

JEWELLERY

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FOCUS

COME ON IN...

STORE DESIGN
AND AMBIENCE

Kevin
Coates'
language
of object

The best of
Goldsmiths'
Fair

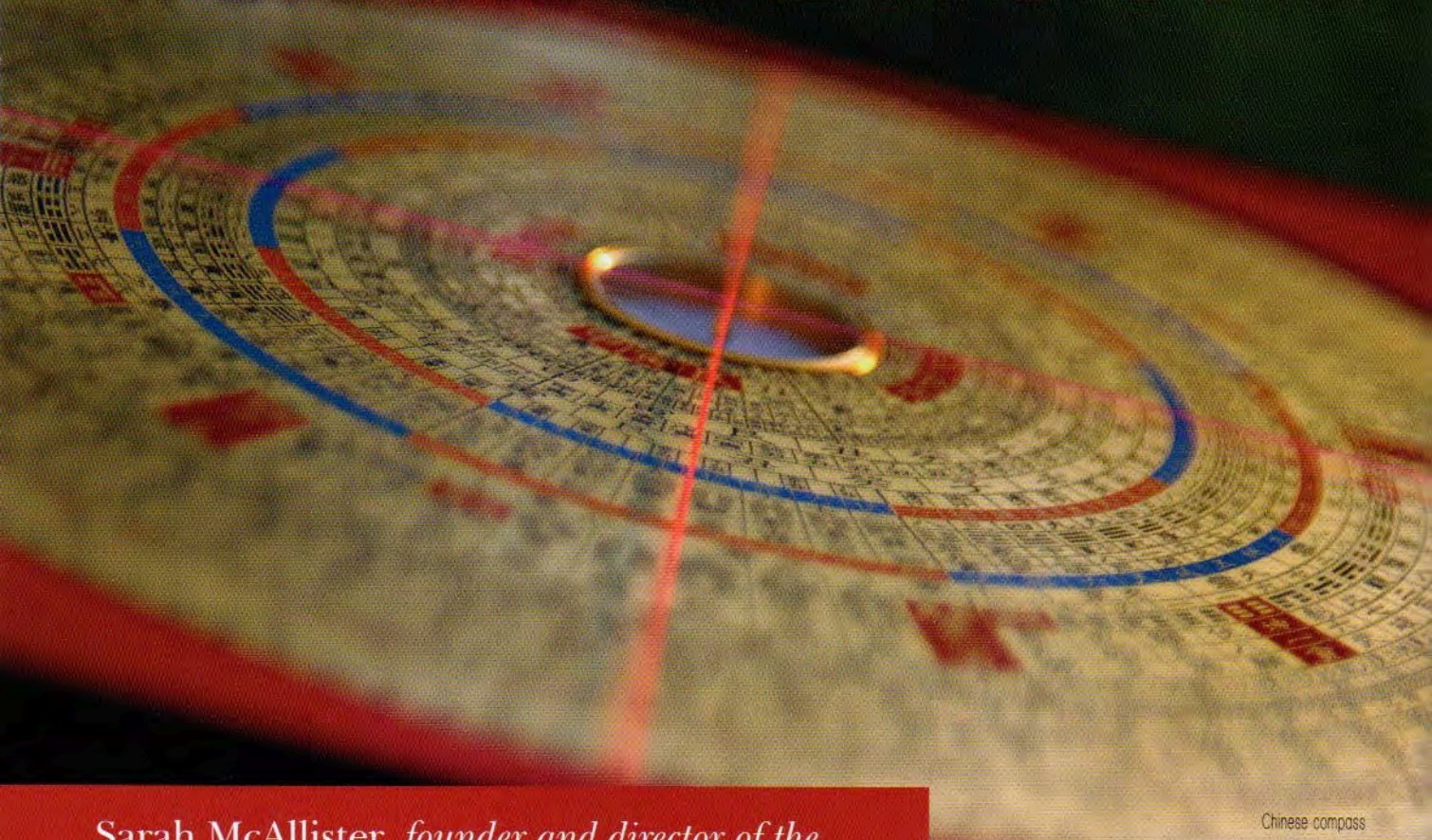
Trends from
the spring/
summer
catwalk

Focus on
bangles and
bracelets



PLATINUM ALLOYS

WORKING LIKE A CHARM



Chinese compass

Sarah McAllister, founder and director of the Feng Shui Agency, provides some pointers for building positive energy into retail store design

Match the interior design theme to the energy of the building

Just as a person has a character, so does a building, and in most cases a business owner will be drawn to a property because it is a good energetic match for them and suits their character – there is an energetic compatibility between them. Even conventional Sir Winston Churchill could see that “we shape our houses, thereafter they shape us,” and many years later the sensibility in business owners and consumers is becoming much more attuned to the feeling and energy or ‘chi’ of a place.

Quantum science confirms we are interconnected to our environment

Feng shui works on the scientifically proven fact that quantum energies permeate the physical, emotional and mental planes of existence, and that how you design your space creates an energetic impact on you, which in turn will affect you positively or in some

cases negatively. The goal of feng shui is to reduce any negative impacts and enhance positive effects so that your energy is supported and life activities are simpler and easier.

Avoid disastrous decisions when purchasing/leasing a retail unit

Sadly, many people lead lives where stress can get the better of them and they make disastrous decisions by focusing only on the ‘bottom line’ and not listening to their gut instinct, which is responding to more subtle energetic cues. Some business owners hire us to help make a decision about where to locate the premises based on the surrounding urban or rural form. There are some areas of a town wholly unsuited to a jewellery shop.

