The Follies Project

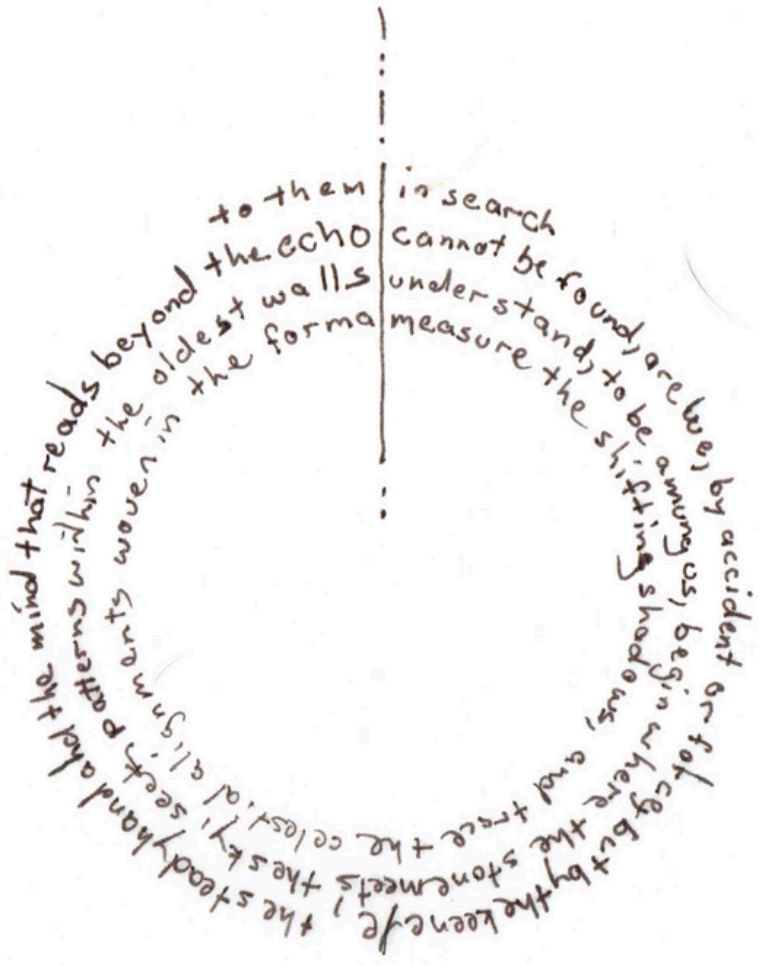
What is The Follies Project?

The Follies Project is a real-time blockchain installation exploring architectural place through web3 technology and art primitives. The project creates small, meaningful places living completely onchain. These places are architectural, symbolic and story-rich – the kinds of places characters remember, return to or build around.

The project defines a framework for generating these places – portable, world-agnostic and designed for Autonomous Worlds to use, adapt and build upon. Loot Follies is the first activation of this framework.

At the heart of the project is a simple idea: **Place is space with meaning.**

The Framework creates places where meaning develops and stories happen.



A diegetic fragment from The Mosaicum's concentric writings - an echo of the first activation

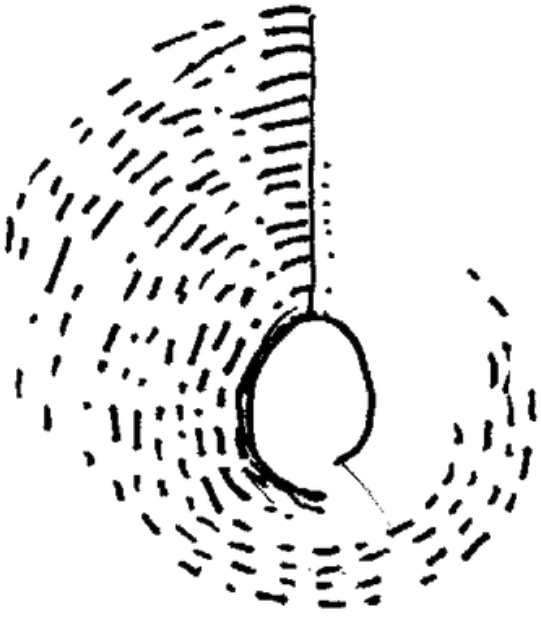
What is a Folly?

A Folly is a small place with a purpose — a shrine, a gate, a tower, a well, a stele.

These are not buildings in the traditional sense. They are **Existential Infrastructure:** spaces that shape meaning, memory, and story.

A Folly is built from simple parts, but those parts combine to create depth, affordances, and potential

Notebook studies from early thinking about layered meaning.

