IN THE MIX weekly
BY MIC DIAZ PRESENTS
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Games, Kantahan, and Filipino Fiesta Spirit Take Over Island Pacific

BY MIC DIAZ | PUBLISHER











Filipino American History Month celebrations brought music, dancing, food, and community together on October 11, 2026, as Island Pacific Supermarket hosted **FAHM Games & Kantahan**. Organized by Giselle Tongi, Island Pacific's Director of Communications and Community Partnerships, the event transformed the supermarket into a lively gathering place celebrating Filipino culture and traditions. Garry Lim hosted the festivities, while ZIN Jackie led an enthusiastic group of Zumba dancers and DJ Rose kept the energy going with music. Seasoned acoustic guitarist Ronnie Cruz entertained guests with live music, accompanied by his wife, Rose, and their daughter, who also performed, adding a special family touch to the celebration.



Another highlight was the opening of Mang Ramon's Karinderya, bringing familiar Filipino street food favorites right into the middle of the supermarket. And, of course, no Filipino gathering would be complete without karaoke! Guests enjoyed singing, games, and shared moments of laughter, reflecting the warmth and camaraderie that define Filipino celebrations. The gathering also embodied the Filipino value of *kapwa*, the recognition of our shared humanity and interconnectedness, where everyone is welcomed and treated as part of a larger community. More than a festive gathering, FAHM Games & Kantahan celebrated the spirit of *bayanihan*, bringing generations together through food, music, dance, and a shared appreciation of Filipino heritage.





COMMUNITY

Los Angeles City Hall Celebrates Filipino American History Month

BY MIC DIAZ | PUBLISHER

Filipino-American heritage, culture, and community leadership took center stage at Los Angeles City Hall on Friday, October 9, 2026, during a daylong celebration of **Filipino American History Month (FAHM)**. The festivities began with a presentation before the Los Angeles City Council by the Los Angeles Filipino Association of City Employees (LAFACE), led by its President Janelle Parra and members. Singer-songwriter Kiana Valenciano performed the Philippine national anthem, while Found Sound LA delivered two musical selections, including “BRB” from the film *Forgotten Island*. Models showcased Filipino-inspired creations by designer Carl Andrada, adding a colorful celebration of Philippine heritage.

The City Council recognized several individuals for their contributions to music, culture, and community, including Joe Bataan, the legendary King of Latin Soul; Dr. Fatima Bustos-Choy; and Filipino-Norwegian R&B singer HILLARI. Councilmembers extended their congratulations to the Filipino-American community, joined by Los Angeles City Controller Kenneth Mejia. Also present was Consul Maynard S. Maleon, representing the Philippine Consulate General in Los Angeles. The celebration continued with the LAFACE luncheon at City Hall's Tom Bradley Room, emceed by Sugar Baltazar. Speakers included Bustos-Choy, Susana Reyes, Councilmembers Hugo Soto-Martínez and Ysabel Jurado, and Mejia. Annie Nepomuceno represented ManoHealth, while Thirdy Berina, Miko Zuniga, and Bryenna De Leon provided musical entertainment. Lunch was catered by Tita Lina's.

By late afternoon, the celebration moved to City Hall's forecourt steps for an evening program presented with the support of Mayor Karen Bass and Councilmember Ysabel Jurado. Hosted by Johneric Concordia, owner of The Park's Finest, the festivities featured performances by Joe Bataan, HILLARI, Ancestral Vision Movement and spoken-word artist Alison De La Cruz. Gabriela Los Angeles and Ginger Dimapasok also received certificates of recognition. Florante Peter Ibanez and Gerlie Collado were likewise honored during the celebration before the lighting ceremony. Guests enjoyed Filipino cuisine from Sampa, with Chef Josh Espinosa on-site, and halo-halo from Mags Matamis by Tim's Thai Tea.

More than a day of performances and recognition, the celebration reflected the Filipino values of *kapwa* and *bayanihan*—shared identity, connection, and collective support. Through music, fashion, food, public service, and community advocacy, Los Angeles City Hall became a gathering place honoring Filipino-American contributions while celebrating the heritage that continues to connect generations.



