

Australian Guitarist Orianthi Salutes her Idol Carlos Santana at "The 36th Annual Kennedy Center Honors"

The Two-Hour Special on CBS Television honoring Carlos Santana, Martina Arroyo, Herbie Hancock, Billy Joel, and Shirley MacLaine will air Sunday, December 29.

This year the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts honored guitarist Carlos Santana; singer/songwriter, Billy Joel; pianist, composer, Herbie Hancock; opera singer Martina Arroyo; and actress Shirley MacLaine. Australian guitarist and platinum selling solo artist Orianthi, joined a star-studded group of performers and presenters to help pay homage to her friend and mentor Carlos Santana. The two-hour special will be broadcast Sunday, December 29 (9:00-11:00 PM, ET/PT) on the CBS Television Network.

The annual event recognizes recipients for their lifetime contributions to American culture through the performing arts in dance, music, theater, opera, motion pictures and television. The esteemed roster of participants performed in front of the President and Mrs. Obama and were kept a secret prior to the gala, held the night before Kennedy Center Honors event.

Carlos Santana, a Mexican immigrant, is one of only a few Latinos to share this coveted honor. Inspired by his father, who was a mariachi musician, Mr. Santana, along with his band Santana, pioneered a Latin-infused rock music in the late 60's and early 70's. Mesmerized by his playing ability, Orianthi literally wore out VHS tapes watching him play and practicing his technique. At age 11 she convinced her father to take her to one of his shows, which she credits for inspiring her to switch from an acoustic to an electric PRS guitar. Seven years later, while Santana was touring OZ again, he invited her to play onstage in front of her hometown crowd. Subsequently he introduced her to Paul Reed Smith, the guitar manufacturer that both Carlos and Orianthi endorse and the maker of their signature PRS models.

As reported by Billboard, the tribute to Mr. Santana began with a medley of his hits: "*Carazon Epinado*", "*Black Magic Woman*" and "*Oye Como Va.*" and featured performances from Orianthi, Sheila E., Buddy Guy and Tom Morello of Rage Against the Machine. "It was an honor to play for the President and Mrs. Obama at the Kennedy Center Honors celebrating the music of my idol, Carlos Santana," said Orianthi.

The two-hour primetime special will air on CBS Television Network on Sunday, December 29th at 9:00-11:00 PM, ET/PT.

About Orianthi:

Australian guitarist and solo artist, Orianthi was first introduced to many when she played the Grammy Awards in 2009 as part of Carrie Underwood's band, but it was being hand-selected for Michael Jackson's ill-fated "This Is It Tour" that exposed her to mainstream audiences. In the Fall of 2009, Orianthi released her major label debut **Believe** in the fall of 2009. The album produced the platinum single "*According To You*" which was a worldwide hit. Coming off the success of **Believe** and headlining shows around the world, Orianthi was asked to join Alice

Cooper's band several years ago. In late 2011, between legs of Alice Cooper's world tour, she began work on her latest solo album, **Heaven In This Hell**, which was released in March 2013.

Orianthi website: www.OrianthiMusic.com

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For more information or to schedule an interview with Orianthi, please contact:

PR Squared Public Relations

Karen Webb

(323) 375-6376 / info@prsquaredpr.com