

GIMP Tutorial: Mandala From Your Name

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While searching for some information about mandalas I discovered a PhotoShop video tutorial on how to make a mandala from your written name. It seemed easy to do but I could not find one for GIMP either written, or video. I decided to convert the PhotoShop tutorial into one for GIMP.

This tutorial is over explained and with many screenshots. I wrote this tutorial for the newest of GIMP users that might not yet be knowledgeable of where all the commands and filters are, but still ready to learn more GIMP effects. Certainly, everyone is invited to play!!

All commands and filters used are in the standard GIMP issue. There are probably decorative fonts available in the standard Gimp but here are two that make very nice images:



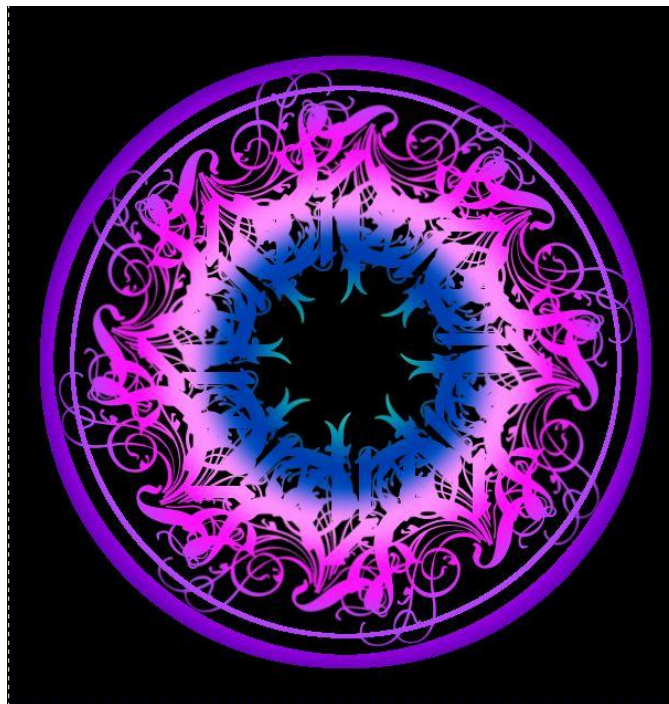
RothenburgDecorative.ttf



strassburg fraktur.ttf

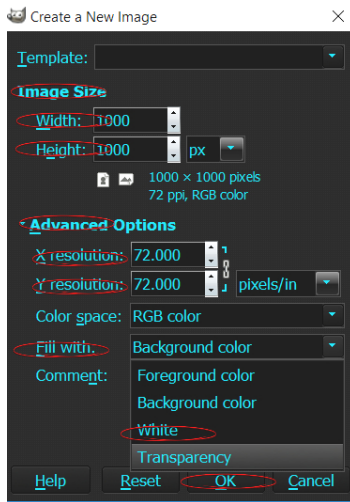
To use: Download the files and place in C:\Users\your name\.gimp-2.8\fonts

If you find any mistakes, problems, or have questions, please let me know.

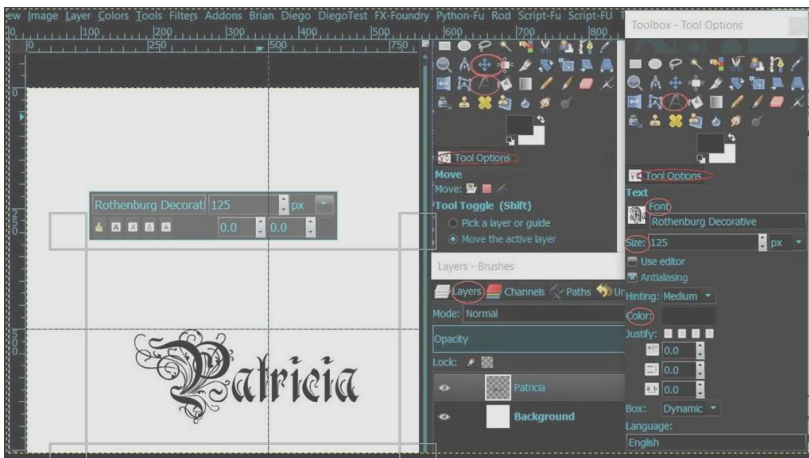
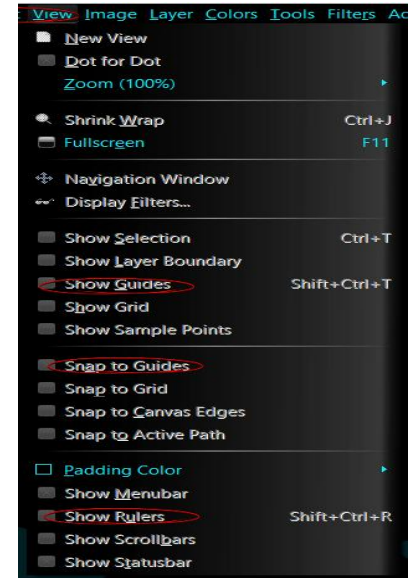


