

"THE PEOPLE OF WAU"

By Pacita Abad

The adventurous spirit of Joseph Conrad will return to the Oriental Hotel's Authors' Lounge today when Ambassador and Madame Manuel T. Yan of the Republic of the Philippines open the art exhibition of the internationally acclaimed Philippine painter, Pacita Abad. Her exhibit, entitled "The People of Wau," consists of twenty four oil paintings recently done by the artist in Southern Sudan, one of the most remote areas in Africa, not far from the Congo Watershed which inspired Conrad's "Heart of Darkness." Unlike Conrad, however, Pacita documents her journeys with brush and paint and the results have been vivid, colorful canvases expressing Pacita's feelings of Africa, Asia, North and South America and Europe.

Born and brought up on Batanes, a small Philippine island in the North China Sea, Pacita received her undergraduate education at the University of the Philippines and a master's degree at the University of San Francisco, where she also worked as art coordinator. After a brief stint in Paris, she completed her formal art training at the Corcoran School of Art in Washington, D.C., and at the Art Students League of New York City.

Despite the fact that most of her formal art training has been in Western countries, Pacita's best works are not of Paris or New York but of Guatemalan jungles, villages in Bangladesh, fishermen on her island of Batanes and most recently the tribal people of Southern Sudan. Pacita's sensitivity to the subtleties of third world cultures and her exuberant optimism about life have allowed her to capture underlying feelings that transform everyday activities into poignant vignettes of color. This is readily observed in her current exhibit in such paintings as "Father and Son," "Waiting for the Dura Truck," and "The People of Wau."

Pacita's exhibit at the Oriental Hotel is her fifth one-woman show and will be open through Saturday, November the twenty fourth. Her previous solo exhibitions have been held in: Washington, D.C.; Dacca, Bangladesh; Manila, Philippines; and Khartoum, Sudan. In addition, she has participated in group shows in Mexico City, San Francisco, New York, Washington, D.C., Manila and Sofia, Bulagaria.

As a result of Pacita's many exhibits her paintings are collected by private collectors in many countries in Asia, Europe, Africa and the United States.