



THE PRESENT DOESN'T EXIST IN MY MIND,
AND THE FUTURE IS ALREADY FAR BEHIND
LILIBETH CUENCA RASMUSSEN

THE PERFORMANCE
PROJECT @
UNIVERSITY
SETTLEMENT

PRESENTED BY
SCULPTURECENTER

*Lilibeth Cuenca
Rasmussen, The
Present Doesn't Exist
in My Mind, and the
Future Is Already
Far Behind, 2009.
Rehearsal views. Photos
by Brian Close.*

Filipino-Danish artist Lilibeth Cuenca Rasmussen's multimedia one-woman show at University Settlement drew on the writings of Valentine de Saint-Point and British-born avant-garde poet Mina Loy, both of whom were affiliated with the Futurist movement only to later reject it. The thirty-minute performance began with Rasmussen ensconced in a cream-colored geometric costume designed by Lise Klitten, standing erectly on stage while slowly dictating collaged excerpts from Loy's 1923 anthology of poems, *Lunar Baedeker*, to an operatic score by composer/musicians Pete Drungle and Brian Bender. Flickering geometric shapes, crudely linear architectural forms, and a descending misty backdrop, created and compiled by artist Brian Close, were projected on Rasmussen's body and the dark screen behind her. Rasmussen's labored movements and restrictive attire viscerally suggested the masculine confines in society. As the bravura of the musical score slowly waned, the artist gradually shed the shell of her costume to reveal a sleek white bodysuit. In a rapid transition to performing her own poetry, Rasmussen threw on a white afro and sunglasses and began rapping "Fuck the F-word"—a song featuring the catchy chorus "Fuck the F, relight the fire / Let the granny feminist retire!" Bringing playfulness and biting humor to the intricacies of identity politics, Rasmussen's rich symbolic imagery and jarring sensual contrasts provided a refreshing exploration of the legacy of Futurism and its continued influence on contemporary feminism.

—Persis Singh