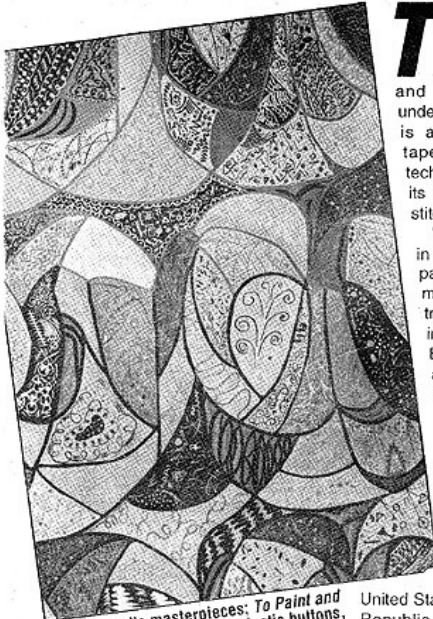


# TRAPUNTO and Fiber Art



Pacita Abad's masterpieces: *To Paint and Want* (above), acrylic, plastic buttons, broken mirrors, gold yarn stitched and padded canvas, 294.64 x 236.22 cm., 1990; *Two Dancing Women*, 177.8 x 144.78 cm.



**T**RAPUNTO is a decorative art which puts together at least two layers of materials. A design is then outlined by running stitches and afterwards padded from the underside for a high relief. What results is a three-dimensional collaged tapestry. A 14th century artistic technique, *trapunto* painting derives its name from the Italian term for stitching and sewing, *trapungere*.

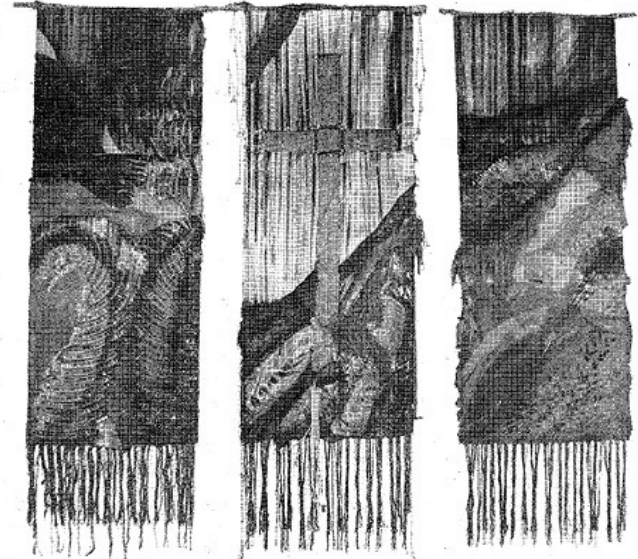
When it comes to *trapunto* painting in the Philippines, Pacita Abad, painter and printmaker, is one of the most well-known. Inspired by traditional forms of *trapunto* painting in Panama, Mexico, Guatemala, Burma, Afghanistan, Africa, India and Indonesia, Abad incorporates various media and processes in her works. Her technique includes painting, stitching, collage, silkscreen, tie-dye and embroidery. Masterpieces by Abad are in the collections of the national museums of Bangladesh, Cuba, Korea, Sri Lanka and the Philippines. She has exhibited extensively in the United States, Hong Kong, the Dominican Republic, Thailand, Japan, Germany, Bulgaria and Bangladesh.

Like *trapunto* painting, fiber art is a unique and innovative art form, an installation art which is not boxed in by a frame. It makes use of natural materials like rope, twigs, coconut shells and roots of plants. However, Filipino fiber artist Paz Abad Santos has a lot more indigenous materials to work with, such as burlap and *gugo*. Abad Santos, in fact, is known for pioneering the incorporation of burlap in her artworks in the early '80s. Her pieces have served as altar installations in a number of Metro Manila churches. Abad Santos has exhibited in the U.S., China, France, Germany, Singapore, Thailand, Indonesia and Brunei over the last 15 years.

Pacita Abad and Paz Abad Santos, two multiawarded Filipino artists indulging in non-traditional art forms, recently joined hands to mount a collaborative exhibit, titled *Thinking Big*, at the Metropolitan Museum of Manila. It opened on June 15 with President Fidel V. Ramos and the First Lady, Mrs. Amelita M. Ramos, as guests of



Fiber artworks from Paz Abad Santos' *Easter (Two Pieces)* (left), collection: Cathedral of the Holy Trinity, 731.52 x 304.8 cm., 1993; *DESU (Offering)* (below), burlap, gugo, twigs and other indigenous materials, 91.44 x 91.44 cm.



The artists: Pacita Abad (left) and Paz Abad Santos.



honor, and will run until July 31. The exhibit features works from Abad's *Immigrant Experience* and *Oriental Abstraction* series, done between 1984 and 1995 and ranging from 4.5 9.75 to 10 x 10 feet in size. It also showcases Abad Santos' 1980 to 1995 works, whose sizes range from 3 x 3 to 24 x 20 feet. The exhibiting artists also conducted workshops and talks on their respective artistic processes, with Abad facilitating the *Trapunto* Workshop and Abad Santos taking charge of the Fiber Indigenous Art Workshop.

Galeria de las Islas cosponsored this special exhibit in cooperation with Philippine Airlines, Rubicon, Fiber Development Authority and the Rotary Club of Makati-Bel Air.

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