

HONGKONG VISITOR

An explosion of colour

Hong Kong is one of Asia's great centres of culture as well as of commerce. There is a thriving local arts scene and the work of major international artists is exhibited here frequently.

For those interested in modern European art, the place to go this month is Room 201 of Wilson House in Central, where the Asian Collector Gallery is hosting an exhibition of works by contemporary British artists entitled *New Directions in Colour and Texture*. The exhibition comprises more than 60 works including paintings, acrylics and sculptures. David Hazlewood, Anita Ford and Brian Plummer are among the better known artists represented.

Those with more oriental tastes are also well catered for. This month the Hong Kong Arts Centre and Alisan Fine Arts are jointly presenting a major exhibition of trapuntoe paintings by Filipina artist Pacita Abad entitled *Oriental Abstractions*.

Trapuntoe is a form of art first practised in Sicily, during the 14th century. It consists of two pieces of cloth, sewn together by running stitches, the upper cloth bearing a design. Stuffing is then inserted between the two so that the trapuntoe has a textured, contoured appearance. The whole thing can then be embellished with sequins and beads to produce a colourful wall-hanging.

This form of art practised by Ms Abad merges the techniques of painting and tapestry to create an effect of visual extravagance. Her trapuntoes are bright exuberant pieces, inspired by the sights of the Pacific and Africa. They are lavishly decorated with ribbons and lace, as well as Abad's more unexpected mirrors, cowrie shells, coloured buttons and Nepali beads.

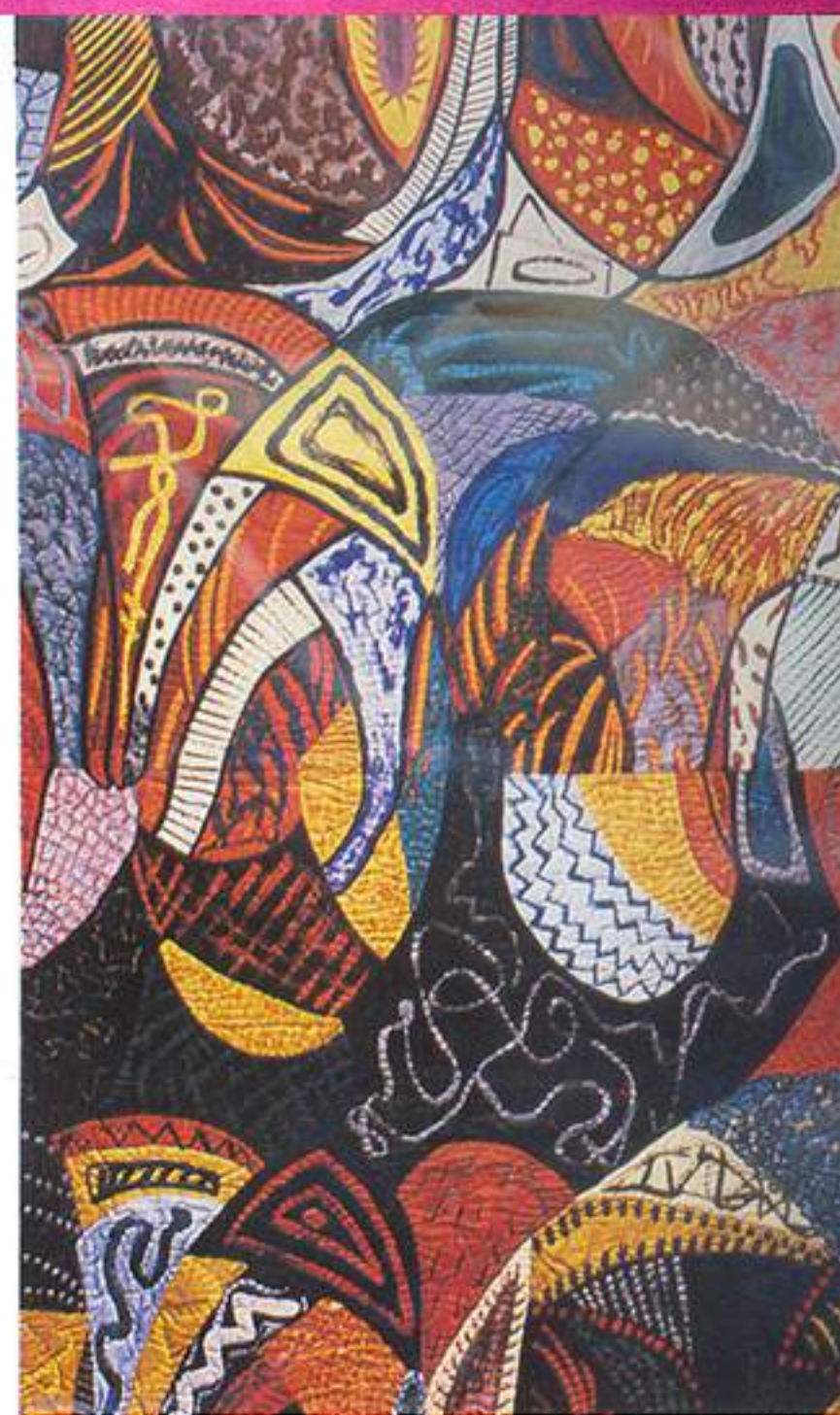
The much travelled Filipina artist has held exhibitions of her work all over the world. When in 1984 she won the TOYM (The Outstanding Young Men) award for art in the Philippines, she was described as a "dynamic and original artist imbued with a global outlook and deep compassion for, and understanding of, the less fortunate and oppressed."

Oriental Abstractions will be the first one-person show by an artist from the Philippines to be held at the Arts Centre. The exhibition comprises 20 outsized hung-on-pole trapuntoe paintings and 20

drawings and serigraphs. It runs from June 7 to 23.

Also at the Arts Centre, but beginning on June 28 is an exhibition featuring the minority Folk Crafts of Guizhou in China. Works exhibited will include traditional costumes, carved bamboo, ceramics and theatrical masks. Twenty photographic studies of Guizhou's scenery and landscape will also be exhibited.

A little of the history of Hong Kong and South China is chronicled in the exhibition of Chinese Export Watercolours at the gallery on the 11th floor of the City Hall High Block. The paintings are of China,



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Exhibitions



Examples of Pacita Abad's paintings: *Tipaklong* (page 74); *Bilog Bilog* (top left); *Red Bug* (top right); *Assaulting the eye with ecstasy* (bottom).



executed in a Western style, and were produced in the 18th and 19th centuries during Canton's heyday as China's most important southern port. The Museum of Art has assembled an excellent collection, of which 65 works will be on display.

Probably the best known of the artists represented is Tingqua, whose paintings mingle a western style with a Chinese approach to brushwork. The major subjects of the paintings are Guangzhou, Hong Kong, Macau and Shanghai and they feature portraits, street scenes, and pictures of junks and local animals. They were intended as souvenirs for visitors to take away and reached the zenith of their popularity and excellence in the mid-1850s. Afterwards their appeal declined because of the invention of photography, and the school of painters gradually died out.

The City Hall Museum of Art is open to the public from Monday to Saturday from 10a.m. to 6p.m., except on Thursdays when it closes. On Sundays and Public holidays it is open from 1p.m. to 6p.m.