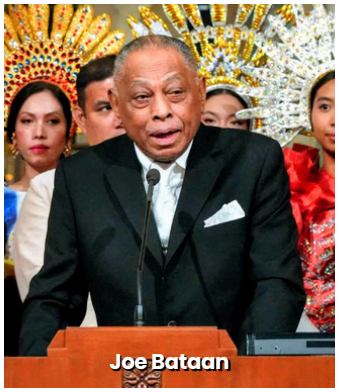
LAFACE President Janelle Parra
Photos by Megan Ignacio



Councilmember Ysabel Jurado



Kiana Valenciano

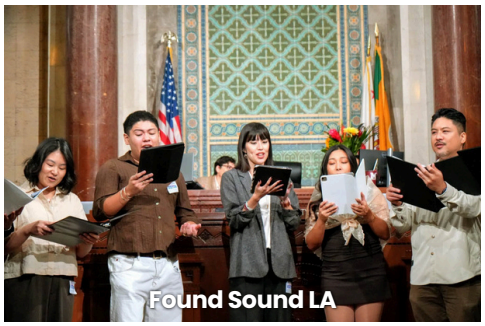


Joe Bataan

COMMUNITY

Los Angeles City Hall Celebrates Filipino American History Month (*Continued from Page 2*)




Found Sound LA


City Controller, Kenneth Mejia, Consul Maynard Maleon, HILLARI, Dr. Fatima Bustos-Choy, Joe Bataan, Councilmember Ysabel Jurado, Janelle Parra


Councilmember Ysabel Jurado, Janelle Parra, Carl Andrada & models


Honorees with LAFACE


PNASC

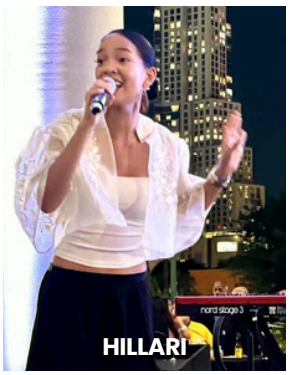

Joe Bataan


Mayor Karen Bass


Johneric Concordia


Ginger Dimapasok


Gabriela Los Angeles


HILLARI


Mags Matamis by Tim's Thai Tea


Ancestral Vision Movement


Councilmember Hugo Soto-Martinez


Photos by Megan Ignacio and Mic Diaz

COMMUNITY

Baryo Bazaar Brings Filipino Creativity to Grand Central Market

BY MIC DIAZ | PUBLISHER

















Filipino American History Month brought a celebration of culture, creativity, and entrepreneurship to Downtown Los Angeles through **Baryo Bazaar**, a collaboration between BARYO and the historic Grand Central Market. Held every Saturday throughout October, the bazaar features a rotating lineup of Filipino-owned businesses, offering entrepreneurs and creatives an opportunity to showcase their products to a wider audience. The partnership is part of Grand Central Market's monthlong Filipino American History Month programming, highlighting Filipino food, businesses, and cultural contributions within one of Los Angeles' most iconic gathering places.

Last Saturday, October 17, I encountered several vendors, including Saint Michael Chicharon, Narra, Para Sa'Yo, and Between Naps Bakery, each showcasing products that reflect the diversity and entrepreneurial spirit of the Filipino-American community. With different vendors featured each Saturday, Baryo Bazaar encourages visitors to discover new businesses while supporting local entrepreneurs. More than a marketplace, the event embodies the Filipino values of kapwa and bayanihan, creating opportunities for connection, collaboration, and community support. It is a reminder that celebrating Filipino-American history also means recognizing the small businesses and creative voices shaping its future.

COMMUNITY

Almuchow Atbp Celebrates Filipino American History Month

BY MIC DIAZ | PUBLISHER







Filipino food, live entertainment, and community spirit came together on Saturday, October 17, 2026, as **Almuchow Atbp** hosted **Pistahan sa Almuchow**, a special celebration of Filipino American History Month. Guests enjoyed favorite Filipino dishes and performances by local Filipino-American artists, including award-winning singer Caren Mempin, who recently released her new single, “Sana Ay Ikaw Na Nga,” on October 9 and announced an upcoming show. Alvin del Rosario, who also recently released a single and is working on a new album, joined the lineup. Butch Lara, known for performing rock classics from the 1960s and 1970s with his band, surprised the audience with heartfelt ballads that showcased his vocal versatility. His impromptu duet with Mempin became one of the evening's unexpected highlights.









