IN THE MIX weekly
BY MIC DIAZ PRESENTS
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Pili Ani Celebrates Filipino Beauty and Wellness at DTLA Launch

BY MIC DIAZ | PUBLISHER










Filipino beauty, entrepreneurship, and community came together on October 25, 2026, as **Pili Ani**, a Philippine skincare and wellness brand, celebrated its **Los Angeles launch** at fashion designer Puey Quiñones' atelier inside the historic Gerry Building in Downtown Los Angeles' Fashion District. Organized by Richelle Magtanong, a Pili Ani distributor, the catered gathering attracted an enthusiastic turnout. Among the highlights was a joint interview conducted by Filipino-American television personality and journalist Janelle So with Mary Jane “MJ” Tan-Ong, co-founder and CEO of Pili Ani, and internationally recognized celebrity hairstylist Ken Paves, who shared their perspectives on the brand and the beauty industry.

Founded by Rosalina Tan and her daughter, Mary Jane “MJ” Tan-Ong, co-founder and CEO, Pili Ani celebrates the natural richness of the Philippines through skincare products featuring two distinctive ingredients from the pili tree, which is native to the Bicol region of the Philippines. Pili Oil, extracted from the fruit, is rich in essential fatty acids and antioxidants that help nourish and moisturize the skin, while Elemi Oil, derived from the tree’s resin, is valued for its skin-conditioning properties.

By combining these two Philippine-sourced oils, Pili Ani brings together natural skincare innovation, sustainable sourcing, and support for local farmers while showcasing Filipino ingenuity in the global beauty industry.

The successful Los Angeles launch showcased more than skincare products. It celebrated Filipino creativity, entrepreneurship, and cultural pride while bringing together beauty enthusiasts, business owners, and community supporters. With its distinctive ingredients and commitment to sustainability, Pili Ani continues to introduce Philippine beauty and wellness traditions to a wider international audience.

COMMUNITY

Piece of Philippines Celebrates Filipino Talent and Culture in Hollywood

BY MIC DIAZ | PUBLISHER

Filipino music, creativity, and cultural pride took center stage on October 25, 2026, as **Piece of Philippines (P.O.P.)** brought together artists, entertainers, and community supporters at The Lot at Formosa in West Hollywood. Presented by Rocky Rock Entertainment and 3013 Media, the event celebrated **Filipino American History Month** while showcasing the talents and contributions of Filipino artists in the entertainment industry. The historic Hollywood studio provided a fitting backdrop for an evening dedicated to music, cultural identity, and community connections.

The celebration featured live performances by Honore, Crismat Mateo, F!LO, SOS, Nikki Paige, Tish Hyman, and BROSHIGEEZ, offering attendees a variety of musical styles and performances. Headlining the event, BROSHIGEEZ, composed of Tommy Van Musser (TVM), Rawcel, and R1CKONE, brought their signature World Hop sound, blending hip-hop, R&B, Latin rhythms, Brazilian influences, and other global musical elements. With creative roots connected to the extended Black Eyed Peas musical community, the trio represents a generation of artists embracing collaboration and musical diversity.

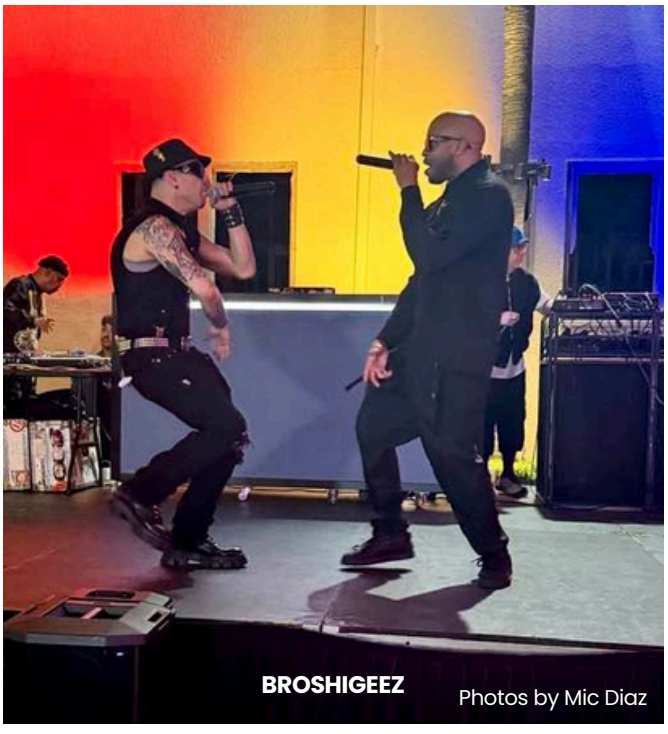
Beyond the performances, Piece of Philippines highlighted the growing presence of Filipino talent in mainstream entertainment. The event brought together performers and supporters who share an appreciation for Filipino heritage and creativity. By holding the celebration at The Lot at Formosa, a historic Hollywood production facility, organizers created an opportunity to showcase Filipino artists in a setting closely associated with the American entertainment industry.

