



ANEL I. FLORES, MFA

(210) 316-7029 | anelflores@me.com | anelflores.com

BIOGRAPHY

Anel I. Flores (she/they/elle) is a trans, queer, Xicano writer, visual artist, and educator whose thirty-year career spans poetry, fiction, graphic memoir, theater, and visual art. Born and raised in the Texas borderlands and now based in San Antonio, Flores holds an MFA in Creative Writing and works at the intersection of Chicana/Latina feminist tradition, Gloria Anzaldúa's nepantla theory, and embodied storytelling. They are the founder of La Otra Taller Nepantla and of Anel I. Flores Studio (est. 1999), a longtime member of Sandra Cisneros's Macondo Writers Workshop.

Flores's work has been presented internationally at the McNay Museum, NYU, the Mexican Cultural Institute, the National Museum of Mexican Art, University of Paris VIII, Universidad de Alcalá, and their writing can be found in *The American Poetry Review*, *Sinister Wisdom*, the *Malcs Literary Journal* and *Hostos Review*. They are the founder of the Queer Voices, an annual multidisciplinary performance festival in San Antonio now in its ninth year. With over three decades in education and administration, Flores facilitates writing and art workshops — from single classroom visits to multi-week coaching intensives — rooted in lived experience, ancestral healing, and social justice, and has served as Distinguished Writer in Residence at Our Lady of the Lake University (OLLU).

Flores novel *Curtains of Rain* (Jaded Ibis Press, 2025) received the 2026 International Latino Book Award and the NACCS Tejas Award, and the Lambda Literary Award–nominated *Empanada: A Lesbiana Story en Probaditas* — also produced and performed as a play — along with the zine *Les Maestres* and the chapbooks *La Fea* and *Behind the Bookbag*. They are co-editor of the anthologies *JOTA: A Queer Latina y Latinx Anthology - FlowerSong Press* and *I Love Us: Queer on the Borderlands* (in progress), and are currently completing the graphic memoir *Painted Red*.

EDUCATION

MFA Creative Writing — Goddard College, Plainfield, VT

Thesis: *Empanada, a Lesbiana Story en Probaditas*

BFA English / Art — University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, TX (1998)

Fine Arts — Instituto Allende, San Miguel de Allende, GTO, MEX (1992-1994)

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

2024 | Artist in Residence — Democratizing Racial Justice 2024, The Mellon Foundation & UTSA
Offering Micro Memoir Zine workshops for community; working on hybrid graphic memoir, *Painted Red*, publishing and distributing socially engaged literature and art.

2023–Present | *Professional Creative Writing & Artist Coach* — Anel Flores Studio

Designing individualized learning pathways for creative professionals; developing assessment frameworks to measure artistic growth; implementing scaffolded instruction and feedback cycles; aligning coaching strategies with industry standards and professional development goals.

2022 | *Distinguished Writer in Residence* — Our Lady of the Lake University

Designed and taught graduate-level courses with clearly articulated learning outcomes and formative/summative assessments; developed culturally sustaining curriculum aligned with accreditation standards; provided student-centered academic advisement; delivered community-engaged public scholarship.

2020–Present | *Founder & Executive Director* — La Otra: Taller Nepantla

Building on Gloria Anzaldúa's legacy by creating biennial creative residencies for BIPOC LGBTQIA+ writers, artists, and healers; designing cohort-based curriculum integrating arts pedagogy, healing justice, and decolonial scholarship; facilitating international professional learning communities; developing assessment protocols for measuring creative and scholarly outcomes.

2018–2020 | *Adjunct Instructor of Literature* — University of Texas San Antonio

Taught Mexican American Literature using culturally sustaining pedagogy; designed curriculum aligned with state and institutional learning outcomes; implemented backward design and Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles; created authentic assessments including participatory action research projects; fostered college-going culture and academic literacy among first-generation students.

2018–Present | *Founder & Curator* — Queer Voices Literary Reading Series

Annual LGBTQIA+ literary readings featuring local and visiting authors; curating programming that centers marginalized voices and builds inclusive literary community.

2016–Present | *Keynote & Motivational Speaker* — NOTA Inclusion

Designing and delivering culturally responsive professional development on DEIB topics for organizations internationally; creating assessment tools to measure organizational culture shifts; facilitating reflective practice and critical consciousness development using evidence-based pedagogical approaches.

2012–2014 | *Education Director* — The Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center

Established educational vision and strategic planning for Latino arts programming; designed culturally responsive curriculum aligned with Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) standards; oversaw and curated all Academy classes, educational outreach programs, school tours and visits, workshops, and summer camps; developed successful outreach programs providing educational lecture demonstrations for elementary, middle, and high school students; partnered with school districts on curriculum implementation and professional development; led instructional design and teacher training; managed educational assessment and program evaluation.

