



Joe Orton's plays to be retyped onto single sheet of paper to commemorate 50th anniversary of his death

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Performance artist Tim Youd to retype Joe Orton's Complete Plays from 20 January to 5 February 2017



To commemorate the 50th anniversary of the death of Leicester-born playwright Joe Orton, performance artist Tim Youd will retype his *Collected Plays* on a single sheet of paper from 20 January to 5 February 2017.

Youd will perform at the South Library in Islington and the Queen's Theatre in the West End - both locations significant to Orton's life and work.

With his partner Kenneth Halliwell, Orton redesigned books stolen from Islington Library - a crime that led to 6 months in jail - and his final play *What the Butler Saw* premiered at the Queen's Theatre.

Youd will finish his performance at the opening of an exhibition of art inspired by Orton's life and work at the Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA) in London on 5 February, between 2:00 – 4:00PM.

The exhibition, titled 'What the Artist Saw', is curated by Dr Emma Parker of our School of Arts and Michael Petry, Director of MOCA, London.

Youd will use the same typewriter as Joe Orton: an Adler Tippa (for the first six plays) and then - because Orton bought a new typewriter in April of 1967, shortly before his death - an Adler Universal 40, for *What The Butler Saw*.

Dr Parker, who worked with Tim to organise the event, said: "The typewriter played a central role in Orton's life: he typed his plays, letters and diaries and his typewriter was

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responsible for his arrest for the defaced library book covers (police matched the type on a letter to that on the altered dustjackets).

“Given this, Tim Youd's imaginative, thought-provoking performance is an apt homage to Orton and a wonderful way to bring new audiences to his work 50 years after his death.”

Tim Youd added: “I met Orton scholar Dr Emma Parker in Leicester two years ago, when I was retyping Kingsley Amis's *Lucky Jim* at the University. Emma introduced me to Joe's sister, Leonie (and Victoria sponge!).

“When Emma invited me to participate in the exhibition, I eagerly agreed to type all the plays in one extended performance. Emma then arranged the South Library venue and Michael set up the Queen's Theatre. And now it's happening.”

Tim Youd is engaged in the retyping of 100 novels over a ten-year period.