



Tim Youd retyping Raymond Chandler's "Farewell, My Lovely" at the Santa Monica Pier, Santa Monica, CA. January 2014 / Mike Street

## Meet an Artist Monday: Tim Youd

SHANA NYS DAMBROT | MAY 20, 2019 | 8:00AM

Tim Youd makes lavishly textured abstract and word-based paintings, but to classify him as a painter ignores the massive territory in his interdisciplinary practice which involves literature, durational site-specific performances, and aesthetic physical artifacts generated therewith. In brief, Youd chooses important books and re-types them. He does this using the same vintage model typewriter as the authors, in locations central either to the story or the artist's real life. He does this in marathon sessions in public, and for each book he uses just a single sheet of paper which becomes saturated with ink and disintegrates with each passing passage. He works in cycles, such as the overarching 100 Novels project, or in "cycles" such as last year's Hudson Valley Cycle which kicked off with Mary McCarthy's *The Group* at Vassar College. And then yes, there are paintings, which are based thematically and physically on the entire idiom. Some fresh examples of these are currently on view at there-there in Los Angeles.

***L.A. WEEKLY: When did you first know you were an artist?***

**TIM YOUD:** My mom is an artist. She strapped a drawing board to my high chair. So it's thanks to her I had it deep in me. But it took me a lot of years and life failures to come around to the idea that what I needed to do was make art.

*What is your short answer to people who ask what your work is about?*

I get this question a lot when I'm doing a 100 Novels retyping, because it's a bit of an unusual activity, and so I've had a lot of shots at answering it. My current best answer is that my work is about devotion and compulsion.

*What would you be doing if you weren't an artist?*

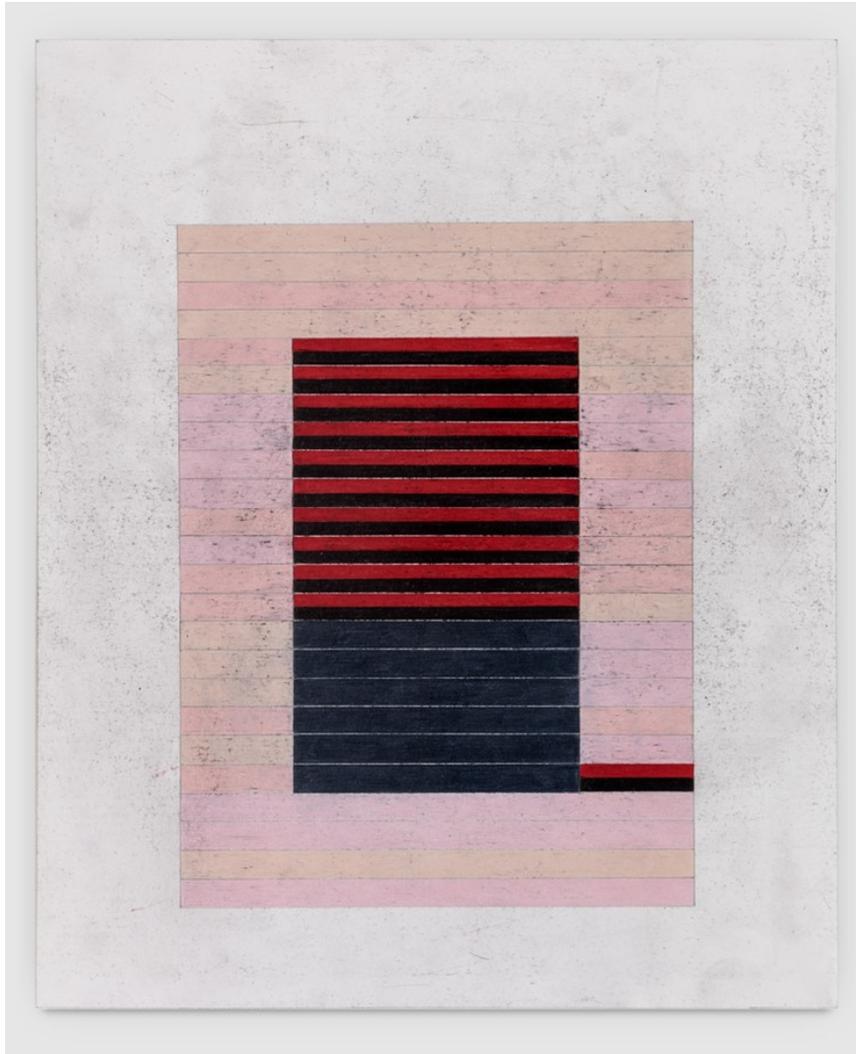
I'd be dead, or I'd wish I was.

*Did you go to art school? Why/Why not?*

I did not go to art school. When I got out of college, I went to work at an investment bank on Wall Street in New York. After a couple years of that, I moved to L.A. to make movies. It wasn't until I was in my early 30s that I came back to making art. It felt, at least to me, that it was kind of late to go back to school. It felt more important to just make art.

*Why do you live and work in L.A., and not elsewhere?*

As I noted above, I came out here to make movies, and failed. Along the way I got married and had kids and dogs and cats and a rabbit and a lizard. So here I am, and why leave now?



