



## Visiting Author and Illustrator Information

# ALL AROUND US

by Xelena González · illustrated by Adriana M. García



**Xelena  
González**

is the author of  
*All Around Us*, a  
picture book that deftly depicts  
her Mestiza culture in the U.S.  
Xelena is an accomplished  
journalist and dancer who has led  
various workshops in creative  
writing, world dance, and  
interdisciplinary arts.

[xelenag@gmail.com](mailto:xelenag@gmail.com)



**Adriana  
García**

is a Texas-  
based visual artist, muralist, and  
scenic designer who has exhibited  
nationally and presented her  
culturally-relevant work at various  
conferences. She has created  
murals with many community  
organizations and schools in  
Texas and beyond.

“Life-affirming in its quiet splendor.”

— Kirkus Reviews

“A girl and her grandfather contemplate circles, both physical and metaphorical, in this thought-provoking tale of family, community, and interconnection.”

— Publishers Weekly

“An evocative picture book...about life and death, traditions, respect, and growth.”

— School Library Connection

“*All Around Us* is all about connections, graced by ethereal images—the perfect children’s book for this season of celebrating endings and new beginnings.”

— Lone Star Book Reviews

[www.allaroundus.info](http://www.allaroundus.info)

Publisher: CINCO PUNTOS PRESS

(Consortium, dist.), Picture Book, 32pages

10-digit ISBN: 1-941026-76-2

13-digit ISBN: 978-1-941026-76-2



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## Visiting Author and Illustrator

# Program Offerings

For large groups, we can offer a standard reading with a possible slide presentation, illustration demo, Q & A, and book signings. For smaller groups, we can offer the following specialized programs:



## Tai Chi Storytelling

In this unique and dynamic program Xelena will follow a reading of her book *All Around Us* with a movement-based retelling of the tale. Drawing upon her experience living in China, she will introduce participants to the basics of tai chi in a way that will make the story

meaningful and unforgettable. Time permitting, participants will then engage in a group story circle that will involve their own ideas and movements inspired by tai chi, yoga, or other forms of expression. This program is appropriate for ages 5 to adult, and can be modified for younger audiences with parent participation.

*30 minutes minimum, with the option to extend exercise up to 90 minutes*



## Writing & Sketching in Nature

Take a nature walk with *All Around Us* creators Xelena & Adriana, as we guide participants in new ways of observing their environment and re-envisioning their findings on the page. As writers,

we will play with personification and other poetic tricks. As artists, we will discover ways to add life to objects that only appear to be inanimate. All ages and levels are welcome to take the nature walk, but participants ages 8 and up will benefit the most from this experience.

*45 minutes minimum, with the option to extend exercise up to 2 hours  
Open access to nature is essential. Parks, gardens, and even yards are ideal.*



## Story Walk: An Interactive Way to Experience Story

*All Around Us* can also be presented in the form of a Story Walk, which can be considered an art installation or set up in the form of a scavenger hunt. This unique way of sharing stories promotes family literacy, healthy living, and nature appreciation. Please contact the creators to discuss the space and cost considerations involved in replicating this exhibition in your space or city. Indoor or outdoor displays are possible.







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## The Rainbow Within: Playing with Poetry

This workshop asks participants to go within and reflect upon their own unique gifts. We will connect with images from nature as we build a poem that may play with metaphor, simile, or personification. Adding illustrations to our creations will enhance the experience and the final piece can be designed on a single page or in “mini book” form. If time allows we will extend the poem into expressive movement with a focus on mindfulness and positive affirmations.

*45 minutes minimum, with the option to extend exercise up to 2 hours*



## Colorful Arcs of Imagination

Add a splash of color to your walls as participants create a group mural that combines images and words relevant to agreed-upon themes and intentions. Everyone will have the chance to contribute ideas in the form of sketches and creative writing,

which Adriana and Xelena will help refine during the workshop. The final piece can be a stand-alone art piece for the space or the initial sketch for an eventual mural. (Adriana, an experienced muralist, can advise interested parties on mural development plans.) This program can be modified for early/pre-writers.

*2 hours minimum is optimal, with the option to extend exercise up to 4 hours*

## The Seeds of Personal Story: Educator Workshop ●●

Open to teachers, parents, and lifelong learners, this workshop asks us to go to our roots to find the stories that shape us. We will begin to explore culture, family traditions, and belief systems through reflective writing exercises and guided discussion. Educators will learn simple techniques for eliciting similar writing from their students through engaging exercises that align with curriculum goals. This offering can be paired with demonstrated activities involving seeding and/or paper-making with seeds.

*1 hour minimum, with option to extend to 4 hours  
Other program offerings can be modified for adults & educators.*

## Program Notes & Fees

● All program offerings may be modified according to preference or time/space/participant size. Although programs are designed to be co-led by both author and illustrator, it is possible to hire one artist.

● A general guideline for program fees is to plan for \$1,000 per day. One day means providing 4-6 programs, depending on the length of each session. Cost of supplies, travel, and accommodations can affect this quote. Please be in touch to discuss details. We can adjust depending on your needs.

● If your school's budget does not allow for visiting authors/artists, consider teaming up with the PTA or with outside community organizations. Adding professional workshops to the visit may also allow your school to find other sources of funding.

To schedule a school visit, please contact Xelena González directly at 210.995.4599 [xelenag@gmail.com](mailto:xelenag@gmail.com)

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