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From the Perspective of Nostalgic Emotional Experience Linyi Willow Woven Crafts Regional Brand Design

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Specialty B2 Design

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The qualification work contains the results of independent research.
The use of ideas, results, and texts of other authors is properly referenced.

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ABSTRACT

From the Perspective of Nostalgic Emotional Experience Linyi Willow Woven Crafts Regional Brand Design. — Manuscript.
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This thesis investigates regional brand design for Linyi willow weaving through nostalgic emotional experience. It develops and critically examines a visual system comprising a logo, the Grandpa Liu character, four narrative illustrations, packaging, cultural merchandise, wayfinding and exhibition communication. The research asks how the identity of a place and a craft can remain legible within an emotionally evocative visual language, and what evidence a design proposal can provide about its intended experience.

The study combines documentary research with close visual analysis and reflection on the completed design corpus. Literature on nostalgia, emotional design, place branding and research through design informs the interpretation of the artefacts. The selected identity combines a stylised Yi character with water and woven bands. Four Scenes of Willow expands this compact sign into imagined settings of making, exchange and everyday care. A restrained palette and application hierarchy connect the different forms across objects and space.

The analysis finds that coherence depends on assigning distinct roles to the logo, character and illustrations. It also identifies a tension between nostalgic atmosphere and geographical specificity: familiar historical imagery can invite interpretation without accurately identifying Linyi. The proposal addresses this tension through explicit naming, selective image adaptation and clearly described conceptual status. Audience emotion, local acceptance and physical performance remain untested. The thesis contributes a situated design approach and a critical account of its limits, with further work centred on practitioner review, physical prototyping and studies of interpretation.

Keywords Linyi willow weaving; regional brand design; nostalgia; emotional experience; narrative illustration; craft heritage

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INTRODUCTION

The design problem

A woven basket communicates through its structure before a label identifies its origin. Repeated strands, an enclosed volume and a handle make its construction and purpose visible. Yet these qualities cannot, by themselves, tell a buyer whether the basket comes from Linyi or another weaving region. This graduation project addresses that problem of attribution. It develops a regional brand proposal for Linyi willow weaving in which the identity, illustrated narratives, packaging and spatial information share a recognisable visual language. The central question is how that language can connect craft with remembered everyday life while giving the place of production a clear presence.

The study takes Linshu willow weaving as its principal heritage reference within the wider Linyi context. The national heritage register identifies Linshu County in Linyi, Shandong, as the reporting locality for the extension project added in 2021 under willow weaving, project VII-55. The register describes local willow material, several weaving operations and both household and contemporary product types [1]. These particulars provide a firmer starting point than a general appeal to ancient Chinese culture. They locate the craft in a named community and connect visual form with material work.

The brand developed here is a design proposal, not an authorised regional certification scheme. Its public-facing name is Linyi Willow Weaving. Yi River Weave names the selected identity concept, which combines the Chinese character associated with Linyi, flowing water and interlaced strands. This distinction matters because a design concept cannot grant itself the authority to represent every producer in a region. The proposal explores how a shared identity might operate; adoption, ownership and the conditions of participation would require agreement with local practitioners and relevant organisations.

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Nostalgia is used as an interpretive perspective because the artefacts connect weaving with domestic routines, gift exchange and intergenerational learning. A basket may recall food carried home, objects stored in a familiar room or the hands of someone making and repairing things. These associations are unevenly distributed. A younger visitor may have no personal memory of willow weaving, while an older resident may connect it with demanding work rather than leisure. The design therefore offers invitations to remember and learn. It cannot prescribe a common emotional response.

Research context and rationale

The project approaches heritage through communication design rather than industrial output or conservation policy. UNESCO's convention treats traditional craftsmanship as part of intangible cultural heritage and emphasises the communities that recognise, maintain and recreate it [2]. For this project, that position directs attention towards people and practices behind the finished object. It also limits what a visual identity can claim. A coherent logo can make attribution easier; it cannot substitute for the transmission of embodied skill.

The original proposal placed substantial emphasis on emotional design and digital participation. The developed work gives these intentions a more concrete visual form through a selected logo, the Grandpa Liu character, four narrative illustrations, packaging families, cultural merchandise and a wayfinding system. A thirty-slide presentation and three exhibition boards bring the components together. Digital screens remain an extension concept. The thesis concentrates on the evidence contained in these completed visual artefacts and considers what further work would be necessary for their use beyond an exhibition.

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The practical difficulty is the coexistence of different kinds of image. The logo is compact and abstract; Grandpa Liu is figurative and friendly; the four illustrations are detailed and spatially imaginative. If all three speak at equal volume on every surface, the result becomes crowded. If the illustrations disappear beneath a strict identity system, their narrative contribution is lost. The design research concerns the relationships among these components, including their scale, hierarchy, colour and suitability for particular situations.

Aim and research questions

The aim is to develop and critically examine a coherent regional brand proposal that makes Linyi willow weaving identifiable while opening a considered relationship with nostalgia. The thesis asks three questions. How can the visual features of place and weaving be translated into a distinctive identity without relying on a generic historical appearance? How can an artisan character and a series of illustrations distribute cultural meaning across packaging, merchandise and space? What can the resulting artefacts establish about design coherence, and which claims about emotion, cultural recognition and practical performance still require investigation?

These questions give different responsibilities to making and evaluation. Making establishes a visible proposition that can be examined: an interlaced mark, a recurring character, a picture sequence and a family of applications. Evaluation asks whether those elements support the stated intention and where the proposal becomes ambiguous. It does not treat the designer's explanation as proof that an audience has understood the work. A reasoned account of an image and an observed response to that image are different forms of evidence.

Scope and contribution

The study uses documentary research, close reading of the design corpus and reflective analysis of the completed visual system. It does not present interview transcripts, survey responses, production trials or measured changes in brand recognition. Figures reproduce design assets and concept visualisations.

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Photorealistic scenes show proposed appearances rather than installed environments or manufactured stock. This boundary permits a detailed account of design decisions without extending the claims beyond the available evidence.

The contribution is a situated design argument. It connects a restrained identity based on a place character and woven structure with richer scenes of everyday craft, then assigns each to appropriate applications. The thesis also identifies a tension within the work: emotionally familiar historical imagery can support storytelling while weakening geographical precision. Addressing this tension is part of the contribution, because an attractive heritage image becomes academically useful only when its assumptions and limits can be examined.

The following chapters establish the conceptual basis, explain the research approach, analyse the visual system and discuss its implications. The design chapter follows the passage from identity to narrative, objects and space. The final discussion separates what the artefacts already demonstrate from a proposed programme of cultural review, physical prototyping and audience study. This organisation keeps the thesis centred on the completed graduation project while leaving a clear route for its further development.

