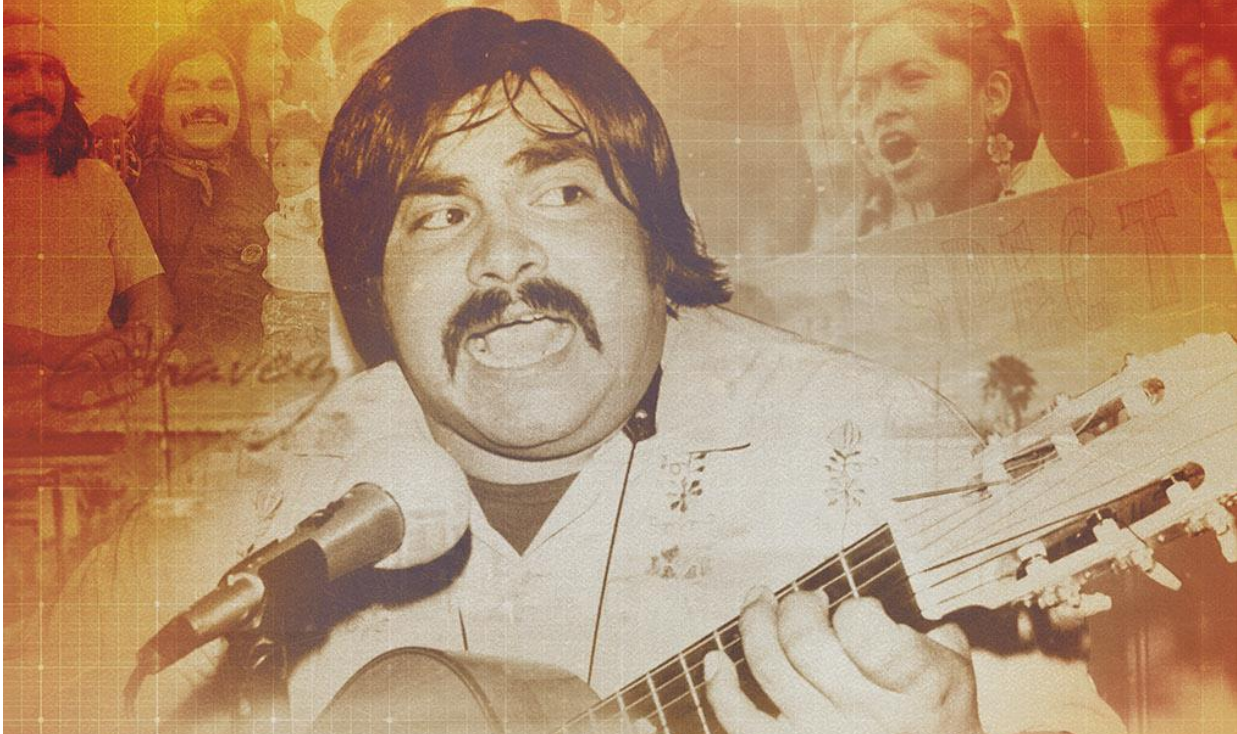


The powerful story of
RAMON "CHUNKY" SANCHEZ
& the inspiring music of the Chicano Civil Rights Movement



SINGING OUR WAY TO FREEDOM

*Chunky
revolucion*



ESPINOSA PRODUCTIONS PRESENTS

ASSOCIATE PRODUCED BY EVAN APODACA NARRATED BY ALMA MARTINEZ ORIGINAL SCORE BY QUETZAL FLORES CINEMATOGRAPHY BY VICENTE FRANCO & SIMONE HOGAN
EDITED BY MARIA ZEISS PRODUCED BY MARK DAY & MICHAEL BOVEE WRITTEN, PRODUCED AND DIRECTED BY PAUL ESPINOSA

www.EspinosaProductions.com www.ChunkyFilm.com

Using this Guide

This toolkit is intended to help support individuals, educators and organizations interested in using the film *Singing Our Way to Freedom* to promote discussion and engage audiences. The toolkit aims to facilitate dialogue and deepen understanding about the critical issues raised in the film. So please sit back, enjoy the film and think about what you can do to change your world.

