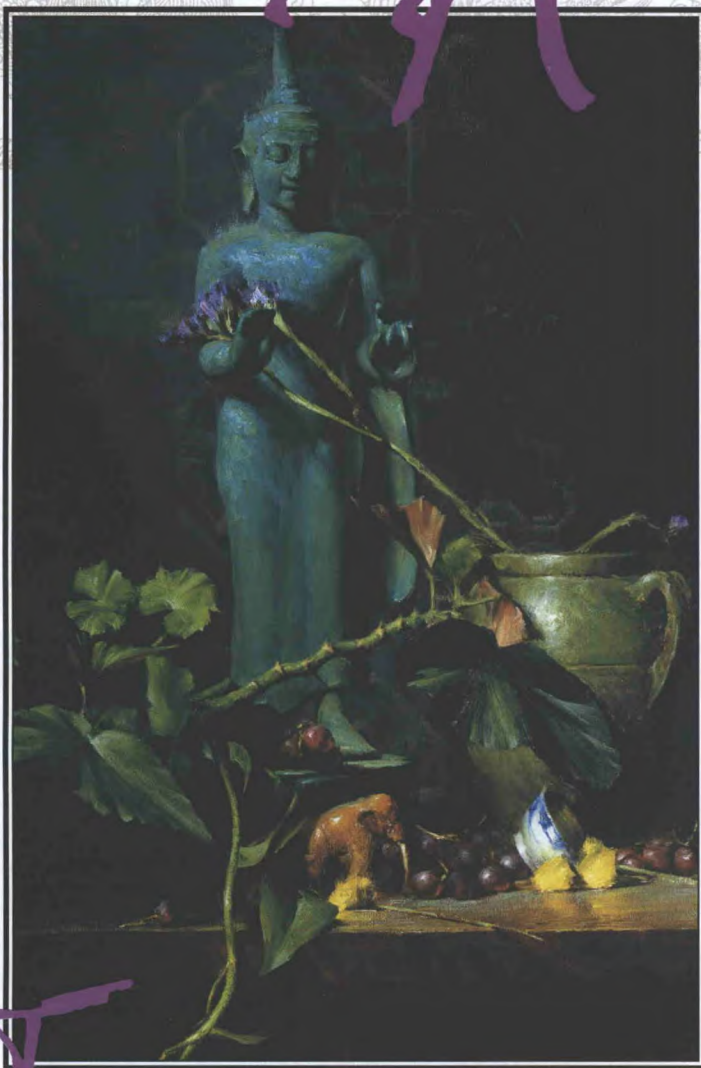


# At heaven, earth and mankind luck

by Lillian Too

Painting: David Riedel



*Feng shui* (geomancy, or the Chinese art of placement) recognizes the ultimate vastness and voidness of the cosmos, which define the “luck from heaven” – what Buddhists refer to as karma, and what Taoists refers to as the Source. There is plenty of conventional wisdom and logic in feng shui. On its own it is neither a religious nor a spiritual practice. But feng shui philosophy is based in the *I Ching*, the Chinese Book of Changes, that contains many Taoist reflections, so it is sometimes seen in a spiritual light. Each practitioner brings his or her own energy to the practice. And I personally have discovered that the purer the motivation that accompanies the practice the more powerful and rapid its results.

The Chinese believe that our lives are shaped and influenced by three types of luck – heaven luck, earth luck and mankind luck – referred to as *tien ti ren*. Feng shui is earth luck, which reveals all the ways we can live and move in consonance with the rhythms of our environment. It makes us open our hearts and minds to a keen awareness of the invisible energy that pervades living spaces, structures, mountains, and rivers, and the landscapes that make up the earth.

The Chinese call this energy *chi*, the dragon's cosmic breath. Understanding its intrinsic nature, we learn to differentiate between expanding *chi* and killing *chi*, between alive *yang*

*chi* and stagnant dead *yin chi*. This life force in the environment has the power to nurture us, or to destroy us. When we succeed in blending harmoniously with the auspicious, benign *chi* of the environment, we refine an approach to living that enhances our quality of life. This is the practice of feng shui – tapping into the good *chi*, the luck of the earth ...

But earth luck makes up only one-third of our store of luck. There is also heaven luck and mankind luck. We have no control over our heaven luck – the situation we are born into. But we do have control over our earth luck and our mankind luck. Awareness of *tien ti ren* thus implies weaving a





Dragon illustrations: Robert Beer

positive pattern of attitudes that engage the best of our outer and inner selves. Learning to use correct knowledge, we activate the essence of the outer chi of our physical spaces, and the inner chi that resides within us. In the process we live in harmony with our environment thereby engaging earth luck, and we tap into our own spirituality and our own source of luck – mankind luck. When we practice feng shui within this perspective, it has great potency.