Other performers included Francis Mendoza, JR Cinco, and Ted Mendoza, while acoustic guitarist Ronnie Cruz accompanied several singers throughout the evening. Among the guests was Agnes Puno-Gonzalez, a Rowland Unified School District Board of Education member seeking reelection. Beyond the celebration, Almuchow Atbp continues to bring Filipino flavors and entertainment to the San Gabriel Valley. Throughout the “ber” months, the restaurant is offering Kanto-Style Pares Nights, Monday through Thursday from 6 to 9 p.m., featuring a favorite Filipino street-food dish. With more shows and community gatherings planned in the coming months, Almuchow continues to serve as a neighborhood destination for Filipino cuisine, live music, and cultural celebrations.

CREATOR SPOTLIGHT

Ysabella Loyola: Finding Her Voice Through Music

BY MIC DIAZ | PUBLISHER

Filipino-American singer and songwriter **Ysabella Loyola** is making her mark in the Los Angeles Filipino-American community through her performances and original music. A familiar face at community events, where she has performed both the Philippine and American national anthems, Loyola is steadily developing her artistic identity. During a recent episode of *Chat With Mic*, she shared her musical journey, creative inspirations, and dreams of building a career in the music industry.

Loyola's passion for music began at an early age, influenced by her mother's love for singing. By the age of five or six, she was already exploring the piano and discovering her interest in performing. Although naturally shy, she finds confidence and freedom of expression onstage. Her early influences included Lea Salonga and Disney classics such as "Reflection" and "Part of Your World." Today, she draws inspiration from K-pop and Filipino-American singer-songwriter Olivia Rodrigo, whose emotionally expressive lyrics and pop-rock sound have influenced her songwriting.

Her original song "Late August," written when she was approximately nine or ten years old, explores the experience of growing apart from a friend. Available on Spotify, Apple Music, and other streaming platforms, the song reflects her ability to transform personal experiences into relatable music. Loyola performed a portion of the song during her *Chat With Mic* interview and shared that she is working on new material. She hopes her music will eventually encourage conversations about mental health, self-expression, and the challenges facing young people.

Loyola also recognizes the importance of Filipino representation in entertainment. Seeing artists such as Olivia Rodrigo and Bruno Mars succeed internationally inspires her to pursue her own ambitions. With encouragement from her parents, who have taught her to embrace mistakes as opportunities for improvement, she continues to develop her skills as a performer and songwriter. Her future goals include releasing albums, exploring musical theater, and someday winning a Grammy Award.

As she continues her musical journey, Loyola hopes to inspire other young people to believe in themselves and pursue their passions. She emphasizes the importance of family support, self-confidence, and understanding between generations. Through her original compositions and performances, Ysabella Loyola is finding her voice while contributing to a new generation of Filipino-American artists determined to share their stories through music.



Photos courtesy of Jo Anne Lim and Mic Diaz



***CHAT WITH MIC* Episode 85: Ysabella Loyola**
Check out the full interview on *Chat With Mic.*

FASHION & STYLE

House of Musa Brings Fashion With a Purpose to LA Fashion Week

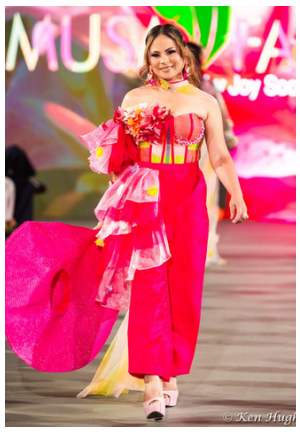
BY MIC DIAZ | PUBLISHER













Filipino creativity and sustainable fashion took center stage on Saturday, October 17, 2026, as **House of Musa** showcased its designs during The Bureau Fashion Week at The Lot Studios in West Hollywood. Founded by Gleizl Joy Soo, House of Musa is known for incorporating banana-fiber textiles into contemporary fashion, highlighting the Philippines' natural resources and traditional craftsmanship. The collection featured designs that combined elegance, innovation, and cultural identity, with models including Michel Molina, Jhoyce Saberon and Rose Lokelani Eberhard bringing the creations to life on the runway.

