



Neighbors Helping Move Roof Tiles Across The River

Woman Offering Fruit

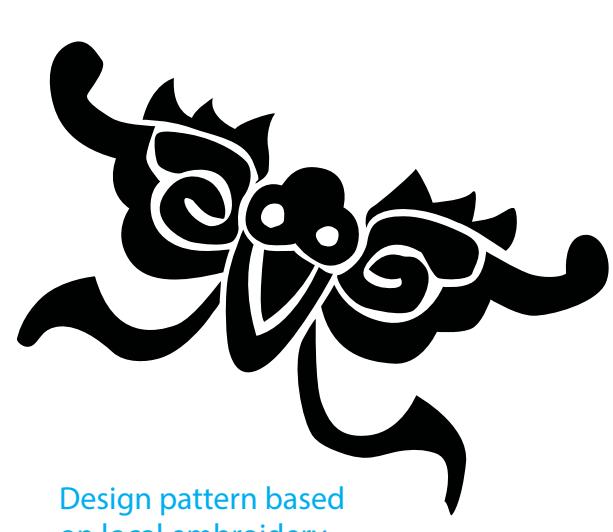
Man Plowing His Field

Neighbors Helping To Spin Cotton Thread On Bobbins

Woman Spinning Cotton

Woman Making Cloth

Kam Minority Heritage Project, Dimen Village, Guizhou, China



Design pattern based on local embroidery



Wu Jie Dyes Traditional Skirt Cloth While Her Husband Gives A Haircut To A Neighbor

Community of Dimen

Situated deep in the mountains of Guizhou province in China, Dimen village has been isolated for centuries from the rest of the world and has resisted modernization. Inhabited by the Kam minority people, Dimen has its own unique customs, stories, songs and designs that differentiate it from other Kam villages as well as from mainstream Chinese culture.

Recently, the outside world has come to Dimen and visible changes are occurring at a rapid rate. Dimen's unique traditions are suddenly on the brink of extinction since the elderly have neither passed down their skills to the younger generation nor has their knowledge been written down.

University of the Pacific Design team
Marie Anna Lee, Visual Arts Professor
Anastasya Uskov, BFA Graphic Design '11
Joanne Kwan, BFA Graphic Design '13

Other Participants

Dimen village
Dimen Dong Cultural Eco-Museum
Jennifer Little, UOP Visual Arts

Issues Addressed

- Preservation of Dimen's cultural heritage and local identity.
- Design solutions for Dimen's goods so that they can be sold beyond the village.

Cultural Heritage and Local Identity

The team documented and learned the craft processes of Dimen matriarchs: paper making, weaving, indigo dyeing and embroidery. A detailed record exists now of the unique techniques that can be built upon in the future by both villagers and researchers alike. Indigenous design motifs will be digitized and given to the village to be used for the promotion of their local identity.

The team also connected with Dimen's younger generation. In one project, middle-school children documented their daily lives with disposable cameras. In another project, a graphic novel featured stories about local young adults.

The future goal is to involve the younger generation in the local crafts through workshops where non-traditional techniques like screen printing are complemented by local designs and processes.

Sustainable Living

The Dimen cooperative sells local organic produce and handmade products. Marie Lee created a visual identity for Dimen and designed various packaging solutions for its goods.

Our goal is to empower local artisans and designers to create their own designs and carry their local identity and cultural heritage into the digital age.



Traditional Coat And Apron Made By Marie Lee And Dimen Matriarchs



Dimen Dong Eco-Museum Logo



Dimen Brand Logo



Design Pattern Based On Embroidery By Wu Meng Xi's Mother



Design Pattern Based On Embroidery By Wu Meng Xi



Design Pattern Based On Embroidery Paper Pattern By Wu Meng Xi



Wu Mei Tz Oversees Marie Lee Dyeing Cloth In Indigo Bath



Wu Mei Tz Teaches Anastasya Uskov To Make Paper

Mission • Use design as a positive force both culturally and economically in the lives of the Dimen people. • Preserve their heritage, and boost their identity and self-worth. • Stimulate interest in their traditions. • Help them achieve better living conditions without having them leave the village.



Proposed Website



Dimen Tea Packaging



Dimen Rice Packaging



Student Wu Zhi Mei Learning To Take Photographs; - Photographs Taken By Wu Zhi Mei Of Her Family And Friends



Pages From "Their Then And Now" A Graphic Novel By Joanne Kwan Featuring Dimen Youngsters