

The Drifters Live at Fiesta In America!

Written by Special to the Filipino Reporter
Wednesday, 21 June 2017 16:14



According to Wikipedia, the Drifters are a long-lasting American doo-wop and R&B/soul vocal group. They were originally formed to serve as a backing group for Clyde McPhatter (of Billy Ward and his Dominoes) in 1953. There were three Golden eras of the Drifters; the early 1950s, the 1960s and the early 1970s.

Few American vocal groups can be truly called legendary, yet the Drifters have carved their names at the top of the rhythm-and-blues, pop and doo-wop pyramid of legends.

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For the first time in Fil-Am community history, the '50s to '70s Billboard chart-toppers will headline an equally enduring expo and cultural show: Fiesta In America!

The Drifters will traipse down memory lane with their avid Filipino fans on Aug. 12, starting at 12 noon; and Aug. 13, starting at 10 a.m. with Mass and Santacruzian parade, at New Jersey's Meadowlands Expo Center in Secaucus, N.J.

"This year will mark Fiesta In America's 19th Anniversary," Nanding Mendez, Fiesta In America's President and CEO, announced.

"To celebrate our milestone, I can think of no musical act that can refresh our fans' memories of youthful romance better than the Drifters, accompanied by their full band. The concert will truly be one for the ages."

The group's line-up has evolved several times since the Drifters were formed in 1953, but they are collectively best-remembered for 13 Billboard Hot 100 hits that have become timeless classics.

Their discography consists of gold records such as "Save the Last Dance for Me" (a massive single in 1960, it was also a recent cover hit by Michael Bublé), "There Goes My Baby" (the first rock-and-roll record to feature a string orchestra), "This Magic Moment," "Up on the Roof," "On Broadway" (which reached Number 5 in the U.S.), and "Under the Boardwalk."

The latter is still an FM radio adult-contemporary staple; it was covered by Bruce Willis, the Rolling Stones, Bette Midler and other artists.

Among various honors, the Drifters have been enshrined in the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame twice as a group.

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Front men Clyde McPhatter and Ben E. King were inducted in the Hall of Fame as individual artists.



As part of Fiesta In America's total entertainment package, the Drifters' concert will be opened by top Filipino acts of today and the recent past.

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Super-songwriter and singer Ray Valera (of “Mr. DJ” fame in the ‘70s), new Tawag ng Tanghalan Grand Champion Noven Belleza, and American Idol! Runner-up Jessica Sanchez will be joined on the show’s roster by original Pilipino music forerunners Spanky Rigor and Roger Rigor of VST & Company, Fe de los Reyes, Eva Caparas of Music & Magic, promising new talents from the New York region such as the Band of Brothers, and multicultural dancers.

According to Ogie Afable, who produces the cultural show, “it will be across-generational musicfest that will be remembered by the young and the forever-young.”

Fiesta In America is a unique blend of trade exhibits (Total Wellness is the 2016 theme), free workshops, a Sunday Mass and Santacruzán, a Food Court of native dishes, plus artistic and fun activities for all age groups.

Philippine and U.S. exhibitors and sponsors are provided with two days to conduct on-the-spot sales and branding.

Tickets for the each day event are available online at www.fiestainamerica.com.

Or call (212) 682-6610.

Pre-event \$22; \$25 at the door; \$65 VIP tickets.

Children under 6 years old-Free.

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The expo even offers a pre-event gala, the People's Ball on Aug. 11, 6 p.m., at the Meadowlands Hilton in Secaucus, N.J. featuring local elective officials, consular dignitaries, as well as community and business leaders.

To attend this "fiesta of nostalgia" led by the Drifters, and to sponsor or exhibit, call 212-682-6610 or e-mail info@fiestainamerica.com.

Videos and photo galleries of past editions are available at www.fiestainamerica.com and on Facebook.



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Singing sensation Jessica Sanchez.