What distinguishes House of Musa is its commitment to creating fashion with a greater purpose. Beyond producing distinctive garments, the brand supports livelihood opportunities for incarcerated women in Davao, Philippines, providing opportunities to develop skills and participate in textile craftsmanship. By incorporating sustainable materials and supporting Filipino artisans, House of Musa demonstrates how fashion can contribute to economic empowerment while preserving traditional craftsmanship. Its charitable initiatives also extend to organizations such as Angels' Haven in Tagum City, reflecting the brand's commitment to social responsibility and community development.

Through its participation in LA Fashion Week, House of Musa introduced its mission and Filipino craftsmanship to a wider international audience. The runway presentation was more than a showcase of clothing; it was an opportunity to highlight the people, traditions, and communities behind the designs. By combining sustainable fashion with social impact, House of Musa continues to demonstrate how Filipino creativity can make a meaningful contribution to the global fashion industry.

BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT

Tony “Stitch Doctor” Dennis: From Handmade T-Shirts to Fashion Brand

BY MIC DIAZ | PUBLISHER



What began with handmade T-shirts in his grandmother's backyard eventually became a career spanning fashion, entertainment, and custom design for **Tony “Stitch Doctor” Dennis**. During a recent episode of *Chat With Mic*, the Buffalo, New York native shared how his creative journey began in the early 1990s, when he experimented with rubber compounds from his workplace to create designs on T-shirts for friends. What started as a hobby soon developed into No Names Designs, a clothing brand he launched in 1992 that incorporated African American history, identity, and social issues into wearable art.

Growing up in Buffalo, Dennis had always been drawn to art and creativity, although his early ambitions included becoming a professional football player. His interest in fashion developed unexpectedly when he began making shirts for friends to wear during outings to Toronto. Encouraged by their positive reactions, he realized that his designs had commercial potential. After relocating to Iowa for work, he received encouragement to explore silk-screen printing, helping him turn his creative experiments into a more established clothing business.

Dennis began selling his designs at college campuses, Black Expos, and events across the country. His entrepreneurial journey included traveling to cities such as Chicago, Kansas City, Indianapolis, New York, and Atlanta to introduce his merchandise to new customers. The experience taught him valuable lessons about business, including overcoming setbacks such as having merchandise stolen during a trip. Rather than abandoning his ambitions, Dennis continued developing his products and expanding his customer base.

His move to Atlanta marked an important turning point. Initially focused on graphic T-shirts, Dennis gradually expanded into custom clothing, tailoring, and fashion design. Largely self-taught, he learned to sew by attaching labels to his garments before developing skills in alterations and garment construction. With encouragement from his wife, Morgana, and guidance from experienced craftspeople, he became increasingly confident in his abilities and began participating in fashion shows.



Photos courtesy of Tony Dennis



***CHAT WITH MIC* Episode 73: Tony Dennis**
Check out the full interview on *Chat With Mic.*

BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT

Tony "Stitch Doctor" Dennis: From Handmade T-Shirts to Fashion Brand (*Continued from Page 8)*

In Atlanta, Dennis established Stitches, a tailoring and custom-design business that opened doors to the entertainment industry. His work led to opportunities involving Tyler Perry Studios, GQ magazine, and JCPenney projects associated with Shaquille O'Neal, along with custom pieces for musicians and entertainment professionals. His nickname, "Stitch Doctor," originated from friends who watched him spend countless hours sewing, refining designs, and perfecting his craft. What began as a playful nickname eventually became part of his professional identity.

As his reputation grew, Dennis expanded into designing custom bags, backpacks, and accessories. One of his early bag projects began when Morgana needed a specially designed laptop bag for her workplace. That experience introduced him to another area of product development and eventually led to projects involving artists such as 50 Cent and music producer Drumma Boy. His willingness to explore new materials, products, and techniques allowed him to diversify his business while maintaining his commitment to craftsmanship.

After relocating to Los Angeles in 2021, Dennis began concentrating on developing his own Tony Dennis brand, encompassing clothing, hats, bags, and accessories. His journey reflects the evolution of an independent entrepreneur who has continually adapted to changing opportunities without losing sight of his creative roots. From selling handmade T-shirts to working on projects connected to major entertainment personalities, Dennis has built his career through practical experience, professional relationships, and a willingness to keep learning.

