

# Mythical icons

From whispered legends to tales that dance through firelight, mythical icons stand as timeless guardians of wonder. Let's step into the world where ordinary disappears and extraordinary reigns with [Yuvika Satija](#), AIS Gur 46, Alumna.



## Yggdrasil

### The World Tree

**Origin:** Norse mythology

**Symbolism:** An emblem of destiny, unity and endless cycle of life connecting the nine realms of the world.

**Appearance:** An ash tree that binds all nine realms of Norse culture. Its roots dig into wells of wisdom and fate, and its branches stretch up to heaven.

**Interesting fact:** It's believed to be the centre of the universe and God 'Aesir's' meeting place.

## Makara

### The Mythical Sea Creature

**Origin:** Hindu mythology

**Symbolism:** An emblem of power, protection, and untamed force of water. It serves as a 'vahana' of the river Goddess 'Ganga' and sea God 'Varuna'.

**Appearance:** Part terrestrial and part aquatic, it has features of a crocodile and elephant in front and a fish or peacock tail in the back.

**Interesting fact:** It serves as a guardian at temple gateways and entrances, warding off evil. It is featured in architecture - temple doorways, water fountains, railings, as well as in astrology and jewelry.



## Chinthe | The Lion Guardian

**Origin:** Burmese and South-Asian mythology

**Symbolism:** It stands for courage, strength, and protection embodying the role of a vigilant guardian spirit.

**Appearance:** Found in pairs of half lion and half gryphon.

**Interesting fact:** Present at the entrances of temples and pagodas as protectors against evil spirit. It appears in different forms such as the Chinese's guardian lions often called Foo dog or Tibetan snow lion among several others.



## Bennu

### Phoenix Of Egypt

**Origin:** Egyptian mythology

**Symbolism:** Emblem of rebirth and regeneration symbolising the cyclical nature of life, death, and resurrection. Bennu was revered in the cult centre at Heliopolis and was associated with the Sun God Ra.

**Appearance:** A massive bird envisioned as a heron blazing with sunlight. It had the power to regenerate itself, while dying in flames and being reborn from its own ashes.

**Interesting fact:** Seen on temple walls and rituals, it gained popularity through its modern namesake: the asteroid 101955 Bennu, which was the target of NASA's OSIRIS-REx mission.

## Ouroboros

### The Self Eating Serpent

**Origin:** Egyptian and later Greek mythology

**Symbolism:** It represents eternal cycle of birth, life, death and rebirth emphasizing the idea of eternal return and infinite renewal

**Appearance:** A serpent devouring its tail, forming an eternal circle.

**Interesting fact:** Embraced by alchemists to depict transformation and purification in nature and universe, it was first seen on a gold shrine in Tutankhamun's tomb.



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