

Ocho Rios for film festival

Ocho Rios is to play host to the sixth staging of the Jamaica International Reggae Film Festival, which will this year honour women in film with a posthumous tribute to Jamaican-American actress Madge Sinclair.

The festival was launched at the Cove Theatre at Island Village Ocho Rios last Wednesday by coordinator Barbara Blake Hannah and will be staged August 1-5 at Island Village. It will feature some 25 films in categories such as features, shorts, documentaries, animation and videos. "We're going to show them over four nights, from 7 p.m. to midnight, and on the fifth night, we give the awards," Blake Hannah explained. "On Saturday night, we're going to have midnight movies which will probably go on until about two in the morning. We also have use of Cove Cinema for two hours each afternoon, so we get to show the films doubled up, almost." Admission will be free and there are some great films to look forward to. There will be two firsts, where Jamaican movie-making is concerned. The festival will feature Jamaica's first gospel movie Just Another Friday and also the island's first horror film, The Croft. Patrons will be able to see Gia O'Meally, reggae singer J.C. Lodge's daughter, in a special episode of Which is Witch, a new British series. Then there is Hill and Gully from Jamaican-American Patrice Johnson, who is described as a brilliant actress, writer, and director. There is also another series from England called Dear Jesus. Documentaries are said to be of high quality and include Lovers Rock out of England and The Land of Look Behind, described by Blake Hanna as one of the greatest documentaries ever made about Jamaica and the Rasta culture. Jamaican-Canadian singer Claudja Barry, who was present at the launch, enters with Losing Paradise and Music, a film giving a perspective on dancehall music and its impact on Jamaica. Films aside, there will be workshops on acting, animation, and scriptwriting, 2:30 p.m. to 4 p.m. on August 2, 3 and 4. There will also be a book fair, courtesy of Judith Falloon-Reid on Sunday, August 4 from 10:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. VIP guests include US Ambassador Pamela Bridgewater, Spanish Ambassador Celsa Nuño, Carl Bradshaw, Cindy Breakespeare, Gia O'Meally and No-Maddz, who also entered the festival with Real Jamaican Girls.