



## Haitians a “no show” at the WIADCA’s Benefit Concert for Haiti?

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The **Haitian** community in Brooklyn, NY was a no show at the **W.I.A.D.C.A.** (West Indian American Day Carnival Association) 2010 benefit for Haiti. Is it that the Haitian community tends to isolate themselves from the rest of the Caribbean family or was there a misunderstanding? The thought of “isolation” crossed the minds of many that attended the concert. If a look is taken at the event which acquired the support of major

Caribbean artists such as Jamaica’s **Ki-Mani Marley**, **Serani** and **Freddie McGregor** among others. Trinidad’s **David Rudder**, Grenada’s **Super P** and St. Vincent’s **Kevin Lyttle**, one would think a massive turn out would be the result. There should have been a better balance in terms of having more local Haitian artists on the program.

**Another** instance to consider is the appearance of Haiti’s **Wyclef Jean** who couldn’t participate due to his current activities with respect to Haiti. Could this be a

valid reason why the Haitian community didn’t bother come out in support?

The announcement about Wyclef Jean not participating was posted on Wiadca’s website shortly before the event took place.

**Were** the Haitians aware of the event? Did Wiadca contact local Haitian organizations, businesses and churches to inform them of the benefit for Haiti? An investigation of the approach will

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certainly shed some light on the subject as for the reason. How serious was this benefit taken? Considering that the whole **Caribbean** community should have been involved, not just the Haitian community, how many were aware of this event?

First, it should be agreed that this was a great idea since the Caribbean community as a whole though they may have had fundraisers in aid of Haiti, non-didn't have the potential magnitude that Wiadca's benefit could have created. This benefit could have mirrored many of the major telethons and fundraisers that were previously televised with today's major artists. Here, a great idea went dead because of reasons not fully explained. The steps to ensure the success of this event weren't taken.

As for the concert, it was poorly attended. For the space that holds in excess of ten thousand people, if there were two thousand in there, it looked like three hundred. The program started late and the coordination was poor. All the right elements were in place but there was no cohesiveness. The stage manager was often coming through the sound system and the audience occasionally chuckled, because they were hearing what was going on backstage through the main speakers. In a way that showed there was a level of unprofessionalism.

### Performances:

Serani was the first artist to get a resounding response from the audience. His performance brought the needed fire to the concert and along with his DJ had the audience on their feet. Ky-Mani Marley also got a favorable respected response and so did

Freddie McGregor. David Rudder made a positive connection with the audience and the audience responded by dancing and singing along during his set.

The performance for most of the other artists was another story. There was little or no connection with the audience as much as they tried to interact. It's understandable to give up and coming artists a chance on the big stage but some of them certainly weren't ready to be featured. There were moments I thought I was looking at a poorly planned talent show. **MC Wassy** had to show many times why he's one of the best master of ceremonies in the business. He dug into the trenches to cleverly save a drowning show. The stage time for each artist was cut drastically due to the late start. Actor and comedian **Susan Kennedy** was asked to shorten her planned skit. Sadly the audience did not get to experience Ms. Kennedy on stage because the skit did not take place.

What could have been a masterpiece and a conversation piece in aid of Haiti turned out to be something else. Did they break even or did they make a profit? I can't say. If there was a profit, hopefully it doesn't get lost in the midst of chaos. The Haitian community not showing up in large numbers could be considered a blessing than an embarrassing situation for everyone.



[Serani](#)



[Ky Mani Marley](#)



[Freddie McGregor](#)



[David Rudder](#)