



Philatelic **BOOKSHELF**

By Michael O. Nowlan

WILD CATS IN ART PHILATELY

When the American Topical Association decided to publish its 161st handbook, that illustrious organization took on a major publishing act. A full-colour two-part title, *Wild Cats in Art* is the first multi-part title released by the ATA. Colour is not new to ATA books, but the extensive 8½-by-11 format in two separate volumes is new.

Author Greg Balagian says "this catalogue is the result of my lifelong fascination with cats." He goes on to explain what cats have meant to him in their various formats from live members of the species to those on stamps and those in art. By combining his "love" for the feline set, he has produced a first-rate two-volume work on wild cats in art. Please note: this is not a catalogue of cats on stamps, but rather a catalogue of cats in art on stamps.

The listings in *Wild Cats on Art* are in alphabetical order by country and include both Scott and Michel catalogue numbers.

***Wild Cats in Art* is a showcase of feline-inspired art on stamps.**

Balagian does not "separate postage stamps from semi-postal, airmail, official, or any other types of stamps." Basic information on each stamp includes appropriate topical significance such as description of the image, author, origin, time period, and the location of the piece of art. Each listing is accompanied by a colour image of the stamp in its original size.

The bulk of the two volumes (341 pages) is reserved for the catalogue, but the author kindly adds sections of common design types, an addendum of items missed, a fine list of resources, an artist index, and a country index. The stamps include world issues to 2010.

Wild Cats in Art will be of special interest to collectors of art on stamps as well as those interested in feline philately. With stamps from 220 countries listed and illustrated, there will be many favourites. Balagian's basic listings, moreover, will probably move many collectors to conduct further research and perhaps add much to their own collections. This is one for the philatelic bookshelf. It is an art gallery in miniature.

The ATA deserves much commendation for this wonderful expose by a noted philatelist whose "Big Cats and Humans" exhibit showcased the representation of felines in art, religion, literature, entertainment, heraldry, and astrology.

Wild Cats in Art is available from the American Topical Association, PO Box 8, Carterville, IL 62918-0008 USA. It retails for \$75 US plus postage. ♣