2009–2012 | *Director of Creativity & Design, Lead Teacher* — Henry Ford Academy: Alameda School of Art & Design

Fostered educational advancement by aligning art and design pedagogy with national and state standards; led standards-based curriculum development using backward design; implemented project-based learning and design thinking (IDEO framework); developed formative and summative assessment protocols; designed professional learning communities and instructional coaching models; led hiring and onboarding of 16+ teachers; published curriculum documentation and scope-and-sequence guides.

2008–2019 | *Co-Reviewer & Committee Member* — El Mundo Zurdo Conference, Society for the Study of Gloria Anzaldúa

Co-curated arts exhibitions; reviewed academic papers, panels, and proposals for international conferences using established rubrics and assessment criteria.

2006–2009 | *Secondary Art Instructor* — L.W. Fox Tech High School, SAISD

Instructed students in art principles and history using standards-aligned curriculum; designed differentiated instruction for diverse learners; collaborated with cross-functional teaching teams on interdisciplinary lesson planning; developed authentic assessment rubrics; supervised 250+ students; implemented classroom management systems supporting student engagement and creativity.

2006–Present | *Owner & Creative Director* — Anel Art Studio

Developing high-level design concepts; managing projects from concept to completion; leading creative sessions.

2004–2009 | *Adjunct English Professor* — San Antonio College, ACCD

Designed and taught English Composition, Mexican American Literature, and Creative Writing courses; developed learning objectives aligned with institutional outcomes; created varied assessment methods including portfolios, presentations, and analytical writing; fostered critical thinking and academic literacy.

1999–2006 | *Secondary English & Creative Writing Instructor* — L.W. Fox Tech High School, SAISD & J.F. Kennedy High School, EISD

Led grades 9-12 in writing, reading, and critical thinking using standards-aligned curriculum; designed backward-planned units with clear learning targets; implemented formative and summative assessments including state standardized tests; differentiated instruction for English language learners and students with special needs; managed classroom of up to 250 students across multiple sections.

AWARDS & HONORS

- **2026** | International Latino Book Award, *Curtains of Rain*
- **2026** | Tejas NACCS Foco Fiction Book Award, *Curtains of Rain*
- **2024** | NALAC Catalyst for Change Award — NALAC & Surdna Foundation
- **2022** | Democratizing Racial Justice Fellowship Award — Mellon Foundation & UTSA
- **2022** | Our Lady of the Lake University Visiting Writer — Kelly Fund, San Antonio Area Foundation
- **2020** | Best Poet San Antonio
- **2018** | Nebrija Creadores Award — Hispa USA Universidad de Alcalá
- **2018** | UTSA Women's Advocate of the Year
- **2018** | NYFA IAP Immigrant Artist Mentorship Program Mentor
- **2017** | Vermont Studio Center Artist Grant
- **2017** | Best Local Author — San Antonio Current
- **2016** | Chingona in Literature Award
- **2016** | NALAC Fund For The Arts Award
- **2016** | Ancinas Scholarship for Squaw Valley
- **2012** | Lambda Literary Award Nominee, *Empanada*
- **2010** | Mentorship Leadership Award — NALAC & National Performance Network

PUBLICATIONS

Books

- *Empanada: un cuento lésbico en probaditas* — Bilingual edition, trans. Mariana Romo Carmona (Flowersong Press, 2026)
- *I Love Us* with Cesar DeLeon (Flowersong Press, 2026)
- *JOTA* — Co-editor with Dr. Rita Urquijo Ruiz & Dr. T. Jackie Cuevas (Flowersong Press, 2026)

- *Curtains of Rain* (Jaded Ibis Press, 2025)
- *Empanada: A Lesbiana Story en Probaditas* (Korima & Evelyn Street Press, 2012)

Essays & Stories (2020-2025)

- "Laguna y Río Carry Me" and "Una Hojita de Buganvilla: A Parable"—*We Are Nature Defending Itself: An Anthology of Women on Bodies, Borders, & Place* (Texas A&M University Press, 2025)
- "I Write in the Morning" — *On the Life and Work of Rosemary Catacalos* (Houston UP, 2025)
- "Cathedral of the Night" — *Hostos Review/Revista Hostosiana 20* (CUNY Press, 2024)
- "El Nido" — *Somos Xicanas Anthology* (Riots of Roses, 2024)
- "Breaking News: It Is Not Okay" — *Indomitable/Indomables* (2023)
- "When I Dusted You" — *Infrarrealista Review* (2021)
- "I Like for You to be Barefoot" — *Xóchitl In Cuicatl* (2021)
- "It's Not Okay" — *Contra: Texas Poets Speak Out* (Flowersong Press, 2020)
- "At the Mouth of the Alley" & "Huele Como El Diablo" — *Camino Real*, 14th Edition (2020)

