

Nikolaj Kunsthal
October 24 2014 - January 25 2015

**"LILIBETH CUENCA RASMUSSEN:
BEING HUMAN BEING"**



EXHIBITION OPENING THURSDAY OCTOBER 23, 5 - 7 PM
UNVEILING OF SCULPTURE AT 5:30 PM AND PERFORMANCE AT 6 PM

Press release

Over seven days, through seven different performances during the school autumn holiday, performance artist Lilibeth Cuenca Rasmussen creates her exhibition *being human being*.

The exhibition will be shown at Nikolaj Kunsthal, Copenhagen Contemporary Art Centre, from October 24 2014 to January 25 2015.

All performances are open to the audience from Thursday October 14 to Sunday October 19 2014, each day 12 to 4 pm.

In this series of performances, Lilibeth Cuenca Rasmussen, assisted by family members and artist colleagues such as Jeannette Ehlers, Kirsten Justesen and Ethiopian Mihret Kebede, describes a thematic movement from the earth, over the body to the language. Repetitive actions, taking as their point of departure the body and the earth, revolve around what is original in an exploration of everything that is universal in our existence and mutual relations.

It is the outcome of these seven performances that will provide the basis for Lilibeth Cuenca Rasmussen's exhibition, the inspiration for which the artist has found in a recent visit to Ethiopia where the Homo erectus is supposed to have taken some of its first steps.

OPENING EVENING OCTOBER 23 2014, 5 TO 7 PM

WITH PERFORMANCE AND UNVEILING OF SCULPTURE ON NIKOLAJ PLADS

5:30 pm Inauguration of the sculpture Prosperous Pal on Nikolaj Plads

Prosperous Pal is a new outdoor sculpture by Lilibeth Cuenca Rasmussen that will be installed on Nikolaj Plads for the duration of the exhibition. Prosperous Pal is a symbol of fertility and a mixture of animism and Christianity typical of Philippine culture, tying together the exhibition theme of origin with Lilibeth Cuenca Rasmussen's own parentage.

Opening speech by Danish sculptor Kirsten Justesen.

6 pm Performance: In the beginning - Bemejemeria

Together with sound artist Jacob Kirkegaard and Ethiopian multi-artist Mihret Kebede, Lilibeth Cuenca Rasmussen explores how everything began. In the beginning - Bemejemeria is a ritual translation of the sounds of the earth and the body into rhythm and language.

THE OPENING PERFORMANCE IS PRESENTED IN CO-OPERATION WITH THE WUNDERGRUND FESTIVAL COPENHAGEN.

ABOUT LILIBETH CUENCA RASMUSSEN

Lilibeth Cuenca Rasmussen is a Danish video and performance artist.

Born in Manila, the Philippines, in 1970 as the daughter of a Danish father and a Philippine mother, she and her family moved to Denmark when she was eight years old.

Her cultural background often provides the pivot of the universal tale which many of her works address. Through a both critical and humorous approach to topics such as identity, culture, gender and relations, Cuenca Rasmussen creates performances that contain strong emotions and transformations.

THE QUEST FOR LUCY

Lucy is the name of a performance made by Lilibeth Cuenca Rasmussen at Nikolaj Kunsthal on Culture Night October 10 2014. For this performance, Lilibeth Cuenca Rasmussen lay on a 1.8 tons clay base, and guests could dig into the clay, shape the earth around her and light candles to create a blaze of light around her.

Lucy is also the name of the approximately 3.2 million years old fossil (*Australopithecus afarensis*) found at Hadar in Ethiopia in 1974. Lucy is considered one of the first proofs of the erect human being. She got her name from the Beatles classic *Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds* that was being played repeatedly in the field camp when the skeleton was found.

The oldest known fossils of species in the human line of development were found in Ethiopia and date back approximately 4.4 million years, while the roughly six million years old "Millennium Man" (*Orrorin tugenensis*) was found in Kenya, and a nearly seven million years old cranium, Toumaï (*Sahelanthropus tchadensis*), has appeared in the Djurab Desert in Chad – all of them thus older than Lucy.

What, however, made Lucy special was the degree of preservation. Nearly 40 per cent of the skeleton was found, including pelvis, thighbone and shinbone, clearly showing her ability to walk erect.

In 2006, the finding of a nearly complete three million years old child skeleton was announced, merely four kilometres from Lucy. The skeleton was named "Lucy's Baby", and the child's fingers, arms and shoulder blade show that this was a species of highly skilled climbers. Researchers therefore think that Lucy spent most of her time in the trees and has only moved down to the ground occasionally.

Lucy is thus not a direct ancestor of the modern human being but a strong beacon and symbol of our development.

Sources: "Den Store Danske" and Videnskab.dk

PERFORMANCES AND ARTIST TALK

Culture Night, Oct 10, 7-11 pm: Lilibeth Cuenca Rasmussen: *Lucy*

Day 1, Oct 14, 12-4 pm: Lilibeth Cuenca Rasmussen + Merci Kirsten Cuenca Christensen & Michael Cuenca Rasmussen (brother and sister)

The entire exhibition room is covered with long lengths of cloth onto which the three siblings with their footprints create three huge joint paintings.

Day 2, Oct 15, 12-4 pm: Lilibeth Cuenca Rasmussen + Jeannette Ehlers (video artist)

On large pieces of linen, the two artists leave their handprints in earth according to a carefully predetermined choreography.

Day 3, Oct 16, 12-4 pm: Lilibeth Cuenca Rasmussen + Boa Niels & Teresita Cuenca Rasmussen (parents)

In a joint choreography, they apply masks of earth to their faces and from this make facial imprints on cloth.

Day 4, Oct 17, 12-4 pm: Lilibeth Cuenca Rasmussen + Kasper Ravnhøj (choreographer and dancer)

Lilibeth Cuenca Rasmussen and dancer Kasper Ravnhøj reshape the clay base used by Lilibeth Cuenca Rasmussen for her performance Lucy on Culture Night. From this clay, objects are created from the imprints of their hands.

Day 5, Oct 18, 12-4 pm: Lilibeth Cuenca Rasmussen + Kirsten Justesen (sculptor)

Lilibeth Cuenca Rasmussen poses as a model while Kirsten Justesen creates a bust of her from the remaining clay.

Day 6, Oct 19, 12-4 pm: Lilibeth Cuenca Rasmussen + interaction with the audience

The audience are invited to leave their thumbprints and together with Lilibeth Cuenca Rasmussen create a work for the exhibition.

Day 7, Oct 23, 6 pm: Lilibeth Cuenca Rasmussen + Jacob Kirkegaard (sound artist) & Mihret Kebede (multi-artist, ET): *In the beginning - Bemejemeria*

In the beginning – Bemejemeria is a ritual translation of the sounds of the earth and the body into rhythm and language. Presented in co-operation with [Wundergrund Festival Copenhagen](#).

Artist talk on Thursday November 6 at 5 pm: Artist talk by Lilibeth Cuenca Rasmussen about the exhibition being human being and her visit to Ethiopia.

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