1. Chinese Calligraphy

An artistic expression of human language in a tangible form. This type of expression has been widely practised in China and has been generally highly esteemed in the Chinese cultural sphere. Distinguishing features of Chinese painting and calligraphy include an emphasis on motion charged with dynamic life. According to Stanley-Baker, "Calligraphy is sheer life experienced through energy in motion that is registered as traces on silk or paper, with time and rhythm in shifting space its main ingredients.

Mr Dajun Sang is a member of Chinese Calligraphy Association, Director of Kaifeng Calligraphy Association, vice president of Kaifeng CPPCC Painting and Calligraphy Institute. Currently working at Kaifeng City Mass Art Museum.

family, his father Master Fan Sang is taught Mr Sang since early childhood.

Supporting information/web-links:

http://www.ksf.gov.cn/sitegroup/kfssfj/html/ff80808148d6c0290148f8ce4f972bdd/14ba6658afa42d380151b74149af8fb.html – article on Kaifeng City Bureau web-site from when MR Sang and 10 other calligraphy artists visited the Kaifeng Compulsory Isolation Drugs Rehabilitation Centre to teach calligraphy culture, educating and guiding patients to quit drugs and regain confidence in starting a new life through cultivation of body and mind.


2. Chinese New Year Woodblock Printing ‘Nianhua’

A Chinese coloured woodblock print popularly used for decoration during the Chinese New Year. With a history of over 800 years, Zhuxian Town (near Kaifeng, Henan Province) Woodblock ‘Nianhua’ is one of the oldest folk woodblock arts in China. It originated in the Song Dynasty, flourished in the Ming and Qing Dynasties. There used to be more than 30 pictures workshops, reduced to no more than 70 at the end of the Qing Dynasty. The themes vary from portraits of martial and intellectual gods to portraits of spirits. The themes are classified into three categories: 1) Exorcising ghosts and conferring blessing; 2) Propitious gods and customs; 3) Theatrical and historical legends. Customarily, as each Chinese New Year arrives, every family replaces its New Year picture in order to bid farewell to the past and welcome in the future.

Miss Wen Li is a Zhuxian Woodblock painter. She graduated from Nanjing University of Arts (Nanjing Arts Institute) and has studied the traditional woodcut Nianhua art theory and engraving printing techniques. She has participated in many cultural events including:

- (2012) Participated in Henan Province Folk Art Exhibition;
- (2014) Participated in China’s “Four Famous Towns” Cultural Tourism Exchange Activities, honoured as the “Youth Folk Artist, China”;
- (2014 – 2017) Attended China Kaifeng Chrysanthemum Cultural Festival, awarded the “Excellent Youth Heritage Artist” each year.

Her colourful prints are simple yet generous, vivid and rich in local flavour with great characteristics of Chinese beauty, conveying happiness and auspiciousness to the world.

Supporting information/web-links:

http://www.iqiyi.com/w_19rucn8pfh.html – video clip showing the process of Nianhua woodblock printing (not the actual artist Miss Li).

3. Chinese ‘Bianjing’ Lantern Zhang

Lanterns are an inextricable part of China’s long cultural history. Always seen lining shops and restaurants, they come out in full force during any festival season. And the biggest is of course the Lantern Festival. There’s a long tradition of making lanterns, which continues today.

Mr Juntao Zhang represents the 7th generation descendant of a renowned traditional lantern-making skill called ‘Bianjing’ Lantern Zhang which has been handed down through generations in over two hundred years and was listed as one of the National Intangible Cultural Heritages in 2008. The workshop was originally set up by his ancestor Zhang Taiquan 240 years ago. But it found fame with Zhang’s great-grandfather, whose lanterns were endorsed by the Qing Dowager Empress Cixi. The lanterns are made using meticulous procedures, with materials such as paper, cloth, silk, brocade, bamboo and wood. Bianjing lanterns combines sculpture, Nianhua, paper cutting, embroidery and other art as one, fully demonstrating the styles of folk art. For over two centuries, the Zhang family has maintained the same rigorous standards and traditions, while always striving to create something new.

