

Ilja Karilampi's videos, installations, and texts are mostly motivated by the culture he believes he belongs to: music. Particularly obsessed with its mythical figures and visual symbols, Karilampi creates biographical narratives that juxtapose mainstream celebrity culture with underground subcultures, hi tech industrial video production with amateur YouTube footage, and pidgin English slang with plain orthodox vocabulary. By contrasting such wide range of cultural styles and visual iconographies with his own personal anecdotes and fictional interpretations, the artist appropriates the necessary elements to create and update his own identity.

With this in mind, Karilampi's exhibition at Kiria Koula presents some of his video works from 2009–2014, which feature subjects such as Dr. Dre, an imaginary train connecting Switzerland with Sweden, the performer Mykki Blanco during and after a gig, and Jimi Hendrix stuck in Gothenburg. To revisit the historical symbolism of each of these four videos, Karilampi produced a series of new brass signs, cut and engraved as if an extension of the graphics in the video works. Installed throughout the gallery, these signs could appear to be appropriated from the outside world, or could be viewed as if the video titles, etched in brass, had already become myths themselves.

Ilja Karilampi

(b. 1983, Göteborg, Sweden) lives and works in Berlin. His work has been shown in venues such as Marbriers 4 in Geneva, New Theater in Berlin, Konstfack in Stockholm, New Jerseyy in Basel, MoMA PS1 in New York, AP News in Zurich, and M HKA in Antwerp, Chisenhale Gallery in London, among others. He hosts a weekly radio show on Berlin Community Radio. Karilampi received an MFA from the Städelschule in Frankfurt in 2010. His exhibition at Kiria Koula is the first time he has shown in California.

Works by Ilja Karilampi



SweSh iPhone

2014

Engraved brass sign

3 1/8 x 5 3/8 Inch

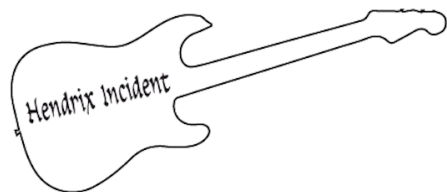


The Chief Dean of Gangsta Shape

2014

Engraved brass sign

4 x 16 Inch



Hotell Opalen, Hendrix 1968

2014

Engraved brass sign

6 x 12 Inch

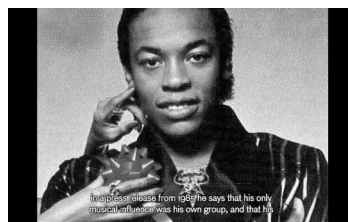


WELL \$PENT V.I.P. Taxi

2014

Engraved brass sign

2 1/2 x 6 1/8 Inch



The Chief Architect of Gangsta Rap

2009

11:11min

h264 video



SweSh Xpress Geneve Trailer

2014

01:59 min.

HD video

In collaboration with Renaud Jerez and Daniel Swan



WELL \$PENT: Mykki Blanco in Malmö

2012

13:30 min.

HD video with special effects



Hendrix Incident

2013

14:22 min.