

BOX

The Last of the Lucky /
You Can't Always Get What You Want

Klara Källström & Tobias Fäldt
in collaboration with Johannes Wahlström

11 November – 11 December 2016

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“The Last of the Lucky / You can’t always get what you want“ by Klara Källström & Thobias Fäldt in
collaboration with Johannes Wahlström.

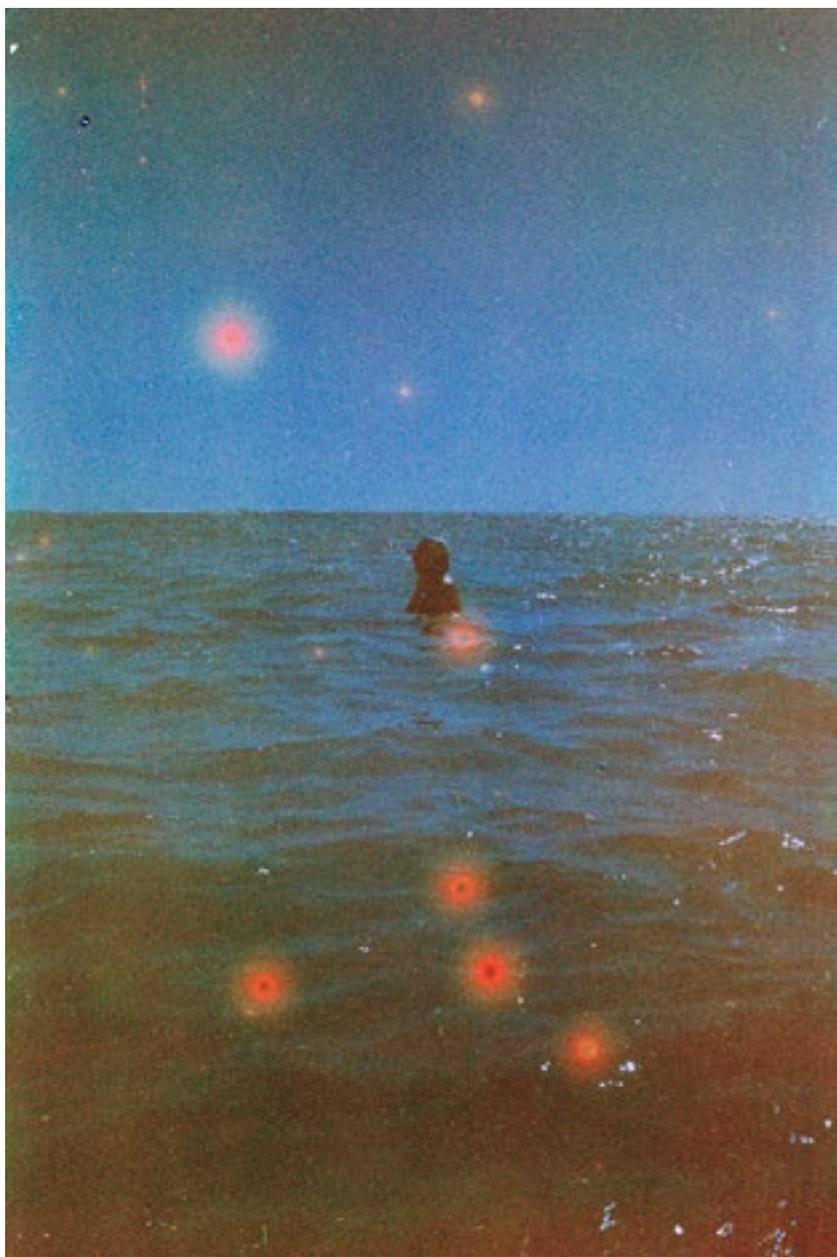
Galleri BOX is supported by the City of Gothenburg and The Swedish Arts Council.

Introduction

by Erik Betschammar

In their exhibition “The Last of the Lucky” Klara Källström and Thobias Fältd present a research-based and multifaceted body of work. With critical eyes on the current political and economical landscape they work almost like investigative journalists in the exhibition. They find connections, stories and power games in the eye of the storm. In the first room they show works that focus on what role photography has played, and still plays, on the way the western world views Cuba and Cuban history. In the inner room the investigation continues and they connect Cuba’s history with contemporary stories and dramaturgies. As the storyteller for the exhibition the artists have engaged the writer Johannes Wahlström to write the essay “You Can’t Always Get What You Want”, in which he reveals some of the narratives behind Källström and Fältd’s works.

