



Exhibition highlights *kesi* silk tapestry's richness and influence

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Every year on the second Saturday of June, China celebrates Cultural and Natural Heritage Day, with this year's theme being "Protecting Cultural Relics and Inheriting Civilization."

On June 7, "The Cultural Exhibition of Kesi by Cao Meijie" opened at Jiading Museum to promote the traditional culture of *kesi* (a type of silk tapestry) as well as highlight its cultural meaning and modern relevance.

The exhibition, organized by the Jiading Museum and the Culture Museum of Suzhou Industrial Park and presented by Beijing Cao Meijie Kesi Culture Development Co, aims to promote intangible heritage culture in everyday life.

Silk tapestry requires sophisticated operations, including warping, threading, pattern drafting and picking.

During the Sui (AD 581-618) and Tang (AD 618-907) dynasties, several creative Chinese craftsmen combined embroidering woolen yarn with Chinese silk to produce silk tapestries. *Kesi* goods were initially pretty small pieces that were both functional and decorative.

During the Song (960-1279) and Yuan (1271-1368) dynasties, *kesi* experienced a profound integration with painting. Both practical and ornamental *kesi* weaving matured concurrently, leading to the emergence of master weavers like Zhu Kerou and Shen Zifan, who elevated



A *kesi* screen of peonies



A *kesi* painting of Amitayus Buddha — Photos courtesy of Jiading Museum

Cao Meijie preserves traditional craftsmanship in *kesi* while integrating modern elements, showcasing the elegance and beauty of contemporary *kesi*.

kesi to an unprecedented level of artistic excellence.

Since the Ming (1368-1644) and Qing (1644-1911) dynasties, the categories of *kesi* have expanded, broadening their applications and showcasing increasingly refined craftsmanship.

Kesi, a stunning testament to traditional craftsmanship, continues to enchant visitors today. Suzhou *kesi* was included in the first national intangible cultural heritage list in 2006. *Kesi*, a traditional Chinese silk weaving technique, was included in the 2009 Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

As the representative inheritor of Suzhou's fifth batch of intangible

heritage cultural assets, Cao Meijie preserves traditional craftsmanship in *kesi* while integrating modern elements, showcasing the elegance and beauty of contemporary *kesi*.

Cao Meijie's *kesi* products are displayed in three thematic sections. During the exhibition, visitors will have the opportunity to deepen their understanding of the Suzhou *kesi* technique through various lectures and events. Additionally, they can participate in hands-on activities to fully appreciate the beauty of the *kesi* products.

Date: Through July 14, 9am-5pm

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A *kesi* robe with dragon pattern