

THE SUNSHINE AWARDS

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News Release

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For Immediate Release

SUNSHINE Awards Organization Announces SPECIAL HONOREES from Africa, the Caribbean And South America



Port of Spain, Trinidad **October 9,** 2008 ----- Today, the SUNSHINE Awards organization announced the names of individuals who will receive special recognition and awards at the 20th Annual SUNSHINE Awards for their unique contributions to Caribbean and South American culture and arts forms. In making the announcement, the Chairman and Founder of the SUNSHINE Awards, Gil Figaro, Sr. said, "*Today we continue what we started in 1989 by recognizing and paying tribute to the talented exponents of Caribbean and South American culture. These great men and women for whom the SUNSHINE Awards was conceived and developed have, through the years, brought joy to our lives and made significant contributions to the development of the various Caribbean and South American art forms -- the art forms that connect us to our cultural heritage. And so, on behalf of the SUNSHINE Awards organization and, on my own behalf, I congratulate all nominees and honorees of the 20th Annual SUNSHINE Awards.*" The nominees for the 20th Annual SUNSHINE awards are:

CCH Pounder of Guyana, South America, has over a hundred films to her credit, including *Baghdad Cafe*, *Prizzi's Honor*, *Postcards from the Edge*, *Robocop 3*, and *Tales from the Crypt*. She has also acted in many popular television drama series. In 2005, she was nominated for an Emmy Award for "Best Supporting Actress in a Drama Series" for her role as "Captain Claudette Wyms" in the television series "The Shield." She also received a nomination for the NAACP Image Award for "Best Actress in a Drama Series." Pounder's other nominations and awards include: the MIB Prism Award, an Emmy nomination for her role in the TV series ER, two Golden Satellite Awards, and a Grammy Award nomination for "Best Spoken Word album" for *Grow Along with Me, the Best is yet to Come*. CCH Pounder is a founding Board member of Artists for a New South Africa and a Board member of the African Millennium Foundation. The SUNSHINE Awards organization wishes to add its own recognition of CCH Pounder's outstanding talents and contribution to the performing arts with a 2008 SUNSHINE Award.

Lauren Ramdhanny from Grenada started her music education by taking piano and violin lessons from her aunt. After graduating from St. Joseph's Convent in St. George's, Grenada in 1966, she migrated to London to further her education at the Royal Academy of Music, where she received a Diploma in teaching, specializing in the piano and vocals. She returned to Grenada in 1970, and taught at McDonald College. She later transferred to the Ministry of Education as the Music Officer for the Government, with the responsibility of supervising the music programs in primary and secondary schools. She also taught music at the Teachers' Training College until the mid-1980s. Her department in the Ministry later became the Ministry of Culture focusing on the country's cultural events such as Carifesta. Lauren was instrumental in pioneering the Radio School Broadcasting Program, working with Cheryl Jarvis of Guyana. She received the "Member of the British Empire Award" for music and education in 1985. Although she retired from the Civil Service in the year 2000, Lauren continues to make a valued contribution in the field of music. She teaches the group "Spice Island Youthquake" and "The National Folk Group of Grenada." In February of this year, Lauren received the "Spice Award" from her Government for her contribution to music. The SUNSHINE Awards organization wishes to add a 2008 SUNSHINE Award to her awards collection for her life-long contribution to Caribbean music.

Holly Betaudier of Trinidad and Tobago has spent his entire life of some eighty-plus years promoting culture and the arts. As a young man, he worked in the broadcast media. With the introduction of television to Trinidad in the early 1960s, he moved into this new media, using it to promote local shows at a time when all television programs were from North America. Everyone looked forward to his "Scouting for Talent" programs; and many of today's prominent artists made their debut on his show. Holly was also well known for theatrical productions, and for his efforts aimed at promoting tourism. He introduced tourists to local arts and crafts and to performances by local artistes at night clubs and hotels. Holly has always been a true friend to local artists and to the Arts in general; and many a calypsonian, pianist, musician and dancer owe their fame and fortune to him. The SUNSHINE Awards organization is proud to present Holly Betaudier with the 2008 SUNSHINE Awards "Friend of the Arts" Award.

