

THE SUNSHINE AWARDS

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News Release

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For Immediate Release

Eighteenth Annual SUNSHINE Awards Announces SPECIAL HONOREES



New Jersey, USA, October 19, 2006 ----- Today, the Sunshine Awards organization and Cherry Lane Music Publishing Co., Inc. announced the names of individuals who will receive special recognition at the 18th Annual Sunshine Awards for their unique contributions to Caribbean culture and arts forms.

Irving Burgie, renowned musician/songwriter, is being recognized by the 18th Annual Sunshine Awards for his outstanding contribution to Caribbean music and culture, and particularly for having written what could easily be considered one of the most well known songs of our time, “Day O.” “Day-O” was first released and made popular by Harry Belafonte on his 1956 album “Calypso”, the first album of any kind to sell one million copies. It was number one on the Billboard charts for thirty-two consecutive weeks, and remained on the charts for ninety-nine weeks. In 1985, “Day-O” was featured on the “We are the World” telecast and, in 1989, in the hit movie “Bettlejuice.” In 1977, NASA used “Day-O” as the wake-up call for the astronauts aboard the space shuttle Atlantis. This much-loved song has been recorded by many world-renowned artistes, including Miriam Makeba, Caterina Valente, Patti Page and Julio Iglesias; and, in 2006, has been proclaimed the “Song of the Century.” Mr. Burgie was born in the United States, but has a special connection to the Caribbean, particularly the island of Barbados where his mother was born. He wrote the Barbados National Anthem. His extensive catalogue of songs includes other popular folksongs such as Jamaica Farewell, Island in the Sun, Yellow Bird and Angelina to name but a few. Irving Burgie has given the Caribbean people an extensive repertoire of folksongs, which have become an important and integral part of their cultural heritage. His music has enriched the culture of people in the Caribbean and in the Diaspora. He will receive the Song of the Century Award for “Day-O.”

For more than five decades, *The Mighty Sparrow* has maintained his stellar position as the Calypso King of the world; and he continues to entertain young and old with his melodious voice and charismatic performing style. He will be presented with the very first Sunshine Awards' Heritage Award as a special recognition for the long-lasting popularity of his first calypso, "Jean and Dinah" the song that propelled him to stardom fifty-one years ago. In 1956, the Mighty Sparrow won the Calypso Monarch competition in Trinidad & Tobago with the calypso "Jean and Dinah." In no time, this calypso became a household favorite. The rest is history. To this day, "Jean and Dinah" is still a popular request at performances by the Mighty Sparrow. The Mighty Sparrow was inducted into the Sunshine Awards Hall of Fame in 1990, and is one of only two calypsonians who have been awarded the Sunshine Awards Lifetime Achievement Award. The other recipient was the late Lord Kitchener. The presentation of the Heritage Award is in recognition of the enduring quality of his talent, and a special celebration of his calypso "Jean and Dinah."

Keith Maxwell Proctor of Guyana has had a distinguished music career spanning several decades both in the Caribbean and here in the United States. He studied music at the prestigious Trinity College of Music in London, England, and received a Fellowship from the Royal School of Music. A classically trained concert pianist, he has performed in the Caribbean, Europe, North and South America. In addition to his talents as a pianist, Mr. Proctor has also distinguished himself as an accomplished organist, and has served as Minister of Music at several AME churches in New York. In 1979, he established "The Love of God Singers," an inter-denominational gospel group that has performed with a number of gospel "greats" in the United States. He has received numerous accolades in recognition of his accomplishments. In 1999, he was awarded an Honorary Doctorate Degree by the Ft. Lauderdale Seventh Day Adventist College. He has performed for such dignitaries as Queen Elizabeth II, President Clinton, former Mayors Dinkins and Koch, and many others. He will be a recipient of a Special Sunshine Award for his accomplishments in music.

