

# Creating Sacred Space with Feng Shui Bagua

Art and Text by **Dawn Gaskill**

Feng Shui means “wind and water.” It is an ancient Chinese method of observing and watching the way the *chi* or energy moves through a space. When we are conscious of the chi around us, we can create a healthier, more prosperous and harmonious environment.

There are many forms of Feng Shui. This series of paintings was inspired by contemplation on the Black Hat Bagua map, which is a more spiritual practice of Feng Shui. Bagua literally means “eight areas” of our lives and along with the center of the map these nine areas represent the aspirations that we all share, though some are more dominant in our lives at times than others. My intention in creating the Bagua paintings is to support us in manifesting the things we choose to have in our lives.

Each painting contains symbolism to activate that part of the Bagua in our living, worship or working space. Hidden within each painting is a number, an element, a trigram, as well as the traditional celestial animal (if there is one), so each painting contains everything you need to activate that area of the Bagua. The Bagua can be used to balance and harmonize a space as large as a property or building, or as small as a room, a desk or a meditation altar.

The orientation of the Bagua map is determined by the entrance to your space, or as you face your desk or altar.

The front and center of the map, the number one, is Career and Life Journey, which is the water element. The black turtle, the traditional celestial animal, also represents heaven on earth because he carries his home



▲ **Wealth and Prosperity.** The ancient name for this direction of the Bagua was Fortunate Blessings. I really love that description because, while we may want to have Wealth and Prosperity, Fortunate Blessings speaks to what we truly want.

◀ **Career and Life Journey.** The black turtle, the traditional celestial animal, also represents heaven on earth because he carries his home on his back and he never gets anywhere if he doesn't stick his neck out.

on his back and he never gets anywhere if he doesn't stick his neck out. The activating colors are black, blue and any color that evokes water. The trigram for Career and Life Journey means deep water, and basically says that to make the most of your life journey, you have to have the courage to go into deep water.

The second direction is Love and Relationships. There is no traditional celestial animal for this part of the Bagua, so I meditated and swans came. Swans

mate for life and so I felt that was an auspicious symbol for this direction. You will notice that I do not have them in water because this is an earth element. Water can represent emotions and you do not want your relationships to drown in emotions. Items should be placed in twos in this part of the Bagua, so on your puja table or altar you could place two pieces of rose quartz, two red hearts or candles.

The third direction is Health and Family. The green dragon is the traditional celestial animal, which represents the growth of new spring. It also represents honoring the ancestors, learning from the past, and moving forward. Since this is number three, I chose to paint a family of three dragons, the largest one holding a pearl that symbolizes wishes granted. If we learn from the past, we can move forward and have our wishes granted. A wood element energy, activate this direction of the Bagua by adding rectangular shapes, fresh-cut flowers or photographs of loved ones framed in wood.

The fourth direction is Wealth and Prosperity. The ancient name for this direction of the Bagua was



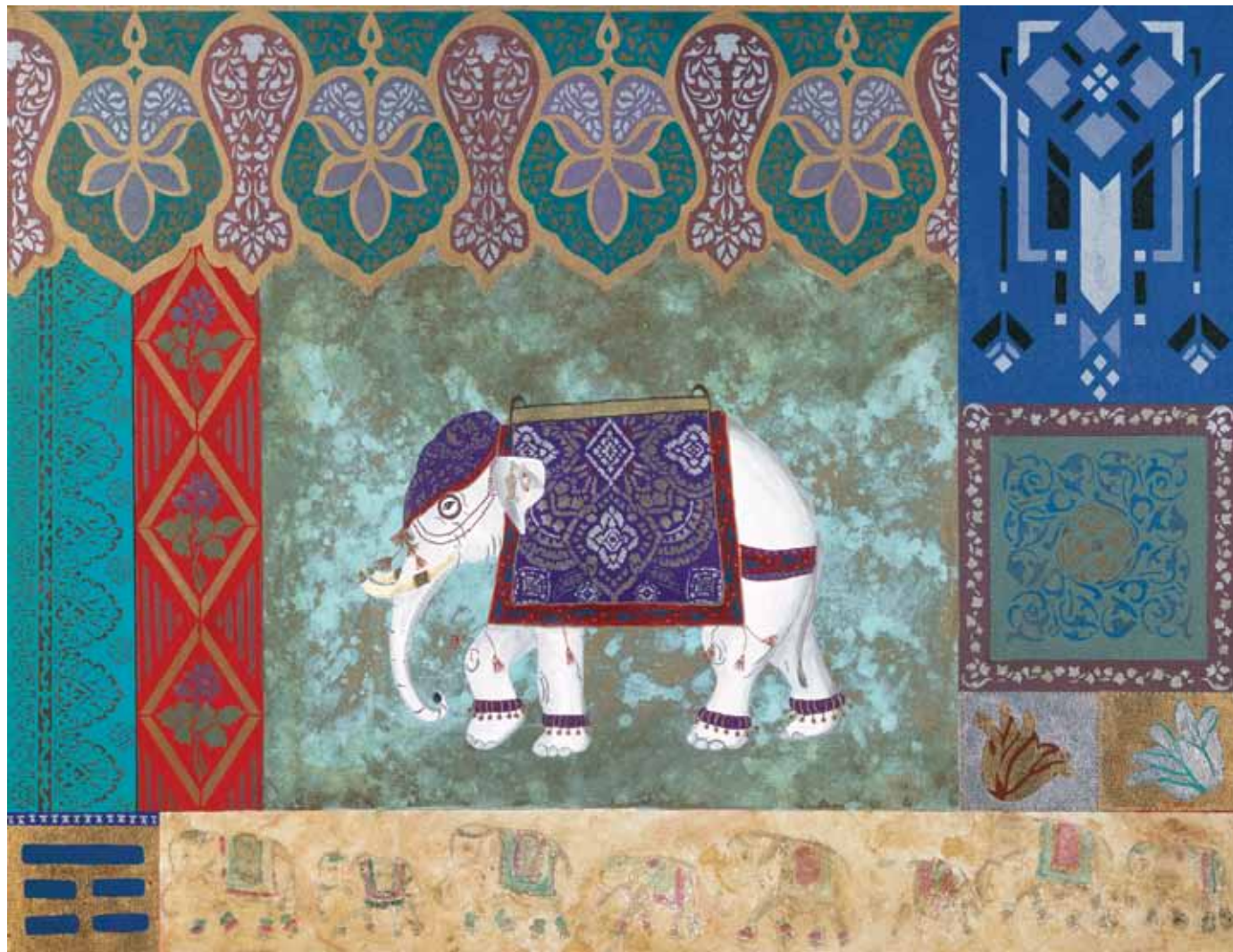
◀ **Creativity and Children.** The core of this direction is to live life joyfully, creatively and pleasurable, to empower your inner child to live to its fullness. The trigram means joy.

