



PRESS RELEASE...June 24, 2024...Kingston Jamaica

Rita Marley to receive International Reggae Day Winnie Mandela Humanitarian Award

Monday JulyOne marks the 30th Anniversary of International Reggae Day (IRD) and the hybrid festival event will be anchored by a new humanitarian award, a drone show, two signature online events, its global IRD Pullup and the annual Reggae Tree Challenge.

For its 30th Anniversary, the **International Reggae Day Winnie Mandela Humanitarian Award** will be presented at its JulyOne celebrations hosted by the City of Miramar and Consul General Oliver Muir. According to IRD founder and producer Andrea M. Davis, “We are thrilled to announce this award named in honour of IRD’s inspiration Winnie Mandela which will be presented to *Nana Rita Marley for her invaluable service to humanity through her music and philanthropic works in communities from Jamaica to Africa*”. The IRD30 celebrations will include a free LunaLyte sponsored drone show featuring 500 drones showcasing Jamaica and its Reggae icons to be streamed on ireggaeday.com.

The ‘IRD AI & Creative Industries Webinar’ scheduled for 10am-1pm, will explore the potential and challenges of generative AI technology on the creative sector with particular focus on media, film, music, IP rights and policy. Hosted by Sherando Ferril, guest presenters will include Willonius Hatcher, the comedian and AI content creator of BBL Drizzy and AI Tupac which went viral in 2024. Also presenting will be Kiran Maharaj of the Media Institute of the Caribbean, attorney Diane Daley McClure and UNESCO AI Policy Roadmap authors Erica Simmons and Andrea M. Davis.

The second signature virtual event will be a roundtable on this year’s theme ‘Riddims & Resistance’ scheduled for 3-4:30pm on ireggaeday.com. Hosted by filmmaker Donisha Prendergast, guests include UWI lecturer Dr. Kadwame K’nife, musicians Sly Dunbar and Willie Stewart, as well as South African cultural advocate Ras Gideon Mantula and artiste Don Dada. The roundtable will examine the impact of Reggae music on global resistance movements such as the fight to end apartheid in South Africa, which also celebrates its 30th Anniversary in 2024.

In addition to media specials being hosted by participating media, the annual IRD Pullup scheduled for 11:30am, will feature a simulcast play of three Reggae anthems. ‘One Love’, in honour of the King of Reggae Bob Marley, ‘Here I Come’ in honour of Crown prince Dennis Brown and ‘Reggae Bring Back Love’ in honour of Ambassador Peetah Morgan.



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The International Reggae Day tree planting challenge was inspired by Nobel Peace Prize winner Wangari Maathai, who was awarded for her efforts to lead women in a nonviolent struggle to bring peace and democracy to Africa through its reforestation. Her organization planted over thirty million trees in thirty years. The IRD Reggae Tree Challenge was launched in Kingston's Emancipation Park with two blue mahoe trees planted by members of the music and media fraternity in 2010 and a mahogany tree planted by members of the visual arts fraternity in 2014.

Over the years, the JulyOne challenge has resulted in trees being planted by fans around the world including symbolic tree plantings from Soweto to Lagos to London. As temperatures continue to rise across the planet, the IRD tree planting challenge is a call to action for the creative and media fraternity, organizations and Reggae fans from Jamaica to the world, to become climate activists.

For IRD2024 Ghanaian Reggae artiste Rocky Dawuni will be among those joining the challenge as he plants a Reggae tree for IRD in Accra, Ghana. The Reggae Tree, planted opposite the legendary Hawkeye Record Store in Harlesden, London will be the site of a special JulyOne reasoning on musical and environmental matters hosted by UK Reggae Tree Ambassador Diane Shrouder-Johnson and special guests to mark International Reggae Day.

IRD2024 celebrations will kick off on June 29 with an all day event at the University of Goldsmith in London hosted by BlackBritishMusic.com, and the IRD UK stakeholders group. The event will include tributes, performances, panels and talks from the UK Reggae fraternity.

Produced as a hybrid virtual and physical event since inception, IRD seeks to connect the roots to the branches for local and global audiences in celebration of the power and impact of Jamaican music culture. A number of official JulyOne satellite IRD endorsed events include the Dennis Brown Memorial event at Heroes Circle Park in Kingston for the 25th anniversary of his transition and an IRD party in Bogota, Colombia.

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