



SHAPING VISUAL STRUCTURES

THE ART OF COMPOSITION, MOVEMENT
AND SPACE IN GRAPHIC DESIGN

CARLA VIVIANA CORDOVA

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AND SPACE IN GRAPHIC DESIGN**

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TEXT, DESIGN & ARTWORK

BY CARLA VIVIANA CORDOVA

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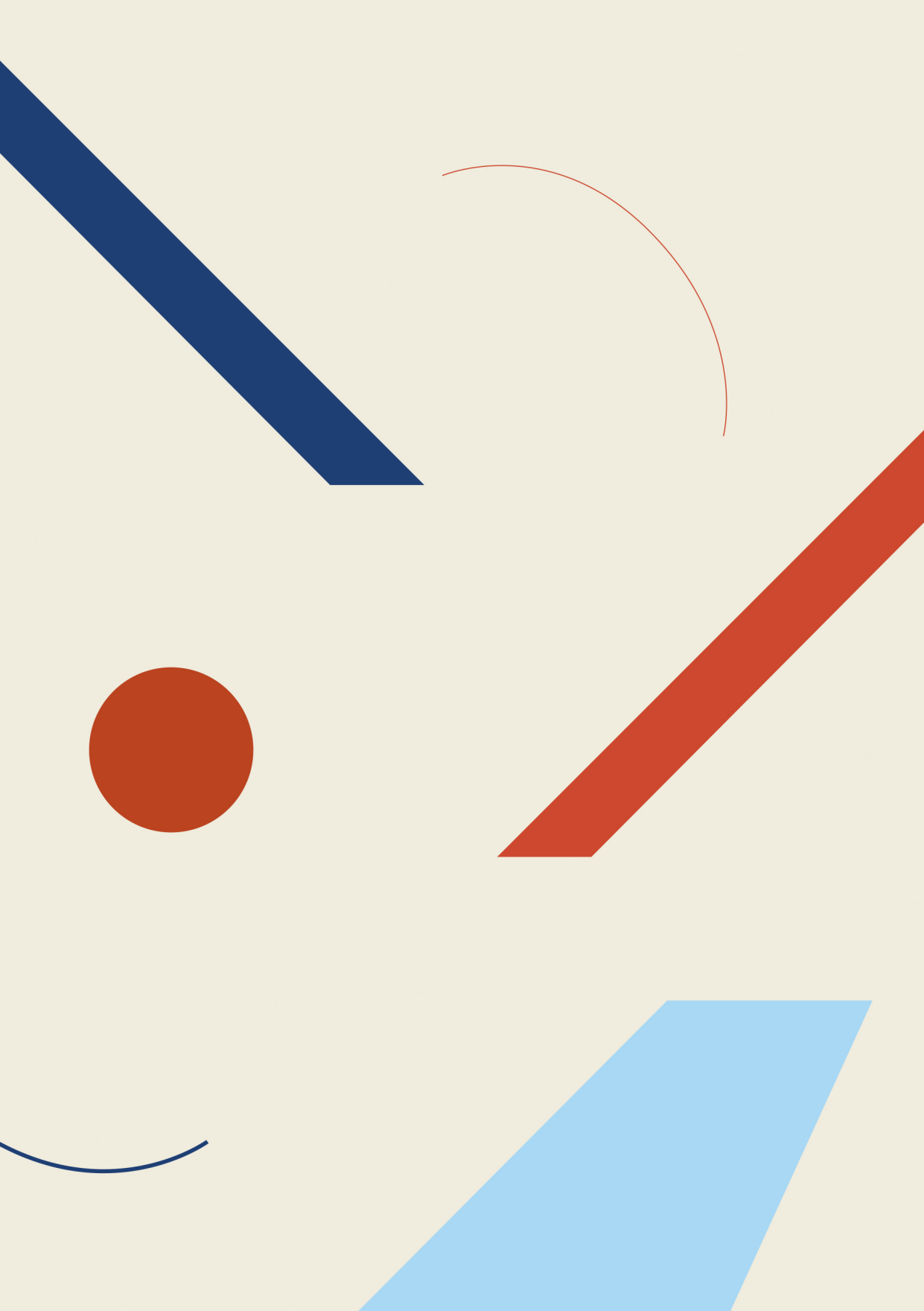
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"Shaping Visual Structures presents a process-oriented approach to graphic design, emphasizing the dynamic interplay of composition, movement, and space. The book invites designers to blend digital precision with hands-on experimentation, fostering creativity and personal discovery."