Throughout his journey, Dennis credits the women who encouraged him, including those who recognized his talent before he fully believed in himself. He speaks openly about overcoming self-doubt and learning to embrace his abilities as a designer and entrepreneur. His advice to aspiring creatives is simple: "Stick to your dreams, believe in yourself." For Dennis, success has been built through years of dedication, continuous learning, and the courage to pursue his vision—one stitch at a time.





Photos courtesy of Tony Dennis

FILIPINO AMERICAN HISTORY MONTH

PEOPLE
HISTORY
CULTURE
COMMUNITY
CREATIVITY
OUR FUTURE

COMMUNITY EVENTS • OCTOBER 2026

Celebrating Filipino American history, culture, community and creativity across Southern California

OCT 18 SUN

- **Kultura Pilipino Day** All Day
  Disneyland | ORANGE COUNTY | @dkababayan
- **2nd Annual Filipino American Fiesta**
  Museum of Ventura County | VENTURA

OCT 21 WED

- **The Filipino Mic Drop** 7:00 – 10:00 PM
  Mic Drop Karaoke, 8811 Santa Monica Blvd.
  WEST HOLLYWOOD

OCT 22-23 THU–FRI

- **FilAm FunFest** Various times
  OC FilAm Comedian Shows | ORANGE COUNTY

OCT 23 FRI

- **Katipunan Poetry Slam** 6:30 PM
  Historic Filipinotown, 1740 W. Temple St.
  LOS ANGELES

OCT 24 SAT

- **Parol Pamilya Play** 2:00 – 5:00 PM
  KUBO LB, 3976 Atlantic Ave. | LONG BEACH
- **Filipinup FAHM Fest** 6:30 – 10:00 PM
  The Post Climbing, 1100 N. Fair Oaks Ave. | PASADENA
- **Carson FAHM Celebration** 10:00 AM
  Carson Event Center, 801 E. Carson St. | CARSON
- **Larry Itilong Day Festival** 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM
  Bresee Foundation, 184 Bimini Pl. | LOS ANGELES
- **Baryo x Grand Central Market Bazaar** 12:00 – 5:00 PM
  Grand Central Market, 317 S. Broadway | LOS ANGELES
- **Philippine Souvenir Woodwork Workshop** 12:00 – 2:00 PM
  Harte Neighborhood Library, 1595 W. Willow St. | LONG BEACH

OCT 25 SUN

- **Lumpia Laps** 9:00 AM
  Sports Basement, 2100 N. Bellflower Blvd. | LONG BEACH
- **ManilaSound: Daytime Disco** 4:00 – 9:00 PM
  Benny Boy Brewing, 1821 Daly St. | LOS ANGELES
- **FAHM & Howl O Ween** 12:00 – 7:00 PM
  Café 86, 301 S. Glendora Ave. | WEST COVINA
- **Piece of Philippines: Filipinos in Hollywood**
  Hollywood | @pieceofphilippines
- **1st Creative Book Writing Certification Workshop & WAC's Book Turnover Ceremony** 2:00 PM
  Glendale Recreation Center (ARC), Dinner Hall | GLENDALE
- **P.O.P. – Piece of Philippines** 4:00 PM
  The Lot at Formosa, 1041 N. Formosa Ave. | WEST HOLLYWOOD

OCT 26 MON

- **Filipino American History Month Celebration** 12:00 – 6:00 PM
  Café 86 | WEST COVINA

OCT 27 TUE

- **Kuya Lord x Kasama Kamayan**

OCT 29 THU

- **Mahjong Lumpia Collab** 6:00 – 9:00 PM
  Green Check | ORANGE COUNTY

OCT 31 SAT

- **Mabuhay CU FAHM Poster Making Contest**
  MCU | CARSON
- **Masquerade Ball** 6:00 PM
  Ivenue, 511 S. Central Ave. | GLENDALE

Know of a Filipino American History Month event we should add?
Send your event information to **Mic Diaz Presents.**

IN THE MIX
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MR. ARTHUR DELA ROSA @ 626.782.1690

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