John Arnold is considered a cultural icon on the island of Tobago. He started playing the piano at the age of seven and, over the years, established himself as one of the premier musical talents in the Caribbean. He attributes his success in music to the many great teachers with whom he had the privilege of studying. As a jazz pianist, Arnold has a style that is smooth yet exciting; and this undoubtedly accounts for the success of his three albums. Not content to stick with only one genre, Arnold, who is the leader of the jazz contemporary band Kariwak Players, also does a comfortable mix of jazz, folk and popular music. In addition to his talents as a jazz pianist, John Arnold is also widely known for his creative choral arrangements of the Signal Hill School Choir, the Alumni Choir, and the Signalite Chorale. For over two decades, John Arnold and the Signal Hill Choirs have dominated folk presentations at music festivals. He has coordinated a number of musical festivals and events and was the musical director for the national contingent for Carifesta in 2000 and 2003. He will receive a special Sunshine Award for Music.

Creighton Pencheon of St. Kitts will be the recipient of a special Sunshine Award in recognition of his outstanding contribution to culture, in his personal capacity as an artiste and in his professional life as St. Kitts' Minister of Culture. A trained teacher and dramatist, he has performed in dramatic and musical productions, acting alongside such celebrated actors as Charles Hyatt of Jamaica. He has also had tremendous success as a writer and director of several dramatic and musical presentations. Creighton Pencheon received his training in St. Kitts and Jamaica, where he attended the University of the West Indies, and the Jamaica School of Drama on an OAS fellowship to study Theatre Arts and Drama in Education. He has always been willing to share his expertise, and has used drama and theatre techniques to foster learning through workshops for teachers and various community groups. As a founding member of the St. Christopher Heritage Society, and an executive member of the National Museum, Creighton works assiduously to assist these organizations in their efforts to preserve the island's cultural heritage. His extensive research into the history and culture of St. Kitts-Nevis has made him one of the foremost authorities on local cultural traditions. His hard work and commitment is reflected in the proliferation of cultural activities, through various community festivals, the rejuvenation of folklore tradition and the improved standards in the performing arts on the twin-island state. He has also made his mark as a guitarist and a calypso songwriter, and has performed under the sobriquet of the Mighty Crusader. Although he no longer performs, he is actively involved in fostering the development of calypso among the youths to ensure that this treasured art form continues for generations to come.

The 2006 Friend of the Arts Award will be presented to ***Prince Cumberbatch*** of Trinidad & Tobago. Mr. Cumberbatch was the Secretary of the Carnival Development Committee from the 1950s to the 1990s. During his long term in office he was instrumental in facilitating calypsonians and steelbandmen who participated in competitions and activities of the Carnival Development Committee. Over the years, he provided invaluable assistance to artists by advising them on financial matters and on sound management procedures. His expertise as an arts and events planner was instrumental in raising the quality of carnival and in generating increased interest in all carnival-related activities. His commitment to the arts and support of the artists inspired countless performers to better hone their artistry and improve their performances. Prince Cumberbatch, public servant, management expert, financial controller, advisor, arts and events planner is indeed a true friend of the arts.

The 18th Annual Sunshine Awards will present ***Dr. Marcia V. Keizs*** of Jamaica with a special award for her contribution to education. Dr. Keizs, who has had a distinguished career of more than 30 years in the CUNY system, was appointed President of York College, CUNY in February 2005. Prior to her appointment, she was the Vice-President of Academic Affairs at Bronx Community College, CUNY. She has served on the boards of the National Council on Black American Affairs (Northeast), Teachers College Alumni Council and the Association of Black Women in Higher Education. She is the founding editor of the New York Carib News, and has published articles in her area of specialty, Afro American literature. She is currently chair of the board of the Morris Heights Health Center in the Bronx and a member of the Vestry of St. Andrews Episcopal Church in Hartsdale. Since her appointment at York College, Dr. Keizs has focused her efforts on enrollment growth, strengthening academic programs, improving administrative and academic systems and building external relationships.

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The Eighteenth Annual Sunshine Awards will be held on Sunday, October 29, at the Sheraton New York Hotel in New York City. A number of world-renowned artists, including the Calypso King of the World, the Mighty Sparrow, the Jamaica National Dance Theatre Company, the Barbados Dance Theatre, and the Signal Hill Alumni Choir of Trinidad and Tobago will be performing.

This year's program is sponsored in part by Hennessy, Carib Beer, New York Carib News, Travel Span Vacations, and RumJungle. Tickets for the black-tie event can be purchased by calling **201-836-0799, 718-528-6424** or by fax **201-836-4440**. Reservations can also be made by sending an email to tickets@sunshineawards.com.