The first time I was introduced to Källström and Fältd was almost 10 years ago. It was at the release of the very last issues of the magazine Tromb, named “Tromb is Dead”. In this issue both of them had images published, and Fältd had the role as the issue’s image editor. During the production of what would become an investigation on Swedish media houses and its ownership structures the editors found out about their own organisation’s problems with irregularities, which in the end led to bankruptcy and discontinuation of the magazine. I have a feeling that this might have been the first indication of what direction Källström and Fältd’s forthcoming work should take on. Ever since they have worked with analysing, investigating and framing the underlying narratives and histories in the intersections of contemporary political, economical and medial events.



The Last of the Lucky / You Can't Always Get What You Want

In the spring of 2014 Klara Källström and Thobias Fäldt, as well as countless before them, traveled from the US via Mexico to Cuba in the spirit of visiting the country before it was irrevocably changed. They had brought along analogue camera film that they feared was damaged by the x-rays of the US Security control, hence they started to search for new film in Havana.

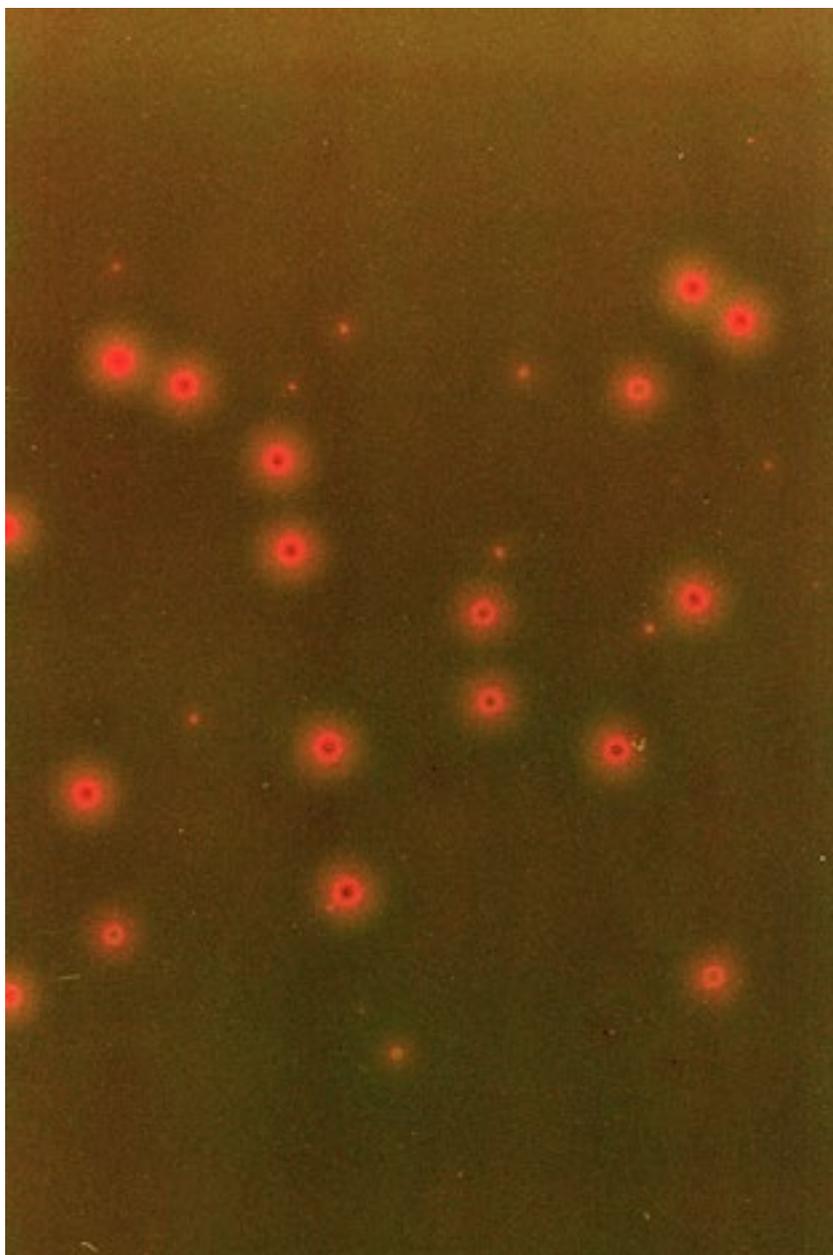
Fortunately for them, in Havana, they met a man who turned out to be one of Fidel Castro's former private photographers. He took them to a camera shop, where despite the general lack of photographic equipment in the city, there were three rolls of film bearing the inscription "Lucky". The salesman handed the rolls over and said: "these are the last rolls of Cuba".

