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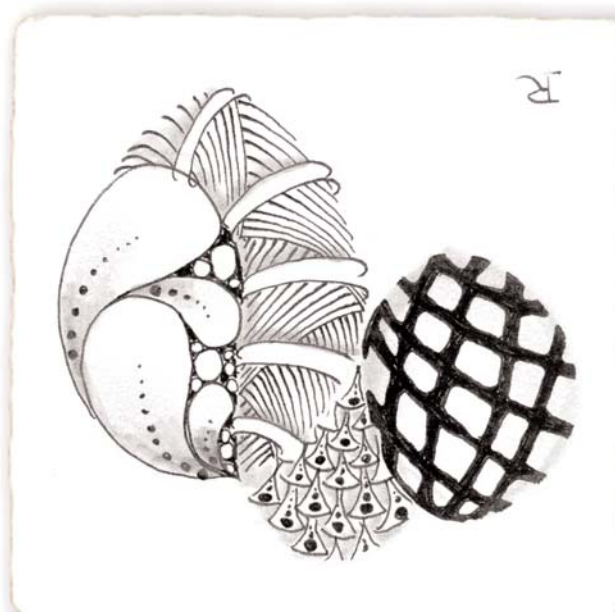
# TANGLING THE ZEN

BY REBECCA FAIR



Zentangle by Maria Thomas.

A Zentangle tile is a 3-1/2 inch square of individually die-cut printmaking paper selected for its texture and archival characteristics. It is recommended to use Sakura's archival Pigma Micron pens which use non-fading pH balanced pigments instead of dyes. A pencil can be used to sketch a border, general shape and add shading elements if desired.



Zentangle by Rick Roberts.

Working in secluded monasteries, the life of the monk has long been centered on meditation as part of their work particularly in the transcribing of scripture. Many of the designs used to create decorative letters, ornamental designs and the intricate knotwork of illuminated manuscripts were repetitive and carried a certain rhythm harmonizing with meditative chants. Wonderful surprises occur when artist and monk collaborate.

## What is a Zentangle?

The Zentangle is an inspired invention and offspring of Maria Thomas and Rick Roberts. It started with a conversation about how Maria loses all sense of time when creating her art. She describes the experience as "a feeling of freedom and well-being with complete focus." Rick and Maria wondered if it was possible to create a simple system so others could enjoy a similar, meditative, artistic experience. So began their journey towards discovering this simple and elegant system they call Zentangle.

As complicated as Zentangle patterns appear, they are easy to draw with simple, repetitive, deliberate strokes. This makes them a great writing exercise for artists and lettering artists in particular. Zentangles can improve focus and dexterity while increasing pen control in a non-traditional format.

There has been much discussion in the creative world about the positive effects of "free sketching" or "doodling." Many of us doodle unconsciously, drawing repetitive shapes and words or letters. Some people even keep a doodle journal. Our doodles seem to be directly

related to thinking patterns which in turn, are related to life patterns and our ability to problem solve. Thinking in words and with learned concepts limits and restricts what can be imagined and created.

The Zentangle is a non-verbal language of patterns and proportions which has the ability to open doors to insights which seemed locked before. Because those doors swing on non-verbal hinges, creating Zentangles can open them. The Zentangle is a way to uncover pictorial expressions of hidden feelings of the subconscious mind while creating something beautiful.

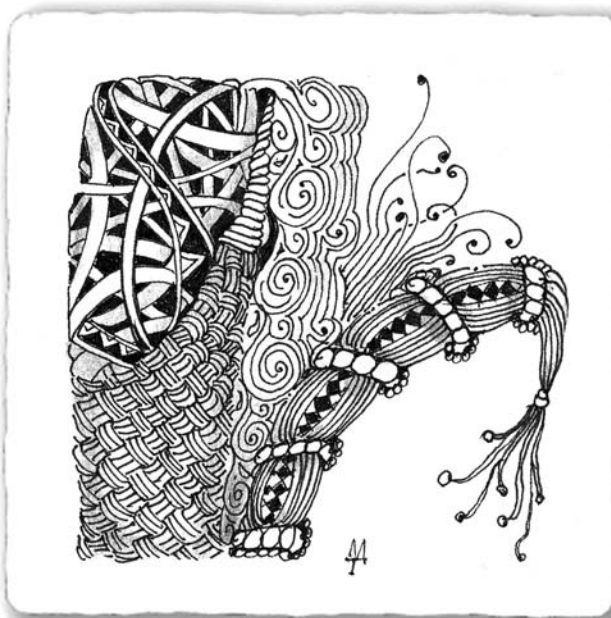
They can be the source of inspiration for more serious artworks or used in conjunction with traditional mediums.

Zentangles are best understood by creating them. Once you understand the basic principals, you will undoubtedly expand on the instructions in new and exciting ways. Because you always create a pattern, there are no mistakes. Often, what appear to be mistakes are seeds for new patterns and creative directions you might have otherwise missed. 🙏



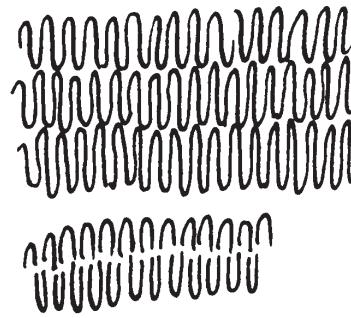
Zentangle by Maria Thomas.

“We believe that life is an art form and that Zentangle is a perfect metaphor for deliberate artistry in life.” – Maria Thomas

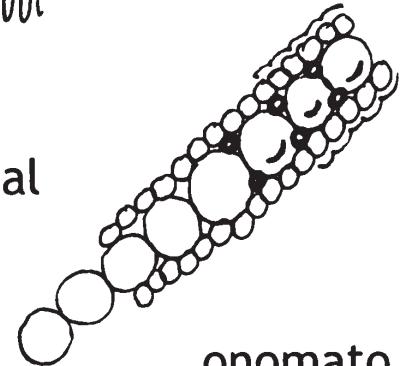


Zentangle by Maria Thomas.

Try creating zentangles with each of your hands. Many studies show this activates a different brain circuitry, increasing creativity and your ability to problem solve.

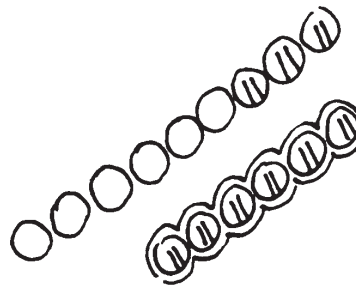


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(above & below)  
Four Zentangle patterns easily integrated in to your own Zentangle creation.



centipede



küle



(left) Rick and Maria have designed a system which allows you to begin creating unique and expressive art that is easy and rewarding. They offer Zentangle workshops, and a kit containing tiles, pens, pencils & sharpener, instruction book and companion DVD. For more information or to order visit [www.zentangle.com](http://www.zentangle.com)