

Physicians after five

Doctors spend so much time taking care of others. Richard Philip takes a look at what some doctors do to take care of themselves, after hours.

Good taste on and off the job



Wu spends his after hours time in the Maosoleum which only opens at night.



If beauty lies in the eyes of the beholder we should be thankful that the beholder is Dr. Waffles Wu, a plastic surgeon for whom beauty is a profession as well as a pastime.

One of Wu's interests is to collect art. Last year, he opened the Museum of Contemporary Chinese Art in Singapore, which showcases contemporary art, mainly from China. Wu has been collecting all manner of things since the age of 12 and Chinese art since the age of 20.

"Now I like to collect big works and there is no way you can put big works in the house. One piece will fill up the entire room. Naturally, the only thing to do was to open one's own art space," says Wu.

Popularly known as the "Maosoleum" the museum is a non-profit establishment located at Kaki Bukit road in Singapore. It opens only at night (from 9.30 p.m. to 12 a.m.) and visitors have to make an appointment before seeing the works in it.

"I believe that when you open things at night it creates a different mood and there is a completely different ambience," says Wu. The Maosoleum's artworks are images of Chinese social realism and include light-based sculptures and installations which are best accentuated in the cover of darkness. "It is pop art – the Chinese version of Andy Warhol," he adds.

Wu's selection of artworks is based on the how much fun they bring to people who view them. "I hate to think of art as blue chips," says Wu, repudiating the tendency to buy art based on its investment value rather than its inspirational draw.

It is comforting to note that Wu, the plastic surgeon, also has an attractive art collection. Good taste, preferably in all things, is certainly a key requirement in an esthetic surgeon.

Wu used to paint and sculpt as a hobby but confesses that his artistic output is much less these days.

"I tend to channel more of my creative energy into the creation of beautiful faces and satisfied patients. Some esthetic procedures can be extremely demanding, stretching one's powers of ingenuity and dexterity – quite enough for a day's work," says Wu who practices at the Woffles Wu Aesthetic Surgery and Laser Centre at the Camden Medical Centre in Singapore.

There's always time to play the sax

Professor Lord Robert Winston, a world-renowned scientist, author, and presenter of popular science programs takes it easy by playing the sax.

In fact, he has mastered the instrument well enough to be able to play a solo at the Royal Albert Hall in London, UK.

The hit British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) One series *Play it Again*, which was aired in 2007, featured Lord Winston learning to play the saxophone from scratch.

The program showed him getting tips on how to play the saxophone from top players such as John Harle, Sir John Dankworth and Courtney Pine. After facing the challenges of busking and playing in a nightclub, Lord Winston goes on to deliver a solo from Russian composer Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition* to a packed crowd at the Royal Albert Hall.

"I play the saxophone a bit and I play the clarinet even worse," says Lord Winston – a modest response considering he is currently chairman of the Royal College of Music in Britain, one of the leading conservatories of music in the world. "I think music is the most basic of all the art forms. It uses abstractions which writing and painting don't," he says, adding that music touches the human soul in a way that is very different from other kinds of art.

Whether it is picking up the saxophone, or writing a book, or doing research it is the thrill of learning something new that motivates Lord Winston. "The reason I am doing it is because I learn something new which I didn't know before. As long as you are learning something new you are going to be useful. When you stop learning you are not useful anymore," says Lord Winston, a professor of science and society and emeritus professor of fertility studies at Imperial College, London. He also runs a research laboratory that works on reproductive and developmental biology.

Lord Winston's research in reproductive medicine led to the development of gynecological microsurgery in the 1970s. His work on preimplantation genetic diagnosis enabled families carrying gene defects to have children free of fatal illnesses. His books and popular television programs have made him a familiar face and have enhanced the public's understanding of science.

His latest book entitled *Bad Ideas* took him 2 years to complete. "It took much longer than most of my books which are written in about 4 to 6 months. The book is essentially a history of technology and it puts forth the idea that every piece of technology has a downside, which is not usually predicted at the time of its invention. "It suggests that every scientific idea that we have brings us closer to destruction. Obviously it is a bit of a construct. But I think it is an interesting idea to have," Lord Winston says.



Lord Winston picked up the sax in a few months. His musical experience before that was a few melodies on the recorder when he was 11.