Essays & Stories (2013-2019)

- "Colgado" — *Fifth Wednesday Journal* (2019)
- "Pray the Gay Away," "Bullets and Beans" & others — *Malcs Literary Journal* (2019)
- "Huele Como El Diablo" & "Solitaria Wants Wings" — *riverSedge*, Vol 31 (2018)
- "Nightmare" — *This City Is a Poem* (2016)
- "Xicana Buddhist Driving Meditation" — *Spiritualities Anthology* (2016)
- "Sinvergüenza on the Banks of the Water" — *Entre Guadalupe y Malinche* (UT Press, 2016)
- "Solitaria's Blue Sky" & "The Next Song" — *Raspa Magazine* (2013)

RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS & KEYNOTES

2025-2026

- **2026** | Panel: "Queer Latinx Narratives" — 49th Annual Writer's Week, UC Riverside
- **2026** | Featured Reading & Panel: Dessert Nights, Rising Stars — Virginia G. Piper Center for Creative Writing
- **2025** | Reading: "Entre: Skewed and Screwed Along the Borderlands" — UC San Diego
- **2025** | Reading: "Beyond the Curtain" — University of Central Florida Creative Writing
- **2025** | Plenary: "Anzaldúan Genres of Dissent and World-Building" — El Mundo Zurdo Conference, Trinity University

2024

- Reading: Big Author Talk — Gemini Ink
- Keynote: "Showing Up: National Coming Out Month" — NOTA Inclusion
- Keynote: "Bridging Identities: LGBTQIA Latinx Voices" — Hispanas Unidas 40th Anniversary, OLLU
- Keynote: "Les Maestres" — OLLU Faculty
- Panel: "Identity, Memory, and Resistance" — MALCS, Oaxaca

2023

- Panel: Should We Just Give Up? — AWP, Kansas City
- Keynote: BIPOC Pop Conference — UT Austin
- Keynote: District Wide DE Summit — Alamo Community Colleges

2022

- Artist Talk: "Queer Voices and Legacies in the Borderlands" — South Texas History Museum

- Artist Talk: "These My Two Hands" — UTRGV Art Dept.
- Artist Talk: "Gloria Anzaldúa, the Rio Grande Valley & Tejas" — El Retorno Al Valle Literary Landmark Symposium

2019

- Author Speaker — Trinity University Office of Diversity and Inclusion
- Speaker — San Antonio College Mexican American Studies Dept.

2018

- Speaker: "Art and Storytelling as Water, as Confluence" — Creative Mornings
- Artist/Author Speaker: PechaKucha — San Antonio
- Plenary: "Artivism and Anzaldúa" — Gloria Anzaldúa: Translating B/orders, University of Paris VIII
- Plenary: "Making Familia" — NACCS Conference, Albuquerque
- Panel: "Poets Without Walls" — MALCS Conference, UT El Paso
- Panel: "Feminist and Queer Publications" — XI Congreso Internacional, Salamanca, Spain
- Panel: "L@s Desnud@s: Writing Together as Decolonial Practice" — El Mundo Zurdo Conference, Trinity University
- Panel: "Artists: Negotiating, Decolonizing and Creating" — SSGA Conference, UTSA
- Panel: "Phenomenal Women in Leadership Series" — Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
- Panel: "Notes from the Field: New Voices in LGBT Writing" — Gemini Ink

2016

- Featured: "¡Chicana! Power! A Firme Tejana-Califas Reading" — AWP, Los Angeles
- Featured: "Tejanas on the Loose" — UCLA
- Panel: "Nuestras Historias: Latin@s in the Arts" — NALAC Regional Arts Kick-Off

2015

- Featured: "Probaditas of You: Queer Chicana Authors" — Aquí Estamos 2015, UTRGV
- Featured: "Palabras de Poder For Your Palette" — UC Davis & Taller Arte Del Nuevo Almanecer
- Featured: Poets and Writers Visit — American River College, Sacramento

2014

- Panel: "Forging Transgressive Literatures: Jotería Small Presses" — National Women's Studies Association, San Juan, Puerto Rico

2013

- "A Celebration of South Texas Voices" — The Texas Book Festival

2008

- Panel: "Creative Plática on Queer Xicana/o Writers and Performers" — NACCS Conference, Austin

