

Diana King – Ibrida

DONNED in all white, reggae sensation Diana King took over the stage and brought impressive energy for a brief spell to Ibrida at Ramee Grand Hotel in Seef.

Fans waited in anticipation for hours for the Jamaican 'KingSinga' to arrive and she finally stepped on stage at 1am brandishing a glittering red sequin microphone, warmly welcomed the crowd and put those still awake in a trance as she broke into her 1995 hit *Ain't Nobody*.

Her brilliant smile only added more sparkle to her bright white outfit and expressive voice. She bopped from one side of the stage to the other and belted out *Treat Her Like a Lady*.

The crowd was then taken down memory lane as she sang *I Say a Little Prayer* and then guided the dazzling microphone across stage for the audience to sing-along to the classic first made famous by soul queen Dionne Warwick.

She stopped in the middle of the stage to jump around in an attempt get everyone pumped up for the rest of her performance, which included the song



REGGAE SENSATION: Jamaican 'KingSinga' Diana King performs at Ramee Grand Hotel's Ibrida in Seef

that everyone wanted to hear: *Shy Guys* from the hit film *Bad Boys*.

She performed a total set of six songs which included two of the same number. But the beat bumped along to the jazzy vocals and created a chilled ambiance.

Diana sang her last song (the *Shy Guy* remix) passionately and left the crowd by graciously thanking them before disappearing off stage never to be seen again. Although the wait was long and the show was short without an encore, the sounds of the Caribbean carried on thanks to the DJ.

– Nawaar Farooq

John Legend – Arad Fort

THE man came with a mission, to spread a little bit of love in a troubled world and, despite facing criticism from the normal Bahrain-bashers around the globe, delivered a sophisticated set to an enthralled capacity Spring of Culture audience.

The Arad Fort is a fabulous venue, acoustically supreme and this artist appeared to revel in the cosiness of the surroundings, which was great for those lucky enough to get hold of a ticket for the show.

Just a few days before he took to the stage, Legend was receiving an Oscar for *Selma* theme *Glory* and he was happy to be back in the kingdom doing what he does best.

His last visit involved a trip to the BIC to take part in a celebrity race as part of an Aussie V8 weekend which he performed miserably in because he had only driven automatic cars before and even former *Radio Bahrain* presenter Krazy Kev managed to beat him by a nose. The drive was actually won by an Olympic Gold British rower who recorded a race victory for



SOULFUL SERENADE: Oscar-winner John Legend launched the 2015 series of Spring of Culture concerts

the first time 'facing' a finishing line ... think about it.

The best bits of Legend's stage show was when he sat at the piano. He promised members of the audience they would enjoy *Tonight (Best You Ever Had)* and he meant it.

His band was sensational too, boasting a punchy brass section which added to the groove, plus two well-coordinated backing singers, although their figure-hugging dresses looked a touch unflattering.

An absolute crowd-pleaser was a soulful cover of Simon & Garfunkel's *Bridge Over*

Troubled Water, dedicated to the singer's late grandmother who first taught him a US gospel-style of piano-playing and his record label should sincerely think of releasing this version as a single.

But he left the best for last. We all came to hear him perform his *All of Me* monster hit and he did not disappoint with a powerful rendition of this romantic masterpiece after leaving the stage and coming back for a final number.

He gave all of himself and for that we must be thankful. The man truly is a legend.

– Stan Szczowka

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