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Pacita Abad's "How Mali Lost Her Accent"; Seeing #2

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Pacita Abad captures the story of a girl who is unfamiliar with a new place, and is still holding on to her roots. Literally speaking, her position in the painting is in the center of the frame. Therefore, she is the focal point of this piece. Then, banners of prestigious colleges, university buildings, and computers are surrounding her. She is also in the midst of this green, tropical-like atmosphere, which portrays her foundation, and her origins. With these explicit details, it seems as if she is at the point in her life where she is not in the future, nor she is in the past. She is in the middle of those two areas, the present. She has not fully forgotten of her roots, nor she has fully assimilated into the American culture. In addition, she is not facing the prestigious schools behind her, nor is she looking down at the computers at the foregrounds of the piece. This may imply that she is not ambitious yet. More so, she is not ready to conform to this new world she is in. The portrait also displays this confusion of the subject. She is not quite sure of her identity because she is combining her roots and this new world she has arrived at.