



ARTS & CULTURE

Vietnam Artist Marks the Year of the Tiger

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As Vietnam prepares to celebrate the Year of the Tiger on February 1, artist Nguyen Tan Phat is busy creating hundreds of tigers to mark the Lunar New Year.

Over the next few months, Phat aims to make 2,022 tigers from wood and red **clay**. Phat often creates art with the 12 animals of the lunar calendar. But he said he is especially drawn to the tiger this year.

"I am very **fond** of tigers as an animal, as they are so powerful yet so **majestic**," Phat said. The 39-year-old artist talked with Reuters reporters from his home and work area in Duong Lam, a village just north of Hanoi.

His tiger **sculptures** are made from local materials. The materials include wood of the jackfruit tree and a clay-like substance commonly used in buildings in the area. He also uses crushed eggshells and seashells to form markings on the surface of some sculptures.

Phat said it takes about six weeks to complete one tiger. He must paint and then cover the sculptures in a protective substance. He works on several tigers at a time and employs two or three people to help him.

As of January 25, Phat had finished more than 800 tigers. Once he is fully finished, he plans to show all 2,022 tigers at a special event. Then he plans to sell them.

The Lunar New Year, known as Tet, in Vietnam will look different than usual years. Officials in both Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City said there will be no traditional firework shows because of COVID-19 concerns.

I'm Ashley Thompson.

Reuters reported this story. Hai Do adapted the story for Learning English.

Words in This Story

clay - n. a heavy, sticky material from the earth that could be shaped and becomes hard when it is dried or baked

fond - adj. strongly felt

majestic - adj. large and impressively beautiful

sculpture - n. piece of art that is made by molding or carving clay, stone, metal, wood, etc...
