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自由中國之聲

Voice of Free China

This is to verify that your reception report on English program on 15270
2139 KHz from 2139 to 2155 GMT on 3-26 19 85 corre-
sponded with our station log of the same day. Thank you for your interest. Further reports are welcome.

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In China, each year has its own particular animal symbol. For example, 1984 is dedicated to the rat, while 1985 will be dedicated to the ox. There are altogether 12 animals in this cycle. They are, in order: the rat, the ox, the tiger, the rabbit, the dragon, the snake, the horse, the sheep, the monkey, the fowl, the dog, and the pig. Why these twelve animals and not others? And why in this order? It is said that long long time ago, Buddha called all the animals in the world to him on the New Year's Day. Of all the animals in the world, only 12 came to him, and they came in the order we just mentioned. As a reward for their loyalty, the buddha gave each of them a year to be named for him..

Each of the twelve animals brings its characteristics to the year dedicated to him. For example, it is said that the Dog year allows for achievement of peace and harmony in the home, while the Rat year is believed to be an auspicious year for commerce, speculation, and the economy in general.

Pictured here is the Chinese character for one of these 12 animals in Chinese calendar. It is written by Mr. Wang Wang-sun, who is known for his excellence in bronze and stone inscription. Mr. Wang, 70 years old, is also known for his paintings and calligraphy. His works are treasures to art lovers. His calligraphy in pictographs is not mere handwriting, it shows originality, style, strength and personality.