

Y'ALL BETTER QUIET DOWN!

CONNY KARLSSON LUNDGREN

MARCH 2–APRIL 6, 2014
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“Y’all Better Quiet Down! (After Leonard Fink)” C-print, detail 2013

‘I do not believe in a revolution, but you ought to!’

The American/Puerto Rican transactivist and Young Lords member Sylvia Rivera is said to have cast the first stone during the 1969 Stonewall riots in New York, the starting point for the same rights movement working toward equal rights for LGBT (LesbianGayBiTrans) people. She is also one of the founders of the aid organisation S*T*A*R (Street Transgender Action Revolutionaries), whose main goal was to keep young homeless transgender and queer people off the streets. In connection with the 1973 Christopher Street Day Parade, Rivera delivers a powerful and defining speech in the Washington Square Park, accusing the then relatively new-formed LGBT movement of being white, neoconservative, excluding, racist and transphobic. Rivera is thrown off the stage,

and after this incident she leaves the political scene as well as New York City completely for 20 years. The short film *Y’all Better Quiet Down/Hallå, kan ni lugna ner er!* is based on a transcript of Rivera’s speech. Together with the queer/feminist theater group Kvalitetsteatern, working in a collective spirit, a performative manifestation is created. The contemporary spirit of Rivera’s words is enhanced, translated and given form through their bodies.

Y’all Better Quiet Down!/Hallå, kan ni lugna ner er! is an independent part of the work series *The Sylvia Fractions* and made possible through the archive at the LGBT Community Center, New York US.

If you were not there and listened.

If you have not watched the documentation – if it was done at all.

If you have not got it narrated by your friend who was there.

Then it disappears in history, until someone or some picks it up, takes care of it, stands up for it.

Therefore, we wrote a speech – free to spread – inspired by Sylvia Rivera and Conny Karlsson Lundgren.

Anna Linder & Hanna Högstedt

SPEECH TO THE SPEAKERS

Sylvia, you speak to me
And I listen
You and you and you; speak for me
You contradict me
Always contradict me

Your words come to me through the stories
through the trapdoors between decades
through secret agents
through megaphones and disco balls
through the silent gaps surrounding the sentences

A choir of voices screaming from the backs of the history books
in the footnotes
out in space

1973–2014: Everything has changed
and nothing

To think about: The one whom is heard least

To think about: Who is queer in who's eyes?

To think about: The inclination of the earth, and the maths in the angle

To think about: the tranny eggs and the tranny sperm heading towards the future of living,
biding their time in the ice

In 1973 and in 2014 there are a lot of things that few people want to hear

In 1973 and in 2014 there is a lot that people want to hear but few say

Not to be constrained by: The Swedish National Radio urging their employees to be careful
when talking about human rights

Not to be constrained by: All the violence and all the weapons, the shootings in the squares

Not to be constrained by: The government

Echoes:

Washington Square Park is the railway tracks in Högdalen

Europe's most vulnerable in the slush outside every supermarket

What we see and what we don't see (wet socks, presumably cold)

Languages being translated into hierarchies

To speak: With each other, and to listen

A speech without an audience is a speech no one will remember

The speech without tongues. Speaking in a trance. Transgressive speech.

Different speeches. Contemporary speeches. Simultaneously remembered.

Listening as an act of intimacy: To really listen is to lick my soul

We are the collectors
We are the magicians
The ones who can turn forgotten into heard
We want to be part of the collections too
We do not want to be part of your collection
We will collect in other ways
in other categories
or along other tracks
Who are we to say

Echoes:

Sylvia Rivera and the prisoners of today
The asylum shelters, the new prisons of Europe
The death sentences at Kållerød custody
The temporary employment agencies, elegantly sweeping away decades of work done by
labor unions

Co-speaker. Counter-speaker. Spoken of. Unspoken.
The speech to us. For us.
The speech for the ones desperately transgressing, trespassing, transcending
From you; the sound of your voices and breathing and other possible worlds
A wider ocean than our eyes can embrace
We need you
Speak to us

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It is time: To demonstrate more

It is time: To have time for others

It is time: To be the bitch on wheels

It is time: To do more and talk more and wait no more

1973 and 2014: Listen to the voices, remember to listen

1973 and 2014: The early years of video more trustworthy than the digital revolution

2014: Remember the revolution

2014: Remember that the definition of queer is queerer than any category

2014: Give me a Q

Anna Linder & Hanna Högstedt
Gothenburg February 2014





[Anna Linder](#) (b. 1967 in Lapland, Sweden) has worked in moving image art as an independent artist, curator and producer since 1990. Her works have been exhibited and screened at Tribeca Film Festival, Palm Springs International Film Festival, Oberhausen International Short Film Festival, ICA London, The Swedish Institute in Paris and at Arsenal Experimental in Berlin. Recent projects include *Words Needed* for the opening of The European Capital of Culture Umeå, 2014 and *Queer Eyes* at Göteborgs konsthall. Anna Linder is currently researching Queer moving image culture at The University of Gothenburg/Valand Academy and is based in the cities of Gothenburg and Stockholm, Sweden.

[Hanna Högstedt](#) (b. 1981 in Gothenburg, Sweden) is a film director and a script writer, often working on the edge between fiction and documentary. Her last film, *A Safe Place for the Wild*, deals with the queer family and the fine line between love and friendship. She is currently working on *My French Revolution*, a feature film moving through Sweden, France and Algeria, challenging the concepts of family and nationality after a separation.

*All still images from [Y'all Better Quiet Down!/
Hallå, kan ni lugna ner er!](#) 9 min, HD, color/
sound, 2013.*

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Employing film, text, image and document, Conny Karlsson Lundgren sheds light on the boundaries between language and social, political and private identities. In various staged situations and narratives, he interlinks seemingly disparate phenomena. Using references from popular culture and material of a more private matter, he explores how position, significance and consequences alter when they are situated in a more explicitly political context. Karlsson Lundgren's work probes issues of social contracts and functions, privileges, gender and identity as construction by the means of a research-based approach combined with subjective history-writing and frequent collaborations with people who have an activist approach to these issues. He introduces an alternative reading and both real and imaginary queer moments in situations where this might not already be present. The dislocations that arise harbour an intention to identify new perspectives and meanings.

Conny Karlsson Lundgren (b. in Västervik, Sweden) holds a MFA in Fine Arts from Valand Academy of Fine Arts 2003. His work has been featured at Kunsthall Nikolaj Copenhagen Centre for Contemporary Art, Gallery September (Project space, solo), the 5th Berlin Biennale both in Berlin, Documenta Magazine Project Kassel and The New Whight Gallery Los Angeles. Recently he showed at Gothenburg Art Museum (Solo two artists), Gallery 54 (Solo) and CFF — Centre for Film & Photography in Sweden. He also took part in exhibitions at Moderna Museet Stockholm and Bildmuséet Umeå. During 2013 he had a major solo museum exhibition at Kalmar Art Museum and took part in a six months Studio Residency at IASPIS. In 2014–2015 he will participate in the Studio Research Programme at Jan Van Eyck Academie in Maastricht, Netherlands.

He is currently based in the cities of Berlin and Stockholm.

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