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Tobago schools flock to T&T Film Festival

Teachers lauded

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Teacher Ayanna Phillips-Stewart, from Goodwood, said her students really enjoyed their outing to see Romeo and Juliet.

Tobago's senior school teachers have been lauded for allowing their students to experience the recent 12th annual trinidad + tobago film festival in person.

Bishop's High School, always a major supporter of the festival, along with Roxborough, Speyside and

Pentecostal Light and Life High Schools packed out the theatre at MovieTowne, Lowlands, to see *The Tempest*.

Signal Hill Senior Comprehensive also filled the theatre as Garnet Lawrence took 156 students with teachers to see *Centerstitch*, directed by Celoi Carr, a student. Filmed at the school, it told of a young boy obsessed with his shoes. The film explored the link between fashion, media and school behaviour and looked at some of the issues plaguing the local school system—bullying, unprotected sex, drug use and gambling.

Three other Tobago films entered ttff/17. *Dream* by Elspeth Duncan—a short, very thoughtful creative piece and *Wetlands and Us* by Omodara Mills, an educational documentary on the importance of wetlands in Tobago and what their presence means for the island and the world.

The third is *Quick Pick*—the only full-length feature at the festival. It was directed by Miguel K Lashley and told the story of Travis, down on his luck with work, love and money. His fortunes changed when he bought a lotto ticket with the winning numbers.

Incidentally, both *Wetlands and Us* and *Quick Pick* were shown in Trinidad and received good reviews and had sold-out performances.

Susan Ramrattan, Movie Towne Tobago co-ordinator for the trinidad + tobago film festival, said: "Interest in the festival was steadily growing and in spite of other long holiday weekend events, attendance increased."

She added that "the festival is grateful for the support of their loyal patrons who support ttff every year."

Tobagonian filmmaker Kyle Walcott was always there to support the event. Ramrattan said he was an essential and important part of the event in Tobago, as he was responsible for screening all of the films.

She was ecstatic about the support of the volunteers who return every year to play their part in ensuring the festival's success.

Ramrattan also said all the staff at MovieTowne, Tobago, managed by Trudianne Aqwi with Lisa Robinson, were "amazing." She said: "They could not have been any better!"

The 12th annual festival, held from September 19-26, screened over 100 films at five venues throughout the two islands. The local feature *Green Days by the River*, which had previously benefited from participating in the Caribbean Film Mart 2015, opened the festival and played to packed-out audiences in Trinidad and is now showing in both Trinidad and Tobago.