

# FROM FORMLESS TO FORM

## Design Exploration Seminar

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# About the Element: Peacock

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## About the Peacock

Peacocks are colorful pheasants known for their iridescent tails and are among the most fascinating creatures on earth. The word "peacock" is used to refer to birds of both sexes. It's only the males that are called peacocks, while the females are called peahens and are collectively called peafowl.

Peacock are omnivorous birds and they mainly eats insects, plants, and small creatures. There are two known peacock species: one is blue peacock found in India & Sri Lanka and the green peacock is found in Java & Myanmar. The Congo peacock, is inhabited by African rainforests which is less-known species.

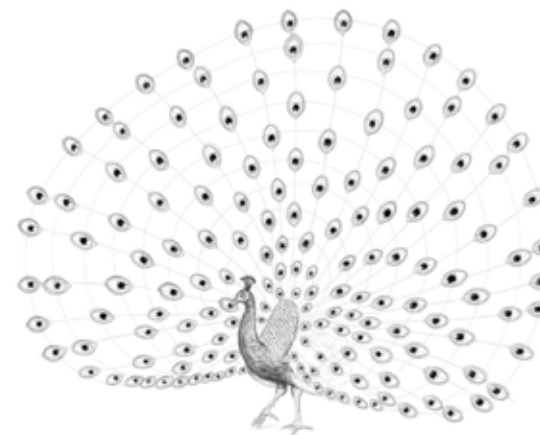


Source: [www.google.com](http://www.google.com)

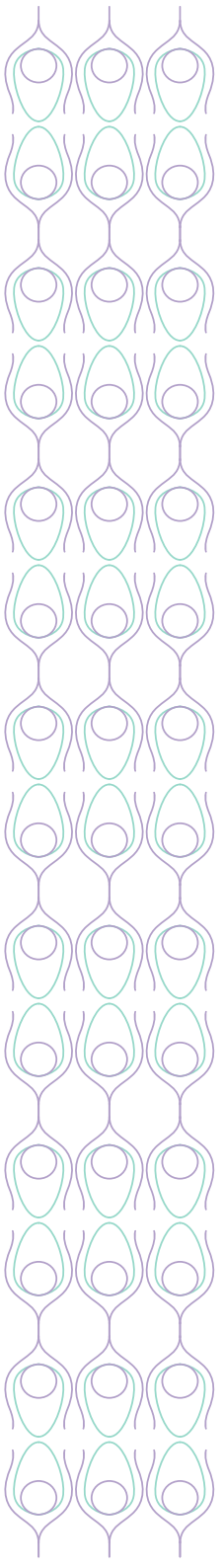
## Peacock Feathers

Peacock tail feathers are spread out in a distinctive train that is more than 60 percent of its total body length and have colourful "eye" patterns of blue, golden, orange, and other shades. The bright and dramatic train is to attract the attention of peahens. They stand for elegance, richness in life, bliss and joy.

People keep the peacock feathers in their homes since it is believed that keeping their feather at home brings good fortune and success in the house. The feather also has extraordinary powers, giving the wearer hypnotizing abilities.



Source: [www.design.tutsplus.com](http://www.design.tutsplus.com)



## Peacock Symbolism

Peacock symbolize integrity, doing what you say, truth, honor, beauty, strength and also has references to

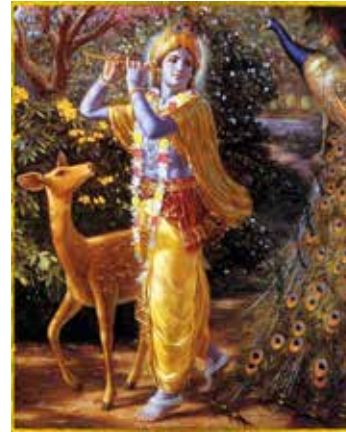
- Self-Esteem
- Humor
- Vision
- Spiritual Awakening
- Long Life
- Confidence
- Awareness
- Leadership Skills
- Enjoying Life
- Resurrection
- Being Well Balanced
- Light Hearted
- Self-love

## Peacock Religious and Cultural Meanings

**Buddhism:** Fully opened peacocks tail looks like a vast Chinese hand fan, which symbolizes openness and acceptance in Buddhist culture. The peacock is well known to eat plants that were poisonous in nature and would kill if eaten by humans, which symbolizes long life or immortality.

**Hinduism:** There are two well-known figures in the Hindu religion known as Lord Krishna and Lakshmi. The goddess Lakshmi in Hindu means having a loving spirit, being kind, goodness, and good luck. Lord Krishna was well known to adorn peacock feathers all around his head and on his flute. It was also said that the peacocks personally gave their feathers as a gift to Lord Krishna.

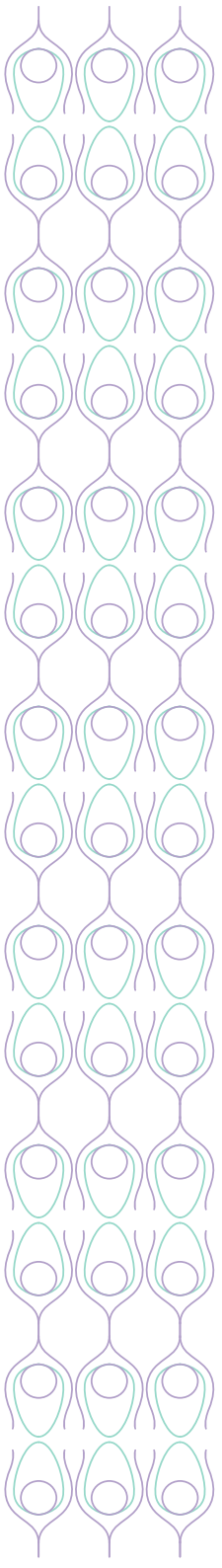
Lord Krishna and Lakshmi



Source: [www.google.com](http://www.google.com)

**Christianity:** A peacock symbolizes pureness. Christians claimed that their soul ascends and goes to heaven once someone has died. This is why early Christians would spread a peacock's feathers over the deceased, as it symbolized a pure soul immune to corruption. The peacock represents Jesus Christ's immortality, resurrection, and spiritual teachings.

**India:** Just as the peacock in China was resistant to poisonous plants, the same is true of India's snakes. These are considered to be resistant to the poison found in the venom of a snake, and known as the "Snake Slayer," and it is even claimed that when a snake is killed and eaten by a peacock, the venom flows into the feathers producing a special radiance.



**Greek mythology:** Throughout Greek mythology, the peacock identified with Hera, Zeus' wife, and the Ancient Greek gods' queen. It is said that Hera turned her hundred-eyed protector Argus into a peacock. Argus' feathers were a symbol of heaven's glory, and the eyes represented the stars in the sky. That is why the peacock represents heaven for the people of Greece, and it is all-powerful.

**Asia:** There was one mortal known by the name of Quan Yin in some parts of Asia. Quan Yin and her wonderful virtues of charity, compassion, honesty and good faith toward her fellow man are synonymous with the Peacock. Quan Yin was well known for having the potential to become immortal but deflected to remain mortal for the greater good of mankind, and to aid in their personal and religious development.

### Peacock in Art

Both human and natural worlds have co-existed in Indian culture and civilization through religious and belief systems. Many of the common natural world elements, such as trees, birds, mammals and reptiles, are considered to be central to Indian culture. Across history, Indians have discussed the deeper meanings of life through these elements, and their relation with earth and universe. As symbols of riches, divinity and royalty, some of these components became subjects of Indian art.

One such natural feature is the peacock, the national bird of India. The majestic and elegant appearance have often inspired

artists of various religions to portray it in various forms, ranging from clay, stone, wall, wood, metal etc.

*Eastern Gateway, Sanchi Stupa*



*Parasurameswara Temple, Kartikeya*



*Laxmi Narayan Temple, Orchha*



Source: [www.blogvirasatehind.com](http://www.blogvirasatehind.com)



'Peacock Throne' of Emperor Shah Jahan (Mughal Art)



Source: [www.google.com](http://www.google.com)

Emperor Shah Jahan's legendary 'Peacock Throne' (also called Takht-e-Tavous) is a marvel of Mughal Art. It was yet another example of the artistic sense and appreciation of art unmatched by Shah Jahan. This is known to be the most valuable single treasure that has been made in the past thousand years. It got its name from its unique shape. It had the figures of two peacocks standing behind it, their tails being expanded and the whole was inlaid with sapphires, rubies, emeralds, pearls, and other precious stones of suitable colors to represent life.

Mango Motif

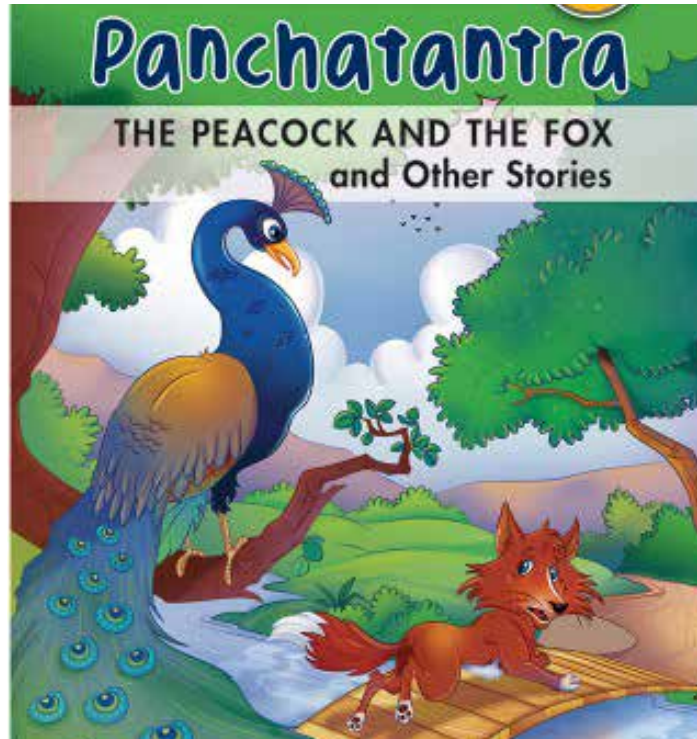


Source: [www.google.com](http://www.google.com)

The mango motif, commonly referred to as paisley or mankolam in Sanskrit, and ambi in Punjabi, and is considered a sign of fertility. This motif can be found easily in various Indian textile arts, such as Lucknow chikankari embroidery or Bengal kantha embroidery.

