



A framework for culture based design innovation for the protection and development of culture heritage.

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Abstract: Traditional Chinese folk arts and cultural heritages are gradually disappearing in our daily life in China. Yet, they play an important role in inspiring designers to design the products with strong cultural identities and understanding of meanings beyond regional significance. There have been many government initiatives in the past in protecting and developing traditional folk arts and cultural heritages. But many of these ended in different versions of commercialization of the work by folk artists and handicraftsmen in which their authenticity and values were lost.

This research aims at establishing a deep understanding of the methods, significance and social values (practical value, artistic value and scientific value) of traditional folk arts in the northwest province of Shaanxi in China. The key objective is to develop a framework for culture based design innovation, by focusing on the masters of patchwork in that region. This framework will integrate the knowledge and skills associated with patchwork making, the aesthetic quality of patchwork, and the innovativeness of the unique methods adopted. The framework will give inspirations and supports to designers with modern design thinking and technologies. Based on this framework and the examples developed, the implication of traditional Chinese folk arts and crafts for modern design education will also be explored in order to bridge the gap between the folk artists and masters of handicrafts in the vast countries of western China and the new generations of designers in China.

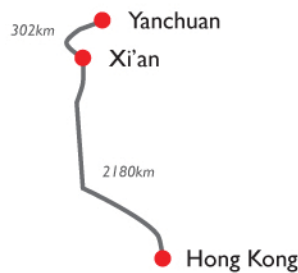
Recently I have conducted a field trip to the villages where many masters of patchwork lived. One master, Ms. Gao Feng Lian, whose exhibition in Washington early this year received international acclaims, has built a museum of patchwork in her village. One of my case studies for this project will focus on her stories and the work of those in her region.



"The Kitchen God" — Yanchuan Patchwork by Gao Fenglian



Gao Fenglian and her patchwork "the Doll Gods"



BACKGROUND:

Bai Xue graduated from Jiangnan University in 2011 and her major was Visual Communication as a bachelor. Then graduated from University of the Arts London in 2013 and got a Master degree, with a major Graphic Design Communication. Now she is a PhD student in the School of Design of The Hong Kong Polytechnic University.