

Artistic Biography of Tim'm T. West

Black, gay-identified, feminist, POZ, and working class, Tim'm T. West has embraced all of who he is and, with laser-beam precision, harnessed the power of his truth to illuminate, celebrate, inspire, provoke, and bear witness. As a teacher, performance artist, author, and culture producer, Tim'm has become an exemplar among contemporary Renaissance personalities of the early 21st Century as he brings others to voice through education for critical consciousness. Indeed, that Tim'm has been interviewed by such dizzying array of media outlets from Newsweek to the New York Times is a testament to his importance to the spirit and history of the times as a foundational maverick among black, multi-disciplinary artists. Even a restricted Google search of just his name yields over 1000 Internet occurrences.

It was in 1999 while still juggling arts and graduate studies at Stanford that Tim'm co-founded the now disbanded, critically acclaimed rap group DDC. In Spring 2007, DDC released its final, full-length studio project, 'On Some Other,' on Sugartruck Recordings. Widely published and anthologized in both academia and the mainstream press, Tim'm occupies a unique position among the provocative voices and critics of the contemporary Hip-Hop landscape. He is featured prominently as one of the critical voices in the acclaimed 2005 Hip Hop documentary, "Pick Up the Mic". Tim'm also appears in Byron Hurt's critically acclaimed Hip Hop documentary 'Beyond Beats and Rhymes.' Most recently he appeared in a set of documentaries directed by Mario Van Peebles about Black Manhood and Responsibility, "Bring Your "A" Game" and its complement "Fair Game?"

As a solo Hip Hop artist, Tim'm released "Songs from Red Dirt" on Cellular Records in 2004. The critically acclaimed solo debut provided a musical complement to his first book, 2002's "Red Dirt Revival: a poetic memoir in 6 Breaths." "Flirting" (2007), Tim'm West's second full-length poetic memoir book follows his chapbook, "BARE: notes from a porchdweller" (2005). In the same year that "Flirting" was published, Tim'm completed his second solo album "Blakkboy Blue(s)" which was also met with great critical acclaim. In Fall 2008 and in support of the campaign against CA's Proposition 8, Tim'm created a chapbook "Love In Full Color" that is also available upon request. It contains work not yet published as well as a compilation of work on the subject of loving from the other collections. In January 2009, Tim'm released his third solo rap project "In Security: The Golden Error", which has been praised as his most polished project to date. In 2010 he will be releasing a collaborative project, "un-earth", with a highly anticipated newcomer on the Houston scene, the kid. Its first tracks can be heard at myspace.com/unearth2010 and discuss topics rarely touched in Hip Hop such as environmentalism, HIV/AIDS, and a variety of other unapologetically political topics in a manner that is highly entertaining and even humorous at times. New school and old school, straight and gay, backpacker and gangster, "un-earth" will offer a hopeful Hip-Hop juxtaposition that will not soon be forgotten.

The foundation for Tim'm's work as an Educator and Scholar can be found in the red dirt of Taylor, Arkansas where Tim'm grew up before leaving for Duke University where he completed his BA. From there, he went on to earn an MA in Liberal Studies/Philosophy from the Graduate Faculty of The New School for Social Research in 1998 and another MA in Modern Thought & Literature from Stanford in 2002. On the secondary level, he served as the Department Chair of English and Creative Writing at the Oakland School of the Arts before relocating to Washington, DC where he taught in the English Department of the Cesar Chavez Public Charter High School. In various capacities, since 1995, Tim'm has also worked for College Summit, Inc. notably as a High School Coordinator in DC in 2006-07 helping to the build capacity of high

schools to get more of their students into college. Known for his engaging teaching methods, Tim'm has taught on the post-secondary level as an instructor of Writing Pedagogy classes at Eugene Lang College of The New School (NYC) and as an instructor in Stanford University's first-year Writing and Critical Thinking Program. In 2008- 2009 Academic Year Tim'm taught in the Department of World Languages and Cultures as a Visiting Lecturer in Ethnic Studies at Humboldt State University (CA). He holds a current position as an Adjunct Professor in Philosophy/Humanities at Houston Community College.

Nationally, Tim'm has continued to host the 'Front Porch' series, a Spoken Word/Hip-Hop/Soul showcase that has mobilized performance artists, musicians, and poets in DC, Chicago, Oakland, Brooklyn, Atlanta, Dallas, Houston and at various colleges and universities. He continues to teach, perform, and raise consciousness while nurturing a community of progressive artists and intellectuals in Houston, TX where he now resides. A dedicated professional, as well as an artist, Tim'm functions as Program Coordinator for young black gay/bi/sgl men at St. Hope Foundation's FUSION Center. In Spring 2010, with the support of St. Hope Foundation, he was named a distinguished Fellow of Black AIDS Institute's African-American HIV University's Community Mobilization College.