A TEN-DAY DRAWING IMMERSION

MYSTIC ART RETREATS

Lines *of* Empire



WHERE

Delhi · Agra

WHEN

10–19 November 2027

LED BY

Ameet Hindocha & Jyotika Purwar

Islamic geometric art expresses the belief that the universe has an underlying order, one that can be understood and is beautiful.





About the programme.

Geometry in Indo-Islamic architecture

Mornings are spent at the monuments, afternoons in drawing sessions and evenings in discussion.

Mughal architecture rests on a visual language of symmetry and repetition, and on the belief that perfect pattern reflects a divine order. Lines of Empire is a ten-day drawing course in which participants use pencil, compass and ruler to study that language and to learn how its patterns were constructed.

The ten days take place in Delhi and Agra, at seven monuments of Indo-Islamic architecture, from Humayun's Tomb to the Taj Mahal.

Ameet Hindocha, an artist and educator, and Jyotika Purwar, an interior architect, teach participants of mixed ability, from those who have never used a compass to those who already practise geometric design. The only requirements are curiosity and a willingness to look closely.

Site study, drawing and reflection.

The structure of each day



Morning

Study on Site

No historical manual explains how these patterns were constructed, so the buildings are the primary source. Each day begins at a monument, where participants study the patterns in situ.



Afternoon

Drawing Practice

Drawing workshops introduce systematic methods for constructing geometric patterns with ruler and compass. Skill and understanding build step by step, starting from simple constructions.



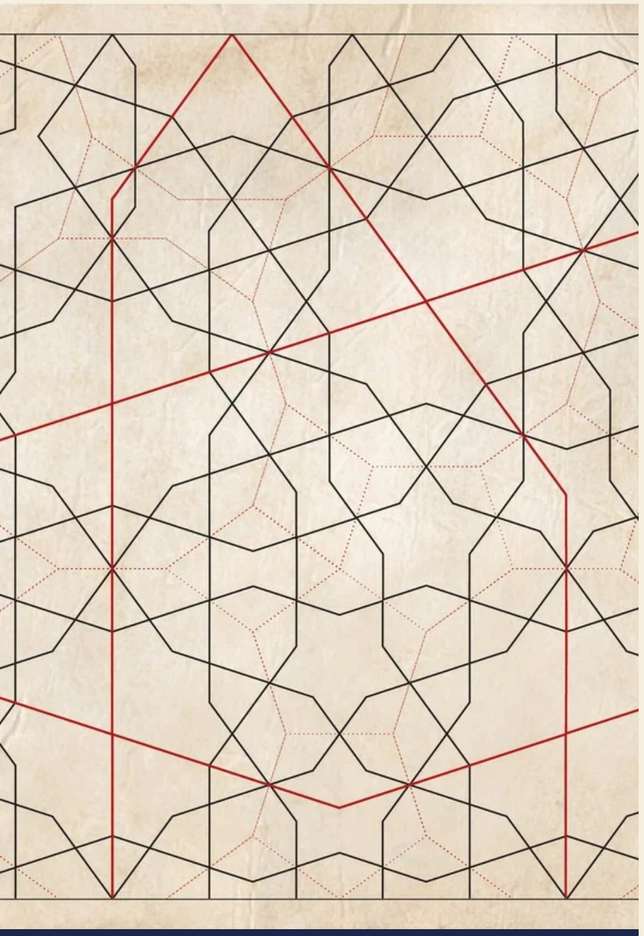
Evening

Evening Reflection

Evening presentations and discussions relate the day's work to history and philosophy. Participants keep a visual journal throughout.

From construction to colour.