▲ **Helpful People and Travel.** The white horse represents movement, power, and the ability to travel safely. The I Ching trigram represents strength, power and endurance.

Fortunate Blessings. I really love that description because, while we may want to have Wealth and Prosperity, Fortunate Blessings speaks to what we truly want. The trigram here means “wind” and the element is soft wood. When I meditated, dragonflies landed in my lap, so I painted four of them because this is number four. An interesting thing about dragonflies is that they will not stay any place that is polluted, so it is important that you keep your environment clean in order to live a life of fortunate blessings. You can use plants with red or purple blossoms or those with round leaves like coins.

The number five is at the center of the octagon, what they call the *tai chi*, and represents Wholeness and Balance. This is the only part of the Bagua that does not have a trigram. Its symbol is yin/yang. The Chinese believe you should use the number five judiciously because it is so powerful. This direction is earth element energy. The golden snake is a traditional celestial animal and represents how we coil up our energy as we create a foundation for ourselves and then move up into the light from that foundation. In addition to having the square, which is the shape for earth element, I also included the other four elements for balance: the golden fish in water, the verdigris finish for metal, the phoenix and flames for fire, the green leaves and flowers for wood.

The number six in the Bagua is Helpful People and Travel. Again this direction did not have a traditional celestial animal so I painted the white horse, which represents movement, power and the ability to travel safely. The trigram represents strength, power and endurance. There are six horses in the fresco section of the painting. You want to activate this part of the Bagua



if you need help from other people, if you want to build a team, if you want more business clients, or if you want a spiritual teacher. The element is strong metal, the shape is round, and the colors are black, white and grey. You can place in this part any item with which you feel a deep spiritual connection.

We move to the seventh direction, soft metal, which is Creativity and Children. The core of this direction is to live life joyfully, creatively and pleurably, to empower your inner child to live to its fullness. The trigram means joy. The colors are soft pastels and the traditional celestial animal is the white tiger. I painted seven tiger lilies to represent the number seven. You may want to activate this part of the Bagua if you feel blocked in your creativity, if you feel your life is not as joyful as you would like it to be, to empower your children or grandchildren, or to improve your relationship with children. Anything that makes you laugh, or anything made of metal or is circular could be used to activate this part of the Bagua.

The number eight is Knowledge and Self-Cultivation. While there is no traditional celestial animal for this direction, the white elephant seems perfect because this is the strongest earth element part of the Bagua and represents knowledge. The trigram represents stillness, living a peaceful life, knowledge, learning easily. You would activate this part of the Bagua to improve your meditations, to have a more peaceful, gentle life, to support yourself or your children to learn more easily and do well in school. Place books in this space, or perhaps a photograph of a mountain. Placing art or photographs of wise ones such as the Buddha, a saint or someone who represents wisdom to you also energizes this section. The activating colors are turquoise and indigo.

The ninth direction of the Bagua is Fame and Reputation. Many people have resistance to claiming this for themselves and that is why I love the ancient name of this direction, which is Illumination. This is the fire element representing people, sunshine and

bright things. The trigram means to make the most of your potential so that you illuminate your life. There are nine flames underneath the red phoenix, which is a traditional celestial animal. The color is red so you could put anything that is red and triangular, such as

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a lamp with a red lampshade. This energy is about learning to respect yourself, and then being recognized and appreciated by your family, by your community, by the people you do business with, and as far reaching as you choose. If you have a project or idea you want to go out in the world, make sure that this part of the Bagua is activated.

Through the art of Feng Shui we can see that the sages who created this ancient art were very wise, and this wisdom still works in our lives today, supporting us in what we most want to manifest. 🌿

© 2010 by Dawn Gaskill. Dawn is a self-taught artist living in San Miguel de Allende, Mexico. To see her fine art gallery and Intentional Art store and read about her Integration of Art and Intentions, visit [www.dawndesigns.com](http://www.dawndesigns.com).

