



Harmonik performs at Miami Gardens' first international music festival on July 23.

MIAMI GARDENS HOLDS FIRST IMFEST

The international Music Festival featured acts from Haiti, Africa and Trinidad

By Clayton Gutzmore
Special to The Miami Times

Recently, Miami Gardens held a day full of activities that showcased the city's melting pot of different cultures.

"There is a conglomerate of Black people here in Miami Gardens. Even though we are 90 percent Black, we are still considered an international city with people from Haiti, Jamaica and the Bahamas living here. Our people want a music show with different genres that

reflects the diversity of Miami Gardens," said City Councilman Erhabor Ighodaro.

Ighodaro delivered an evening concert called Imfest, Miami Gardens' first International Music Festival.

Imfest took place Saturday, July 23 at the Betty T. Ferguson Center in Miami Gardens. The show had several acts featuring soca, calypso, kompa and reggae. More than 100 people were in attendance to see what Ighodaro hopes will grow into something like the

city's signature entertainment show, Jazz in the Gardens. The artists featured on Imfest were Nigel Lewis, Sassy Singz and Dilly Chris. The headlining acts were kompa group, Harmonik and African artists, Flavour.

"It's an honor to be a part of a festival that unites so many countries. We are all from Africa and it is a pleasure to be with my brothers," said Mac-D, lead singer in Harmonik.

Each one of the artists scheduled represents a genre of music. The councilman and the staff aspire to get big name artist like Wyclef Jean and Beres Hammond. Councilman Ighodaro received donations

from different organizations to put together the music festival. He received a \$1,000 grant from The Miami Children's Trust to organize a talent show that happened earlier that day. Ighodaro also received a \$20,000 donation from JHD3 Consulting.

"I saw a need to be fulfilled here. I had an opportunity to be a part of something new here in the city," said John Dixon III, CEO of JHD3 Consulting.

Sassy Singz was the first artist to open up the show. She performed her current singles, "Glimpse of Love" and "No reason." Following her was Diane

Please turn to IMFEST 5C



Miami Gardens Mayor Oliver Gilbert III and city council members give John Dixon III an award for contributing \$20,000 toward Imfest.



International music festival was a big hit

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Andrieux, a Haitian singer from Tampa. She sang covers of "All of Me" by John Legend and her own gospel singles, "Set A Fire" and "Fill Me Up."

"Lately, I have been singing a lot about love because of all the negativity that is going on in the world. I am proud of the councilman for bringing international music here in Miami Gardens," said Andrieux. After Andrieux, soca artist Nigel Lewis performed and rocked the crowd. Lewis was the most

upbeat performance as guests moved left and right to the beat.

"I always want to do feel-good music that makes people forget about their problems," said Lewis. The Trinidad and Tobago artist resides in Miami Gardens and believes people are not seeing the beauty of this city.

"You could raise a family here in Miami Gardens. People think that this is a bad area but the right side of the city is quiet," said Lewis.

Attendees enjoyed the first Imfest. The concert concluded with African artist, Flavour. Already,

the staff behind the show and the councilman are planning for a bigger Imfest next year.

Harmonik was unanimously the favorite performance of the night.

"I like these guys. This is my first time hearing them and my first time here at the center since I work in Jupiter," said Monica Ward, resident of Miami Gardens.

"Harmonik was the best. I live in North Miami with no connection to Miami Gardens but my friend invited me and it was worth it," said Rose Antoine.