Tim Youd, "Drawing of a Painting - XS - No 9" (2019). Colored pencil and graphite on paper, 17 x 14 inches. / Joshua White/JWPictures.com

***When was your first show?***

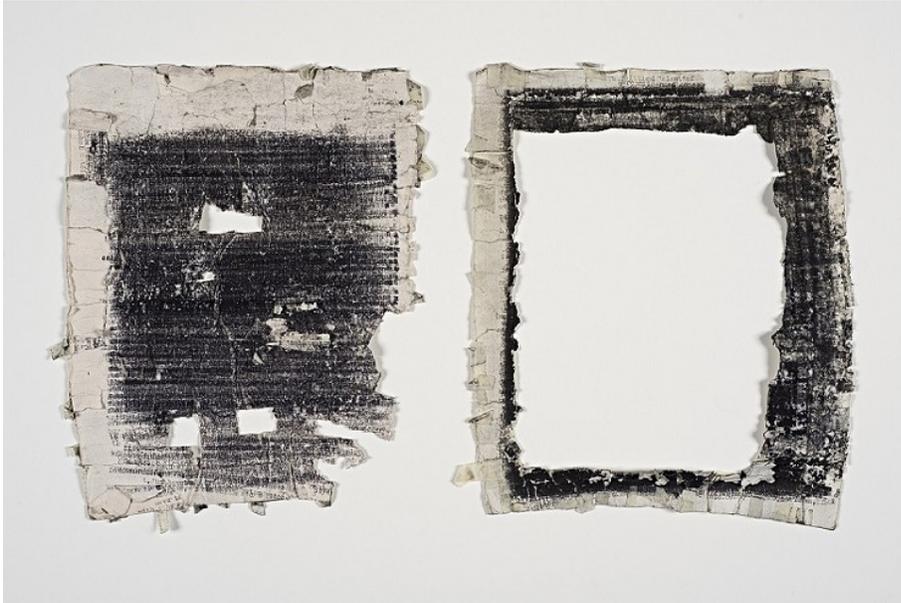
When I was age 9 I won the Kellogg's "Stick Up For Breakfast" art contest. It was 1976, and there was a bicentennial theme. I drew Captain John Paul Jones eating a bowl of Frosted Flakes on board his ship the Bonhomme Richard. A photo of my drawing made the local paper.

***When is/was your current/most recent/next show?***

I have a show of my new typewriter ribbon themed drawings at [there-there](#). A few years ago, Lauri Firstenberg curated my retyping of Upton Sinclair's novel Oil! at her LAXART performance gala at the Greystone Mansion. So I'm happy she wants to show these drawings.

## CRISTIN TIERNEY

And on Tuesday May 21 through Thursday May 30, I begin the first of six retypings in Arizona, which I am doing with the Museum of Contemporary Art Tucson, leading up to a show at the museum in the fall of 2020. I'm starting this Arizona cycle with Cormac McCarthy's *Blood Meridian*, which I'll be retyping at the Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area on an Olivetti Lettera 32. It's at the Yuma Crossing that the bloody climax of the novel takes place.



Tim Youd. Mary McCarthy's "The Group" retyped at Vassar College  
Courtesy of the artist



Tim Youd, site of a retyping  
Courtesy of the artist

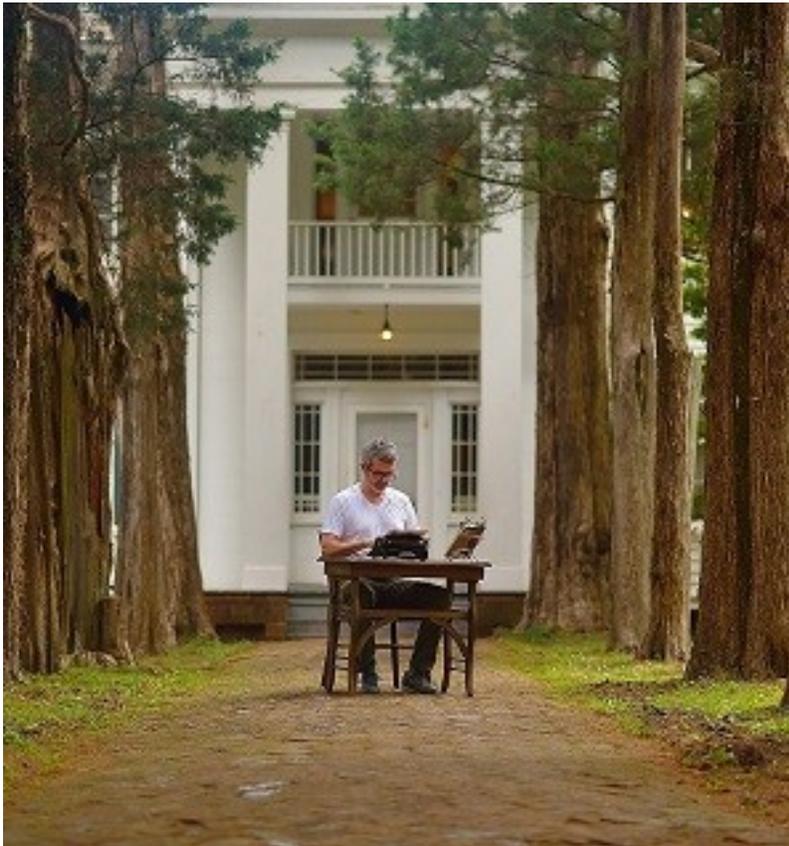
CRISTIN TIERNEY

**What artist living or dead would you most like to show with?**

Lately I've been thinking about the reds and blacks of Alberto Burri's blowtorched plastics. It's a tenuous connection I know, but the complete saturation of the red/black of the typewriter ribbon keeps drawing me to him.

***Do you listen to music while you work? If so what?***

My studio is in a storage warehouse, and my studio door is a large garage door that swings open onto a loading dock and parking lot. Across the lot is a production services company. They play their music at max volume all day long. So I just listen in — it's eclectic.



Tim Youd retyping William Faulkner's "The Sound and the Fury" at Faulkner's home in Oxford, Mississippi, June 2014  
Courtesy of the artist

***Website and social media handles, please!***

timyoud.com

Instagram: @TimYoud