

Toni Press-Coffman — Biography

Toni Press-Coffman was born and raised in the Bronx. She has lived in 14 cities in the United States and done artist residencies in 11 more. She wrote her play about Richard III (*Two Days of Grace At Middleham*) at Hawthornden Castle outside Edinburgh from where she traveled to Richard's birthplace, to Middleham Castle where he grew up, and to Bosworth Field, where he died. Written in a rage about Shakespeare's acting as a Tudor propagandist, the play traveled to the Edinburgh Fringe Festival in summer 2000 following productions in Tucson and San Francisco.

With a grant from the Arizona Commission on the Arts, she wrote *Touch* at coffee shops and motels along the Pacific Coast as she traveled to and from the Oregon Shakespeare Festival. The play premiered at Damesrocket Theatre in Tucson and opened Off-Broadway at the Women's Project in 2003 following a production at Actors Theatre of Louisville's Humana Festival.

She wrote *La Sangre Llama* in Indianapolis in collaboration with that city's Santeria community and *Coyote y Culebre* in collaboration with second, third and fourth graders in Tucson public schools. She wrote *That Slut!* during an NEA/TCG Playwright Residency at the Phoenix Theatre in Indianapolis, where it premiered. Inspired by our absurd collective obsession with Bill Clinton's licentious encounter with Monica Lewinsky, the play was subsequently produced in Tucson and San Francisco and as part of The Kitchen Dog New Play Festival in Dallas.

She has written 20 plays, which have been produced throughout the country, including in New York, Los Angeles, Indianapolis, San Francisco, Portland (OR), Tucson, Columbus, Miami, and Baltimore. She has had work developed at the Sundance Institute (*All Ye Faithful*), Playlabs (*Trucker Rhapsody*), the Minneapolis' Playwrights Center (*Touch*), and the Eugene O'Neill National Playwrights Conference (*Stand*). *Stand* subsequently received the Brodtkin Award given annually to support the career of a National Playwrights Conference participant, and was produced at The Purple Rose Theatre outside Ann Arbor. She has received commissions from the National New Play Network, the Sloan Foundation, Bloomington Playwrights Project, and the Phoenix Theatre (Indianapolis). Both *Touch* and *Holy Spirit On Grand Avenue* won the Arizona State Playwriting Award. Her latest play, *Armor*, won the Arizona Theatre Company's Playwriting Contest in 2010. Although she can't prove it, she believes she has had more readings and workshops of her plays—that did not lead to full productions—than any other living American playwright.

In addition to writing plays, she has taught playwriting at the undergraduate and graduate levels at The Ohio State University, The University of Arizona, Arizona State University, Chatham College, Stanford University and the University of Wisconsin; and mentored numerous playwrights through her work as a Literary Manager and production

Dramaturge.

Press-Coffman lives with her husband Glen, cat Gus and dog Grace in Tucson, where she writes and acts, and is Borderlands Theater's Literary Manager. Most mornings, she is excited to wake up in such a beautiful place.

PO Box 64939 • Tucson, Arizona 85728 • 520-749-3800 • HYPERLINK "http://www.windingroadtheater.org"
www.windingroadtheater.org • windingroadte@gmail.com