, the roof of Africana House, while patrons soaked up the sun and drinks at the poolside.

RELAXED UNDER THE STARS

In the night the spiral staircase in Africana House was the path to the cinema on the Mandela Deck, where people lounged and relaxed under the stars as they watched *Shock Value*, *Sugar* and *Origins* on a night dedicated to Jamaican filmmakers.

In the audience were Kurt Wright, director/writer of *Origins*; Adrian Lopez, writer/director of *Shock Value*; and Michelle Serieux, director of *Sugar*. Shantol Jackson, the lead actress in *Sugar* was also in attendance. The question and answer session after the screening was moderated by Renee Robinson, JAMPRO film commissioner.

The big climax to the four-day event came Sunday night when *Bruk Out*, a dancehall queen documentary, unfolded on the Sahara

Deck. That screening was scheduled for nearby Boston Beach, but was relocated because of the threat of inclement weather.

The capacity audience watched as dancehall queens from the world over prepared for the 2014 Dancehall Queen Competition, held at Pier 1 in Montego Bay, St James. Director Cori McKenna explores the hopes, dreams and challenges of some of the competitors, exposing the impact that Jamaica's dancehall movements have on popular culture in general, and on some people's life in particular.

McKenna and associate producer Brad Martin were in the house to field question and comments, but the audience was equally delighted with the presence of Pinky, a popular Japanese dancehall queen. All three were part of an engaging post-screening discussion of issues concerning dancehall.

Pinky fell off the stage during the actual competition, and told the audience on the deck what happened. And she obliged, to the joy of those present, when a request was made for her to 'bruk out'.

And with that Cinema Paradise Portie Film Festival zoomed out from 2017.