Tutorial: Mandala Made From Your Name

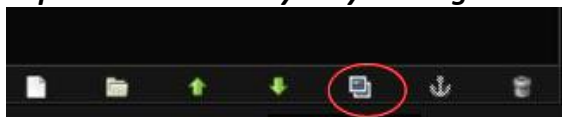
1. Go to the main menu across the top and open new 1000 X 1000 px document with 72 px resolution, white background. (File\New: which brings up the: Create a New Image dialog box.)

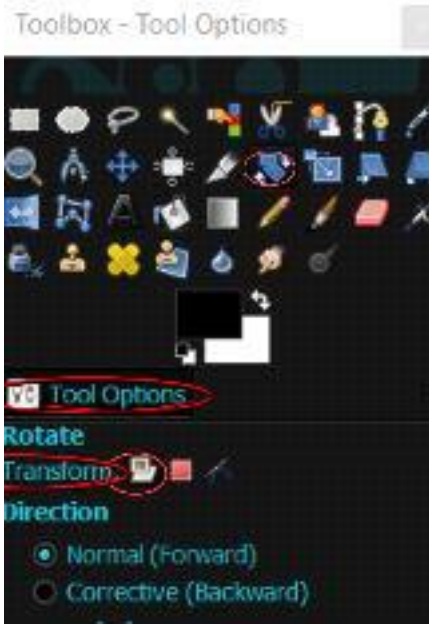


2. Look under “View” to make sure: Show rulers, guides, and Snap to guides are checked. Place horizontal and vertical guides at the center of the document (500 x 500) by dragging a guide from the left ruler and from the top ruler.

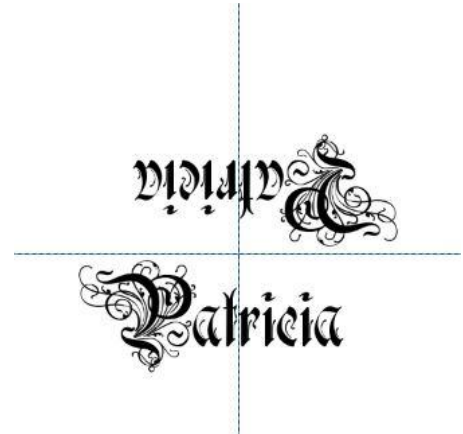


3. Left click on the Text icon in the toolkit and draw a textbox in center of the document.
4. Select an ornate font to type your name. (I used Rothenburg Decorative at about size 100 px.)
5. Center your text just under the center crosshairs as shown by adjusting the width, height of your Text box, or by using the Move tool. Using the move tool makes the text box disappear which is O.K. as we are done with it.
6. In the layer dialog box, right click on the text layer and choose “Discard text information”. This turns the text layer into a normal layer. Right Click on this layer again and choose “Layer To Image Size”.
7. Duplicate this Text layer by clicking on the duplicate icon at the bottom of the layer dialog box.



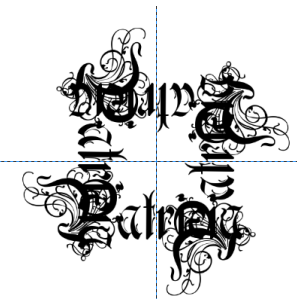


8. Make the duplicate layer active, Click on the Rotate tool  in the Toolbox, make sure in the tool options “Transform” layer is checked . Click on the layer to display the dialog box. To rotate layer 180°, type in 180 or use the up and down arrows and then press enter. Press Rotate to make the change permanent. The text should be upside down over the first text layer as shown.



9. With the rotated layer active, Right click next to it in the layer dialog Box and then choose “Merge Down” from the menu. This makes the two text layers one layer again containing the images of both.