The gathering also underscored the importance of Filipino American History Month as an occasion to recognize cultural contributions, celebrate achievements, and strengthen connections within the community. Through music and entertainment, Piece of Philippines demonstrated how Filipino artists continue to share their stories and creative identities with audiences across generations and cultural backgrounds.

Piece of Philippines was more than an evening of performances. It was a celebration of Filipino pride, artistic expression, and the power of community. With a lineup featuring both emerging and established talent, the event reflected the creativity and diversity of Filipino artists while reinforcing the importance of platforms that bring their work to a wider audience.



SOS



BROSHIGEEZ

Photos by Mic Diaz

COMMUNITY

Piece of Philippines Celebrates Filipino Talent and Culture in Hollywood (*Continued from Page 2*)


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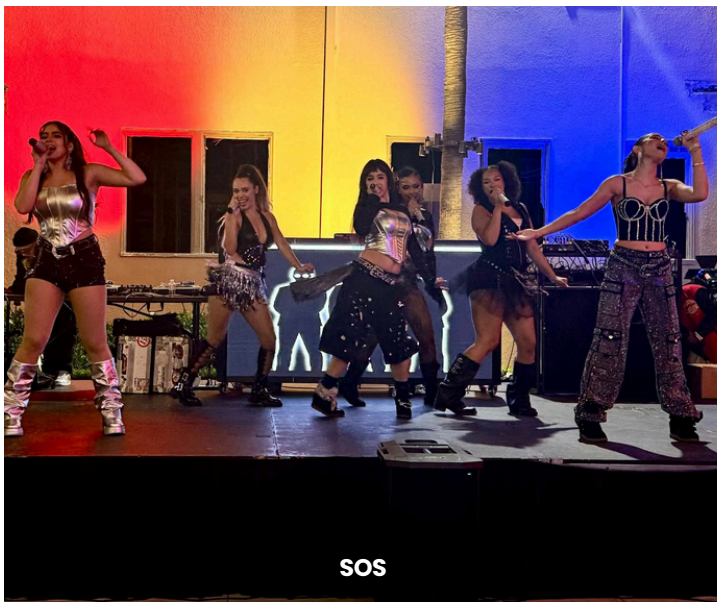
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HONORE

Photos by Mic Diaz

COMMUNITY

Masquerade Ball 2026 Brings Music, Mystery, and Halloween Elegance to Glendale

BY MIC DIAZ | PUBLISHER



Photo by Ronnie Cruz

An evening of elegance, mystery, and Halloween festivities unfolded on October 31, 2026, as **A Night Behind the Mask: Masquerade Ball 2026** brought together community members, healthcare professionals, and students at iVenue LA in Glendale, California. Produced by Bernard Matthew Riccomini, JR Del Rio, and GG Starr, the celebration featured live entertainment, dancing, and a costume competition. Major sponsors included Beverly Hills Creatives, LLC; Aberdeen Global Education, LLC; Aberdeen Institute, LLC; Aberdeen Learning Center, LLC. and Upgrade Financial Group.

Hosted by Bernard Matthew Riccomini and GG Starr, the gathering attracted students from Aberdeen Institute, representatives of Angeles University, healthcare professionals, and community members. Adding to the Halloween atmosphere was Elizabeth Luna, a psychic and tarot reader who offered guests tarot card and psychic readings, bringing an element of mysticism to the masquerade celebration.

