

Performance Artist Types "Ironweed" Line By Line In Albany



Artist Tim Youd at his typewriter
LUCAS WILLARD / WAMC

As part of a public art performance, William Kennedy's classic novel "Ironweed" is being re-typed line by line this week in the author's home city of Albany.

Performance artist Tim Youd has been re-typing 100 novels, seven of which he is working on in the Hudson Valley this summer. "Ironweed" is No. 61.

Speaking at the Albany Institute of History and Art Wednesday, Youd says his project is both a tribute to reading and an abstract visual exercise.

"I recognized that on a formal level, what I've been looking at all these years is a rectangle of black text inside the rectangle of a white page, and I had this palpable urge to crush the book, and to get not just the abstract words all on one page, but the layers, and the weight and the texture and the blackness of all those words," said Youd.

Youd uses typewriter models the authors would have used, on a single sheet of paper.

CRISTIN TIERNEY

With the entire novel re-typed on one page, it becomes an indistinguishable block of ink. Youd will continue to type the Albany-set Pulitzer-winner at the Institute through Saturday.