

The 100 Greatest New York City Artworks, Ranked

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44 **Pacita Abad, *L.A. Liberty*, 1992**



Pacita Abad, *L.A. Liberty* (at center), 1992.

Photo : Photo Hyunjung Rhee/Courtesy Tina Kim Gallery and Pacita Abad Art Estate

Of the many representations of the Statue of Liberty throughout art history, few look quite like Pacita Abad's *L.A. Liberty*. Abad, a Filipina artist who has spent much of her career in the United States, reiterated the common image of the statue as a gleaming beacon of immigrant pride, with one key twist: Lady Liberty is no longer a white woman. Abad said her image of Lady Liberty, done using a style that involved stuffing and stitching her canvas, was intended to recognize how many immigrants had not passed Bartholdi's statue on their entry into the country, given that there were many African, Latino, and Asian immigrants who did not arrive via Ellis Island. Her radiant work suggests a more inclusive vision of one of New York's most distinctive landmarks—an image that immigrants like herself may see themselves reflected in.