

JURAKA'IN

Documentaries Collection



Directed & Produced by:
Gonzalo Mazzini & Rosa Emmanuelli Gutiérrez

BARRIO BORIKÉN: TALES FROM CHICAGO



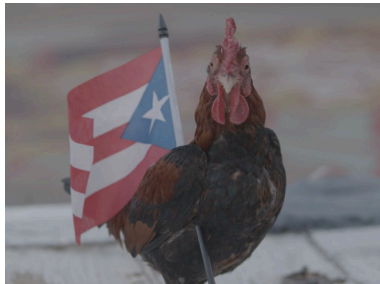
Logline:

The families who migrated from the warmth of Puerto Rico to the cold city of Chicago struggled to build a home in Humboldt Park. Now they stand at a crossroads: to be swept away by displacement or to rise together in resistance.



Synopsis:

Birds migrate into the windy city of Chicago as the sound of a trumpet pierces the air. Salsa music fills the streets, and a towering steel Puerto Rican flag proudly oversees the landscape. Below, a sea of Puerto Rican flags waves through the streets. The cultural manifestations are palpable in the air but it hasn't always been this way.



Once a cold and unwelcoming place for Puerto Rican migrants, Humboldt Park has become a beacon of cultural pride and community strength. Yet, this hard-won legacy is under threat. As gentrification looms, the very soul of the neighborhood is at risk. Through the voices of its residents, this documentary uncovers the personal and collective battles they fought to carve out a home in a city that once rejected them.

From Don Lolo, a 102-year-old pioneer who was among the first Puerto Ricans to settle in Chicago, to Oscar López Rivera, a founder of the Pedro Albizu Campos High School (PACHS), and Jessie Fuentes, a PACHS graduate and community leader, this documentary brings together 30 voices from Humboldt Park. Their stories weave a rich tapestry of cultural pride and the unyielding fight to protect their neighborhood as a home for Puerto Ricans.

Some of our interviewees:

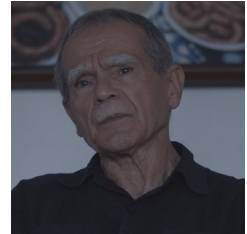
Don Lolo,

a 102-year-old who arrived in Chicago in the 1950s.



Oscar López Rivera,

a co-founder of La Escuelita Puertorriqueña.



Ida Luz Rodríguez,

a co-founder of La Escuelita Puertorriqueña.



José E. López Rivera,

professor, community leader and Executive Director of PRCC.



Marta Rodríguez,

blind woman who graduated from La Escuelita Puertorriqueña.



Luis V. Gutiérrez,

first Puerto Rican U.S. Congressman from Illinois.



Jessie Fuentes,

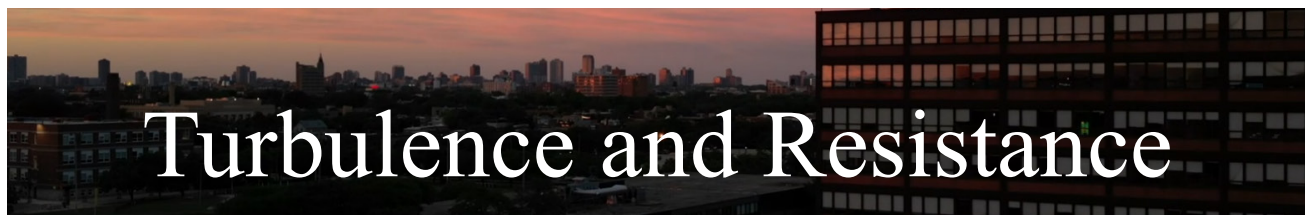
current Alderperson of the 26th Ward and graduate from PACHS.



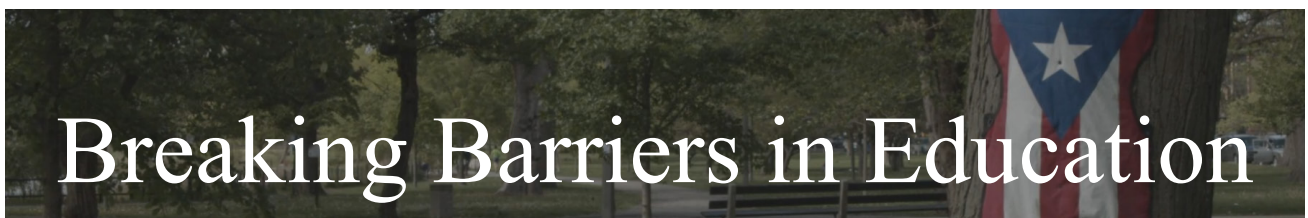
Movie Chapters:



This chapter explores the journey of Puerto Ricans migrating to Chicago in the 1950s, highlighting the harsh realities they faced—cold winters, language barriers, and discrimination. Despite these challenges, they found strength in community.



