Ayala MUSEUM

GEOMETRY AND SYMMETRY IN DESIGN

THE MERCEDES ZOBEL COLLECTION OF INDIGENOUS PHILIPPINE TEXTILES

ART AND THE ORDER OF NATURE

Most of contemporary textiles today come from industrial production. Only a portion is made in the traditional manner of handweaving. In the Philippines, the tradition of hand-woven textiles in the Ilocos region, Panay island, in some rural communities, and among Indigenous Peoples is slowly decline as praticing weavers grow older.

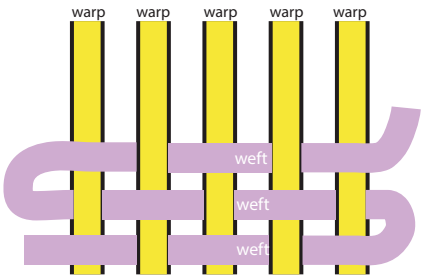
Art & the Order of Nature in Indigenous Philippine Textiles exhibition of Ayala Museum is a permanent exhibition of Ayala Museum featured selections from a 143-piece collection donated by Mercedes Zobel.

In collaboration with the Prince's School of Traditional Arts in London, selected textiles and their patterns were analyzed to understand and appreciate better the sacred geometry and biomorphic designs found in the fabric of our traditional culture. The spirituality that pervades Philippine textiles is reflective of the harmonious relationship of the weavers with nature–as source of raw materials and as design inspiration.

WARP AND WEFT

Weaving is a process of crossing of warp and weft threads. The warp consists of strands of threads arranged vertically on a loom while the weft are the fibres that horizontally go over and under the warp threads. When the warp and weft threads cross each other, a physical and symbolic center is established. The threads move out from the center in four directions.

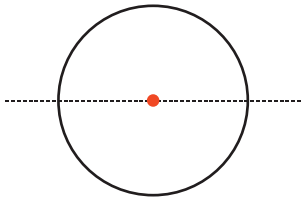
Weavers, dyers, embroiderers, and artists of cloth may not have been familiar with art or geometry but they were highly attuned to nature and the cosmos.



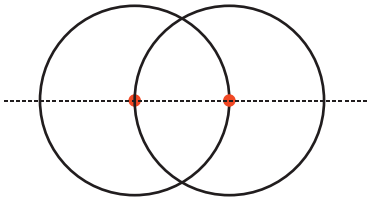
LET US LEARN THE PATTERNS!

