

**Tim Youd** (b. 1967, Worcester, MA; lives and works in Los Angeles) has been the subject of numerous museum exhibitions, including Hanes Art Gallery at Wake Forest University, Winston-Salem, NC; New Orleans Museum of Art; Monterey Museum of Art; Hemingway-Pfeiffer Museum, Piggott, AR; Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego; University of Mississippi Art Museum at Rowan Oak; and the Lancaster Museum of Art and History, Lancaster, CA. The artist has presented and performed his 100 Novels project at Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions (LACE) and LAXART, in Venice during the Biennale previews, at the Museo dell'Ara Pacis, Rome; and the Grand Hotel Des Iles Borromees in Stresa, Italy. In fall 2017 he completed retyping Daphne Athas's *Entering Ephesus* at the Weatherspoon Art Museum and Chapel Hill, and John Ehle's *The Land Breakers* at Wake Forest University. Additional 100 Novels performances will be held in conjunction with an exhibition in 2018 at the Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center at Vassar College, where Youd will retype multiple novels in a "Hudson Valley cycle."

The Artist Talk is generously supported by the Robert Lehmann Foundation.

*Tim Youd: St. Louis Retyped* is organized for the Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis by Lisa Melandri, Executive Director, with Misa Jeffereis, Assistant Curator.

## Related Programs

### Artist Talk: Tim Youd

Friday, February 2, 6:00 pm

### Performance Schedule

**T.S. Eliot, Collected Poems**  
Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis  
January 19–21, 23–25

**Stanley Elkin, The Franchiser**  
Washington University in St. Louis  
Holmes Lounge, Ridgley Hall  
January 26  
Coffee Room, Duncker 210  
January 29–30, February 1–2, 5–6  
**Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis**  
January 27–28, February 3–4

**Marianne Moore, Complete Poems**  
First Presbyterian Church of Kirkwood,  
Tree of Life Chapel  
February 26–March 3, 5–7

**William S. Burroughs, Naked Lunch**  
Burroughs's Childhood Home (not open to the public)  
March 8–9  
Left Bank Books  
March 10–12  
Burroughs's Family Lot, Bellefontaine Cemetery  
March 14–17

Performances are free and open to the public and will typically take place 10:30 am–4:00 pm with a break 1:00–2:00 pm. Schedule subject to change.

Visit [camstl.org/timyoud](http://camstl.org/timyoud) for updates.



**Contemporary Art  
Museum St. Louis**  
3750 Washington Blvd  
St. Louis, MO 63108  
314.535.4660

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Gallery Guide  
Contemporary Art  
Museum St. Louis

January 19–  
April 22, 2018



# Tim Youd St. Louis Retyped



Tim Youd retyping John Kennedy Toole's *A Confederacy of Dunces*; 394 pages typed on an Olivetti Studio 44; Faulker House Books/Pirate's Alley with The New Orleans Museum of Art, New Orleans, LA, October 2015. Courtesy the artist and Cristin Tierney Gallery, New York.

Tim Youd is more than halfway through his 100 Novels project, in which the Los Angeles-based artist is retyping one-hundred novels over a ten-year span—a project he began in 2013. For *Tim Youd: St. Louis Retyped*, Youd retypes poetry as well as novels, all by authors with deep St. Louis connections: William S. Burroughs, T.S. Eliot, Stanley Elkin, and Marianne Moore.

You'd's durational typing performances—lasting between six and eleven days—take place around St. Louis at sites that are historically significant to the authors. Youd retypes each book on the model of typewriter the author originally used. He types on a single sheet of paper, which is laid on top of a second sheet and run repeatedly through the typewriter. At the end of his typing marathons, Youd mounts the two sheets side-by-side as a diptych. At CAM, these

diptychs are placed in the Front Room gallery following each retyping, thereby marking the end of the performance and ultimately the completion of the exhibition. A selection of the artist's typewriter drawings are also on view. These drawings of the same model typewriters used in performance evolve from recognizable images to abstractions, clouds of lines accumulated over time.



### Audio Tour

Visit [camstlaudio.org](http://camstlaudio.org) or ask for an iPod at the front desk to hear directly from the artists and curator on the audio tour.

## The Performance

Youd has long engaged with literature in his artistic practice. One day while reading he realized, on a formal level, that a book is simply a rectangle of black text within a rectangle of a white page. He wondered, “How could I squash the book? Could [I] squeeze it until [I] get all of the words of the book onto one page?” Recalling that Hunter S. Thompson had retyped *The Great Gatsby* (1925) and *The Sun Also Rises* (1926) after he decided to become a writer, Youd purchased an IBM Selectric and retyped Thompson’s *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas* (1972). That action led to his desire to then retype one-hundred novels.

The performative aspect of Youd’s project came about accidentally and organically. Yet it was through performative typing that he realized his project could also be about reading—an art action that included an almost religious devotion to the text. Youd notes, “As I’ve gotten further into it, I’ve seen even more clearly that not only is it an act of devotion toward that specific novel that I’m retyping, it’s also this opportunity to not just be a good reader in the moment but to become a better reader over time, which makes the journey exciting for me.”



