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Contemporary Art
Museum St. Louis

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Artist Tim Youd retypes St. Louis author William Gass's
The Tunnel on live video stream**



Tim Youd at the Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis in 2018.

April 27, 2020 (St. Louis, MO) - The Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis (CAM), with [Cristin Tierney Gallery](#), announces a live-stream, remote durational performance by Tim Youd, who will retype William Gass's epic novel, *The Tunnel*, from the artist's garage in his Los Angeles home, beginning Friday, May 1, 2020, at 11:00 am CST. Youd expects to complete the 650-page novel in 31 days, ending on May 31, his longest retyping performance to date. Youd refers to Gass's work as a "densely postmodern" novel about becoming increasingly trapped in one's own circumstances and in one's own mind." For Youd, his performative act will be akin to "tunneling out of the quarantine."

Viewers may follow *Tim Youd: The Tunnel Retyped* by visiting tunnelretyped.com, where they may link to the live YouTube video stream, from 11:00 am to 4:00 pm CST each day. The artist will be visited by a guest close to the project on Instagram Live each Friday at 1:00 pm, beginning with Lisa Melandri, CAM Executive Director, on May 1. Each subsequent Friday Youd will speak with Misa Jeffereis, assistant curator at CAM; Allison Unruh, Brooklyn-based independent curator and former associate curator of the Mildred Lane Kemper Art Museum; and Cristin Tierney, director of her eponymously named New York City gallery, which represents Youd. Viewers are invited to send in questions.

Tim Youd: The Tunnel Retyped continues the artist's [100 Novels](#) project, with the goal of retyping 100 novels in a twelve- to fifteen-year span—a project that began in 2013. Youd often types at or near a location significant to the author: *The Sound and the Fury* at William Faulkner's Oxford, Mississippi home; *The Violent Bear It Away* in Flannery O'Connor's childhood home in Savannah, Georgia. In 2018, during Youd's CAM exhibition [St. Louis Retyped](#), he typed William Burroughs's *Naked Lunch* at the author's childhood home; Left Bank Books, where he gave his last St. Louis reading; and Bellefontaine Cemetery, where he is buried in the Burroughs family plot. Youd researches the specific model typewriter upon which each novel is written, a Hermes Rocket for *Naked Lunch*, for example.

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Gass lived for decades in St. Louis and taught at Washington University in St. Louis. And while the quarantine restricts Youd to his garage in Los Angeles, he will be appearing in St. Louis virtually. He is typing *The Tunnel* on an IBM Selectric, the model on which Gass completed his novel during a residency at the Getty Research Institute in Los Angeles—another bridge between the work, St. Louis, and Youd's West Coast performance.

Youd types on a single sheet of paper, with a second sheet beneath it. When he reaches the end of the page he returns to the top of the page again, on and on through until the end of the book. He exhibits these dual pages as diptychs, a documentation or residue of the performative act, as well as an arresting image.

William Gass (1924–2017) was one of St. Louis's and the world's literary lions. His numerous accolades include the American Book Award for *The Tunnel* (1996); three National Book Critics Circle Awards for Criticism for *Habitations of the Word* (1985), *Finding a Form* (1997), and *Tests of Time* (2003); and a lifetime achievement award from the Lannan Foundation (1997). Gass is credited with coining the term "metafiction," in which the author becomes part of the story. Plot was of lesser importance than language in his complex fictions. The protagonist of *The Tunnel* is a middle-aged, miserable, and unpleasant history professor at a midwestern university, who secludes himself in his basement to tunnel his way out of his unhappy life. Gass composed the novel over a period of 26 years. He taught at Washington University in St. Louis from 1969 to 1999, and was Professor Emeritus at the time of his death.

Tim Youd (b. 1967, Worcester, MA) is a performance and visual artist working in painting, sculpture, and video. To date, he has retyped 66 novels at various locations in the United States and Europe. Residencies at historic writer's homes have included William Faulkner's Rowan Oak with the University of Mississippi Art Museum (Oxford, MS), Flannery O'Connor's Andalusia with SCAD (Milledgeville and Savannah, GA), and Virginia Woolf's Monk's House (Rodmell, Sussex). His work has been the subject of numerous museum exhibitions, including the Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis, The Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center at Vassar College, Hanes Art Gallery at Wake Forest University, The New Orleans Museum of Art, Monterey Museum of Art, Hemingway-Pfeffer Museum, Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego, University of Mississippi Art Museum at Rowan Oak, and the Lancaster Museum of Art and History. He has presented and performed his 100 Novels project at Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions (LACE) and LAXART, and retyped Joe Orton's *Collected Plays* at The Queen's Theatre with MOCA London. He lives and works in Los Angeles.

Tim Youd: The Tunnel Retyped
May 1–31, 2020, 11:00 am–4:00 pm CST
tunnelretyped.com

About the Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis

The Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis works to enrich lives and inspire curiosity, creativity, and learning through experiences with contemporary art. Focused on a dynamic array of changing exhibitions, the Museum reflects and contributes to the global cultural landscape while engaging thousands of visitors through a wide array of public programs. CAM nurtures the creative minds of our city's youth through free, in-depth art education, making a long-lasting impact on the community. We are a site for discovery, a welcoming space, free and open to all.

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