

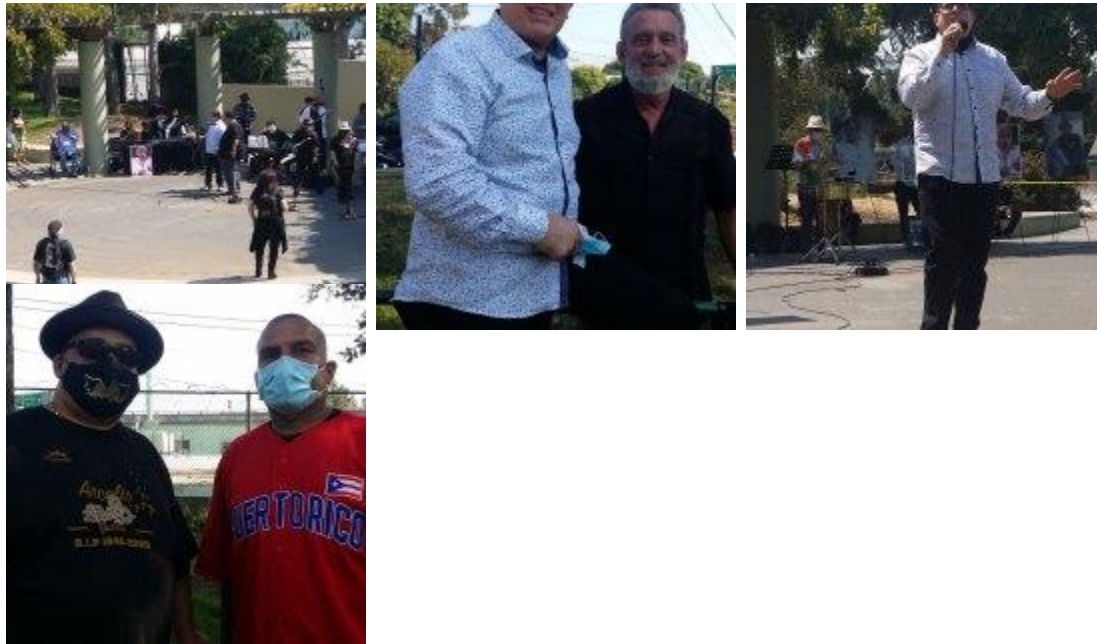
Community Celebrates Rock Legend Arcelio “Malo” Garcia’s Life, Legacy

Published in El Tecolote

September 25, 2020

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SEPTEMBER 25, 2020



PHOTOS BY SADIE PECKENS

Community members gathered in Potrero del Sol Park on Sept. 5 to celebrate the life of musical legend Arcelio “Malo” Garcia, founding member of Latin rock and roll band Malo. The Mission-based band rose to fame in the 1970s and helped shape the Latin rock movement.

The day of the service, the outdoor stage was lit by bright sunshine, filled with musicians, and decorated with photos of Garcia, who passed away August 11 at age 74.

The memorial began at noon with spoken messages, prayers and songs from family and other members of Victory Outreach San Francisco. Current and former members of Malo then took turns making statements and playing favorite songs like “Suavecito,” “Cafe” and “It’s a Lovely Day.” The soulful notes sounded through the park inspiring celebration. At the foot of the stage, fans danced and snapped photos. In shaded sections, people raised their hands and voices in honor of the Mission District’s beloved rock idol and community member.

Garcia’s daughter and a lead organizer of the memorial service, Yvette Garcia Hernandez, reflected on her father. “Our family was a very big part of the community when Malo was started. Because of him a lot of the local talent here were able to get their start,” Hernandez

said in an interview. "It was a road that he never wanted to travel alone. He always wanted to do this with his friends, family and community."

Garcia's role in the community echoed throughout the day. Richard Segovia recorded with Garcia and owns the "House of Latin Rock" at 25th and York streets, which features a mural of Mission District Latin rock bands that have defined the genre. "Arcelio was like the Mission District's protector. He was like the ambassador. He left a mark here," Segovia said.

Former Malo band member Pastor Martin Cantu also emphasized Garcia's leadership. "Arcelio took me under his wing and taught me," Cantu said. "He would give musicians from the Mission District the opportunity to be onstage. A lot of the musicians here today owe gratitude to him."

Family gathered around sharing stories and memories, emphasizing that Garcia was a Latin rock legend and much more. They want people to remember that Garcia was a family man who always had a joke for everything. He was a great baseball player and boxer. He was kind and humble. When his loved ones picture him, they see him not only on stage, but also in grandma's kitchen while she cooks.

"We used to walk down the street together and I used to tell everyone 'do you want to meet my uncle the rock star?' He didn't like that," Garcia's nephew, Pele Garcia, remembered with a laugh. "But he always came back with a joke. I love my uncle and I am going to miss him."

"He is still with us," Garcia's nephew Raymond Garcia remarked, because "he's in everybody's hearts. He put a piece of his soul into everyone." His family agreed that Garcia lives on through the talent he shared with the world. As long as his music is played, he will be remembered.