Tim Youd retyping William Faulkner’s *The Sound and the Fury*; 326 pages typed on an Underwood Universal typewriter; Faulkner’s home “Rowan Oak,” Oxford, MS, June 2014. Photo credit: Robert Jordan, University of Mississippi. Courtesy the artist and Cristin Tierney Gallery, New York

## The Novels

Youd employs a broad criteria to select each novel to retype: it needs to have been written in English (Youd’s only language) and must have been written on a typewriter. Youd also needs to be compelled to spend time with the novel; some books can require close to one hundred hours of typing in a very concentrated set of consecutive days. So he has read every novel at least once before he retypes it. Youd has said, “The exercise for me is to really try to come to terms with that novel over the course of the performance, so I want to make sure it’s something I feel is worth exploring.”

## Typewriter Drawings

Youd’s typewriter drawings are created in tandem with his typing performances. The drawings are composed of one-hundred accumulated and superimposed outlines of the same model of typewriter, with index cards logging the number of times and on which days Youd drew the image. Each drawing corresponds to the typewriter that Youd utilizes in his performances. He sees these drawings, with their references to time-based action, not as performances per se but as visual metaphors—even portraits—of performances.



Tim Youd, *100 Corona No. 3s with Tally*, 2017. Graphite on paper and typed index cards, 36 × 48 inches. Courtesy the artist and Cristin Tierney Gallery, New York.

## William S. Burroughs

William S. Burroughs was born in the winter of 1914 in the master bedroom of his family’s home in the Central West End. The Burroughs’s manor—a three-story brick home on stately Pershing Avenue—designed and built by Burroughs’s father, Mortimer, is still there. The family’s wealth was owed to Burroughs’s grandfather, who invented an ubiquitous adding machine. Rebelling from his “comfortable capsule” of affluence, Burroughs sought the rough and seedy parts of St. Louis, as the author noted he “always was attracted to the run-down, or the old or the offbeat.” Although Burroughs left St. Louis as a young man to attend Harvard University, he remained tied to the prewar city of his childhood, a place he called “a different world” and “the old broken point of origin.” Burroughs went on to live in New York and connected with Beat writers Jack Kerouac and Allen Ginsberg, and it was there that he developed as a writer. He earned cultural and literary notoriety for *Naked Lunch* (1959) until he ultimately he came to rest for eternity in the Burroughs’s family plot in Bellefontaine Cemetery in 1997.

## T.S. Eliot

T.S. Eliot was born in 1888 in his family’s home at 2635 Locust Street in St. Louis (now a parking lot). His grandfather, William Greenleaf Eliot, was a leading minister in St. Louis and the founder of Washington University. His father, Henry Ware Eliot, ran Hydraulic Press Brick Company, and his mother, Charlotte Stearns Eliot, was a social worker who wrote poetry. The family later moved to 4446 Westminster Place, and Eliot attended Smith Academy, a boys’ private school near Enright Avenue and Union Boulevard. Eliot then enrolled at Harvard University and later settled in Europe. Although he left St. Louis at an early age, he credited his hometown with fueling his literary vision: “It is self-evident that St. Louis affected me more deeply than any other environment has ever done. I feel that there is something in having passed one’s childhood beside the big river, which is incommunicable to those people who have not. I consider myself fortunate to have been born here, rather than in Boston, or New York, or London.” Eliot received the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1948.

## Stanley Elkin

Stanley Elkin was born in Brooklyn and grew up on the South Shore of Chicago, where he began writing stories in grade school. After graduating from high school, he attended the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, where he earned a bachelor’s degree in English in 1952, a master’s degree in 1953, and a doctorate in 1961. In 1960, he became an instructor in the English department of Washington University in St. Louis, where he later became a full professor and taught writing until his death in 1995. Considered a

writer’s writer, Elkin was the author of numerous works of fiction including *The Dick Gibson Show* (1971), *The Franchiser* (1976), *George Mills* (1982), and *Mrs. Ted Bliss* (1995)—these last two titles each were awarded the prestigious National Book Critics Circle Award. Elkin was often described as a clear-eyed realist, even though his work veered toward parody and black humor.

## Marianne Moore

Marianne Moore was born in 1887 in the manse (no longer standing) of the First Presbyterian Church of Kirkwood, where Moore’s maternal grandfather John Riddle Warner, served as the church’s first pastor. Moore was raised by her mother and resided in St. Louis until age 16, when her mother took a teaching position in Pennsylvania. Moore was a devoted and conservative Presbyterian, and approached her Christian faith as a lesson in strength tested by adversity and temptation. Her poems reflect this concern, in which will is maintained through trials, tests, and tribulations. However, Moore was also a liberal, radical, Modernist writer who, while dressed in her famous cape and tricorne hat, mingled with avant garde peers in Greenwich Village. In contrast to the popular free verse of the time, Moore used precise syllabic form and conventional rhyme. Moore was highly regarded as a poet in her lifetime, and her *Collected Poems* (1951) won both the Pulitzer Prize in poetry and the National Book Award.



Tim Youd, *William Faulkner’s The Sound and the Fury*, 2014. Typewriter ink on paper, framed: 17 × 25 inches. 326 pages typed on an Underwood Universal; Rowan Oak, Oxford, MS, June 2014. Courtesy the artist and Cristin Tierney Gallery, New York.