



AKADEMIN VALAND

# Queer Community through Photographic Acts

Three Entrances to an Artistic Research Project  
Approaching LGBTQIA Russia

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# Abstract

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This compilation thesis is made within the field of *fotografisk gestaltning* (photography) and is a study of the potential for queer community to emerge through photographic acts. It consists of two artworks that have been presented in a series of exhibitions, published texts, workshops, and lectures. The artworks are the photography-, video-, and sound-based installation *State of Mind, and the photographic series At the Time of the Third Reading/Vid tiden för den tredje läsningen/Во время третьего чтения*, which is presented as framed images as well as in book form.

The publication *Queer Community through Photographic Acts* introduces the research through three entry points: photography, queer, and artworks. The first two entries highlight how these concepts are used in the research as practices and theories. The latter is a written visit to the artworks that takes place from different temporal and situational positions, and reflects on the work with LGBTQIA issues and community over borders.

The focus is on the emergence of community within, and through, the artworks, and how this may produce recognition of certain identities. At the same time, the artworks may destabilize what is taken for norms. How community emerges in the process of making art, as well as when activating the finalized works through exhibitions, workshops, and other presentations, is also explored.

The subject of the artworks is lesbian living in St. Petersburg, a Russian women's camp, and how one may navigate through society as queer identities. Group portraits and community form the overall foundation for the gestaltning of the artworks. The conditions for making art with the Russian LGBTQIA community as an artist from abroad are taken into consideration, as well as other shared embodied positions such as queerness and whiteness. This is performed through notions of positions and movement, as well as paying attention to an in-between – Trinh T. Minh-ha's concept which opens for a space of change and resistance to fixed positioning.