Ben Hannam, Associate Professor and Department Chair, Elon University, North Carolina, USA

"This is an exceptional and much needed book. Viviana Cordova has developed an engaging and interactive publication that covers important information that helps shape our understanding of the underlying structures of design. The exercises are fun, engaging and informative and you will find this book helpful, whether you are a design student, design educator or practicing designer. I highly recommend this book."

Bernard Canniffe, Professor, Iowa State University, USA

"The book as a guided tool for experimentation and exploration both digital and analog promises to be essential in becoming well versed in visual language. The principles of visual arrangement of shapes are broken down to basic organizational principles and invites the reader to explore further. The book is fun, colorful, and inviting."

Alma Hoffmann, Associate Professor, University of South Alabama, USA

"A 'Design Playbook' to inspire experimentation. Simple assignments, explained in an easy-to-understand way, encourage you to start playing with shapes. Carla Viviana Cordova Chacon helps readers grasp the fundamentals of composition. And more! These basic exercises can also be applied to other areas, such as designing logos. Play!"

Sven Ingmar Thies, author of the book "Teaching Graphic Design", University of Applied Arts Vienna, Austria
thiesdesign.com
linkedin.com/in/sven-ingmar-thies

This book has been inspired by sketching, thinking, and designing elements that are part of the constant work in progress we go through as designers. Embracing thoughts and experimental endeavors that allow us to push boundaries and also understand how our design methods can change, diverge, evolve, and even go back to previous inspirational thinking. Our visual senses absorb the abstraction of our surroundings all the time.

**I want to thank my daughter
Luz who inspires me
everyday, and my father
Oscar and brother Oscar, who
encourage me daily.**



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1.introduction

Humans have communicated through graphics since 50 000 BC, starting with cave paintings of animals, hunting, people, and their lifestyle. During the Industrial Revolution, when communication became commercialized through graphic design, this came to be called commercial art. This transition from handmade products to manufacturing started in 1760 and continued to 1840 and brought about drastic changes and speed. Humanity started to crave a fast paced lifestyle during the Second Industrial Revolution, also known as the Technological Revolution, which ranged from 1817 to 1914.

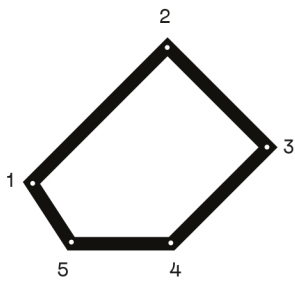
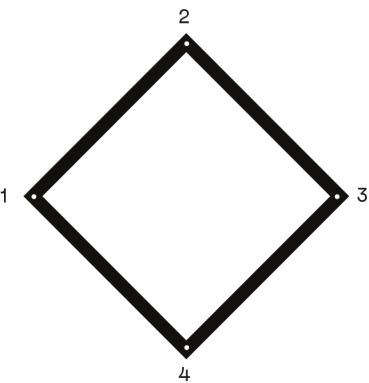
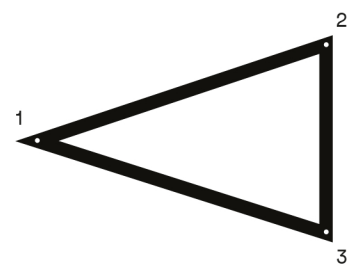
The current Revolution we are experiencing is the Information Age, which began in 1946 with computing and became more accessible in 1974 through Smalltalk, the first graphical user interface that allowed graphics on the

computer screen. The advancement of graphic design has evolved because it has always been influenced by technology. The work in this book was influenced by the following Art and Design movements, including Dada 1916–1923, Bauhaus 1917–1932, and De Stijl 1917–1938. The content has inspirational visual exercises and methods of thinking and features an abstract approach, providing creative systems that are easy to understand and access.