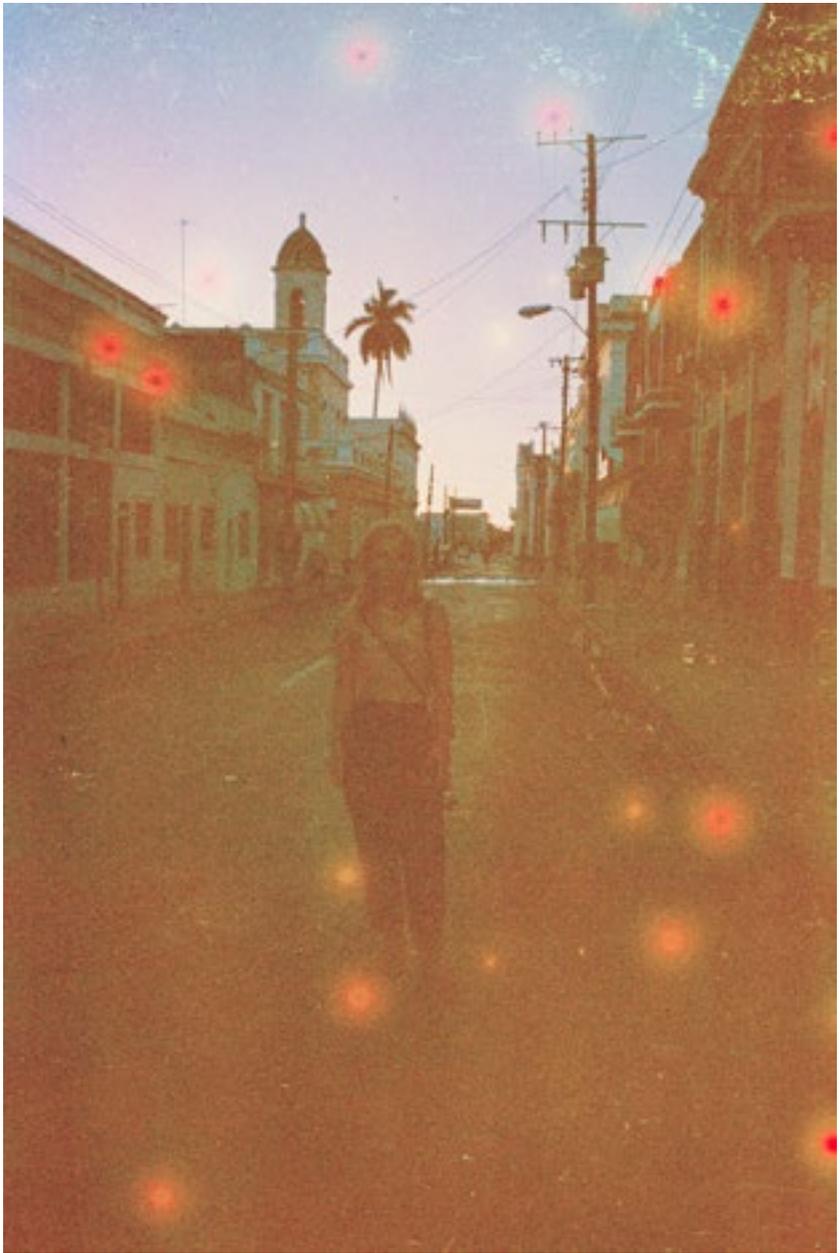
Soon after the rolls had been exposed, US president Barack Obama declared that the trade embargo against Cuba would be lifted. Since then film is no longer a rarity in Cuba, but what Klara and Thobias did not know at the time was that the photographs from the "Lucky" rolls would unintentionally capture a last glimpse of something entirely different.

In the spring of 2016, after a visit to Cuba by president Obama, a number of events set in motion an irreversible change. This is compiled by author Johannes Wahlström as a historical documentation, albeit with the perspective turned back towards the US.









