

Seattle City Council

**Housing, Human Services, Health and Culture Committee Meeting**  
2 p.m. Wednesday, June 23<sup>rd</sup> 2010

**Words' Worth**

The Poetry Program of the Seattle City Council

Curated by **Priya Keefe**

Today's poet is **Dobbie Reese Norris**

**Dobbie Reese Norris** is a poet, writer and raconteur. He is a former Wordsworth curator. His works have been published in various anthologies including *Within Walking Distance*, a collection of University District writers, poets and visual artists, *The Little Red Studio Anthology of Poets - 2009*, and in the fall 2010 release of *Many Trails to the Summit*, a Rose Alley Publication of Seattle area poets. In May of 2005, Dobbie, was the cover story of *Las Cruces Poets and Writers Magazine*. His chapbook is *Pralines and Cream*, a collaborative effort, with Bellevue poet Brenda Givens. However, Dobbie is best known for being the originator, host of and contributor to one the longest running reading series in the city; *Third Tuesdays Poets & Writers in the Bitter Lake community*.

**The Coxswain**

By Dobbie Reese Norris

Sitting steering  
The jockey-size young man  
Barks coaxing commands  
Into Jane's sun-glassed face  
She responds to a measured  
Quickening of the pace  
Not all out  
A half a length back  
Third was not good enough  
In this race

The oars lift and submerge  
As the shell surges  
Forward

Making up water  
Churning up water  
In “The Cut”

The eight –woman crew  
Pull hard  
In their charge  
In control  
Knees to chests  
Arms outstretched  
Legs extended  
Hands to breasts  
Beautiful Clydes dolphins  
They are

The small man’s dreams are being  
Realized  
As he speak  
Clearly to his stroke  
“Jane, eight hundred meters to go  
Keep heart  
Stay within yourself”  
He watches her knees lock  
Then extend  
The sun visor nods  
Sweat mixes with new rain  
Streaking the opaque glasses  
The relationship is secured

Synchronized oars push  
Through pocked water  
“Fire hundred meters to go  
One moment in time”,  
He screams  
Jane takes the cue  
These galley Amazons  
Take the task

Hearts, arms, chest, legs, blood  
Row  
They bow  
In exhaustion  
After crossing the line  
The little man throws  
Up his arms  
Then gently touches

Jane's arthroscopic knee  
All had been given

-- *end* --