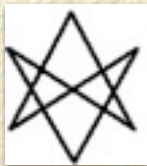
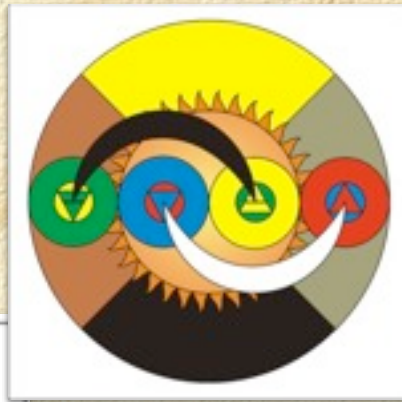


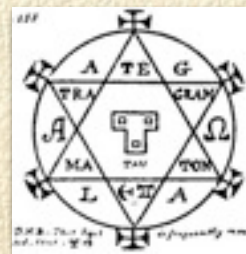
Sigils: The Art of Magick

What are sigils?

- “a sign or image considered magical;
a seal or signet”



Well, that's a nice broad definition.



What are sigils?

- Visual focus for ritual, or meditation; magickal identifier
- A way to bypass the conscious mind, as all the thinking is done during its construction, not its use
- If a sign or image causes a shift in your mental/emotional state, it can be used as a magical tool and is thus a sigil.

Why apply artistic principles to sigils and other magickal objects?

- Sigils are visual focii; as such, they make use of the eyes and the brain to make their impact.
- Sigils are a door to the unconscious; most reactions to artistic principles happen on a subconscious level.

Using perceptual and aesthetic principles will enhance sigils' visual impact, and thus their power to affect your magickal work.

Sigil Design Methods

- ❑ Pictographic: remove duplicate letters, arrange remaining ones into glyph
- ❑ Symbolic: merge existing symbols
- ❑ Magic Squares: transform words to numbers, and map them on a numeric grid
- ❑ Rose Cross: transliterate into Hebrew and map letters on the Golden Dawn Rosy Cross
- ❑ Others: find letters in a fingerprint or starmap; pick them out of a book; map them on a keyboard.....
- ❑ Intuitive: meditate on your subject, then just start drawing

How are they used?

☐ Creation

- ☐ The sigil is made with full conscious intent, and then laid aside until the analytic basis for it has been forgotten.

☐ Charging

- ☐ The sigil is charged in a ritual context with energy related to its purpose.
- ☐ Example: work yourself into an ecstatic or trance state before gazing at the sigil; use it as a focus in meditation; touch with a drop of blood or sexual fluid

☐ Use

- ☐ Where the sigil is set loose to do its work. (May be synonymous with destruction in some cases)
- ☐ Focus for meditation, worn as jewelry, kept under a pillow

☐ Destruction

- ☐ After the ritual or once the goal is accomplished
- ☐ You've bound a piece of your Will into this object - once its purpose is done, get it back!
- ☐ Not applicable in all cases

Questions thus far?

Let's walk through the design process

- ❑ Pick a subject, goal, name, or concept
- ❑ Write a 'Will Statement', or pick a set of relevant words or symbols
- ❑ Decide on a design method
- ❑ Transliterate, transform, add and reduce as needed
- ❑ Merge letters and symbols, or plot letters/numbers onto map
- ❑ Evaluate design

First, the words

- Name
- Descriptors
- 'Will-statement'

Try to be specific and active in the language you choose.

'I want to get a better job'

VS.

'It is my will to get a job which pays well and leaves me the time and energy to come to more OTO events.'

Too many letters!

- A properly specific will-statement will likely have far too many letters - we're making sigils, not inkblots!
- Some possible solutions:
 - Remove vowels and duplicate letters
 - Remove everything but nouns and adjectives
 - When converting to numbers, change by syllable instead of by letter.

The quick and easy way!

- Rearrange remaining letters
 - Rotate, reflect, resize - play with the letterforms until you get something you like.

Example - 'harmony':



- Take existing symbols, combine and tweak them to make something of your own, e.g.:



Libra (balance) + Sun (beauty) = Harmony

Secret Decoder Rings

Transform letters (or syllables) into dots on a map, and then play connect the dots!

- ❑ Traditional letter/number maps:
 - ❑ Magic Squares
 - ❑ Rose Cross

- ❑ Less traditional (I made them up last night)
 - ❑ Random Pattern
 - ❑ Bibliomancy

Magic Squares

- Grids of numbers whose rows, columns, and diagonals all add up to the same number
- Seven of them, one for each of the astrological planets

Square of Saturn

- 3x3 square
- lines sum to 15
- entire square sums to 45

4	9	2
3	5	7
8	1	6

Correspondences: business, law,
death, discipline

Square of Jupiter

□ 4x4 square

□ lines sum to 34

□ entire square sums to 136

Correspondences: wealth, authority

4	14	15	1
9	7	6	12
5	11	10	8
16	2	3	13

Square of Mars

□ 5x5 square

□ lines sum to 65

□ entire square sums to 325

Correspondences: battle, strength

11	24	7	20	3
4	12	25	8	16
17	5	13	21	9
10	18	1	14	22
23	6	19	2	15

Square of Sol

□ 6x6 square

□ lines sum to III

□ entire square sums to 666

Correspondences: beauty, light,
resurrection

6	32	3	34	35	1
7	11	27	28	8	30
19	14	16	15	23	24
18	20	22	21	17	13
25	29	10	9	26	12
36	5	33	4	2	31

Square of Venus

□ 7x7 square

□ lines sum to 175

□ entire square sums to 1225

Correspondences: love, beauty,
relationships

22	47	16	41	10	35	4
5	23	48	17	42	11	29
30	6	24	49	18	36	12
13	31	7	25	43	19	37
38	14	32	1	26	44	20
21	39	8	33	2	27	45
46	15	40	9	34	3	28

Square of Mercury

□ 8x8 square

□ lines sum to 260

□ entire square sums to 2080

Correspondences: knowledge,
communication, travel

8	58	59	5	4	62	63	1
49	15	14	52	53	11	10	56
41	23	22	44	45	19	18	48
32	34	35	29	28	38	39	25
40	26	27	37	36	30	31	33
17	47	46	20	21	43	42	24
9	55	54	12	13	51	50	16
64	2	3	61	60	6	7	57

Square of Luna

□ 9x9 square

□ lines sum to 369

□ entire square sums to 3321

Correspondences: intuition,
creativity, dreams

37	78	29	70	21	62	13	54	5
6	38	79	30	71	22	63	14	46
47	7	39	80	31	72	23	55	15
16	48	8	40	81	32	64	24	56
57	17	49	9	41	73	33	65	25
26	58	18	50	1	42	74	34	66
67	27	59	10	51	2	43	75	35
36	68	19	60	11	52	3	44	76
77	28	69	20	61	12	53	4	45

- ❑ If you're going to use a magic square, these letters now need to turn into numbers.
-
- ❑ Different numerologies for different languages.

