

Reggae series on BBC television

A series of programmes celebrating Reggae's impact on the British music, culture and society will be aired on the BBC 4 television, beginning on February 11.

The programmes are a part of the BBC 4 Britannia series and will show how Reggae came from Jamaica in the 1960s to influence, over the next 20 years, both British music and society.

The series will start with the documentary Reggae Britannia and includes major artistes and performances from that era, including Big Youth, Max Romeo, Linton Kwesi Johnson, Jerry Dammers and the Specials, the Police, UB40, Dennis Bovell, lovers rock performers Carroll Thompson and Janet Kay, bands like Aswad and Steel Pulse and reggae admirers, such as Boy George and Paul Weller.

A release from the BBC quotes Commissioning Editor, BBC Music and Events, Jan Younghusband as saying he was delighted with the series.

"In the great tradition of BBC 4 musical treats, we are delighted to be celebrating UK Reggae with two new documentaries, a special Barbican concert and a host of treasures from the BBC archive," the Editor said.

A special Reggae Britannia concert was held at the Barbican centre in London on February 5. The broadcast of this concert will follow Friday's opening documentary.

Other programmes in the Reggae Britannia series will include the broadcast of a special live recording of the 1973 Reggae Concert at the Edinburgh Festival, which featured the Cimarons, Winston Groovy, Dennis Alcapone, the Marvels, Nicky Thomas and the Pioneers.

A documentary on the rock steady era of Jamaican music in the mid-to-late 1960s will be shown as well. This programme chronicles the coming together of rock steady's surviving vocal stars - like the Tamlins, U-Roy, Ken Boothe, Leroy Sibbles from the Heptones, Judy Mowatt, Dawn Penn, Rita Marley and Marcia Griffiths - to celebrate their greatest 60s hits and perform a reunion concert.

The series also include the Rise Up Reggae Star programme, which followed three aspiring artistes who seek to "rise up" from obscurity for their chance at success. The Reggae Britannia series end on February 19 with the 1977 Bob Marley Exodus concert.