

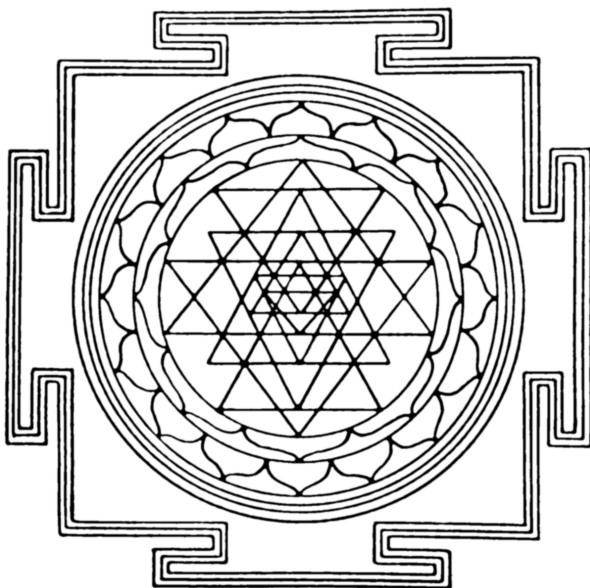
Fractured Geometry Activity ~ Create Your Own Mandala

The concept of “fractal geometry” helps communicate central themes of Hinduism and the ways in which colonialism interrupts those themes. However, it is important to note that while Hindu temple architecture follows the principles of fractal geometry, these structures are not fractals themselves. Because fractals contain infinitely repeating shapes, natural and man-made structures can only be “fractal-like.”

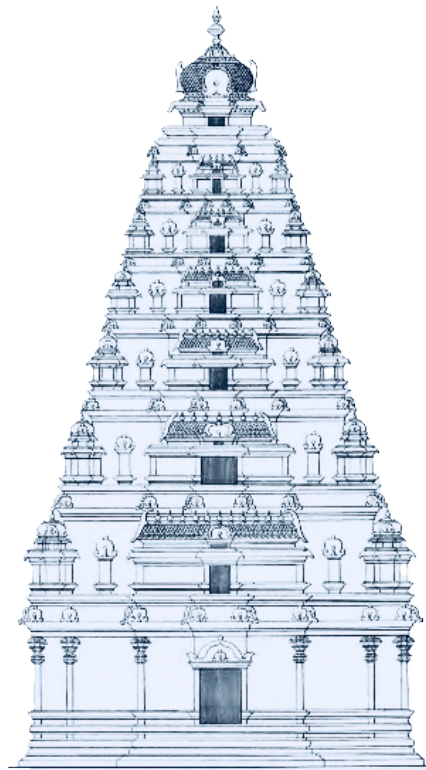
Hindu temple architects and sculptors understood fractal geometry through geometric diagrams called mandalas and yantras. Mandalas represent the universe, while yantras represent specific deities. These complex diagrams are built upon the following foundational shapes:

- **Point (Bindu):** represents concentrated energy, the source of all creation
- **Circle:** represents the cyclicity of the universe, with no beginning and no end
- **Square:** represents the earth, and the stable man-made world
- △ **Upward Triangle:** represents masculinity, kinetic energy, and the spiritual realm
- ▽ **Downward Triangle:** represents femininity, potential energy, and the physical realm
- ☆ **Hexagram:** represents the fusion of polarities in a perfect state of union
- ◇ **Lotus Petals:** represents purity, transcendence and the sphere of the absolute

Below is an image of the *Sri Yantra*, often used in meditation. Notice that it depicts all of the foundational shapes:



In Hindu temple architecture, the foundational shapes are fractalized, or broken down and repeated in successively smaller scales:



To think about the precise mathematics behind Hindu temple architecture, we invite you to design your own mandala using any foundational shapes you find in the *Fractured Geometry* series. To use the template given below, draw mirrored or repeating designs within the provided guidelines.

Additionally, to think about the fracturing effects of colonialism, try erasing a section of your completed mandala. This helps illustrate that removing architectural elements from a Hindu temple, no matter how small that fragment may be, creates a noticeable absence that makes the structure feel “off” :