We hope our film will raise thought-provoking questions and encourage you to engage in conversations with your family, friends and classmates. Consider some of our suggestions below for areas to explore in panel discussions, in the classroom, in communities, and online. If you're interested in learning more, check out the Additional Resources section below for books and links to online pages.

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How to Access the Film

Encourage your school, libraries, & community centers to visit this link to order the film: <https://goaddocs.net/products/singing-our-way-to-freedom>

Coming to PBS - Fall 2022 (check your local listings)

Available to PBS Passport members – Beginning Fall 2022

Our Website: www.ChunkyFilm.com

Trailer: <https://vimeo.com/269397941>

Opening Scenes: <https://vimeo.com/571356272>



About the film

Singing Our Way to Freedom chronicles the life and music of Ramon "Chunky" Sanchez from his humble beginnings as a farmworker in Blythe, California to the dramatic moment when he received one of his nation's highest musical honors at the Library of Congress in Washington DC.

As a young man in the 1960s involved in the struggle for social justice, Sanchez joined the picket lines in the California fields with Cesar Chavez, eventually becoming Chavez's favorite musician. Sanchez's arc of transformation from marginalized farm kid to charismatic social justice leader shows how one person can use art and music to mobilize people in changing the world. In his songs and his life, Sanchez offers an inspiring narrative, emphasizing that the battle for freedom has to be fought anew by every generation.

Using the trajectory of Sanchez's life, the film revisits the Civil Rights movement, reminding audiences about what was achieved during this period as well as the way in which the Civil Rights era continues to inflect our contemporary lives. Borrowing from musical traditions on both sides of the U.S.-Mexico border, Sanchez used music and humor as powerful weapons in fighting for social justice. His story underscores that building community and social change is often done by ordinary people with deep passions, strong commitments and clear visions.



Themes and Activities for Discussions

Chunky emphasized that “We need to instill the arts into the classroom, to use them as tools to enlighten, to educate and to inspire young people.” Here are some suggestions for using the film with students and viewers in order to have richer discussions.

Subject Areas

Latinx Studies • Chicana/o Studies • American History • Ethnomusicology • Social Studies Spanish • Border Studies • Sociology • Labor Ethnic Studies • Anthropology • Food Studies

Creative Activities

1. Discuss or write about the opportunities and challenges you have today compared to the world that Chunky Sanchez grew up in the 1960s. Could you rewrite one of Chunky’s songs to fit today’s experiences?
2. Choose one or more of Chunky’s songs that inspires you to want to write your own song or poem. For inspiration, consider the lyrics from Chunky’s songs. Click on the following song titles to access those lyrics: [La Guitarra Campesina](#), [El Trilingual Corrido](#), [Chicano Park Samba](#), [Rising Souls](#), [Pocho](#), [Mexico Americano](#), and [El Quinto Sol](#). Are there lines from these songs that speak directly to you?
3. Are there parts of the film which can help you describe your own dreams, feelings and hopes for imagining a better world? Consider creating a journal, drawing or painting that expresses your dreams, feelings, and hopes.
4. Think about the power of story in creating an alternative narrative to the negative images that some people experience in their lives. Can you write a personal narrative that ends by imagining the community you want to belong to?

Research Activities

1. Is there a particular moment in the film or a line from a song that makes you curious to know more? How might you start to do research based on your own curiosity? What questions do you want to answer?
2. After watching the film, what questions could you ask your parents, grandparents, extended family or other community members? Consider recording an interview with them about their resilience in the face of adversity. Transcribe the interview, reflect on how their lives differ from yours and think about the process of conducting these interviews.
3. Think about the people you know who have been erased or forgotten from materials you’ve used in school. What could you add to school materials to address these forgotten individuals?