This chapter begins with the emergence of Los Caballeros de San Juan, a community organization that arose to tackle the pressing issues faced by Puerto Ricans in Chicago. It recounts the tragic incident after the first Puerto Rican Day Parade, where a police officer shot a community member, increasing racial tensions and igniting the riots.



This chapter examines the 72% dropout rate among Puerto Rican children, a crisis fueled by language barriers and systemic lack of support. In response, the community founded La Escuelita, a culturally grounded school. The story of Marta, a blind student, illustrates the transformative impact of this initiative. When Marta enrolled, the high school lacked braille books and resources for students with special needs. Yet, through determination and creativity, the staff adapted the curriculum to meet her needs, enabling her to not only learn but also graduate. La Escuelita's success eventually led to its evolution into the Dr. Pedro Albizu Campos High School.

Movie Chapters:



This chapter confronts the pressing issue of gentrification threatening Humboldt Park, where soaring housing costs displace families and jeopardize cultural heritage. The story of Xiomara, whose family has lived in Humboldt Park for three generations, illustrates the human toll of these economic pressures. When her grandmother passes away, Xiomara may be forced to leave the community because the property tax freeze for seniors will no longer apply, making the home unaffordable for her family. Her plight reflects the broader battle to protect a neighborhood's soul from erasure, as families like hers fight to remain in the place they call home.



In this vibrant conclusion, Paseo Boricua stands as a testament to community-led efforts, a thriving economic district offering health, housing, and cultural services that anchor Puerto Rican identity in Humboldt Park. Among the community's advocates is Juan, a proud graduate of Centro Infantil and Pedro Albizu Campos High School, whose family was forced to sell their home due to rising costs. Now, he lobbies at state and federal levels to establish Barrio Borikén as a Culturally Designated District, aiming to support local economic initiatives and repopulate Humboldt Park with Puerto Rican families by making housing more accessible.

The chapter reflects on the future of Puerto Ricans in Humboldt Park, where even the cold winters are warmed by parrandas navideñas. As people fill the streets to sing traditional songs, their voices rise in defiance: "Que no, que no, que no, que no me voy de aquí! (I'm not leaving here!)"

ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS



Rosa Emmanuelli Gutiérrez (Puerto Rico) & **Gonzalo Mazzini** (Mexico) are an independent filmmaker duo committed to exploring social issues through documentary storytelling. Their work delves into themes of colonialism, identity, activism, and community resistance, capturing powerful narratives that inspire dialogue and action. Together, they have directed and produced several impactful films:

- ***Jurakán: Nation in Resistance*** (2017) – Rosa: Producer / Gonzalo: Director
- ***Jurakán: The Power of Our People*** (Premieres in 2025) – Co-directed
- ***Barrio Borikén: Tales from Chicago*** (In post-production) – Co-directed

**These movies are part of the Jurakán Documentaries Collection,
where the history of Puerto Rico comes alive.**

Rosa and Gonzalo are committed to our peoples' narratives, showcasing how identity and culture empower collective resistance, and amplifying community-driven solutions that inspire real change.

JURAKÁN

DOCUMENTARIES COLLECTION



“Nation in Resistance”

Narrates the history of Puerto Rico from 1898 to 2016.



After premiering in San Juan, the creative team organized a screening tour with Q&As across P.R. and the US.



100 events



15,000+ spectators



49 cities and towns



40 schools

The most frequent question at the screenings became the premise of our next documentary.

What are the people of Puerto Rico doing in the face of colonialism?



“The Power of Our People”

Boricuas are facing the threat of disappearing from their islands. Hurricanes, earthquakes, and economic crises have trapped them in an unending cycle of storms. In the face of adversity, they have come to understand that no one is coming to save them; their only hope for survival lies within themselves.

This movie is in post-production and will premiere in 2025.



Barrio Borikén: Tales from Chicago

This movie finished production in December 2024, the producers want to start post-production as early as possible. The objective is to premiere the movie in 2026.

Work Calendar

March:	Kickstart Fundraisers
April:	Archival footage and pictures compilation
June:	Picture-lock
July:	Start Post-Production; Music, Sound Design and Color Correction
August:	Start Transcription and translation
September:	English and Spanish Subtitles
October:	Poster and artwork design
December:	Final touches; Music and Sound Design Concludes

