

The Sound of Roy Ayers Lives On!

BY MIC DIAZ | PUBLISHER



The music and legacy of jazz-funk icon **Roy Ayers** took center stage at Grand Performances on August 1 with **Bees & Things & Flowers: A Tribute to the Music of Roy Ayers**, filling California Plaza with jazz, funk, soul and hip-hop influences.

Producer, arranger and multi-instrumentalist Sly5thAve led an ensemble through arrangements of Ayers' catalog, joined by special guests including drummer and producer Kassa Overall, vocalist Jimetta Rose, vibraphonist Sasha Berliner and multi-instrumentalist Justo Almario. The performance also reimagined contemporary music that has sampled Ayers, highlighting his influence on generations of artists.

Ayers, a pioneering vibraphonist, composer and producer, became one of music's most frequently sampled artists, influencing hip-hop artists including A Tribe Called Quest and Kendrick Lamar. His unmistakable blend of jazz, funk and soul continues to connect generations of listeners.

The evening also celebrated another influential musical legacy, with Linafornia presenting a DJ set honoring the 20th anniversary of J Dilla's landmark album *Donuts*. The free concert was part of Grand Performances' 40th season of bringing global music and performing arts to Downtown Los Angeles.



CHAT WITH MIC

Can We Still Tell What's Real?

BY MIC DIAZ | PUBLISHER

As artificial intelligence becomes increasingly part of everyday life, knowing what—and who—to trust is becoming more complicated. On *Chat With Mic*, entrepreneur **Ron Lozano Echual**, founder of AIFactify and Phantom Messenger, shared his vision for using technology to help people navigate that challenge.

Echual created AIFactify to help users verify information and identify misinformation, deepfakes, manipulated media and AI-generated content. He also discussed Phantom Messenger, a privacy-focused communication platform designed for an era when digital security and trust are increasingly important.

But for Echual, technology alone isn't the answer. He believes people still need to question information, conduct their own research and exercise critical thinking rather than automatically trusting what AI produces.

His path to entrepreneurship has included student activism, a move to the United States, work in the entertainment industry and corporate life before eventually building his own ventures. Through those transitions, Ron developed a problem-solving mindset that continues to shape his approach to innovation.

Ultimately, his goal extends beyond creating new technology. Echual hopes to use innovation to fight misinformation, protect creativity and build tools that serve people—while reminding us that in the age of AI, human judgment still matters.

DON'T MISS OUT!

Check out the full interview in *Chat With Mic* on the Mic Diaz Presents Youtube channel.



New conversations every week on *Chat With Mic* Talk Show at Mic Diaz Presents Youtube Channel



CHAT WITH MIC Episode 75: Ron Echual



Photo by Edrian Pengilman

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COMMUNITY

Carlton Cares: Faith in Action

BY MIC DIAZ | PUBLISHER



“At the end of the day, we have to ask ourselves why we do what we do.”

– RONSON PROVIDO

For more than two decades, **Carlton Cares** has been guided by a simple mission: helping people through faith, compassion, and community action.

Founded by **Ronson Provideo** and supported by his wife, Caroline, Carlton Cares serves underserved communities through feeding programs, clothing drives, care packages for unhoused individuals, and partnerships with grassroots initiatives in both the United States and the Philippines.

What began in 1999 as small neighborhood gatherings outside Provideo's family home in the Philippines eventually grew into Paskuhan sa Barangay, a community outreach effort that continues today through the support of family members, neighbors, and volunteers.

Now based in Southern California, Ronson and Caroline continue that mission by supporting individuals facing hardship, homelessness, and instability. Inspired by their faith and a commitment to service, they believe meaningful change happens through consistent acts of kindness and human connection.

Supporting that mission is Carlton Group, the parent company behind businesses in engineering, construction, renewable energy, and real estate development. Despite its growth, the organization's focus remains the same: creating opportunities to serve others and make a lasting difference in people's lives.



ART & CULTURE

Around L.A.: Food, Dance & Film

BY MIC DIAZ | PUBLISHER

Los Angeles offered plenty to explore recently, from a neighborhood market in Downtown L.A. to an evening of cumbia at The Music Center and Indonesian cinema.

In DTLA's Historic Core, the **5th Street Market** brings together local vendors, artists, makers, food and more, creating a Sunday gathering place where visitors can shop small and experience the neighborhood.

On July 31, **Dance DTLA: Cumbia** filled Jerry Moss Plaza with music and movement. The free Music Center event welcomed dancers of all levels for instruction followed by an outdoor dance party celebrating the popular Latin American dance tradition.

Also on July 31, the Consulate General of Indonesia in Los Angeles hosted a screening of *Suamiku, Lukaku*, an Indonesian drama exploring domestic violence, courage and the importance of breaking the silence. Together, the events offered three very different ways to experience the art, culture and diversity of Los Angeles.



UPCOMING EVENTS

Every 1st Thursday of the Month

ArtNight DTLA, Spring St., Broadway and Grand Ave.

Every Friday this Summer!

- Barnsdall Friday Wine Nights, Barnsdall Art Park
- Chinatown Summer Nights, Central Plaza, Chinatown
- Dance DTLA, The Music Center, DTLA
- KCRW Summer Friday Nights, various locations

Every Sunday

Smorgasburg, Row DTLA