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CHAPTER 1

CONCEPTUAL FOUNDATIONS AND RESEARCH APPROACH

1.1 Nostalgia as an interpretive condition

Nostalgia needs a more precise role in design than the description of a colour palette as old-fashioned. Wildschut et al. [3] examine nostalgia through accounts and experiments that associate it with personally meaningful events and social relationships. Their findings support attention to the relational content of remembrance. They do not establish that a brown package, an elderly character or a traditional landscape will automatically evoke nostalgia. In the present project, those features are possible cues whose meaning depends on the viewer's history and the context of encounter.

The distinction between remembering and recognising is central. Someone may recognise a woven basket as traditional without remembering any personal experience of it. Another person may connect its handle with shopping alongside a family member. Both responses can matter to communication design, but they should not be described as the same psychological event. Recognition can support identification of a product category; autobiographical recall concerns a person's own past. The design must also accommodate imaginative interest, in which an unfamiliar viewer is drawn into a pictured world without claiming that world as a memory.

Boym [4] distinguishes restorative and reflective tendencies in nostalgia. The former seeks the recovery of a lost home or order, while the latter remains attentive to distance, longing and the contradictions of remembrance. This distinction is useful for examining the project rather than assigning it a flattering label. The illustrated landscapes show an idealised world in which craft, leisure and nature coexist. A reflective reading allows these images to remain imaginative constructions. Presenting them as an accurate restoration of historical Linyi would give their decorative details an authority they do not possess.

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The proposal consequently treats nostalgia as an invitation to interpret ordinary practices. Carrying, storing, weaving and giving provide its most tangible subjects. These actions remain intelligible even when their setting is invented. Their familiarity can offer a point of entry, while accompanying information explains where the contemporary craft is practised. Nostalgia becomes problematic when the invitation turns into an instruction to admire a supposedly unified past. The thesis therefore asks whose labour appears, whose memory is assumed and what forms of current life are missing from the representation.

1.2 Emotional experience and design decisions

Norman's account [5] of visceral, behavioural and reflective design offers a practical vocabulary for separating immediate appearance, interaction and interpretation. Applied here, the first concerns qualities such as line weight, colour relationships and visible material texture. The second concerns actions such as opening a package or following a directional sign. The third concerns the meanings attached to origin, learning and keeping an object. These are analytical viewpoints; the thesis does not treat them as a sequence every visitor must complete.

Desmet and Hekkert [6] distinguish aesthetic experience, experience of meaning and emotional experience. Their account helps prevent a common inference in heritage design: that visual attractiveness proves emotional attachment. An illustration can be aesthetically engaging while its cultural references remain unclear. A label can communicate origin accurately without prompting affection. A difficult opening mechanism can disrupt the experience of an otherwise attractive gift. The project therefore examines appearance and meaning separately before considering the emotional intentions that connect them.

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These frameworks are not identical, and combining them into a single scored model would obscure their different purposes. This thesis uses Norman to organise encounters with applications and Desmet and Hekkert to question the inference from designed features to felt responses. The resulting analytical practice is deliberately modest. It can identify whether the system offers a legible point of entry, a plausible activity and information that sustains interpretation. It cannot determine the strength of nostalgia without audience evidence.

Material experience adds a further difficulty. Karana et al. [7] propose a design approach that attends to what materials do and how they are experienced, extending enquiry beyond their visual appearance. This is particularly relevant to willow weaving, where flexibility, pressure and contact are integral to making and use. A rendered woven surface represents those qualities optically. It offers no direct evidence of their tactile character, weight or durability. The packaging analysis therefore distinguishes the suggestion of a material experience from the performance of a physical sample.

1.3 Regional identity and representation

A regional brand operates among multiple interpretations of place. Kavaratzis and Hatch [8] describe place identity through an ongoing relationship among culture, identity and image. Their approach challenges the idea that a designer can extract a permanent regional essence and place it inside a logo. In this project, the interlaced character provides a proposal for recognition. The social legitimacy of that proposal would depend on how local people and organisations interpret and use it.

Kavaratzis [9] also situates city branding beyond intentional graphic communication, including the ways that places communicate through their organisation and behaviour. Applied to a craft brand, this suggests that a workshop sign, product label and visitor encounter should support one another. The connection is an inference for this project, not evidence that a particular signage family has improved Linyi's reputation. A brand promise about patient workmanship would become fragile if the actual workshop experience were confusing or the product information misleading.

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Regional identity has different degrees of specificity. A basket identifies a craft category. An interlaced character can identify a named place for a reader who recognises it. A verified producer address identifies an actual source. These levels should be kept visible. The four illustrations contain motifs associated with a broad traditional Chinese visual repertoire, whereas the logo explicitly names Linyi. Their coexistence can be productive if captions and product information clarify the relationship. It becomes misleading when decorative architecture is presented as a documented local landmark.

Tung's [10] study of collaboration around rush weaving provides a useful methodological comparison. It examines a particular craft and design relationship rather than assuming that a visual redesign alone constitutes revitalisation. Its relevance lies in the attention given to collaboration and local practice, not in transferring its results to another region. The present project has not completed an equivalent collaboration with Linshu weavers. This difference defines the next research requirement and prevents a studio proposal from borrowing the authority of participatory work.

1.4 Craft knowledge and the role of objects

The basket is simultaneously an object of use and a visible record of operations. Interlacing shows a relationship among parts: individual strands gain coherence through their arrangement and constraint. The logo uses that relationship as a graphic principle, while the illustrations return it to hands, vessels and activities. The transfer is selective. A broad graphic band cannot explain the preparation of willow or the judgement required at a change of direction. Its value lies in making construction noticeable, after which interpretation can become more specific.

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The design must leave room for the craft's present tense. Concentrating exclusively on historical dress and an elderly mascot risks placing willow weaving outside contemporary life. The packaging and merchandise applications partly address this by introducing portable bags, notebooks and everyday storage. These products suggest circumstances in which woven objects and associated imagery could be encountered now. Their relevance remains a design proposition until real users and makers assess whether the proposed forms suit their activities and economic conditions.

Objects also raise questions of care. A removable sleeve can reveal the woven surface and allow the container to remain useful after the gift is opened. A story card can connect that use with a producer, provided its information is accurate and its authorisation clear. Neither feature guarantees long-term retention. The project treats reuse as something to support through accessible construction and a credible second use, rather than as a property conferred by a natural-looking material.