### Peacock in Storytelling

Several animals have been used in Indian stories throughout the history showcasing the stories through their personalities. one of them is Peacock which have been depicted in various stories portraying his beauty, royalty, self-centredness etc.



Source: [www.shreebookcentre.com](http://www.shreebookcentre.com)

The Panchatantra stories at the end of each story have regaled children and adults alike with a moral. The children are also encouraged to bond with nature.



Source: [www.google.com](http://www.google.com)

For centuries the peacock has always been an object of wonder and inspiration. It has adorned Lord Krishna's crown, became the emblem of many royal Indians, its portrayal in Indian art and textiles, Indian mythology, literature, and eventually adopted as the national bird of India. In Indian culture, the peacock has always been the constant.

With some of these readings, the idea was to get the gist about the bird, its personality, and cultural significance to effectively depict or bring that essence in the further process of drawing and making icons.

# Peacock Form Study

## Three categories of sign

Primarily, the emphasis was to understand the difference between Icon, Index and Symbol- three categories of sign:

Signs can take several forms. They can be numbers, words, photographs, paintings and road signs etc. Although signs can be many things, however, they may be classified as one of several types:

### Icon

An icon is meant to be a direct emulation of the object or concept. Icons have a physical resemblance to what's being represented.

Take a picture of a dog and the resulting image will look like that dog. It definitely resembles anything it's portraying.

### Index

An index is a sign indicating evidence of the idea or entity being represented. An index does not imitate the represented object or definition. Rather, it represents something that indicates the entity or idea.

Smoke, for instance, is an index of fire. Dark clouds are an index of rain. A footprint is an index of a foot.

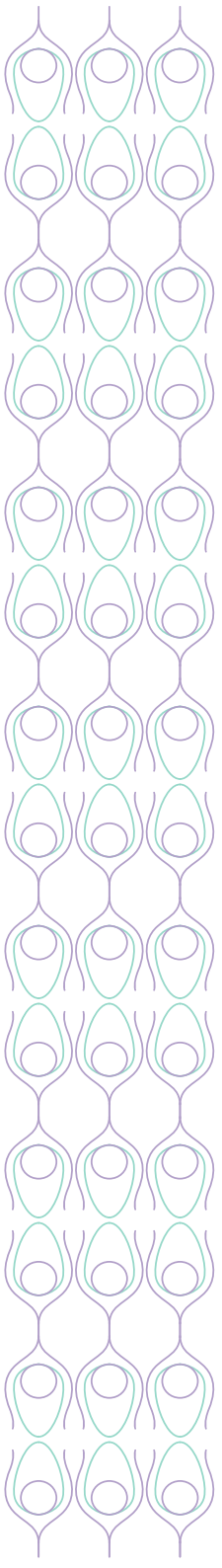
### Symbol

Symbols are at the opposite end from icons. There is a abstract connection between a symbol and what it represents. The connection has to be grasped and is usually associated with the belief that it represents over time.

Traffic lights are symbols. Flags are symbols. What's being communicated, must be learned.



Source: [www.vanseodesign.com](http://www.vanseodesign.com)

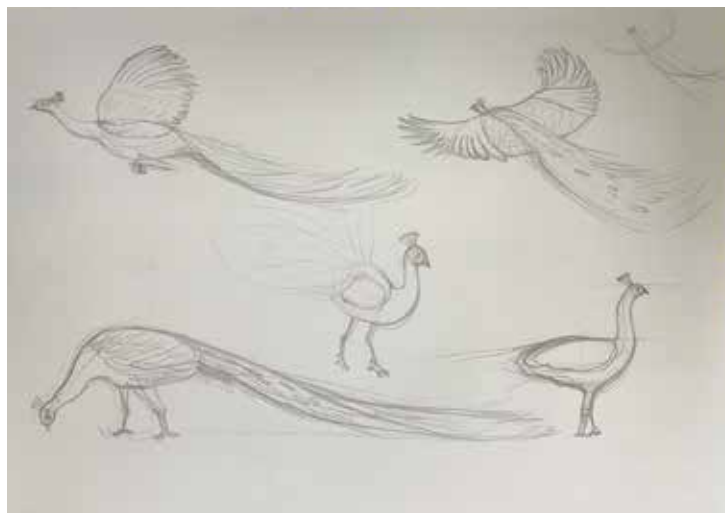
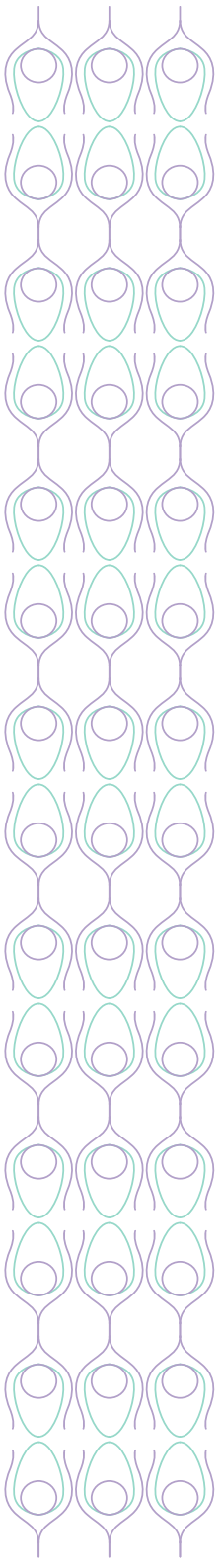


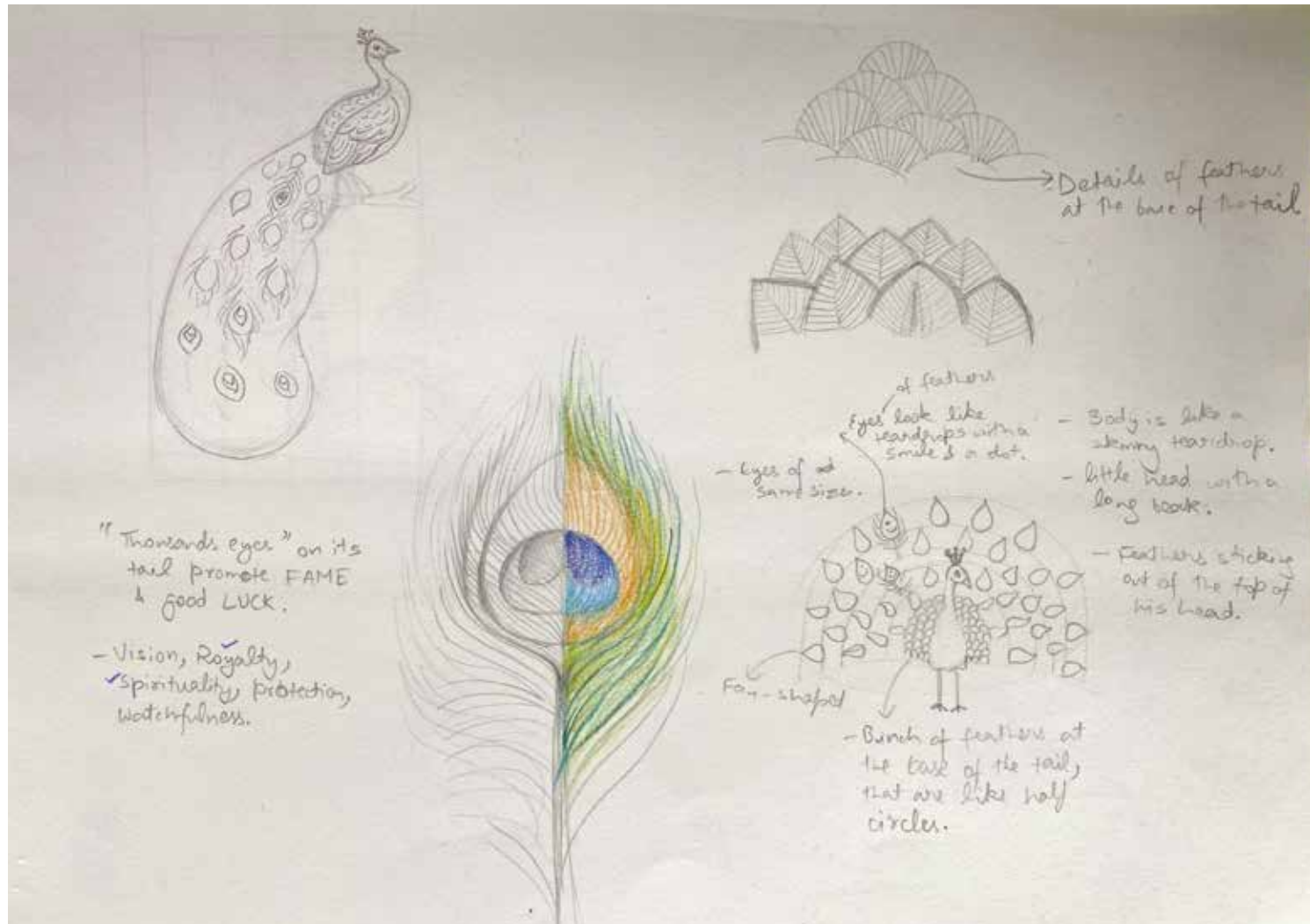
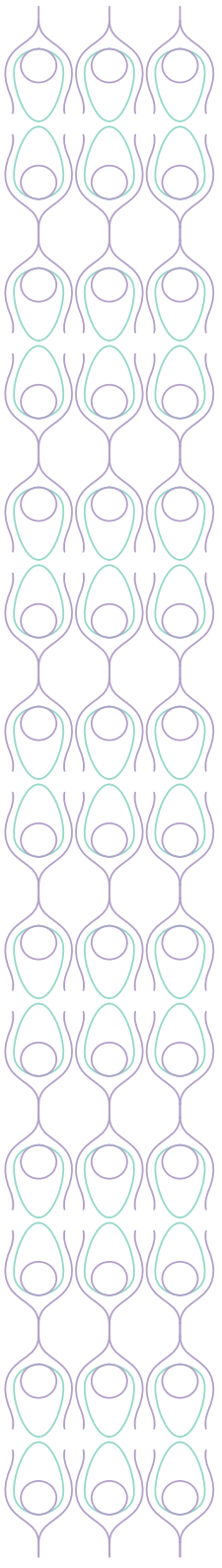
## Explorations