BEGINNINGS: POINT, LINE, AND CIRCLE

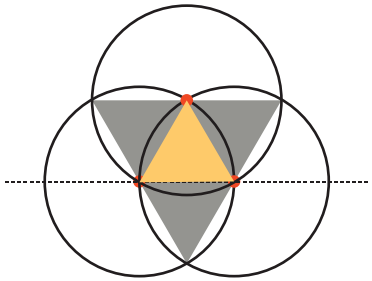
ONE: UNITY, THE CIRCLE



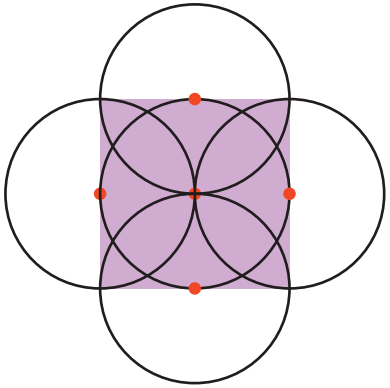
TWO: DUALITY, THE VESICA PISCIS



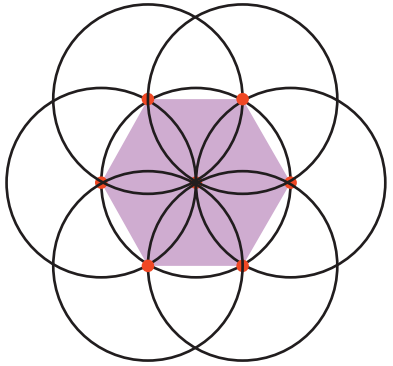
THREE: THE TRIANGLE AND THE INTEGRATION OF HEAVEN AND EARTH



FOUR: THE SQUARE SYMBOL OF EARTH



SIX: THE HEXAGON AND THE SIXFOLD PATTERN OF CREATION



SQUARE GRID PATTERNS AND WEAVING

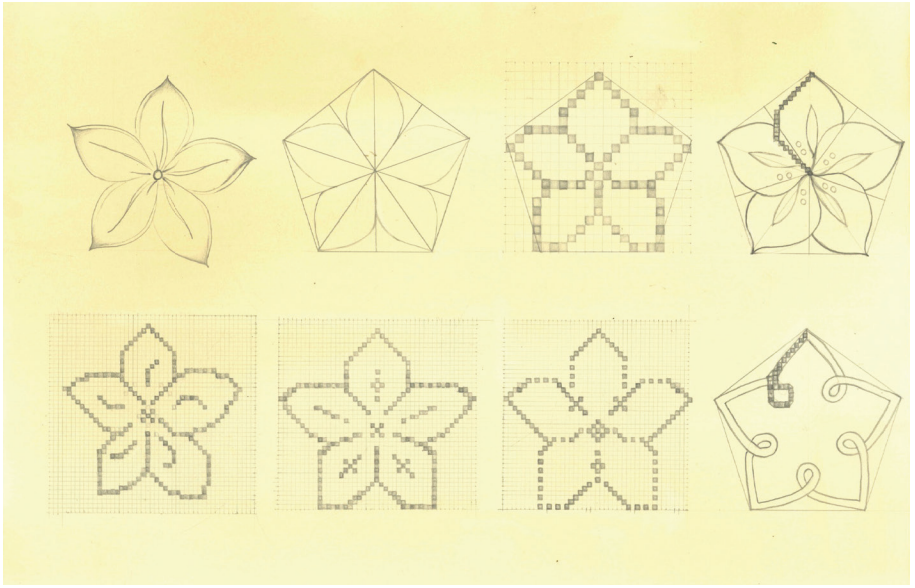
The crossing of two sets of warp and weft give rise to a plane which is square. Further additions to this crossing creates a web or a fabric. There are hundreds of varieties of patterns that you can develop on a simple square grid. The grid can be used to develop woven patterns found throughout the traditional crafts of the world.

Spend a few moments looking at these patterns. Are they symmetrical? Is there an order to them? Do they start from the centre and radiate outwards?

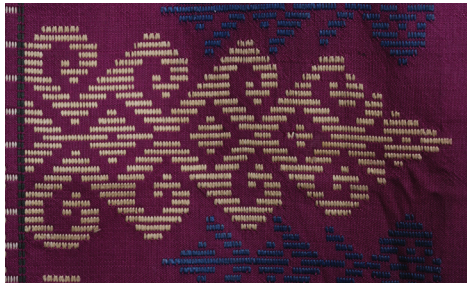
Because the square is a fundamental form in weaving, we see many variations of square or fourfold patterns in textiles. However, everyone can still make their own unique interpretation. Compare the *mata-mata* pattern above from a Bontoc loincloth and the pattern below from the Tausug *kandit* below. How are they similar, and how are they different?

