

SUPERYACHT DESIGN

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Q4





WINDS OF CHANGE SALLY JOHANSSON

The *feng shui* philosophy enjoys a considerable following among land-based architects, but has made little conscious impact on yacht designers. This is despite the fact that its name is derived from wind (*feng*) and water (*shui*); two elements at the heart of the sailing experience. Sally Johansson of Bjorn Johansson Design argues it is time for a change.

There must be many designers who use *feng shui* principles without being aware that they are doing so. These principles are, after all, both logical and common sense and yet so often when we consider *feng shui*, we do not understand that it is universally applicable and not just relevant to Far Eastern cultures. However, *feng shui* is slowly attaining its rightful place as a seriously respected art in the West as well, incorporating the environment with an understanding of natural laws. So how can *feng shui* considerations be transferred from buildings to boats, when so much of the emphasis of *feng shui* is on the magnetic qualities of earth energy and corresponding directions? And, indeed, why would we want to?

We can't explain the principles and facets of *feng shui* in detail in the space of a short article, but by applying the principles of Yin (female) and Yang (male) together with the five elements (water, wood, fire, earth and metal) it is possible to interpret the spatial and time-sensitive energies around us by using design and working in harmony with natural cycles. We can use the most fundamental and powerful technique of all—form—to create psychologically supportive spaces. Simple examples of this would be how doors open into the interiors, for example the 'yin' door which protects the bed from view in the bedroom or the 'yang' door which opens straight into the space in a social area. It is worth pointing out, that form should never be compromised in good *feng shui*, so if something is not practical, it is not applied to a person's life or the design of a building or vessel; another parallel with good design.

It goes without saying that the design of a yacht involves working closely with the owner, but can we go that one step further by creating the yacht as an extension of the owner? *Feng shui* would say definitely—bespoke design resonates with the unique energy blueprint of the owner/s by selecting colours, textures, materials and artwork to complement the natal energies of the client as revealed in their Chinese horoscope, which uses the year, month, day and hour to calculate the unique blueprint of each individual.

When BJD was working on a interior for a client who specifically asked us to use *feng shui* principles, we asked Sarah McAllister of the Feng Shui Agency to advise us and were interested to find that the measurements we were using more often than not were in accordance with the Chinese ruler *Loa Bann*, which has auspicious measurements for the height and width of doors, desks, beds, etc.

The overriding benefit that *feng shui* design principles can deliver must surely be the increased feeling of psychological wellbeing, which is achieved by the human experience being at the centre of the design considerations.

And here's a thought: you can select favourable dates for the launching of the vessel, the maiden voyage or use directionology to plan your sailing routes, using the *Tung Sing Almanac* and *10,000 Year Calendar* to work with the owner's personal life force. After all, who wants to sail against the wind?

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