UNESCO's account of traditional craftsmanship places particular emphasis on the continuation of knowledge and skill, rather than the preservation of finished objects alone [11]. That emphasis establishes a demanding question for the brand: does its communication give viewers a clearer understanding of making, or simply provide attractive objects associated with heritage? The current visual system offers possible entry points, especially hands, baskets and the fictional guide. Further educational content should explain specific operations with practitioners rather than allowing the general image of patient handwork to stand in for technical knowledge. This requirement becomes more important as the system moves onto products that contain no actual willow.

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1.5 Research through design

Frayling [12] distinguishes forms of research associated with art and design, including enquiry conducted through practice. His account provides a basis for treating making as part of an investigation when its questions and reasoning are made available for scrutiny. In this thesis, the artefacts are not presented as self-explanatory answers. The written analysis identifies the problem addressed by a decision, describes what the decision produced and considers where the resulting image remains uncertain.

Zimmerman et al. [13] discuss research through design as a means of producing and examining designed artefacts within interaction research. Gaver [14] considers the provisional and situated character of knowledge produced through such work. Together these perspectives support an account that is explicit about its particular case. This project offers an articulated visual proposal and transferable questions about craft branding. It does not claim a universal model or a measured causal relationship between nostalgic imagery and cultural participation.

The research process consists of documentary grounding, interpretation of the design brief, visual development and critical examination. Documentary grounding establishes concepts and a limited set of verified contextual facts. Interpretation translates the brief into representational problems, such as making Linyi visible and assigning different roles to the logo and illustrations. Visual development produces the identity and applications. Critical examination compares the resulting artefacts with their stated purposes and identifies requirements for further testing. These activities overlap, but they remain distinct sources of judgement.

1.6 Evidence and analytical procedure

The design corpus comprises the proposal presentation, the developed thirty-slide presentation, the selected logo, the Grandpa Liu character studies, four supplied illustrations, application visualisations and three exhibition boards. The proposal is treated as a record of intention. Its numerical claims about audiences and industry are not used as research findings because the underlying datasets and sampling

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documentation are unavailable for this thesis. The developed presentation and boards provide evidence of what was designed and how it was organised, rather than evidence of public reception.

Each major component is examined through four questions. What information does it communicate visibly? Which feature links it to the broader identity? What activity or interpretation does it invite? What remains unverified? This procedure supports comparisons without assigning invented performance scores. For example, the teal used on the logo, mascot clothing and signage can be observed directly. Whether this recurrence improves delayed recall would require a different study. The same distinction applies to the apparent friendliness of a character and a visitor's willingness to approach a workshop.

The analysis also differentiates the status of images. The four illustrations supplied for the project are its primary narrative artwork. Several identity and application visualisations were developed with generative image tools under iterative design direction. Selection, revision and layout established their role within the proposal. These visualisations require technical redrawing and material review before production. Their realistic lighting and surfaces should not be read as photographic records of objects that have been fabricated. This distinction is relevant to the research method because it determines what the images can substantiate.

No audience responses are inferred from the designer's preference among the logo alternatives. The selected first scheme establishes the direction used in the final system; it does not establish statistical superiority over the other schemes. Similarly, revisions to exhibition layout demonstrate responsiveness to a communication brief but do not constitute a controlled readability experiment. This discipline keeps the research claims proportionate to the available material while preserving the value of close visual analysis.

1.7 Criteria for critical assessment

The principal criteria are geographical attribution, consistency among applications, narrative legibility, suitability for use and responsibility in representation.

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Geographical attribution asks how clearly the system identifies Linyi and distinguishes broad cultural imagery from local evidence. Consistency concerns relationships among colour, typography, image and scale. Narrative legibility concerns whether craft remains identifiable within the illustrated scenes. Suitability for use concerns the practical requirements implied by packaging and wayfinding. Responsibility concerns credit, the representation of makers and the authority attached to heritage claims.

These criteria sometimes conflict. A detailed illustration may reward close looking but become unreadable on a small badge. A large decorative mark may dominate a sign while reducing space for the destination. A charming character may attract attention while suggesting that practitioners belong to a single age or gender. Critical assessment therefore considers trade-offs at the level of each application. The preferred decision is the one that makes its purpose clear and exposes the remaining question, rather than the one that merely repeats the largest number of brand elements.

Conclusions to Chapter 1

The conceptual framework establishes nostalgia as a contingent interpretation and separates it from visual attractiveness, usability and cultural authority. Research through design provides the means to examine the artefacts, while heritage and place-branding literature identify the limits of an individual designer's representation. The method can support reasoned judgements about form and consistency. Claims about audience emotion, local acceptance and material performance require additional evidence. This distinction guides the contextual analysis and the assessment of each application that follow.

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CHAPTER 2

CULTURAL CONTEXT AND VISUAL ANALYSIS

2.1 From regional reference to design material

The local heritage reference supplies a distinction that the design needs to preserve. Linshu is the specific county identified in the national listing, while Linyi supplies the broader place name used by the proposed brand. The register locates Linshu's craft within the setting of the Shu River and describes the suitability of cultivated willow for weaving [1]. The Yi River in the identity concept functions at the scale of the Linyi brand. It should not be used to relocate the documented craft or to imply that the two rivers are interchangeable.

The same caution applies to terminology. Woven containers can resemble products made with bamboo, rattan or other plant materials. A graphic weave therefore communicates a construction principle more readily than a botanical identity. The brand name and product description must provide the specificity that the abstract mark lacks. Material information on a real product would require confirmation from its producer, especially where a package combines willow, paper, textile and supplementary components. Visual resemblance cannot settle the composition of an object.

For design development, the most productive references are those capable of operating at more than one scale. An individual strand can become a line; crossing strands can form a mark; a repeated crossing can become a pattern; a woven container can organise an illustrated scene. These transfers establish relationships among assets without reproducing a craft sample as a decorative texture on every surface. They also allow the designer to vary the amount of detail according to viewing distance and function.

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2.2 Reading the selected identity

The selected mark places three teal water-like strokes beside broader brown bands arranged as a woven character. Its silhouette can be read as a stylisation of Yi, the character present in Linyi's name. The lower lettering explicitly states Linyi Willow Weaving in Chinese and English. The wordmark is essential to its communicative role. Without it, the graphic can suggest water and interlacing, but an unfamiliar viewer may not identify the intended location. Figure A1 records the selected version used throughout the applications.

The contrast between fluid teal strokes and restrained brown bands gives the symbol a discernible internal structure. The water element creates movement; the crossings establish an organised counterweight. Rounded ends soften the graphic without turning it into a drawing of a particular basket. This is a plausible solution to the brief because it provides a place cue and a craft cue within one compact image. The analysis can identify those cues in the form, although their recognition by different audiences remains a question for testing.

