

## Writers On Work

# Three Writers Collaborate with Seattle Professionals on the Nature of Work

Writers on Work celebrates labor vital to the life of Seattle. Poet Lyn Coffin translates the voices YMCA case reports, performance artist Stokley Towles rides in a North Precinct squad car & fabulist Bret Fetzer listens to an ambulance siren. Three jobs: Social Work, Police Work, Emergency Medical Response. Three nights.

*Writers on Work* reading, series created by the Hugo House Writer-In-Residence Matt Briggs, teams professional writers with community members whose jobs are integral to the operation and function of our city. The series provides a connection between practicing writers and professionals and looks to ways that Hugo House, as a community resource center, can be used and be of use to anyone. Each writer-worker pair is a reflective nonfiction piece about work to be performed at the Hugo House Cabaret this spring. The performance schedule and selected participants are featured below. Each performance will begin at 7:30. General admission is \$7 (\$5, Hugo House members).

# Writers *on* Work

Labor as Art and Playing on Work

Writers *on* Work celebrates labor vital to the life of Seattle. A poet translates the voices of case reports, a performance artist rides in a squad car & a fabulist listens to an ambulance siren. Three jobs: Social Work, Police Work, Emergency Medical Response. Three nights.



<p>Tuesday, April 20<sup>th</sup></p> <p>Lyn Coffin <i>Poet and Playwright</i></p> <p>Martin Cross <i>Teen &amp; Family Programs -YMCA</i></p>	<p>Tuesday, May 25<sup>th</sup></p> <p>Stokley Towles <i>Performance Artist</i></p> <p>Officer Dain Jones <i>Seattle Police Department</i></p>	<p>Tuesday, June 22<sup>nd</sup></p> <p>Bret Fetzer <i>Fabulist and Playwright</i></p> <p>Stephen McCandless <i>Emergency Medical Technician</i></p>
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Richard Hugo House, established in 1997 on Seattle's Capitol Hill, is a nonprofit literary arts center offering classes, programs, a site library, publishing resources and events to encourage the development of writing as a craft and as a vehicle of inquiry.

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*Writers On Work: An evening on social work with poet Lyn Coffin and YMCA executive Martin Cross*

On April 20th, playwright Lyn Coffin and the director of Teen and Family Programs at the YMCA, Martin Cross, presented a series of vignettes based on case work and Cross' work with foster parents.

**Lyn Coffin** is an accomplished poet, translator, short story writer, and playwright. Her four books of poetry include *Human Trapping* and *The Poetry of Wickedness*. She has translated the Russian and Check poets Jiri Orten, Jaroslav Seifert, and Miloslva Holubova. Her fiction and poetry has been widely published in literary magazines. Her story "Falling Off the Scaffold," was selected by Joyce Carol Oates for *The Best American Short Stories* collection in 1969. For

the last several years she has written, directed, and acted in the theater. Her own plays have been produced at The Attic Theater in Detroit, the Performance Network, and the Ann Arbor Civic Theatre. Her awards include the Academy of American Poets' Prize, Hopwood Award, first prize in the International Poetry Review's translation competition. She has taught creative writing in Michigan and Wisconsin.

**Martin Cross** is originally from Michigan and moved to Seattle in 1984. He has a Masters Degree in counseling psychology and has worked with children, teens, and families for the past 20 years. He joined the Downtown Seattle YMCA in 1989 and currently serves as the Associate Executive of Teen & Family Programs. Martin has taught numerous courses at Seattle University and has performed

training at both the state and national level. He has attended advanced training to develop his own leadership skills, and is passionate about helping teens develop their leadership potential. Martin enjoys spending time with his family (has a 14 year old son), traveling, and outdoor activities.

*Writers On Work: An evening on police work with lyric investigator Stokley Towles and Seattle Police Officer Dain Jones*

On May 25th, performance artist Stokley Towles and Police Officer Dain Jones will present their collaboration looking at the police in Seattle and the life and work of officers.

**Stokley Towles** has spent the last month talking to Police Officers and examining points of contact between the Seattle Police Department and the history of Seattle. He's found annual reports listing crimes in Seattle committed by profession. In the 1920s he found that there was one writer and one author. How did the arresting officer determine the distinction between a writer and an author? Office Dain Jones was recommended on the basis of the fine prose style exhibited in his police reports. On May 25th at 7:30, Towles will present his findings and Officer Jones will, perhaps, read from his reports. Questions and answers and a discussion will follow the reading.

Stokley Towles tells stories. Venues for his work range from the sidewalk at the corner of 151st and 8th Avenues SW in Burien, where story plaques tell a 10,000-year history of that block, to the University of Washington, where

he impersonated a professor for two years and gave lectures to students in a construction trailer.

**Dain Jones** is a Seattle Police Officer with the North Precinct.

*Writers On Work: Emergency Medical Technician - Early on the Scene*

June 22nd: An Emergency Medical Technician has been referred to as the "man in the white coat." As in, they are coming to take me away. The EMT often arrives as the first professionals on the scene of an accident. Stephen McCandless, an EMT, describes the kind of personality drawn to this line of low paying, high stress work as the kind of thing done by people who feel the need for a continually shocking experience. On June 22nd at 7:30 pm, local playwright Bret Fetzer will present his collaboration with McCandless on the Cabaret Stage at Richard Hugo House.

Noah Adams featured Fetzer and McCandless on National Public Radio in a report on low wage workers.

For more information:  
[www.npr.org/features/feature.php?wfId=1840917](http://www.npr.org/features/feature.php?wfId=1840917)

This event is the final night of the Writers on Work reading, series created by the Hugo House Writer-In-Residence Matt Briggs, teams professional writers with community members whose jobs are integral to the operation and function of our city. The

series provides a connection between practicing writers and professionals and looks to ways that Hugo House, as a community resource center, can be used and be of use to anyone. Each writer-worker pair is a reflective nonfiction piece about work to be performed at the Hugo House Cabaret.

**Bret Fetzer's** plays have been produced across the United States. He has been commissioned by Seattle Children's Theatre to write an adaptation of the picture book *Everyone Knows What a Dragon Looks Like*. His newest play, *Angel of Mercy*, will be read at the FringeACT Festival at ACT Theatre in April 2004. His books of original fairy tales, *Petals & Thorns* and *Tooth & Tongue*, are available through <[www.pistilbooks.com](http://www.pistilbooks.com)>.

**Stephen McCandless** has been an Emergency Medical Technician for a private ambulance company for almost four years. About his professional, McCandless said, that in his line of work he generally plays the role of "the men in the white coats." So no one is happy to see him despite the fact that he is there to take them to a safe place.



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