

## GBE

### KARL HOLMQVIST

*HERE'S GOOD LOOKING @U, KID*

### RIRKRIT TIRAVANIJA

*untitled 2014 (KH reads)*

March 7 – April 25, 2015

***HERE'S GOOD LOOKING @U, KID*** is an exhibition of new paintings, sculptures, and a site-specific written intervention by Karl Holmqvist.

Working across various media, including painting, sculpture, film, video, audio, and design, Holmqvist has, for the past twenty-five years, traversed a path that explores the possibilities of language—written, aural, spoken, and beyond. Steeped in a longtime interest in concrete poetry and the promise it holds for the reinvention of language, Holmqvist's works are as much concrete material as they are tools to address social, political, and cultural concerns. His sculptures, poetry, and word repetitions might reference real-world sources—a musical lyric, advertising slogan, or newspaper headline—or simply gaze at you as a physicalized thing separate to us. They inhabit the space of the high and low, existing in the deep center while also surfing the frothy superficial surface of the world of rock and pop and celebrity culture.

For this exhibition, Holmqvist has made three monumental four-letter word sculptures out of rough, bolted I-beams, a new fluorescent sculpture, and printed canvases installed on walls covered in all uppercase tags and graffiti. Together, they address some of the artist's current concerns, such as the freefall development of New York's real estate market or how gentrification is intertwined with sexism, racism, and homophobia. At the same time, the sculptures allow for a shift in scale between the public and the private, the intimate and the oversized, the industrial and the handcrafted.

***untitled 2014 (KH reads)*** is a 5-channel, 49-minute long video by Rirkrit Tiravanija. It marks the most recent entry in a series of portrait films by the artist, following *untitled (a study for karl's perfect day) or (the incomparable karl holmqvist)* (2012); *john giorno reads* (2008); *chew the fat* (2009); and *lung neaw* (2010).

Shot in Berlin through the summers of 2012 and 2013, this installation offers an intimate portrait of Tiravanija's friend, the artist Karl Holmqvist. These scenes are part of an ongoing, all-encompassing video titled *karl's perfect day*, which follows the artist through moments of unremarkable daily tasks: shaving, getting dressed, etc., and also to deeply lyrical moments of creativity. The scenes in *KH reads* consist of Holmqvist reading/performing his own works. There is no other audience except for the cameraman (Tiravanija) and the reader (Holmqvist himself).

Karl Holmqvist and Tiravanija have long been friends, and it is this intimacy, proximity, and closeness that render the film all the more personal. Tiravanija blurs the definitions between art and life, occupying an interstitial state. This film captures this space. Both Holmqvist's and Tiravanija's works center around freedom, and the many shifting ideas and definitions that protean term comprises. Communication depends on imitation and convention, we learn to speak through repetition, and we use language to achieve understanding—nevertheless, the combinations of words and sentences we create to achieve this understanding are constructed and limited. Language is often used with astounding compliance and convention—an analog to how we can behave as members of society.

This exhibition provides a unique and fortunate opportunity to see two installations that complement and counterpoint each other, by two friends and contemporaries, who have been circling each other and exchanging with each other since the early 90s.



**Karl Holmqvist** (Swedish; born 1964) lives and works in Berlin. His work has been featured in numerous international solo and group exhibitions, including Manifesta 7 (2008), Trento, Italy, and Manifesta 8 (2010), Murcia, Spain; Performa 05 and Performa 07, New York; as well as the *ILLUMinations* section of the 54th Venice Biennale (2011) and *Ecstatic Alphabets/Heaps of Language*, The Museum of Modern Art, New York (2012). Recent exhibitions include: *The Visit no.5*, Bergen Kunsthall (2012); *The Sun Shines for Everyone*, Kunsthalle Zurich (2011); *Give Poetry A Try*, Moderna Museet, Stockholm; *Give Posters A Try*, Kunsthall Charlottenborg, Copenhagen; and *Rameau's Nephews. Sofie Berntsen and Karl Holmqvist*, Nasjonalmuseet Oslo (2014/15). In 2013 he was awarded the prestigious Arthur-Köpcke-Prize.

Born in Buenos Aires, **Rirkrit Tiravanija** is widely recognized as one of the most influential artists of his generation. His work defies media-based description, as his practice combines traditional object making, public and private performances, teaching, and other forms of public service and social action. Winner of the 2010 Absolut Art Award, and the Guggenheim Museum's 2005 Hugo Boss Prize, Tiravanija has also been awarded the Benesse Prize by the Naoshima Contemporary Art Museum in Japan and the Smithsonian American Art Museum's Lucelia Artist Award.

Tiravanija has shown extensively in galleries and museums around the world, including the Museum of Modern Art, New York (2012); Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth (2014); Bonnierskonsthall, Stockholm (2011); Serpentine Gallery, London (2005); Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris (2005); PS1 Contemporary Art Center, New York (2006); Musée d'Art Contemporain de Lyon (2007); Sharjah Biennial, United Arab Emirates (2007 and 2015); and the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago (2007). Tiravanija will also open a solo exhibition in June at The Garage, Moscow, for the opening of their first permanent space, and is currently showing a new project at the Sharjah Biennial, Sharjah.

