

ART

# Paper cutouts honor China's Olympic idols

By YANG JUN in Guiyang  
yangjun@chinadaily.com.cn

## 222 portraits

Every morning for two years, Deng Rongrong woke at 7 am to begin another day's work on her "heroes" — 108 cut paper portraits of Chinese table tennis champions.

The 72-year-old former table tennis coach from Guizhou province devoted more than 11 hours a day perfecting the album, which she calls *The Glory of National Sport*.

Deng, who had no previous art experience, took up paper cutting as a hobby after retiring in 2009. Tutored by other artists, she began with simple designs such as fish and butterflies.

"People were skeptical whether my energetic 'racket hands' could hold a pair of scissors," she said.

"But sports has taught me to be determined, patient and calm. It actually helped me succeed in paper cutting."

She progressed from drawing simple signs of the zodiac to reproducing entire famous Chinese paintings, including a 12-meter-long version of *Along the River During the Qingming Festival*.

In 2012, Deng decided she wanted to pay tribute to her table tennis idols, but she worried that her artwork would not do them justice.

"They are all famous people. I feared my craftsmanship wasn't good enough," she said.

So, after completing a draft version of the portraits, Deng traveled to Beijing to meet all the champions she could, armed only with a map, a water bottle and her sketches.

"People thought I was crazy trying to find Olympic champions with a city map," Deng said, but after three months of searching, she met with Qiu Zhong-

of all Chinese gold medalists since 1984 are on display at the Xiamen Olympic Museum.

hui, Wang Nan, Liu Wei and four other Olympic table tennis champions, who all praised her work.

Ma Lin, the 2008 Olympic gold medalist, even wanted a copy to place next to his trophies.

With 108 paper portraits already under her belt, Deng's next project — to create a 222-portrait album featuring all Chinese gold medalists since 1984 called *China, Olympics and Glory* — began in 2015.

"I wanted to commemorate the Olympic Games in my own way and cheer for our athletes," she said.

Zhan Xiaoyong, Deng's husband, researched the photos and gave advice, while she worked on the portraits.

"He is the mind and I am the hand, we are a perfect team," said Deng, who took around three to seven hours to create each portrait, depending on how intricate it was.

Xu Haifeng, the first Chinese gold medalist, took Deng several days to complete.

"Sometimes the early photos are just not clear enough, and my husband and I go through several designs because we want every feature to be as precise as possible," she said.

"As a former coach, I fully understand the dedication of every athlete. They are all heroes in my eyes."

*China, Olympics and Glory* has been on display in Xiamen Olympic Museum since in Fujian province early August.

Zhang Zhihao contributed to this story.



### A study in stone

Visitors examine stone armor at the Palace Museum in Taipei, Taiwan, on Tuesday. More than 300 historical relics, including Terracotta Warriors from the Qin Dynasty (221-206 BC) in Xi'an, Shaanxi province, are part of a three-month exhibition of Qin culture at the museum. The exhibition runs to the end of August. SONG ZHENPING / XINHUA

SOCIETY

# Govt to tighten penalties for unruly air passengers

Potential ban on use of cellphones during flights questioned, since Western airlines are flexible

By ZHAO LEI

zhaolei@chinadaily.com.cn

Passengers misbehaving aboard a commercial airliner or at an airport may face heavier punishments under a draft amendment to the Civil Aviation Law.

The draft includes 14 types of misconduct that may threaten the safety and order of civil aviation, according to a notice published on the Civil Aviation Administration of China website.

They include distributing fabricated information, using mobile phones or other electronic devices against regulations and smoking in the cabin. Moreover, taking another

person's seat, blocking check-in counters and boarding gates, disrupting crew members or security inspectors and fighting aboard a plane are also listed.

Violators will face administrative punishment with a fine up to 50,000 yuan (\$7,540). If their behaviors are serious, they may face criminal charges, the draft says.

Legislative and civil aviation experts in China have been calling for the inclusion of such misconduct in the Civil Aviation Law. Over the past two years, stories about passengers disrupting flights or insulting crew members have become frequent in the media.

