

# Writefest

## POETRY



### ABOUT THE INSTRUCTOR:

Leslie Contreras Schwartz teaches writing workshops in poetry and personal essay at Inprint Houston and [Writespace](#). Her poetry has appeared or is forthcoming in *Hermeneutic Chaos*, *Storyscape Literary Journal*, *Rust + Moth*, *Tinderbox Literary Journal*, *The Collagist* and *Split Lip Magazine*. Her personal essays have appeared in the *Huffington Post*, *Houston Chronicle*, *The Toast*, *Ozy*, and *Dame Magazine*.

Her first collection of poems, *Fuego*, was published by *Saint Julian Press* in March 2016. She holds an MFA in poetry from Warren Wilson College and a BA in English from Rice University, where she won the Academy of American Poets' College & University Prize in 2001.

### CULTIVATING A WRITING PRACTICE IN POETRY

Why do we write? Writing is a kind of work, just like carpentry, engineering, or laboratory science. But it is also a vocation, requiring a kind of dedication and passion to create a sustained practice that can be both frustrating and rewarding. This four-day workshop will focus on the craft of writing poetry with which you can build a sustained practice—despite daily obligations, work, responsibilities, and care-taking of ourselves or others.

The class will begin with focusing on what you, as a poet, are currently drawn to addressing in your writing life, that truth that you are looking to question or define and need to put down on paper. Students should submit at least two poems two weeks in advance of the class to workshop. We will take these poems and revise your work with attention to mastery of tension, imagery, figurative language, tone, structure, and varying authorial distance. We will also look at the effect of sound in language, and how you can use its emotive quality to create meaning and effect on the reader.

In addition to writing exercises and workshopping of students' work, the class will also look at excerpts of poems or lyrical essays, including Anna Ahkmatova, Li-Young Lee, Natalie Diaz, ire'ne lara silva, Vievee Francis, and Sherman Alexie. We will study these exemplar examples for insight into how you can bring improved attention to craft in our work, and to encourage workshop participants to enrich their writing life with an equal amount of reading from writers across time periods, styles, and various backgrounds.

At the end of this workshop, you should have at least one poem that has a crafted beginning form, which you can take home to begin, or continue to cultivate, a sustained writing practice. You should leave with a greater understanding of how you can be your own best editor and how you can use attention to craft to revise and demand more of yourself as a writer.

**MARCH 6<sup>TH</sup> – 9<sup>TH</sup>  
MON-THURS 9AM-12PM  
SILVER STREET STUDIOS  
STUDIO # TBA  
ARTIST: TBA**

**MARCH 6-12, 2017**

**BY WRITESPACE**