

Flowers Blossom from Yarn



The Art of Wool Knitting and Crochet

BETWEEN WARP AND WEFT,
I WEAVE THE WARMTH OF SHANGHAI.

The Art of Wool Knitting and Crochet



In the rhythm of the needles rising and falling,
in every afternoon when sunlight fills the workshop,
within their stories,
and in the cares and strength knitted into the wool,
the Skilled Hands Mothers weave their passion.

It's a slow, soft voice whispering to us that
this is not just an intangible cultural heritage skill,
but a warm story.



The Woman Within the Stitches

Liu Xiaomei was born in 1971 in the weaving town of Hai'an, Jiangsu. She learned to weave at the age of six. After settling in Yangpu, she joined the "Skilled Hands Mothers Craft Workshop" and is now a core member.

After Liu Xiaomei settled in Yangpu, the establishment of the "Skilled Hands Mothers Craft Workshop" at the Yangpu District Women's and Children's Activity Center in 2010 became a crucial turning point in her weaving career. This public welfare-oriented platform brought together weaving enthusiasts scattered across the community and opened up a new landscape for Liu Xiaomei's skill development. With the support and empowerment of the center, she was no longer a craftswoman solely undertaking processing work but transformed into a disseminator of weaving techniques. She actively integrated into the community, providing free weaving instruction, serving as a judge in various weaving competitions, and actively participating in public welfare activities, transforming her exquisite personal skills into a shared cultural resource for the community. To align traditional weaving with modern aesthetics, she frequently visits major knitting exhibitions in Shanghai, absorbing urban fashion concepts and pondering innovative paths for wool weaving amidst the collision of traditional techniques and modern aesthetics.

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The Women Within the Stitches

In 2010, the Yangpu District Skilled Hands Mothers Craft Workshop was established under the guidance of the District Women's Federation. Using Shanghai-style wool knitting techniques as a link, it constructed a Center - Sub-district - Neighborhood Committee" three-tier linkage system. This women's intangible cultural heritage brand brings together residents who were strangers before, weaving through shared crafting. It transforms community buildings into a warm community of mutual support, becoming a vivid sample of community cultural construction in Yangpu.



A Stitch that Reaches Out



During the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics and Winter Paralympics, the "Skilled Hands Mothers Craft Workshop"'s woolen Chinese red roses made a stunning appearance at the award ceremony, marking a milestone achievement for the workshop. This endeavor embodied the craftsmanship and sense of mission of over a thousand artisans, showcasing the splendor of Chinese intangible cultural heritage techniques. The roses were made from high-quality Chinese red wool, rich in color, perfectly aligning with the Winter Olympics' atmosphere and traditional cultural significance. The entire process was handmade, taking at least six hours per flower. The petals have distinct layers and a dynamic form; even the stem's fuzz is realistically rendered, with a level of precision far exceeding ordinary knitted items.

We Weave, Like This

“Building a Deeper Emotional Connection with My Hometown”

For team member Zhang Qianhui, the "Ripple Action" was a valuable practical opportunity.

"It allowed me to step away from abstract book knowledge, to actually understand and experience the wisdom and charm of traditional culture through field research, while also developing my hands-on skills and communication abilities. Wool culture is also the essence of Shanghai's local culture. As a Shanghainese, participating in this action itself helps me understand my hometown more profoundly and build a closer emotional bond with this city."

The sunlight filtered through the plane trees onto the wool yarn, and that serene, tranquil scene struck me instantly. I realized that beyond the city's skyscrapers, there are such warm corners hiding stories woven with yarn, stories told in time.