



The word “run” apparently has 645 meanings, a rapid accumulation over the last 100 years or so. There’s a New York Times article you can read, also an accompanying NPR special dedicated to this simple, small word. With the increase in the number of machines and computers used in daily life, it has quickly become the default word to describe motion, movement, and progress. A train is running through a station, the car runs on gas, my computer runs apps, my phone ran out of battery. It also became a way to attribute strength and action, even power: running a marathon, hitting home runs, running a tight ship, running for office. Perhaps due to its constant usage, it not only just defines an action but the word itself has become personified. R-U-N-N-I-N-G. Reading it, you feel yourself moving along the word, each letter pushes you forward to the next with an air of urgency; it is an action, you are literally running your eyes across it. RUNRUNRUNRUNRUNRUNRUN. Repeating the word feels not unlike reciting a mantra, rendering the words eventually meaningless, then ultimately transcendent.

I googled “Beyoncé”, and came across a promo video for her tour with Jay-Z from 2014. They released a movie trailer on YouTube titled “RUM” short for the title of their show, “On the Run”. The trailer ends with a release date of never and stars Don Cheadle, Jake Gyllenhaal, and Blake Lively, Sean Penn too. Most of the trailer is Bey and Jay running red lights, running from the police, running into trouble, running out of luck. I can’t help thinking not about *Bonnie and Clyde* (as a nod, Bey even wears a cute little beret while brandishing her gun), but rather about the first great feminist film I can remember from my teen years, *Thelma and Louise*. Like in the faux movie trailer, Thelma and Louise are also On the Run; friendship is the pivotal axis on which they turn from individually running from their own pasts, to running towards something together. Since everyone these days can’t seem to decide if Beyoncé is *actually* a feminist (when we should rather be questioning her capitalist ethics), thinking about her and Jay in the same context as two women coming together to beat the odds feels right, because in the end, isn’t the first step towards feminism female solidarity?

I'm hearing Karl murmur WHO RUN THIS MOTHER?, and I begin to think about mothers, Karl's mother, my own mother even. I remember a private yacht I once saw that was named "Mother", WHO RUN THIS MOTHER? and this made me wonder what Beyonce's private yacht might be named. UPSTAIRS DOWNSTAIRS I think about the captain of the "Mother"; does he ever ask himself under his breath "who run this mother"? A HOUSE IS NOT A HOME I imagine a running motorboat, ILLEGAL ALIEN which only naturally leads me to think about motor-boating, WHO RUN THE WORLD? GIRLS and now that I'm just thinking about sex, SLAVE LABOUR I realize I am in a sort of meditative trance. HOW DO I MAKE MYSELF A NOBODY? By using a medium comprised of fragments from daily reality, ready-made material like song lyrics, news clippings, friends names, celebrities, idioms, truisms, and even rhetorical questions, Karl is first tapping into the general psyche; what can be an easier access point than ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS. But once Karl is tapped in he goes further, sculpting a virtual landscape furnished with letters and words, a wide open terrain to wade through a multitude of meaning rather than look for singular truths, where up can mean down and chicks can mean dicks; this is a place free of the authority and boundaries of language.

When Karl says WOMENS PLACE IS IN THE HOME, do I believe him? I do when he says VEGETABLES ARE PEOPLE TOO.

- Lisa Jo

KARL HOLMQVIST (b. 1964, Västerås, Sweden; lives and works in Berlin) has been the subject of numerous solo museum and gallery exhibitions including: Gavin Brown's enterprise, New York (2015); Moderna Museet, Stockholm (2013); Kunsthal Charlottenborg, Copenhagen (2013); dépendance, Brussels (2013); Galerie Neu, Berlin (2013); Bergen Kunsthall (2012); House of Gaga, Mexico City (2011); Badischer Kunstverein, Karlsruhe (2010); amongst many others.

Group shows include institutions such as: Bielefelder Kunstverein (2014); Artists Space, New York (2014); MoMA, New York (2012); Kunsthalle Zürich (2011); 54th Venice Biennial (2011); MASS MOCA (2011); CCA Wattis, San Francisco (2007); Swiss Institute, New York (2006); Haus der Kunst, Munich (2004); 50th Venice Biennale (2003), and many others.

With special thanks to: Gavin Brown's enterprise, New York and Galerie Neu, Berlin