While welcoming the civil

aviation authorities' efforts to ensure passengers' safety and interests, some people have voiced concerns over the strict ban on the use of mobile phones in the cabin, saying this rule stands in contrast with the common practice at most foreign airlines.

"Considering that the international civil aviation community has demonstrated that using a mobile phone in flight is safe, why are our airlines refusing to admit this?" asked Sina Weibo user Dantengdezhanshibang.

Yuan Tingting, an office worker in Taiyuan, Shanxi province, has the same question.

"I have flown with many foreign carriers and most of them allow passengers to use mobile phones before the plane takes off or lands. I don't understand why this is com-

pletely prohibited in China."

Wang Ya'nan, editor-in-chief of Aerospace Knowledge magazine, said that the US Federal Aviation Administration and the European Aviation Safety Agency regard the use of mobile phones as having a low-level risk, so they allow airlines to decide whether to ban such activities in their cabins.

"Therefore, some Western airlines permit passengers to use mobile phones during flights if the passengers do not make a call," he said. "It is understandable that our civil aviation authority treats passenger safety as its top priority, but it should be made clear if all of a mobile phone's functions are banned from use on board the aircraft, or is merely making a call banned while passengers can use other functions."

TOURISM

# Bus crash in Macao spurs talk of reform

By CHINA DAILY

A tour bus crash on Monday in Macao that injured at least 32 mainland tourists has raised concerns among industry insiders about Macao's tourism capacity, a report by Xinhua News Agency said.

According to the Macao Public Security Police Force, the accident occurred when the bus was proceeding downhill on a sloping street close to the Ruins of St. Paul, a well-known tourist attraction. A white van rear-ended the bus, and the bus driver got out to check the situation.

The bus started rolling down the slope without the driver and rammed into a roadside clinic.

Macao's Health Bureau said 10 people remain hospitalized.

Macao legislator Ho Ionsang said the street where the accident happened has long been dangerous for tour buses. He said he hoped the local government would optimize bus routes to avoid similar accidents in the future.

Wu Keng-kuong, president of the board of directors of the Travel Industry Council of Macao, told Xinhua that Macao gets around 30 million tourists annually, a third of them in groups from the mainland.

The Ruins of St. Paul is a "must-see" for groups, he said, but the 2,800-square-meter area has dangerous old buildings and gravel streets. Plus, tour parking has become a headache.

"Major tourism attractions are in Macao's old district, which is dangerously overcrowded. The industry has called for the construction of a large parking lot for years, but the project never started."

"Now we have come up with more ideas. For example, we could build an underground parking lot beneath Camoes Garden," Wu said.

Zeng Zhonglu, a professor specializing in Macao-mainland cooperation at Macao Polytechnic Institute, said the sightseeing model is no longer attractive to a younger generation of tourists.

"Tourists born after 1980 are not interested in the old travel pattern of taking buses, eating take-out lunches, shopping for souvenirs and taking photos," Zeng said. "The tourism industry in Macao should reform itself based on the needs of the new generation."



Deng Rongrong with her latest cut-paper album at Xiamen Olympic Museum in Fujian province. PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

### What they say

I took a flight with my son in 2015, and what made me worry is that a young boy sitting next to me kept kicking and hitting things inside the plane for no reason during the flight. I tried hard to persuade him to stop, but it was in vain. So I am pretty glad to see this rule that makes clear what shouldn't be done.  
**Sun Jinlong, 78, retired, Anhui province**

Considering personal security and a comfortable flying experience, I agree that there should be some laws or rules to regulate passengers' behavior. Nevertheless, laws and rules are far from enough. Moral education should be promoted among passengers in order to improve the flight environment.  
**Gao Yifeng, 24, student in Beijing**

No doubt it is a timely rule for every passenger's sake, and I believe it will make a difference. As for me, I am wondering if Kindle is also banned from use because the message varies from one flight attendant to another. I hope it is OK to use Kindle or I won't have anything to do on the plane.  
**Yu Heng, 25, lobby manager, Zhejiang province**

I support the legislation. Using mobile phones will threaten flight safety so they must be banned. I once told a stranger sitting next to me to stop playing on a cell phone during a flight but the advice was ignored. It will be safe for everyone if banning phones in flight becomes legislation and implemented efficiently.  
**Xie Huiling, 52, bank employee, Xinjiang Uygur autonomous region**

SOCIETY

# Women married to gay men struggle to break free in an unsympathetic system

By XINHUA

She has no regrets, but for Qing Feng divorcing her husband — a gay man — and losing her son and money, was no easy process. Qing, from Guizhou province, ended her sexless, loveless marriage months ago, after an arduous negotiation with the man who had constantly belittled her throughout their 13-year relationship.

