

THE SUNSHINE AWARDS

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News Release

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For Immediate Release

The SUNSHINE Awards Organization and Brooklyn Public Library to Launch the Autobiography of the Composer of “Day-O”

New Jersey, USA, June 14, 2007 ----- The Sunshine Awards organization announced today that, on June 30, 2007, together with the Brooklyn Public Library, they will be launching the autobiography of Irving Burgie, the composer of “**Day-O,**” at the Caribbean Literary and Cultural Center (CLCC), Flatbush Branch, 22 Linden Boulevard, Brooklyn, New York, 11226.

In October 2007, the Sunshine Awards organization paid special tribute to Irving Burgie at the Eighteenth Annual Sunshine Awards as it celebrated the 50th Anniversary of perhaps the most popular song in the world, “**Day-O.**” Day-O was first released and made popular by Harry Belafonte on his 1956 album, “Calypso,” the first album in the United States to sell a million copies. Mr. Burgie’s catalog includes other popular folksongs such as Jamaica Farewell, Island in the Sun, Yellow Bird and Angelina. Mr. Burgie has given the Caribbean people an extensive repertoire of folksongs which have become an integral part of their cultural heritage. He also wrote the National Anthem for his mother’s birthplace, Barbados.

Gil Figaro, Sr., founder of the Sunshine Awards said, “*My organization is delighted to join with the Brooklyn Library to launch the autobiography of a great man, who has made a significant contribution to Caribbean culture. Irving Burgie’s life experiences are truly inspirational. From*

humble beginnings, he spent a lifetime striving for perfection, and along the way, he created beautiful music that will always be part of our heritage. In “Day-O” he brings these experiences to life and shares them with all of us. It is a book that should have a special place in our homes.”

In his autobiography, Mr. Burgie reflects on his life as a boy growing up in Brooklyn, his time in the military, and as the composer of the song that made Harry Belafonte famous. Maya Angelou in her endorsement of the book stated *“This book includes exciting stories about an exciting time in the United States. I praise him for living the life he has lived and writing about it so well.”* Sidney Poitier said, *“Irving Burgie’s autobiography immediately draws the reader into a life that captures the imagination and holds the interest.”*

The Founder and Director of the Jamaica National Dance Theatre Company and Chancellor Emeritus of the University of the West Indies, Rex Nettleford had high praise for Irving Burgie and thinks that his autobiography is of historical significance. He said, *“Day-O”, Irving Burgie’s narrative of a Caribbean-American boy growing up between the two World Wars, is not simply an easy, delightful read. It adds to the growing literature on yet another segment of Africa-America’s textured history of diverse cultures, of collective forbearance, personal courage and the honing of creative talent among marginalized hordes who have seized the opportunities to find place and purpose via the exercise of the creative imagination.”*

The launch will be hosted by Dr. Charles Green of the Department of Sociology at Hunter College of the City University of New York and will begin at 1:00 p.m. Mr. Burgie will be in attendance. **His achievements have also been noted earlier this year – he was inducted into the Songwriters Hall of Fame and the Celebrity Path at the Brooklyn Botanic Gardens. This book launch will prove to be another milestone in his long history of excellence.**

Once again, the Caribbean Literary and Cultural Center (CLCC) of the Brooklyn Public Library has partnered with another Caribbean-centered organization to “...present and preserve the histories and cultures of the Caribbean peoples.” For more information about the CLCC, visit the website at www.brooklynpubliclibrary.org/clcc.jsp or call 718-287-8597.

The Nineteenth Annual Sunshine Awards is scheduled for Sunday, October 28, 2007 at the Sheraton in New York City. The program is sponsored in part by Caribbean Airlines, the official airline of the Sunshine Awards.