Letter to Number Conversion: English

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i
j	k	l	m	n	o	p	q	r
s	t	u	v	w	x	y	z	

Letter to Number Conversion: Greek

α	alpha	‘ah’	1
β	beta	‘b’	2
γ	gamma	‘g’	3
δ	delta	‘d’	4
ε	epsilon	‘eh’	5
Ϝ	digamma (obsolete)	‘w’	6
ζ	zeta	‘z’	7
η	eta	‘ay’	8
θ	theta	‘th’	9

ι	iota	‘ee’	10
κ	kappa	‘k’	20
λ	lambda	‘l’	30
μ	mu	‘m’	40
ν	nu	‘n’	50
ξ	xi	‘x’	60
ο	omicron	‘oh’	70
π	pi	‘p’	80
Ϟ	qoppa (obsolete)	‘k’	90

ρ	rho	‘r’	100
σ	sigma	‘s’	200
τ	tau	‘t’	300
υ	upsilon	‘oo’	400
φ	phi	‘f’	500
χ	chi	‘kh’	600
ψ	psi	‘ps’	700
ω	omega	‘aw’	800
Ͱ	sampi (obsolete)	‘ss’	900

Letter to Number Conversion: Hebrew

א	aleph	— (‘a’)	1
ב	bet	‘b’	2
ג	gimel	‘g’	3
ד	dalet	‘d’	4
ה	heh	‘h’	5
ו	vav	ו (‘o’, ‘u’)	6
ז	zayin	‘z’	7
ח	chet	‘kh’	8
ט	tet	‘t’	9

י	yod	י (‘ee’)	10
כ	kaph	‘k’	20
ל	lamed	‘l’	30
מ	mem	‘m’	40
נ	nun	‘n’	50
ס	samekh	‘x’	60
ע	ayin	— (‘ay’, ‘aw’)	70
פ	peh	‘p’	80
צ	tzaddi	‘ts’	90

ק	qoph	‘k’	100
ר	resh	‘r’	200
ש	shin	‘s’	300
ת	tav	‘t’	400
ך	kaph final	‘k’	500
ם	mem final	‘m’	600
ן	nun final	‘n’	700
ף	peh final	‘p’	800
ץ	tzaddi final	‘ts’	900

So we get:

- 'harmony' → 8-1-9-4-6-5-7
- αγαπη → 1-3-1-80-8
- תפארת → 400-80-1-200-400
- 'destroy Cincinnati'
→ 'destroycina'
→ 4-5-1-2-9-6-7-3-9-5-1

or by syllable: des-troy-cin-cin-na-ti

→ (4+5+1)-(2+9+6+7)-(3+9+5)-(3+9+5)-(5+1)-(2+9)
→ 10-24-17-17-6-11

Number reduction

- If a number is too large to fit in the square, you can reduce it by adding the individual digits together: so $400 \rightarrow 4+0+0 = 4$.
- Modulo arithmetic: 17 in a 16-cell square becomes 1
- Add complexity by multiplying letters by a relevant number, and then reduce if needed:
 - so 400 on Sol: $400 \cdot 6 = 2400 \rightarrow 2+4+0+0 = 6$
 - 5 on Venus: $5 \cdot 7 = 35$

Destroy Cincinnati!

