

PARANGAL FOR PACITA ABAD

January 17, 2005
St. Thomas More Garden, Ateneo de Manila University
Loyola Heights, Quezon City



Program

Welcome Remarks

Fr. Bienvenido F. Nebres, S.J.
President, Ateneo de Manila University

An Invocation for Pacita

Dr. Leovino Ma. Garcia
Dean, School of Humanities, Ateneo de Manila University

The 5th Helenica Foundation Lecture to Honor a Filipina Visual Artist

Corazon S. Alvina
Director, National Museum of the Philippines

Joyful Remembrances

Ian Findlay-Brown
Chief Editor, *Asian Art News* & Pacita's Biographer

Florencio "Butch" B. Abad
Secretary of Education

Jack Garrity

Hosted by



Ateneo Library of Women's Studies

on its 10th Anniversary

You are invited to view the **Parangal for Pacita Abad** exhibition
January 17-February 17, 2005
Rizal Library, Ateneo de Manila University, Loyola Heights, Quezon City

With thanks to:

Jack Garrity

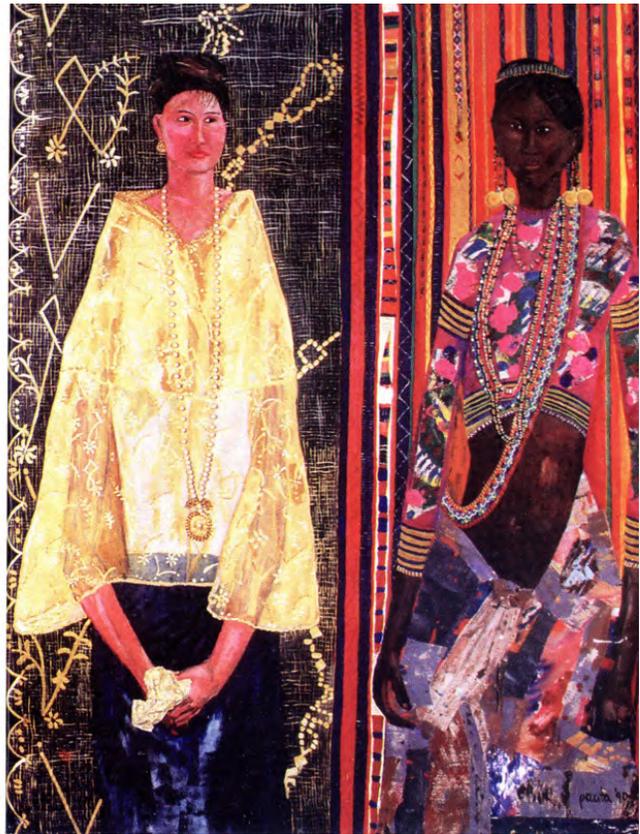
Cultural Center of the Philippines
Metropolitan Museum of Manila
National Museum of the Philippines
Galleria Duemila

George Abad
Tina P. Colayco
Lanelle Abueva Fernando
Evelyn Lim Forbes
Grace Marie Katigbak
Gloria L. Tablico

FOR INFORMATION contact ALIWW

Address: 3rd Floor, Rizal Library Annex, Ateneo de Manila University
Loyola Heights, Quezon City, Philippines
Telefax: (632) 426 6001 Local 5811
E-mail: aliww@admu.edu.ph • URL: <http://rizal.lib.admu.edu.ph/aliww>

Cover: *The Filipina: A Racial Identity Crisis Maria Isabel and Liwayway*, 1990, acrylic on stitched, dyed, trapuntoed canvas with beads and cotton yarn, 100 x 64 inches. Pacita Abad.



You are invited to

PARANGAL FOR PACITA ABAD

The 5th Helenica Foundation
Annual Lecture and Exhibit
to honor
Filipino Women in the Visual Arts
to be delivered by Philippine National Museum
Director Corazón S. Alvina

hosted by
ALIWW (Ateneo Library of Women's Writings)
on the 40th day after the Artist's passing
Monday, January 17, 2005
4 o'clock in the afternoon

St. Thomas More Garden
Ateneo de Manila University
Loyola Heights, Quezon City

Please come in colorful Filipiniana.

HELP DOCUMENT THE LIFE OF PACITA ABAD

Bring photos, videos, documents, articles, tear-sheets, ephemera and correspondence made by Pacita Abad to you or by you to her when you come to the Parangal thereby helping ALIWW and Fundacion Pacita increase their documentation of a fabulous Filipina! You may choose to donate the items or leave them with ALIWW to be reproduced after which they will be returned shortly. Booths with donation and loan receipts will be set up at the al fresco venue.

