

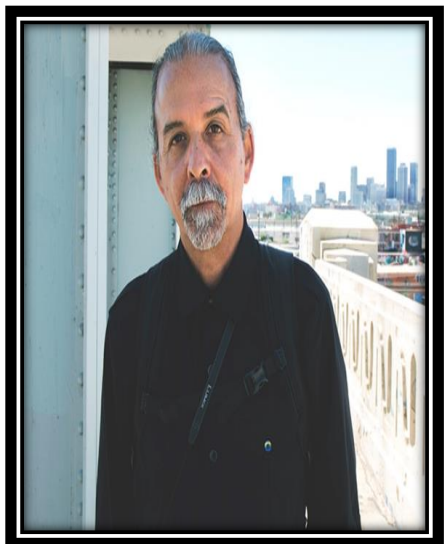
## PROFILE OF RESISTANCE

### Harry Gamboa Jr.

organizer, student protestor

*“I decided to make things instead of reacting to things”*

Page | 1



Photography by B. Justine Jaime

#### Background Information

Born: 1951

Harry Gamboa Jr. is a Mexican-American who was born in the state of Nevada. He experienced discrimination as a young boy. His elementary school teacher purposely embarrassed him in front of the class because he could not speak English. Gamboa lost his trust in schools. He taught himself how to speak English by reading American comic books.<sup>1</sup> Harry Gamboa Jr. attended high school in Eastside Los Angeles.

His school district had a reputation for being the worst in the country. His high school had the number one dropout rate in the country at the time. There were not enough resources for the schools with mostly Mexican-American students. Gamboa decided he wanted to take a stand.

#### Gamboa's Resistance

Gamboa was a student leader in the Chicano Student Walkouts of 1968. During this time, many teachers and students walked out to demand change for their schools. Gamboa joined the protests for civil rights. Like many other students in the walkouts, his name was unfairly placed on a watchlist.

After the walkouts, he continued to see discrimination. He once saw a violent incident where the Los Angeles County Police fired their weapons into a crowd, killing many people. These unfair acts made him realize that he needed to keep on responding to the injustice. He decided to turn his anger into art. He began to take photos and create art that brings people's attention to the inequality that still happens.

#### Achievements

Harry Gamboa Jr. is not well-known among many people, because he was a young student during the 1968 walkouts. He has shown that even young people can resist discrimination. They can be a part of something big. Gamboa fought to make a difference in his school. Gamboa continues to fight discrimination against Mexican-Americans through his art. He wants to create things instead of react in angry ways. His art fights against the bad stereotypes about Mexican-Americans in the media. He uses art to show Mexican-Americans in a good way.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Erased: Limits and Borders with Artist Harry Gamboa Jr. (2011). Retrieved from <https://americanart.si.edu/videos/erased-limits-and-borders-artist-harry-gamboa-jr-154312>

<sup>2</sup> Harry Gamboa Jr. (2015, November 6). Retrieved from <http://www.futuretongue.com/harry-gamboa-jr/>

## Essential Questions

1. As a student, how did Harry Gamboa Jr. fight for Mexican Americans' civil rights?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. Gamboa now makes art to resist the negative stereotypes about Mexican-Americans in the media. How do negative stereotypes cause harm in society?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. *"I decided to make things instead of reacting to things"*
  - a. How can you use art to make change in society?