

EVERYDAY FENG SHUI
Feng Shui by Maria
May Column for the Benicia Herald

Art Enhances Your Energy

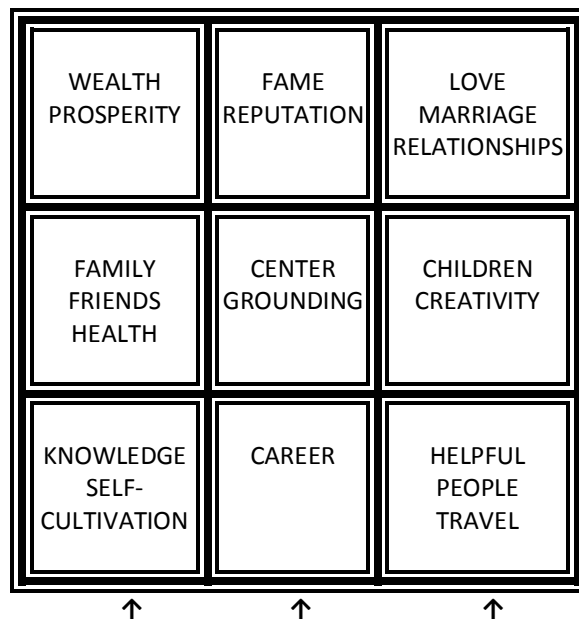
They say that, "A picture is worth a thousand words." What is your art telling you?

In Feng Shui our homes can become nurturing places for us mentally, physically and spiritually. To accomplish this we have to make sure that our surroundings accurately reflect who we are as individuals and who we aspire to become. Keep the energy in your home vital by treating it as an important aspect of your life. We are all different and therefore we are fortunate that there are numerous ways to enhance the energy flow in your home. Feng Shui is not just about hanging crystals. It's about finding the personal Chi enhancers that match your personality and style.

Chi enhancers are the basic Feng Shui tools that are used as remedies for treating, stabilizing, enhancing and balancing the energy in any environment. The ten Chi enhancers are: 1) Art – paintings, sculptures, collages, collections and textiles, 2) Colors – find the hues that you love, 3) Crystals – round faceted to circulate Chi, 4) Lighting – electrical, candles, oil, natural light, 5) Living things – plants, flowers, animals, 6) Mirrors – the bigger the better except for bedrooms and dining rooms, 7) Objects of nature – rocks, shells, seeds, potpourri, 8) Sound Makers – wind chimes, bells, musical instruments, 9) Whirligigs - mobiles, flags, 10) Water Features – fountains, ponds, birdbaths, aquariums.

Of all of these I find that enhancing with art and colors, is the easiest because they have the most powerful effect on people and their personal energy. Art is the soul of a room; it gives it energy and life, and it is easy to identify how it enhances the Feng Shui of a space. To enhance the Chi in your home choose art that elicits positive feelings and makes your heart sing. Remember that in Feng Shui everything is alive and is constantly talking to you. What you surround yourself with can nourish or drain you, therefore ensure that every art piece in your home is one that you love, and that portrays a serene or inspirational subject matter. Art depicting violence, death, distortion or negativity is not recommended.

To get the most benefit from art and colors match them with the function of each room. Choose romantic and sensual for the bedroom; lively, colorful art for the living room; powerful and motivational for the home office.



ENTRANCE QUADRANT

Use the Bagua map to help you choose the appropriate art and colors that correlate with the goals in your life. The Feng Shui Bagua (Ba-gua) Map, represented as a grid of eight sectors, with the Center being the grounding Force comes from the Chinese philosophy, “The I Ching,” and literally means “eight trigrams.” Each of the nine areas is associated with colors and art representations. If you want romance and your Love and Marriage Area is in the dining room, choose art that’s romantic and appropriate for your dining area. If you wish to improve your health, and your Health and Family area is in the bathroom, display art that evokes radiant health and vitality.

Here is a list of Art and Color recommendations for enhancing each Bagua area of your home or business:

Career Area:

- * Art - paintings, photos, collages pertaining to moving water (oceans, rivers etc.), asymmetrical shapes, and black frames
- * Colors – Black or shiny dark colors

Knowledge and Self Cultivation Area:

- * Art - paintings, photos, collages representing calm nature scenes (forests, ferns, vineyards etc.), columnar shapes, and wooden frames
- * Colors – Blue and green

Friends, Family, Health Area:

- * Art - paintings, photos, collages representing fresh, healthy vibrant flowers, family, friends and/or you in a healthy state, columnar shapes, and wooden frames
- * Colors – Blue, green and floral

Wealth and Prosperity Area:

- * Art - paintings, photos, collages or figures representing opulence and wealth, tall round leaf plants, bubbling fountains, triangular, cone shapes, and wooden frames
- * Colors – Purples, blues, reds

Fame Area:

- * Art - paintings, photos, collages or figures representing fame, animals, birds, stars suns, fire, upward movement, inspirational quotes, triangular, cone shapes, and wooden frames
- * Colors – Red

Love and Marriage area:

