Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis revs up with spring exhibitions

By Calvin Wilson St. Louis Post-Dispatch

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Artist Tim Youd retypes William Faulkner's "The Sound and the Fury." Photo by Robert Jordan/Ole Miss Communications

One of the prime destinations in Grand Center is the Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis, and for good reason. Not only does the art tend to be well worth checking out, but the museum is the hub of a social scene that you’d have to be a hardcore curmudgeon not to appreciate.
Accordingly, openings at CAM tend to draw a crowd. And the latest crop of exhibitions sounds promising.

“Trenton Doyle Hancock: The Re-Evolving Door to the Moundverse” reflects the singular vision of Houston-based painter/sculptor/video artist Hancock, whose influences include comic books, cartoons, films and video games. The “moundverse” refers to the Mounds — half-plant, half-animal, existentially threatened creatures whom Hancock puts to purposes both comic and serious.

Also in the Main Gallery, the exhibition “Salvatore Scarpitta: Racing Cars” is comprised of racing-themed works by the Italian-American artist in a wide range of media, from paintings to video. Also included are actual race cars. Presumably no one will attempt to drive away in one of them.

“Stanya Kahn: Friends in Low Places” features a large-scale video that will be projected onto the museum façade from dusk to midnight. Los Angeles-based artist Kahn has called the work “an allegorical visual poem for the struggles of humanity against the state.”

And in the Front Room, “Tim Youd: St. Louis Retyped” is a work of conceptual art in which artist Youd retypes books with the same model of typewriter that their authors used. On his agenda are works by writers associated with St. Louis including William Burroughs, T.S. Eliot, Stanley Elkin and Marianne Moore. His performance schedule includes stops at other venues:

T.S. Eliot’s “Collected Poems,” Smith Corona Silent “flat top” • Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis, Friday-Sunday and Jan. 23-25
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Stanley Elkin’s “The Franchiser,” Adler Satellite • Washington University, Holmes Lounge, Ridgley Hall, Jan. 26; Coffee Room, English Department, Duncker 210, Jan. 29-30, Feb. 1-2, 5-6; Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis, Jan. 27-28, Feb. 3-4

Marianne Moore’s “Complete Poems,” Smith Corona Coronet • First Presbyterian Church of Kirkwood, Tree of Life Chapel, Feb. 26-March 3 and March 5-7

William S. Burroughs’ “Naked Lunch,” Hermes Rocket • Burroughs’ childhood home (not open to the public), March 8-9; Left Bank Books, March 10-12; Bellefontaine Cemetery, March 14-17

Youd’s performances are 10:30 a.m.-1 p.m. and 2-4 p.m. and are free and open to the public, unless noted.