

Asia's Songbird is part of the Divas4Divas concert tour

Artist Highlight: Regine Velasquez



albums in Asia, such as *Drawn*, *R2K* and *Regine Live! Songbird Sings the Classics*. In 2001, she released *Reigne*, her first offering of original material in two years.

Music, it turns out, was only the first arena for her success. As a spokesperson, she helped increase the presence of American fast-food chains like KFC and Wendy's in Asia. As an actress, she has appeared in a number of Filipino films that, it's safe to say, succeeded exclusively because of Regine's star power.

In 2002, Regine was true to form, releasing her most successful movie (*Ikaw Lamang Hanggang Ngayon*) to date. Add to that an MTV Asia award for "Best Philippine Artist," coupled with a "Box Office Queen" award, which only cemented her status as the best performer the country has ever seen.

As a television host, her talent search shows has continually received high ratings since *Star For a Night* which led her to more shows like *Search For a Star* and *Pinoy Pop Superstar* which is on its third year already. These talent searches that Regine hosted has produced superstars and hit makers of today's generation: Sarah Geronimo, Mark Bautista, Rachele Ann Go, Mau Marcelo, Jonalyn Viray, and Gerald Santos.

2006 marked Regine's 20th anniversary in the music industry. She started the year by releasing her 14th album, *Covers: Volume 2*. Her most ambitious production to date, the album is made up of foreign pop favorites presented with innovative arrangements from R&B/hip hop, pop rock, pop ballad, and blues showcasing her musical versatility. Together with Cacai Velasquez, Ogie Alcasid and Raul Mitra, Regine launched a record label, IndiMusic. On October 11, Velasquez reunited with Robin Padilla on the big screen on a movie entitled *Till I Met You*.

In January, 2007, Velasquez was an honoree during People Asia Magazine's "People of the Year" awarding ceremonies. She was the recipient of an Exemplary Achievement Award for her significant contribution in the field of music and entertainment. She shared the honor with prima ballerina Lisa Macuja-Elizalde, top fashion designer Lulu Tan-Gan and broadcast icon Charo Santos-Concio of ABS-CBN.

Catch Regine in this year's anticipated concert series *Divas 4 Divas* with Kuh Ledesma, Zsa Zsa Padilla and Pops Fernandez at the San Jose University, Event Center. April 3, 2009 at 7pm.

For information call Cecile at 707-645-1098, Gabe at 707-590-3663 or the box office at 408-998-8497.

Please check out our website at www.divas4divas.com.

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Regine Velasquez was born in Manila, Philippines on April 22, 1970. She came from a poor family. The family was so poor that her mother would not eat so she can give it to her children. They didn't have any TV so they would go to their neighbor to watch. They also didn't have water so they would shower under the rain with soap!

They moved to Leyte where Regine was trained by her father in the sea of Henundayan, Southern Leyte. At age nine, Regine and her family moved to Bulacan. She has a younger sister named Cacai (married), a younger brother named Jojo, and twin sisters, Diane and Deca (both married).

Regine credits her parents for getting her involved in the music business when they let Regine join singing competitions in remote provinces, and to undergo intensive singing lessons led by her father. Regine was submerged into the water up to her neck and was singing. She also sacrificed eating ice cream until 15 years old.

There were a lot of singing in Regine's house. At two to three years of age, Regine's dad would sing a lullaby to get her to sleep, and the song which her dad usually sang was *You'll Never Know*. When she was about three or four, Regine could interpret a whole song. The first song that she was able to memorize on her own was Sharon Cuneta's *Mr. DJ*. She sang songs of The Carpenters like *Close To You*, and songs from Imelda Papin like *Bakit (Why)*. It was one of Regine's favorites as a child.

Regine had so many ambitions as a young child (she wanted to be a nun, nurse, doctor) but by the age of six, she finally decided that she wanted to sing, so she joined an amateur singing contest. The very first song she sang in a contest was entitled, *Buhat Ng Kita'y Makilala (Ever Since I Met You)*. Regine didn't know how to read at that time so her father would sing it to her, and she would memorize each word her father had sang. Regine lost that contest, but was given a special award for her brave performance. Her constant contest piece then was *Bakit Ako Mahihiya*. Among the 200 competitions she joined in, Regine won 67 of them.

By age 25, Regine became an international (Asian) recording artist. She became well-known in Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia, Taiwan, Korea, Bangkok with her album, *Listen Without Prejudice* (Regine's favorite album!) and even collaborated with Jacky Cheung for the song, *In Love With You*.

Eventually, her star shone brighter year after year. Regine became an international star and released three multi-platinum albums in Asia. She toured around the Philippines, and in various countries, captivating jampacked crowds with her performances. She is really a crowd favorite, in large part to her charm and endearing personality. "I work hard at what I do. I try to do better all the time," she says.

In 2000, Regine finally became known as the "Concert Queen" after selling out her R2K concert on back-to-back nights. That concert also won an award as the best concert of the year and was hailed as the greatest show by an Asian performer in the last 25 years.

The exposure rocketed her from Filipino celebrity to Asian music superstar. Almost overnight, she began selling out stadium concerts and put out several multi-platinum

Renowned dermatologist Dr. Zein Obagi hosts seminar on March 7 in Downtown SF

In the current economic climate, it's more important than ever that women spend their money on products that really work instead of formulas that don't measure up. In the pursuit of products that promise to lift, tuck, firm and plump, it's easy to spend a fortune without seeing a return on your investment.

On March 7, 2009, internationally renowned dermatologist Dr. Zein Obagi will host a seminar debunking common anti-aging myths and revealing what formulas and ingredients really work. Join Dr. Obagi at the Nordstrom Conference Center in San Francisco (865 Market Street) from 11am to 1pm for a look at the facts—and fictions—behind anti-aging skincare.

