

HYPERALLERGIC

Commemorating the 1968 East LA Walkouts with Films, Art, and More

On the 50th anniversary of the walkouts, the Chicano Studies Research Center at UCLA has organized a two-day conference to commemorate this seminal event.

By Matt Stromberg, March 5, 2018



Photo by Devra Weber showing students and community supporters outside of Roosevelt High School during walkouts (1968) from *La Raza* Photograph Collection (image courtesy UCLA Chicano Studies Research Center)

In the spring of 1968, thousands of Latinx students walked out of their East LA high schools, demanding “Schools, not prisons!” and calling for more equitable educational conditions for Mexican-American children in the Los Angeles Unified School District. Known as the East LA Walkouts or Chicano Blowouts, the protests were milestones in the history of the Chicano Rights Movement, and set an important precedent, showing that youth could wield real power when organizing for change.

On the 50th anniversary of the walkouts, the Chicano Studies Research Center at UCLA has organized a two-day conference to commemorate this seminal event. Saturday’s program features a full day of talks aimed at exploring the significance and results of the walkouts, including discussions on Chicanas in the movement, the legacy of Sal Castro, a teacher and activist who was arrested for his role in the protests, and a subsequent walkout in Arizona which took place in 1970. The talks will be followed by a tour of a corresponding exhibition in the library of the Chicano Studies Research Center. Sunday’s program features an afternoon of film screenings, including the 1995 documentary *Taking Back the Schools* and the 2005 feature *Walkout!*. The films will be followed by a Q&A with director Susan Racho and producer Moctesuma Esparza, himself one of the student organizers of the Walkouts. The conference is free, but RSVP for each day is required. Although Saturday’s program is at capacity, walk-ins will be accommodated 20 minutes after the program begins according to seat availability.

When: Saturday, March 10, 9am–7pm & Sunday, March 11, 12–4:30pm

Where: The Fowler Museum at UCLA (Lenart Auditorium, 308 Charles E Young Drive North, Westwood, Los Angeles)

More info at [Fowler Museum at UCLA](#).