In 2011, Mr Zhang converted his ancestral residence in Kaifeng to a Bianjing Lantern Museum.

“We will pass on these skills and traditions to future generation. But we also want to promote the tradition and culture of lantern making across our society. That’s the reason we’ve established this museum.”

http://english.cntv.cn/program/cultureexpress/20130224/102466.shtml

video: http://english.cntv.cn/program/cultureexpress/20130223/104474.shtml
Supporting information/web-links:

web-site: www.lanternzhang.com
There is an option for English page but it doesn’t seem to be working at the moment.
On the left side menu list are links to pictures, videos, qualifications.

http://volu.jcbctv.com/volunteer/show-16-2017-1.html – article including pictures from when he went to a primary school in China for lantern making workshop.


http://epaper.gmw.cn/gmrb/html/2016-09/25/nw.D110000gmrb_20160925_6-05.htm - article from when Mr Zhang was invited again at “Traditional crafts return to the “HYUNDAI” (modern) life” event held by Hyundai Motor Group for two days crafts workshop teaching guests to produce Bianjing lanterns.

http://english.cntv.cn/program/cultureexpress/20130224/102466.shtml
video: http://english.cntv.cn/program/cultureexpress/20130223/104474.shtml


http://www.sohu.com/a/101641629_119863 – article on Mr Zhang’s lantern museum.

https://kknews.cc/culture/6kvrlev.html - Article on school children’s visit to Mr Zhang’s lantern museum

https://kknews.cc/culture/nvrxe8.html - article on how Mr Zhang abandoned year’s of paid salary to convert his ancestral home into a lantern museum.

https://kknews.cc/culture/2akkmxe.html - Article on school workshop

4. Chinese ‘Bian’ Embroidery

Chinese Bian Embroidery, also called Song Embroidery, developed into full swing at Kaifeng, Capital of early Song Dynasty over 800 years ago.

Mrs Yuqin Han is a Provincial Intangible Cultural Heritage representative of Bian Embroidery. Also Director of Kaifeng Dongjin Song Embroidery Institute, member of Chinese Arts and Crafts Association, member of Chinese Folk Artist Association, she is a Henan Province Folk Arts & Crafts Master. She has been making great contributions to embroidery discovery, inheritance, research, innovation and development for decades. Her achievements include:
- (2000) “Folk Colour Embroidery Wall Hanging” and “12 animal zodiac map”, win the Chinese Arts and Crafts Master Competition;
- (2002) “Hundred Chun” Golden Tripod Award at the Henan Province Arts and Crafts Fair;
- (2004) “Five Cattle” Gold medal at the National Fair; “Country Road” won the Henan Arts and Crafts Gold Award;
- (2005) Kaifeng City is named “Song Embroidery Research Base”;
- (2005) Served as a deputy head of the delegation of arts and culture in Kaifeng City;
- (2007) “100 Chun” awarded Henan Province Fine Arts and Crafts;
- (2008) approved by the State Administration of Trademarks
- (2009) “Loyalty Figure” won the highest award in the Chinese embroidery industry, “Chinese Folk Arts Mountain Flower Award”, “Chinese Arts and Crafts Hundred Flowers Award”.

Embroidered Japanese Buddha works exhibited in Japan caused a sensation with their delicate and exquisite embroidery (2000).

She has been invited to participate in various large-scale folk cultural exchange activities both at home and abroad where her embroidered products received rave reviews. Including Buddhism Art Exhibition in Japan (2000), Singapore Kaifeng Fine Art Exhibition (2002), Malaysia, Israel, Taiwan, Hong Kong etc,

Mrs Han’s works display elegant colour harmony with great design, highly skilled needle-work, inheriting the ‘simple, elegant, delicate’ artistic style of Song Embroidery.

Supporting information/web-links:

web-site: http://www.yxhenan.com/space/1412 – introducing Mrs Han, her works, achievements and recent activities.

http://www.sohu.com/a/61110471_119841 - Article from when she was invited to attend the 6th Vancouver Spring Festival temple activities for 10 days in 2016 where she exhibited some of her most notable artworks.