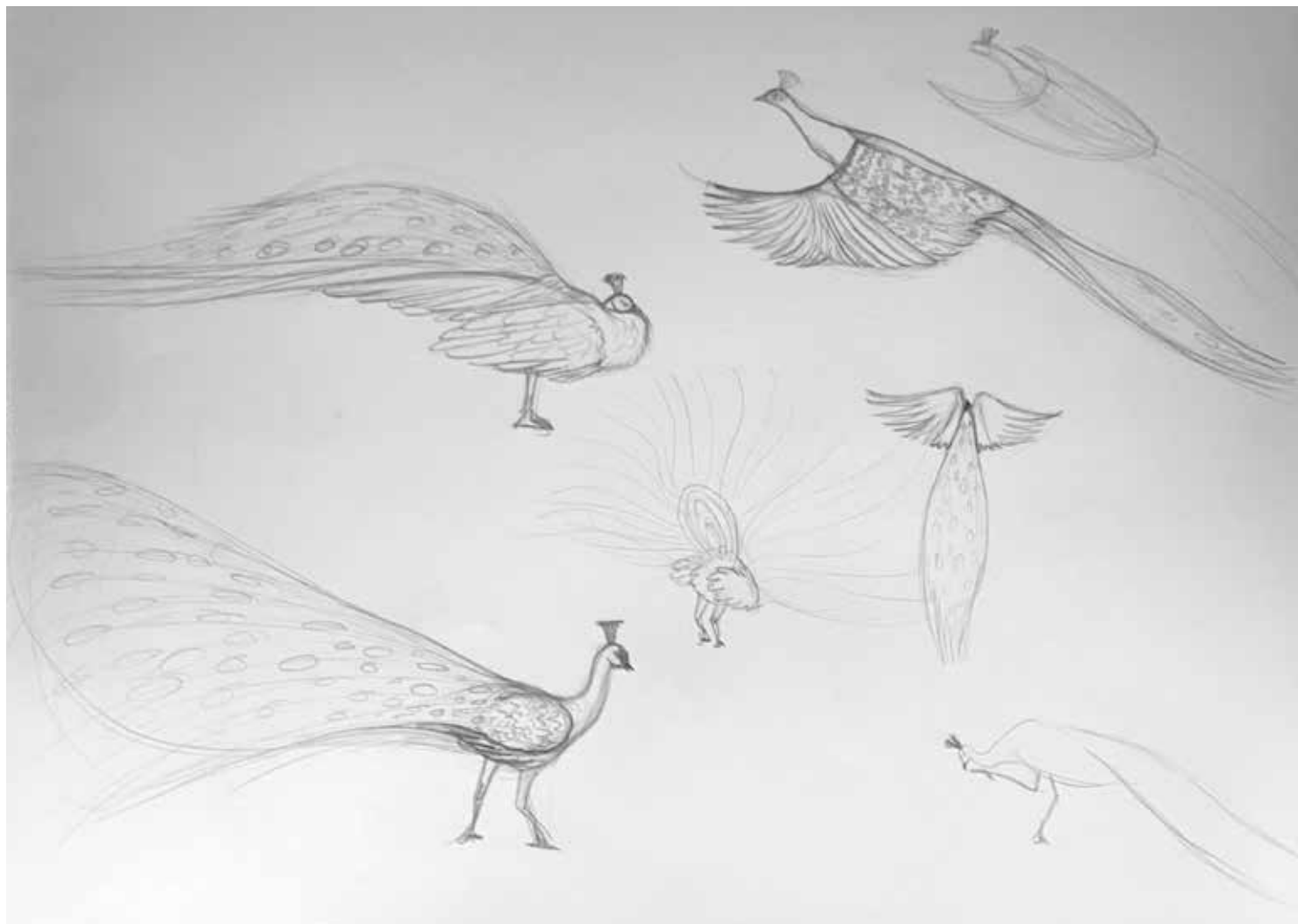
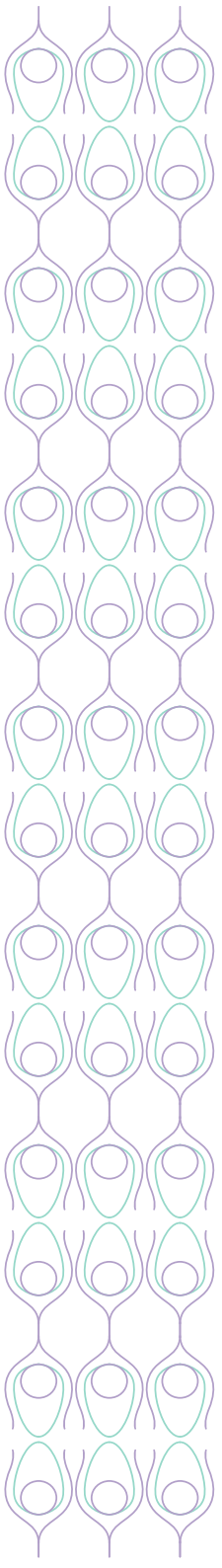
Initial explorations includes drawing peacock anatomy, features, forms, and details of peacocks' part to get the essence of the overall form and personality.

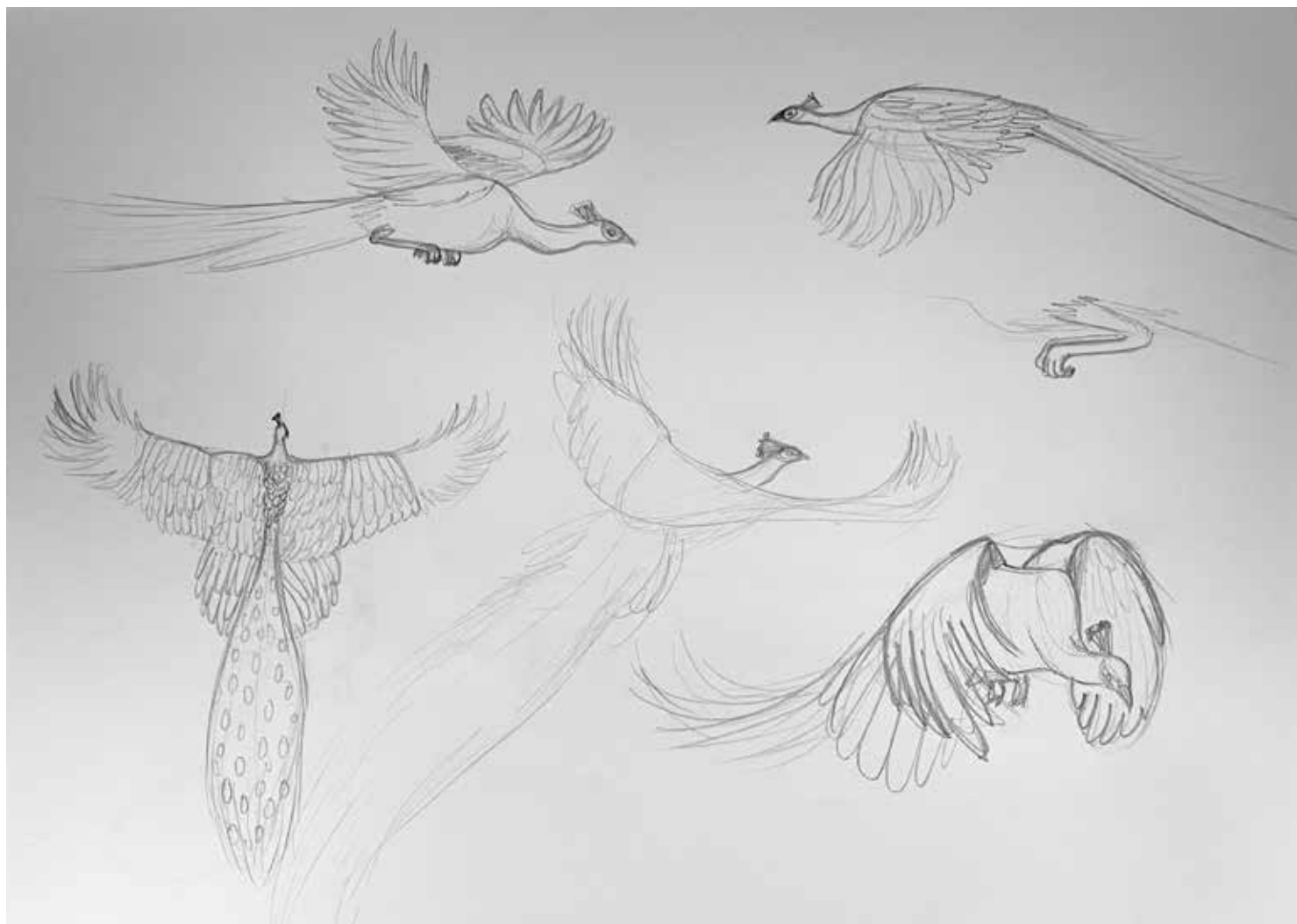
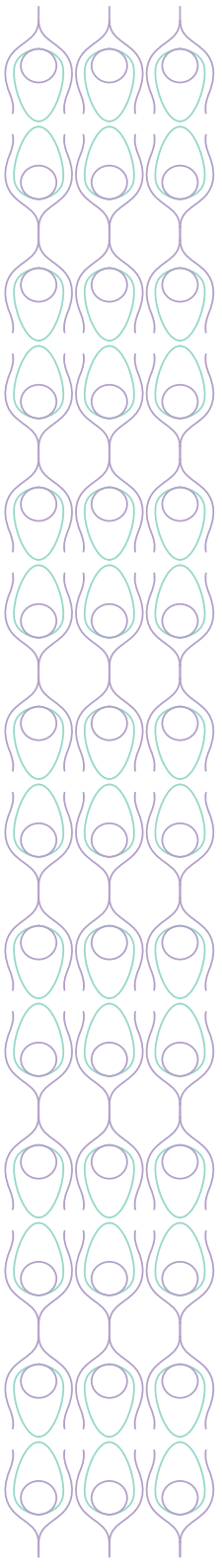




