Meet the Author

Tim Hoppey



Tim Hoppey received his B.A. in English and History from Hobart College in Geneva, NY. For over twenty years, he has worked as a New York City firefighter stationed in East Harlem. This is the setting for *Tito, the Firefighter / Tito, el bombero*. Tim's firefighting profession and his many experiences on the job inspire the children's stories and poetry he writes.

A dedicated husband and father, Tim is involved with many aspects of his children's life such as supporting them in school and being active in sporting activities. He admits he might be getting too old, but he still can't give up his favorite sport, lacrosse. This includes some coaching and some playing (just for fun, of course). When Tim was in high school, he was named All-American in this rugged activity. He also keeps busy doing home improvements and enjoys reading for pleasure as well as writing stories and poems.

Tim lives with the reality of a bilingual community in his professional life. He knows that communication and the potential for breakdown in that communication due to language differences can be a real problem. This was the spark for the beginning of the Tito story. The idea of community and the sharing that goes on within that community is also at the heart of *Tito, the Firefighter / Tito, el bombero*. Not only does Tim know that firefighters provide an invaluable community service, but he knows too how much he has gotten back from the job.

Being a firefighter has many rewards. Over the years, he has befriended some of the neighborhood kids, much like Richie in the story, and still stays in contact even after they have grown up. He was also part of the rescue efforts in New York City on 9/11 and the harrowing effects of that time have definitely influenced his life, his job, and his writing.

Contact Tim Hoppey through the publisher at raven@raventreepress.com.



Tito, the Firefighter written by Tim Hoppey illustrated by Kimberly Hoffman
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1400 Miller Parkway McHenry, IL 60050
Phone: 877-256-0579 Fax: 800-909-9901 www.raventreepress.com raven@raventreepress.com

Questions for the Author

Tim Hoppey



1. Who or what inspires you to write?
Tim is a New York City firefighter. His profession and the people he meets during the course of his workday are the inspiration for many of the picture books he has written.

2. What is your favorite writing environment? Describe your workspace.
Tim has converted an extra bedroom in his house into a writing space for himself. There he can sit facing the wall (less distractions that way) or gaze at the only picture on the wall, an old photograph of his grandfather's 1917 high school football team. Back then, football was played without helmets and with very few pads. This photo reminds Tim of how tough you have to be to be a writer.

3. Are there any special supplies you use for writing?
When Tim sits down to write he has four sharpened pencils at the ready. He does this so that when the Muse arrives he won't scare Her away with the noise of grinding pencils in the sharpener.

4. Describe your creative process? What is a 'must have' when you are in the creative process?
Silence is all Tim needs when he is writing. That being said, he admits that being the father of three noisy children, silence is a rare commodity.

5. Who are your favorite authors? What influence have they had on your work?
As a child, Tim's favorite books were Margaret Wise Brown's *Pussy Willow* and Leroy Jackson's *The Peter Patter Book*. Both books still entrance him to this day.

6. What specific message do you want people to get from this book and why? What experiences have you had that directly reinforce your book's message?
Tito, the Firefighter / Tito, el bombero is about communication, whether it be the ringing of bells in the firehouse or the sounding of the horn and siren on the fire truck. Tim believes that the ability to communicate connects people and brings our world closer together.



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Questions for the Author (continued)

Tim Hoppey



7. Do you have any interesting hobbies that other may be interested in?
Lacrosse in the summertime is Tim's sport of choice. He coaches and plays, although he thinks that maybe he's getting a little too old to still be playing.

8. How long have you been at work on this book? Why did you write it? Where did your ideas come from?
Having worked in East Harlem for over twenty years, Tim has come to know many of the children in the neighborhood. Like their counterparts everywhere, they are fascinated by firefighting. They often hang around the firehouse hoping to be invited to don a helmet or explore the fire engine. These Hispanic children were the initial inspiration for *Tito, the Firefighter / Tito, el bombero*.

9. Did the book involve special research? Please include.
Tito lives in East Harlem. Tim works in East Harlem. Richie is a firefighter. Tim is a firefighter. The characters and the setting were already familiar, so Tim didn't have to do much additional research for this story. It basically grew out of his everyday life.

10. Detail any fun things that have happened/or are happening because of the publication of this book.
During Fire Prevention Week, Tim was asked to read *Tito, the Firefighter / Tito, el bombero* and discuss fire safety with the children in elementary schools on Long Island and in New York City. He says this was a great event and tons of fun.



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Meet the Illustrator

Kimberly Hoffman



Kimberly Hoffman earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Design Communication from the University of Minnesota. She works as a freelance illustrator and designer and recently moved from Madison, Wisconsin to Venice, California. *Tito, the Firefighter / Tito, el bombero* is Kimberly's first published children's book and she loved the experience so much she is definitely ready to pursue this facet of design work.

