

# ARTY CATS

## Stone Tiger-Man, Ying Dynasty By Greg Balagian

On December 10, 2014, Taiwan Post issued a miniature sheet of eight stamps depicting important artifacts found in ruins of Yin, the last capital of the Shang dynasty from the late 14th century to early 11th century B.C.

A UNESCO World Heritage Site, the Yin ruins were discovered in 1899 in the northern Henan province near the modern city of Anyang in northeast China.

One of the stamps shows a kneeling anthropomorphic stone figurine with a tiger's head and a human body.

The tiger's head is slightly tilted upward with a large, open mouth filled by saw-like teeth and canines. The ears are up and alert.

A vertical groove runs along the figurine's back, possibly to attach it as

Tiger-Man Stone Sculpture, Yin Dynasty, China (Taiwan) 4213f (2014). *The Mew Listing is on page 69.*



a decorative architectural element. The tiger-man is in the Henan Museum, Zhengzhou, Henan Province, China.

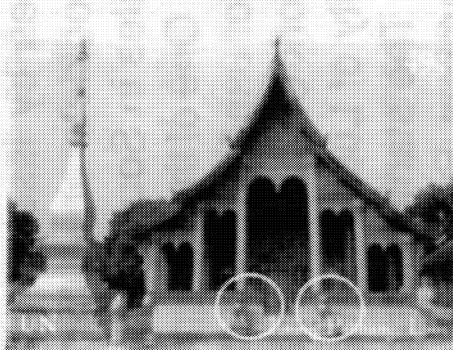
Tigers are revered in Chinese culture for their beauty, power and ferocity and thought to keep the cosmic forces intact. Tigers are found in Chinese art and literature. The Year of the Tiger is one of the important symbols of the Chinese Lunar New Year.

The now endangered Siberian or Amur tiger (*Panthera tigris altaica*) was once abundant in the northeast portion of China, near Anyang. 🐾



Photo by Dean Wickham

Chinthe are guardian lions in front of a temple. This one is in Luang Prabang, Laos, on a recent stamp from UN NY.



## Guardian Lions, Laos By Greg Balagian

The United Nations Postal Administration continues its World Heritage series by issuing six new stamps and booklets on June 5, 2015 depicting sites in Southeastern Asia.

One of the stamps denominated 49c (for use from the UN post office in New York City), honors the famous Laotian city of Luang Prabang.

The stamp pictures one of the most famous Buddhist temples in Luang Prabang, the Wat Sene, or Wat Sensoukaram, which was built in 1714 by Tia Tiao during the reign of King Kithsarat (1707-1725).

Golden statues of various beasts are in front and around the temple, and among them most prominently are a pair of chinthe or mythological guardian lions seen in many cultures of Southeast Asia. 🐾