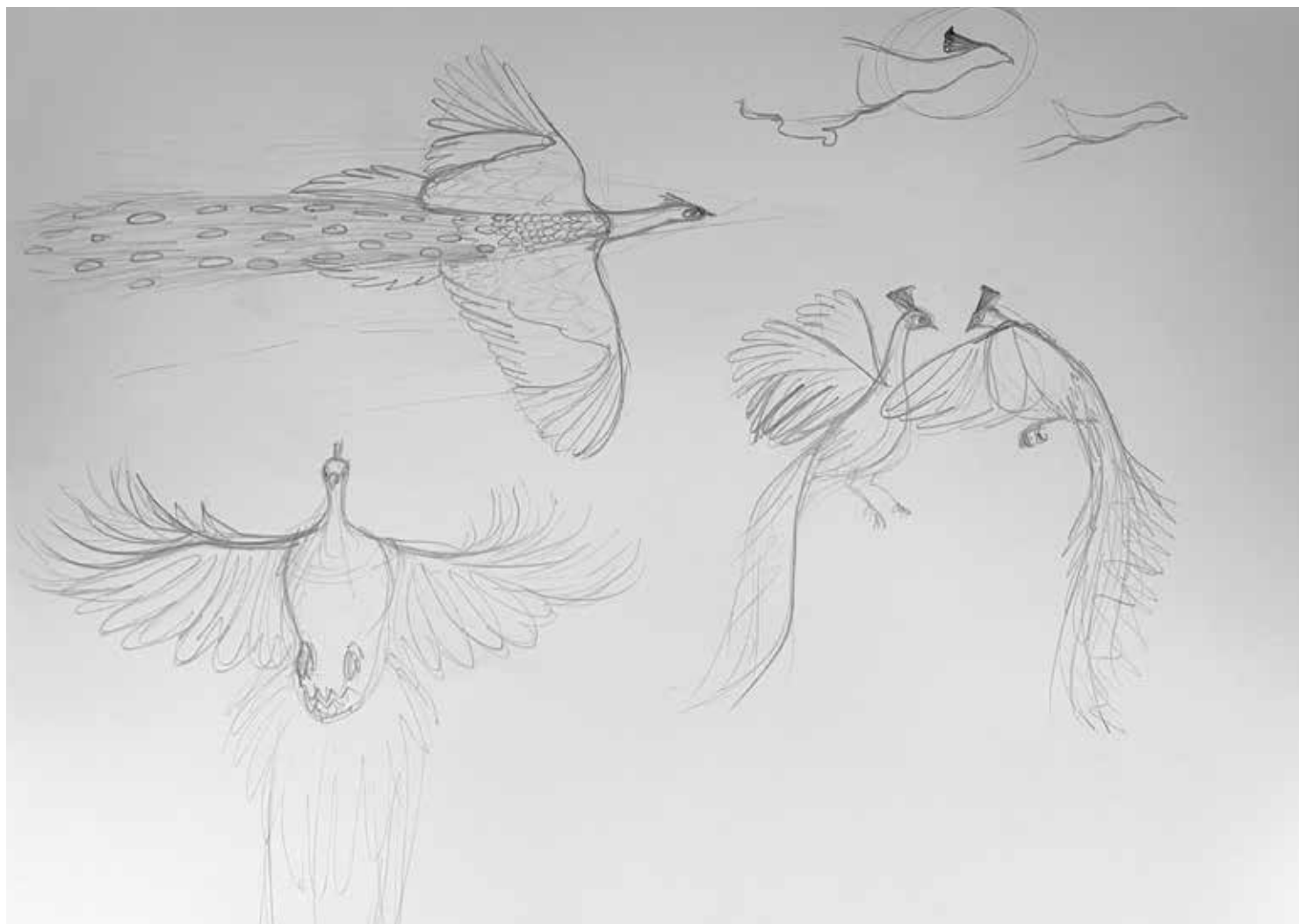
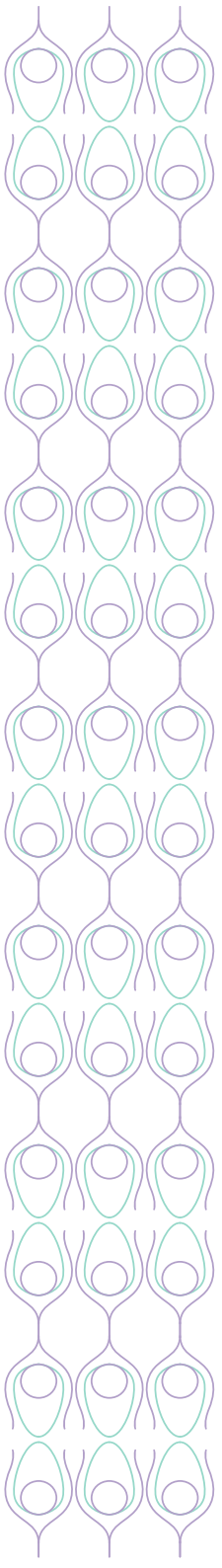


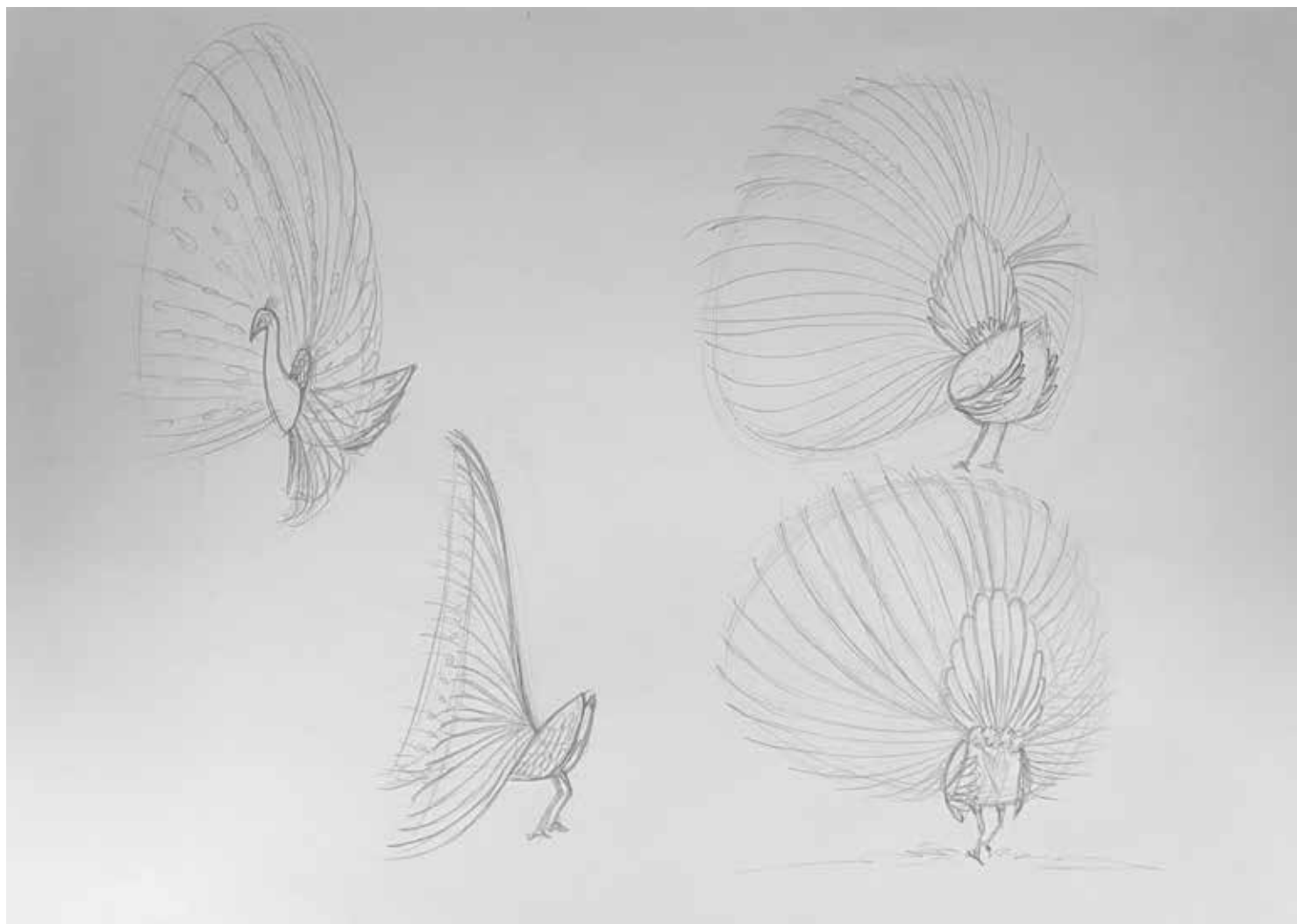
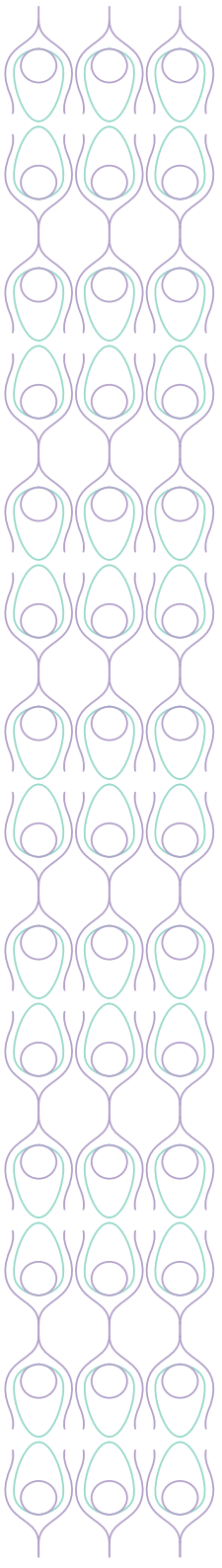