Tune in with your female clientele

The feeling of a space is so important, especially considering that a lot of jewellery is bought and selected by

women who in general are much more attuned to space than men. It is possible to design your store with feng shui in mind, which will resonate with women and probably not go entirely unnoticed by men either – and it isn't necessary to use Chinese or Asian themes or any amateurish trinkets in the décor.

Design is a powerful influencer even from a physical and visual perspective alone
Consider the sense of awe you experience when walking into a beautiful cathedral – this was a conscious intention of the architect; to create a sense of wonder at God's magnificence by creating atmospheres that rather dwarf the human in terms of proportion. Now consider the lighting and connection with nature – the huge multi-coloured windows let through an almost mystical amount of heavenly light.

Transfer these principles into modern-day architecture and you will see how the space very much influences our moods, and our inclination to settle into and enjoy commercial premises, or to leave without purchase or reflection.

As above, so below

Add to this the simple fact that the Earth itself, below and surrounding the building, has a magnetic energy, and the solar and stellar system interacts with this forcefield, and we have a sentient, almost matrix-like web of energy constantly moving and morphing within the building.

Natural flow and retail landscaping

The ancient Chinese observed the movement of energy in the environment and how buildings with different orientations all displayed different characteristics when it came to the life stories and experiences of the occupants.

If at all possible commercial premises will have a landscaping area in front, designed to bring good chi towards the property.

Match the design ethos of the space with the artistic perspective

The sensibility required to create a beautiful piece of art (which is what jewellery is, after all) is akin to the mind of the spatial and energetic designer – ie the feng shui designer who sees the holistic nature of the space and taps into streams of consciousness and symbolic awareness, in a similar way to those who create meaningful art. Would it not make sense, then, that the retail environment is given the same careful and conscious deliberation in terms of design and layout, as the items that are on show?

Beyond brand architecture

Fads in design are fun but they are shortlived and lack real meaning or longevity. The high-end jewellery business requires a certain gravitas to be taken seriously, so any design that is too gimmicky will not work well. Design that blends consciousness and visual appeal will be the most successful, because the space will be resonating with exquisite ambience and harmonising with the energies of prosperity and unlimited mind, rather than with the lower energies of 'bottom line' and the finite mind.



Jade charm

Pattern recognition

Feng shui is actually really down to earth and about observation of how the material world and the energetic world are constantly morphing and influencing each other. There are definite patterns to be analysed, which will, for example, reveal the best areas in a home to be used for important activities such as sleeping, eating and working, and the areas that need to be used least, and turned into storage or guest rooms.

Natural health of a building

Feng shui works with the same Five Elements diagnosis systems as traditional Chinese medicine and acupuncture/shiatsu, but we also have the knowledge from the macrocosm (directional alignment) that links the health of certain psychological/emotional functions with the chi of certain directions. For example, if you were suffering from poor staff management then we would usually look at the north-west area of the premises, as this relates to the leadership function because of the general stillness of this direction, and the trigram 'Heaven' or 'Father' is located here.

Chinese horoscope works synergistically with feng shui layouts

Many people think that the Chinese horoscope is simply based on the year of birth and whether or not you are one of the 12 Chinese zodiac animals. This is only the beginner level and is great fun to look at, however the true Chinese horoscope is based on the year, month, day and hour of the individual and can be used to help the management teams make better decisions around

business functions such as staffing, team members and best times for marketing campaigns etc.

Just as an acupuncturist balances the energy of your body, we advise on ways in which your horoscope chart might need to have some elements balanced (between water, wood, fire, earth and metal) and one way of doing that – in addition to colours to wear or colours to use in the feng shui – is to bring in the symbolism of one of the 12 zodiac animals, which are each related to different elements. These can be worn as pendant charms made out of silver or jade, either in the actual shape of the animal or as the Chinese character for the animal.

Retail premises feng shui

The below are a few simple tips which scratch the surface of the detail provided by a professional consultation:

Nature knows best – keep lighting dazzlingly natural

Full spectrum lighting makes people feel better than the reddish/yellow lighting of traditional bulbs because the wavelength is faster and approximates natural sunlight, having more white/ultraviolet light in it. This also means that the subtle colours of fine metals and precious gems are better illuminated and therefore their natural beauty is more dazzling.

Keep the front entrance clear from obstruction or clutter

It might sound obvious, but some stores try to cram in too much stock – less is most definitely more, and ensures the energy flows smoothly into the premises.

Ensure all plants are real and healthy

Research proves that live greenery increases retail spend.

Keep the air clean and oxygenated

A Nikken Air Wellness Filter, for example, reduces stress levels by keeping air supplied with refreshing negative ions, which simulate fresh forest or mountain air.

Sarah McAllister is an educator on the subject of feng shui and has helped with the feng shui design for award-winning retail stores and spas throughout the UK and overseas. She is a Master of classical feng shui, having trained since 1998, and founded the Feng Shui Agency Ltd in 2003, where she and her team offer private coaching, horoscope analysis, feng shui surveys and a full interior design/refurbishment/architectural service for new builds and renovations. Sarah is offering a very special promotion only for readers of *Jewellery Focus* – the first five businesses or individuals to book a consultation by 4 December will receive 20 per cent off regular fees. For further information, please call 0844 848 4099, email info@fengshuiagency.com or visit www.fengshuiagency.com