The mark's rendered shading gives the bands an appearance of volume. That appearance is useful in a large presentation but creates a production issue at small sizes. Fine tonal differences and narrow gaps may weaken when embroidered, stamped or reproduced in one colour. A production identity would require a clean flat master and a controlled monochrome version derived from the same geometry. This is a refinement of the selected scheme, rather than a reason to replace it. The thesis distinguishes a convincing presentation image from a completed technical identity standard.

2.3 The four illustrations as a narrative sequence

Four Scenes of Willow is the narrative centre of the project. Each image combines a dominant subject with smaller activities, landscape elements and a meandering watercourse. The works share a vertical format and a detailed pictorial language. Their differences allow the series to move among transmission, imagined landscape, seasonal livelihood and patient making.

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These themes are interpretive titles for the design discussion; the images are not assigned to four historical periods or treated as a documented seasonal calendar. Figures A3 and A4 preserve the complete compositions.

The first scene, Willow Legacy, places an elderly woman with a basket near the upper right of the composition. Her hands and the willow strands make the act of weaving visible. Architecture, a bridge, small figures and flowers surround her at changing scales. The large maker and smaller episodes resist a single naturalistic viewpoint, allowing several activities to be read within one field. The age of the principal figure offers a possible cue to transmission, but the image itself does not document a named practitioner or family relationship.

Pink, muted yellow and green give the first scene a soft tonal character. Large flowers along the lower edge frame the passage of water through the composition. For packaging, this makes the lower portion visually rich but unsuitable as a background for essential small text. The principal figure is more effective on an uninterrupted panel or a card where her hands remain visible. Cropping only the blossoms would preserve colour continuity while reducing the specific connection to willow weaving. The illustration's craft meaning depends on more than its ornamental surface.

The second scene, Woven River, enlarges a basket until it becomes part of the landscape. Water held within the vessel flows into the surrounding scene, producing the clearest visual metaphor in the series. The basket becomes both container and setting, connecting the scale of a household object with the scale of an imagined place. Markets, food and riverside activity continue around it. This composition is especially adaptable to a gift-box lid because its central subject remains recognisable before the smaller episodes are examined.

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The same visual strength creates a risk when adapting the second scene. A fold through the basket's handle or a closure across the flowing water would interrupt the metaphor. The packaging proposal should therefore allocate the central basket to the broadest panel, with supplementary episodes on adjoining surfaces. The image does not establish a geographical map. Its river is an organising device within an imagined landscape, and product copy should make that status clear where a viewer might otherwise infer a specific local scene.

The third scene, Willow Harvest, is organised around a young figure wearing green and holding a basket of fresh strands. Tea-related objects, food, small figures and another maker appear below. Compared with the first illustration, the principal subject gives the series a younger presence. The stronger green field changes the atmosphere without removing the shared warm outline and river structure. Its contribution to the sequence is to associate craft with continuing everyday activity, although its historical costume does not by itself demonstrate contemporary participation.

The fourth scene, Willow Workshop, brings a woman making a basket into proximity with plants, vessels and objects associated visually with herbal practice. A bridge and lotus-filled water link the upper and lower scenes. The work suggests care, preparation and repeated manual attention. These are design readings of the image. The presence of medicinal-looking objects is not evidence of a documented relationship between Linshu willow weaving and a particular medical tradition. Packaging derived from this scene must avoid implying health effects or product contents that have not been established.

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2.4 Cultural specificity and imaginative distance

The illustrations use familiar conventions of an idealised Chinese landscape: layered mountains, flowing clouds, pavilions, towers and historical clothing. Some buildings, including white walls and dark tiled roofs, evoke a broad traditional architectural repertoire rather than a verified Linyi site. This makes the images accessible as cultural fantasy while limiting their evidential value as regional representation. The analysis therefore assigns them the task of telling stories around craft and everyday life. The logo, naming and verified explanatory text carry the more exact task of geographical attribution.

That division of work is useful but insufficient on its own. If a regional brand relies entirely on generic scenery, the name can become a label attached to an interchangeable image. A future revision should identify particular local building details, workshop arrangements or material preparation practices through documented research and collaboration. Such details should be introduced because they clarify the subject, rather than being added as a catalogue of landmarks. The current series provides an artistic framework within which that more grounded specificity could be developed.

Aitken and Campelo [15] place community relationships at the centre of place-branding enquiry. Their work supports treating local interpretation as a substantive part of brand development. In this project, residents and practitioners would need to assess whether the imagined scenes feel meaningful, inaccurate or overly distant from everyday craft. Their responses might require changes to the imagery rather than additional promotional explanation. A regional visual system should be capable of that revision.

2.5 Requirements for a coherent system

The visual corpus calls for a hierarchy rather than a uniform treatment of every asset. The logo supplies attribution. The character introduces a social presence. The illustrations provide a world of stories. Woven structure and the three principal colours connect these components without requiring them to imitate one another.

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River teal, willow brown and paper ivory form the stable identity palette, specified for the screen designs as #3E7472, #785035 and #F7F3EA. The illustrations retain their wider colours within that frame.

This arrangement also defines an information hierarchy. Functional text needs a quiet ground; artwork needs sufficient uninterrupted area; the brand name needs a consistent position and adequate contrast. These requirements become stricter as an object becomes smaller or its use more urgent. A postcard can invite prolonged looking. A directional sign must identify its destination quickly. Treating both as equally decorative would weaken the communication of at least one of them.

The project therefore needs controlled variation. Repetition of colours and naming can establish continuity, while the number and scale of pictures change with the application. Figure B1 presents the identity, Figure B2 gives the illustrations their own field, and Figure B3 shows their passage into objects and space. The exhibition sequence makes this hierarchy explicit. It also provides a practical basis for examining whether the broader proposal reads as one project without flattening the distinctive character of each component.

Conclusions to Chapter 2

The analysis identifies a workable relationship between a specific name and an imaginative visual world. The chosen mark joins the place character with weaving, while the four pictures expand the subject into scenes of making and use. Their shared watercourses, baskets and tonal relationships support continuity. Their generic historical settings require careful description and further local review. The resulting design requirements concern attribution, selective adaptation and legible information, rather than the indiscriminate repetition of motifs.

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CHAPTER 3

DEVELOPMENT OF THE BRAND DESIGN PROPOSAL

3.1 Identity and application hierarchy

The developed identity begins with the selected first logo scheme. It places the regional name at the centre of the communication system and uses interlacing as its principal formal relationship. Figure A1 shows the complete mark and lettering. In application, the identity needs a stable area around it so that the crossings remain legible. It should appear on a quiet field rather than directly over the most detailed part of an illustration. This relationship gives the mark a consistent role even as its surrounding images change.