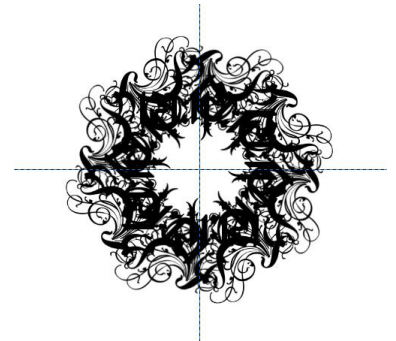
10. Duplicate this merged layer. Make the copy the active layer. Then go to the Toolbox and click on the Rotate Tool. Set this rotation for 90° and complete rotation as previously instructed. Your image should now resemble the image to the left.



11. Merge down your top layer again as previously instructed.

12. Duplicate the newly merged layer.

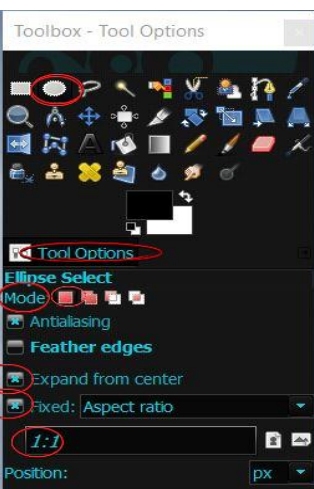
13. Rotate the copy layer by 45°. Your image should look similar to the image to the right.



14. Merge down your top layer again to the one below it.

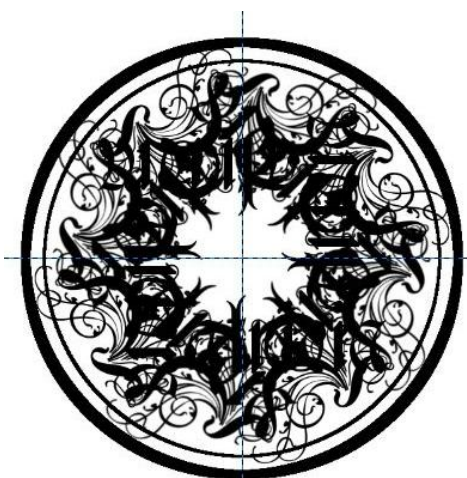
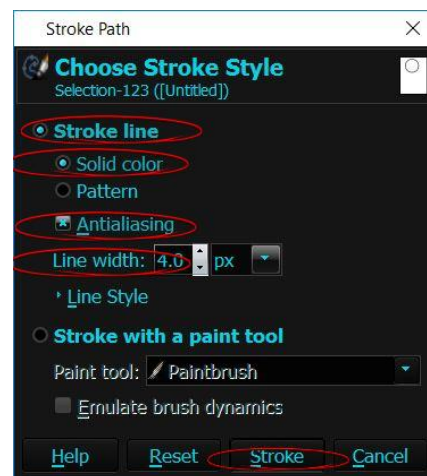
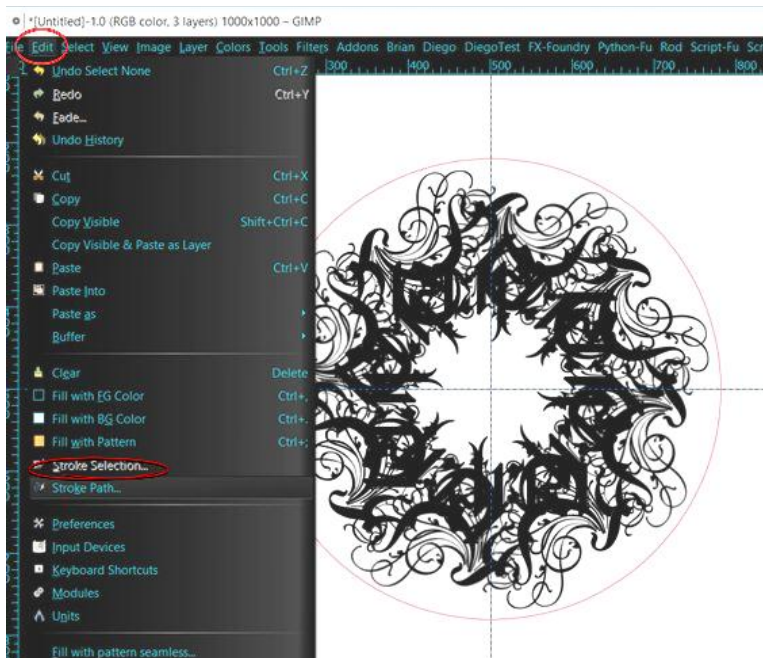
15. Make a new layer by Right click on the top layer in the layer dialog box and Left click on: “New Layer” in the menu then choose transparent. Click OK.