Kimberly's hand-sketched scenes for *Tito, the Firefighter / Tito, el bombero* began as Prismacolor® pencil 'roughs'. Those 'roughs' became lively computer-enhanced, full-page spreads through Kimberly's skillful and imaginative use of Adobe® Illustrator. She captured the New York atmosphere of Tito's energetic neighborhood as well as the architecture of the fire station, Tito's apartment building, and the lively market. The flashing lights and chrome of the fire trucks gleam and seem to radiate and pulsate off the pages. Energetic shades of red and brilliant primary colors make these illustrations particularly appealing. Hours of research at fire stations and author/illustrator photo-sharing helped Kimberly achieve subtle details and give a unique rendering of this special locale in New York City.

She has traveled and lived in Ghana, Zambia, and Zimbabwe, Africa. Zimbaubwe has a special fascination for Kimberly (maybe in part because she met her husband there) and its culture continues to inspire her. So much so, in fact, that she hopes to co-author a children's story with her husband using this setting as the backdrop for the story.

Kimberly is Mom to a baby daughter and has found inspiration in her new role as a mother. She also enjoys movies, bicycling, and Zabel, her orange-striped cat. With easy access to the ocean, she can explore the West Coast for new stimulus in design and stories.

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Questions for the Illustrator

Kimberly Hoffman



1. Who or what inspires you to draw?
Inspiration comes from many places including her adorable 1-1/2 year old daughter, the country and culture of Zimbaubwe, and the environment she is currently in, namely Venice, California. Venice is a smorgasbord of imagery and energy.

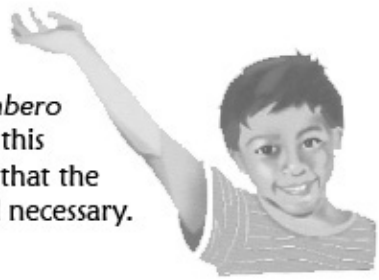
2. What is your favorite illustrating environment? Describe your workspace.
Kimberly draws wherever she goes. It may be a cliché, but she really does sketch on paper napkins in restaurants and her little scraps of 'scribbles' can be found in the car, her purse, alongside the weekly grocery list, etc.

3. Are there any special supplies you use for illustrating?
Kimberly uses graphite drawing pencils and a sketch pad for roughs, but a computer tricked out with the latest design and illustration programs becomes a necessity when it comes down to the special effects she likes to incorporate into her illustrations.

4. Describe your creative process? What is a 'must have' when you are in the creative process?
Contemplation, sketching, late nights, early mornings, between baby stuff, Kimberly is always in a creative mode. Each project takes on its own set of necessary equipment, such as cool drinks when the illustrations are hot (like the firehouse scenes in *Tito, the Firefighter / Tito, el bombero*) or hot cocoa when the story involves snowy winter scenes.

5. Who are your favorite illustrators? What influence have they had on your work?
Now that Kimberly is reading to her daughter on a regular basis, she is becoming familiar with many new and exciting illustrators of children's books. She finds that she has a new favorite every other week. She feels each one has something to offer her in the way of style and technique.

6. What specific message do you want people to get from this book and why? What experiences have you had that directly reinforce your book's message?
The colors and motion Kimberly used in T*ito, the Firefighter. / Tito, el bombero* emphasize the intensity in the life of a firefighter. She hopes kids will catch this energy and appreciate the job firefighters do in our communities. The fact that the story is bilingual is another message that Kimberly thinks is meaningful and necessary.



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Questions for the Illustrator (continued)

Kimberly Hoffman



7. Do you have any interesting hobbies that others may be interested in?
Kimberly likes to bike, go to movies, and of course, do more art.

8. How long have you been at work on this book? Why did you illustrate it? Where did your ideas come from?
It took about a year to complete *Tito, the Firefighter / Tito, el bombero*. Much of that time was spent on creating the special swirling, whirling effects that were needed to show the high intensity of the action in the story and the excitement of the firefighter activity.

9. Did the book involve special research? Please include.
Kimberly visited local fire stations, chatted with firefighters, examined firefighting clothing, the trucks and various firefighting gear. She then collaborated with the author on how the East Harlem neighborhood scenes, including the firehouse, could be brought to life. This collaboration included photos of his fire station, the street scenes of Harlem, and local businesses from author Tim Hoppey.

10. Detail any fun things that have happened/or are happening because of the publication of this book.
An event at a local fire station that she had visited during her research was a highlight for Kimberly. Everyone was so excited about the book's release and the part they had in making the illustrations a reality. Kimberly has also enjoyed the various book store signings she has been invited to give and looks forward to many more to come.