Reflective Questions

1. How do you think Chunky developed confidence in the power of his self-expression? How can you begin to discover this power in yourself?
2. Are there parts of the film that gave you ideas for standing up against injustices in your own life? What could you do to begin to make transformative changes in your community? Who could you talk to about these ideas?
3. Is there a moment in the film that made you think about the power of music in building your own community?
4. Why do you think young people played such a leading role in the Chicano movement? What roles do you think young people can play today in making positive changes in their lives and those around them?

“I realized that you could take from both sides of the border and combine them and come up with a new style of music - bilingualism, biculturalism.”
Ramon “Chunky” Sanchez



Additional Resources: Beyond the Film**Links to Additional Online Resources**

[Songs of the Chicano Movement \(CD + Liner notes\)](#)
[Lasting Legacies of the Chicano Movement](#)
[Chunky Sanchez receives National Heritage Fellowship from NEA](#)
[The Creation of Chicano Park](#)
[Brief History of Chicano Park](#)
[The Line Between Us: Teaching About the Border and Mexican Immigration](#)

**Books**

Acuña, Rodolfo. *Occupied America: A History of Chicanos*, New York: HarperCollins, 1988.

Alvarez, Luis. *Chicanx Utopias: Pop Culture and the Politics of the Possible*, Austin: University of Texas Press, 2022.

Diaz, Ella Maria. *Flying Under the Radar with the Royal Chicano Air Force: Mapping a Chicano/a Art History*, Austin: University of Texas Press, 2017.

Ganz, Marshall. *Why David Sometimes Wins*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2009.

Griswold del Castillo, Richard. *Chicano San Diego: Cultural Space and the Struggle for Justice*, Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2007.

Mariscal, George. *Brown-Eyed Children of the Sun: Lessons from the Chicano Movement, 1965-1975*, Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2005.

Montoya, Maceo. *Chicano Movement For Beginners*, Danbury, CT: For Beginners, 2016.

Ontiveros, Randy J. *In the Spirit of a New People: The Cultural Politics of the Chicano Movement*, New York: New York University Press, 2014.

Patiño, Jimmy. *Raza Sí, Migra No: Chicano Movement Struggles for Immigrant Rights in San Diego*, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2017.

Pawel, Miriam. *The Union of Their Dreams*. New York: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2009.

Sanchez, Rita and Sonia Lopez. *Chicana Tributes: Activist Women of the Civil Rights Movement - Stories for the New Generation*, San Diego: Montezuma Publishing, 2017.

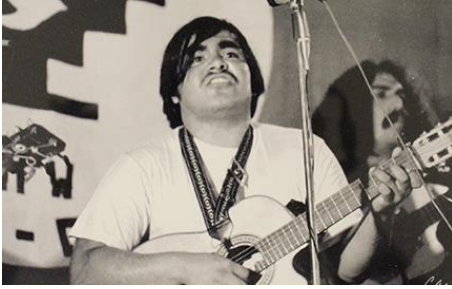
Our Supporters

- The Leichtag Foundation
- The San Diego County Board of Supervisors
- The Hervey Family Fund of the San Diego Foundation
- The Virginia G. Piper Charitable Trust
- Wells Fargo Bank
- The Institute for Humanities Research at Arizona State University
- Queríamos Norte Foundation
- The McGrory Family Fund of the Jewish Community Foundation
- KPBS-TV, San Diego
- The National Association for Latino Arts & Culture Fund for the Arts
- The Arizona Community Foundation
- The Raza Development Fund
- Price Philanthropies Foundation
- Hundreds of individual supporters (check out supporters at www.ChunkyFilm.com)

In Their Own Words - What students are saying

"It was really cool to hear the stories of young people who found the courage to fight for self-determination and justice, people who were ready to challenge the world through the art of music." High School Senior

"My grandparents had exposed me to some of this history but never in depth. What really took me by storm was that activism didn't begin just because it was the trend to be an activist. It started in the community and built from there." High School Senior



SONGS FROM THE FILM
La Guitarra Campesina

[SPANISH]

by Ramon “Chunky” Sanchez
Oye hermanos campesinos
Yo les vengo aquí a cantar
Que en este país tan rico
Aprendimos a luchar
Que en este país tan rico
Aprendimos a luchar