11	24	7	20	9
4	12	25	8	16
17	5	13	21	10
10	18	1	14	22
23	6	19	2	15

English numerology, Square of Mars
no transform

11	24	7	20	9
4	12	25	8	16
17	5	13	21	10
10	18	1	14	22
23	6	19	2	15

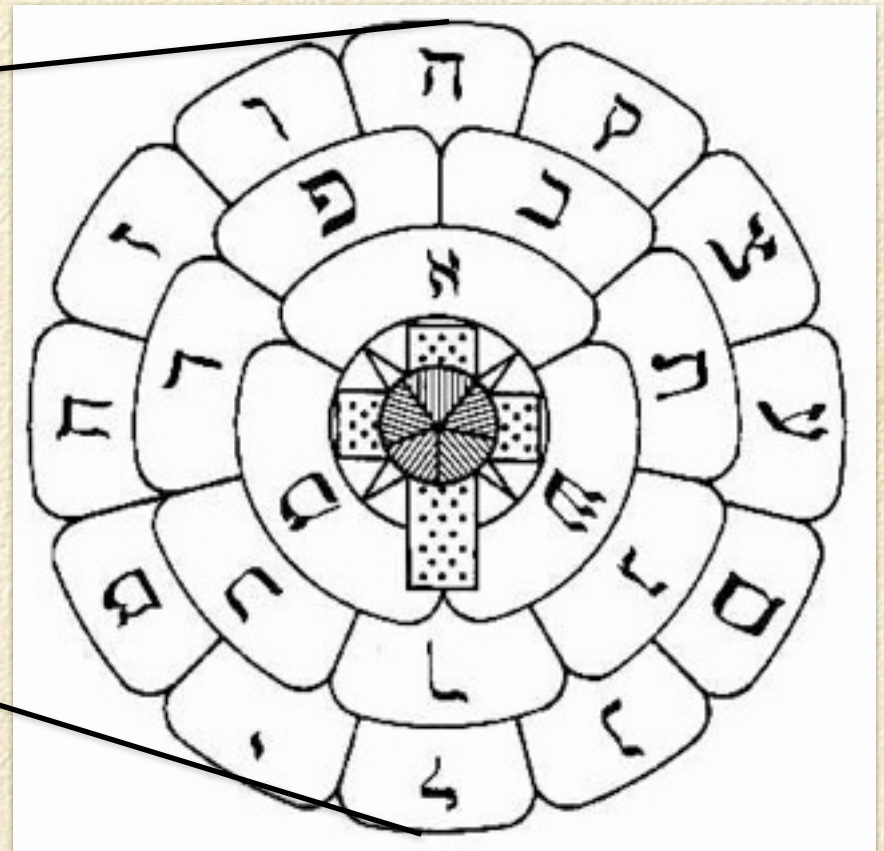
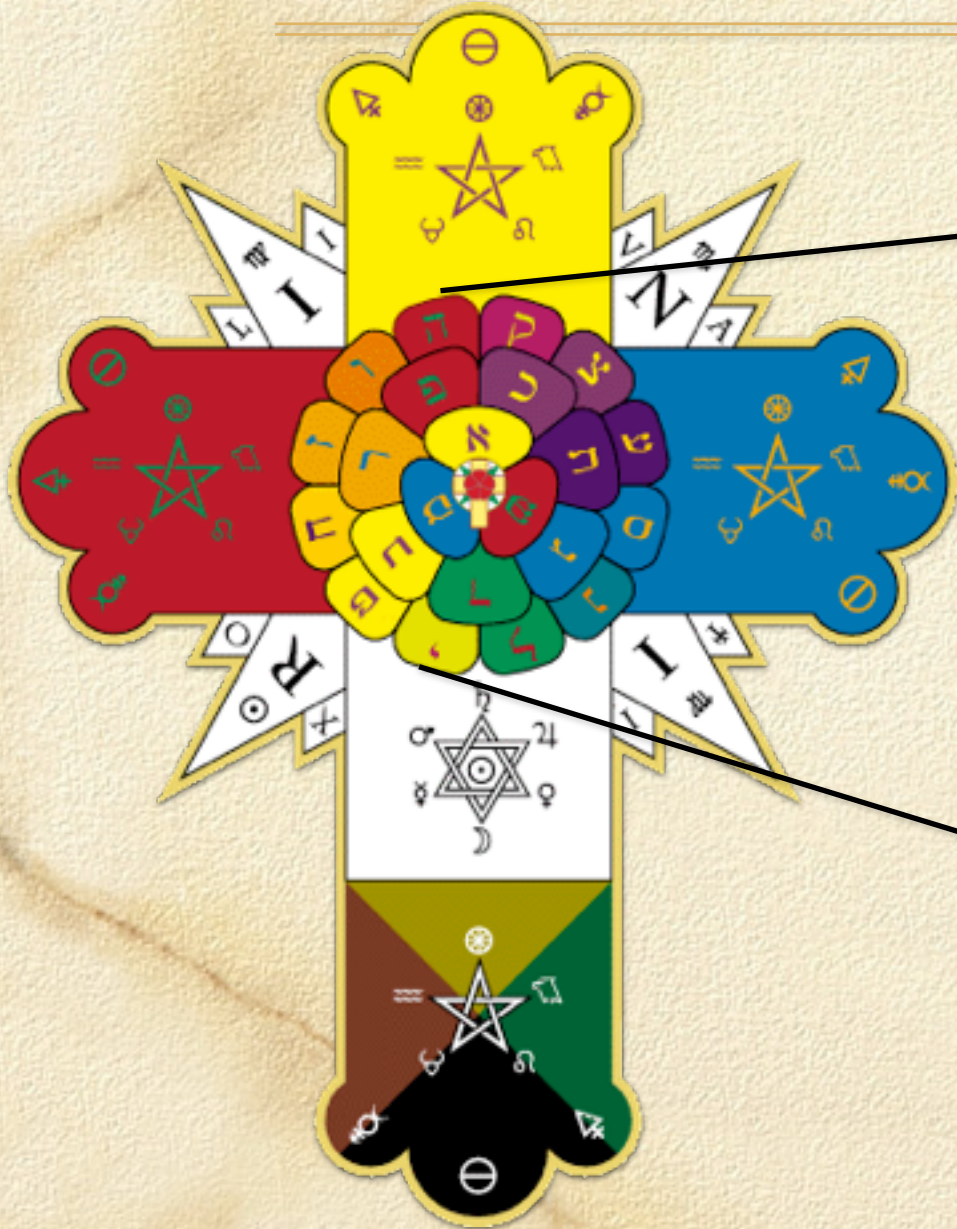
English numerology, Square of Mars
x5 transform

11	24	7	20	9
4	12	25	8	16
17	5	13	21	10
10	18	1	14	22
23	6	19	2	15

Greek numerology, Square of Mars
x6 transform
ΙΟ Αππολλον!

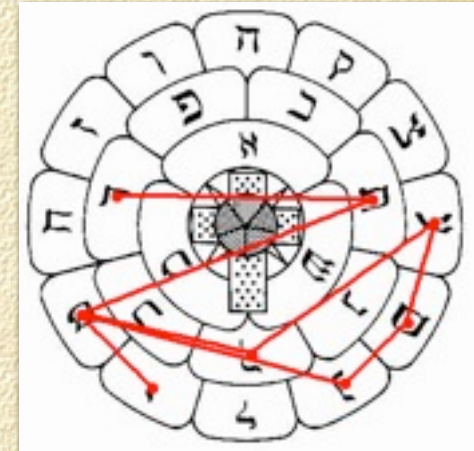
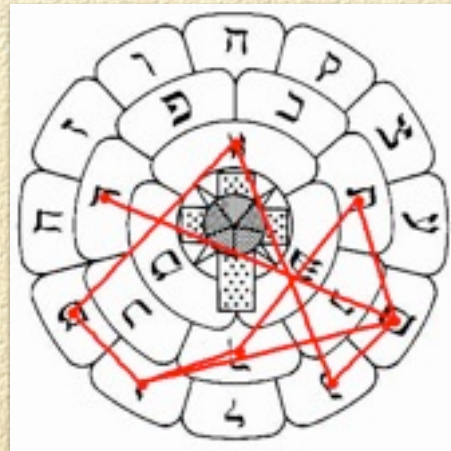
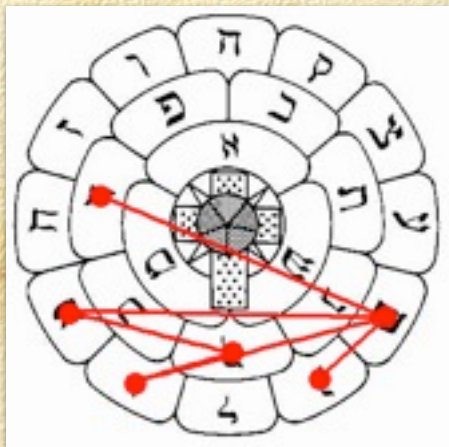
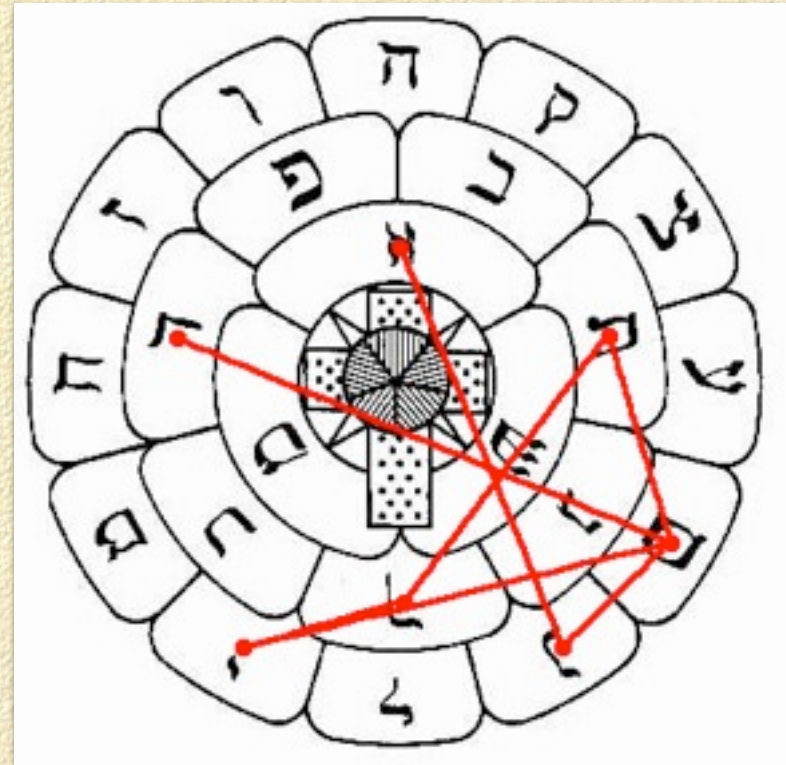
If you don't want to bother with those pesky numbers....

