

## KC PORTER



**M**usic takes KC Porter around the world, and he is thrilled to go. Whether he's in China singing songs in Spanish, or in Spain recording a Puerto Rican artist, KC loves to share the universal language of music. His passion began in childhood. His family moved from the United States to Guatemala to share the Bahá'í Faith, so KC grew up with a variety of Latin American music, as well as American pop, rock, and jazz. With encouragement from his father, musician Bob Porter, KC learned the piano, sang for commercials, and performed in his father's band.

After high school, KC returned to the U.S., and his career as a music producer soared. He's worked with a diversity of artists, including Carlos Santana, Boyz II Men, Bon Jovi, Janet Jackson, and Ricky Martin. He's earned a GRAMMY award and two Latin GRAMMYS, as well as many nominations. He also co-founded Oneness, a group helping to end racism through the arts. He lives in California with his wife, Aimee, and their three children.

### Q. What was your most challenging experience as a kid?

Having a bigger brother and . . . sister . . . I felt that it was constantly a struggle trying to, like, keep up with the others . . . Growing up in Guatemala was challenging, because [at that time] I didn't have access to anything that we have access to here . . . My father, because he was in music, he had an electric piano that he arranged on, so I started learning how to play piano . . . That was a really good outlet for my restlessness.

### Q. What do you enjoy more, performing or producing?

I love both. When I go out on stage . . . I am so excited. I know [the microphone is] calling my name . . . I'm learning [that] it's not about getting a huge record

### Q. How does being a Bahá'í affect your work?

Because so much of the music we hear on the radio today is lacking in spirituality . . . we really feel like we want to sprinkle a little light into the music so that it really can uplift our spirits and really do what music is meant to do, which is to be a ladder to our souls . . . We can try to share a little bit of



**Left:** KC at age 7, the year he and his family moved to Guatemala.

**Right:** Growing up, KC enjoyed playing the ukulele, and he still does.

deal, it's not about becoming successful . . . I think the most important thing is doing music that you truly love and that you want to go out there to perform . . .

the spiritual wisdom that we learn from the Bahá'í Faith and other religious wisdom, other spiritual wisdom . . . Every day, I am mindful of the sacrifices that our dear friends in Iran are making for us.\* I can't help but want to do everything I can, everything in my power, to honor that . . .

**Q. You've introduced Latin American performers to global audiences. Why do you think that's important?**

Artists from around the world are excited about crossing over to a new market. I think, at the same time, that the world is very hungry to hear music from all over the world . . . The possibilities are wonderful.

**Q. How did the group Oneness get started, and what are its goals?**

The whole idea was to create a non-profit [group] . . . focusing on . . . the oneness of humanity through music, the arts, and education . . . Last year . . . we selected . . . youth who came out to a national songwriter summit . . . And from that big workshop, we pulled together a band called The Bricks . . . They're making a difference and showing their story and inspiring other people to see what they can do. It's exciting.

**Q. What advice do you have for kids who want to be singers or songwriters?**

There are two things that I would recommend right away. Start keeping a journal. Start writing, writing, and writing. You may hate it in the beginning, and that's okay . . . God's inspiration can flow through you . . . Write from your heart if you can. Use your mind if you need the help. Also, learn an instrument like piano or guitar . . . It's always important to have an instrument that you can accompany yourself with.

**Q. In this issue of *Brilliant Star*, we're talking about unity. What do you think kids can do to build unity among people?**

Every step that we take that has the intention of helping bring change to the world, or helping bring light to the world, or helping be of service to the world, is important. We don't have to feel, "I could never do this work. I could never help the *whole* country, never help the whole world" . . . No, you start with one step at a time. How do you fill the ocean? One drop at a time. That's how we can change the world.



**Top:** KC and Aimee Porter live in California with their three children, Carlos (left), WenJie (middle), and Emma (right). PHOTO BY ALICE WILLIAMS  
**Bottom Left:** KC performing in California in February 2011. PHOTO BY AIPING ZHENG  
**Bottom Right:** As a producer, KC has worked with many internationally-known musicians, including Celine Dion.

**Q. What makes a good song?**

I think a good song is a song that comes from your soul, that comes from your heart . . . I think a lot of times, when we really need to say something, that's when our heart prompts us with the right words to say.

**Q. If you had one wish for our *Brilliant Star* readers, what would it be?**

That each of us can begin our journey to finding the path of service that we can be joyful in walking, and passionate in pursuing.