



Young Chinese revive, transform ancient crafts for modern markets

Descrizione

COMUNICATO STAMPA - CONTENUTO PROMOZIONALE

DALI, CHINA - Media OutReach Newswire - 2 December 2025 - At the 2025 Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) brand promotion week held from Sunday to Friday in Dali, which was organized by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, over 120 heritage brands demonstrated how traditional craftsmanship can be integrated with contemporary design.

At the event's opening ceremony, Douyin, the Chinese version of TikTok, announced that its e-commerce platform had sold 6.5 billion orders of ICH-related products in the past year. Meanwhile, another platform, Kuaishou, reported over 178 billion views for ICH-related videos.

In a sun-drenched courtyard in a village in southwest China's Yunnan Province, Bai ethnic woman Yang Julan hung up newly dyed tie-dye scarves, one by one. Soon, the sun would dry them, allowing these scarves to embark on a journey to Europe, destined for the Netherlands.

A farmer near Erhai Lake in the city of Dali, Yang would possibly struggle to pinpoint Amsterdam on a world map, but her creations do find their way to the Dutch capital and even beyond - adorning customers in distant lands she has never seen.

"At my age, to see our dyeing cloth reach the world map is a profound pride," said Yang, 65.

The tie-dye technique, dating back nearly 2,000 years to the Eastern Han Dynasty (25-220), was listed as a national-level Intangible Cultural Heritage in China in 2006.

Like tie-dye, ICH in general is experiencing a remarkable revival in China - resulting in the transformation of ancient crafts into modern global commodities, driven by a new generation who are

breathing contemporary life into time-honored traditions.

Just a few years ago, many traditions faced extinction as practitioners dwindled. Yang herself had abandoned her craft, believing â??the ancestorsâ?? handiwork had become useless.â?•

The turning point came when urban entrepreneurs recognized the commercial potential of ICH.

While working in Beijing, Dali native Zhang Hanmin, then 28, noticed urban youth embracing traditional elements like embroidery and prints in their clothes and accessories. Convinced that her hometownâ??s tie-dye held similar appeal, she returned to Dali to revitalize the craft.

Having established a brand named Dali Blue in 2012, Zhang focused on innovating product designs while also launching hands-on workshops for visitors â?? resulting in an influx of both orders and tourists.

Such market success created more jobs, attracting experienced local artisans like Yang back to the craft. â??With improvements made by the young people, tie-dye has been reborn,â?• Yang noted.

This craftâ??s revival is part of the countryâ??s larger wave of cultural entrepreneurship â?? seeing young Chinese tapping into ICH to build successful commercial ventures.

Chinese cultural authorities have established a comprehensive system to preserve and revitalize ICH items, guiding artisans to enhance quality, build brands and sharpen their market focus.

Numerous people in their 40s, 30s and even 20s have joined ICH preservation and inheritance efforts, creating many distinctive heritage brands, the ministry revealed.

During the â??Double 11â?• shopping festival earlier this month, ICH-related product sales via Alibabaâ??s Taobao platform had reached 9.42 billion yuan (1.33 billion U.S. dollars).

Brian Linden, an American from Chicago who has lived in Dali for over a decade, said growing cultural confidence is reshaping Chinese consumption patterns, making heritage products part of daily life.

â??Meanwhile, these heritage goods, infused with Chinese aesthetics, are crossing borders and stirring a strong â??China chicâ?? trend in the international market,â?• Linden added.

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