



Paul Simon  
Universal Music AB  
Box 55777  
114 83 Stockholm

Dear Mr Simon,

Unfortunately, I have to contact you concerning an urgent and embarrassing matter.

During this autumn, Sweden is carrying out the task of heading the presidency of the EU. An extensive cultural programme is part of the presidency. The coming Thursday the Stockholm City Theatre, one of the main theatres in northern Europe, is hosting the New Riga Theatre and its award winning director Alvis Hermanis.

In the presence of – among others – Latvia's minister of foreign affairs Mr. Maris Riekstins, the New Riga Theatre was suppose to perform their well known and famous play Sound of Silence.

Sound of Silence is a play that uses the fact that a Simon & Garfunkel concert was cancelled in Riga 1968. The characters are trying to listen to your music through a bad radio and envy the neighbours that do have the record. The play with the references to your music symbolizes an emerging liberalism in the Soviet occupied Baltic countries that made it possible to dream of another life.

It was with great disappointment that I got the message that the very much foreseen play could not be performed in Stockholm. According to your representatives in Stockholm you personally have engaged in the matter and would not allow performance.

I have noticed your international commitment and social awareness. Therefore, I believe that it must be a mistake to stop a play where your music symbolizes a strive towards democracy and freedom. I hope you will have the possibility to watch the mentioned play and give your admittance to the New Riga Theatre to perform it.



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Sound of Silence has been performed in countries such as Canada, Germany, France, Finland, Latvia and Austria and I am therefore surprised that you have not allowed the play to be performed in Sweden. Consequently, I am asking you to reconsider this decision.

Needless to say Stockholm City Theatre is bound by the national agreement with the Swedish Performing Rights Society (STIM) and pay full costs according to this contract.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Madeleine Sjöstedt', written over a faint, larger version of the same signature.

Madeleine Sjöstedt  
Vice Mayor Culture and Sports  
City of Stockholm