

Three Fil-Ams Featured in First Asia Society Exhibition of Contemporary Asian American Art

Three Filipinos are among twenty foreign-born Asian American visual artists featured in the first ever exhibition of contemporary art to be presented by the Asia Society entitled "Asia/America: Identities in contemporary Asian American art," opening February 16 and running through June 26, 1994 at the Asia society headquarters, 725 Park Avenue (at 70th Street), in New York city.

The Filipino artists are Pacita Abad, mixed media; Marlon Fuentes, photographer and filmmaker; and Manuel Ocampo, a Los Angeles-based painter.

The exhibition is described by the society as a collection of paintings, sculptures, photographs, and mixed-media installations by "foreign-born Asian American visual artists who, in their art, deal with the complex question of identity faced by Asians living in the west."

Hence, the works in the exhibition will be grouped by artist and not by theme. Text panels and interpretive labels, including the artists' quotations about their intentions, will accompany the works to place the individual pieces in context and draw attention to common concerns.

Mixed media artist Pacita Abad has mounted solo exhibits at the Philippine center gallery in New York, including "flower paintings" and "abstract emotions." Abad has also lived, painted and exhibited in South and Southeast Asia, Africa, and Europe, and has traveled worldwide. Born in the small northern Philippine town of Batanes, Abad moved to the United States in 1968 after receiving her BA degree at the University of the Philippines. In 1972, she received her MA degree from the University of San Francisco.

Photographer and filmmaker Marlon Fuentes came to the United States from Manila in 1975 as a student. Although largely a self-taught artist, Fuentes took courses in photography at the Corcoran School of Art (1981-1982). Fuentes has an extensive exhibition record that include such venues as the Corcoran Gallery of Art, the Kathleen Ewing Gallery, the Washington Project for the Arts, and D.C. Art Center in Washington, D.C.; Santa Barbara Museum of Art; Huntsville Museum of Art, Alabama; Photogenesis Gallery, Albuquerque, New Mexico; Nexus Gallery, Atlanta; Arc Gallery, Chicago; and numerous university art galleries across the United States.

Los Angeles-based painter Manuel Ocampo, through his parents, was exposed early in his youth to both politics and religion, which profoundly affected his later work. Ocampo's early training consisted of copying religious paintings from a local church. And his early mentor, an artisan, hired to make images of saints for the church. Later he took art courses at the University of the Philippines and much later on, California State College in Bakersfield. After having visited the United States in 1981 as a teenager with his family, Ocampo moved to the U.S., first to New York and then, in 1985, to California. Recent solo exhibitions by Ocampo include presentations at Salander-O'reilly Galleries, Beverly Hills, California; University Art Museum/Pacific Film Archives, University of California, Berkeley; and Christopher John Gallery, Santa Monica. He has also participated in numerous group shows including exhibitions in Germany, London, and Tokyo.