Yo vengo del Imperial
De Coachella a San Joaquin
A pelear con los rancheros
Y para darles ya su fin
A pelear con los rancheros
Y para darles ya su fin

[ESTRIBILLO]

La guitarra campesina
La guitarra campesina
La guitarra campesina
En huelga se levantó

Mantenemos la nación
Y siempre nos tratan mal
Cuando llega el día de pago
Quedamos todos igual
Cuando llega el día de pago
Quedamos todos igual

Este pueblo esta olvidado
En la ley de este nación
Nuestro gente en el solazo
Los ricos en su mansión
Nuestro gente en el solazo
Los ricos en su mansión

[ESTRIBILLO]

Cuando pidieron justicia
En caminos nos echaron

Y todos gritando “Huelga”
Al botes todos llegaron
Y todos gritando “Huelga”
Al botes todos llegaron

En esta linea de guardia
No me salgo mi hermano
Hasta que ya me respeten
Como a un ser humano
Hasta que ya me respeten
Como a un ser humano
[ESTRIBILLO]

[ENGLISH]

My campesino brothers
I have come here to sing
In this country that is so rich
We are learning how to fight
In this country that is so rich
We are learning how to fight

I come from the Imperial Valley
From Coachella to San Joaquin
To fight against the growers
And to finally defeat them
To fight against the growers
And to finally defeat them

[REFRAIN]

The campesino guitar
The campesino guitar
The campesino guitar
Was vital for our strike

We sustain this country
And they always treat us bad
When payday arrives
Nothing changes for us
When payday arrives
Nothing changes for us

Our community is forgotten
In the laws of this country
Our people in the hot sun
The rich in their mansions
Our people in the hot sun
The rich in their mansions

[REFRAIN]

When we asked for justice
They rounded us up
Everyone yelling “Strike”

We were all sent to jail
Everyone yelling “Strike”
We were all sent to jail

On this picket line
I’m not leaving my brother
Until they respect me
like a human being
Until they respect me
like a human being
[REFRAIN]

El Trilingual Corrido

by Ramon “Chunky” Sanchez

[SPANISH]

Ese hermano que no entiende
Come and sit aquí conmigo
Let me tell you en mi canto
Lo que mi hizo un enemigo

I was born aquí en Aztlán
Y mi barrio fue Califas
Aunque tú seas de otro lado
Las costumbres son las mismas

I was raised piscando uvas
Betebeles y melones
All the bosses look the same
Eran gordos y pelones

My jefito made it big
Se cruzó pues de bracero
Pronto a los veinte años
Avanzó a ser mesero

Me forzaron a la escuela
Para aprender el inglés
Now they all call me a pocho
Porque lo hablo hasta al revés

Y nos quieren deportar
Con la ley Arnett y Dixon
“Sáquenlos de mi país”
Les gritaba Richard Nixon

Es bonito ser Chicano
Peleando la causa entera
Buscando la libertad
Por cualquier por my manera

Es hermano que no entiende
Come and sit aquí conmigo

Let me tell you en mi canto
Lo que mi hizo un enemigo

[ENGLISH]

That brother who doesn't
understand
Come and sit here with me
Let me tell you with my song
Who is your enemy

I was born here in Aztlán
And my neighborhood was
California
Although you are from the other
side
Ours customs are the same

I was raised picking grapes
beets and melons
All the bosses look the same
They were fat and bald

My jefe made it big
He crossed over as a bracero
And after twenty years
He advanced to being a waiter

In school they forced me
To learn English
Now they all call me a pocho
Because I speak Spanish poorly

And they want to deport us
With the Arnett and Dixon law
"Get them out of my country"
Richard Nixon yelled at them

It's beautiful to be Chicano
Fighting for the whole cause
Looking for your freedom
In whatever form it takes

That brother who doesn't
understand
Come and sit here with me
Let me tell you with my song
Who is your enemy

Chicano Park Samba

by Ramon "Chunky" Sanchez
In the year 1970,
in the city of San Diego

Under the Coronado Bridge lied a
little piece of land
A little piece of land that
the Chicano community of Logan
Heights
wanted to make into a park
A park where all the chavalitos
could come and play in
So they wouldn't have to play in the
street
And get run over by a car.