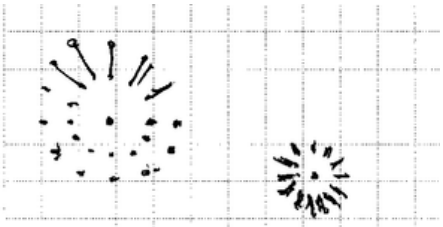


Early CypherGlyph Ideation exploring radial meaning delineation

Existential Infrastructure?

Existential Infrastructure (EI) are space-defining objects or structures with a physical scale relating to an individual or group.

They are found in stories, fables folklore and more recently in games, typically built to support the activity or development of characters and stories.



Notebook vignettes on how purpose gathers around a point in space.

Existential Infrastructure is the idea that place itself can carry purpose. EI may encode a story, impact characters and events or signal meaning. In the Framework, EI doesn't dictate a narrative. It creates the conditions where stories can unfold.

In games, stories and Autonomous Worlds this kind of infrastructure becomes:

- a waypoint
- a ritual site
- a puzzle
- a memory anchor
- a source of power

Existential Infrastructure is the philosophical foundation of the Follies framework.

What is a Folly made of?

Each Folly is built from six simple parts.

1. Base Structure
The main space defining object or structure.

Examples include:

- Shrine
- Gate
- Tower
- Well
- Stele

The Base Structure defines what the Folly is used for.

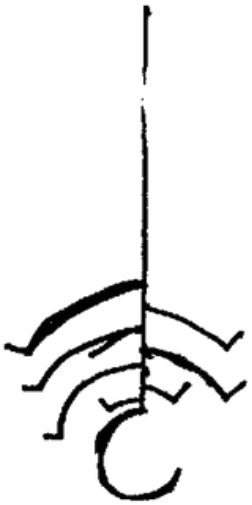
2. Components
Each Folly includes extra elements called Components, which come in two types:

Built-Ins - part of the structure.
Examples: carved niches, platforms, hollows

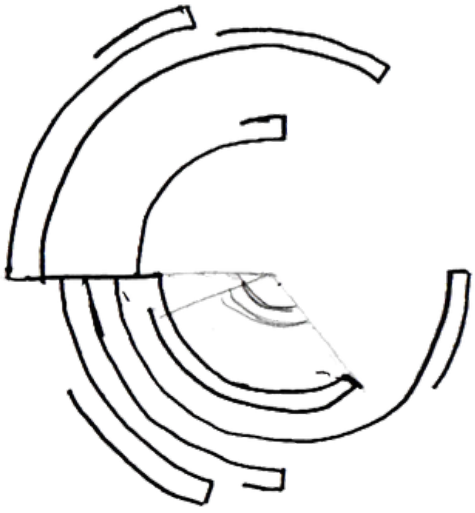
Features - included in the setting.
Examples: lecterns, vials, chests, statues

Larger Follies have more components. Smaller Follies have fewer.

These components afford opportunities and give clues about how the Folly might be used.



An early attempt to root the CypherGlyph in a structural spine.



Early study on radial branching and component relationships.

3. Greatness
Every part of a Folly has a Greatness value from 1 to 20. Higher Greatness imbues an element with stacking modifiers.

- 15+ → Engraved
- 19+ → Empowered
- 20 → Secret

Greatness layers meaning and creates hooks for future builders, games, and stories.

4. Size
Each Folly has a size: **Tiny, Small Medium, Large & Huge**.

Size determines complexity and how many extra components it has.

A character might stand beside a Tiny Folly.

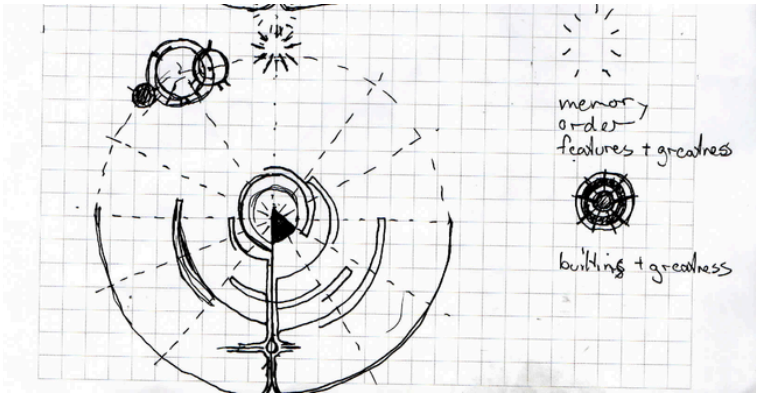
A Huge Folly might dominate a clearing or plaza.

5. Episodic Memory
Humans imbue places with memory, and so too are Follies. Each Folly has a simple episodic memory made of three numbers representing:

- How old the memory is
- How emotionally intense it was
- How well the memory is remembered

These values do not tell a story directly. They invite one.

In the framework, they're treated as **three elements in motion around the Folly,** creating a small pattern of meaning. Sometimes these elements align; sometimes they drift. Either way, they give each Folly a sense of history and presence.