### The benefits of feng shui

When we use feng shui correctly we will be unconsciously creating an environment that is conducive to the emergence of our heaven luck. Its correct practice will give everyone a helpful hand in assuaging their basic needs and more. Life becomes less stressful, and easier when we arrange our spaces in accordance with feng shui. Luck will improve, interactions with loved ones and others become smoother, less hostile. Work anxieties are reduced. Success in all things comes more easily. There is a sense of security and health also improves. Illness will get reduced. The chi of the living space will vibrate with goodwill and happiness. Feng shui also promises greater wealth and higher incomes when the forces of prosperity are activated. Sounds like magic? It is a living skill.

### Basic fundamentals of feng shui

Directly translated, the two words feng shui mean wind water. These are the forces that shape the living environment. When we practice feng shui we capture the good chi brought by the winds and waters and we avoid killing energy also brought by these same elements. The Chinese have been practicing feng shui for well over four thousand years since the time of the Yellow Emperor in 2700 BC. It has survived as a body of knowledge under various dynasties and metamorphosed into a broad-based set of principles for arranging our living environment. These principles origi-

nate from the Chinese view of the universe, which defines all existence in terms of the primordial forces of yin and yang. These two forces – known as the *tai chi* – give birth to everything. Yin and yang is expressed in terms of the five elements (*wu xing*) – wood, fire, earth, metal and water – so these elements have both a yin and a yang expression. These elements also have cyclical relationships with each other. The attributes and characteristics are then contained in a set of symbols known as the eight trigrams. Trigrams are three lined symbols made up of broken and unbroken lines and these trigrams are placed around the eight-sided symbol known as the *Pa Kua*. The *Pa Kua* encapsulates the basic fundamentals of feng shui.

### Easy feng shui with a compass

Feng shui is simply about creating a balance of yin and yang in the environment, and it is about creating a harmony of elements. It is possible to achieve this merely by arranging the placement of doors, furniture, objects and structures in this physical space in accordance with the orientation of chi in that space. To do this, a compass is required to point to the different directions and orientation of the space.

Simple feng shui uses the eight cardinal and secondary directions of the compass to categorize different types of luck. So the house or building is divided into eight sectors with a space in the center, and each sector has attributes that are arranged in the eight-sided *Pa Kua* (see next page), each side of which corresponds to a direction, an element, and a trigram. This means that each direction of any space, each of the corners of any house or building, has a different kind of chi. So to practice feng shui at its most elementary level you need to familiarize yourself with the *Pa Kua*. For yang houses (i.e. houses of the living as opposed to houses of the dead – gravesites) we use the *Yang Pa Kua*, which is referred to as the Later Heaven Arrangement *Pa Kua*.



# This is how you do it

Each of the directions of the Pa Kua corresponds to a specific type of luck. So the eight directions each bring a different aspect or nuance of luck. Anyone starting out and wanting to practice feng shui need only focus on this simple use of the Pa Kua and the compass to activate the different corners of the home. Activating can be done simply by placing specific auspicious or energizing objects or by introducing a big dose of yang energy.

Start by learning to take directions with a simple compass. Use any kind of compass that points to the magnetic North as its reference point. You may not know it but in feng shui we recognize three types of North – the magnetic North, the true North and the Polaris North. For most feng shui practice involving space enhancement we use the magnetic North, which is also the North used in modern style Western-made compasses. Hold the compass level to the ground and stand at the front door. It is always a good idea to learn to take directions from the front wall where the main door is. The direction that is 90 degrees to the front wall looking out is called the facing direction. The facing direction of the house is the basis of many advanced formulas of feng shui so learning to take this direction correctly is a very useful start to your feng shui practice.

Next take directions from the center of the house. Using a compass this way enables you to get your bearings. It is then easy enough to know which direction in

your home is North or South, East or West. Next from the direction you will be able to identify which is the North corner of the house, or the South corner and so forth.

And you will also be able to go into any room inside the house and identify the North corner of that room, or the South corner and so forth. The idea is to be able to identify the eight major corners of the home and of every room in the home according to the compass. In authentic Chinese feng shui we always use the compass to give us our bearings. We never use the front door to mark out any sector of the Pa Kua. We superimpose the Pa Kua onto any house or apartment plan using the compass to identify the directions of the house.

It is up to us to define the space we wish to enhance. This space is usually the whole house, but it can also be an apartment, or just a room, or your office at work. In feng shui all space reflects the tai chi, and when we do the whole building we are doing the big tai chi and when we do a small room we are doing the small tai chi.