ALIWW is a unique archival program for the personal papers of creative women, and is currently celebrating its 10th anniversary. Fundacion Pacita is a family tribute to Pacita's support for young artists, and maintain the museum in her memory located in Batanes.

Exhibition of a selection of Pacita Abad's art, personal papers, interviews, and memorabilia will run till February 17, 2005 at the Pardo de Tavera Room, 2nd Floor, Rizal Library Building, Ateneo de Manila University, Loyola Heights, Quezon City.

DIRECTIONS

Enter Ateneo's Gate 3 on Katipunan Avenue 9across from KFC). Continue up the road. You can leave your car at the North Car Park (to your left) indicated by a PARANGAL to PACITA sign. St. Thomas More Garden (beside Rizal Library) is on your right across the parking lot.

**Invocation at Parangal for Pacita Abad
St. Thomas More Garden
17 January 2005**

**by Leovino Ma. Garcia, Ph. D.
Dean, School of Humanities**

**Let nothing disturb you
Let nothing frighten you
All things are passing
God never changes.
Patient endurance
Attains to all things
To one who has God
Nothing is wanting
God alone suffices.**

St. Teresa of Avila

O Creator of Light, Life, and Beauty; Spirit of Love, Truth and Goodness; Source of our being, happiness, and joy we are gathered together this afternoon in friendship and love, with much affection and with great joy to thank You for your gift to us—the undeniable presence of Pacita in our lives. We celebrate today her zest for life, her intense passion for art, her compassion and affection for this fascinating world of ours—with its multiplicity of cultures, diversity of places, and uniqueness of each and every person.

In this open space become this afternoon the garden of memory, we decant from our unique experiences with Pacita the joy of memory. The French philosopher Paul Ricoeur, in his latest work entitled *Memory, History, and Forgetting*, instructs us about a “happy memory” and “the small miracle of memory” that occurs when there is recognition or acknowledgement of someone or something. He writes:

I consider recognition to be the small miracle of memory. And as a miracle, it can also fail to occur.

But when it does take place, in thumbing through a photo album, or in the unexpected encounter

with a familiar person, or in the silent evocation of a being who is absent or gone forever, the cry escapes:

“That is her! That is him!” And the same greeting accompanies step by step, with less lively colors, an event

recollected, a know-how retrieved, a state of affairs once again raised to the level of “recognition.” Every

act of memory is thus summed up in recognition.

HELP DOCUMENT THE LIFE OF PACITA ABAD

The Ateneo Library of Women's Writings (ALIWW), now on its 10th year, is a unique archival program for the personal papers of creative women, with an emphasis on writers and visual artists. Among its holdings are the personal papers of Paz Marquez Benitez, Encarnacion Alonza, Angela Manalang Gloria, Lina Flor, Leonor Orosa Goquingco, Mita Pardo de Tavera, Liwayway Arceo, Maria Rosa Luna Henson, Araceli Limcaco Dans, Linda Ty-Casper, AnnaFer, Lualhati Bautista, Marilou Jacob and Maningning Miclat, to mention but a few.

You are invited to bring photos, videos, documents, articles, tear-sheets, ephemera and correspondence made by Pacita Abad to you or by you to her. Donations of the material are very welcome. ALIWW can also reproduce the items and return them.

For information about ALIWW, contact:

Gemma Roces or Heidi Dizon
3rd Floor - Rizal Library Annex
Ateneo de Manila University, Loyola Heights, Q.C.
Telfax: (632) 426-6001 local 5811
E-mail: aliww@admu.edu.ph
URL: <http://rizal.lib.admu.edu.ph/aliww>

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The Ateneo de Manila University's School of Humanities was formally opened in 2000. In support of the School's program in the Fine Arts, the Ellen Francisco Fajardo Foundation awarded an endowment fund to the Ateneo Library of Women's Writings (ALIWW), to establish an annual lecture/exhibit series to be henceforth known as

**The Ellen Francisco Fajardo
Annual Lecture/Exhibit Honoring
Filipino Women in the Visual Arts**

SPEECH BY CORAZON ALVINA

PACITA ABAD: CURATING PACITA ABAD

Jack (Mr Garrity), Butch - Department of Education Secretary Florencio Abad, Ateneo University President Father Bienvenido Nebres - also a trustee of the National Museum Board, ALIWW officers specially Ms Felice Sta Maria and Edna, Rita Ledesma, friends and other relations of Pacita, ladies and gentlemen:

In my tour of duty as director of the Metropolitan Museum of Manila, I had the pleasure and privilege to curate, cocurate, organize and otherwise engage in projects with Pacita Abad. Though she had been a friend since university days at the University of the Philippines, we had lost touch through her residence and praxis in other parts of the world.

