

Fengshui, the contemporary way

By applying modern approaches to classic texts, Desmond Jason Academy is bringing the mystical Chinese practice of fengshui into the 21st century.

DESMOND NG and Jason Chan are fengshui masters, whose understanding of their field goes way beyond the ancient divination classic I Ching and other writings on Chinese astrology and date selection.

The two read widely across architecture, culture, current affairs and geopolitics, economics, psychology and strategy. The library in their Tanjong Katong shop-house contains almost 1,000 books. A favourite reading is about “Li ji” – the historical record of Chinese emperors and rituals across different dynasties.

“In commercial fengshui, bosses also often ask about business strategy and human resource issues, and we have to advise them appropriately based on the techniques dating back as far as the Warring States period,” Mr Ng says.

Their knowledge also stretches into interior design, architecture and geography.

“If a client wants to build a fengshui house, we need to investigate the landforms, climate, and the sun’s path across different seasons and altitudes at the location. Once we come up with a design guideline, we then work with professional architects,” Mr Ng says.

To them, fengshui is about designing sustainably, delicately balancing science and art. It is also a holistic philosophy of prosperity, wellness and virtue.

The science in fengshui involves quantitative analyses of Chinese horoscopes and definitions of day, time, directions, and the flow of energy.

The art is in “the flow of the design”. Given their clientele across a wide range of cultures and regions, creative solutions are devised to adapt to local culture if necessary.

The Singaporean edge

Singaporeans have an edge in the fengshui business because of their bilingualism, Mr Ng says.

“We can read, speak and write both English and Chinese equally well. That is our branding internationally.”

Curious about Chinese culture since his youth, Mr Ng was drawn into fengshui after devouring classics like Sun Tzu’s “The Art of War” and the writings of I-Ching philosophy.

After graduating with an IT engineering degree from Nanyang Technological University in the 1990s, he plunged into the fengshui trade, initially advising friends on issues like marriage dates, home renovations, and one’s ba zi, the direction one is likely to follow in life.

“Ba zi is the DNA of one’s character and potential that one can possibly take,” Mr Ng says.

He continued learning, acquiring a Masters of Education from Monash University to improve his understanding of the geography of thought. Mr Chan, meanwhile, joined him more than 10 years ago initially as a disciple.

The duo used to give fengshui talks and lessons, hence their company’s name, Desmond Jason Academy Pte Ltd. Today, business has grown to a point where they are focusing on consultations more than education.

Clients include those from banking and finance, food and beverage industries, as well as business and home owners. Advice is sought on improving business, health, on home renovations, on offices and factories, as well as on new phases in life.

Business grew steadily by word of mouth, locally and abroad. Today, Desmond Jason Academy has clients hailing from nearby regions like Malaysia, Thailand, Myanmar, Laos, Indonesia, Australia, China, Hong Kong and Taiwan, as well as further-flung places like Middle East, Canada, France, the UK and Switzerland.

The day after the interview, the duo flew to the glitzy winter sports town of St Moritz in Switzerland to



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consult on the fengshui of home construction and of a burial site.

Keeping up with the times

Mr Ng and Mr Chan say it is not easy to find young people who meet their exacting requirements to join them.

“People who join us must be at least graduates, because the research skill is important. In that way, we are also raising the bar of our field,” Mr Ng says.

“They also need to be bilingual, as they need to read Chinese ancient texts and at times have to write 200-page reports in Chinese and English.”

Desmond Jason Academy also innovates its marketing and operations.

Mr Ng’s Facebook page is constantly updated with pictures and video clips of his travels and notes on favourable locations. A private Facebook page also keeps clients updated on dos and don’ts. Other social media tools of Whatsapp and Instagram are also used.

In the past, a fengshui master might take years to plan and design a building. Today’s rapid business cycle makes that impossible. Time-consuming drawings are ditched in favour of pictures taken by smartphone

cameras, 360-degree cameras and even drones. 3D printing is now being explored for presentations to clients, Mr Ng says.

A year of consolidation

Looking ahead in the year of the Earth Dog 2018, major economies like China, United States, European Union and United Kingdom are likely to consolidate their economy, Mr Ng says.

“The consolidations will impact our business landscape,” Mr Ng says.

“Those individuals who are born in the year of the Dog, Dragon, Goat and Ox will likely experience more challenging situations at their workplace. Companies who incorporated during these four Zodiac signs may also expect demanding times ahead.”

“But we always say when times are good, you save and when times are bad, you spend. Make sure you check your ba zi before making your next move.”

Mr Ng and Mr Chan have written a detailed 2018 fengshui forecast and analysis on their website at www.ichingfengshui.com.