

# CRISTIN TIERNEY

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**What the Artist Saw: New Art Inspired by the Life and Work of Joe Orton**  
**February 5 – March 4, 2017**  
**Exhibition opening: Sunday 5 February 2 - 4pm**

Joe Orton was one of the UK's most significant authors of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and perhaps few will know that he is also famed for his collage work. Those collages had him jailed, because he and his then partner Kenneth Halliwell (who murdered him) were using the covers of library books for their material. They would make alterations to the covers usually of a 'smutty' nature that were often comical if not hilarious. However, the judge did not agree and they were sent down.

MOCA London has invited three contemporary artists, David Lock, Louise Plant and Tim Youd, to make a new work reflecting on Orton as part of the UK's LGBT History Month. We will also be showing related material from the Orton Archive at the University of Leicester. MOCA will also display its first edition of Orton's *What the Butler Saw*. The play premiered at the Queens Theatre in 1969 and Tim Youd will perform in the theatre's lobby for a week typing out the full play on a single sheet of paper.

Youd is a Los Angeles based performance artist currently re-typing 100 famous novels. He will continuously type the text on a single page, which gets blacker and blacker, and the end result will be shown at MOCA as part of the exhibition. He will type the last pages of the play at MOCA on the day of the opening. David Lock is a painter whose paintings, watercolours and collages have been widely exhibited in museums and galleries across Europe. He will make a new work seen through the lens of Patrick Procktor. Procktor was a highly successful painter in London in the 1960's whose own homosexuality was seen as daring if not shocking at the time, along with David Hockney and Francis Bacon. Procktor made a nude portrait of Orton which is now in the National Portrait Gallery and illustrated the cover of Orton's posthumous book *Head to Toe*. Louise Plant is a sculptor who works in marble. For the commemoration of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his death Plant is making the new piece the *Rip Cord* in powder coated steel as inspired by the man Joe Orton's life. The blood red, jointed piece reflects his pains and tensions in his writings, his challenges to our attitudes and beliefs and his dark touching humour.

The exhibition is co-curated with Dr Emma Parker, Reader in Post-War and Contemporary Literature at the University of Leicester, which houses his archive. The exhibition will travel to the New Walk Museum and Art Gallery (24 July – 22 October, 2017) in Leicester and will compliment the Orton, crime and justice exhibition at the Galleries of Justice Museum, Nottingham, (22 July-1 October, 2017)

Tim Youd's performances:

**South Library in Islington**, 115-117 Essex Rd, London N1 2SL  
Fri-Sat Jan 20- 21; Monday Jan 23; Wed Jan 25.  
Daily hours 10am-4pm, with a lunch break from 1-2pm.

**Queen's Theatre**, 51 Shaftesbury Ave, Soho, London W1D 6BA

Orton's final play *What the Butler Saw* received its premiere here in March 1969, almost two years after his death.

Thurs-Fri Jan 26-27; Tue Jan 31 ; Thurs-Fri Feb 2-3.  
Daily hours 10am – 5pm, with a lunch break from 1-2pm.

**MOCA London**, 113 Bellenden Road, SE15 4QY

Tim Youd will complete his retyping performance at the opening of "What the Artist Saw" at MOCA London  
Sunday February 5 - during the exhibition opening.