A park, where all the viejitos could
come en la tarde
And just sit down and watch the sun
go down.
A park where all the familias could
come
And just get together on a Sunday
afternoon
And celebrate the spirit of life itself.

But the city of San Diego said,
"Chale.
We're going to make a highway
patrol substation here."

So on April 22nd, 1970,
La raza of Logan Heights and other
Chicano communities
got together and they organized,
and they walked on the land,
And they took it over with their
picks and their shovels,
And they began to build their own
park.

And today, that little piece of land
under the Coronado Bridge in San
Diego
Is known to people everywhere as
Chicano Park.

It began in 1970,
Under the Coronado Bridge,
En mi barrio, in San Diego,
Where my people began to fight
For Chicano Park, for Chicano Park.
Under the bridge, under the bridge,
Under the bridge, under the bridge.

We shall continue to live, my
brother.

We shall continue to fight, my
friend,
For Chicano Park,
Under the bridge.
¡Raza!
¡Que vivan, que vivan,
Los barrios unidos!



Rising Souls

by Ramon "Chunky" Sanchez
Well it's time to shine the light
On the young souls of the Earth
Let it shine and illuminate
The beauty of their worth

(Refrain)
We got to educate
Not incarcerate
So the humanity will shine

Vamos mis amigos
Let's try some brotherhood
We don't need to kill another
Over a neighborhood

(Refrain)

Nothing really glamorous
About living in a cell
Sometimes you got to wonder
If you're really not in hell

(Refrain)

The will to want to learn
And all our hearts will hold
Like brother César Chávez
And Dr. King has told

(Refrain)



Pocho

by Ramon “Chunky” Sanchez
 “Pocho”, a name I was called as a kid, with the intentions of degrading and humiliating me.
 “Pocho”, I wasn’t exactly sure what it meant at first. I felt emotional pain, before I ever comprehended its verbal meaning.
 “Pocho”, it promoted self-hatred and confusion as to who I was and what I was doing here.
 “Pocho”, I wasn’t liked here and I wasn’t liked there
 “Pocho”, I knew I was Mexican, I looked Mexican, but why did I have trouble speaking Spanish

“Pocho”, my name was Ramon when I started kindergarten but by the third grade everyone called me Raymond.
 “Pocho”, I couldn’t speak no Spanish, but I always brought burritos for lunch, huh!
 “Pocho”, I began to realize that maybe I wasn’t Mexican. Could it be that I was Spanish? But wait, my jefe was from Guamuchil, Sinaloa. That’s not in Spain, that’s in Mexico.
 “Pocho”, all the confusion aroused the curiosity in me. I began to question the implications of the word.
 “Pocho”, does the label really fit me? Maybe it does. And if it does, is it my fault?
 “Pocho”, I began to realize that I had absorbed the strengths of two cultures and lifestyles.
 Was that good or bad?

“Pocho”, good, que no? I have an innovative way of expressing myself that relates to both sides of the border.
 “Pocho”, what’ll it be today? Tacos or hamburgers? Pedro Infante or the Rolling Stones? Tequila or whiskey? A blonde or a morena? A Ford or a Chevy?
 “Pocho”, I’m beginning to think that there’s pride in the word, a pride that was incarcerated by shame and stereotypes.
 “Pocho”, you know what? I am a pocho. A proud pocho. Proud because I have survived cultural denials and attacks on my soul.
 “Pocho”, si mon que yes, soy Ramon Sanchez, but better known as Chunky, a little bit of that and a little bit of this, that’s who I am, one bad ass pocho. Quitate before I get mad, ese.