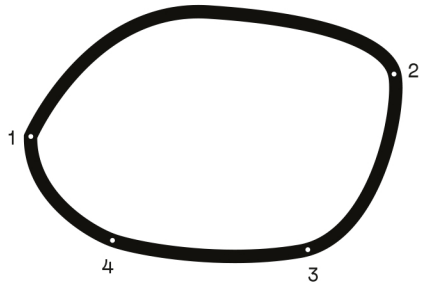
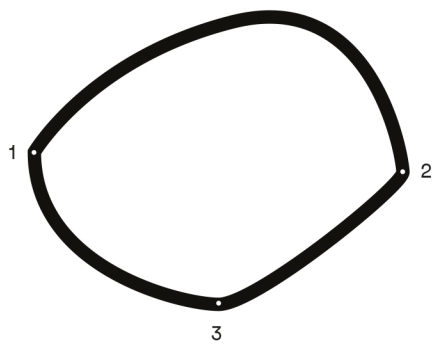
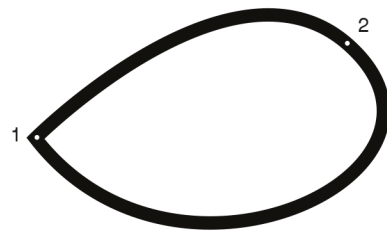
Understanding how we work with structure and how elements are organized is essential to visual brainstorming. The content explores a vast range of topics, such as movement, experimental, spontaneity, etc. This explorative work will inspire students, professionals, and other enthusiasts to create their own designs.

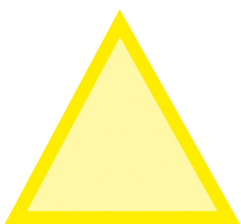
shapes

geometric

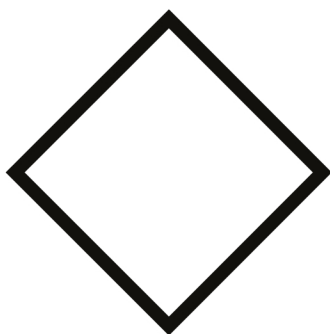


irregular

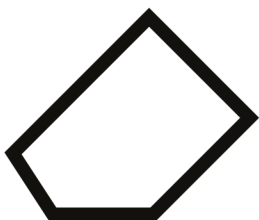
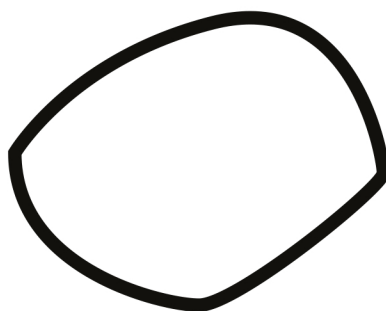




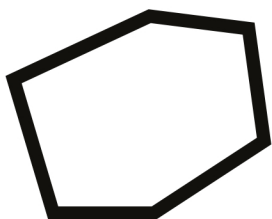
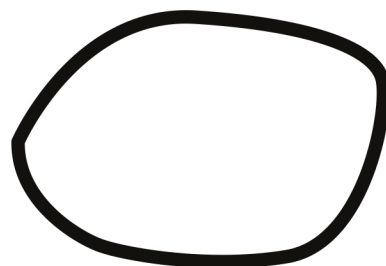
3 points



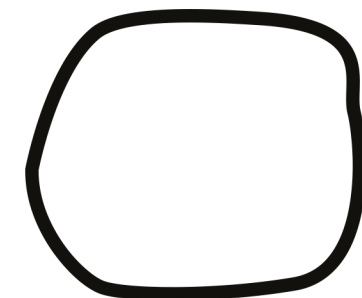
4 points



5 points



6 points



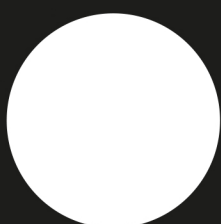
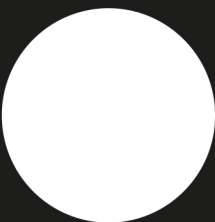
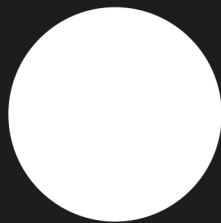
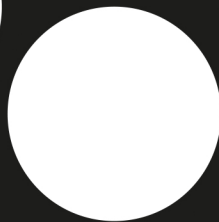
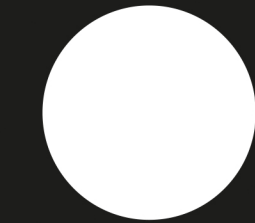
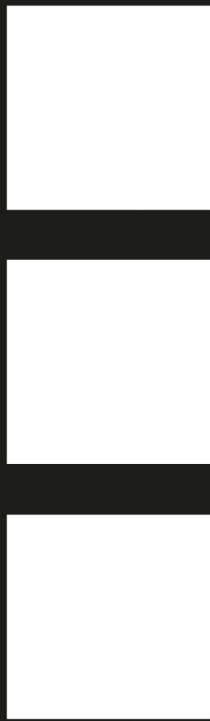
brainstorming and shape creation