Mamadou Dahoué was born in the northern region of the Ivory Coast in the village of Ségula, Africa. He became a member of the National Ballet of Côte d'Ivoire at the age of eighteen, and has performed throughout Africa, Europe and the United States. Mamadou was born into a prominent family of dancers and craftspeople; and it his family that is responsible for perpetuating the *Zaouly* masked-dance tradition. In addition to being a highly skilled concert artist, Mr. Dahoué is actually a "Mask". This means that Mr. Dahoué is spiritually "enfranchised" through his family heritage to perform highly-respected and powerful traditional masked-dance roles, such as *Zaouly*, *Flaly*, and *Djouanigbê*. In addition to carrying out his many responsibilities as a "Mask" and his illustrious career with the National Ballet of Côte d'Ivoire, Mr. Dahoué also performed with Rosemarie Guiraud's *Les Guirivoires* for nine years. Mamadou Dahoué has served as an adjunct professor at Medgar Evers College. He is currently serving as a teacher and lecturer in the Public School System. His performance experience includes BAM Dance Africa, Lincoln Center Out-of-Doors, and Family Concert at Carnegie Hall. The SUNSHINE Awards organization is proud to recognize his contribution to the performing arts.

Sundar Popo, of Trinidad and Tobago was a soca-chutney performing artist who got his musical inspiration from his father, who was a tassa drummer. His first public performance was at age 15 in south Trinidad. He is credited for mixing the rhythms of Indian folk songs and soca to create his own unique sound. By age 30, Sundar Popo had become a household name, with performances in both in English and Hindu. He has received numerous awards, including the Indian Cultural Pageant Award of Trinidad and Tobago and a SUNSHINE Award in 1993. Sundar Popo passed away in May of 2000, leaving behind approximately 50 albums as national treasures for the Caribbean community. The SUNSHINE Awards organization remembers Sundar Popo for his contribution to culture and the Arts, and is pleased to make him a Special Honoree of this year's Awards program.

Quintyn Toby Joseph, better known as Toiler, of St. Vincent and the Grenadines began his calypso career in 1964. He was inspired to sing calypso by the Calypso king of the World, the Mighty Sparrow; the Grandmaster, Lord Kitchener; and Lord Melody, all of whom he describes as his Caribbean heroes. In 1969, Toiler won his first title, the Calypso Monarch of Tatola. In 1974, he won the St. Vincent & the Grenadines' Calypso Monarch and Road March (the most played calypso for the carnival season) competitions. Toiler founded the Liberty Calypso Tent of St. Vincent, which he closed after eight years in 1976. Mr. Joseph has toured the Caribbean and Europe. His last performance in England was in 1984 during the Nottingham carnival season. Among his many hits are: “*Nancy Trick Them,*” “*Who Shoot de Puppy,*” and “*The Power of Prayer.*” Mr. Joseph is currently attached to the “On Tour Calypso Tent” of St. Vincent and the Grenadines.” The SUNSHINE Awards organization wishes to say thanks to Mr. Joseph for his forty-four years of contribution to Caribbean music by naming him a Special Honoree of this year Awards program.