FROM NATURE TO SYMBOL

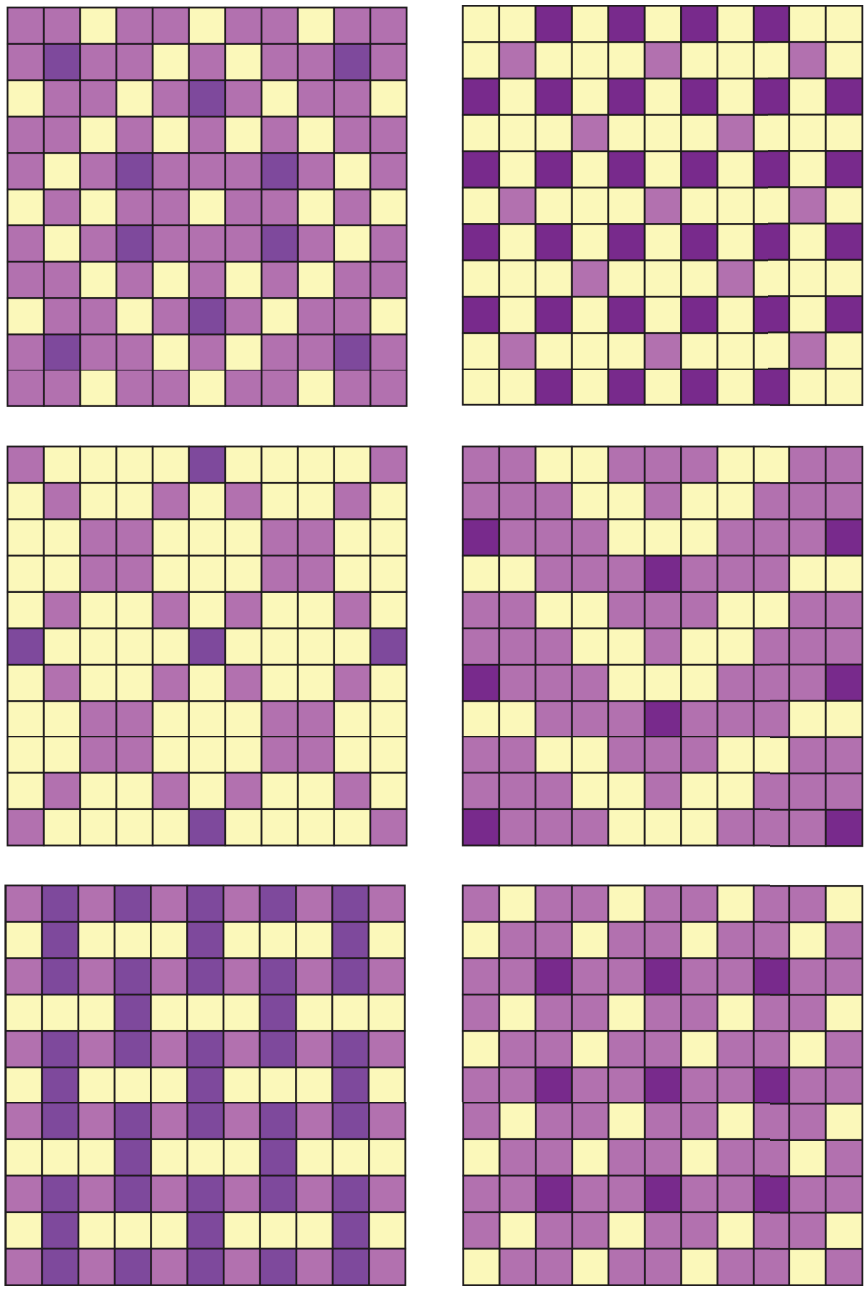
The studies on this page demonstrate stages of interpretation and analysis from the forms we observe in nature to symbolic representation as textile motifs.



Take a look at the image of the fern leaf on the left. Can you see how the shape was translated into textile design in the Maranao *pako rabong* (growing fern) design on the right?