The Rosy Cross



Destroying Cincinnati, Golden Dawn style

Of course, given the difficulties of translating into Hebrew, it could also look like any of these:



'Alternative' methods

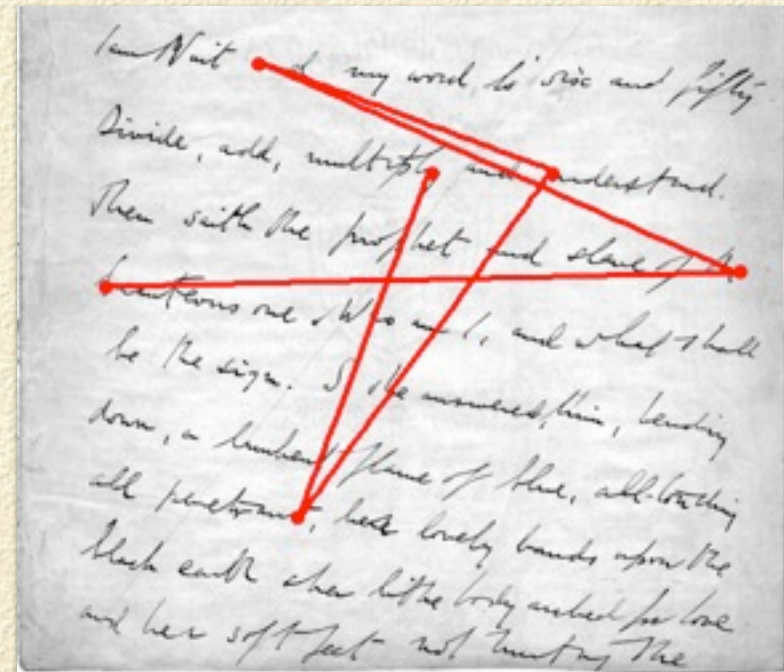
Fingerprints:

'beauty'



Bibliomancy

'beauty' using Liber AL, I:24-26



And so many other possibilities!

A scattering of rune stones, starmaps, QWERTY or Dvorak keyboards, Ouija boards, some unique layout invented by you....

Time to Get to Work!

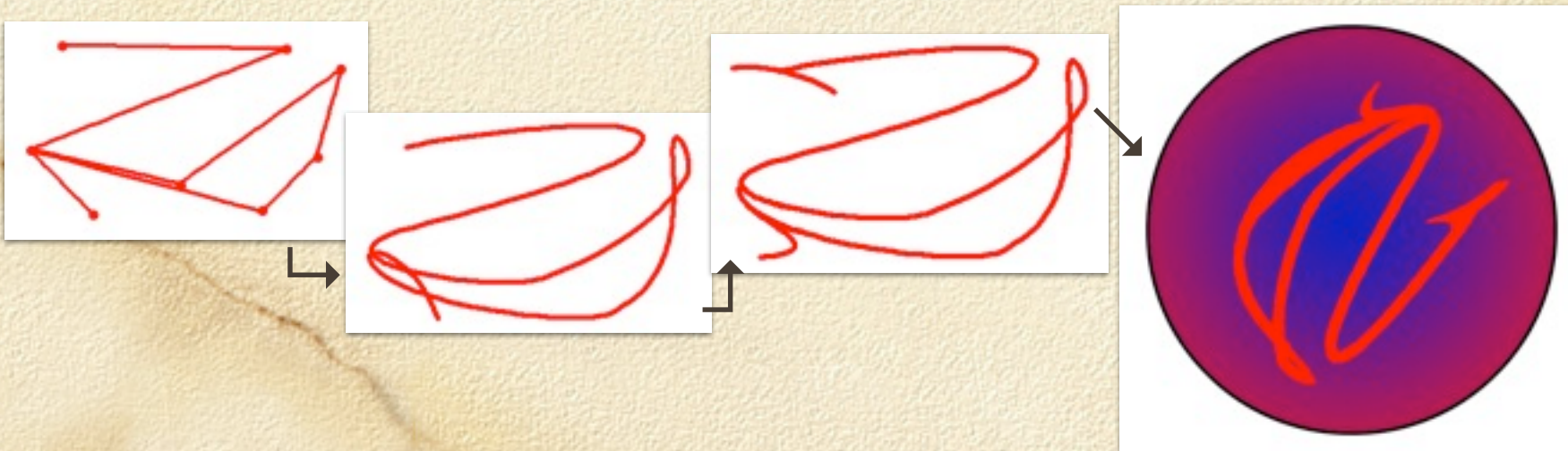
You have 10 minutes to come up with a core symbol.

- ☐ Pick a subject, goal, name, or concept
- ☐ Write a 'Will Statement', or pick a set of relevant words or symbols
- ☐ Decide on a design method
- ☐ Transliterate, transform, add and reduce as needed
- ☐ Merge letters and symbols, or plot letters/numbers onto map
- ☐ Evaluate design

Now comes the fun part!

You have the core symbol - now we can play!

