



## Border Arts Network Artist Spotlight

Telling the stories of the Border.

**Name**  
**Email**

Sammy Ybarra  
[sammy518@yahoo.com](mailto:sammy518@yahoo.com)

**State:** California  
**City:** San Diego



## Bio

Sammy Ybarra, Chicano Poet, San Diego. Born and raised in Paradise Hills by way of Logan Heights Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Church, St Augustine High School and Hilltop High. Statesman, political subservant, singer, song writer and entertainer, first and foremost a printer by trade. In this 2000 millennium, with HOMESCAPE, home remodeling and landscaping, now retired and settled, to date plays piano and still performs at private functions and parties singing love ballads and old school favorites. Has been writing for the past twenty years poetry, short stories, opinions and editorials. Writing poetry now consumes his day, surrounded by his manicured backyard and a view of the world. "Life is giving and when you feel to give, look with compassion and you will see where love is needed" ..... .... Sammy Y

## Interview

1) *How does your home state influence your art?*

As a Californian I am surrounded by its beautiful coastline as well as its mountains and desert and year round wonderful weather. It's historical history with Mexico its heart and American living greatly influences my artistic and creative words.

2) *What inspires you to create?*

I am inspired by my grandparents and their 14 children, my mother's love and my father's world of knowledge and the difference my 3 brothers make in life.

3) *What is your art? Literary? Music? Drawing, painting, sketching? Photography? Film? Or other?*

My art is in the creative words of my poetry, expressing life and my feelings and opinions and in being blessed with my art of singing in Spanish and English.

4) *Which creators influence you?*

There are so many but I can say as a poet, Rodolfo Corky Gonzales is my favorite and has greatly influenced me. His poem, 'I am Joaquin' telescopes all of chicano history and greatly inspired my poem 'I am chicano'

5) *How is your art (or art in general) important to society in the border states??*

We have an ongoing misunderstood problem here on our Frontera and it is the continuing writing of poetry that keeps these border issues alive with a heartbeat of consciousness

6) *Is there a specific purpose for your art?*

I believe I have been put here in this unique place as a human being coupled with my writing ability to be a link between the daily issues of the southwest and all who live here with words to better understand what is being done and what needs to be

*7) Are there other artists that you collaborate with, network, or recommend?*

As the grandson of Juan deDios Gonzalez, the organizer of the first successful fight against school segregation in the US I am invited yearly by Sheila Solorzano a member of SDSU faculty as a guest speaker in her social justice class

*8) Do you have a "real" job or is your creative work your fulltime gig?*

I worked for 45 years, am now retired but I still get hired with 'real jobs' be it with construction, landscape or with music .. I strive every day to make my creative accomplishments be my 'real job'

*9) Do you collaborate with other artists/creators?*

I do with music other musicians and with other writers with our weekly writing sessions and just our network and exchanging ideas and feelings of our work

*10) Tell us about an upcoming project you are working on currently?*

I am currently writing and practicing a collaboration of my poetry to music kind of reading my poetry to music and we have been putting my poems into categories with the hope of publishing my own book of poetry ..

**Additional info:**

It has been my hope for some time now to have my poetry published somehow someway into the school curriculum so that our school kids can hear my words and discuss today's issues. My poetry speaks of world issues, current events but most of my poetry expresses life and love .. all the creative aspects of what I see, with myself and the experience of others, including the hatred that seems to be running rapid in today's society. If any poem of mine can reach or affect even one person, then I have accomplished a victory in the importance of words and how we communicate and understand each other in this world of diversity. We all have feelings inside but not all can express them, so it is my hope to write of those feelings to bridge the vast amount of expressions together and to help us become a better world of love and understanding.