

PRESS RELEASE

STPI
CREATIVE WORKSHOP & GALLERY

STPI PRESENTS

***Pacita Abad:
Common Ground***

25 October – 13 December 2025
STPI, 41 Robertson Quay



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STPI – Creative Workshop & Gallery presents ***Pacita Abad: Common Ground***, featuring artworks created during the late Filipino artist's 2003 residency at STPI. After two decades, this exhibition offers a rare opportunity to experience a significant body of her STPI works, alongside two of her iconic *trapunto* paintings from the Pacita Abad Art Estate. The exhibition runs from 25 October to 13 December 2025.

As the workshop's third artist-in-residence and the first female to undertake the role, Abad fully embraced STPI's experimental ethos in its formative years. In Singapore, Abad is most beloved for transforming the Alkaff Bridge into a rainbow of 46 colours and 2,350 circles—an iconic public artwork and testament to her belief in colour's power to uplift communities. This latest exhibition arrives amid renewed global recognition for Abad, whose vibrant, boundary-crossing practice has recently been celebrated at major museum exhibitions and biennales worldwide.

"Pacita Abad's practice, which championed cross-cultural dialogue and diversity, was ahead of its time in addressing what are now central concerns in contemporary art," said Emi Eu, Executive Director of STPI. "Her fearless experimentation with materials resonates with STPI's mission to push the limits of paper and printmaking. With this exhibition, we are proud to share an innovative chapter in her career with a new generation of audiences and celebrate an artist who illuminated the common ground that connects us all."

Pacita Abad (b. 1946, Batanes, Philippines—d. 2004, Singapore) was an artist whose life and work spanned six continents and over 60 countries. "I always see the world through colour," she once said. "I feel like I am an ambassador of colours, always projecting a positive mood that helps make the world smile." Known for her bold canvases and textile-based works, Abad filled surfaces with dazzling colour, exuberant textures and abstract forms. Her palette, rooted in her Filipino upbringing and enriched by global traditions, became a radiant language of joy, resistance and connection.

During her three-month residency at STPI, Abad embraced the circle as her unifying motif—"direct, simple, modern, universal, intimate, fascinating and playful". She turned circles into suns, moons, doorknobs, traffic lights and umbrella shapes, layering glitter, buttons, mirrors and luminous inks into richly coloured pulp. These kaleidoscope works shimmer with vitality, affirming colour as a universal language of optimism.

Beyond aesthetics, her work challenged Western dominance in late 20th-century art and elevated often overlooked materials and practices. Migration, identity and social justice influenced Abad's practice. Exiled from the Philippines at 23 for her family's opposition to the Marcos regime, she settled in San Francisco and became immersed in activist and immigrant communities. Later travels to refugee camps along the Cambodia-Thailand border deepened her awareness of displacement and resilience, infusing her art with stories of shared humanity.

Pacita Abad: Common Ground reaffirms STPI's role as a site of experimentation and dialogue with the international art world. Today, her works speak with renewed urgency, addressing culture, identity and diversity in ways that remain profoundly resonant.

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About STPI

STPI is a dynamic creative workshop and contemporary art gallery based in Singapore. Established in 2002, STPI is a not-for-profit organisation committed to promoting artistic experimentation in the mediums of print and paper and has become one of the most cutting-edge destinations for contemporary art in Asia. STPI sits alongside National Gallery Singapore and the Singapore Art Museum as part of the national Visual Arts Cluster of leading institutions in the region.

About Pacita Abad

Pacita Abad (b. 1946, Batanes, Philippines – d. 2004, Singapore) was a prolific artist celebrated for her vibrant, large-scale *trapunto* paintings, a technique she pioneered that involves quilting and stuffing canvases to create a sculptural, three-dimensional effect. Her work is characterised by bold colours and an accumulation of materials, reflecting the many cultures she encountered during her extensive travels.

Abad's expansive practice explored a wide range of themes, from portraying tribal masks and social scenes to intricate underwater landscapes and abstract forms, all while drawing inspiration from global ethnic craft traditions. Her art transcended borders, blending diverse cultural motifs into a universal visual language.

Abad's work is held in major international collections including Tate, London; M+, Hong Kong; National Gallery Singapore; Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, DC; and the Ayala Museum, Manila. She has been the subject of numerous notable solo exhibitions, including recent retrospectives at MoMA PS1, New York (2024); the Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto (2024); the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (2023); and the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis (2023). Her work was also featured posthumously in major international festivals such as the 60th Venice Biennale, *Stranieri Ovunque – Foreigners Everywhere* (2024), and the 13th Gwangju Biennale, *Minds Rising, Spirits Turning* (2021).