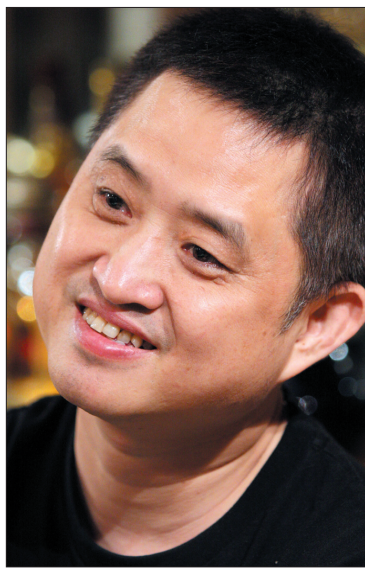


Taiwanese rose painter presents his third tea set design for Aynsley



The Victoria Collection



Robert Huang



The Tai Chi Rose



Robert Huang's English Rose Gold

By Lu Chia-ying
STAFF REPORTER

Taiwanese rose painter Robert Huang will unveil his third creation in a series of tea sets for Aynsley - one of Britain's leading tableware manufacturers since 1775, in Taiwan next month to mark the 20th anniversary of Taiwan's first franchise teahouse, the Rose House.

Huang, who established the first Rose House with his wife in Taichung in 1990, is the first foreign artist invited to be a designer of china tea sets by the 234-year-old English pottery house, says a spokesman for Rose House.

Aynsley has been honored to supply specially commissioned china to British royalty, governments and companies in England and overseas during its distinguished history. Queen Victoria, Queen Elizabeth II and the Prince of Wales have all chosen Aynsley bone china for their homes. Aynsley is renowned for its use of large amounts of cattle bone powder in making its bone china products, says Cathy Ni, vice general manager of Rose House.



A set of special commissions Aynsley designed to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the coronation of Queen Elisabeth II in 2003.

She adds that the policy of maintaining a 50% weed-out rate for preliminary products has also helped the company win the recognition of international china connoisseurs.

Huang and Aynsley worked together for the first time in 2003 to present the Victoria Collection, says Ni. The English company invited Huang to re-create a series of classic tea sets designed by reputed British designer Joseph A. Bailey in 1920.

Bailey was a select porcelain designer for British royalty during the 1920s and 1940s. He was commissioned to design tableware for numerous royal occasions, including the wedding dinner for Queen Elisabeth II in 1947.

Aynsley invited Huang to re-create the 64-piece tea set originally designed by Bailey after the company learned that Huang is a painter who uses roses as his only subject for painting, Ni says. They believed that Huang would understand the thinking behind Bailey's ideas for the original work, which features roses—a common subject for Victorian style art pieces.

Huang accepted the invitation and presented his 21st-Century edition of the classic production, hewing closely to Bailey's original designs as a sign of his admiration for the aesthetic achievements of the late British designer. However, the reproduction work was unexpectedly challenging as Bailey's original manuscript was drafted in pencil, and the sketches had faded badly over the past 80 years.

Some of the colors that the English designer applied to the

original design can also not be found today, thus Huang had to do his best to reproduce the colors, Ni discloses.

Aynsley revealed Huang's re-creation in a Frankfurt exhibition in 2004, where it won the endorsement of many connoisseurs. The limited edition of 2000 sets of Huang's creation was sold out last year, according to Ni. "Only part of the 64 pieces are now available in the market for someone who aspires to collect the work," she says.

"It is nearly impossible for one to find a whole new set of the Victoria Collection in the market," she claims.

Huang designed his second tea set "Tai Chi Rose" for Aynsley in 2006. He applied the typical Chinese pattern "Tai Chi" to create a full white china tea set, which comprises a tea pot, two plates, six cups and a tea pitcher in accordance with the traditions for serving Chinese tea.

The Hualien-born painter and founder of Taiwan's first franchise English teahouse will present his third tea set - Robert Huang's English Rose Gold - for Aynsley this year, which is a significant year for Huang and his wife. They will be celebrating the 20th anniversary of the founding of Rose House, which now boasts 50 franchise locations in major cities in Taiwan and China as well as overseas metropolitan areas such as New York and Seoul.

As general agent for Aynsley in Greater China, Huang will introduce the third series of his Aynsley tea sets in a press conference on August 8 to mark the 20th birthday of the Rose House, Ni announced.