

Year of the Dragon brings predictions

Feng Shui master in high demand

Rosemary Eng

This is the busiest time of year for **Sherman Tai**, fortune teller and geomancer. Everyone wants to know what will happen in the new Year of the Dragon so they can plan their lives, he said from his office in **Aberdeen Centre**.

His mornings are usually devoted to corporate clients who want advice on the optimum placement of buildings and interior offices to harmonize with environmental energies (*feng shui*).

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Tai's clients include the **HSBC Bank Canada** and the architects of **Richmond's new city hall**.

Because of the old scrolls hanging from the walls and the tortoise shell and three *I Ching* Chinese coins on his desk, one expects to encounter a wizened gent.

Instead, Tai is smartly dressed in business suit and black coat, looking just like an ordinary businessman as he reaches into his pocket to answer his cellular phone.

Tai said he was trained in Hong Kong and the U.S. in mechanical engineering. Though he went through normal, formal schooling, his life started with an unusual turn when he was four years old, after he suffered a severe head injury from a fall. Because his parents were poor and could not afford to care for him as well as their other children, he was sent to Hong Kong's New Territories to live with an "auntie."

In the New Territories he met a *feng shui* master from Tibet who was certain Tai had been the doctor who saved him during a previous life.

The master trained Tai in the Asian philosophies relating to Buddhism, the *I Ching* and geomancy (*feng shui*).

Working in Hong Kong, Tai told people's fortunes as a hobby and became known for his accuracy.

Aberdeen Centre developer **Thomas Fung** said when he learned about Tai, who speaks both Chinese and English, he thought the service would fit nicely into the



Fortune teller **Sherman Tai**

business mix of his then new mall.

Tai took up Fung's idea and has made a living here in fortune telling and geomancy since 1989. His corporate consulting rates start at \$800. His fortune telling rate is \$20.

Tai said 30 per cent of his clientele is non-Chinese, who usually want to know when they can retire. These people are often only in their 40s, he said.

Chinese ask about business, money and a happy family life.

"People are too greedy, always asking for more and more money. Money is not everything. If you have a peaceful, happy mind you will be successful," advised the geomancer.

Tai, 47, looks like a man in his early 30s. He attributes his youthfulness to daily meditation and being "spiritually quite happy." ♦

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Sherman Tai sees good and bad in coming year

Predictions for the Year of the Dragon:

- The **Toronto Stock Exchange** will rise 15 to 18 per cent.
- The **Dow** will rise 10 to 15 per cent before the bubble bursts.
- The **Hang Seng** market will go up at year-end.

- **British Columbians** will see a cut in taxes, but economically will suffer through another difficult year and businesses will continue to move out of province.
- Strongest sectors in B.C. will be entertainment media and tourism.