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About the Book

Tito, the Firefighter/ Tito, el bombero



Set in Spanish Harlem and written by a New York City firefighter, *Tito, the Firefighter / Tito, el bombero*, is the story of how the ability to speak two languages is a valuable asset. Tito speaks both English and Spanish. He is also a great admirer of the neighborhood firefighters, or bomberos. He makes friends with Richie, a firefighter, and hopes to be able to ride in the fire truck someday. Little does Tito imagine that his bilingual ability will help the bomberos save the day. He gets to realize his dream of being a firefighter (if only for a day) when he interprets a plea for help from a Spanish-speaking man into the English the firefighters can understand.

Tito's personality shines and his ready assistance is a lesson in good citizenship. Not only is his bilingual ability an advantage, but it actually proves a necessity in a potentially dangerous situation. Children will love the excitement of this embedded bilingual story. They will imagine themselves in Tito's place and come to appreciate his linguistic ability and helpful attitude.

Hoffman's illustrations for *Tito, the Firefighter / Tito, el bombero* were created in Adobe® Illustrator and Adobe® PhotoShop to achieve the movement and brilliance that appears on the spreads throughout the book. The siren glows and the chrome of the fire engines gives off an energy that carries the story to a new level. The activity in and around the firehouse is depicted in waves of motion and swirling colors. It would be hard not to get drawn into the excitement. The illustrations not only define the text, they enhance and accelerate the progression of the story.

This story is presented with embedded Spanish text. Take a story in English and sprinkle in a little Spanish. The word is first introduced in English and then reiterated in the same sentence, or in the same paragraph, in Spanish. Once the word is introduced, it is used in both languages within the context of the story. Illustrations, context and the different color ink with which the embedded words are printed, aid in making the leap from one language to another.



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Rave Reviews

Tito, the Firefighter/ Tito, el bombero



"*Tito, the Firefighter* is an inspirational story …written by a NYC firefighter…excellent book that should be on every bookshelf. " **—Jennifer LB Leese, author**

"I highly recommend this book!" **—Richard Picciotto, Deputy Chief Retired NYCFD, author of Last Man Down**

"Picture book storytelling at its best. The skillful combination of English and Spanish words along with the authentic illustrations enable youngsters in Spanish Harlem to both hear and see themselves in their neighborhood environment. The friendship and adventures of Tito and Richie are a fine addition to those generations of stories that include fire houses, fire equipment and especially firefighters." **—Dr. Jim Higgins, Prof. Emeritus, Queens College, City University of New York**

"Serving and protecting the community is engrained in the soul of every firefighter—on and off the job…member Tim Hoppey demonstrated that common thread recently with the publication of his children's book [Tito, the Firefighter]…fire fighters work hard to overcome the language barrier by taking classes and working on their Spanish, but it can be an issue…[Hoppey hopes] this book can serve as a good educational tool and bring the Spanish and English speaking communities together…" **—International Association of Fire Fighters**

"What a great story! Children always love a book in which the child becomes "the teacher" and helps out the adult. The look on Tito's face as he translates for Richie, the firefighter, is priceless…Tito lives out every little boy's dream! The bright full-page illustrations are filled with detail right down to the page numbers inside a fire shield…*Un libro excelente*!" **—Francis F. Cabana, 4th grade teacher Kensington Road Elementary School, Glen Falls, NY**

"Tim Hoppey, a New York City firefighter in East Harlem, wrote, *Tito, the Firefighter*, about a boy named Tito who wants to be a *bombero* (firefighter) and whose ability to speak both languages helps the firemen in an emergency. Instead of being complete in both languages, it uses a mixture, so children are introduced to vocabulary words in Spanish. Realistic illustrations by Kimberly Hoffman plus abbreviated text make it perfect for early readers." **—San Antonio Woman**



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Rave Reviews (continued)

Tito, the Firefighter/ Tito, el bombero



"The story is told in English with Spanish words and phrases worked in seamlessly. Hoffman's illustrations are special. Sharp details produce photographic quality that contrasts beautifully with pale background tones and scenes blurring off into the distance as the fire truck speeds by ….first rate artwork." **—Kirkus**

"…Spanish words are presented in red, so they stand out, and all are explained within the text…Gorgeous artwork coupled with a strong text that teaches about helping will make this a favorite among little children, especially those who already have an interest in fire trucks. Parents familiar with the popular bilingual children's television program, "Dora, the Explorer," will appreciate the message and approach of this book…" **—The Times Record**