Live entertainment featured GG Starr and her band, G Strings, alongside Garth Garcia, the Fil-Am Prince of Pop, and singers Kevin Hermogenes and Michael Jurolan. DJ Roland Libo-on provided music for dancing, with several guests showcasing their ballroom dancing skills.

A surprise adult-themed dance performance added an unexpected twist to the evening's festivities.

The costume competition featured 14 contestants selected by organizer Bernard Matthew Riccomini, with Filipino singer Felson Palad serenading the participants. The judging panel included Dr. Sasha Rarang of Angeles University; Roland Santos, CFO of Sherman Oaks Hospital and Encino Hospital Medical Center; Leah Spencer, official hair and makeup artist (HMUA) and judge; and Dr. Bernard Riccomini, Director of Aberdeen. Marlon Saria, a nurse practitioner at Kaiser Permanente, won the top prize dressed as the Grim Reaper, while Jash Mendoza earned first runner-up honors and Lhope Bantegui was named second runner-up.

Beyond the music and festivities, Masquerade Ball 2026 celebrated community connections, creativity, and camaraderie. With the support of its organizers, sponsors, performers, and guests, the event brought together individuals from the healthcare, education, and broader community sectors for a memorable Halloween celebration.

COMMUNITY

Masquerade Ball 2026 Brings Music, Mystery, and Halloween Elegance to Glendale (*Continued from Page 4*)

















FILM & TELEVISION

Award-Winning *58th* Returns to Los Angeles for Oscars Campaign

BY MIC DIAZ | PUBLISHER

Following its success at international film festivals, the award-winning Philippine animated documentary ***58th*** returned to Los Angeles for **special theatrical screenings at Laemmle Glendale from October 23–29, 2026,** as part of its **campaign for Best Documentary Feature Film consideration at the 99th Academy Awards**. Directed by Carl Joseph Papa and produced by GMA Pictures and GMA Public Affairs, the film is receiving official campaign support from the Film Academy of the Philippines.

The Los Angeles engagement also included a filmmaker Q&A and a reception on October 27 at the home of Lisa Lew, executive producer and co-founder of the Manila International Film Festival (MIFF). Longtime TFC journalist Yong Chavez moderated the Q&A, bringing together writer-director Carl Joseph Papa, co-writer Aica Ganhinhin, animator Joseph Brillantes, and Reynafe Castillo for a discussion about the documentary and its continuing relevance. Castillo's presence brought a personal dimension to the gathering, connecting the film's historical subject to the ongoing pursuit of justice by families affected by the massacre.

Among those attending were Markki Stroem, musical theater actor and radio host; Cerritos Mayor Lynda P. Johnson; Ellen Rodriguez Swing of the Filipino American Chamber of Commerce of Cerritos; and Winston Emano, programming chairman and co-producer of MIFF. The reception brought together filmmakers, media professionals, civic leaders, and members of the Filipino-American community in support of Philippine cinema and the documentary's efforts to reach a wider international audience.

The Los Angeles screenings followed the film's success at the third Manila International Film Festival, held September 3–6, 2026, at the TCL Chinese Theatre in Hollywood, with its awards gala at The Beverly Hilton. *58th* received three major honors: Best Picture in the Documentary category, Best Director for Carl Joseph Papa, and the Shining A Light Award for Reynafe Castillo. The documentary's return to Los Angeles also reflected the importance of theatrical screenings and community engagement in bringing Philippine films to international audiences.

With the involvement of Lisa Lew and the MIFF community, the event created opportunities for filmmakers to connect with industry professionals, journalists, and supporters. The Q&A and reception offered attendees an opportunity to hear directly from the people involved in the documentary and reflect on the importance of preserving stories that might otherwise fade from public attention.

Beyond the screenings and awards, *58th* continues to generate conversations about press freedom, historical remembrance, and justice. As the documentary pursues Academy Awards consideration, its message remains especially relevant: the stories of those who lost their lives in the Maguindanao massacre must not be forgotten. Its Los Angeles engagement demonstrated how Philippine cinema can reach audiences beyond its borders while drawing attention to issues that continue to resonate around the world.