- Curve the lines to get a more fluid symbol
- Add flourishes and individual tweaks
- Consider colors, borders, shapes, and backgrounds



Shapes and Colors

- The human eye has evolved to see three-dimensionally; it can often be fooled into seeing a third dimension when there is none.
- The human brain has instinctual psychological reactions to color and shape
- Magickal correspondences are linked closely to these phenomena

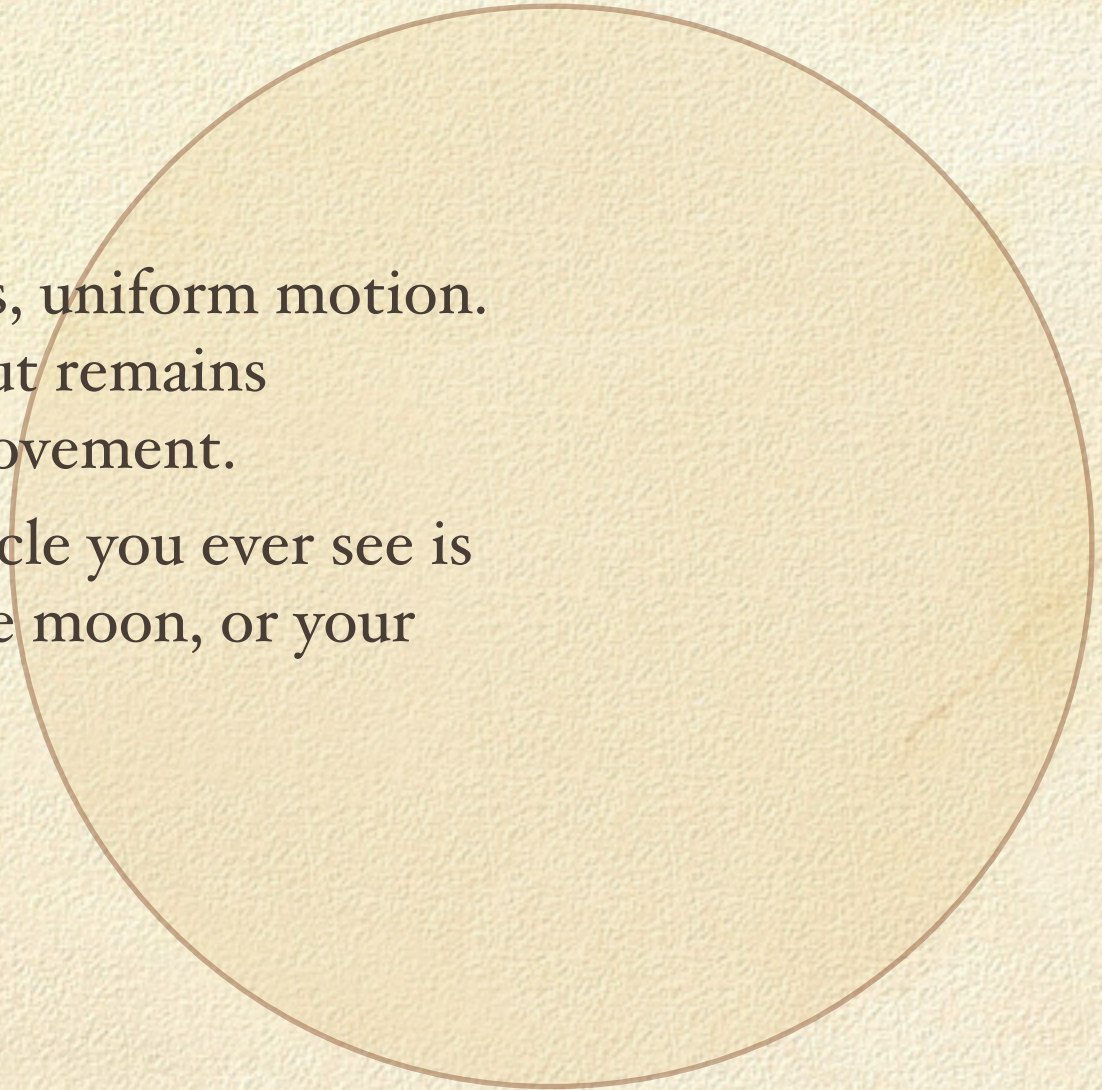
Principles of Shape

- Tension: how much the shape wants to 'fall over' into another position
- Symmetry: is it a mirror image of itself, and along how many lines
- Movement: how and where the line directs your eye

Shapes!

The Circle

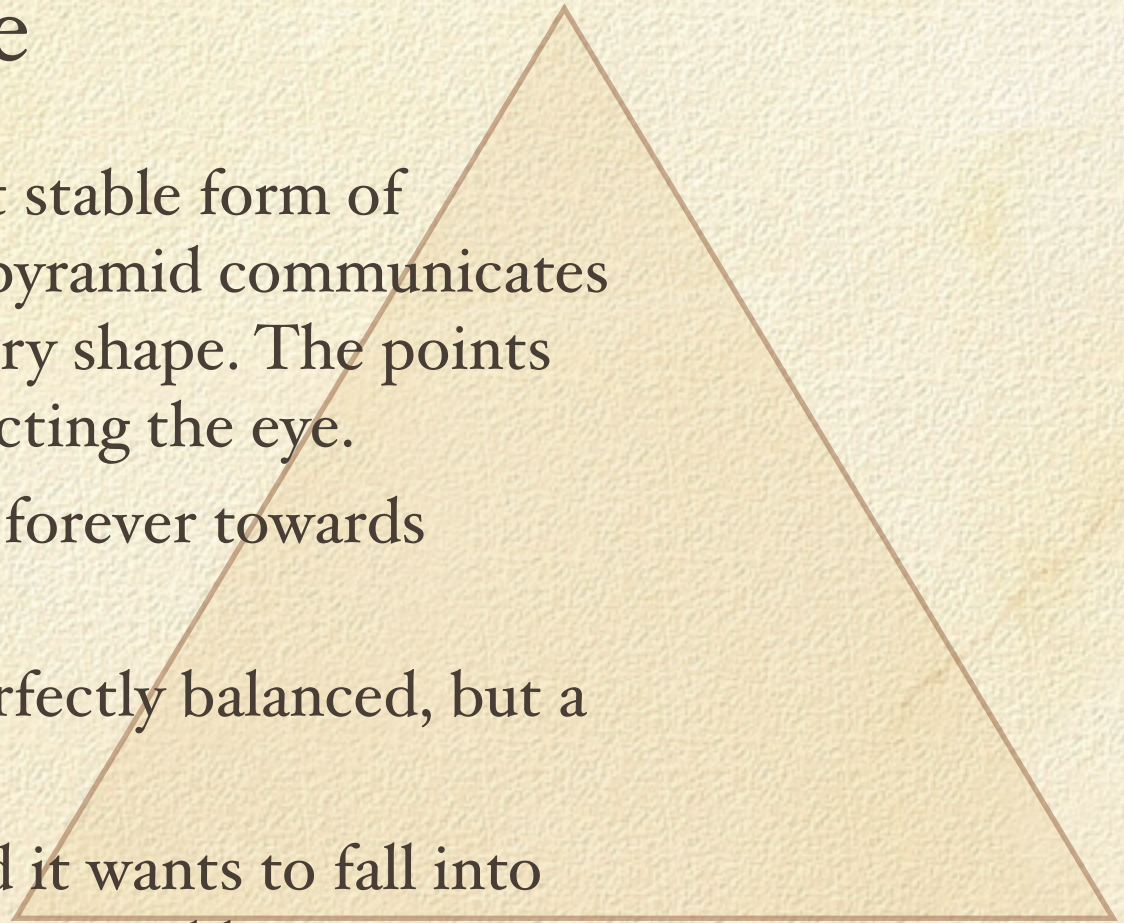
- Smooth, continuous, uniform motion. It rolls like a ball, but remains unchanged by its movement.
- The first perfect circle you ever see is likely the sun, or the moon, or your mother's eye.