Oliver Samuel was born in the parish of St. Mary in Jamaica. He is well known globally as a comedian, actor, producer and director. At the age of 22, he was introduced to theatre by the late Louise Bennett-Coverley. Since then he has been writing an incredible chapter in Jamaica’s theatrical history. Oliver, for many years, was known as Mr. Pantomine, a name given to him by theatre lovers in Jamaica because of his lead roles in the Little Theatre Movement’s (LTM) Pantomimes such as “Music Boy,” “The Witch” among others. Oliver has worked with most of Jamaica’s recognized writers and producers, including Trevor Rhone (*School Out*) and Carter Gambrill (*All that Glitters*). He has also worked with international producers in productions such as “We are One Theatre Company of Canada,” Neil Simon’s “Odd Couple,” and Mustapha Latura’s “Playboy of the West Indies.” In 1982, Oliver took his talent to the big screen when he appeared as “Pillion” in the Jamaican film “Countryman” and “Rupert” in the famous film, “The Mighty Quinn.” Over the years, Oliver has received many recognitions, citations and awards for his contribution to the performing arts. As Oliver celebrates his 50th birthday and 30 years as a performer, the SUNSHINE Awards organization wishes to add its own recognition of his outstanding talents.

LeRoy Clarke, of Trinidad and Tobago, was the first person to be conferred the title “Master Artist and National Treasure” by the National Museum and Art Gallery of Trinidad and Tobago. He is an Honorary Fellow of the University of Trinidad and Tobago. Mr. Clarke has received numerous recognitions and awards, including the “Achievement of Excellence” Award from the National Association for the Empowerment of African People, and the “Staff of Eldership” and Chieftaincy title in the Orisha community by the Ile’ Eko Shango/Oshun Mil’osa (I.E.S.O.M.) in 2005. He has often stated that the fundamentals for the integrity of his Art come from the rituals of the Shango Yard, the Hindu Ceremonies, the Hosay Celebrations, the Shouter Baptists, and that unique instrument, the Pan. These cultural elements exposed him to the varying dimensions of the cultural mix in his country. Mr. Clarke is a man of many talents: a former school teacher and a lead singer, in 1958, with the then popular group the Beamers. He has also authored four books of poetry. He is currently working on a fifth publication, which will chronicle his pen and ink drawings from 1960 to 2008. Mr. Clarke’s art has been on display at many global exhibitions since 1962. The SUNSHINE Awards organization wishes to add its own recognition of Mr. LeRoy Clarke's contribution to the Fine Arts.

Habib Kagimu was born in the Republic of Uganda. He is an entrepreneur extraordinaire and business executive with extensive business background in international and multicultural relations. He is well known in Business and the upper echelons of Government in Africa, the Middle East, Far East, Europe and the United States.

Mr. Kagimu, as a philanthropist, supports many needy causes both at the personal and corporate levels and is a staunch advocate of cultural diplomacy. He played a central role in funding the visit of twenty children and three officials from the **Save Our Souls Children's Home** for orphans from Uganda on a one month Diplomatic Student Exchange Programme with orphans from Trinidad and Tobago. He provided a unique and rare opportunity for students from both countries to meet and understand more about their cultures and societies. He has sponsored the construction of housing accommodation for children for the Save Our Souls Homes organization.

In the field of sports, he has contributed to the development of football in Uganda by facilitating the establishment of the Ferdinand Pro Line Soccer Academy (named after Rio Ferdinand) the only world class football academy in Uganda and East Africa. He has also encouraged and sponsored visits by the Pro Line Academy for friendly matches with major league teams in the United Kingdom.

The SUNSHINE awards organization wishes to recognize Mr. Habib Kagimu for his contribution to humanity.

The Twentieth Annual SUNSHINE Awards will be staged on Saturday, October 25 at the AXA Equitable Center, 787 Seventh Avenue (at 51st Street) in New York City. The Grammy style, black-tie event will begin at 6:00 p.m. with a cocktail reception followed by the presentation of awards and show at 8:00 p.m. with performances by Caribbean artists from around the world. Tickets and reservations can be obtained by calling (201) 836-0799; fax (201) 836-4440; or by email info@sunshineawards.com.

The Twentieth Annual SUNSHINE Awards is sponsored in part by Caribbean Airlines, “the official airline of the SUNSHINE Awards,” Tobago House of Assembly, Moët Hennessy USA and the New York Carib News.