

<http://spiralsnotebook.blogspot.com/2011/01/bucket-list-fundacion-pacita-abad.html>

Bucket List: Fundacion Pacita Abad

By: Sharlene on *My Spiral Notebook*

January 28, 2011

In 2004, I chanced upon a magazine that I found among a bunch of old newspapers that were marked for disposal at the office. I was listlessly going through the magazine, killing time and hoping for a reprieve from the emptiness I felt when an article in it caught my attention. The article featured a Filipino artist named [Pacita Abad](#). I marvelled at the photos of her art that accompanied the article. Vibrant, beating loudly like a thousand drums yet flowing like a clear river under a speckled sky – her work told me to live and not be afraid. To walk the earth and not regret retracing steps but rather regret those that were never taken. I promised myself then that one day I would somehow get to talk to her and learn from her.



Pacita Abad and one of her art installations

(Photo by [PacitaAbad.com](#))

Pacita Abad died in 2004 of lung cancer. Coincidentally, she died in the same month that I found the article. And although I was to learn of her passing a little over a year after it happened, I remember feeling lost for no reason after hearing about her death, like some light had gone out and I could not find the switch to turn it back on.

I chanced upon this photo last year on Flickr while browsing the net for inspiration during a bleak, empty time in my life -



I can no longer recall where I found it on Flickr but I fell in love with it instantly and fervently wished that the house in the photo was where I lived.

There was something about the raw, windswept vista that captured my heart. And though the house atop this craggy hill seemed to sit forlornly by itself, the word isolation never entered my mind each time I looked at it. What came to mind was a sense of peace, of wholeness, of standing on top the world and knowing your exact place on it. Whenever I looked at this photo, it felt like I was looking at home. Each time I looked at it, I somehow felt comforted.

Last night, I came upon [Carlos Celdran's blog](#). Carlos Celdran is a celebrity of sorts in the Philippines. An artist and history lover, he runs walking tours of Old Manila (one more thing on my bucket list) and in one of his posts, he wrote about a trip to [Batanes](#) he took with his wife. After a few paragraphs, I realized that the lovely inn he was referring to in his blog post was the very same house in the photo above. I fell head over heels, truly, deeply, madly, tear-you-hair-out-act-crazy in love all over again.





All photos from [Fundacion Pacita Abad](#)

Imagine how dumbfounded I was when I found out it was where Pacita Abad lived and worked for several years before her passing.

Visiting this place is now in my bucket list. I don't know why I found all these at such times in my life -- moments when I felt lost and unsure and afraid. I do know that the article and the photos of her and her art told me to live fully and that the photo of her home made me feel at peace. Maybe when I finally get to visit, I'll find out.

Strange how I found connections where I had thought there were none. Stranger still that an artist I admire but never met is able to speak to me from atop the grassy knoll in the sky where she now paints.

I don't feel so lost anymore.