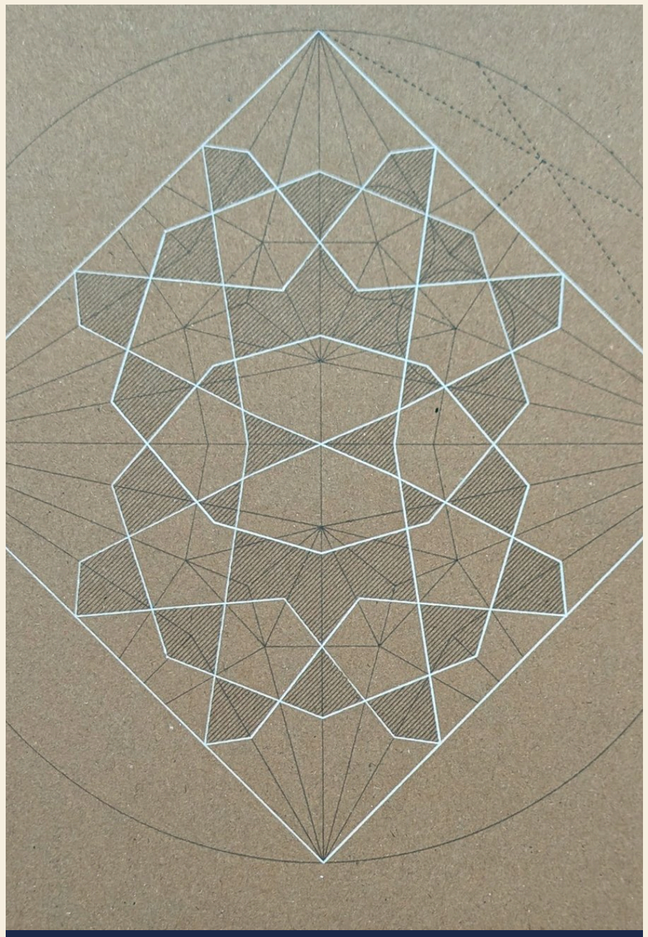
How a pattern is drawn



STEP 1

Analyse

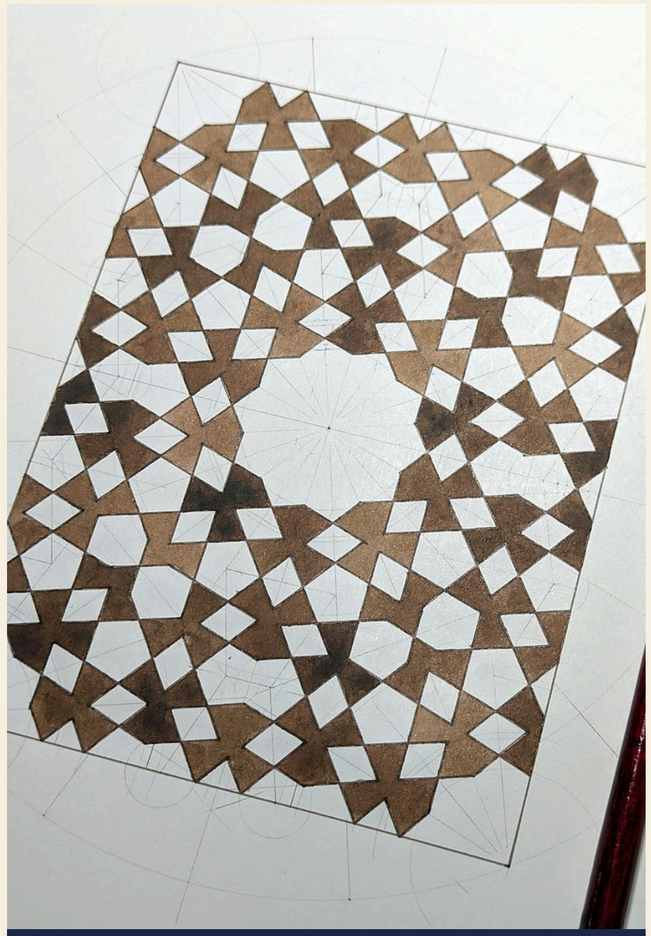
Repeat, grid and symmetry



STEP 2

Construct

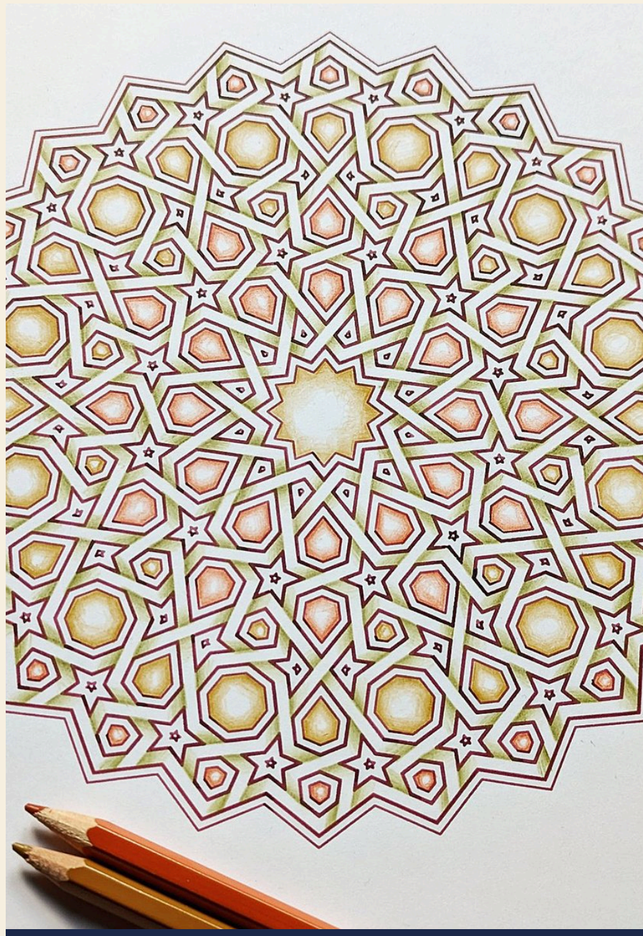
Circle, compass and ruler



STEP 3

Ink

Tone laid in ink



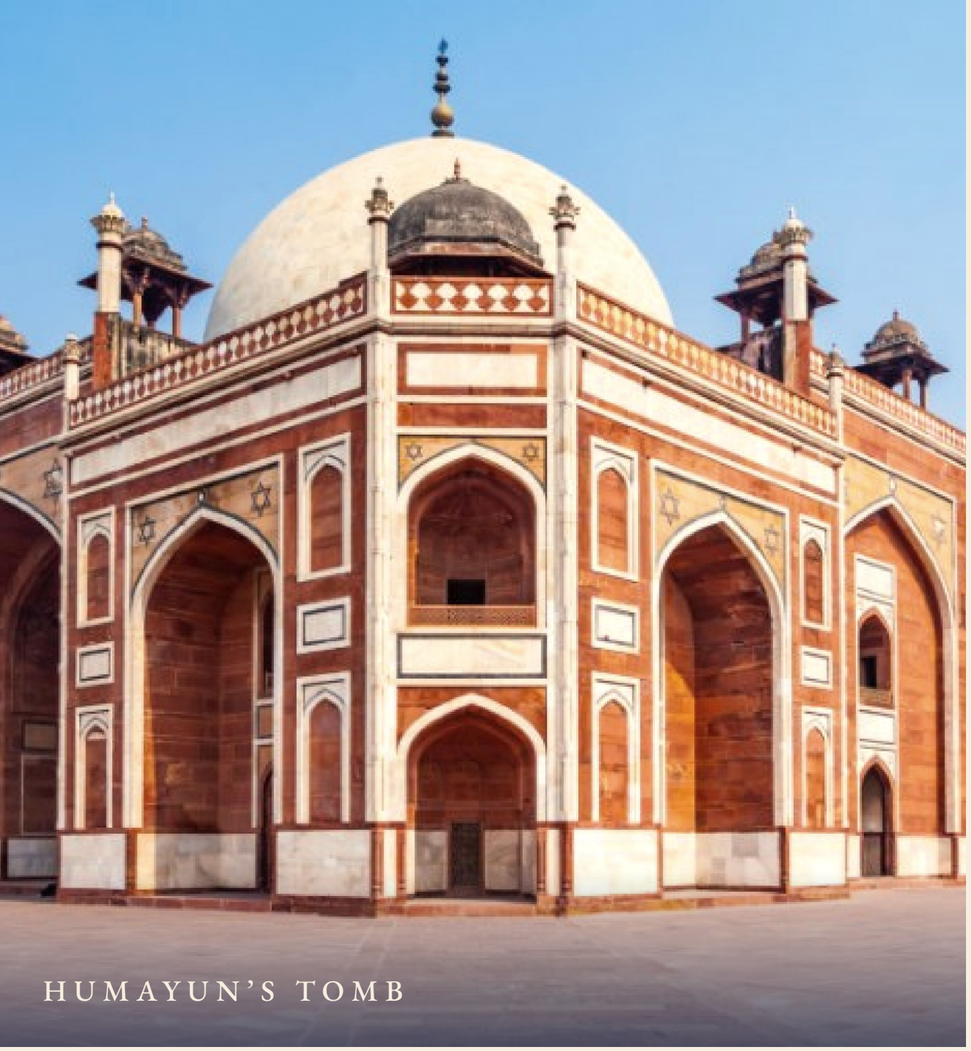
STEP 4

Colour

Pencil, in soft gradations

Delhi

Two monuments over three days



HUMAYUN'S TOMB



QUTUB COMPLEX

BEGUN 1565 · DAYS 2–3

Humayun's Tomb

One of the earliest Mughal monuments and the first garden tomb on the Indian subcontinent, it is the starting point of the programme. Its pointed arches suit the study of geometric construction, and its double dome and charbagh garden anticipate the Taj Mahal. The visit also includes the site museum and the surrounding precinct.

