

# ARTY CATS, con't

## Chinese Porcelain Lion by GREG BALAGIAN

The invention of porcelain in China during the Eastern Han Dynasty period (206 B. C. - 220 A. D.) was a development that changed the face of art throughout the world. It took years for the process to be replicated anywhere else, but the ubiquity of Chinese porcelain was firmly stamped in the history books. Porcelain is so identified with China that it is still called “china” in everyday English usage.

During the Ming Dynasty period (1368-1644) Chinese artisans made a technical innovation adding manganese to prevent cobalt from bleeding during furnace heating and so distorting the fine artwork. For this reason the famed Ming Dynasty blue and white porcelain is considered to be the pinnacle of beauty and exquisite artwork on this type of porcelain.

In 2016 Solomon Islands issued a miniature sheet and a souvenir sheet commemorating “China 2016” Asian International Stamp Exhibition and depicting various examples of the famed Chinese porcelain.

The souvenir sheet shows a beautiful blue and white plate and a figurine of shishi, Chi-



**Chinese porcelain plate with a Guardian Lion stamp, Solomon Islands 2164 (2016).**

nese Guardian Lion, also known as Foo Dog when it is portrayed in a small form.

In Chinese symbolism, shishi were believed to have powerful protective benefits and the large shishi were usually placed in front of temples or palaces, and smaller Foo Dogs were kept in homes. 🐾