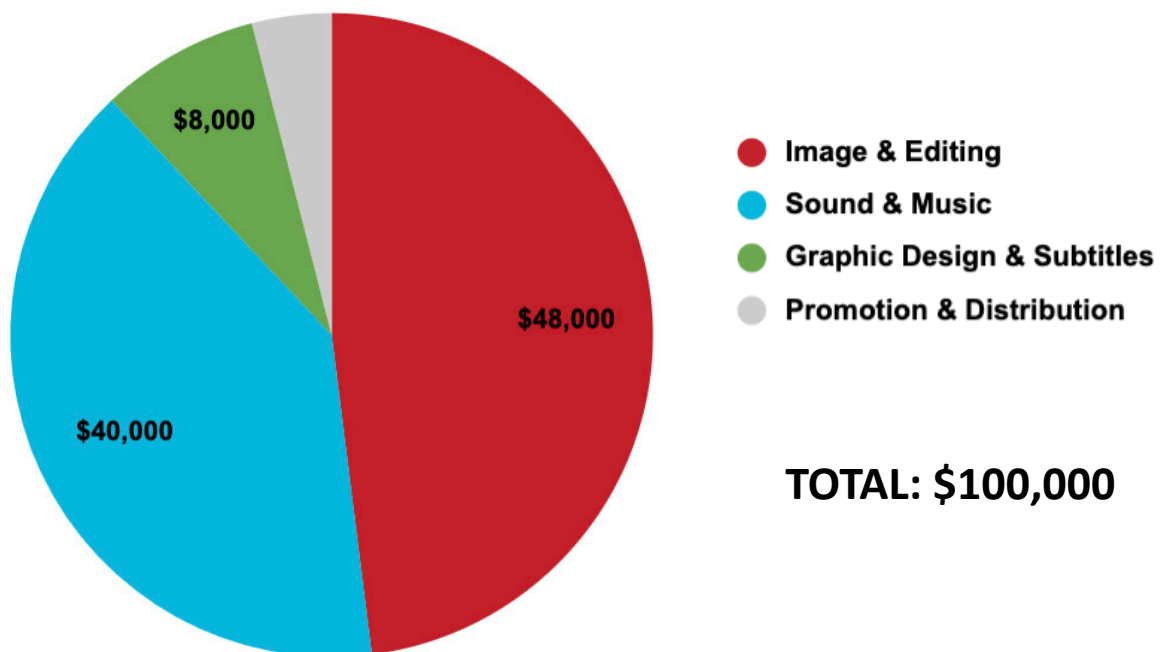
Distribution set to start in 2026 (includes: Film Festivals, Theatrical release in Puerto Rico and Impact campaign across the United States and Puerto Rico.)

CALL TO ACTION

Barrio Borikén: Tales from Chicago is a living testament to the Puerto Rican experience in Humboldt Park, empowering a deeper understanding of cultural identity, community, and grassroots organizing. This documentary is a love letter to the people of this vibrant neighborhood, celebrating their legacy and resistance.

We invite you to join us on this journey and help us complete the project. To ensure the movie has the greatest possible impact, we need the expertise of sound designers, music composers, and other specialists. By sharing these powerful stories, we aim to inspire solidarity and action in preserving the cultural identities of immigrant communities everywhere—and to strengthen the connection between Puerto Ricans on the archipelago and those in the diaspora.

BUDGET



PERKS

TAX-DEDUCTIBLE DONATIONS



PITIRRE
\$1,000 USD

- ★ **Appear in credits as Contributing Producer**
- ★ **Personalized Card**
- ★ **3 Special Edition DVDs w/ Digital Code**
- ★ **2 T-shirts**
- ★ **2 surprise items**



CAREY
\$2,500 USD

- ★ **Appear in credits as Executive Producer**
- ★ **Personalized Card**
- ★ **6 Special Edition DVDs w/ Digital Code**
- ★ **3 T-shirts**
- ★ **3 surprise items**



CEIBA
\$5,000 USD +

- ★ **Appear in credits as Executive Producer**
- ★ **Your company logo in credits, promotional posters and mentioned in events**
- ★ **Personalized Card**
- ★ **10 Special Edition DVDs w/ Digital Code**
- ★ **5 T-shirts**
- ★ **5 surprise items**

DONATION



Donation Link & QR Code

To pay with Debit/Credit Card/Bank Transfer:



<https://tinyurl.com/barrioboriken>



Check made payable to: Puerto Rican Cultural Center

Memo: *Documentary*

Mailing Address:

*Puerto Rican Cultural Center
2556 West Division Street
Chicago, IL 60622*

FROM THE DIRECTORS

Dear Friends and Supporters,

From the very start, our mission as filmmakers has been to document stories that matter—stories of identity, struggle, and resistance. Barrio Borikén: Tales from Chicago is a reflection of that commitment, capturing the strength and cultural pride of Humboldt Park’s Puerto Rican community.

What began as a journey with our first documentary, Jurakán: Nation in Resistance, led us to Chicago, where we found a rich legacy of activism and community-driven change. With the guidance of José E. López and the generosity of so many, we’ve spent years documenting multigenerational voices that celebrate triumphs while confronting ongoing challenges.

This documentary is more than just a historical record—it’s a call to recognize and preserve the stories that shape our communities. Your contribution will help amplify these voices, fostering solidarity and action to preserve the cultural identities of immigrant communities everywhere while strengthening the bond between Puerto Ricans on the island and in the diaspora.

Thank you for believing in this film and in the power of storytelling to inspire change. We are deeply grateful for your support.

Con gratitud,



Rosa Emmanuelli Gutiérrez



Gonzalo Mazzini

Directors, Barrio Borikén: Tales from Chicago

CONTACT US

For more information about
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