- * Art - paintings, photos, collages or figures representing romance, pairs of items, pictures of you and your significant other, triangular, cone shapes, and wooden frames
- * Colors – Reds and pinks

Children and Creativity Area:

- * Art - paintings, photos, collages or figures representing creativity and whimsy, pictures of children or child art, triangular, round shapes, and metal frames
- * Colors – Whites and pastels

Helpful People and Travel Area:

- * Art - paintings, photos, collages or figures pertaining to spiritual guides, and/or mentors, places you have traveled to or aspire to visit, pictures of mountains or natural stone, circular shapes, metal frames
- * Colors – White and grey

Center Area:

- * Art - paintings, photos, collages or figures representing earth scenes, deserts, wheat fields, yellow flowers or trees, rectangular shapes, metal frames
- * Colors – Yellows and earth tones

Look at the art you have in your home. Jackson Pollock said, “A painting has a life of its own.” What is each piece “saying” to you? No matter how positive and creative you may be in your inner world, if your home or work surroundings are contradictory or present energetic barriers, you are likely to find it difficult to manifest all that you desire. By paying attention to the flow of energy around you, beginning with the art and colors that surround you, you can align your inner intentions with your outer realities to make your life a conscious act of creation.

Affirmations and Inner Work:

In Feng Shui, intent plays a significant role in enhancing any area of your home or business. Is your art inspiring you or depressing you; affirming or scolding you? Listen to its voice, and then decide whether it should remain in your life. If it doesn't belong with you anymore, let it go by trading, selling or passing it on.

Feng Shui at Work:

One of my clients was struggling at work. She felt underappreciated and undervalued. I went to her home to find that her Fame area, in the living room featured three large picture windows with an expansive view of water. In the small wall space available she had two beautiful wall hangings representing asymmetric designs, coming down like waterfalls. They immediately reminded me of water, and combined with the large water view I sensed that the water element was dousing the fire element needed for fame, and contributing to her lack of appreciation at work. The art was expansive and beautiful, so we chose to move it to a more auspicious location than to pass it on. We found a perfect place for them, one on either side of a large mirror she had in her entrance, which was located in her Career area, a water element location. She then replaced the hangings with lively art showing celebration and upward motion; three women dancing and birds in flight with a red background. Pictures of people and animals represent the fire element, and the dancing and birds in flight represented celebration and upward movement. I knew that this was a good choice of art for her fame area. Soon after this change and a few affirmations she noticed that people began recognizing her and asking for her opinion more than before. One of her projects was funded and within a year she was offered a new job with a sizeable raise. Art matters!

Feng Shui on a Shoestring:

Feng Shui enhancements do not have to cost a great deal. I call repositioning art "shopping in your own home." Assess the art you have and move it to the identified locations recommended by the Bagua and remove any art that doesn't fit or make you feel good. Surround yourself with what you love!

Questions, Questions, Questions:

I encourage you to email me with question, which I will respond in this column or by email.

Be careful when selecting your art.

Reader: "I love buying art, and recently purchased a very large, bright colored painting of San Francisco. It's a modern art drawing of Nob Hill, the bridges, cable cars etc... It's very vibrant with a lot of yellows and reds. I attached a picture of it so you can see it. Where should I hang it? I was thinking of hanging it in my bedroom, but I'm single and I'm not sure that would be the best place. San Francisco is romantic."

Dear Reader: "Thank you for sending me a picture of your recent purchase. It's definitely very whimsical and fun. However, it is not a romantic representation, so I would avoid the bedroom. I would recommend one of three places; the Child and Creativity area for its whimsy, the Helpful People and Travel area for its representation of a location, and possibly the Center for its abundance of yellow; although it is a very active painting and may not serve to center and ground you. The first two areas are better. Sometimes it's better to think about where you need art before buying it, but I know how much fun it is to purchase something you love! If it evokes a positive emotion then its Feng Shui too "

Reader Follow -Up: "Thank you for your recommendations. The Children and Creativity area happens to be in my living room and it looks beautiful there! It definitely makes me happy every time I walk past it."

For questions or home consultations email at mtmccull@aol.com and put "Feng Shui" on the subject line, or visit my website at www.fengshuibymaria.com, (where you can read past columns), or Facebook "Feng Shui by Maria", where I post pictures as examples to enhancements.

I'm starting a new series of classes in June. Sign up now and get \$40 off a home consultation.

For information and registration go to: <http://fengshuibymaria.com/events-classes.html>

* Check out my BLOG – Just go to the website and click on “Blog”: You can view many pictures and, I will respond to your questions quickly.

Maria McCullough – Bio

Maria McCullough, a Benicia resident, is the owner / founder of Feng Shui by Maria (www.fengshuibymaria.com) and is a speaker and educator with over 20 years of experience. She specializes in residential, landscape and business consultations. She is a graduate of the Western School of Feng Shui and has personally trained with Terah Kathryn Collins, founder of the Western School of Feng Shui, specializing in Essential Feng Shui® and author of numerous books including “The Western Guide to Feng Shui.”