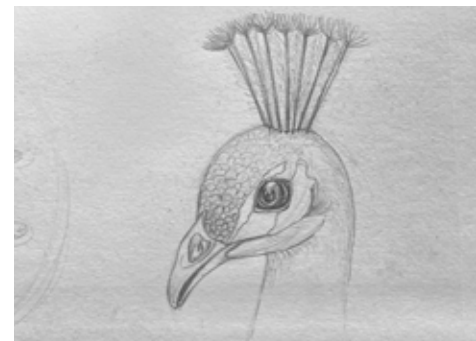
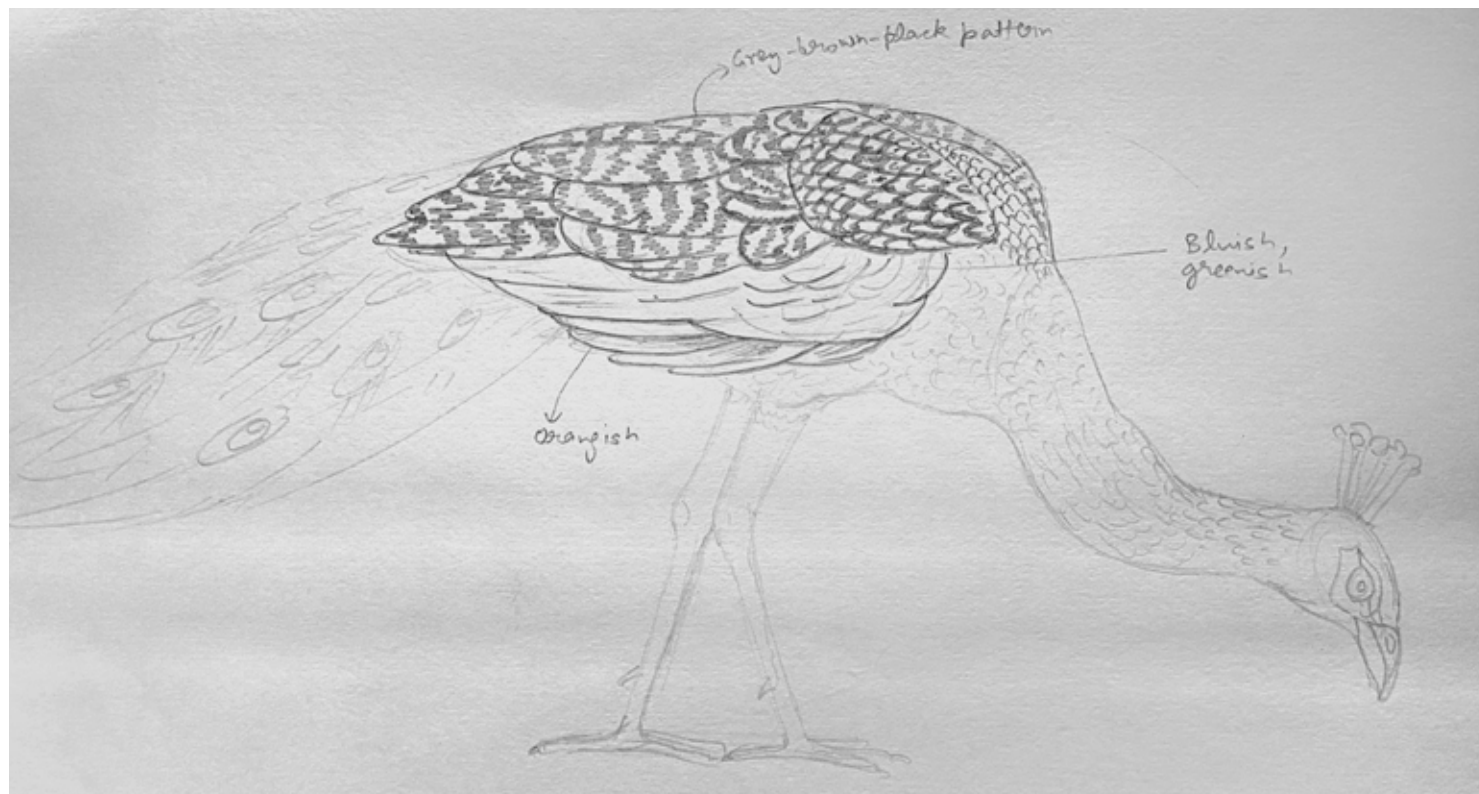
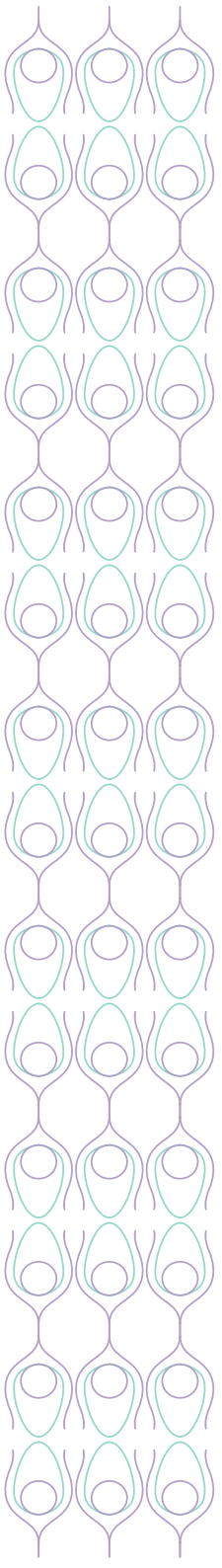


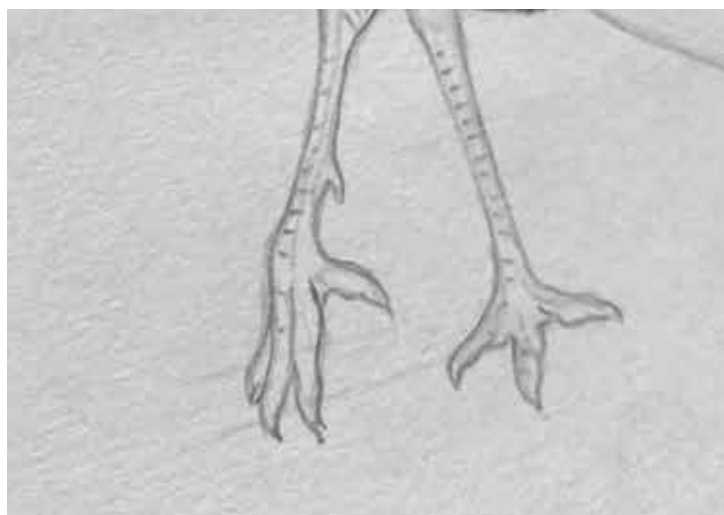
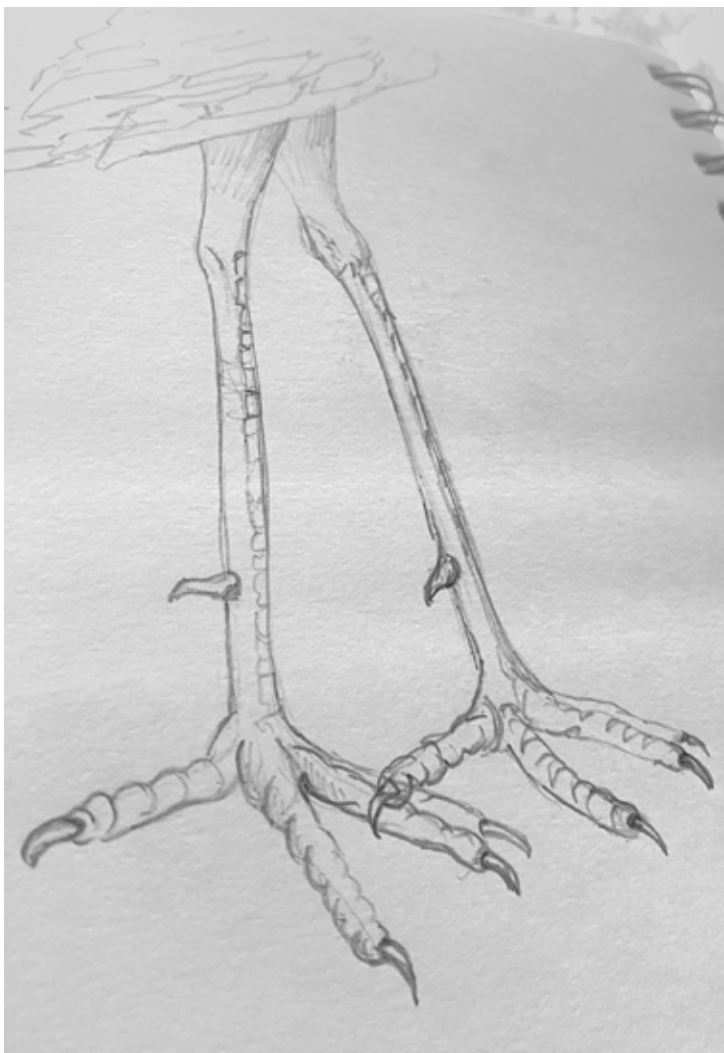
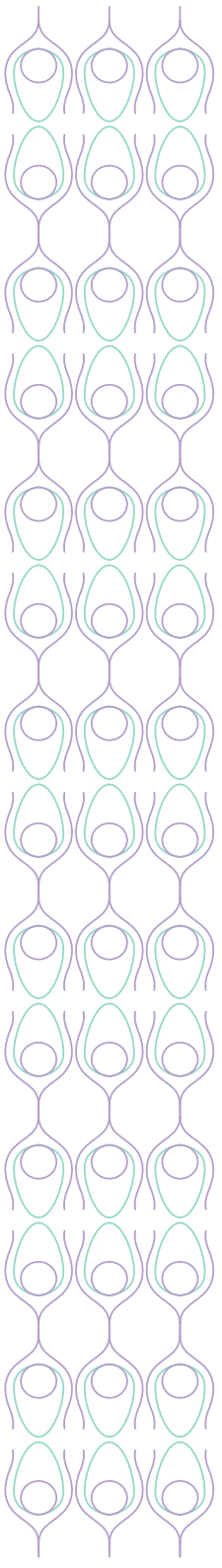




