



**pacita
abad**

a million things to say

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Study Guide | College

PRE-VISIT

- Generally, *trapunto* (Italian for quilted or embroidered - Latin, Trans: through + *pungere*, to prick, pierce) is a quilt with a raised surface, stuffed with cotton and defined with running stitches. Have the students look into history of quilting, famous works and *trapunto*'s place in the develop of art.
- Invite a guest speaker who is knowledgeable about *trapunto* making and other textile works and methods. During the talk, allow the students to touch the *trapunto*; the texture, colors, stitch work, etc. Another option is to visit a textile shop or design studio with *trapunto* works and related fabrics. Have them view first-hand how it is made.

Based on their research and the talk, have the students create their own rubric describing how a quality *trapunto* piece is made and how it should look like. From this, let them use their rubric in evaluating their favorite piece or perhaps one that they saw during the talk. Have the students research examples of *trapunto* works. What are the materials used in making them? What are they usually for? Have them list down their answers. You can also do a class sharing of their favorite *trapunto* piece; it can be a form of tapestry, home décor, or sleeping accessory, a fashion piece, or an artwork

VISIT

- Look closely at the works. What embellishments do you see? What materials are used for these embellishments? Look into whether or not embellishment is unusual, and if the materials used for these are uncommon. Why? Have the students write down their answers.
- It is said that *"At first glance, Pacita's vivid canvases look like oil paintings. However, as the viewer draws closer, her works are, in fact, three dimensional: not only painted, but padded, sewn, and often festooned with sequins, beads, shells, buttons, tiny mirrors, bits of glass, rickrack, swatches of precious textiles, such as Indonesian ikat and batik, which Pacita gathered on her numerous journeys to the far reaches of the globe."*
- Did you notice any local or special textiles used in the works? Which one/s? Seeing that these textiles have their own origins and contexts, how does it affect the painting's meaning? Does it add another layer of significance? Why or why not?
- Besides the textiles, what other details did you notice that have some international or cultural influences? What do they remind you of? Let the class write their answers and even share them with one another.

POST-VISIT

- Have a class discussion about Pacita's travels. It is said that *"Later as she travelled the world Pacita's trapunto paintings began to evolve, as she constantly discovered similarities and new influences from traditional forms such as the mola from the San Blas Islands of Panama, huipil from Guatemala and Mexico, embroidery from Afghanistan, kalaga from Burma, kante from Bangladesh, as well as mirrors from India, shells from the Philippines and the South Pacific, bark cloth from Papua New Guinea, batik and ikat from Indonesia and tie-dye from Africa."*
 - How did the cultures of the places Pacita visited translate into her works? What are the culture-specific details she adapted in her paintings?
 - Combining all these cultural references, is there a common theme that emerges from all these paintings? What does it say about the artist? What does it say about people and the world?
 - How do Pacita's works become a celebration of culture and heritage?
- Let the students think about one of their favorite part about their travels. What about the culture, the people, and the place stood out or impacted them the most? Let them select one detail and have it as an inspiration in making an artwork. Just like Pacita, they can add textiles and assorted embellishments into the paintings. Including a memento originating from that particular place makes the work unique.
- Display the works in a mini-gallery. Invite the other classes to view the works of the students. As part of the gallery, let the students make a write-up about their piece and what inspired them. Lastly, have them write a reaction paper on how it feels to have their works displayed and if their mini-exhibition encourages them to travel more.
- Have a class discussion about cultural appropriation. What is it? You can also ask them to read various articles about it, particularly issues raised in their field, and have them make a reaction paper. Another way is to present forms of cultural appropriation. For each example, let them share or write down ways on how to properly address the situation; how to properly credit the culture one is borrowing from.