"Passing in front of a firehouse in Spanish Harlem, Tito sees a man gesturing excitedly and speaking Spanish to one of the firemen. Tito interprets what the man is saying; he saw smoke coming from a window. The incident gives Tito the chance to learn what firemen are like and see how they react to a fire. Tim Hoppey, the author of this simple children's tale, is himself a fireman, who was involved in the 9/11 rescue efforts. Ages 3-6." **—Midwest Book Review**

"…Hoppey has done an excellent job of capturing and conveying the world of New York City firefighters and opens a window into the world of the children who befriend them. Hoffman's illustrations bring to the story a sense of warmth and community…I found this text to be a meaningful book worth sharing with young children. It is simple, yet it carries an important message. It is truly a tribute to firefighters, and it clearly speaks to the importance of knowing more than one language." **—MultiCultural Review**

"…This attention-catching book validates the importance of being bilingual…Children ages four to eight will enjoy the big red fire truck and will identify with Tito's excitement …The book's most vital lesson is that being bilingual is a great asset." **—ForeWord Magazine**

"…Told primarily in English, with embedded Spanish words, this exciting story may well inspire English-speaking children to want to be bilingual too. Hyper-realistic, computer-enhanced illustrations give lots of visual detail…" **—Notes from the Windowsill**



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Rave Reviews (continued)

Tito, the Firefighter/ Tito, el bombero



"Sure, there are fire trucks and firefighters, and big adventure…enough on their own, to capture any five-year-old's attention. As a mom, it was my little boy's immediate interest in the Spanish words and phrases that captured mine. Woven into this delightful children's storybook was my son's first Spanish lesson, and a golden opportunity to discuss cultural differences, and how our lives are enriched when we all work together. Thank you, Tim Hoppey."
—Joanne Wilson, Setauket, NY

"…a refreshing slice of life. The Prismacolor pencil illustrations, enhance by Adobe Illustrator, have a fuzzy-edged look…the bright color, activity, and realism give them considerable child appeal…may have some application in ELL programs and could be used in conjunction with Chris L. Demarest's…*Firefighters A to Z* (S & S, 2000) to create a storytime on these local heroes." **—School Library Journal**

"… young readers and listeners can learn by the context setting–akin to immersion language training. The book is on the mark as it shows how often young children are thrust by situations into translation responsibilities dealing with emergencies. We rated it a high four hearts." **—Heartland Reviews**

"…The combination of good public relations and the importance of knowing a second language team up to save the day. The need for a diverse department which reflects the community is expressed in a subtle, effective manner." **—Albert Gonzáles, Former Vice-President, Hispanic Society, FDNY**

"…this was the first one [bilingual book] to prompt our child to want to practice her skills…The principle value is in introducing Spanish. That said, there are other things to do. You can teach safety skills and how to report fires. You can also bring the book to life by visiting a firehouse."
—The Reading Tub



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Tip Sheet for

Tito, the Firefighter/ Tito, el bombero

Tito the Firefighter / Tito, el bombero
Written by Tim Hoppey Illustrated by Kimberly Hoffman
32 pg. / Hardcover / Jacketed / 1st Edition / Trade Cloth
Children's Bilingual (English text with embedded Spanish words)
ISBN 09724973-3-1 HC
ISBN 0-9741992-6-5 PB
Reading Level—2.6
Publication Date– 2004 11 x 9
Retail Price $16.95 USD Ages 4-8
Accelerated Reader® Quiz # 87319 (in English only)

Description: Tito admires his neighborhood *bomberos* (firefighters). He dreams of being a *bombero* himself someday. But, he never dreamed that his ability to speak both English and Spanish would actually help the firefighters save the day.

Selling Points:
- Kids love firefighters and trucks
- Firefighters hero status greater since 9/11
- Author is a NYC firefighter and 9/11 survivor

Selling Sentence: Tito's bilingual ability makes his bombero dreams come true.

Author Bio: For over nineteen years,Tim Hoppey has worked as a New York City firefighter. He is stationed in East Harlem, which is the setting for *Tito, the Firefighter/Tito, el bombero*.

Illustrator Bio: Kimberly Hoffman is an illustrator and a graphic designer who lives in Venice,California. She holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Design Communication from the University of Minnesota.

Advertising & Promotion Plans:
- Direct marketing to booksellers, schools and libraries
- Electronic advertising to e-lists
- Introduction at local, national and international trade shows including BEA and ALA
- Catalog and galley mailings to all major book reviewers

Pre-Publication Comments and Special Sales:
- National reviews and Scholastic Book Club sale

Subrights: All subrights currently available

Market Niche: fundraising firefighter's associations, community outreach projects for Fire Prevention Week in October of each year



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