



News Release

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Century Hosts Philosopher/Mechanic Matthew Crawford Oct. 25 and 26

Matthew Crawford, a philosopher/mechanic who is also a New York Times best-selling author, will give two presentations at Century College in October. The events are free and open to the public.

The first presentation is Tuesday, Oct. 25, at 7 p.m. in the Century College Theatre. The second is Wednesday, Oct. 26, at 10 a.m. on the Lincoln Mall, East Campus.

Crawford, the author of *Shop Class as Soulcraft*, brings alive an experience that once was quite common, but now seems to be receding from society – making and fixing things. Those of us who sit in an office often feel a lack of connection to the material world and find it difficult to say exactly what we do all day. *Shop Class as Soulcraft* seeks to restore the honor of the manual trades as a life worth choosing.

On both economic and psychological grounds, Crawford questions the educational imperative of turning everyone into a “knowledge worker” based on the misguided separation of the work of the hand from that of the mind. Crawford shows us how such a partition, which began a century ago with the assembly line, degrades work for those on both sides of the divide.

Crawford also offers good news: the manual trades are very different from the assembly line, and from dumbed-down white-collar work as well. They require careful thinking and are punctuated by moments of genuine pleasure.

Based on his own experience as an electrician and mechanic, Crawford makes a case for the intrinsic satisfactions and cognitive challenges of manual work. Such work ties us to the local communities in which we live, and instills the pride that comes from doing work that is genuinely useful. *Shop Class as Soulcraft* offers a passionate call for self-reliance and a moving reflection on how we can live concretely in an increasingly abstract world.

In addition to running a small motorcycle repair business, Crawford is a fellow at the Institute for Advanced Studies in Culture at the University of Virginia. Crawford majored in physics as an undergraduate, and then turned to political philosophy, earning a PhD from the University of Chicago.

Crawford's appearance is part of Century's ongoing Speaker Series, a community outreach activity that has brought to campus such authors as David Finkel, Robert Sapolsky, Marjane Satrapi, Steven Pinker, Anne Fadiman, Sarah Vowell, David Shipler and Stephanie Coontz.

Please call 651.779.5531 for more information.



Photo: Matthew Crawford. Photo credit: Robert Adamo