

**A.S. Alex Schady** *Thomas Brothers*

Most of the goods are hidden from view in the labyrinth of shelves that provide a backdrop for the three brothers who stand behind the counter. The brothers have provided me with materials for DIY, art, pest control, home security and children's fancy dress. They have been solving my problems for the twenty years that I have lived on the Holloway Road. I will miss them when the shop closes.

**J.S. Jessica Scott** *Work Ethic*

A trip to Thomas Brothers was about a willingness to commit the time and money to craft something properly. In this sense it was more than a shop, it was the beginning of an ongoing ethos in my work.

**Z.S. Zuky Serper** *Stikman Come Home, Adventures in South Archway*

Best tool shop with resourceful advice. (Our tools for the community garden at St John's Way Surgery were from there).

**N.S. Nicola Shilcock** *Thos Bros haikus*

Thomas Brothers taught me everything I know about contact adhesive.

**D.S. Diana Smith** *Thanks for letting me talk*

I felt like I was allowed to be there. Talking to the Thomas Brothers taught me how to banter. They'd joke, but they'd also help me work out what materials I needed.

**J.T. Jo Taylor** *Actions Speak...*

I will miss the brothers (and sisters) and all the useful and curious things that help with making and doing.

**R.T.&M.Z. Ross Taylor & Madalina Zaharia** *Ampersand*

With your help we built a ship, a shop and all else in between. A dream palace of everything and anything. Not many things last for 97 years these days.

**J.T.&S.W. Jeremy Till & Sarah Wigglesworth** *Whatsits*

In 1984 we bought our first home in Fairbridge Road. Over five years we rebuilt, replumbed, rewired, mostly with our own hands. Every weekend we would go to Thomas Bros and ask for 'whatsits'. They would smile, go back into the depths of those mysterious shelves, instinctively know where to find the whatsit, and come back with several to choose from. Over the years we aged at the same rate as the brothers. To see them go makes us feel old, but much more, sense the passing of something important.

**J.W. Jamie Wagg** *History Print 1988-2014*

'What you need is that thing that goes there. Thomas Brothers have got them, they are called...' I would say this to almost every student until they'd discovered the wonders of the hardware store just around the corner. Thousands of Byam Shaw students would use materials and freely be given expertise. Sadly, broken bonds.

**J.W. Jane Watt** *5pm Close*

As well as a mine of information about all things hardware, Richard can trip the light fantastic rather well.

**R.W. Rosalie Woods** *N19 3JH*

Four significant Thomas Brothers purchases; a UV vest (I was always impressed by their pink range), wire brush, sack truck and a blue Dickies overall.

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**Everything Must Go** at Thomas Brothers, 698-804 Holloway Road  
from 26th April – 3 May 2014, was organised by AIR at Central Saint Martins,  
Univeristy of the Arts London. [www.airstudio.org](http://www.airstudio.org)

T.B.

EVERYTHING  
MUST GO →

**An exhibition of artworks made by Thomas Brothers' customers past and present, to mark its closure and to thank the brothers and their esteemed Archway institution.**

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**M.B. Margot Bannerman** *And another thing...*

I was happy to wait, leaning at that wooden counter... a breather... surrounded by things to do things with, listening to the problems, requests, advice, and anecdotes about doing, fixing, sorting, and making things right.

**D.B. David Barrett** *3mm Bleed, 2014*

Have you got any of those things, you know, adjustable things with little screws where you can hang something on a cable or rope and move it up and down... is there some kind of glue, for everything really – rubber, metal and straw and stuff – strong, really strong, and sets before you know it... I need some of those zippy strip things, I wish I knew what they were called, where you slot one end in the other and then pull it and it locks but you can pull it back out again if you want... I'm not sure whether this is even possible but maybe you might have an idea... can you paint on this?

**O.B. Olivia Bax** *Package*

In my final year at Byam Shaw I would run into Thomas Brothers twice a day for another metal sanding disk. In hindsight I don't know why I didn't just buy a pack.

