



Above: A bento box, which is a portable food container consisting of a partitioned box and a soup bowl, is the sort of enamelware mentioned in one of Eileen Chang's novels.



Right: The enamel cups, designed by the Jiushen team, are often characterized by their rich decor that incorporates local elements.

Enamelware inheritor establishes new brand

Dong Hong and Li Xinran

A third-generation inheritor of the Bafenyuan enameling technique has established a new enamelware brand.

Enamel is a composite material used as a coating for pots and pans. The process of making enamelware is very similar to the process of making glass.

In 1916, the production of enamelware entered the Chinese market and Shanghai took the lead in mass production.

The Bafenyuan enameling follows the

development footprint of a century-old enamel production, seeking innovation in material selection and production equipment, and changes in shape and color.

With localized and youthful design, it recreates traditional enamel craftsmanship and transforms enamelware pieces into beautiful artworks that contain life aesthetics and Eastern charm.

Xie Dangwei is the founder of the Bafenyuan · China Centennial Enamel Exhibition Hall in Jiading's Jiangqiao Town. He believes that no matter how much times change, lead-free, cadmium-free, acid and

alkaline-resistant enamelware will always have a place in people's daily lives.

At the age of 18, Xie started working with enamel, and has continued to work with this material until today. In 2002, the enamel factory where Xie once worked for was closed, so he raised funds to build the Bafenyuan · China Centennial Enamel Exhibition Hall, and has since spent the next 20 years carefully collecting items to awaken the collective memory of a generation.

The hall displays over 2,600 enamel products and more than 400 enamel paintings, including the 'six-piece set,'



A set of enamel ware shows modern customers' respect for simplicity and minimalist aesthetics. — Photos by Dong Hong

which used to be a must-have dowry for the marriage of Jiading residents in the past, as well as a portable enameled lunchbox, mentioned by Eileen Chang (1920-1995) in one of her novels.

Influenced by Xie, his son Xie Xian also entered the world of enameling and

became the third-generation inheritor of the Bafenyuan enameling technique.

In September 2015, Xie Xian established a new enamel brand Jiushen, bringing enamel back to people's daily lives with a new identity.

One of the highlights of the Bafenyuan enamelware designed by the Jiushen team is its rich decor. The designers cleverly integrate traditional elements such as Miao embroidery, traditional Chinese New Year paintings, printmaking and woodcarving into their designs.

The enamel products, paired with themed packaging and vibrant traditional festival colors like the Spring Festival, Mid-Autumn Festival and Dragon Boat Festival, are trendy with a distinctive Chinese style.



The Bafenyuan · China Centennial Enamel Exhibition Hall in Jiading's Jiangqiao Town has about 3,000 enameled artifacts collected by Xie Dangwei.



Xie has been studying and working in the field of enameling for years.