

The Eternal Lovers - A Border Design based on the 'Sunwheel' Motif



Whilst on holiday in Thailand I purchased two items of Indian art from an antique shop in Chang Mai. The first a watercolour of an Indian women which was mounted, to include dome topped ruled lines and wash panel, and framed. See link <http://www.harlequin-frames.co.uk/articles/mal-s-masterclass>. The second item was a painting on silk possibly depicting the eternal lovers; the blue god Krishna and Radha in a field of flowers with two trees behind Krishna that balance and give an extra dimension to the scene.

Whilst I liked the artwork itself I considered the border to overpowering and whilst I wanted the work mounted to reflect the shades of blues and greys I was undecided how to treat the border.

With my interest in geometrical patterns I had noticed that the Sunwheel motif occurs across a wide range of cultures and whilst being exclusively a symbolic religious Icon in the Indian sub-continent and the Far East it can be found throughout the Middle East and some western cultures



The Sunwheel, more commonly known in the west as the 'Swastica' can be seen in various designs and forms. There are suggestions that the cross symbolises the four seasons or elements set around a motionless centre, with the trailing line arms providing rotational symmetry in either a clockwise or anti-clockwise direction. Both depictions have a particular meaning. In Hinduism the clockwise sunwheel symbolises the sun and prosperity whilst the anti-clockwise sunwheel symbolises the night or the tantric aspects of Kali. Alternatively, in Buddhism the sun wheel symbolises the footprint of Buddha.

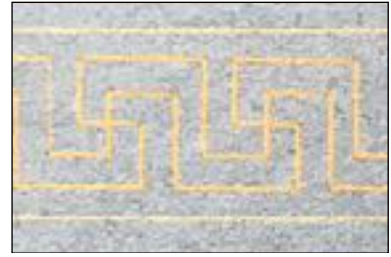


The sketch shows an anticlockwise sunwheel in relation to the Khatam(8 pointed star) featured in Moareq tile work in the Molla Ishmael mosque, Yazd, Iran.

It is in the west where the swastica has been stigmatised by its association with ideas of racism, hate and mass murder but the 'Sunwheels' origins are of an ancient religious icon

used widely on the Indian sub-continent and throughout East and Southeast Asia where it remains a symbol of spiritual printciples and values.

This simple border pattern is based on and constructed around five symmetrical horizontal and vertical lines distanced 5mm apart. Once complete the result is simply two complete lines spaced 50mm apart or 10 iterations of 5mm. Whilst this may sound complicated once the lines



were drawn a pattern soon emerged however, care still made to ensure no mistakes. Gold acrylic paint was applied using a split leafed ruling pen. To complete the sunwheel rotational dimension I decided to place circles in each of the four corners.

The bevel of the window mount and the second level 2.4mm mount were painted with acrylic gold. The artwork was 'T-hinged' to the undermount, two hinges along the top edge and a single hinge located around 7/8ths of the way down each side. Cotton museum tape was used for all hinges.

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