16. With the new layer active, select the Ellipse tool from the Toolbox. In Tool Options , make the selections as shown to make a perfect circle.



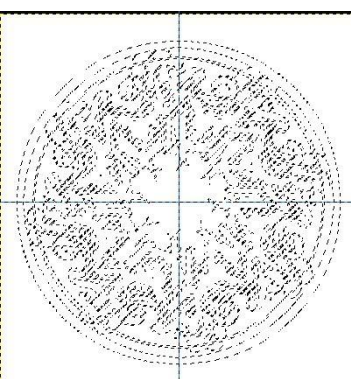
17. Place the cursor on the crosshairs of the center guides and draw the circle out to just the end of the image . This will make a selection.

18. Stroke the selection: Go to Main Menu: Edit/Stroke Selection. A dialog box will open for you to make choices. Need Solid color, which is the foreground color, black, line width of 12. Check settings are correct and click on stroke.



19. Go to main menu/Select: Choose "None".
20. Repeat Instructions # 15-19 except in #17 draw the circle out but not as far as the first as shown in the image. In #18, change the line width to 4 pixels.

21. Merge down the smaller circle to the larger circle, and then merge down to the Text image layer. You should now have just the white background layer, and the image resembling the one to the left.



22. Right click on the top layer in the layer dialog box and choose "Alpha to Selection". All of your image will now be selected as evidenced by the "marching ants".

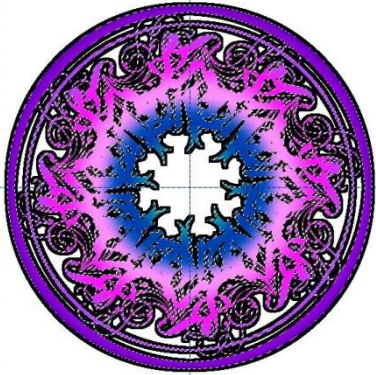
23. Right Click on top layer in the layer dialog box and choose "New Layer". Make it the active layer.

24. Turn off the Text image layer by Left Click on the "eye" to its left making it invisible. All you should see now are the marching ants of the selection.

25. Left Click on "Gradients" to open the gradients dialog box (Generally below the Layers, Channels, Path dialog area). Choose a gradient with bright colors but some contrast.

- 26 In the Toolbox, left click on the blend tool (). Under Tool Options: Shape, choose Radial. Place the cursor on the center crosshairs of the image, left click and drag out to the right end of the image. Your image should resemble the one to the left.

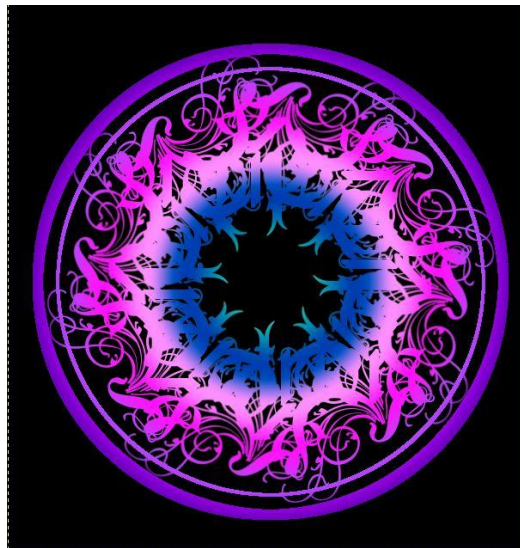




27. ***This step is optional.*** If you want your colors accented a bit more, make a transparent layer and position it just below the gradient layer. Make it your active layer. As your selection should still be active, choose Edit/stroke selection and stroke about 5-8 pixels with the black foreground color. How many pixels you use will depend on the name, and your preference for its effect. I did 5 pixels on mine. Please experiment. Remember to use the Edit/undo key if you do not like it, and then try another one, or none. Select “none” when finished with this layer.

28. ***Choose a background.*** You may leave it on a white or any other color background you choose. Use the Bucket tool () from the Toolbox: Select a color from the color palette for the choice of FG or BG color choice, or choose Pattern fill. Choose Fill whole selection. Left click on the background layer. You can also add additional layers directly above your background layer and fill with different colors or patterns so you can compare your choices by turning on and off the “eyes” of each layer.

29. ***I chose black as I thought it accented the image the most with the colors I chose.***



30. ***Remember each image will look different unless the name and the font is the same.***

Remember to Experiment!!! It is great for learning. Don't be afraid of making a mistake, the Undo command is your friend!