"He said I wouldn't get a penny or the custody of my son because I asked for a divorce without evidence to show he was wrong," said Qing, who is in her 40s.

"He was well prepared for the day of the divorce. He had transferred all our assets to his parents."

Qing is one of many women in China known as "gay wives", or *tongqi*, who unwittingly marry closeted gay men. For these women, the road to a

successful divorce is often rocky because of obstruction from their husbands and a lack of clear legal support.

The names of the women who are married to gay men in this article have been changed to protect their privacy.

In a country where gay marriage is illegal, a gay man may choose to marry a woman and have children because of pressure from parents and society. Many Chinese believe continuing the family bloodline is an inescapable male duty and that not having children constitutes a failure.

### No easy way out

At a seminar on protecting women married to gay men that was held in Changsha, Hunan province, in late July, Qing shared her story and encouraged other women in her situation to pursue their happiness with courage.

"It shows huge progress that these women were able to stand up to protect their rights."

Zhang Beichuan, sexologist, speaking of women who divorced their gay husbands

Two years ago, a TV program focusing on the tragedy of "gay-straight" marriages helped Qing overcome doubts she had about divorcing her husband, who she said recoiled from physical contact after their son was born and seldom showed her any care.

"He repeatedly told me, 'Don't laugh. You look ugly when you do that.' He liked nothing about me, so I kept trying to change myself to please him," she said.

When she finally ques-

tioned her husband about his sexual orientation, he confessed, but he refused to divorce because he feared it would ruin his reputation.

Because she attended last year's seminar, Qing said she was insulted by her husband and his family. She finally had enough and made up her mind to insist on divorce, despite hesitating for the sake of her son.

A lawyer told Qing that even if she filed a divorce lawsuit, it might not go in her favor.

Many Chinese gay men conceal their homosexuality, which makes it difficult for women to collect evidence of their husband's sexual habits and orientation, said Yang Shaogang, a Shanghai-based lawyer who is experienced in gay-straight divorce cases. As a result, judges often do not grant the divorce, and the women need to file again at a later date, Yang said.

In addition, Chinese law does not make a gay man culpable for the marriage breakdown, meaning it's possible that no compensation will be awarded to the woman. Further, the law offers no privilege for such women to obtain custody of their children.

Yang has called for legal changes regarding the distribution of property and child custody in such divorce cases to encourage *tongqi* to break free.

Three of the 15 *tongqi* who

attended that first seminar last year are now divorced.

"It shows huge progress that these women were able to stand up to protect their rights," said sexologist Zhang Beichuan.

### Disease, violence

A 2013 survey conducted by Zhang and her team sampled nearly 150 women who had either married or divorced gay or bisexual men or who were currently dating such men. Seventy percent of the respondents said they had suffered long-term emotional abuse from the men, often characterized by sexual apathy.

In addition, 90 percent of the women developed symptoms of depression and 20 percent of them reported beatings.

Nearly 40 of those surveyed also reported symptoms of sexually transmitted diseases. Of the 30 who were tested for HIV,

two found themselves infected.

Su Yun, 60, recently divorced her gay husband. She became deaf in one ear after enduring beatings. A day after the divorce, she said her ex-husband and his boyfriend barged into her home.

"I didn't dare call the police. I thought he might strangle me. He tried once and I almost died," said Su, in Shandong province.

Divorced women are often discriminated against in China, and not everyone trapped in an unhappy marriage wants to get out, said Li, the seminar founder.

In general, the *tongqi* are an invisible group. A large number of women are even unaware that their husbands are gay, due to conservative attitudes toward sex. Li said: "Many never even wonder why they have no sex life in their marriage."