*Excerpt from “The Last of the Lucky / You Can’t Always Get What You Want”
by Johannes Wahlström*

Ever since the Cuban revolution the Clandestine services of the United States had demonstrated incredible stamina and resourcefulness in facilitating the fall of Cuban socialism. But neither a military invasion nor reportedly over 600 assassination attempts against Cuban president Fidel Castro had produced the desired result. In order to endeavor a different approach to regime change in Cuba, the “Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act” was adopted. The law, signed by then president Clinton in March of 1996 provided the United States government with an open legal and economic framework to bring about “democracy and market economy in Cuba”.

In the winter of 2014 then president Obama announced that the United States would begin a process of normalization with Cuba. This process, made possible by the above mentioned law, was based on the idea that if a violent overthrow of the Cuban regime was not achievable, then perhaps Cuban socialism could be undone by exposing it to the superiority of the American way of life.

In the summer of 2015 the diplomatic relations between the United States and Cuba were reinstated after having been frozen for over half a century. This “Cuban Thaw”, as it was branded in the newspapers of New York and Washington, was described as the beginning of the end of Cuban socialism and the reintroduction of the island into the “global” economy, politics and culture. With the embargo slowly being lifted from Cuba, the newspapers pointed to the ailing leadership of the Castro brothers as a guarantee that the war of ideas with the renegade island would soon be won. By allowing American citizens to travel to Cuba, by exposing the islanders to American culture, values and dollars, the Cubans would finally rise up against their ageing disconnected elites, their censoring media, their introvert culture, and demand change. That was how the Cuban revolution was supposed to finally be swallowed by the United States of America.

In the winter of 2015 the Office of the Inspector General of the United States published a description of one of the attempts to topple the Cuban regime with the help of the “Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act”.

The essence of the project was to circumvent censorship in Cuban media by creating a dissenting Cuban social network.

Messages sent to subscribers of the Cuban social network ZunZuneo.

Messages Sent

The Spanish messages below were provided by OTI. The review team did not verify the completeness of the list. The translations into English were done by OIG auditors working in RIG/San Salvador and verified by OTI.

Grant	Message
Grant #1	<p>News Update! Mystery resolved: Michael Jackson was murdered. Raul sends condolences to Obama. Fidel reflects, "It was Lage."</p> <p>Ultima hora! Se aclara misterio: Michael Jackson fue asesinado. Raul manda condolencias a Obama. Fidel reflexiona: "fue Lage."</p>
	<p>THE LATEST! Cuban dies from laptop electric shock. Ramiro Valdes declares: I already told you, these devices are weapons of the enemy!! haha Visit us at www.quevola.net</p> <p>LO ULTIMO! Cubano muere por corrientazo de laptop. Ramiro Valdes declara: Yo ya lo dije. Esos aparatos son armas del enemigo!! jaja Visitanos en www.quevola.net</p>
	<p>Would you like it if Los Alicantinos sang for peace with Juanes at the Square??? Give us your opinion at www.quevola.net !!!</p> <p>Te parecería bien que Los Alicantinos cantaran por la paz con Juanes en la Plaza??? Danos opinion en www.quevola.net !!!</p>
	<p>Are you thinking about going to the concert for Peace? Tell us what singer you like most and what you like about him. See the results at www.quevola.net or send an SMS +34652264523</p> <p>Piensas ir al concierto por la Paz? Dinos que cantante te gusta mas y que te gusta de el! Mira los resultados en www.quevola.net o manda un SMS +34692264523</p>
	<p>Are you at the concert for peace? Or watching it? How is it going? Give us your opinion at www.quevola.net info@quevola.net or SMS to +34657569891</p> <p>Estas en el concierto por la paz? o viendolo? Como la estas pasando? Danos tu opinion en www.quevola.net info@quevola.net o envia un SMS a +34657569891</p>
	<p>Juanes said it: It's time to change, freedom has no owner. We want to hear your opinion www.quevola.net info@quevola.net or Send an SMS to +34691122648</p> <p>Ya lo dijo Juanes: Es tiempo de cambiar, la libertad no tiene propiedad. Queremos oír tu opinión www.quevola.net info@quevola.net o Envía un SMS al +34691122648</p>

Exactly 20 years after the adoption of the “Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act” by president Clinton, United States president Barack Obama visited Cuba in march of 2016. This was the first time since the Cuban Revolution that a US president visited the Island, and as such it was much publicized by the newspapers of New York and Washington. At that time presidents of the United States were regularly received as rock stars in many Western market economies, the Cubans were therefore expected to likewise be much impressed by the visit, perhaps inspiring them to rise up against their own regime.