FILM & TELEVISION

Award-Winning 58th Returns to Los Angeles for Oscars Campaign (*Continued from Page 6*)



Reynafe Castillo (daughter of Reynaldo "Bebot" Momay, the subject of the documentary) accepts Best Picture Documentary Award















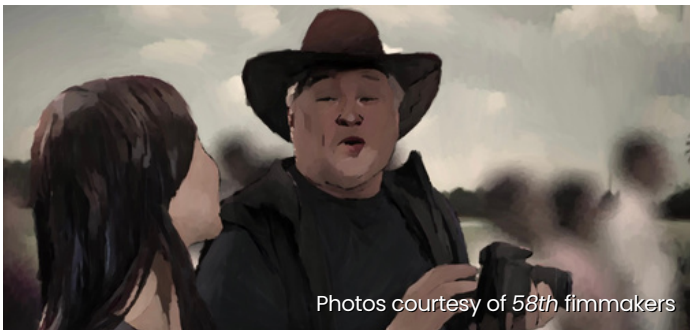
Photos by Ellen Rodriguez-Swing and Mic Diaz

CREATOR SPOTLIGHT

58th: The Filmmakers Behind a Daughter's Fight for Justice

BY MIC DIAZ | PUBLISHER





Photos courtesy of *58th* fimmakers

How do you tell a story that is both deeply personal and politically sensitive? In this episode of *Chat With Mic*, we sit down with Carl Joseph Papa, director; Aica Ganhinhin, co-writer; and Joseph Brillantes, animator, the creative team behind ***58th*, an animated documentary about the 2009 Maguindanao massacre** in the Philippines. Through the story of Reynafe Castillo, whose father, photojournalist Reynaldo “Bebot” Momay, is regarded as the massacre's 58th victim and whose remains have never been found, the film explores grief, remembrance, the search for truth, and the continuing pursuit of justice.

Papa admitted that he initially hesitated to take on the project, fearing he might not do justice to such a sensitive subject. He eventually returned to the purpose behind his filmmaking: giving a voice to stories that deserve to be heard. Ganhinhin, who has collaborated with Papa for approximately a decade, shared similar concerns about tackling a politically charged story. What ultimately convinced her was the importance of reminding audiences that Castillo and her family continue their fight for justice. The project originated with GMA Public Affairs, whose longstanding interest in documenting the massacre helped bring the film into development.

The filmmakers chose to tell the story primarily through Castillo's perspective, combining interviews, archival footage, and rotoscope animation to recreate memories and experiences that cameras could not capture. Brillantes, who previously worked with Papa on *The Missing* and *Next 24 Hours*, explained that more than 90 animators contributed to *58th*. Glaiza de Castro, who portrays Castillo, filmed her scenes against a green screen before animators worked through the footage frame by frame. The team also incorporated painterly effects and black-and-white sequences, using animation to convey the emotional weight of the tragedy without relying on graphic imagery.

Beyond the technical achievements, the filmmakers hope *58th* encourages audiences to reflect on the dangers faced by journalists and the importance of preserving historical memory. Papa emphasized that filmmaking carries a social responsibility, particularly when addressing events whose consequences remain unresolved. Their conversation revealed that *58th* is more than an artistic undertaking. It represents a collective commitment to telling a difficult story with sensitivity, courage, and purpose—and ensuring that Reynafe Castillo's continuing search for justice is not forgotten.





***CHAT WITH MIC* Episode 89: *58th* Filmmakers**
Check out the full interview on *Chat With Mic.*

WELLNESS SPOTLIGHT

Isabella Alonzo-Gatti: Finding Our Way Back

BY MIC DIAZ | PUBLISHER

Why do people who love each other sometimes hurt each other? Can relationships survive betrayal, and what does it take to rebuild trust? These are questions that **Isabella Alonzo-Gatti**, a licensed marriage and family therapist, has explored throughout her personal and professional journey. During our conversation on Chat With Mic, Isabella reflected on how her upbringing, life experiences, and work with couples shaped her understanding of love, emotional intimacy, and the patterns that influence relationships.

Growing up in the Philippines, Isabella was surrounded by a close-knit family filled with music, lively conversations, and strong personalities. Yet she also witnessed contradictions in how people expressed love and treated one another. Her curiosity about relationships eventually led her to study counseling psychology, pursue training in play therapy, and establish a private practice. At 37, she moved to the United States, leaving behind an established career and her daughter. After rebuilding her life in New York, she eventually relocated to California, where she completed additional training and became a licensed marriage and family therapist.