12TH–13TH C. · DAY 4

Qutub Complex

Delhi's earliest group of Islamic monuments predates the Mughals and shows the architecture that came before them, with some of the oldest Arabic calligraphy and geometric carving in northern India. A full day is given to close study.

AMEET HINDOCHA

CONSTRUCTING A PATTERN AT THE EASEL

Agra

Five monuments over five days



DAY 5

Akbar's Tomb, Sikandra

The tomb of the Emperor Akbar, completed by his son Jahangir, introduces the emperor and his vision. Its southern gateway is inlaid with large geometric patterns in white marble and coloured stone.



DAY 6 *1571–1585*

Fatehpur Sikri

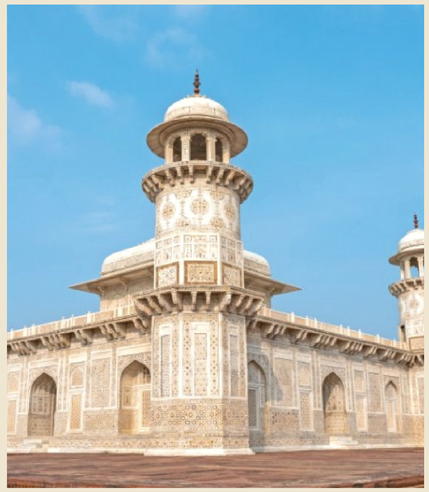
Akbar's capital in red sandstone shows how order, symmetry, craft and his syncretic beliefs shaped its buildings and spaces. It has the most geometric pattern of any site on the programme.



DAY 7 *1565–1573*

Agra Fort

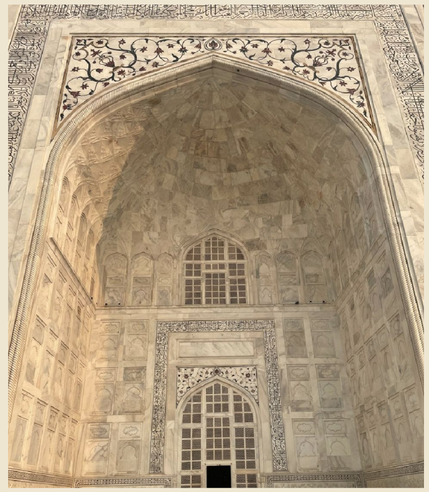
Begun by Akbar and altered by Jahangir and Shah Jahan, the fort shows more of Akbar's work and how the styles of his successors developed, from carved sandstone to marble pavilions.



DAY 8

Itimad-ud-Daulah

Known as the 'Baby Taj' and built before the Taj Mahal, the tomb marks a clear shift from red sandstone to white marble. Its pietra dura panels are studied closely.



DAY 9 *1632–1653*

Taj Mahal

The programme ends at Shah Jahan's white marble tomb. There is less surface pattern than at the earlier monuments; the geometry is in the proportions and the ornament.



Agra and Environs · Survey of India
Historical map, c. 19th century

Two cities: Delhi and Agra.

DAYS 1–4

Delhi

Arrival, followed by two days at Humayun's Tomb and one at the Qutub Complex.

DAYS 5–10

Agra

Sikandra on the way, then one monument each day. The hotel has rooftop views of the Taj.

DELHI TO AGRA	*c. 200 km · 3–4 hours*
AGRA TO DELHI	*c. 200 km · 3–4 hours*
TRANSPORT	*Private coach throughout*
AIRPORT	*Indira Gandhi International, Delhi*

The programme, day by day.

The order of visits traces the development of Mughal architecture.

DELHI — *Days 1–4*

1 — Arrival
Airport transfer, time to settle in and an introductory evening session

2 — Humayun's Tomb
One of the earliest Mughal monuments: proportion, symmetry and the hasht bihisht plan

3 — Humayun's Tomb & Precinct
The museum, the Tomb of Isa Khan and the surrounding precinct

4 — Qutub Complex
Monuments that predate the Mughals, including the Alai Darwaza and the carved bands of the Qutub Minar

→ *On to Agra*
c. 200 km · 3–4 hours by private coach

AGRA — *Days 5–10*

5 — Travel via Sikandra
The drive to Agra, stopping at Akbar's Tomb for an introduction to the emperor and his vision

6 — Fatehpur Sikri
How order, symmetry, craft and Akbar's syncretic beliefs shaped his capital

7 — Agra Fort
Akbar's fort, and the developing styles of Jahangir and Shah Jahan

8 — Itimad-ud-Daulah
The shift from red sandstone to white marble, before the Taj Mahal

9 — Taj Mahal
A full day at the Taj Mahal, studying how geometry governs its proportion and ornament

10 — Departure
A final review of the work, followed by the transfer to Delhi airport

Included in the fee.

