

CRISTIN TIERNEY



BETA
Cool Art & Stuff

What the Artist Saw: Art Inspired by the Life and Work of Joe Orton



David Lock Looted with El Muniria 2017 inkjet paper collage and oil on canvas painting: 61cm x 46cm collage: 297.5cm x 243cm ©the artist

Joe Orton was one of the UK's most significant authors of the 20th 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 Joe Orton as part of the UK's **LGBT History Month**. Related material from the Orton Archive at the University of Leicester will be shown. 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.

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Tim You'd Retyping Orton's Complete Plays, on an Adler Universal typewriter, Queen's Theatre, London, 2017. ©MOCA London

You'd 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 Proctor. Proctor 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. Proctor 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*. Lock will make an inkjet collage for his paintings to be hung on, similar in complexity to the one Orton and his partner Kenneth Halliwell made in their Noel Road flat. Louise Plant is a sculptor who works in marble. For the commemoration of the 50th 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)

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February 5th – March 4th, 2017 Exhibition opening: Sunday 5th February 2 – 4pm
www.mocalondon.co.uk

Tim Youd's performances:

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 26th-27th: Tue Jan 31st: Thurs-Fri Feb 2th-3th.

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 5th – during the exhibition opening.