[SPANISH]
 Yo soy Chicano, tengo color,
 puro Chicano hermano con honor
 Cuando me dicen que hay
 revolución,
 definiendo mi raza con mucho valor
 Tengo mi orgullo, yo tengo mi fe,
 soy diferente, soy color café
 Tengo cultura, tengo corazón
 y no mi lo quita a mí nunca cabrón

[ENGLISH]
 I’m Chicano, I’m brown,
 Pure Chicano, a brother with honor
 When I’m told there’s a revolution
 I defend my people with great
 courage
 I am proud, I have my faith
 I’m different, I’m brown
 I have culture, I have heart
 And no bastard will take that from
 me.

Mexico Americano

by Rumel Fuentes
[SPANISH]
[ESTRIBILLO]
 Por mi madre yo soy mexicano,

Por destino soy americano.
 Yo soy de la raza de oro.
 Yo soy México Americano

 Yo te comprendo el inglés,
 Tambien te hablo en español.
 En mi suerte tengo orgullo,
 Porque así lo manda Díos

[ESTRIBILLO]

 Zacatecas a Minnesota,
 De Tijuana a Nueva York.
 Dos países son mi tierra,
 Los definiendo con honor

[ESTRIBILLO]

 Yo te comprendo el inglés,
 Tambien te hablo en español.
 En mi suerte tengo orgullo,
 Porque así lo manda Díos

[ESTRIBILLO]

[ENGLISH]
[REFRAIN]
 By my mother, I am Mexican,
 By destiny, I am American.
 I am of the golden race.
 I am Mexican American

I understand your English
 And I also speak Spanish.
 It is my fate and I am proud,
 Because that is the will of God.

[REFRAIN]

 Zacatecas to Minnesota,
 From Tijuana to New York.
 Two countries are my land,
 I defend them with my honor

[REFRAIN]

 I understand your English
 And I also speak Spanish.
 It is my fate and I am proud,
 Because that is the will of God

[REFRAIN]



**El quinto sol /
The Fifth Sun**

by Enrique Ramírez
[SPANISH]

Ésta es la era del sol—del quinto sol

Trajo gachupines con todo y frailes
Trajo a Jesucristo y a Richard Nixon
Trajo la viruela y hasta la sífilis
Y ahora en vez de náhuatl, hablo español
También trajo un vato, llamado Cortez
Que con La Malinche, metieron las tres
Y de la conquista, y la destrucción
Nacieron mestizos, hijos del sol

[ESTRIBILLO]

Pero este sol ya se acabó, se está apagando
El gringo opresor, ya está temblando
Todo el mundo pobre, ya va marchando
Cantemos hermanos, al nuevo sol
Cantemos hermanos, al nuevo sol

Por trescientos años, colonizaron

Y al indio noble, aniquilaron
Y la independencia, nos dió las tierras
Pero los controles, venían de afuera
Sudamericano, tú los sabes bien
Tú sufres las hambres, y otros comen bien
Muera el monopolio, y su religión
Mueran las alianzas, con el opresor.

President Monroe, te lo prometía
Que las tierras libres, él respetaría
Y así prometiéndolo, no colonizar
Tomó Puerto Rico, Hawaii y Aztlán
Hermano Chicano, no hay que decaer
Busca en tus entrañas al indio de ayer
Sólo su nobleza, y su humanidad
Te darán las fuerzas, de la libertad.

[ENGLISH]

This is the era of the sun – of the Fifth Sun

It brought Spaniards with friars and everything
It brought Jesus Christ and Richard Nixon
It brought smallpox and even syphilis
And now instead of Náhuatl, I speak Spanish.

It also brought a “dude” by the name of Cortéz
Who, with Malinche, made the three of them
And from the conquest and the destruction

Were born Mestizos, children of the sun.

[REFRAIN]

But this sun is finished, its light is dimming
The gringo oppressor is now trembling
All the world’s poor are now marching
Let’s sing, brothers and sisters, to the new sun
Let’s sing, brothers and sisters, to the new sun.

For three hundred years, they colonized
And they annihilated the noble Indian,
And independence gave us the lands
But control came from elsewhere.
South American, you know well
You suffer hunger while others eat well
Death to monopoly and its religion
Death to all alliances with the oppressor.

