

logo not found or type unknown

Limpricht Park Glitters as St. Croix Welcomes Christmas Season with Joyful Celebration

Crucian Cultural Group's signature event showcases seasonal traditions and community unity

Culture / **Published On December 09, 2023 06:57 AM /**

Janeka Simon **December 09, 2023**

Image not found or type unknown



The entrance of Limpricht Park in Christiansted, St. Croix is transformed into a captivating spectacle of lights. By. V.I. CONSORTIUM

ST. CROIX — Limpricht Park came alive on Friday night with “lights, culture, tradition, history,” according to Sandra Gerard Leung, who along with James Weber, co-hosted “Ah Glow in The Park: Ah Glittering Jubilee of Trees for De World To See” on Friday.

The two-hour long extravaganza was the fifth annual tree-lighting ceremony organized by the Crucian Cultural Group.

Vivian Ebbesen-Fludd, chair of the Crucian Cultural Committee, said that the group's focus is to "preserve, maintain and showcase our rich Virgin Islands Culture," and that was evident in Friday night's program, which featured scintillating performances from a comprehensive slate of performers, among others.

The evening began with the band Stanley and the Ten Sleepless Knights (TSK), who filled the air with the sounds of local seasonal Quelbe favorites.

Undaunted by the intervening rain shower, patrons then returned to their seats to enjoy a quadrille performance by the madras-clad Children of TSK, followed by a riveting pantomime performance by Kevin Nicholas, set to the inspirational song "Carry your Candle".

The annual inkberry tree tradition took a different turn this year, as explained by Mark Biggs of the Gentlemen of Jones. This year, the group decided to plant one in the park to serve as a permanent installation for future Christmas festivities. The inkberry features prominently in Virgin Islands culture, as it is used to be a popular substitute for the spruce and fir trees used as Christmas trees elsewhere in the country. The Gentlemen then serenaded attendees.

As Ms. Leung explained, the decorations for the ceremonial inkberry tree were handmade this year by students of the CJM Home School. These decor items were arranged around the tree as opposed to being hung, so as to protect the newly planted tree from any inadvertent damage.

The CHS Carib Divas added a touch of sparkle to Friday's event, performing an energetic dance routine dressed in gold and red sequined costumes. Golden poinsettia hair accessories completed the festive outfits. Following the brief soca number, traditional seasonal music returned when members of the Ay Ay Masqueraders took center stage, accompanied by TSK.

Before the masquerade number, however, cultural stalwart Asta Williams was honored for her contribution to masquerade in the Virgin Islands. "When I do things, I do it from the heart," Ms. Williams said, expressing her deep gratitude for the unexpected tribute. She then danced alongside the costumed masqueraders, moving to the traditional flute melodies to the approbation of the crowd.

Bradley Christian was also singled out for praise and honor, albeit reluctantly, as Ms. Fludd indicated. Mr. Christian and the St. Croix Heritage Dancers were credited by Ms. Fludd with being the inspiration behind the territory's official madras pattern. According to Ms. Fludd, Mr. Christian wanted his dancers to be identifiable as Virgin Islanders wherever they performed. For his contributions to culture and the development of the madras, Mr. Christian was gifted with male and female figurines dressed in the iconic fabric. He accepted his accolades with humility, playfully scolding Ms. Fludd for the deception employed in getting him to the event that evening. Having been told that he was needed to judge the decorated trees, after accepting his floral bouquet and other tokens of appreciation, he quipped, "this is the result of the [nonexistent] judging."

After announcing the lengthy list of winners from last week's lantern and float competition, it was time for the final performance of local traditional Christmas music from Stanley and the 10 Sleepless Knights, followed by the third award of the evening, presented to Dr. Stanley Jacob of TSK for his contribution to Virgin Islands Culture and the band's stalwart support of the Crucian Cultural Group.

After that, the park went dark in anticipation of the climax of the evening. Following a brief countdown, Limpricht Park lit up in a glorious celebration of the season, with colored bulbs,

baubles, and seasonal decorations everywhere the eye could see. As patrons began to circulate through the park to take in the sights, the sweet sounds of steelpan could be heard filling the air, courtesy of the St. Patrick School Steelpan Ensemble.

With that, the 5th annual “Ah Glow In The Park” event officially came to a close, marking another successful activity on St. Croix’s seasonal celebration calendar.

© Viconsortium 2024