**PRESS RELEASE**



For Immediate Release

May 2, 2024

Tempe, Arizona

**CantoMundo Hosts Annual Latinx Poetry Workshop and Public Readings at Arizona State University**

DATES: Friday, May 31, 2024, and Saturday, June 1, 2024

TIMES: 7-8:30 pm public readings on both nights, reception following

SITE: Memorial Union Pima Auditorium 230 at ASU Tempe

CantoMundo and the Virginia G. Piper Center for Creative Writing at Arizona State University (ASU) are pleased to announce the 2024 CantoMundo retreat at ASU Tempe Main Campus, May 30-June 2, 2024.

Since 2009, CantoMundo, a groundbreaking literary arts organization, has celebrated and supported Latinx poets through its fellowship program and annual retreat. After a pandemic-related hiatus, CantoMundo is returning for its first in-person retreat since 2019; moving forward, it will be housed at the Piper Center at ASU.

Featured faculty for the 2024 retreat are nationally recognized and award-winning poets Rodrigo Toscano and Yesenia Montilla. The keynote speaker is acclaimed poet and translator of trans experience Roque Raquel Salas Rivera.

Rodrigo Toscano and Yesenia Montilla will read from their work on Friday, May 31, and Saturday, June 1, 2024, respectively. The readings are free and open to the public.

Numerous Latina/o/x poets from across the country, all current CantoMundo Fellows, will join the featured readers. These poets include: Aldo Amparán, Diannely Antigua, Oliver Baez Bendorf, María Fernanda, Cristina Correa, Maritza N. Estrada, Aerik Francis, Paul Hlava Ceballos, Antonio López, Alexandra Lytton Regalado, Florencia Milito, Sebastián H. Páramo, Emily Pérez, Gabriel Ramirez, Reyes Ramirez, Kimberly Reyes, Iliana Rocha, Roberto F. Santiago, Michael Torres, Emma Trelles, David Joez Villaverde.

Norma Elia Cantú, Professor in the Humanities at Trinity University (San Antonio) and a CantoMundo Co-Founder and Advisory Board Member, states that when CantoMundo was founded “we imagined a home for Latinx poets and poetry, a place where our voices and our stories would be heard. In gratitude, we go forward, aware of the power of poetry to change lives, to change the world.” CantoMundo Director Jacqueline Balderrama (Clinical Assistant Professor of English at ASU) notes, “There’s so much geographic significance for CantoMundo to have a home in the Southwest and at ASU, which was recently designated a Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI).”

[**Rodrigo Toscano**](https://urldefense.com/v3/__https:/rodrigotoscano.com/__;!!IKRxdwAv5BmarQ!aquciSxCwE7g7K-wO0dYY-h3b2dsmp9aGfFfVf1WAw9ScYtHlDxz_KMynT-AdweezsrvbBKtf4pTDMPJqr6QaQ$) is a poet and dialogist based in New Orleans. He is the author of eleven books of poetry. His latest two books are *The Cut Point* (Counterpath, 2023) and *The Charm & The Dread* (Fence Books, 2022). His poetry has appeared in over 20 anthologies, including *Best American Poetry* and *Best American Experimental Poetry (BAX).* Toscanohas received a New York State Fellowship in Poetry. He won the Edwin Markham 2019 prize for poetry. *The Charm & The Dread* was an honorable mention for the International Best Latino Book Award. Toscano works for the Labor Institute in conjunction with the United Steelworkers, the National Institute for Environmental Health Science, Native American tribes and immigrant groups on educational training projects that involve environmental and labor justice culture transformation.

**Yesenia Montilla** is an Afro-Latina poet and a daughter of immigrants. She received her MFA from Drew University in Poetry and Poetry in translation. She is a CantoMundo graduate fellow and a 2020 New York Foundation for the Arts fellow. Her work has been published in *Academy of American Poets Poem-a-Day, Prairie Schooner, Gulf Coast and in Best of American Poetry 2021* and *2022*. Her first collection, *The Pink Box*, was published by Willow Books. Her second collection, *Muse Found* *in a Colonized Body* (Four Way Books), was a finalist for an NAACP Image Award in 2023. She is currently an adjunct professor at The Juilliard School and lives in Harlem N.Y.

**Roque Raquel Salas Rivera** (he/they) is a Puerto Rican poet and translator of trans experience born in Mayagüez, Puerto Rico. His honors include being named Poet Laureate of Philadelphia, the Premio Nuevas Voces, and the inaugural Ambroggio Prize. Among his six poetry books are *lo terciario/ the tertiary* (Noemi Press, 2019), longlisted for the National Book Award and winner of the Lambda Literary Award, and *while they sleep (under the bed is another country)* (Birds LLC, 2019), which inspired the title for *no existe un mundo poshuracán: Puerto Rican Art in the Wake of Hurricane Maria* at the Whitney Museum of American Art. His most recent book, *antes que isla es volcán/ before island is volcano* (Beacon Press, 2022), won the Juan Felipe Herrera Best Poetry Book Award and the Premio Campoy-Ada.  
  
The readings are sponsored by the Hawthornden Foundation, Academy of American Poets, Poetry Foundation, University of Arizona Poetry Center, and Virginia G. Piper Center for Creative Writing at Arizona State University.  
  
**For more information, please contact Jacqueline Balderrama at** [**cantomundo@asu.edu**](mailto:cantomundo@asu.edu). Visit CantoMundo at [cantomundo.org](http://www.cantomundo.org/) and Virginia G. Piper Center for Creative Writing at [piper.asu.edu](https://piper.asu.edu/).