**S.B. Sam Blunden** *Annie Finkhäus' Sweet Relief*

I know Thomas Brothers from the outside, passing by admiring the signs. Simple, colourful and hardware-ing. A Radial Arm, the Flip-Over.

**J.C.&T.B. Jane Cheadle & Tessa Baird** *1:94*

A place to linger.

**I.C. Inês Coelho** *Opening Hours, Closing Cycles*

I used Thomas Brothers quite a lot during the two years I spent in Archway. Somehow seeing Thomas Brothers go reminds me this time has gone. A new era is starting.

**J-P.D. Jean-Philippe Dordolo** *Eine Helfende Hand*

Thomas Brothers often recommended solutions to my studio problems. I was interested in what the implementation of some measures would bring with their relative disregard for my intended outcomes.

**R.D. Rob Drugan** *Some summers they're dropping like flies (a fragment)*

The intimacy of the experience has been a rare privilege in these unfortunate days where human interaction has been institutionally outlawed. So I'll continue to trust in a man in a warehouse jacket over a catalogue any day.

**R.E. Rosie Edwards** *Prime*

Thomas Brothers was my local hardware shop of choice. Here hi-tech gadgets rub shoulders with ancient things. Rare old screws in dusty ornate boxes mounted on plinths of power tools. What a gem.

**M.E. Mary Evans** *Sheet Material for Thomas Brothers*

I'm not from the local area so I have only ever bought small portable things from Thomas Brothers, usually in desperation and at the last minute; bubble wrap, plastic sheeting, brown paper. In a hardware store sheet material usually refers to anything that is sold in sheets or by the metre.

**M.F. Magda Fabianczyk** *Lost Fields*

The brothers' advice to students felt genuine. The shop and the people were rooted in Archway. Me – at the beginning of a journey – quite the opposite. Going to their shop made me feel less of an outsider.

**T.F. Tilly Fowler** *Four Handles*

The brothers patiently listened and interpreted while I explained what I was attempting to do in garbled language, using approximations and gestures to describe size, shape, and problem. 'It's about this big.' I always left the shop with the right thing.

**D.F. Deb Froome** *You owe me five farthings*

Thomas Brothers, the artists' grocer.

**M.G-P. Mir Gwilliam-Parkes** *798 - 804*

Thomas Brothers was an essential part of studying at Byam Shaw. You could get everything you needed, tools, paint, wire even the odd items I needed for making pinhole cameras. Thomas Brothers was a place that made my obscure ideas a reality.

**A.H. Anna Hart** *This box from that shelf*

Skills, secrets, and other useful things, are all on ancestral shelves. They can be shared or stored. A family business like Thomas Brothers does both publicly.

**L.H. Lynn Hewett** *Unsecured*

When I asked dumb questions about something that I needed for some project or other, I felt secure in that the answer I would receive would be helpful, wise and friendly. Thomas Brothers played a huge roll in making art happen at the college.

**E.J. Evy Jokhova** *Power Structures (1-12)*

The brothers became my mentors. An Aladdin's cave for DIY structures and spatial transformations.

**A.M. Anna Macdonald** *Speculating about Richard*

Last summer Richard Thomas brought his old key grinder and sat with it in Junction Road as part of our performance *This is for you*.

**R.M. Roman Manfredi** *Daisy Roots*

From monkey tails to bear paws, always something Jack n' Dandy. But best of all has gotta be, you never got no Jackson Pollock.

**S.M. Shelagh McCarthy** *Fetish Disco Ball*

'We become what we behold. We shape our tools, and thereafter our tools shape us.' John Culkin appropriated by Marshal McLuhan circa 1964.

**T.P. Tomas Percival** *Supply Supplies Supplying Supplied*

I never did buy that Makita.

**K.P. Kit Poulson** *Top Tool*

Thomas Brothers was always a landmark for me. A proper hardware shop. You could go in and see things you didn't even know you needed. Inspirational.

**E.R. Ellie Rees** *A Day in the Life*

I have lived in Archway for about eleven years now. Thomas Brothers has become a personal landmark. Its absence will be felt.