Shapes!

The Triangle

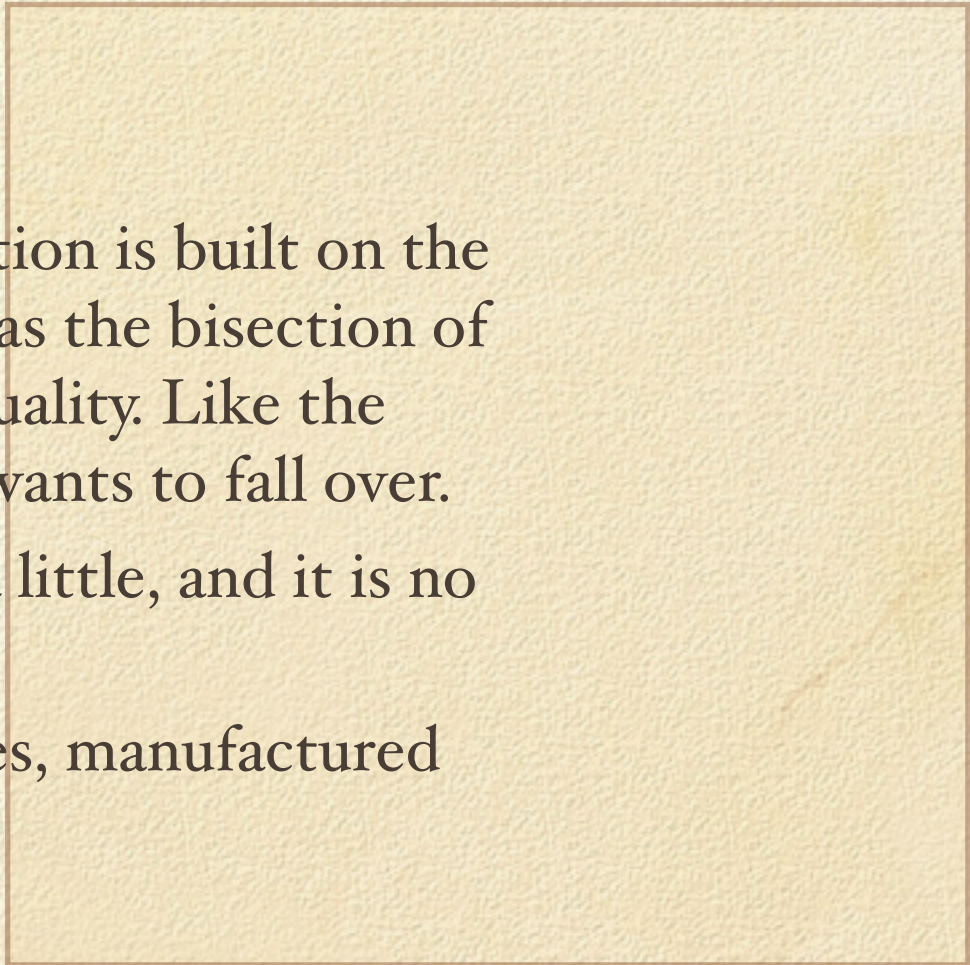
- A tripod is the most stable form of support there is. A pyramid communicates its stability by its very shape. The points are like arrows, directing the eye.
- Point up, it reaches forever towards heaven.
- Point down, it is perfectly balanced, but a breath could tip it.
- Point off center, and it wants to fall into the pyramid, to attain equilibrium.



Shapes!

The Square

- Most of modern civilization is built on the square. The right angle, as the bisection of a straight line, implies duality. Like the triangle, a tilted square wants to fall over.
- Change the shape only a little, and it is no longer a square.
- Squares are houses, boxes, manufactured things.



Shapes!

The Line

- A smooth, curved line leads the eye without stops or breaks
- A line with sharp angles is more segmented, rougher.
- A rock with a sharp angle is likely to be sharp, useful for cutting, but you run the risk of hurting yourself; one with a smooth profile is likely to be smooth to the touch as well.

Shape Theory: Application

- What is the overall shape of your glyph?
- What kind of shapes make up its parts?
- Are there any commonalities between the feel of the shapes and the intent of your sigil?
- Can you tweak the glyph to make the shapes better reflect its intent?
- What shape do you want to use for the background?

Colors!

Artists use this color system:



- The primary colors (the ones out of which all others are made) are red, blue and yellow.
- The secondaries are made by mixing primaries: green, orange, and purple.
- The tertiaries are made by mixing a primary with a secondary (or two parts one primary, one part another): cyan, olive, citrine, russet, magenta, indigo

Colors!

- ‘Complementary’ colors: ones that are across from each other on the wheel. Red and green, blue and orange, yellow and purple.
- ‘Flashing’ colors: any pair of primaries on the pigment wheel: red and blue, blue and yellow, red and yellow.
- ‘Clashing’ colors: any pair of colors at odd angles to each other on the wheel.

Components of Color

- Hue: the pure color (red, blue, citrine, etc.)
- Value: how light or dark the color is (as if it were converted to black-and-white)
- Saturation: the degree of purity of a color (pink is low-saturation red, and higher value than pure red)
- Temperature: Colors with red in them are 'warm', those with blue are 'cool'.

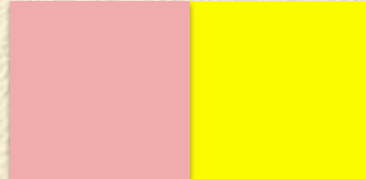
So both pink and burgundy are low-saturation reds; but pink has a higher value than pure red or burgundy. And all of them are 'warm'.