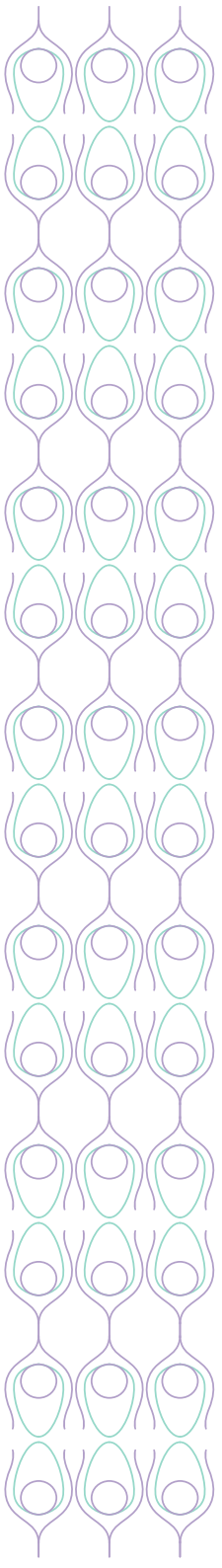




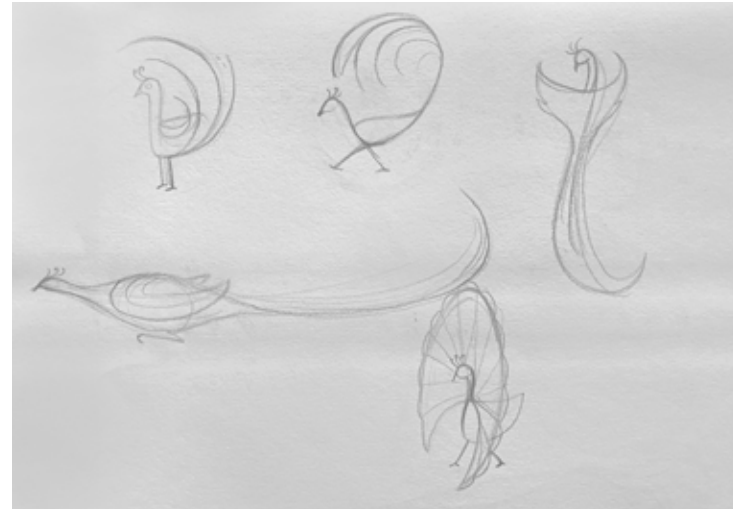
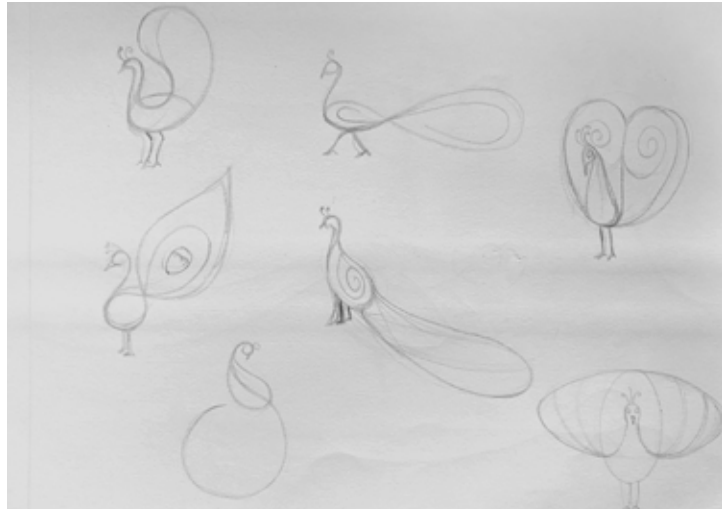


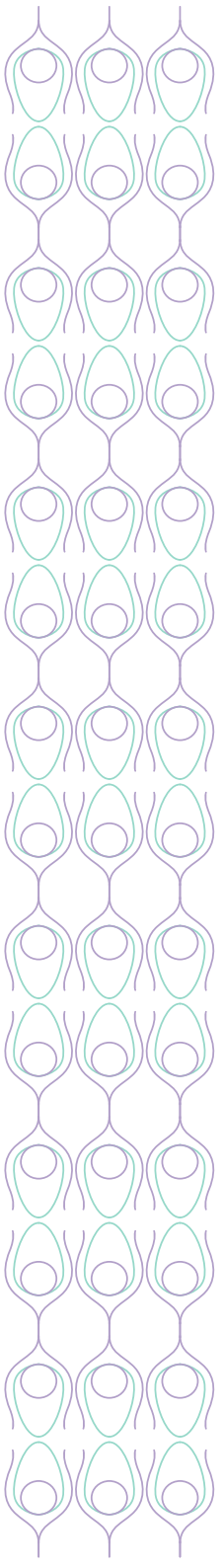




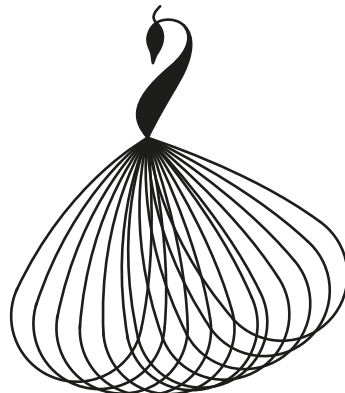
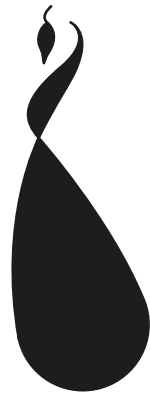
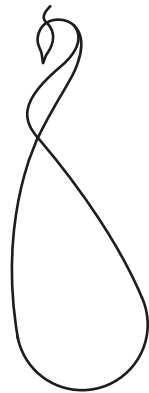
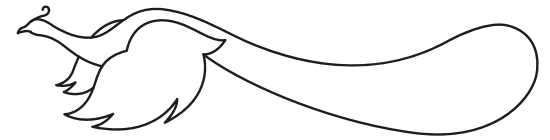
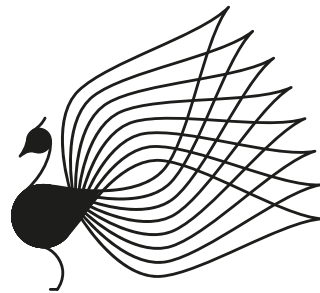
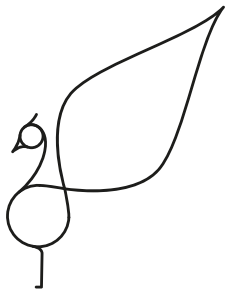


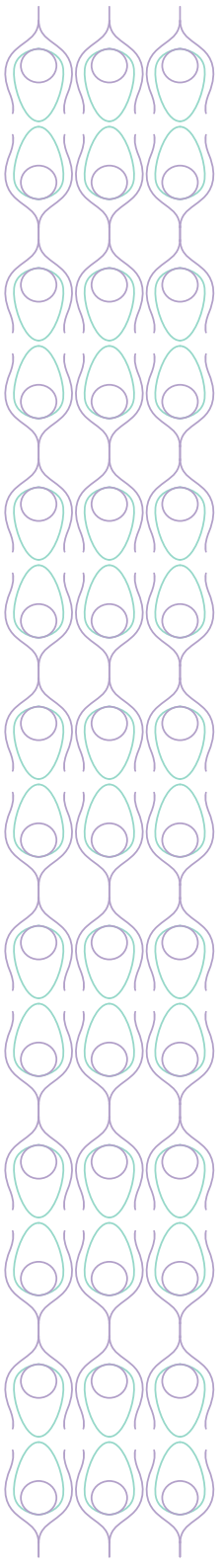
In the next stage, focus is to depict in the form of “ICON”, depicting the way it is keeping in mind several points like: full body and keeping minimal.