A few days later Havana would witness what the newspapers would describe as the epitome of global culture, a free concert by rock band The Rolling Stones. The concert, featuring the 1969 chart hit “Honky Tonk Women”, was bankrolled by a corporate lawyer from the Dutch Caribbean island of Curaçao. The banker, Gregory Elias, claimed to have paid the 7 million US dollars required to arrange the concert from his own pocket, complaining that the group had nonetheless refused to play his favorite song “Far Away Eyes”. The symbolic importance of the Rolling Stones in Havana was in the newspapers of New York and Washington likened to the appearance of The Scorpions with the “Wind of Change” in Moscow just months before the fall of the Soviet Union. This, the newspapers were convinced, would be the final nail in the coffin of the ailing Castro Brothers and Cuban socialism.



Your Highlights



The Rolling Stones

@RollingStones

The Rolling Stones announce free concert in Cuba! #StonesCuba [rollingstones.com/2016/03/01/the ...](http://rollingstones.com/2016/03/01/the...)



RETWEETS

1,932

LIKES

2,428



7:10 AM - 1 Mar 2016



1.9K



2.4K





Your Highlights



President Obama

@POTUS

¿Que bolá Cuba? Just touched down here, looking forward to meeting and hearing directly from the Cuban people.

RETWEETS

34,307

LIKES

63,436



1:22 PM · 20 Mar 2016



34K



63K



Camila Cabello @camilacabello97 · Mar 20

.@POTUS THIS. IS. AWESOME



3.6K



9.9K



Meanwhile, as attention was directed at what was supposed to be the imminent fall of the Cuban regime, a little known senator from the state of Vermont in the United States took the lead in opinion polls for the presidential nomination to the governing US Democratic party. The polls took the New York and Washington newspapers by less than positive surprise, since they seemed to show the senator beating the establishment candidate Clinton II in the upcoming US presidential elections later that year.

At the same time the main candidate for the Republican Party, Bush III seemed to be loosing the nomination against a real estate tycoon known for promoting US financial protectionism and political isolationism. The gravity of the situation could not be overestimated by the aforementioned newspapers, as the Republican Party at that moment was the only established opposition party in the United States.



Your Highlights

Bernie **Bernie Sanders** 
@BernieSanders

I applaud President Obama for traveling to Cuba and moving relations between our two countries into a new era.

SEATTLE – U.S. Sen. Bernie Sanders on Sunday issued the following statement after President Barack Obama landed in Havana, Cuba, making him the first U.S. president to visit the country in 88 years:

"I applaud President Obama for making history by traveling to Cuba and moving relations between our two countries into a new era. This is an approach that is long overdue. I continue to stand by his calls for Congress to fully lift the failed embargo. Fifty years of Cold War is enough. It is time for Cuba and the United States to turn the page and normalize relations."

###

RETWEETS

3,340

LIKES

10,892



8:08 AM - 21 Mar 2016



3.3K



11K





Your Highlights



Donald J. Trump

@realDonaldTrump

Wow, President Obama just landed in Cuba, a big deal, and Raul Castro wasn't even there to greet him. He greeted Pope and others. No respect