Contrast

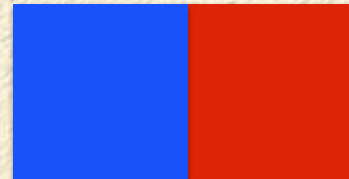
- Contrast is what makes text legible and an image interesting.
- The greater the difference in two colors' value and/or hue, and the higher their saturation, the higher the contrast.



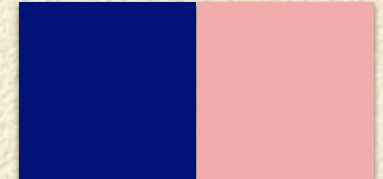
Similar hue
Similar value
Lowest contrast



Different hue
Similar value
Low saturation
Low contrast



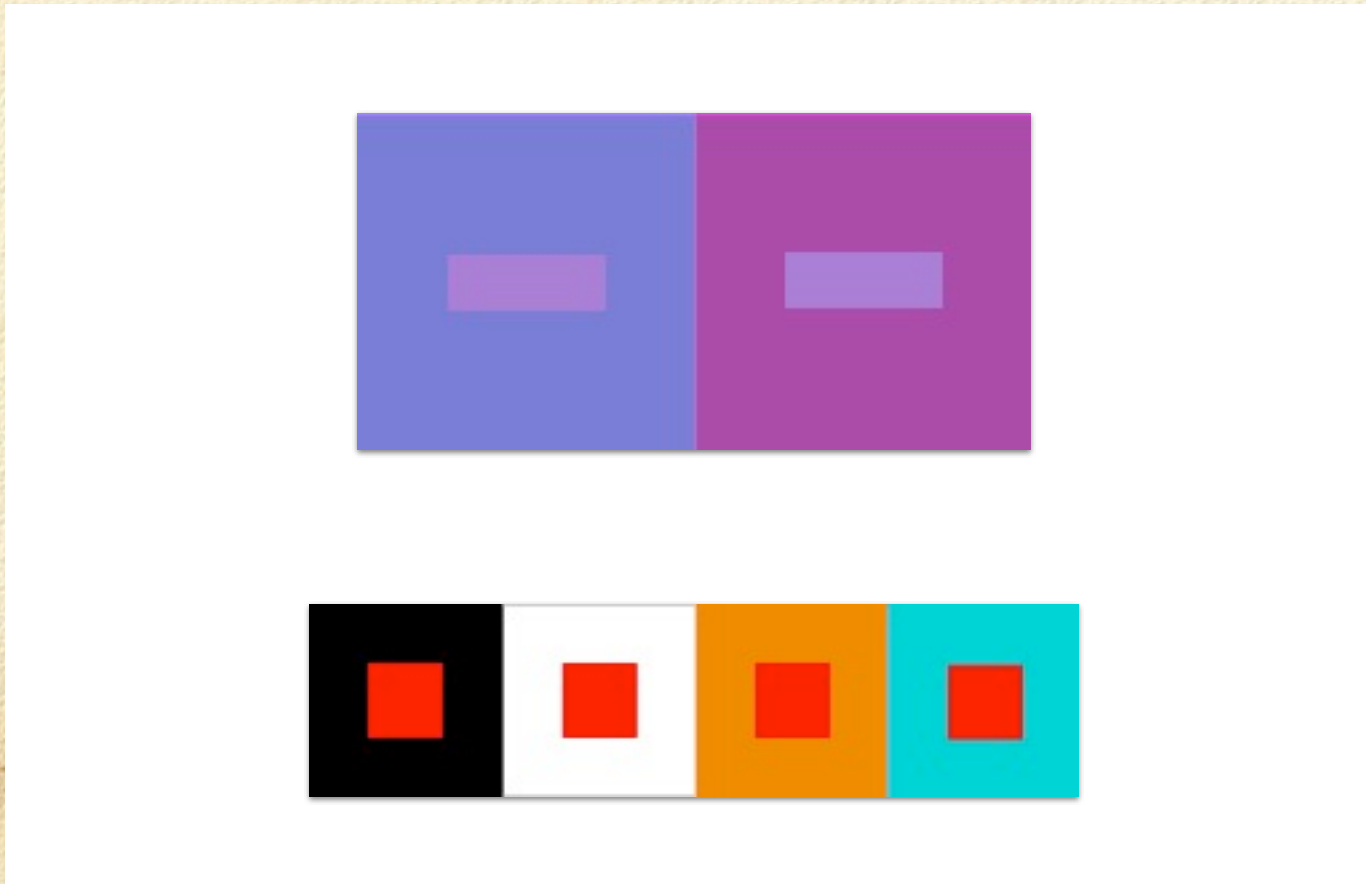
Different hue
Similar value
High saturation
High contrast



Different hue
Different value
Highest contrast

Colors in Context

- The same color can look different depending on what colors are near it:



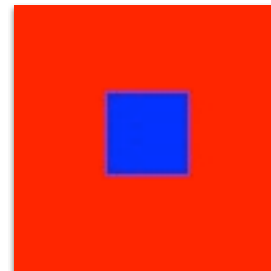
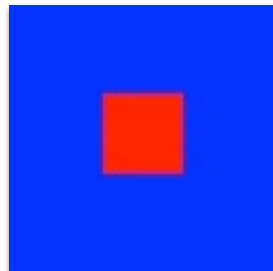
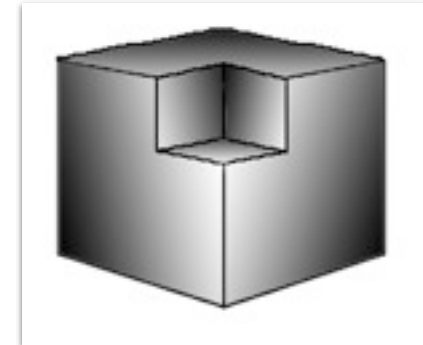
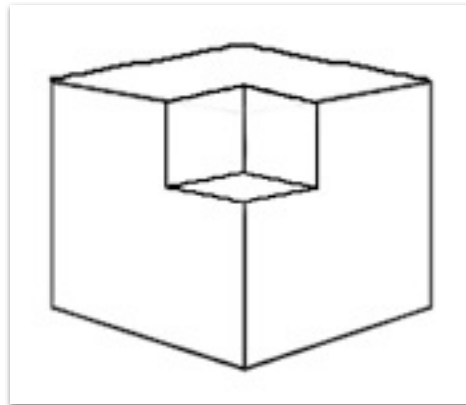
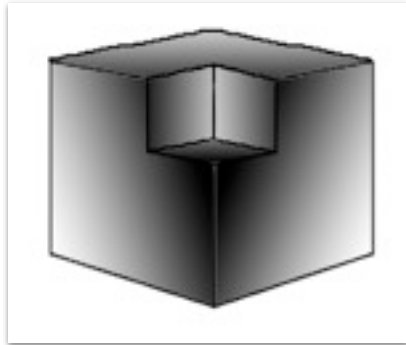
Choosing a Color Scheme

