**Tale of intrigue and love in classic opera**

Chinese-Italian production of Tosca three years in making, Chen Nan reports.

**Artist in wheelchair inspires others facing challenges**

GOTUNG — Ling Runzhi, 41, who has used a wheelchair ever since she was 6,-latents to an online class about modern Chinese landscape painting with rapid attention.

With a few deft strokes of her painting brush, Ling skillfully brings to life a black-and-white world of art, adorned with delicate textures and captivating contrasts. Despite the loss of sensation in her lower body from congenital joints' faults, this talented artist refuses to let her physical limitations hinder her creativity.

Ling's art has not only helped her fulfill her own dreams but also offered a window to a broader world for others like her. Through her art, she also helps them experience the beauty and wonders of the world on a broader scale.

"There was once a dark phase in my life. My parents were busy with farmwork and my sisters were at school, so I had to stay at home by myself. Constant loneliness and fear were my only companions," said Ling, who is from the village of Biaohuan in Guizhou, capital of Guizhou province.

During that time, without access to a wheelchair, Ling resorted to sitting on a simple wooden spring chair at home. To make matters worse, she was painfully taking edge the chair forward, which, watched by the teacher and myself, could result in a crash.

Guided by a supportive sister, Ling learned to read Chinese. Her sister also purchased a collection of ancient paintings by Chinese women, which helped inspire Ling. "I started to recreate the paintings myself. Besides, I found the world of painting was difficult for my gender," she said.

In 2000, inspired by her sister's practice, Ling started delving into the techniques of restoring elements such as Chinese landscape paintings through stitches and threads. Wearing a black dress, Ling delved into the techniques of representing elements such as flowers, birds, insects and fish in her needlework, adding a new dimension to her artistic repertoire.

She later went on to hone her skills in competitions such as the handicraft competition in Guizhou province, through which she won more than 40 awards. The growing recognition of Ling's art has not only bolstered her confidence, but also brought new hope and joy to her life.

During her pursuit of a deeper understanding of modern Chinese landscape painting, Ling's work came to the notice of Jiang Xuejun, a painter from Heilongjiang province who is also a paralympian, in her case as the result of a car crash.

"Through meaningful online interactions, I started to find out more and more people who faced similar situations. As I thrived shared my stories and experiences with these people, I embarked upon a remarkable journey of mutual enrichment," she said.

Since then, Ling decided to create more paintings and embroideries to capture the vibrancy and beauty of the world for people who find themselves challenged by adversity, particularly those who are paralyzed.

"I will mark China's 3rd national day of activating disabled persons. This year's goal is to improve social security programs and services for persons with disabilities and promote the all-around development of their endowments.

"After my embroidery and paintings were exhibited in Gui- zhou, many people with disabilities and handicapped became familiar with my work and they understand that people who are paralyzed are valuable."

Being a painter and a paralympian, Ling has an ambition to promote the cultural exchange between China and the United States, this is the first time that I will perform at the NCPA.

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