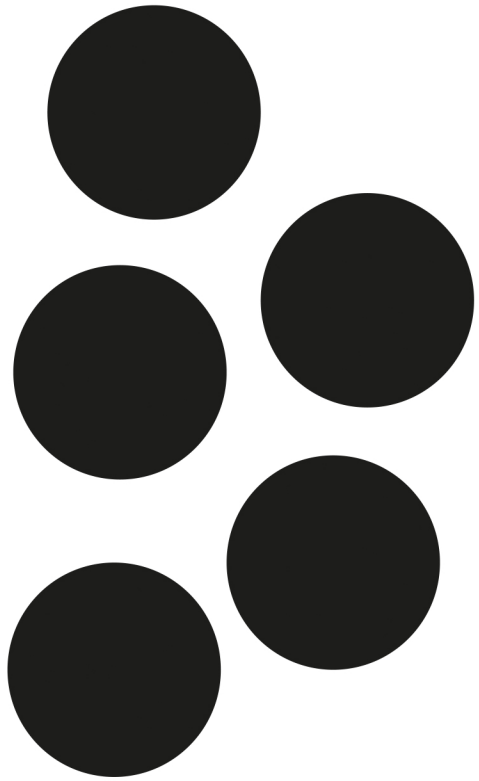
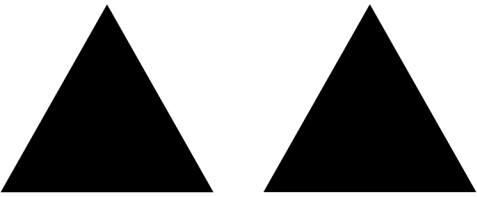
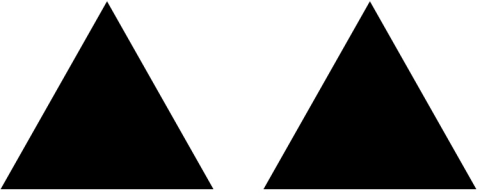
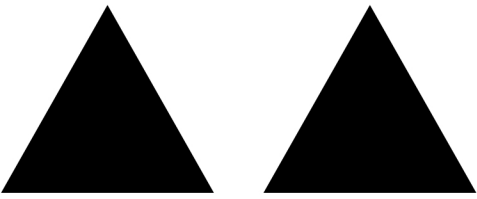
Creating shapes can seem very easy because they are so primitive. By connecting points, we can easily form straight lines, curves, diagonals, and more complex systems using repetition, rotation, reflection, refraction, and other limitless actions. The simplest shapes are inspired by geometry—created using three, four, five, six, seven, eight, or even more points. Some shapes are very well-known: triangle, circle, trapezoid, hexagon, and so on. At the same time, we can explore abstract, free-form shapes that can be drawn with complete freedom.

Shapes can also be combined to create more complex forms that generate surfaces and textures—not only digitally, but also through hand drawing. Computing and digital tools have deeply influenced how mathematical our design process and thinking have become. Many graphic designers prefer to program and design using algorithms, fractals, and pre-made shapes, which offer convenience in our fast-paced world. However, exploring other mediums can generate fresh imagery and new modes of expression. Working both outside the computer and with digital tools is equally important.

Ancient tools such as pencils, brushes, unknown objects, and even our fingers are still in use and continue to inspire the creation of new shapes and forms. Also, various surfaces that we still use as canvas to create artwork and design. We should not limit ourselves—instead, we can combine and mix digital and physical processes to expand our creative possibilities.