Early study on encoding memory as orbital positions within the glyph.

6. Coordinates (World + Sky)
Every Folly is generated with celestial coordinates - Right Ascension (RA) and Declination (Dec) - providing geospatial positioning.

These coordinates place the Folly on a world map and connected to the stars.

What does a Folly NFT look like? (The Three Views)

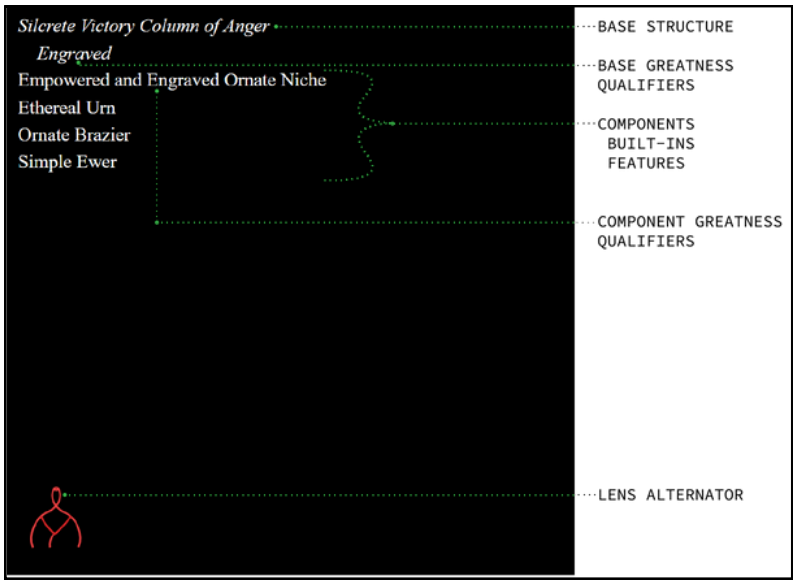
Each Folly NFT can be viewed through three lenses.

1. Data View (JSON)
The raw data - numbers, indices, and attributes designed for games, apps, and smart contracts.

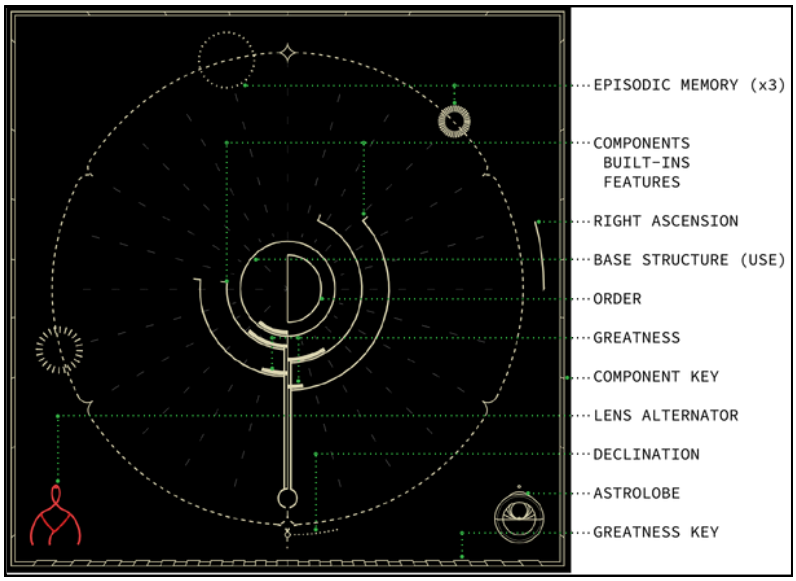
2. Text View (The Logoi)
A simple text description, similar to Loot and rendered in real time.

Easy for humans to read and imagine.

The Logoi reveals the textual parts of the Folly.



3. Glyph based Data Representation (The CypherGlyph)
A graphical representation of the underlying data and rendered in real time.
It reveals relationships between use, components, memory and meaning.
It lets you see patterns that text alone cannot show.



Mapping Follies in the World and Sky

When a Folly is minted, it's assigned a pseudo-random RA and Dec related to it's Base Structure and Components.
This allows one to:

- Plot it on a map of the world
- Plot it relative to a celestial sky
- See patterns between Follies like constellations

This mapping system is part of the broader Follies Framework, giving Autonomous Worlds a shared way to build environments, routes, constellations and spatial meaning.

Geographical placement adds another layer of meaning and potential game-play. Games and stories can treat Follies as points of interest or sources of magical energy aligned with stars.

- **Right Ascension (RA)** is like longitude but measured in hours, minutes and seconds.
- **Declination (Dec)** is similar to latitude measured in angular degrees north or south of an equator

Autonomous Worlds building with the Follies Project Framework can create a world of places or enrich the one they have.

