

HBO Includes Jamaica In Game Of Thrones' Promotion

HBO Latin America, on March 31, premiered the third season of its original series, Game of Thrones, in the Caribbean simultaneously with the United States.

In promoting the premiere of the new season, HBO invited more than 20 journalists from across Latin America and the Caribbean to attend a press junket in Miami, Florida at The Biltmore hotel. Jamaica and The Bahamas were, however, the only two Caribbean islands represented, and were the only English-speaking countries of all those attending the event. At the press junket, Liam Cunningham (Davos Seaworth) and Alfie Allen (Theon Greyjoy), actors from the Emmy and Golden Globe award-winning HBO original series, met with Caribbean and Latin American press to promote the third season of the series, which has already been confirmed for a fourth. Both actors spoke candidly about their experiences on the show, filming, preparations, what they thought about their characters, and the overwhelming success that the HBO original series has had. Cunningham joined the cast in season 2 and according to him, he didn't take lightly the role he was getting into. "The process was kind of scary, because you're coming into something that has already started to make a name for itself, and seeing the quality of it, you don't want to be the person to let the side down, so you up your game definitely, but to be faced with the challenge and opportunity is something that I was very happy to do. And you can see the level of talent that it (the series) attracts, both on the writing side and on the directing side," Cunningham noted. Adding, "We definitely feel the show is bigger than us now, and the fans, not only are they loyal, but they have a sense of ownership of this, a sense of participation, which the exhibition in Sao Paulo (Brazil) was part of that. It's HBO, kind of saying thank you, because they don't charge for the exhibition or anything like that, and it's how fans get a little bit closer." The exhibition to which Cunningham refers, was one of several promotions held in major cities around the world, where Game of Thrones transported viewers into the breathtaking and enchanted world of Westeros. Five stops The travelling exhibit, the first of its kind by HBO, made stops in five international cities - Toronto, New York City, Sao Paulo, Amsterdam and Belfast. Presented by HBO and international partners, the exhibition was free to the public and focused on key characters from five of the noble houses: Stark, Lannister, Targaryen, Baratheon and Greyjoy. It showcased a trove of more than 70 original artifacts from seasons 1 and 2, plus select pieces from this year's new season. According to Cunningham, Game of Thrones, "seems to be turning from a TV show into a phenomenon," as statistics show that outside of the United States, Brazil has the largest viewership. Twenty-six-year-old Allen says, "I didn't ever think that I'd be part of something so brilliant as this and something so huge this early on in my career, if ever, to be honest. But I couldn't really ask for anymore. They say the sort of prime of a male actor is now (mid 20s) until say 34, 35 maybe. So yeah, it's great, I just want to keep it going and see what happens." The new season promises to be full of action, and has already delivered on much as the battle continues for the Iron Throne in the Seven Kingdoms of Westeros. And of course, the actors are excited to see how fans will react as the season unfolds. Allen, who sees his character as "someone who is quite realistic, and not much of a hero, but is trying to be one and do the right thing," says for the remaining seasons, "I definitely want to do justice to the character and to do what people expect of him from the books (The series is an adaptation of A Song of Ice and Fire, George R. R. Martin's series of fantasy novels, the first of which is titled A Game of Thrones), and to transition that to the TV show. But at the same time the TV show is its own thing and I think it's taking on its own sort of life now. But I definitely want to keep the book readers happy and also the TV viewers happy as well." And maybe Cunningham knows just the right recipe to keep fans interested, as he says, "We have to keep the quality of the show up, we have to keep it intelligent, shocking, dramatic, violent, sexy ... I think all that is incredibly important." Composed of 10, one-hour episodes, Game of Thrones is executive produced by David Benioff, D.B. Weiss, Carolyn Strauss, Frank Doelger, Bernadette Caulfield. Other producers include George R.R. Martin, Vanessa Taylor, Alan Taylor, Guymon Casady, Vince Gerardis, Christopher Newman and Greg Spence. Jamaica Gleaner