fold or cut here



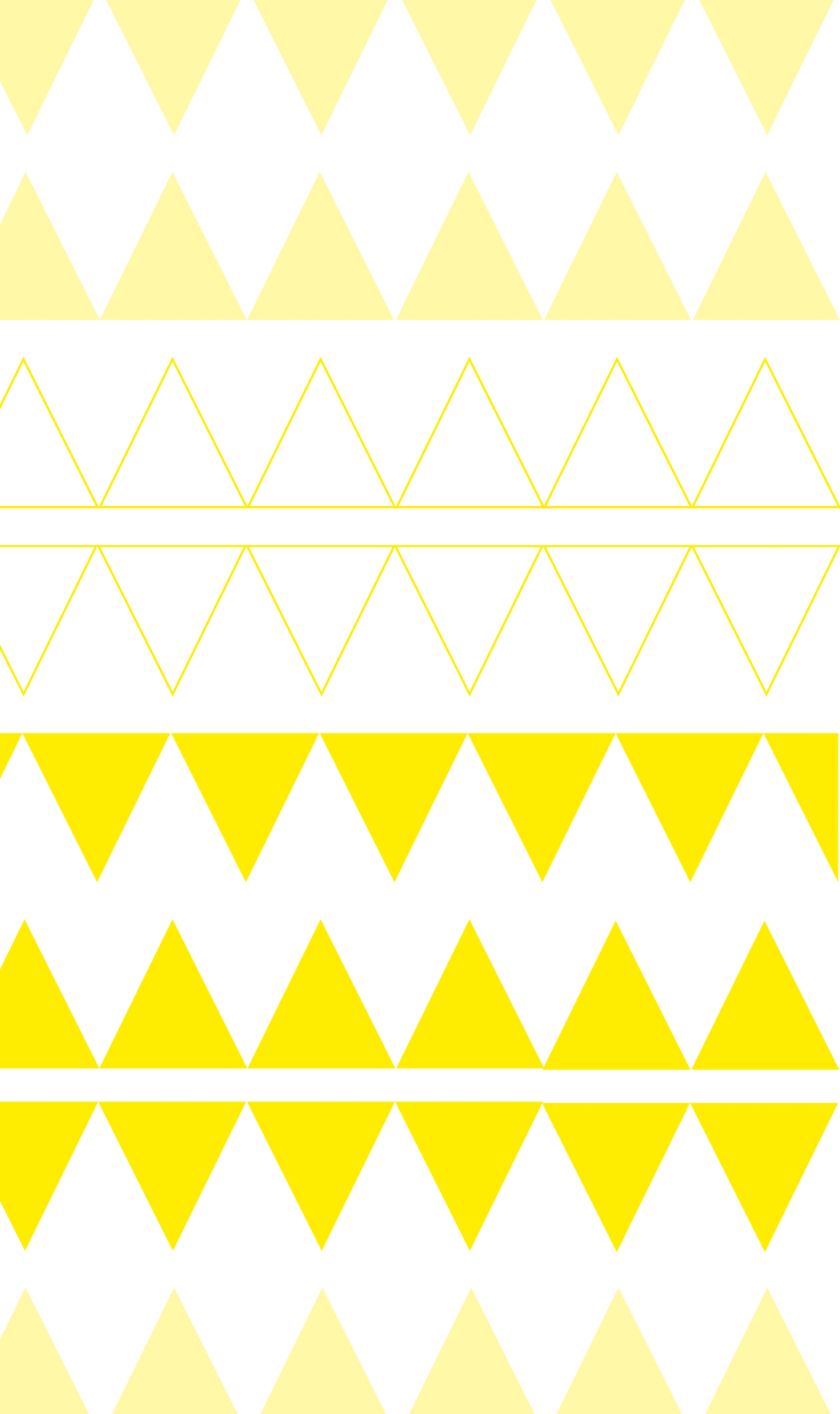


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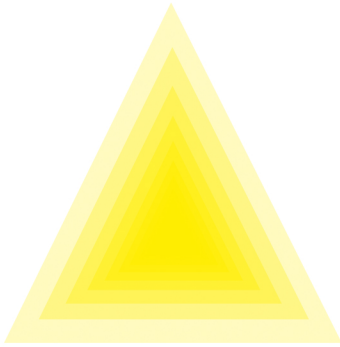
exercise

Use the pages as a foundational start in this chapter to draw, cut, paste, etc. Be inspired to create and design using the shapes in the left page or the previous page to design in a separate sheet or sheets. Please feel free to use the space below as a canvas.

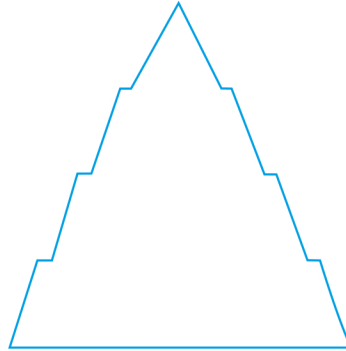
sketch, fold or cut here



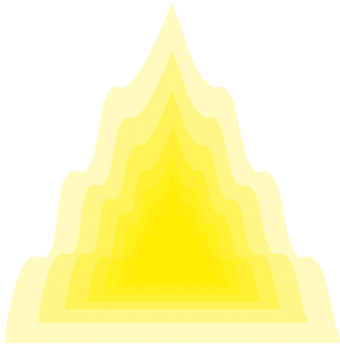
fold or cut here



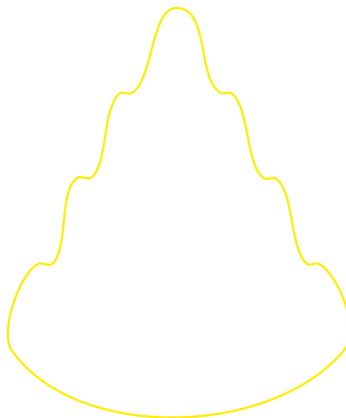
**repetition, transparency,
and straight lines**