So that when the exhibition schedule of the Met was turned over to me when I assumed office there, I was pleased to see that one of the plans was to have an exhibition of artwork, size big, featuring the trapunto of Pacita, and extremely large mix media works, for wall and floor, by Paz Abad Santos. I was tasked to curate this show, and to this day I consider it one of the most exhilarating exhibitions I had ever put together. It was also delightful, not like work at all. It was not wracked with angst; it was not marked by bitter battles as sometimes occur in the course an exhibition from conceptualization through installation - and after -- between artists and curators over independence and freedom in creation and expression on the one hand, and the curatorial muscle that some of us sometimes flex for museology, for personal curatorial ideologies, and in compliance with the museum's exhibition theories and education policies.

It is not solely the Met's curatorship, but rather largely the substance of the artist and her works, that the shows that had Pacita Abad artwork were, to a show, critically acclaimed, had tremendous audience numbers, and were truly enjoyed by the viewers. As a curator, working with good work is half the undertaking. Working with the art of Pacita was selectable and professionally gratifying. This is not to mean that her artworks were facile, but that they were not obfuscatory, her technique inviting empathy and identification, thus connections could and would be made.

Thinking Big was curated like two one-man shows in one, but interconnecting them by setting up dialogues too between the oeuvres of Pacita Abad and Paz Abad Santos, knotting and tying their concerns as given face and form in their artwork. Apart from the physical size of the works, seen also as enormous and shared at that, was the responsiveness of both artists to issues in Philippine art, and to societal concerns at the time. Between them, immigration, identity and nationhood, indigenous issues, values that affect art production and the conservation of artwork were tackled, with scrupulous attention to the physical material, and the thought processes that were invested in the artwork themselves. Pacita's works for Thinking Big presented faces of immigration; images of Philippine social issues; environmental inspirations; and, expressions of her unadulterated passion for color, texture, and form in art seen at every thrust and upturn of the needle, whatever the substance and content of the work.

As we were preparing for Thinking Big, Pacita and I were one day seated on the floor as she added or replaced buttons on a few of her trapuntos. I had not seen anyone use a thimble while hand-sewing for a long time, and was fascinated with her dexterous and precise pushing and pulling of the needle. Without missing a stitch, she said that she liked using buttons in her trapuntos because buttons reminded her of Filipinos: they were both numerous, variously shaped, sized and colored; both were everywhere and could adapt and blend in, or stand out, or fall off through faulty stitching and weak rooting. Filipinos and buttons had potentials for different roles and functions. Buttons -and Filipinos -- could also

be not overly visible, appear to "disappear" even as they added to the texture of trapuntos, and to that of life wherever the Filipino chooses to be.

Let me fast forward to *At Home and Abroad: 20 Contemporary Artists*, another exhibition that featured Pacita's works, and apropos in the manner of buttons and Filipinos overseas. Pacita, in a conversation with Jeffrey Baysa, MD one of the other two curators for that Philippine Centennial celebrations traveling exhibition [Note: it traveled to San Francisco, Houston and Hawaii] said of her images of immigration and immigrants, that "The dreams of immigration hold myriad hopes; the reality holds an abundance of deceptions," showing her sensitivity and familiarity with the plight of Filipino immigrants, a situation with which she remained in touch with.

In the catalogue for *At Home and Abroad*, the artists's entries were written by art historian Dr Patrick D Flores, now the National Museum's curator II for the Arts Division. He actually began his entry by noting Pacita's fascination with texture, which, he wrote, spurred her to explore possibilities inherent in such traditional craft techniques as silk screen and collage. Her work in trapunto - a technique in which images are stuffed, stitched, painted on and embellished, that is if I remember her graphic description of what the trapunto is - attests to the artist's assertive creativity." For indeed there is nothing weak-hearted or tentative about Pacita's trapuntos, and there is nothing but full-bodied expression in color, volume, and dare we say decibel, in Pacita's works. Her celebratory renditions were like her laughter, hearty, audible, but most of all true.

Pacita's trapunto also invited stroking and caressing because of her magical transformation of coarse canvas into embellished surfaces that looked like soft, sensuous silk. The sculptor Jerry Araos, a Pacita friend, kept visiting *Thinking Big* because of that. He said that looking at Pacita's large trapunto-ed canvases invited him to touch the trapunto. Jerry, restrained by the Met's watchful guides, guards and conservator, in revenge posed a question to the staff: what word in English meant "inviting to the touch, asking to be touched" -- nagpapahaplos, nagpapahipo? Jerry delighted in introducing the young staff to the word haptic, the other side of tactile.

