

The Virgin Islands Consortium

St. Croix Festival Village Redo A Smashing Success As Thousands Turnout For Destra, Asa And Orlando Octave

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ST. CROIX -- One of the biggest concerns of the Festival Committee's decision to add two additional nights to the 2017-18 festival season, after the last night was ended prematurely because of gun violence at the Village, was whether Virgin Islanders who turn out.

That concern was laid to rest last night, as thousands of St. Croix residents and visitors alike overwhelmed the Festival Village, a show of defiance that says nothing will stop the fun, and a redeeming outcome for Davidson Charlemagne, Festival Committee

Chairman, who poured days into planning and promoting the extended event.

"This one was the best," Mr. Charlemagne told The Consortium following the show, pointing to a night filled with nonstop entertainment from three top artists: Destra Garcia, Asa Bantan and Orlando Octave -- the latter known for his smash hit, [Single](#). Asa Bantan, who continues to grow into a phenomenon championing Bouyon music around the world, satisfied the crowd with a performance so energetic that some wondered whether his act could be topped.

But by the time Ms. Garcia, known as the Queen of Bacchanal, made her grand entrance to the stage, the Festival Village appeared to have no room to move around, and certainly not at the front, where revelers came ready to dance to the Soca star's array of hits spanning well over a decade.

The mood at the Village was celebratory; the St. Croix crowd is not an easy one to get moving at festival events, but people sang and danced along to all of Ms. Garcia's songs -- from known hits like Celebrate, Fly, It's Carnival, Call My Name, Lucy, to newer efforts like [Somebody](#) -- eventgoers from teenagers to seasoned adults freed themselves to enjoy the memorable moment.

It was Ms. Garcia's first time performing on St. Croix, and she seized the moment to make it unforgettable. She gave a strong, long and captivating show that satisfied those in attendance. And after performing her set, Ms. Garcia sang four songs of Bob Marley, a decision she later revealed was made in light of last Saturday's shooting, stating that she wanted to close the festival on a mellow note with songs stirring unity.

For St. Croix, the event's success was much needed. There were questions as to whether people would come out to the extended Village nights following last weekend's tragedy, and even about future Festival Village events. But with a strong police presence, a general mood of merriment, the activities went off without a hitch (save for some WAPA interruptions before the show began).

Mr. Charlemagne said last week that the extended Village was to complete on good standing what had been a safe and enjoyable festival season, as well as a way to compensate booth owners who lost money when the event was stopped on the final night because of the violence. His goal was undeniably accomplished.

Events continue tonight with Ricky T and Vio International.

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