President Monroe promised you
That he would respect the free lands
And while promising not to colonize
He took Puerto Rico, Hawaii and Aztlán
Brother Chicano, let us not weaken
Look inside yourself for the Indian of the past
Only his nobility and his humanity
Will give you the strength to gain your liberty.

About the Filmmakers

Dr. Paul Espinosa, the film’s Producer, Director and Writer, is an award-winning filmmaker and head of [Espinosa Productions](http://EspinosaProductions.com), a San Diego production company specializing in films focused on the U.S.-Mexico border region. A Professor Emeritus in the School of Transborder Studies at Arizona State University, he has been involved with producing films for over 40 years. His [many films](#) for PBS include *The Lemon Grove Incident*, *...and the earth did not swallow him*, *The Hunt for Pancho Villa*, *The U.S.-Mexican War: 1846-1848*, *In the Shadow of the Law* and *Ballad of an Unsung Hero*. Espinosa’s films have been screened at festivals around the world and have won many awards including **eight Emmys**.



Producers - **Mark Day** is an Emmy award-winning producer whose films include: *The San Patricios*, *Stepan Chemical* and *River of Broken Promises*. **Michael Bovee** has produced and edited many films for PBS including *Liquid Stage: The Lure of Surfing* and *The Border*.

Directors of Photography - **Vicente Franco** is a longtime cinematographer whose film, *Daughter from Danang*, was nominated for an Oscar for Best Documentary. He was the DP on three other Academy Award nominees, *The Barber of Birmingham*, *The Most Dangerous Man in America* and *Freedom on My Mind*. **Simon Hogan** is a San Diego based cinematographer whose credits include *Test the West*.

Editor - **Maria Zeiss** is an accomplished editor whose credits include *The Price of Renewal* and *Remaking American Medicine*.

Narrator - **Alma Martinez** is an acclaimed film, television and theatre actor whose work includes decades of landmark social justice projects with Luis Valdez and El Teatro Campesino. Her films include *Zoot Suit*, the Peabody Award winning *The Bridge* on F/X and PBS's *Corridos: Tales of Passion & Revolution*.

Original Score - **Quetzal Flores** is the musical director for the East Los Angeles based rock group "Quetzal" which has five albums including *Imaginaries* and *The Eternal Getdown* both released on Smithsonian Folkways.

SELECT REVIEWS

"Highlighting the power of music, the film provides vivid vignettes that contextualize the cultural and political ambiance of the Chicano Movement. This remarkable documentary will prove invaluable to students of history, music, cultural studies, American Studies, and ethnic studies." **Dr. Olga Nájera-Ramírez, University of California, Santa Cruz**

"Provides soundtracks, translations of lyrics, and significant footage of performances to easily convince viewers that Sanchez wrote, sang, and composed terrific music for today and yesterday." **Dr. Karen Mary Davalos, University of Minnesota**

"Music and storytelling appeal to students and this film masterfully brings important historical knowledge to students using these strategies." **Dr. Kristine Diekman, California State University, San Marcos**

"What I most appreciated about *Singing Our Way to Freedom* is that it provides viewers a chance to see how Latinx identity has changed, grown and evolved over time, reminding us that our cultural/ethnic identities are dynamic, contextual and political." **Dr. Francisco Rios, Western Washington University**

"An essential film for understanding U.S. history, popular culture and civil rights struggles, and a long overdue homage to the legendary Chunky Sanchez." **Dr. Maurice Rafael Magaña, University of Arizona**

"Paul Espinosa tells a powerful story about Chicano resistance in the 1960s in ways that resonate with today's immigrant rights movement. This film is both a delight to watch while also being extremely teachable and informative." **Dr. Sharada Balachandran Orihuela, University of Maryland**

"He just may be the best folk singer you've never heard of." **KCBS**

"Possibly the most enjoyable documentary I've ever seen, as entertaining as it is inspiring. I'd recommend it to anyone." **Educational Media Reviews Online**

"A song called freedom, a tribute to a barrio kid whose love of Mexican folk music and lyrical activism saw him honored with a NEA National Heritage Fellowship – arguably the nation's highest plaudit for an artist." **Austin Chronicle**

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