Today, Isabella works primarily with couples experiencing communication difficulties, emotional disconnection, infidelity, and unresolved conflict. She believes that beneath many relationship struggles are deeper questions about trust, emotional security, and belonging. “Am I important to you? Do I matter to you? Can I trust you?” she asked during our conversation. Her approach encourages couples to examine their emotional patterns, understand each other's experiences, and take responsibility for their contributions to conflict.



***CHAT WITH MIC* Episode 88: Isabella Alonzo-Gatti**
Check out the full interview on *Chat With Mic.*

For Isabella, vulnerability and equality are essential to lasting intimacy. “You cannot be intimate with another person and be invulnerable because intimacy requires vulnerability,” she explained. She also emphasized that healthy relationships require partners to stand beside each other as equals rather than allowing one person's needs to dominate. When betrayal occurs, rebuilding trust involves accountability, emotional safety, and a willingness to change the behaviors that damaged the relationship.

Isabella's personal experiences continue to influence her work as a therapist. She acknowledges that understanding relationships is an ongoing journey, even for professionals who help others navigate them. Through her work, she encourages couples to recognize that love requires more than affection—it takes self-awareness, respect, vulnerability, and the willingness to grow together. Her message is ultimately one of hope: meaningful relationships can be strengthened when both partners are willing to understand each other and find their way back to connection.



Photos courtesy of Isabella Alonzo-Gatti and Mic Diaz

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ISSUE ONE | FALL 2026

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SPECIAL FEATURE

In the Mix: Live! — A Celebration of Stories, Music, and Community

BY MIC DIAZ | PUBLISHER

A new chapter in storytelling begins on December 13 as Mic Diaz Presents, in cooperation with WestLoft LA, celebrates the launch of Issue One of *In the Mix Magazine* with In the Mix: Live!, a holiday mixer bringing together artists, entrepreneurs, community leaders, and supporters for an evening of music, fashion, and meaningful connections.

Featuring Ogie Diaz and Mama Loi on the cover, the Fall 2026 issue brings together stories and perspectives from individuals across entertainment, business, health and wellness, relationships, technology, and community leadership. Guided by the theme A World of Stories & Ideas, the magazine celebrates the experiences, accomplishments, and conversations that connect people from different backgrounds and professions.

For publisher Mic Diaz, the magazine represents an expansion of the storytelling that began with her talk show, *Chat With Mic*. Many of the personalities featured in Issue One first shared their journeys through conversations on the show, which have since developed into editorial features offering readers a deeper understanding of the people behind the stories. The publication also builds on the reach of *In the Mix Weekly* and *Freshly Mixed*, creating opportunities for stories to connect with audiences across multiple platforms.

The December 13 celebration will feature live performances by Broshigeez, GG Starr, Caren Mempin, Jascel Valencia, Mark John Almeria, Alvin Del Rosario, Ysabella Loyola, and Crissangel Gomez. Guests can also look forward to a fashion show, DJ entertainment, food, drinks, and a holiday mixer hosted by Edward Gibson. The evening offers an opportunity for performers, readers, businesses, and community members to connect in a festive and welcoming setting.

Beyond the entertainment, In the Mix: Live! celebrates the individuals and collaborations that have helped bring the magazine to life. From the personalities featured in its pages to the writers, creative collaborators, advertisers, and supporters behind the publication, the event recognizes the value of bringing different voices and perspectives together.



As In the Mix Magazine begins its journey, the publication aims to create a space where stories can reach beyond individual communities, industries, and generations. Through thoughtful features and personal perspectives, the magazine seeks to introduce readers to people they may not otherwise encounter, encourage new conversations, and inspire connections that extend beyond the printed page. The December 13 launch marks the beginning of that vision, bringing the spirit of the magazine to life through a shared celebration.

In the Mix: Live! takes place on Sunday, December 13, 2026, from 6 PM to 11 PM, at WestLoft LA, 5021 W. Jefferson Blvd., Los Angeles. General admission is $40 and includes food and drinks. VIP admission is $100 and includes food and drinks, one printed copy of the magazine, a swag bag, and MDP Circle recognition and updates.

For tickets and information, contact Mic Diaz at 213.677.9768 or visit micdiazpresents.com. Guests are encouraged to dress to impress and celebrate the holiday season while welcoming the first issue of In the Mix Magazine.

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