RESIDENCIES & WORKSHOPS

- **2018** | Ayuda Nebrija Creadores Residency — Hispa USA Universidad de Alcalá, Spain
- **2017** | Vermont Studio Center
- **2016** | Squaw Valley Community of Writers — Olympic Valley, CA
- **2016** | Vermont Studio Center (Not Attended)
- **2016** | Hedgebrook Writers Workshop (Not Attended)
- **2005** | NALAC Leadership Institute Workshop
- **2003–Present** | Macondo Writers Workshop

BOARD & COMMITTEE SERVICE

- **2018–2024** | Board Member — Mayor's LGBT Task Force, City of San Antonio
- **2018–2021** | Board Member — Macondo Writers Workshop
- **2018** | Mayor's Housing Task Force for Equity San Antonio
- **2015–2017** | Board Member — Pride Center San Antonio
- **2015–2016** | Advisory Board Member — Macondo Writers Workshop
- **2008–2019** | Co-Reviewer & Committee Member — El Mundo Zurdo Conference, SSGA
- **2008–2009** | LGBT City Liaison — Austin Latino Lesbian and Gay Organization

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

- **2012–Present** | Mujeres Activas en Letras y Cambio Social (MALCS)
- **2005–Present** | National Association of Latino Arts and Culture (NALAC)
- **2005–Present** | Society for the Study of Gloria Anzaldúa

EXHIBITIONS

Solo Exhibitions

- **2025** | *I Am Home: A Retrospective* — Mexican Cultural Institute, San Antonio
- **2013** | *Ometeotl* — ARTery Studio, San Antonio
- **2008** | *La Contemporáneo* — Rutamaya Riverwalk, San Antonio
- **2006** | *Your Cuerpo, Tu Body* — Alternative Gallery, San Antonio
- **2002** | *Summer Feast* — Latina Letters Conference, St. Mary's University
- **2002** | *Dance On* — In Home Consultants, San Antonio
- **2002** | *Mujer Sin Titulo* — Central Branch Library Gallery, San Antonio
- **2002** | *Late Metaphor* — Peep Hole Art Gallery, San Antonio
- **2002** | *Woman, Alive, Exploding* — Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center Annex
- **1998** | Senior Art Exhibition — University of the Incarnate Word

Curated Exhibitions

- **2015** | Women Who Dare — Carver Cultural Center
- **2015** | Women of San Antonio, a Tribute Show — Carver Cultural Center
- **2013** | Querida Maestra — SSGA Conference, UTSA
- **2012** | Transformations — SSGA Conference, UTSA
- **2010** | La Freak Show — Noche de la Gloria
- **2009** | El Mundo Zurdo — SSGA Conference, Esperanza Peace and Justice Center
- **2008** | EnCanto de Mujer — Esperanza Peace and Justice Center

Group Exhibitions (Selected)

- **2025** | Centro Cultural Aztlan
- **2025** | La Peña
- **2025** | Benson Gallery Collections — University of Texas at Austin
- **2024** | Virgen Exhibition — Centro Cultural Aztlan
- **2024** | Mellon Foundation African American Museum — Carver Cultural Center
- **2023** | Nuestra Delta Magica — Brownsville, TX
- **2023** | La Otra Taller Nepantla Exhibition — Eye of the Beholder Art Gallery
- **2022** | La Retorno — UTRGV, Edinburg
- **2022** | Masa V — Centro Cultural Aztlan
- **2022** | NYFA Immigrant Artist Mentoring Exhibition Round 2 — Centro de Artes
- **2019** | NYFA Immigrant Artist Mentorship Exhibition — Centro de Artes
- **2019** | Transamerica/n — McNay Art Museum
- **2018** | Mariconx — Galeria E.V.A.
- **2018** | Queer Voices — Texas Pop Culture Museum

- **2017** | United We Are One — Plaza de Armas
- **2017** | Sor Juana Festival — Galeria E.V.A.
- **2016** | Nepantla: Spaces of Transformation — Galeria E.V.A.
- **2016** | International Women's Day Exhibition — La Peña Art Gallery, Austin
- **2015** | Queer Y Que — Esperanza Peace and Justice Center
- **2014** | Homenaje a la Mujer — La Peña Art Gallery, Austin
- **2013** | Mujerista — La Peña Art Gallery, Austin
- **2010** | Fotoseptiembre — La Peña Art Gallery, Austin
- **2010** | Sacrilege — Centro Cultural de La Raza Gallery, San Diego
- **2010** | Hecho A Mano — Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center
- **2009** | Dia de Los Muertos — La Peña Art Gallery, Austin
- **2008** | International Women's Day Exhibition — Viva, San Antonio
- **2006** | Rayitos de La Virgen — Centro Cultural Aztlan
- **2005** | Paint Me Text — Keller Studio @ Blue Star
- **2002** | Olmos Fourteen — Galleria Ortiz
- **2002** | Mexican American Renacimiento — Central Branch Library Gallery
- **1998** | Annual Showcase — San Antonio College Fine Arts Gallery