RETWEETS

12,682

LIKES

35,479



1:41 PM - 20 Mar 2016

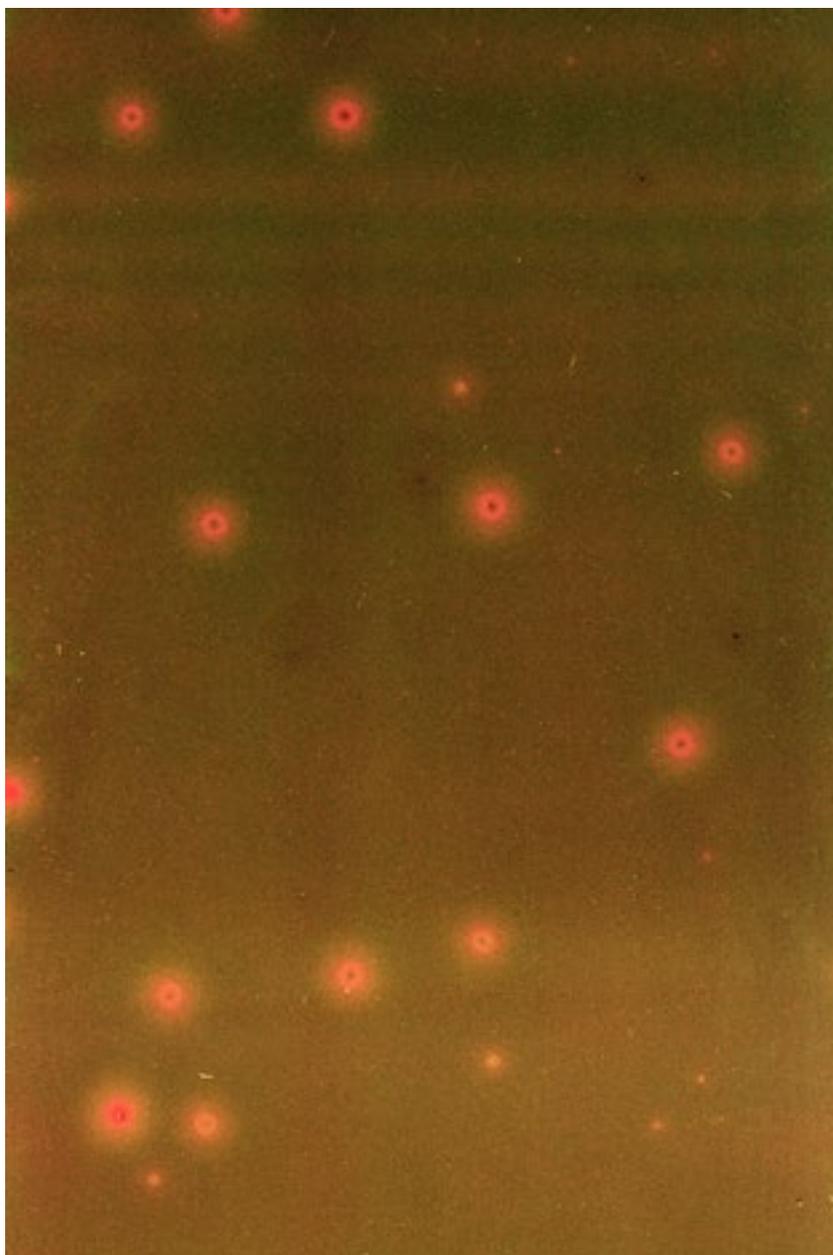


13K



35K





With cruise liners once again mooring the Havana harbor, US artists gearing up for further concerts, and US airlines taking flight reservations to the Island, the American spring of 2016 seemed to bring much anticipated change to the Western hemisphere, but in a somewhat different manner than projected by the New York and Washington newspapers.

The following is a chronological excerpt of messages sent over US social network Twitter leading up to the US presidential elections in the winter of 2016.







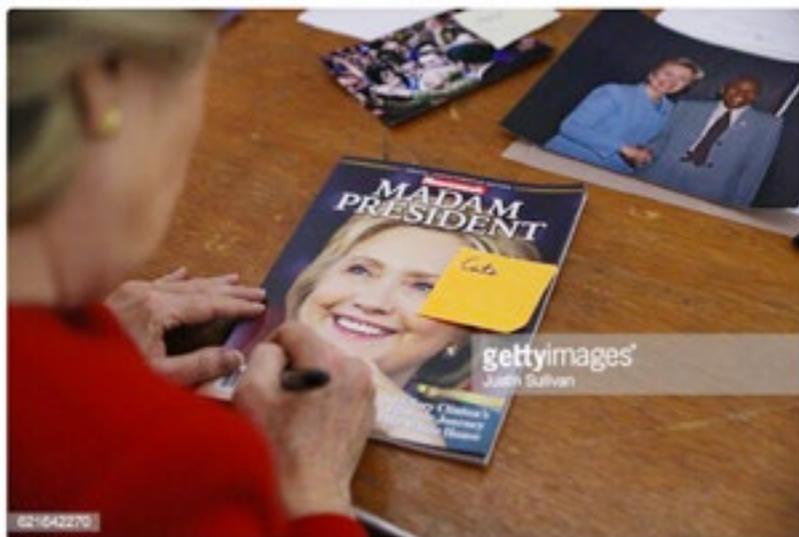
Your Highlights



Liz Kreutz ✓

@ABC Liz

Hillary Clinton signs a "Madame President" edition of @Newsweek for a supporter backstage (photo by @sullyfoto)



