

Cinergy series closes with Miles Ahead

JOAN RAMPERSAD Saturday, April 15 2017

TONIGHT, the curtain will come down of the trinidad+- tobago film festival's (tfff) Community Cinergy open air cinema series, sponsored by bpTT, with the screening of Miles Ahead at the San Fernando Hill, at 7 pm. The film is expected to bring to life the legendary jazz musician Miles Davis (1926 - 1991), who was at the forefront of a number of major stylistic developments in jazz over his five-decade career.

This series started with the airing of All Oceans Blue on April 1, a documentary on famed TT sailor Harold La Borde, that was held at the TT Sailing Association, Chaguaramas, and a week later, at Lange Park Recreation Grounds in Chaguanas, the airing of The World of Goopi and Bagha, an animation film in Hindi.

Johanna Thomas, public relations and marketing co-ordinator at the tfff said the tfff celebrates films from and about the Caribbean and its diaspora, as well as from world cinema, through an annual festival and year-round screenings.

She said the tfff seeks to facilitate the growth of Caribbean cinema by offering a wide-ranging industry programme and networking opportunities.

And with the upcoming Tobago Jazz Experience, Thomas told Newsday: "For the first time ever we are going to be working with the THA (Tobago House of Assembly), and having a Tobago Jazz Film Festival from April 23 to 25." This inaugural festival is expected to be a celebration of music and Tobago through film, and will be held, as part of the Tobago Jazz Experience. Admission to all events is free.

The lineup begins on April 23, with the Tobago-made short film Redman, about Jerry, a young man who is confused about what women want. It is made by Tobagonian screenwriter, film director and actor Jared Prima, co-founder of Triple Spades Studios Ltd.

Dancehall Queen, the full length feature film from Jamaica, that follows Redman tells the story of Marcia, a single mom and street vendor barely scraping by even with financial assistance from Larry, a gun-toting strongman with a twisted desire for Marcia's teenage daughter, Tanya, who he pursues.

Both films will be shown at the Shade Nightclub in Bon Accord, from 7 pm, and will be followed by a dancehall after-party.

On April 24, it will be Tobago's turn to take in the screening of Miles Ahead at Mount Irvine Bay Resort, However the evening begins with the short film, Glass Bottom Boat, a true story of Janet Wells, who came to Tobago on vacation with her sister and fell in love with local fisherman, Galla. The film was made by film-maker and photographer Kyle Walcott, who was born in Trinidad, raised in Tobago and attended Bishops High School.

The festival ends on April 25, at Waves Restaurant and Bar with the evening airing of the Tobago-based short film, The Resort - a series of three vignettes shot in Tobago that follow a young man as he sells love for a living. Later, the animated film, Chico and Rita, set in 1950s Havana will conclude the festival.

Annabelle Alcazar programme director, tfff told Newsday the first tfff was launched in 2006 for just one week and with one sponsor, the Trinidad and Tobago Film Company. It was the same year that the BA in Film programme was started at UWI when film had been identified as one of the seven pillars of economic diversity in TT .

Dr Bruce Paddington is the founder and festival director.

Alcazar said: "The festival has continued to expand over the years and in 2015 celebrated its tenth edition. That was a bumper year with over 130 guests and the launch of the Caribbean Film Database (an online database of Caribbean film from 2000 to 2014 translated into three languages) and the inaugural Caribbean film mart, which invited 15 projects from around the region to meet with international film industry professionals to pitch their projects with a view to acquiring funding, sales or distribution." In 2015 the tfff was also named the top "Unmissable Event in the Caribbean" by the lifestyle magazine, The Culture Trip, and was also voted "one of the 25 Coolest Film Festivals in the World" by the international film magazine MovieMaker.

"Uniformly excellent cinema...

genuinely thoughtful, inspiring panels and moviemaker education events..., extending its coolness beyond borders", an article in the magazine said.

Alcazar stated: "That same year, the Ministry of Trade and Industry said 'In addition to providing a boost to the local film industry, the tfff serves to redefine the identity of Trinidad and Tobago as a hub for film making and festivals.... which translates into an increase of its annual contribution to the economy from revenue generated'." Last year, the festival was held for one week but screened films in two screens at MovieTowne as well as at UWI, COSTAATT , and other venues around the country, showing over 100 films features and shorts.

Alcazar said: "After 12 years in operation, the tfff is considered the most prestigious festival in the Anglophone Caribbean."