The three main colours establish that quiet field. Paper ivory reduces the starkness of a white background while retaining contrast with dark lettering. Willow brown links text and graphic structure with the appearance of woven material. River teal supplies a cooler counterpoint and a recognisable accent. These are deliberate associations within the project, not universal psychological meanings assigned to colours. Actual reproduction would require printed proofs because an RGB specification does not determine the appearance of ink on textured paper or dyed fabric.

Typography separates expressive and functional information. The presentation uses a serif voice for major English headings and simpler lettering for small explanations. The logo retains its established bilingual lettering. In production, a short approved type specification would need to define font availability, weights and substitution behaviour. Decorative lettering should remain concentrated in the identity rather than spreading into instructions. A maintenance label, destination name or material description must remain readable when the viewer has little time or familiarity with the brand.

This hierarchy also provides a way to handle bilingual communication. The English exhibition boards address the graduation presentation, whereas local applications would need carefully reviewed Chinese content alongside English where

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appropriate. Translating a title is not enough if the destination name, opening information or product description changes meaning between versions. A shared terminology list would keep Linshu, Linyi, willow weaving and the character name consistent. The thesis retains the Chinese lettering embedded in the logo as part of the visual artefact while explaining the system in English.

3.2 Grandpa Liu as an interpretive character

Grandpa Liu gives the system a recurring human presence. The character's white hair, moustache and woven hat identify an elderly maker; teal clothing and a brown apron connect him with the main palette. The front, side and back views in Figure A2 describe a consistent silhouette that could guide later model making. His basket and working accessories connect the figure to a practice. Without those attributes, the same facial expression could serve almost any heritage brand.

The character is fictional. He is not a portrait of a named inheritor and should not be presented as an authorised voice for local practitioners. This distinction becomes particularly important if the character delivers historical explanations or appears beside heritage emblems. The authority for such explanations would come from reviewed content and credited sources. A friendly figure can help introduce information, but it does not make the information accurate by association.

The elderly male figure also creates a representational imbalance that the wider system must recognise. The illustrations include women and a younger protagonist, offering different points of identification. Future character stories should retain that range rather than attributing all knowledge to a single grandfather figure. A workshop narrative could introduce several real practitioners, with permission, while using Grandpa Liu to guide the reader between their accounts. This would give the mascot a hosting role without allowing it to replace the people whose work gives the brand substance.

For small merchandise, a reduced head or bust may remain readable where a full figure becomes indistinct. Embroidery requires particular attention to the moustache, eye spacing and woven hat pattern; a rendered texture cannot be transferred directly into stitches.

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The merchandise images establish an intended visual family of patches, keychains and stickers. They do not resolve tooling, material specifications or safety requirements. Those decisions belong to a production stage in which the character must be simplified without losing its identifiable silhouette.

3.3 Adapting the illustrations

The four illustrations remain complete works in the presentation and appendices. Their adaptation to objects follows a different logic. A package panel offers a fixed viewing direction and may be interrupted by folds or handles. A notebook cover offers a broad rectangle but needs its binding edge protected. A round badge offers too little space for a complete vertical landscape. The design approach therefore distinguishes full-scene placement, carefully selected details and simple colour or pattern continuity.

Full-scene placement is most appropriate where the main figures and the passage of water can be read together. Art cards and generous gift-box panels provide such fields. Details may be selected for secondary surfaces when they retain a clear relation to the source image. A basket, weaving hands or a segment of the river carries more of the project's subject than an isolated ornamental cloud. The selection should be documented so that later applications do not gradually replace craft content with generic decoration.

The series benefits from differences in dominant colour. The first and second images contribute warmer pink and yellow tones, while the third and fourth introduce stronger greens. The identity frame keeps this variation coherent without recolouring the original artwork into a uniform palette. Recolouring every image into teal and brown would simplify brand consistency at the cost of the narrative series. The selected approach allows the pictures to vary while the logo, labels and surrounding space maintain continuity.

The available illustrations are raster images measuring 777 by 1037 pixels. That resolution places a practical limit on physical reproduction. At 300 pixels per inch, each image supports approximately 66 by 88 millimetres without enlargement.

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Larger display use is possible at a lower effective resolution, but increasing the export dimensions cannot restore missing detail. Production packaging should therefore use higher-resolution masters or reconstructed artwork for large panels. The exhibition files demonstrate composition; they should not be mistaken for proof of print quality at every proposed scale.

3.4 Packaging as an ordered encounter

The packaging family introduces the brand through a combination of woven surfaces, restrained paper areas and illustrated sleeves. Figure A7 shows the general gift collection; Figure A8 shows the extensions derived from the four scenes. The woven component keeps the craft materially visible in the concept, while the printed surface provides room for narrative and product information. Their relationship is more persuasive than a fully printed imitation of weaving because it leaves a distinct task for each material.

Opening the package is considered as a sequence of actions. The outer identity first establishes attribution. Removing or lifting the illustrated component reveals the woven container and the contents. A card then offers a short explanation that can remain with the object. This sequence is a design intention inferred from the package structure, not an observed user journey. A physical model would need to establish where a person places their hands, how much force is required and whether the parts remain intact after repeated opening.

The gift context gives the story card a particular role. The purchaser and recipient may have different knowledge of willow weaving. The card should therefore provide enough information to explain the object without requiring a long presentation: the verified maker or producer, actual materials, care guidance and the meaning of the selected scene. A personal message can occupy a separate area. Historical claims should remain brief and sourced, while batch information should be completed only when a real product and supplier have been established.

Reuse depends on construction as well as intention. A basket that remains useful after its sleeve is removed offers a plausible second function; a heavily bonded decorative assembly may not.

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Schifferstein and Zwartkruis-Pelgrim [16] examine relationships between memories, enjoyment and attachment to products. Their findings make retention a relevant design question, but they do not demonstrate that recipients will keep these packages. Chapman [17] similarly frames the duration of relationships with objects as a design concern. Here, an unobstructed usable container and a removable narrative layer are proposals to investigate within that concern.

Claims about environmental benefit require more evidence than natural colour and woven texture. A physical specification would need to identify the fibre, finishes, adhesives, coatings and any hidden supports. A reuse claim would need to consider whether the container remains suitable for an actual household task. The thesis therefore describes the packaging as designed to support continued use. It does not label the illustrated proposals biodegradable, recyclable as a whole or lower in environmental impact without evidence about their material composition and disposal context.