RETWEETS

92

LIKES

119



3:05 AM - 8 Nov 2016



92



119



Klara Källström, Thobias Fäldt and Johannes Wahlström

Klara Källström, Thobias Fäldt and Johannes Wahlström work in the field of photography, text, installation, publishing and film. Their work focus on the production of knowledge, exploring media-issues, historical narratives and how political events are depicted and perceived.

Källström, Fäldt and Wahlström have for the past years produced a number of works relating to places undergoing paradigmatic changes where they seek to activate historical layers, notions of uncertainty and chance in order to draw attention to the gap between what is visible and what is told.

Together with the designer duo 1:2:3, Källström and Fäldt run B-B-B-Books as a publishing platform to engage in methods of narration and visual culture.

Contact

www.b-b-b-books.com

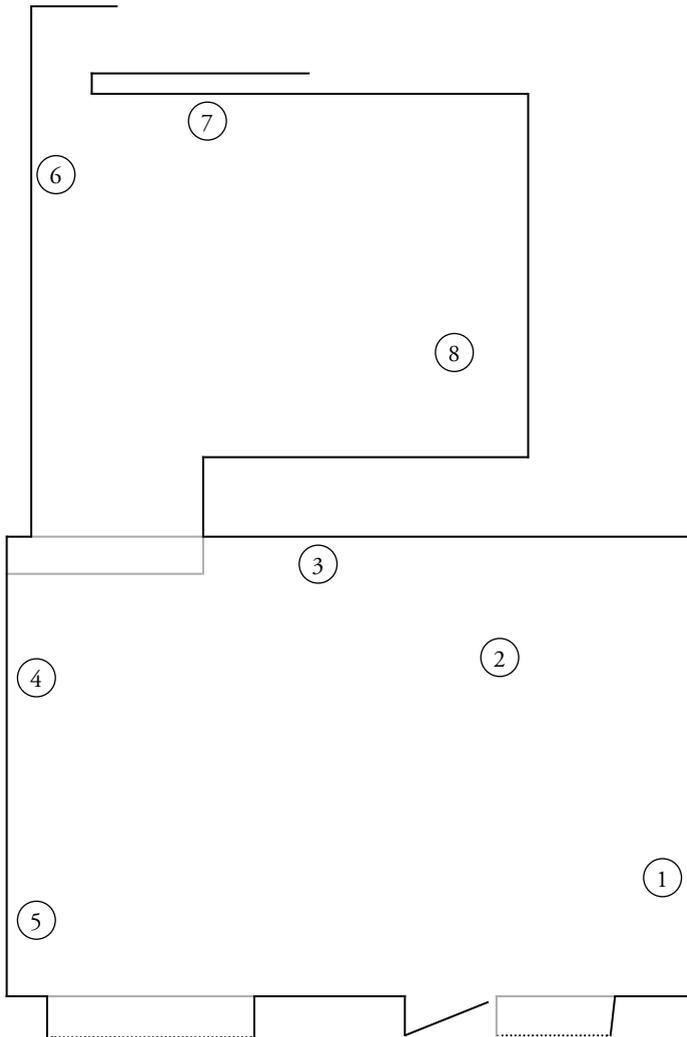
www.kk-tf.com

www.thobias.se

www.klarp.se

List of works

- 1 The Last of the Lucky 1
Newsprint, 2014
- 2 Vitrine
*Lucky film roll (1991),
Granma (October 16, 1967), New York Times (March 22, 2016)*
- 3 The Last of the Lucky 2
Newsprint, 2014
- 4 The Last of the Lucky 3
Newsprint, 2014
- 5 Lightbox
Newsprints, 2014
- 6 You Can't Always Get What You Want
7" single, The Rolling Stones, 1969
- 7 The Last of the Lucky 4
Newsprint, 2014
- 8 You Can't Always Get What You Want
Xerox prints of Tweets on blue paper, 2016



Entrance



Galleri Box

Kastellgatan 10
411 22 Göteborg
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Tues – Thurs 13-17
Sat – Sun 12-16
Free admission

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