Activating both big or small tai chi works equally well. This is the secret of feng shui. It looks at space in a relative sense. All directions are expressed as bearing from a point of reference. So what is North to you is South to your neighbour. What is East from one room becomes West from another room. When you understand this you will also understand why yin becomes yang under certain circumstances. So in feng shui nothing is static. Everything



Graphic by WOFs.com

The Pa Kua





is dynamic. All things have energy, and all energy is moving – only at different rates.

When we use feng shui to activate good luck for and in any defined space we are enhancing the good energy of that space to create a certain outcome “ruled” by that corner of that space. This is easy feng shui.

Thus based on the Yang Pa Kua here are attributes and co relations you can immediately use to enhance the feng shui of your room, your home or your office. Look at the luck that each direction stands for:

**THE SOUTHEAST** is for prosperity. Place a gem or money tree in that corner to create prosperity chi. This is also the corner of wood element so placing fresh flowers here or a healthy growing plant creates excellent growth energy.

**THE SOUTH** stands for recognition, respect and at its most shining brilliance it stands for fame. Place fire objects here like a red lamp or bright lights or better yet the tribute horse. The horse belongs to the fire element and 2002 being the year of the horse it has excellent energy.

**THE SOUTHWEST** stands for love, family, marriage and romance – everything to do with mother energy. This is because the trigram here is *Kun*, which stands for the nurturing energy of the mother. If you want romance in your life place two mandarin ducks in this corner. If you want your marriage and family life to strengthen place crystal balls or better yet place an amethyst geode under your bed and place your bed in the Southwest corner of your home.

**THE WEST** is for descendants and children's luck. When this corner of the home has good metal energy the children of the family will benefit. So anything gold or metallic in this corner benefits them. The best energizers for this corner will be the three or ten dynasty Chinese coins.

**THE NORTHWEST** stands for the luck from heaven, which benefits the family patriarch and also attracts influential influence to the home. This important corner also signifies big metal so windchimes with six rods are especially excellent for this corner. When you hang wind chimes in your home make certain they are never dangling above anyone's head. Place them in corners to do their work and it does not matter if there is insufficient breeze to make them tinkle. What we want is the metal energy of the wind chime. When metallic sounds are also generated they are of course better.

**THE NORTH** stands for career luck. Here the best image to have is that of a sailing ship made from gold. The ship should be sailing into your room, your home or your office and it is bringing you lots of abundant good fortune. The ship is excellent because it represents luck brought by the winds and the waters. You can also place water in the North to activate the intrinsic element of this corner.

**THE NORTHEAST** stands for wisdom, literary pursuits and scholarship. For those wanting to become straight-A

students, place a crystal globe in the Northeast corner for your room. When the Northeast of any home is well activated, either by crystals or by lights, the home will produce successful writers as well as scholars.

**THE EAST** stands for overall good fortune and for health – it is also the place of the eldest son. This is a wood corner, which should be energized by water or by green plants. Place a small water feature in this corner and better yet, place a dragon nearby. This makes it a very powerful activator of wealth luck.

The above is often described as easy feng shui but I have discovered in the course of my thirty years' exposure to this wonderful practice that easy feng shui works just as well as the complex formulas of feng shui.

If you have come to feng shui from a different angle and learned a different kind of feng shui application, there is no need to be confused. Feng shui is a very broad-based body of knowledge that originates from a country of many diverse dialect groups. Feng shui has also evolved many times over since its foundation thousands of years ago. Try the different approaches to feng shui and find one you are most comfortable with.

Remember that no one has a monopoly on knowledge. No one knows it all – in the context of modern applications of this ancient science, there is room for creativity and interpretation which has led to different inputs from different masters. As a result there are different schools of feng shui, which are inter-related and build one on the other. If you study them all, your feng shui knowledge really will become more complete.

Keep an open mind and practice with a genuine motivation; then let your small experiments with feng shui surprise you with some solid, tangible results. When you have tasted something of the potency of feng shui, and are convinced that this is something worth learning then you can proceed to investigate it further.

You can begin to discover that there is both a space and a time dimension to feng shui and to the balance and harmony of the intangible forces that surround us. That is when you can learn the Kua formula of personalized auspicious directions, the flying star formula of feng shui natal charts and the annual charts that offer the predictive branches of this wonderful practice. And much more ...

© Lillian Too is a Buddhist and leading feng shui author whose work has been translated into 24 languages. Her books have sold over six million copies worldwide. Her *Complete Illustrated Guide to Feng Shui* has sold over 900,000 copies. Lillian Too lives in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, where she observes the principles of feng shui in her own home and immediate environment. For more information on feng shui go to [www.lillian-too.com](http://www.lillian-too.com) or visit her feng shui online magazine at [www.wofs.com](http://www.wofs.com). See page 83 for information on her new book, *Mantras and Mudras: Meditations for the hands and voice to bring peace and inner calm*.