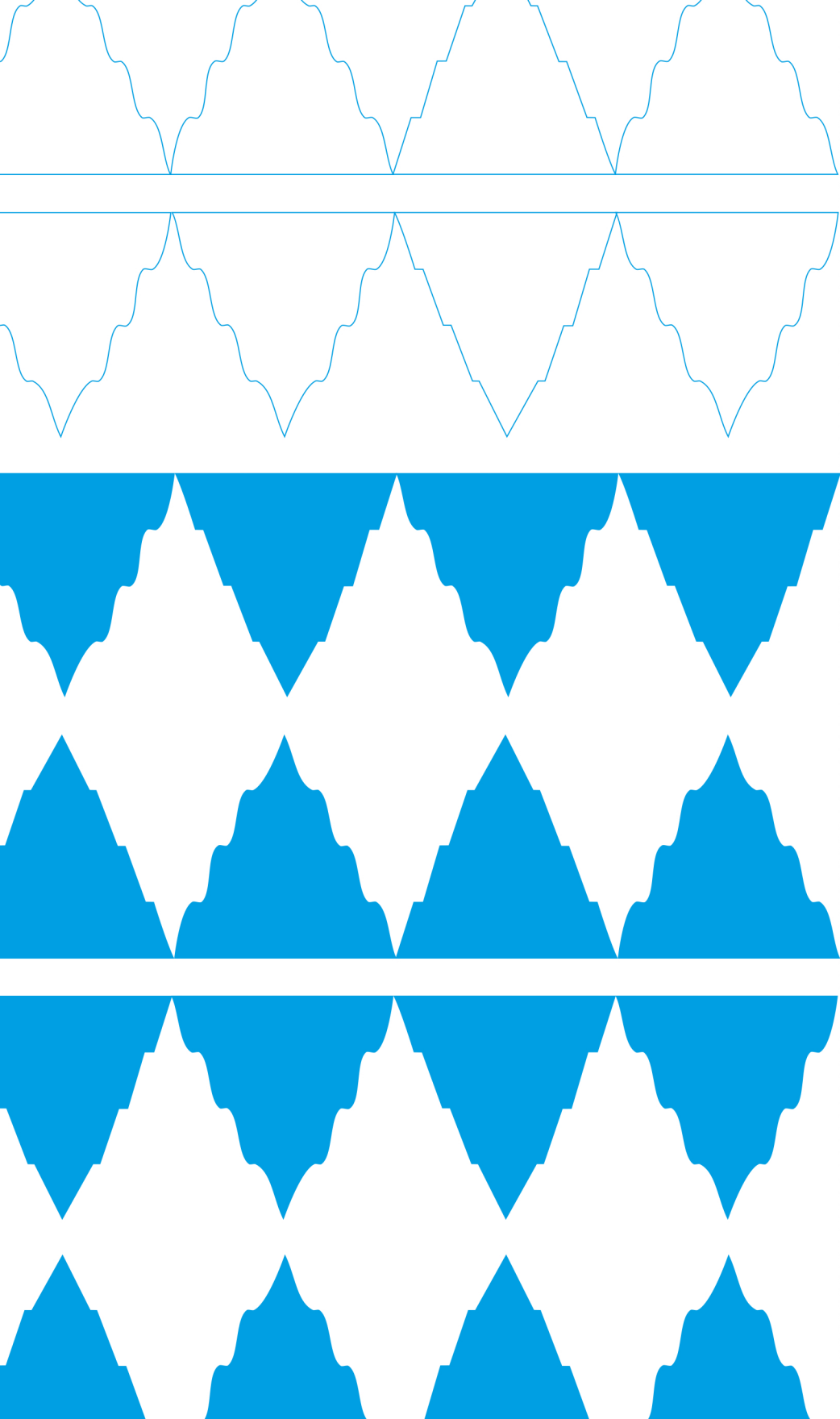
**sharp edges, cyan outlines,
and angular lines**



**repetition, transparency,
yellow, and rounded edges**



**rounded stairs, yellow outline,
and triangle**



fold or cut here

fold or cut here