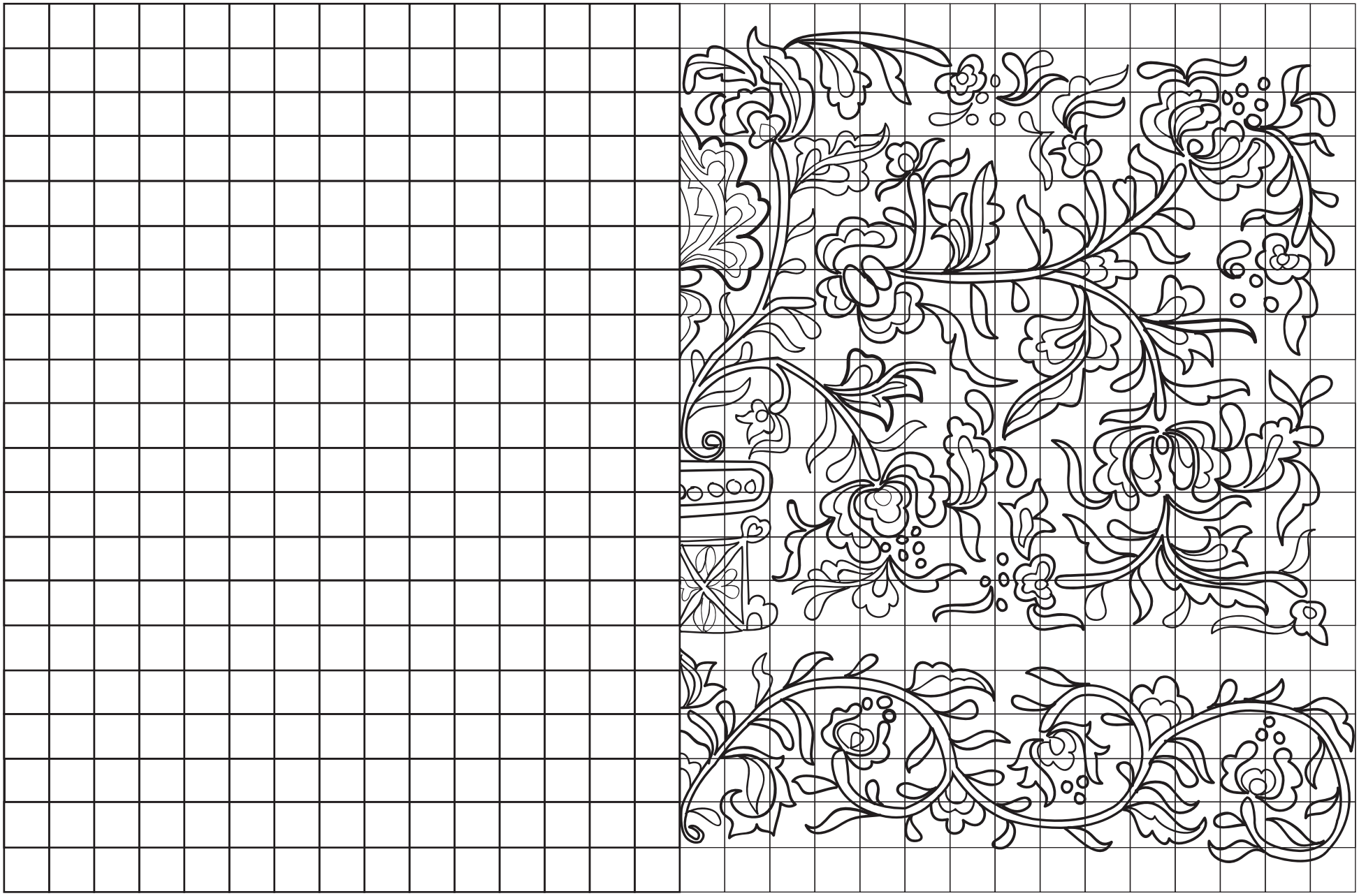
EXAMPLES OF SQUARE GRID PATTERNS



CREATE YOUR OWN DESIGN

Using the square grid below and your choice of coloring materials, create your own unique design.

DRAW THE OTHER HALF!



LUKIS KAYAPU

THE LOTUS MOTIF IS AN IMPORTANT DESIGN IN THE TAUSUG VISUAL ARTS.
THIS PATTERN IS DERIVED FROM A EMBROIDERED (TIYAHIAN) TAUSUG SASH (KANDIT) IN THE AYALA MUSEUM COLLECTION.