



Museum of Contemporary Art Tucson

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE** – April 29, 2019

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## RETYPING ARIZONA with TIM YOUD

MOCA Tucson is pleased to announce the commencement of **Retyping Arizona** - a cycle of performances by artist Tim Youd. Over the coming eighteen months, Youd will be retyping five novels that relate to Arizona's rich literary tradition. To begin, from Tuesday, May 21, 2019 through Thursday, May 30, 2019, Youd will retype in its entirety Cormac McCarthy's novel *Blood Meridian*, at the Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area.

This retyping performance of *Blood Meridian* will be the 62nd novel Youd has retyped in his larger multi-year **100 Novels Project**. He retypes each novel on the same make/model typewriter used by the author, and in a location related to the novel and/or author. In the instance of Cormac McCarthy's *Blood Meridian*, the story's bloody climax takes place at the Yuma Crossing's Pivot Point, the historic location of the 1800's rope ferry that spanned the Colorado River.

Youd will conduct his retyping on an Olivetti Lettera 32, the same make/model used by McCarthy to write most all his novels, including *Blood Meridian*. Famously, in 2009, McCarthy auctioned his own Olivetti Lettera 32. The sale raised \$254,500, which McCarthy donated to charity. Legend has it that a friend of the author subsequently purchased another Olivetti Lettera 32 at a yard sale, and gave it to the writer, a machine he uses to this day.

When retyping, Youd types all the words of the novel onto one page (which is backed by a second sheet) by running it over and over again through the typewriter. The words become illegible, and the accumulated text becomes a rectangle of black ink inside the larger rectangle of the white page. Upon completion, Youd separates the two highly distressed pages and mounts them side by side in diptych form. This performance relic thus becomes a formal drawing, a representation of two pages of a book. The novel is present in its entirety, yet the words are completely obscured.

In the fall of 2020, MOCA Tucson will present a solo exhibition of these completed Arizona diptychs. Accompanying the diptychs will be work from the artist's studio, including paintings and drawings featuring the motif of the typewriter ribbon.

The other novels Youd will be retyping at locations in Arizona are Joy Williams's *The Quick and the Dead*; Edward Abbey's *The Monkeywrench Gang*; Oakley Hall's *Warlock*; and Don DeLillo's *Underworld*. He will also retype David Foster Wallace's short story collection *Girl With The Curious Hair*, which Wallace wrote on a typewriter during his time at University of Arizona.

### **ABOUT THE ARTIST**

A performance and visual artist, **Tim Youd** is presently engaged in the retyping of 100 novels over a multi-year period. To date, he has retyped 61 novels at various locations in the United States and Europe. His work has been the subject of solo museum exhibitions at the CAM St. Louis, the MCA San Diego, the New Orleans Museum of Art, the Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center, the Hanes Gallery, and the Lancaster Museum of Art and History. He has been in residence at various historic writer's homes, including William Faulkner's Rowan Oak (Oxford, MS), Flannery O'Connor's Andalusia (Milledgeville, GA), the Hemingway-Pfeiffer House (Piggott, AK), the National Steinbeck Center (Salinas), and Virginia Woolf's Monk's House (Rodmell, Sussex). He has presented and performed his **100 Novels Project** at Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions (LACE), LAXART and the Museo dell'Ara Pacis (Rome) and retyped Joe Orton's *Collected Plays* at The Queen's Theatre with MOCA London. He is represented by the Cristin Tierney Gallery in New York. On May 16th, a show of his typewriter-ribbon themed drawings opens in Los Angeles at Lauri Firstenberg's there-there.

Youd lives and works in Los Angeles.