3.5 Cultural merchandise and everyday use

The derived product collection extends the illustrations onto textile bags, cards, notebooks and small keepsakes. These applications offer different amounts of space and different relationships with daily life. A bag can carry a major pictorial detail while moving through public space. A notebook can preserve a complete scene on its cover and a quieter graphic treatment inside. Cards allow the four images to remain a sequence. Small badges need a reduced motif or the character, because shrinking the whole landscape would leave little that can be read.

The collection should not be expanded merely to increase the number of mockups. Each object needs a reason to carry the imagery and a plausible use that justifies its manufacture. A notebook that is uncomfortable to open or a bag with weak handles cannot support a claim about thoughtful craft through its printed image alone. The current visualisations allow comparison of the family appearance. Selection for production would require attention to use, cost, material quality and the capacity of participating makers or suppliers.

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The illustration-derived collection also exposes an unresolved attribution problem. The current concept image gives the pictures priority and does not visibly repeat the selected logo. A production layout would need a reserved area for the identity and verified origin information, positioned without interrupting the principal figures. This gap limits the claim of consistency across the entire corpus. It also demonstrates why visual similarity among products cannot replace an explicit account of who made them and where they come from.

There is also a boundary between willow craft and merchandise about willow craft. A printed postcard communicates the subject, but it is not itself a woven artefact. Labelling should preserve that distinction. It can identify the illustration series and regional brand without implying that every object is handmade by a willow weaver. Clear description allows printed products to act as accessible introductions while maintaining the specificity and value of the actual craft.

3.6 Wayfinding and the workshop setting

The spatial proposal comprises entrance identification, directional information and functional signs. Figure A9 presents the entrance concept. The recurring teal, brown and woven references connect it with the packaging, while the larger physical scale gives the brand a place to be encountered. The sign acts as the beginning of a visitor experience. Its effectiveness would depend on approach routes, lighting and the actual position of the entrance, none of which can be established from a single perspective rendering.

Calori and Vanden-Eynden [18] treat signage and wayfinding as a coordinated environmental graphic design process. This supports examining the proposal as a family of information tasks rather than a collection of decorated panels. Entrance identification confirms arrival; direction signs support choices along a route; functional signs identify particular rooms or facilities. The project's visual language should connect these tasks while allowing their information density and scale to differ.

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For a future workshop, the sequence could lead from entry to a display area, then to a demonstration space and product collection point. Those destinations are programme proposals, not a record of an existing floor plan. The operational site would determine the actual route, names and accessibility requirements. Arrows must correspond to real decision points, and a destination should retain the same name from the first direction sign to the room itself. Consistency of wording is as important as consistency of colour.

The nostalgic atmosphere should remain subordinate to navigation. An interlaced border can identify the system, but it should not cut through an arrow or reduce the clear area around a destination. Text should have a plain contrasting ground and an appropriate size for the installed viewing distance. No compliance claim can be made from the present renderings. Full-scale samples, route observation and an accessibility review would be needed before fabrication and installation.

3.7 Digital extension and exhibition communication

The digital concept extends the same identity into an interface for viewing craft information and exploring patterns. It remains a screen proposal, shown in Figure A10, rather than a working application. Earlier ambitions for augmented reality and pattern co-creation indicate possible directions, but they have not been implemented or tested here. The thesis therefore evaluates the visual continuity of the interface and the usefulness of its proposed content, not technical functionality that the artefact does not possess.

A useful digital extension would give the reader access to verified material that a small package cannot contain. A product page could show a credited practitioner explaining a step, while a pattern activity could distinguish a decorative arrangement from a structurally feasible weave. The distinction is educationally important. Moving lines on a screen can introduce a principle but cannot reproduce the resistance of willow or the coordination needed to form a vessel. Digital participation should lead towards a clearer understanding of those differences.

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Sanders and Stappers [19] describe co-design through changes in the roles of designers and participants. By that account, choosing among prepared colours or arranging supplied motifs is a limited interaction, rather than proof of shared control over the project. A later participatory stage should allow practitioners to influence which activities are represented, how their knowledge is explained and what uses of the imagery they consider appropriate. The present interface could support such work, but does not establish that it has occurred.

The exhibition system condenses the project into three stages. The first board introduces the logo, colour system and character. The second gives the four illustrations sufficient space to be read together. The third presents their movement into gift packaging, keepsakes and a workshop setting. Figures B1 to B3 reproduce the boards. Their consistent margins, ivory ground, teal accent and typographic hierarchy help establish continuity without requiring every board to contain every application.

The three boards also clarify the status of the work by describing applications as concepts. This wording is a small but necessary distinction in a polished exhibition, where realistic material rendering can otherwise imply completed manufacture. English titles and descriptions support the chosen presentation context, while the established Chinese logo remains part of the identity. The thesis uses the boards as evidence of curatorial organisation: the sequence reveals how the components are meant to be understood in relation to one another.

3.8 Critical assessment and proposed verification

The artefact review supports a limited set of conclusions. The applications centred on the brand identity repeat the selected mark and palette, while the illustration-derived collection still needs a consistent attribution area. The four images remain distinguishable as a series. The character offers a recurring figure across different media. Packaging and spatial concepts give the system plausible contexts of use. These observations concern visible relationships within the corpus. They do not establish increased recognition, nostalgia, purchase intention or participation in craft learning.

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A future audience study should first separate those outcomes. Recognition can be examined by asking viewers to identify the craft and location before and after reading the label. Narrative comprehension can be explored by asking what activity they see and which details led to that interpretation. Nostalgic response requires questions about remembered experiences and their personal significance, rather than a leading question about whether the design feels nostalgic. Sedikides et al. [20] provide a conceptual account of nostalgia's emotional and social dimensions, but a local study would need its own appropriate procedure and interpretation.

A comparison could present the same application with the logo alone and with the logo plus illustration, while keeping size and viewing conditions similar. The purpose would be to examine what the narrative layer adds and whether it obscures attribution. Participant groups should include local practitioners or residents as well as visitors unfamiliar with the craft. No sample size or expected percentage improvement is specified here because recruitment conditions and an analysis plan have not been established. A small formative enquiry could identify misunderstandings without pretending to represent the region's population.

The wording and order of questions would need particular care. Asking participants to identify a region immediately after a description of Linyi would measure their recall of the explanation rather than recognition of the design. Likewise, introducing Grandpa Liu as a nostalgic character before asking about emotion would encourage agreement with the researcher's framing. Initial descriptions should therefore remain neutral, and spontaneous interpretations should be recorded before more focused prompts. Counterbalancing the order of visual alternatives would help distinguish preferences for a design from the effects of seeing it first.