THEATRICAL PRODUCTIONS

- **2021** | *Empanada, the Play* — Full production (two-week run), The Public Theater of San Antonio
- **2015** | *Empanada, the Play* — Performance excerpt, UC Davis & Taller Arte del Nuevo Amanecer
- **2010** | *Empanada, the Play* — MACLA/Movimiento de Arte y Cultura Latino Americana, San Jose
- **2010** | *Empanada, the Play* — Chicago Sor Juana Festival & National Mexican Museum of Art
- **2007** | *Empanada, the Play* — Trinity University LGBT Organization reading
- **2006** | *Empanada, the Play* — First Annual Sor Juana Festival, Houston Museum of Art
- **2006** | *Empanada, the Play* — Two-weekend run, Teatrofest, Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center & Esperanza Peace and Justice Center
- **2005** | *Empanada, the Play* — Annual Noche de Macondo, San Antonio
- **2003** | *Empanada, the Play* — Esperanza Peace and Justice Center
- **2002** | *Empanada, the Play* — UTSA Women's History Month & Café Revolucion

PUBLIC ART PROJECTS

- **2010** | Mural: Haven for Hope — Collaboration with Henry Ford Academy Alameda students
- **2009** | Mural & Garden Path — Fox Tech High School Art IV class
- **2008** | Mural: Las Estudiantes — Art Pace & Fox Tech High School collaboration

CONTACT INFORMATION

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- Email: anelflores@me.com
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ARTIST STATEMENT

My work is an evolution of the Xicana/e movement in art and literature, now infused by Latina/e transfeminism, intersectionality, queer politics, and resistencia. Over a 30-year creative career, this has manifested as poetry, fiction, graphic memoir, and paintings—a practice born of the need to heal

myself, understand the world around me, and connect with generations past, present, and future. I was born with one foot in Mexico and one in Texas, crossing El Chalán with my abuelita for eggs on the way back to Los Ebanos. Mine is a life lived in the borderlands—what Gloria Anzaldúa called *una herida abierta*, where the Third World grates against the First and bleeds. I grew up between Brownsville, my birthplace, and San Antonio, where I now live as an out, queer, trans, and two-spirit cultural worker, author, artist, and parent. My process oscillates between disciplines in search of ancestral healing, present-day joy, gender and bodily autonomy, and the re-centering of Latina/e, BIPOC, and LGBTQIA+ Womyn, Femmes, and Gender NonBinary power. I work in collaboration with other writers, in ceremony. I take photographs. I walk long distances along the river, the ocean, the border wall, and across the stolen ranches of my ancestors. I interview and uncover stories of closeted gays my 84-year-old parents knew, and the ones their parents knew before them—the *vecina* down the road, the whispered names. I do research on the ground and in archives: photos, artwork, the medicine passed from land to art to story to practice. This medicine has been buried deep, and it is being stolen fast—by AI, by racism, by the transphobic rhetoric of this administration. My investigation reaches for whatever stories remain accessible: stories from the trees, the oceans, the crops of our land, the dead, our ghosts, the stories downloaded from the universe itself. Because of the physical, emotional, and sexual violence, the homophobia, transphobia, and environmental racism I have endured and witnessed, I write and paint the world I want to see. I move to make work as an access point for viewers to engage against binary thought and step into dreams of a world where we live at our fullest. I weave in stories of the people from all the spaces in between—Indigenous and Tejane stories, the song of the four-legged, the resilience that blooms in our continued example of community, of *nepantla*, that space of transformation between worlds. I am writing a story that cannot be erased: of lives that are valid, of people who were leaders, lovers, family in our neighborhoods and *panaderías*. I honor the queers who become chosen family when blood family ousts us, resisting those who try to silence the truth that we have always been here. I see my work in conversation with Alison Bechdel, Sandra Cisneros, Alex Espinoza, Mira Jacob, Melissa Febos, Roxane Gay, and MariNaomi—writers who braid the graphic, the confessional, and the political to make queer and Latina/e life visible. My forthcoming memoir chronicles how and why I have made it to where I am today, and why I encourage others to keep telling their stories and claiming their power.