As a preparatory activity to the Centennial activities, the Commission for Filipinos Overseas through its executive director Jose Z Molano, Jr. and the Met put together a list of artists who would be invited to exhibit. Many of them had not had a museum show in Manila - Leon Pacunayen has been based in Rome for quite a time, Duddley Diaz in Florence; Gaston Damag was in Paris; Venancio Igarta, Lenore Lim and Lamberto Hechanova were all in New York; Manuel Ocampo was in Los Angeles at the time; Romeo Tabuena, in Mexico. And what list, indeed, of Filipino artists overseas would be complete without Pacita. For this show, we borrowed three very large trapuntos that were born of Pacita's scuba diving activities. They were joyous canvasses, but also observations of reality as she showed her concern for the vulnerability of the ocean and its denizens.

Alab ng Puso was the Met's centennial exhibition, and Pacita provided the climax to this show. Entitled *100 Years of Freedom - From Batanes to Jobo*, she exhibited an assemblage "15 feet high and 15 feet wide.. .painted on a large Muslim wedding tent from Zamboanga, incorporating pieces of textiles from all over the Philippines."

In the artist's statement, Pacita wrote that she had been collecting bits and pieces of textiles from all parts of the Philippines for more than 20 years, and she enumerated hand-woven cloth from Baguio and Bontoc, hand-woven ikat from villages in Kalinga Apayao, tnalak from the Tboli of South Cotabato, tubao scarves and malong from Mindanao; her grandmother's lace mantilla from Cebu, crocheted curtains and dresses made by her mother; panielos worn by her aunts, the old jusi barong tagalog of her father. It was akin to a "quilt of the archipelago's cultures", and at the same time a story of her relationships with family, her communities and her country, and her friends.

Pacita's artwork truly reflect her commitment to her connection to those near and dear to her: They are unselfish revelations of her passions, her convictions and opinions, as well as a sharing of her emotions, her joy of life, her life.

Good afternoon to all, and Pacita, I know you are with us this afternoon.

Corazon Alvina

AROUND THE NATION - Noli hails Pinoy as first free man in Asia

24 January 2005

[Manila Bulletin](#)

Speaking before Bulakeños in the historic Barosoain Church, De Castro lauded the Filipinos passion for freedom which he said led to the declaration of the Malolos Constitution — the first Philippine Constitution, and the Malolos Republic — the first republic in Asia.

De Castro said he was honored to be at the Barosoain Church where three important political events transpired: The first assembly of the Philippine Congress on September 15, 1898, the declaration of the Philippine Constitution on June 21, 1899, and the establishment of the first Philippine Republic on June 23 on the same year.

Filipinos will always fight for freedom because we love to be free and independent, he said.

Top honors for Ivantan visual artist

Abad was honored during the 5th Annual Helencia Foundation Lecture and the 10th anniversary of Ateneo Library's Archival Program for the Personal Papers of Creative Women on Jan. 17, 4 p.m. at the St. Thomas More Garden of the Ateneo's Loyola Heights campus in Quezon City, which also coincided with the 40th day of the artist's demise.

The National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA), which supports all initiatives to honor her contributions in the field of art, said National Museum Director Corazon S. Alvina delivered the lecture in honor of the Ivatan visual artist.

A commemorative exhibit, "Parangal for **Pacita Abad**," runs at the Ateneo Library until February 17, 2005 where her world-renowned ceramics, trapuntos, personal correspondence, photographs, videos and other memorabilia chronicling her life are on display.

Under a memorandum of agreement, Holcim Philippines provided one-third of the R2 - million budget for the project, while the local government unit, under the leadership of Mayor Wellie G. Lim, agreed to finance another one-third of the cost. The Habitat for Humanities-Iligan City also signified its intention to help in the project and shouldered the remaining one-third portion cost.

The signing was witnessed by officials of Holcim Philippines, headed by Paul O'Callaghan, Alex B. Vonow and Eduardo A. Sahagun. Misamis Oriental was represented by Gov. Oscar S. Moreno, together with barangay Capt. Alberto Mergino and Lim.

To further ensure the survival of the relocated families, the project proponents also launched the "Galing Mason Training," a livelihood skills training program designed to arm the farmers with new income-producing skills. It also came in handy for the farmers who were only too eager in contributing their time for the construction of their own homes.