Analysis should retain disagreement rather than reducing all responses to a satisfaction average. A practitioner might identify an implausible weave that a visitor finds attractive; both observations matter, but they answer different questions. The study should distinguish comments about regional accuracy, visual preference and ease of use, while recording the reasons participants give. Negative or unexpected responses could guide changes to particular features.

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A clear report would show how those changes follow from the evidence and preserve unresolved disagreements. This would provide a stronger basis for development than selecting only positive quotations to accompany the exhibition images.

Physical trials address different questions. A gift package needs handling and opening tests with realistic contents. Printed proofs need inspection for image sharpness, colour shifts and small lettering. Woven parts need examination for edges, deformation and secure assembly. Signs need to be read at actual distances under relevant lighting. These activities should precede claims about usability or production readiness. Their results may require changes to the imagery, dimensions or material choices, even where the current rendering appears resolved.

3.9 Conditions for responsible implementation

The next development stage should begin with local review rather than immediate expansion of the product range. UNESCO's ethical principles give communities a primary role in safeguarding and emphasise informed participation in collaboration [21]. For this proposal, that principle suggests a practical agenda: review the regional name, clarify who may use it, agree how practitioners are credited and establish what stories or images require permission. These are conditions for responsible adoption, not claims of approval already obtained.

Anholt [22] addresses identity at the scale of nations, cities and regions, a scale that exceeds a single graphic commission. The present project is correspondingly limited. It can contribute visual tools to a broader regional conversation, but cannot create collective legitimacy through consistency alone. A shared brand would need terms of participation, reliable origin information and a process for correcting misrepresentation. Such arrangements would determine whether the identity supports diverse producers or obscures them behind one polished image.

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Implementation also requires an asset register. The selected logo should have a controlled master and defined variants; the character should have approved views; the illustration files should retain credits and resolution information; each application should identify its production status. This practical documentation would reduce drift between the exhibition concept and later suppliers. It would also make revisions traceable, especially where a visually convincing generated detail needs to be redrawn according to a real weaving process.

Conclusions to Chapter 3

The proposal establishes a hierarchy that lets a regional identity, a fictional artisan and four narrative scenes coexist across different media. Its strongest design decision is the allocation of distinct roles to these components. The logo identifies, the illustrations invite sustained interpretation, and the applications connect those images with handling, keeping and finding a place. The remaining work is equally concrete: local review, accurate production masters, physical prototypes and studies of interpretation. These steps would test whether the visual coherence of the exhibition survives use beyond it.

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CONCLUSIONS

This thesis has developed and examined a regional brand proposal for Linyi willow weaving through the perspective of nostalgic emotional experience. The resulting system connects a selected identity, Grandpa Liu, Four Scenes of Willow, packaging, cultural merchandise and environmental information. Its principal achievement is the organisation of these different forms into a coherent proposal whose decisions can be explained and questioned. It establishes a design argument about the relationship between craft, place and remembered everyday life. It does not establish measured emotional or commercial effects.

The first research question concerned the translation of place and weaving into an identity. The selected logo provides a compact response by bringing a stylised Yi character into relation with water and interlaced bands. The bilingual wordmark supplies explicit attribution that the abstract symbol cannot reliably carry alone. The resulting combination is more geographically specific than an unlabelled basket or weave. Its place reference remains an interpretation at the scale of the proposed Linyi brand, while the heritage discussion identifies Linshu and its documented local setting with greater precision.

The second question concerned how a character and illustrations could distribute meaning across applications. The project demonstrates a useful division of roles. Grandpa Liu offers a recurring guide, while the four scenes establish a larger imaginative world. Their makers, baskets and rivers connect manual work with activities beyond the workshop. Packaging provides a sequence in which these narratives can be encountered, and wayfinding brings the same identity into a proposed place of visitation. Coherence depends on this allocation of roles, as well as on repeated colour and graphic elements.

The third question concerned the evidence supported by the artefacts. The work permits examination of visible relationships, including repeated naming, colour continuity, the treatment of complete illustrations and the hierarchy of an exhibition sequence. These relationships can be described without assuming a particular audience response.

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The visualisations also reveal practical questions about the scale of artwork, reproduction of the logo, simplified character details and the separation of decoration from functional text. Those questions show how critical analysis can turn a finished-looking image into a basis for further design enquiry.

The main interpretive finding is that nostalgic atmosphere and geographical specificity do not necessarily increase together. Historical clothing, gardens and elaborate architecture can make an image culturally familiar while leaving its relation to Linyi uncertain. The four scenes are strongest when treated as artistic narratives centred on craft. They are weakest when asked to function as evidence of a particular historical landscape. The brand name and verified information partly resolve this gap, but further local research should influence the images themselves rather than remaining confined to captions.

A second finding concerns the relationship between simulated material and actual craft. The visualisations make woven texture prominent, which helps communicate the design intention. Yet texture on a screen cannot establish flexibility, comfort, structural performance or the experience of handling an object. A thesis grounded in design practice needs to retain that difference even when the presentation is visually persuasive. The next stage should therefore prioritise a small number of well-documented physical prototypes over a larger number of application images.

The study is limited by the character of its evidence. It contains no verified audience dataset, completed community co-design process or physical performance trial. The broad historical vocabulary of the illustrations also requires more local scrutiny. Several presentation assets require technical reconstruction before manufacture, and the available illustration resolution constrains large-format print use. These limitations restrict the conclusions to a situated design proposal. They also identify the conditions under which stronger claims could become possible.

Further work should proceed in a sequence that can alter the design. Practitioners and local reviewers should first examine regional attribution, representation and the proposed use of a shared name. Their response should inform the revision of imagery and explanatory content. Physical trials should then test the chosen packaging and a limited set of signs.

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Audience enquiry can examine recognition, comprehension and personal associations using those more stable artefacts. A subsequent study of keeping and reusing objects would require observation over time rather than an immediate statement of purchase preference.

The implications extend to the management of the visual system. A regional identity needs arrangements for credit, authorised use and correction as well as a consistent logo. A real application should identify the people and materials behind it whenever that information can be verified. Printed merchandise should be described as imagery about willow craft when it contains no woven element. Such distinctions preserve trust and leave room for producers to maintain their own identities within a shared communication system.

The contribution to art and design practice lies in a documented relationship among graphic abstraction, narrative illustration and proposed use. It shows how an emotional intention can be developed into specific decisions without treating those decisions as evidence that the intended emotion has occurred. It also gives critical attention to features that a promotional account might overlook: the ambiguity of place, the social assumptions of a mascot and the gap between an image and a material object. Nostalgia remains valuable here when it encourages attention to people, remembered actions and the continued possibility of making. The next task is to test that invitation with those whose craft and everyday experience give it meaning.