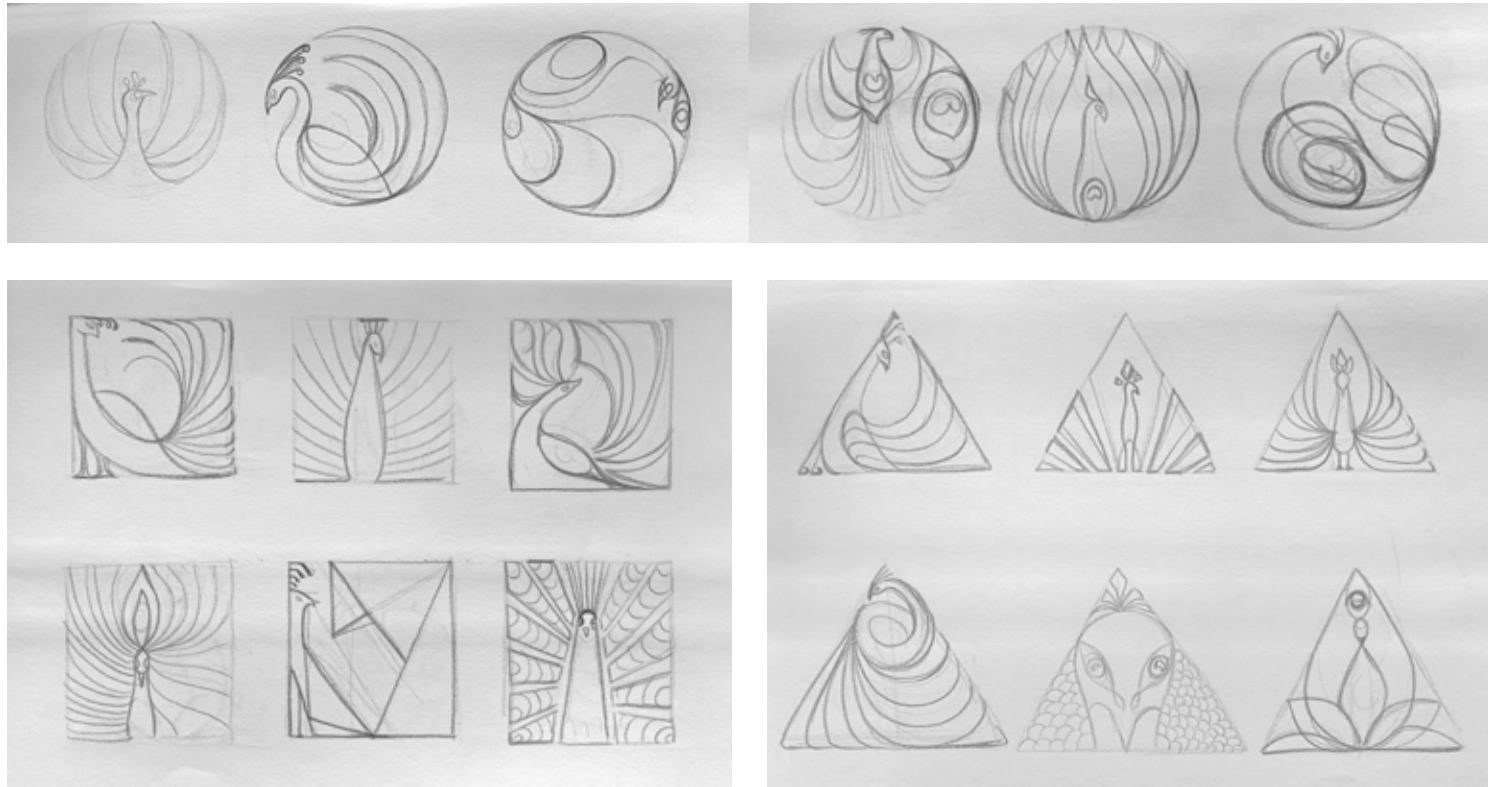


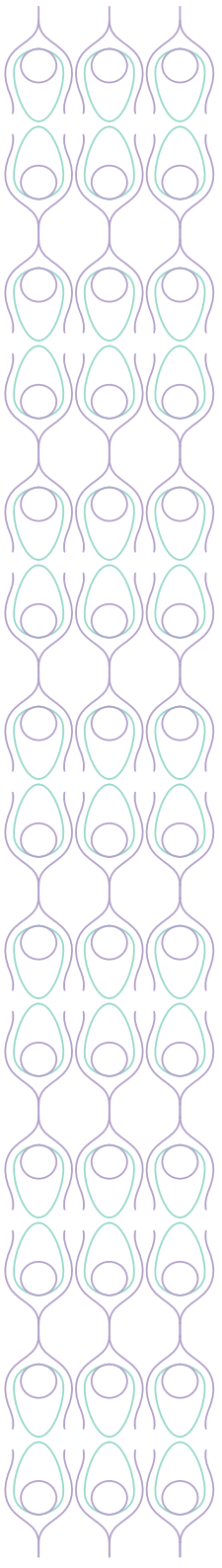
Digital version of "ICON" exploring the whole form of peacock with variations in strokes, brushes, negative and positive space etc.



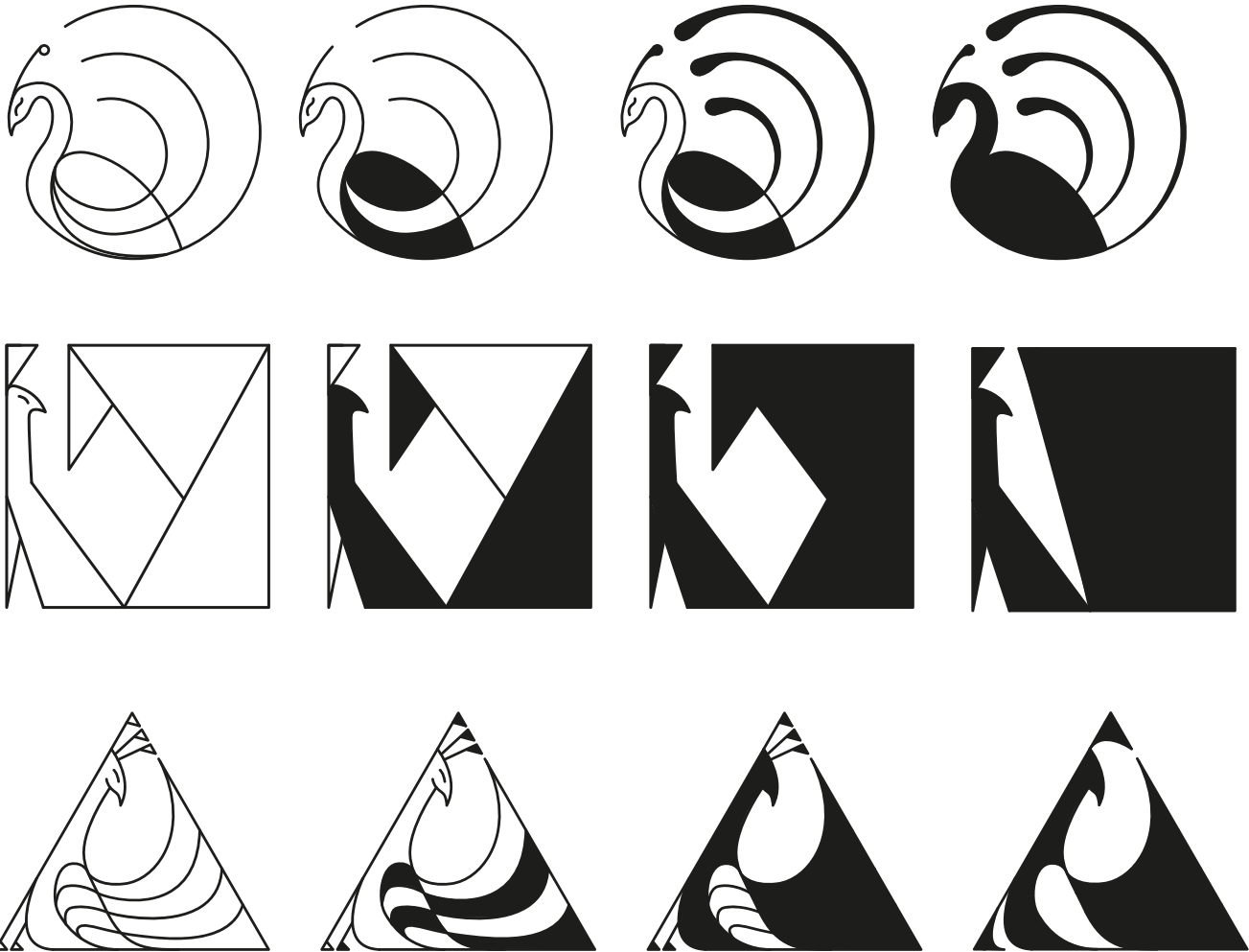


Few explorations done by fitting the elements in some shapes like circle, square and triangle.

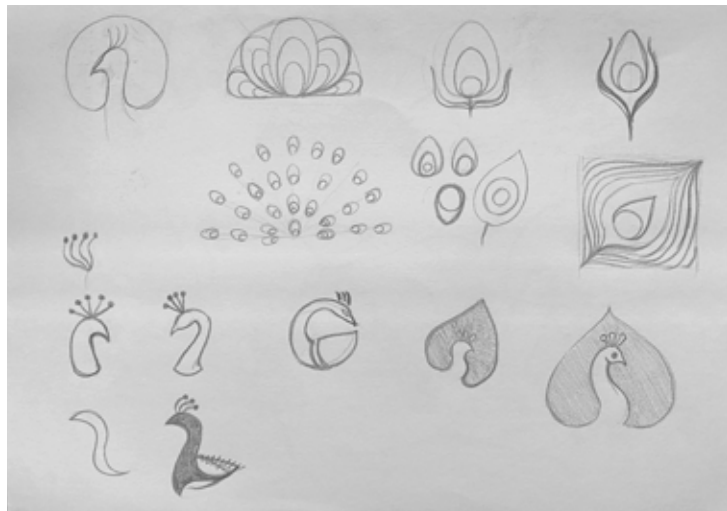


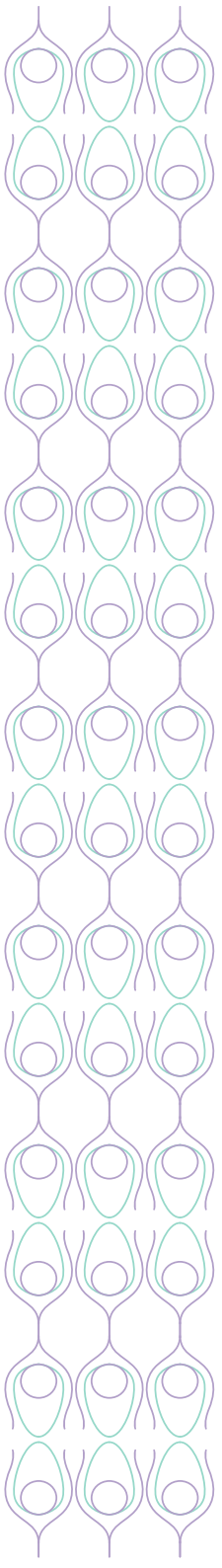


Digital version, by fitting the elements in some shapes  
like circle, square and triangle.