- The glyph and the background should be high contrast
- The background may be multiple colors, but they should be analogous (close on the color wheel).
- Clashing or just plain ugly colors may be appropriate, depending on the sigil's intent



The Third Dimension

- Warm colors advance, cool colors recede
- Light colors advance, dark colors recede



Color Theory: Application

- ❑ What color(s) fit the intent of your sigil?
- ❑ Should the color scheme be harmonious?
Chaotic? Intense? Subdued?
- ❑ Do you want the glyph to seem like it is
floating, falling, or vibrating?

Optical illusions!

Forced perspective:



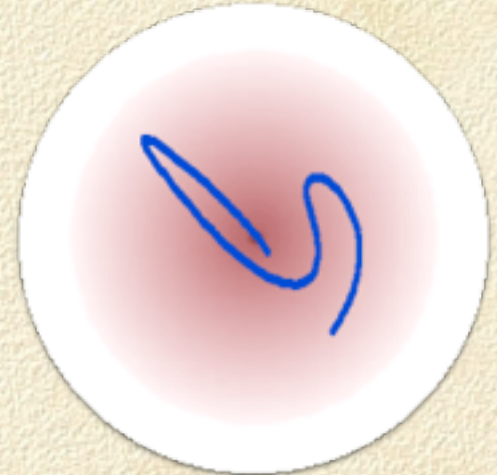
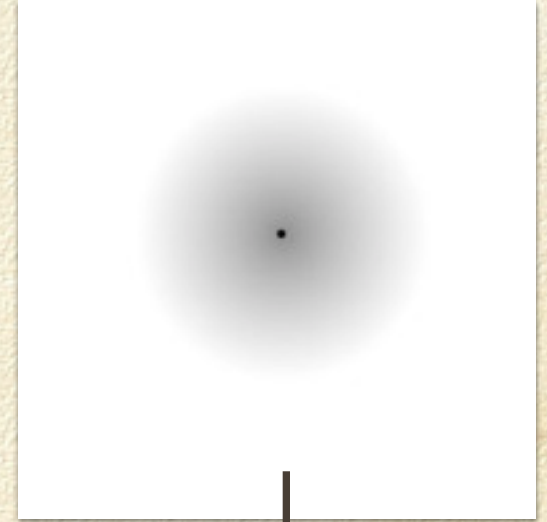
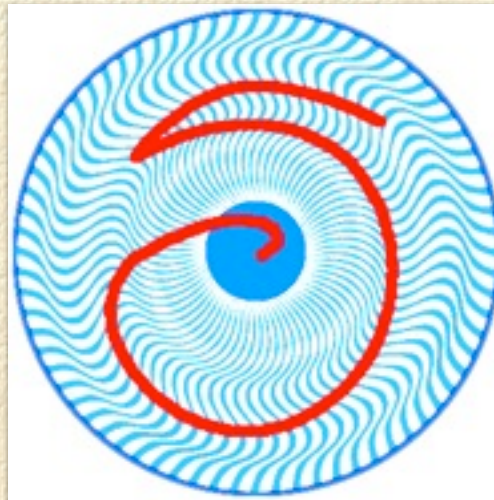
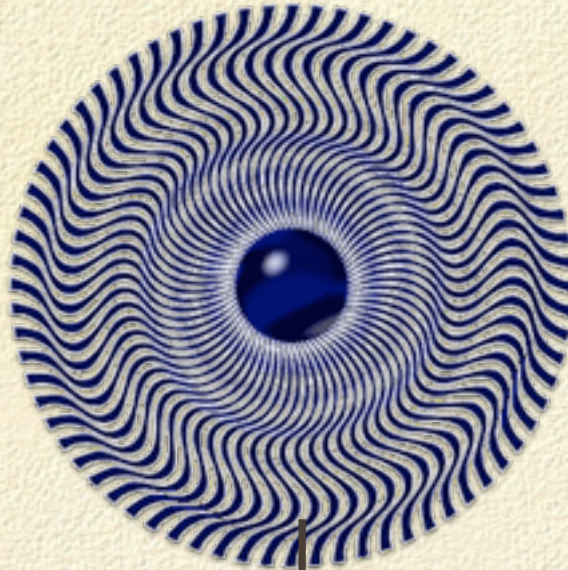
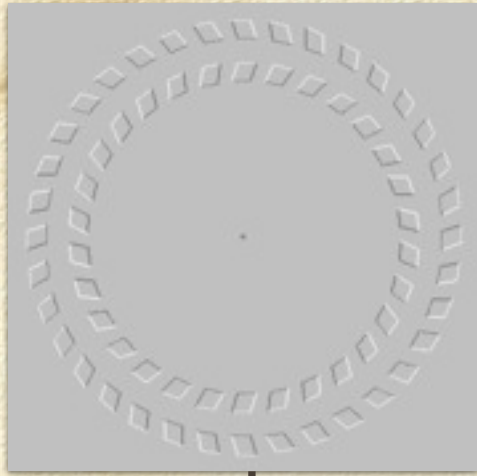
Concentric circles:



Drop shadow:



Optical illusions!



Optical Illusions: Application

- ☐ Will an additional sense of depth or movement enhance your sigil?
- ☐ Do you want the background to be part of the sigil's design?
- ☐ Are you willing to put in the extra work it takes to get a strong illusion?

Practical Technique

- Do lots and lots of rough drafts!
- Tools are your friends: rulers, compasses, shape templates
- Draw lightly!
- Don't expect it to look the way it does in your head!

Conquering Perfectionism

- Try to stay detached - evaluate each stage of the image without expectations.
- Creating any image is a dialogue between you and the materials. Don't order them around and expect them to behave!
- When all else fails, put it away. Try something else, or come back to it later.

Questions?

Time to Get to Work!

With the remaining time: play with your core symbol

- Consider shapes and colors that would be appropriate to your intent
- Redraw your sigil a number of times using different colors and shapes to see what works
- Iterate until you're satisfied
- Have fun!

Go home: put it aside for a week or so;
and then put it to good use.