

INTERVIEW

Jean-Christophe Maillot
Les Ballets de Monte Carlo

HAUTE HORLOGERIE

Powerful Expressions

FASHION

Travellers' Collection
& Spring 2012

BEAUTY

Skin-full Pleasure

FURNITURE

Practically Comfortable

VEHICLES

Killer Models



Le Gray

Acupuncture, a Myth or a Reality?

In any case it's not magic. Acupuncture originates from China and has been practiced there for thousands of years. It involves the insertion of very thin needles through the skin at specific points on the body, said to activate specific energy points in the body. For those who tried it, they say it has therapeutic benefits when used to treat illnesses like neck, shoulder and back pains, anxiety, depression, stress, migraines, chronic fatigue, sinus, sports injuries, PMS problems, and especially insomnia and infertility. Acupuncture remains controversial among scientists; however, just like any other treatment, it needs to be trusted. You need to believe in what you're undergoing, and the therapists have to believe in their clout... do not underestimate the power of placebo!

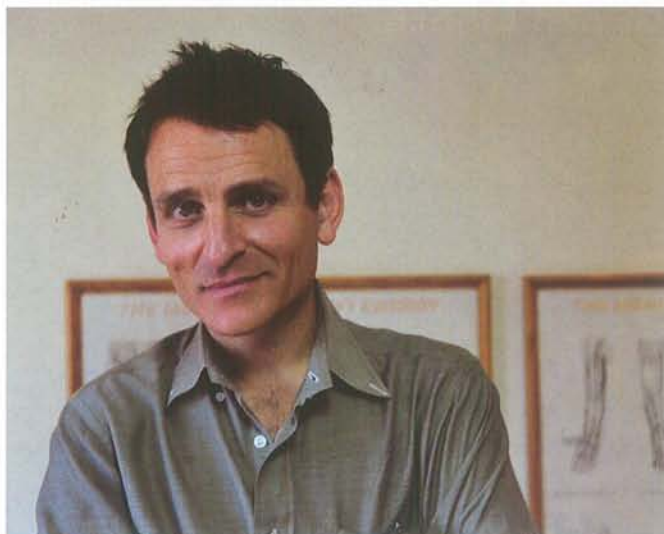
Digging out the best in our city, Dr. Robert Ogilvie caught our eye in Le Gray Hotel in the Beirut Central District. As an Acupuncture and Chinese Herbal Medicine specialist, Dr. Ogilvie is featured in Tatler as one of Britain's 150 best private doctors. He uses techniques such as inserting needles to encourage blood flow to specific areas of the body. He promises to spend a lot of time in Beirut for fun and for work at the same time.

1) What brings you to Beirut?

I'm a victim of my own success in London, I've been doing acupuncture for 22 years, and one day my friend Gordon Campbell Gray (Le Gray Hotel owner), whose also my patient, told me that if I stay in that clinic I'm going to die in it. I was looking for some culture shock, I came to Beirut in February and I fell in love with it, now I plan to come here often to spend some time and work meanwhile.

2) The first question that pops into anyone's head "does it hurt"?

Yes it does! There are different styles of acupuncture, some don't hurt, but the one I do hurts. The discomfort doesn't come from the needle insertions but rather from the sensation of the energy flow in the body. If it doesn't hurt, it means there isn't much change going on thus the treatment isn't effective.



3) How did you come to learn acupuncture? Since you're English and this ritual is Chinese...

I lived in New York in my twenties, and I went back to London one day "heartbroken," a friend of mine advised me to see that lady who does acupuncture, hesitantly I did, and I was amazed by how she made me feel after acupuncture. That lit up my mind and I decided to learn acupuncture.

4) How do western doctors react towards acupuncture? Is it a substitute or does it complement western medicine?

Acupuncture is greatly fought against by the politics of western doctors. Western doctors ban the use of many herbs used in Chinese medicine to make Chinese remedies less affective. Acupuncture actually works well with western techniques; it's not a substitute, but when a patient suffers from infertility and has an in-vitro scheduled in a few months, meanwhile she can have acupuncture and will most probably get pregnant before her in-vitro appointment, and that's when Chinese medicine turns out to substitute western medicine. But if she doesn't get pregnant, then the Chinese treatment will certainly reduce the side effects that all western cures cause to our bodies.



Beauty

Health

5) You're specialized in treating infertility, how does acupuncture work on that? This issue is not very common in the Middle East (we're over populated), so what are you expecting?

Well as I said before I'm here not just to work, I'm also here to enjoy some time out of London. In this part of the world women have kids at a younger age, but in London women decide to have children after the age of 35, and one of the causes of infertility is the cold weather in the UK. What Chinese medicine does is that it looks at your body in a way western medicine doesn't; acupuncture will simply put heat into a woman's body, it won't make the ovary produce 15 eggs, but it will help round out edges. It can also cure infertility in men.

6) What is the worst case scenario, or the worst that can happen while performing acupuncture?

Knock wood! I haven't had any worst case scenarios. You can actually make someone worse by doing "unintelligent treatments," but you have to be really stupid to cause that. My treatments weren't as effective earlier in my career, but as I gained a lot more experience I can simply tell what is wrong with the person the moment they step in.



7) How much time will you be spending time in Beirut and how much will a session of acupuncture cost?

I haven't figured it out yet, but I think it'll be around \$100 USD (not less) for an hour. The first session should be two hours so that'll be \$200 USD. I'll be coming here once every month, probably for around 5 days, and I'll be treating at Le Gray Hotel. When I'm not here my patients should be taking the herbal treatments. Press coverage is certainly a good affirmation for patients, but nothing is as effective as the word of mouth. You know... what keeps you busy is when people recommend a certain treatment to their friend.