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APPENDIX A

Design artefacts and application concepts



Figure A1. The selected Linyi Willow Weaving identity. Yi River Weave is the name of the selected design concept. The regional name remains explicit in the bilingual wordmark.

Source: graduation project design archive; selected identity developed with generative image assistance.

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Figure A2. Grandpa Liu character views. Front, side and back views establish a proposed character family. Grandpa Liu is fictional.

Source: project design archive; generated concept visualisation under design direction.

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Figure A3. Willow Legacy and Woven River. The first and second supplied illustrations, shown in full from left to right.

Source: the four-illustration artwork series supplied by the project author. Titles are interpretive labels used in this thesis.

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Figure A4. Willow Harvest and Willow Workshop. The third and fourth supplied illustrations, shown in full from left to right.

Source: the four-illustration artwork series supplied by the project author. The landscapes are imaginative, not documentary records.

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Figure A5. Character merchandise concepts. Proposed small objects extend the character into portable formats.

Source: project design archive; generated application visualisation. Products have not been fabricated or tested.

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Figure A6. Packaging and opening concept. The pictured structure suggests an ordered encounter with the object and its accompanying information.

Source: project design archive; generated packaging visualisation. Handling and construction remain to be verified.

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Figure A7. The gift packaging family. Woven surfaces and restrained identity areas organise the proposed collection.

Source: project design archive; generated packaging visualisation, not a photograph of manufactured products.

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Figure A8. Packaging and merchandise derived from Four Scenes of Willow. The four illustrations are adapted to gift packaging, textile and paper objects.

Source: project design archive; generated application visualisation using the supplied illustration series as references.

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Figure A9. Workshop entrance concept. The identity and material references are extended to a proposed visitor setting.

Source: project design archive; generated spatial visualisation. No installation or accessibility compliance is claimed.

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Figure A10. Digital interface concept. The interface explores a visual extension of the identity and craft interpretation.

Source: project design archive; generated screen concept. The application and augmented-reality functions have not been implemented.

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APPENDIX B

Exhibition boards



Figure B1. Identity and character board. The exhibition series uses a consistent portrait format, colour frame and information hierarchy.

Source: project exhibition layout with artwork and concept visualisations from the design archive. Reproduced at reduced size.

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Figure B2. Four Scenes of Willow board. The exhibition series uses a consistent portrait format, colour frame and information hierarchy.

Source: project exhibition layout with artwork and concept visualisations from the design archive. Reproduced at reduced size.

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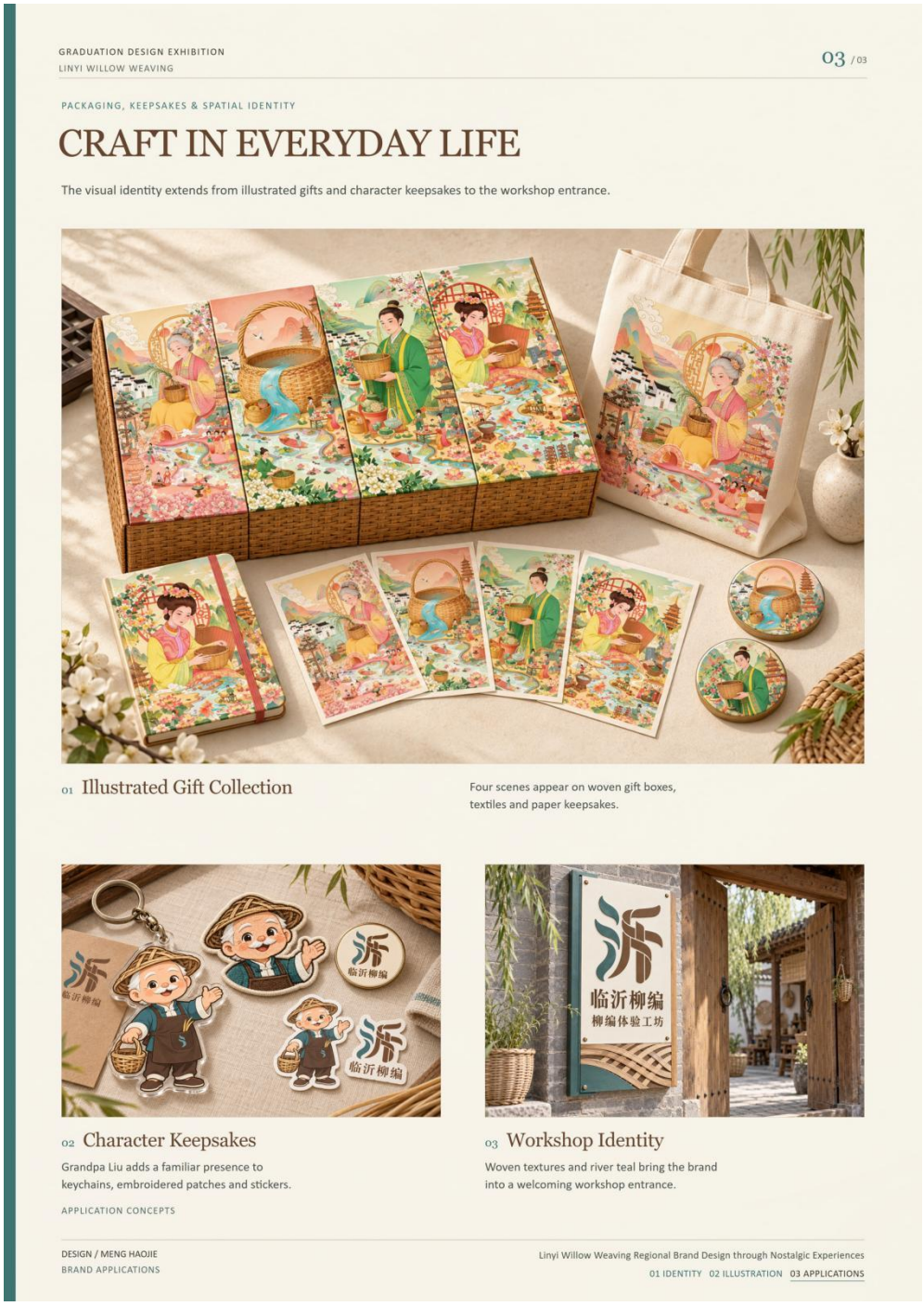

Figure B3. Applications and everyday use board. The exhibition series uses a consistent portrait format, colour frame and information hierarchy.

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