"Women are spending a lot of time and money on products that don't deliver to get rid of their lines, wrinkles and age spots, and that's unfortunate," says Dr. Obagi. "The fact is that many of these products don't work, and can even accelerate the signs of aging."

Now, in his tell-it-like-it-is, no-holds-barred style, Dr. Obagi will speak about some of the new over-the-counter anti-aging products at his upcoming seminar. Called *Face the Facts* the seminar will reveal what products and procedures work, and which ones are a waste

of time and money. Armed with the latest research, Dr. Obagi will shed light on topical skincare, as well as explain the results and risks of medical procedures.

For more information and reservations, call 415-243-8500, x 1423. At the conclusion of the seminar, personal consultations will be available with Dianne Bedford, MSN, of the Obagi Skin Health Institute.

The *Face the Facts* seminar cost is only \$25, redeemable with a purchase of any ZO Skin Health product.

(Dr. Obagi, well-known for his charismatic, provocative style, is often referred to as a "maverick" in skin care who doesn't always agree with his fellow dermatologists. His interviews, quotes and accolades include *USA Today*, *Vogue*, *Allure*, *InStyle*, *US Weekly*, *Fox News*, *ABC News*, *Dermatology Times* and *Cosmetic Dermatology*.) *

*Advertising Supplement

SOUNDS FAMILIAR

By BABY A. GIL
Philstar.com

Falling in love with Rachele Ann

Rachele Ann Go balked upon being asked to record *Feelings*, the Morris Albert composition that became a monster hit during the late '70s for her new album. The song was just too big, too phenomenal in sales and popularity that there came a point when people just refused to listen to *Feelings* anymore. That was also the reason why the song became the butt of jokes worldwide. People said they found its simple lyrics corny. You know how it goes, *Feelings*, nothing more than feelings, and its inane unrealistic sentiments. Truth to tell, Rachele Ann's *bakit 'yon* reaction had already been heard and will surely be heard again many times in the future even from singers who only know the song by its reputation.

But it can never be denied that *Feelings* is a beautiful song and deserves to be heard again and again through the ages. *Maganda pala*, was Rachele Ann's reaction after listening to the song. And indeed it is. Once you get into the emotions expressed in the song and realize that it is about the tidal wave of feelings that comes with being in love, you really get to appreciate *Feelings*. As a result *Feelings* became one of the cuts now included in Rachele Ann's new album *Falling in Love*. The CD is made up of beautiful songs and *Feelings* truly deserves a place in a collection like that.

Falling in Love is not about a particular era. The songs do not come from a specific genre. What the cuts have in common is that they are old songs about love, happy and

ecstatic one moment, then sad and broken-hearted in another. Rachele Ann does them well. This girl is probably the most versatile young singer around, one of the few who can go from rock to R&B to heart-wrenching ballads without missing a beat and sound good in every way. Remember, her last release was the live-recorded *Rachele Ann Rocks*. Now *Falling in Love* has opened new doors for her and it is the kind that leads to a long, successful career.

Aside from *Feelings*, *Falling in Love* also includes *If by Bread*; *Of All the Things* by Dennis Lambert; *I'll Always Love You* by Taylor Dayne; *Somebody Waiting* by Karen Wyman; *I Got Caught Dancing Again* by the Hues Corporation; *If You Don't Know Me* by Now originally by Harold Melvin & the Blue Notes but now better known as a hit by Simply Red; *Didn't We* by Jim Webb; *Let the Pain Remain*, a Willy Cruz composition popularized by Basil Valdez; *Traces* by The Classics IV, which was also successfully covered by the Lettermen; *This Time I'll Be Sweeter* by Angela Boffill; *You and Me Against the World* by Helen Reddy; *You and I* by Petula Clark from the motion picture *Goodbye Mr. Chips*; and the Richard Rodgers and Lorenz Hart composition *All the Things You Are*, which is so old and also so beautiful and has been recorded and performed by so many singers in the past 70 or 80 years.

Just like the songs it contains, *Falling in Love* is a beautiful album. It is the kind you can listen to all the time. But it is also a fact that this is another album of covers. That is all that



our singers seem to be recording at the moment. Sharon Cuneta, Martin Nievera, Regine Velasquez, Lani Misalucha and so many of the local big names have embarked on the oldies bandwagon. The CDs sound great. They sell a lot of copies. They keep the music industry alive during difficult times. Still I find it disheartening that this is the lifeline we have latched on to. And pity those who would be recording 20 or more years from now. They will have very few songs to cover from this era because we have stopped making new hits.

Some that they might find worthy of being revived are the titles in this week's Pinoy MYX countdown of top videos. Take note though that several of them are also cover versions. *You Changed My Life* by Sarah Geronimo; *Hintay* by Callalily; *Heart to Heart* by Kyla; *Di Na Mababawi* by Sponge Cola; *Senti* by Moonstar88; *Old Friend* by Kyla; *And I Love You So* by Regine Velasquez; *If You're Not the One* by Nikki Gil; *Lifeline* by KJwan; *Tayong Dalawa* by Gary Valenciano.

Your Universe by Rico Blanco; *Ibrahim* by Wolfgang; *Gusto Ko Lamang Sa Buhay* by Itchyworms; *FX* by Pedicab; *Blue Monday* by Miguel Escudeta; *Igiling* by Janno Gibbs; *Softly Saying Sorry* by Ariel Rivera; *Rendezvous* by Dice & K9 Mobbstar; *There You'll Be* by Nina; and *Last Day on a Cruise Ship* by Bamboo. ■

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