Tuition	All drawing and geometry teaching over the ten days, led by Ameet Hindocha and Jyotika Purwar
Materials	An A4 cartridge sketchbook, compass set, technical pens (0.1, 0.3 and 0.5 mm), HB and 2H pencils, eraser shield, set square and watercolour pencils
Accommodation	Nine nights in single rooms at hotels of four-star standard or above, in central Delhi and in Agra
Meals	All breakfasts and dinners, and most lunches
Site access	Entry fees and permits for all seven monuments, including the second day at Humayun’s Tomb
Transport	Private air-conditioned coach throughout, including the Delhi–Agra drive via Sikandra
Transfers	Airport transfers in Delhi on Days 1 and 10

Not included in the fee.

International flights	Flights to and from Delhi
Visas & insurance	Indian visa fees, and travel and medical insurance
Some lunches	A small number are left free for independent exploration
Personal expenses	Alcoholic drinks, laundry, telephone calls and shopping
Gratuities	Tips for drivers, site guides and hotel staff
Extensions	Additional nights or private travel before or after the programme

FEE

£2,250

per participant

Payment by instalments available

GROUP SIZE

A maximum of ten participants

What to know before you arrive.

Ability Level

Complete beginners and practising designers are equally welcome. No previous drawing experience is required, and all materials are provided. Ameet and Jyotika adapt each session to the level of every participant.

Dietary Requirements

We can cater for vegetarian, vegan and other dietary requirements. Please give details of any allergies and preferences when booking, so that we can brief the hotels and restaurants before you arrive.

Accessibility

Most of the programme is on foot, over uneven stone and steps, and some interiors have no step-free access. Please tell us about any mobility or other access needs before booking, and we will talk through what is possible.

Pace

Site visits, drawing sessions and evening presentations make for full days, and most days centre on a single site. The drive from Delhi to Agra takes three to four hours. The schedule has some flexibility.

Climate & Health

November is a good time to visit Delhi and Agra. Days are warm and dry, at around 25–29°C, and evenings are cool, at around 12–15°C. Participants should consult their doctor about recommended vaccinations and other health precautions for travel.

DATES *10–19 November 2027 · ten days, nine nights*

A detailed pre-departure guide is sent a few months before the retreat.



Ameet Hindocha

Artist · Educator · Practitioner of Islamic Geometric Design

Ameet Hindocha is an artist, designer and educator who specialises in geometry, with a particular focus on Islamic geometric design. Through a cyclical process of study and making, he explores geometric pattern.

His work draws on a long-standing interest in mathematics and nature, and combines analogue and digital processes.

He teaches and lectures on geometric design in the UK and abroad, and teaches digital fabrication at the University of the Arts London.

His courses and lectures have taken him to many places: the King's Foundation School of Traditional Arts and the V&A Museum in London, Dumfries House in Scotland, summer schools in Andalusia, Jameel House in Cairo, the Istanbul Design Centre, Education City in Doha, and the universities of Bristol, the West of England and Anglia Ruskin. He has also taught online courses for the King's Foundation.

Jyotika Purwar

Interior Architect · Designer · Researcher of Mughal Geometry

Agra, her mother's home town, has been part of Jyotika Purwar's life since childhood, when family visits first took her to its Mughal monuments. Today those buildings are the focus of her research into the geometry and patterns that shape them.

An interior architect and designer based in Mumbai, she studied interior architecture at CEPT, Ahmedabad, and holds an MFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Her practice covers interiors, furniture, graphic design and experience design.

Travels in Spain, Morocco, Egypt, Turkey, Japan and elsewhere developed her interest in how different cultures have used geometry to create order, pattern and meaning in architecture. For six years she has been documenting the Mughal monuments, recording their geometric patterns and analysing how they were constructed.

This research forms the basis of her online courses for the King's Foundation School of Traditional Arts, covering Humayun's Tomb, Itimad-ud-Daulah, Fatehpur Sikri, Sikandra and Agra Fort.



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10–19 November 2027

RESERVE YOUR PLACE

mp@mysticart.org

A maximum of ten participants · £2,250 per participant
Payment by instalments available

CURRICULUM ENQUIRIES ameet@ambigraph.com

Participants will be invited to share their drawing experience and interests in advance, so that the programme can be adapted to the group.

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