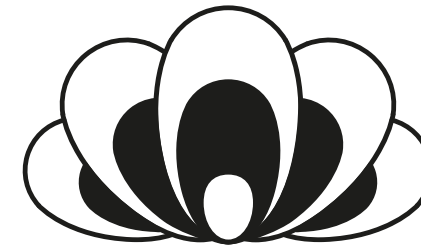
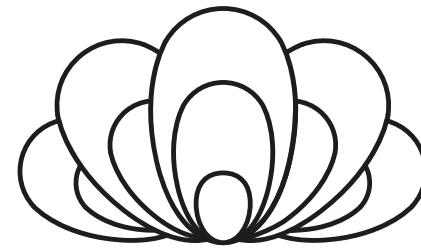
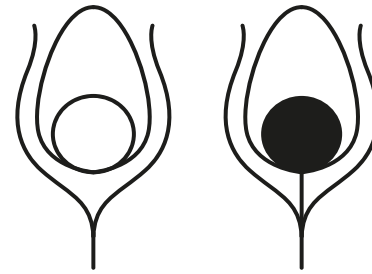
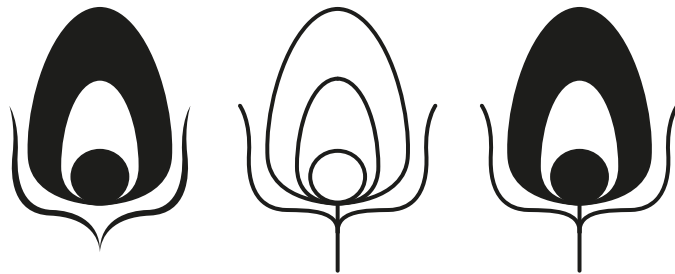


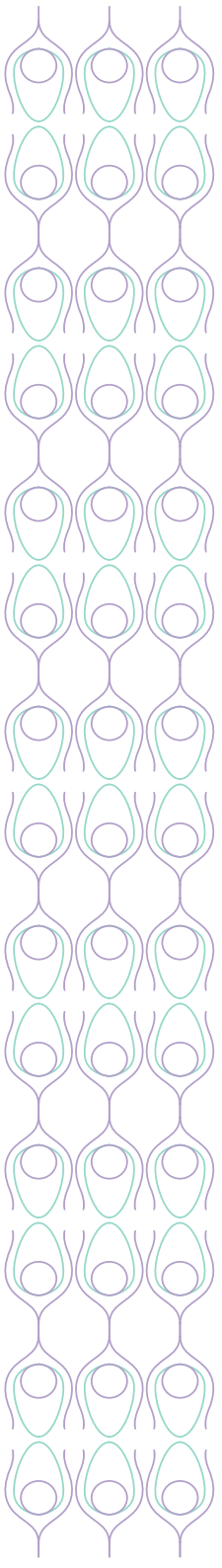






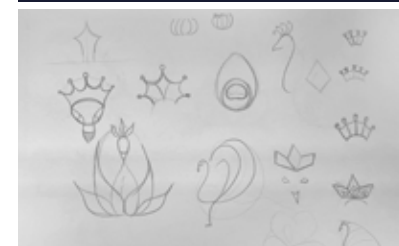
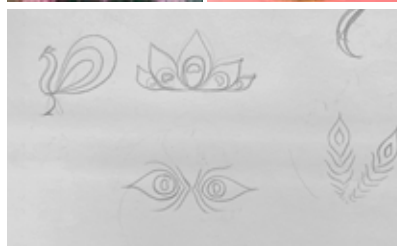
Digital version of "INDEX"

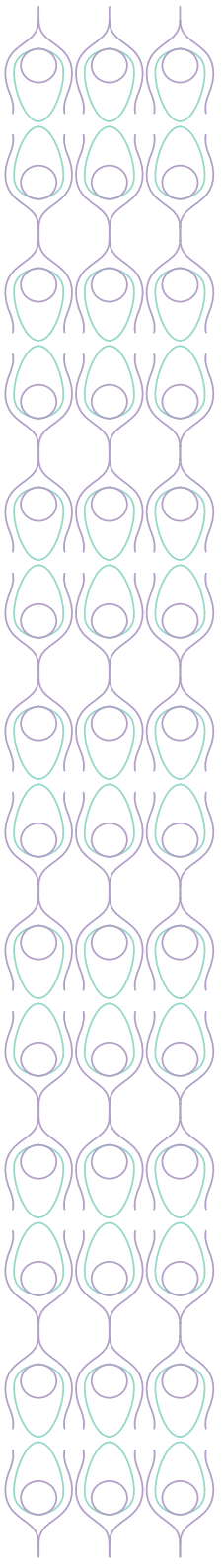




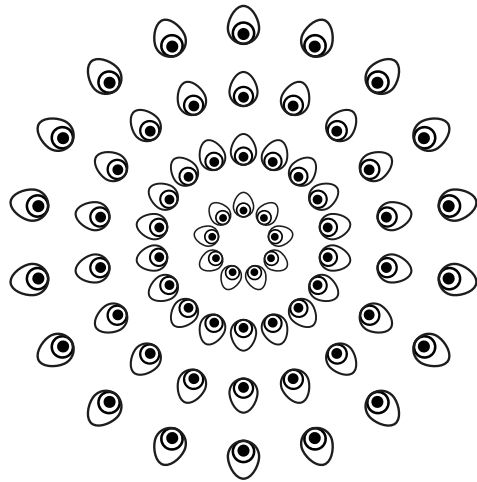
In these explorations, focus is to depict in the form of "SYMBOL".  
Giving form to something which is formless like depicting lamp,  
royalty and spirituality in abstract.

Mood boards were made for elements: lamp, royalty and  
spirituality and explorations were done.

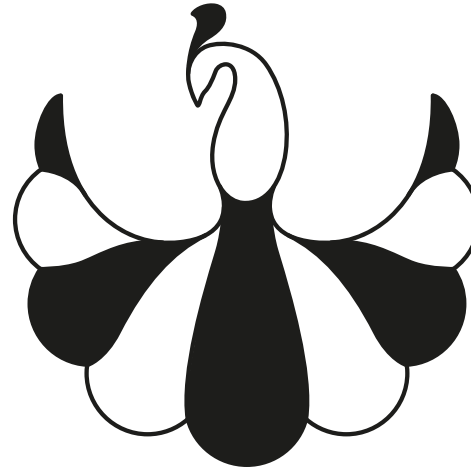




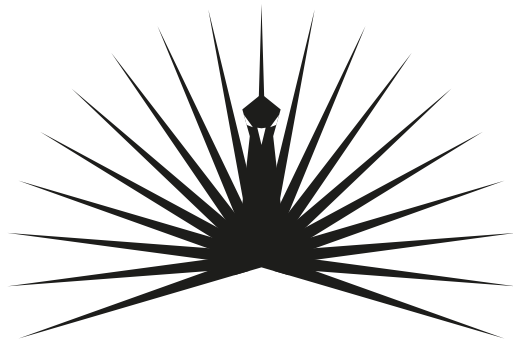
Digital version of "SYMBOL"



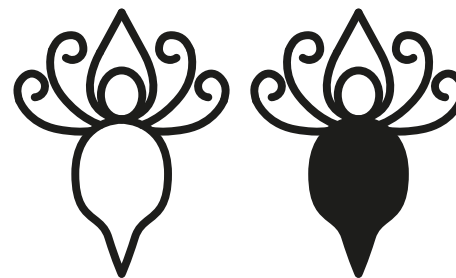
Spirituality: Mandala Art



Woman and Peacock

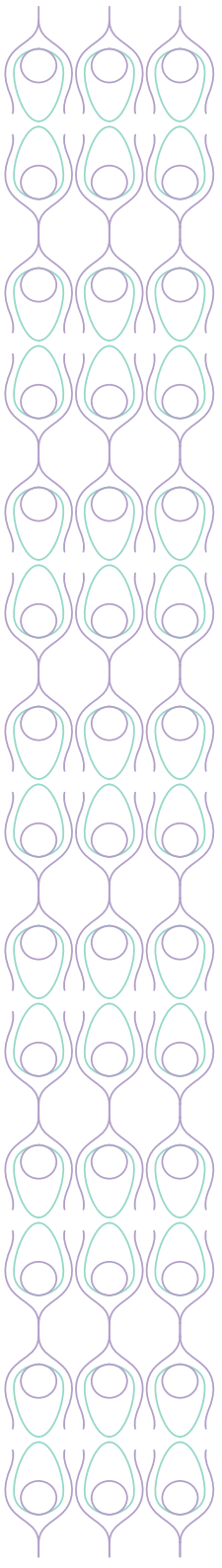


Lamp and Peacock



Royalty

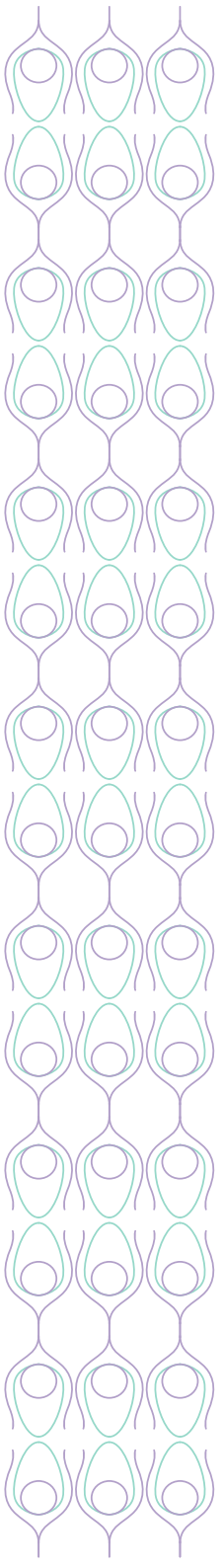




## Final Output

Final output will be in the form of a book which will include the variations in icons been made categorically. The broad categories will include Icons, Index and symbols.





# Conclusion

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Icons and symbols which can be easily seen in our surrounding and has the power to effectively communicate the same meaning to people of various culture globally. These small elements catches my attention all the time and made me choose this DES “From Formless to Form” which gave me the opportunity to explore and get better idea about the process of making Icons like understanding the elements’ background study, which involves its physical form, its deeper and conceptual meaning.

And various explorations done categorically over the time in a defined order helped in understanding the technicalities, details, context and then effectively represent the idea.

This project gave me the broader idea of this small unit and its limitless possibilities to explore in the future.