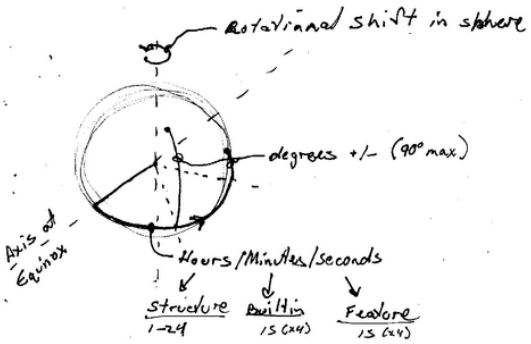
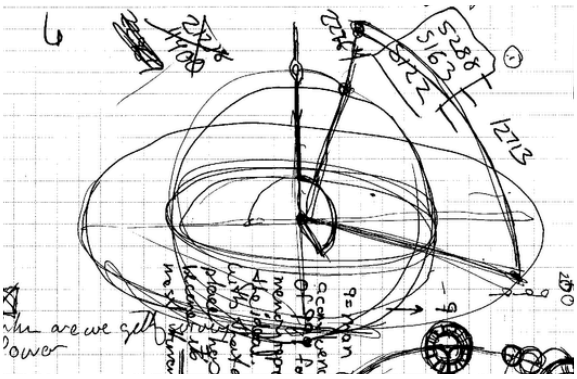
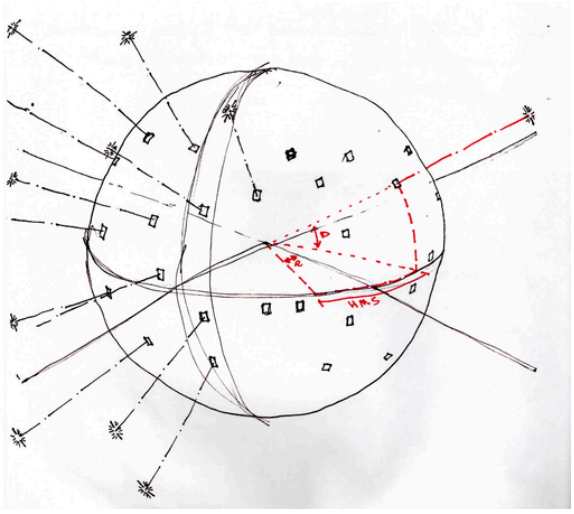


Diagram of equatorial coordinates - RA & Dec locating a point on a sphere



Sketch study of RA & Dec as arcs across a planetary surface



Concept sketch showing Follies mapped on a world sphere with celestial alignments

Technology and Lore

The framework is extradiegetic - a template for builders. But the first activation, The Loot Follies, includes a layer of lore around the creation and documentation of the Follies.

In the story, a secret order called

Theto Topos Mosaicum

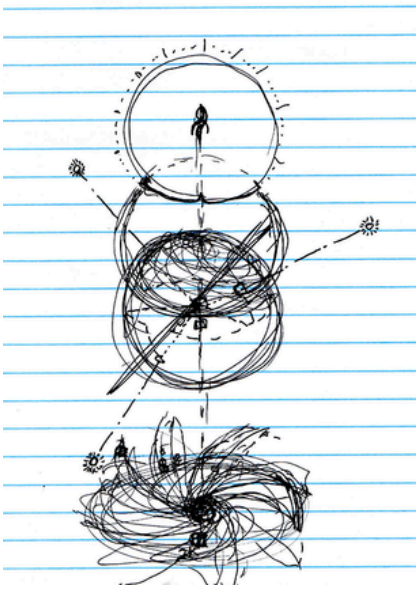
The Mosaicum for short, created and curated the Follies while mapping hot-spots paired with the celestial sphere. They encoded their knowledge of each Folly into Cyphered Glyphs and collected them in a catalogue known as **The Codex Mosaicus**.

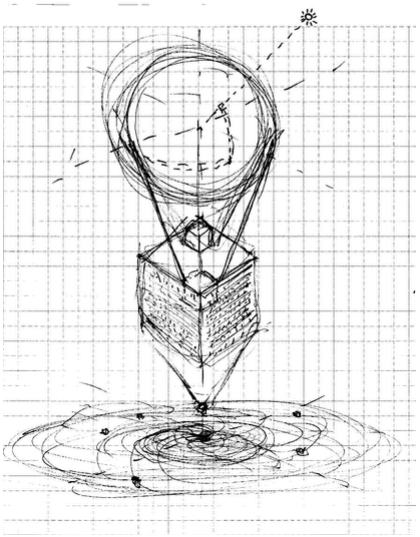
The sketches throughout this document are marginalia from a draft Codex Mosaicus.

In reality, this lore exists because:

- The story and the technology shape each other.
- The structure suggested a story

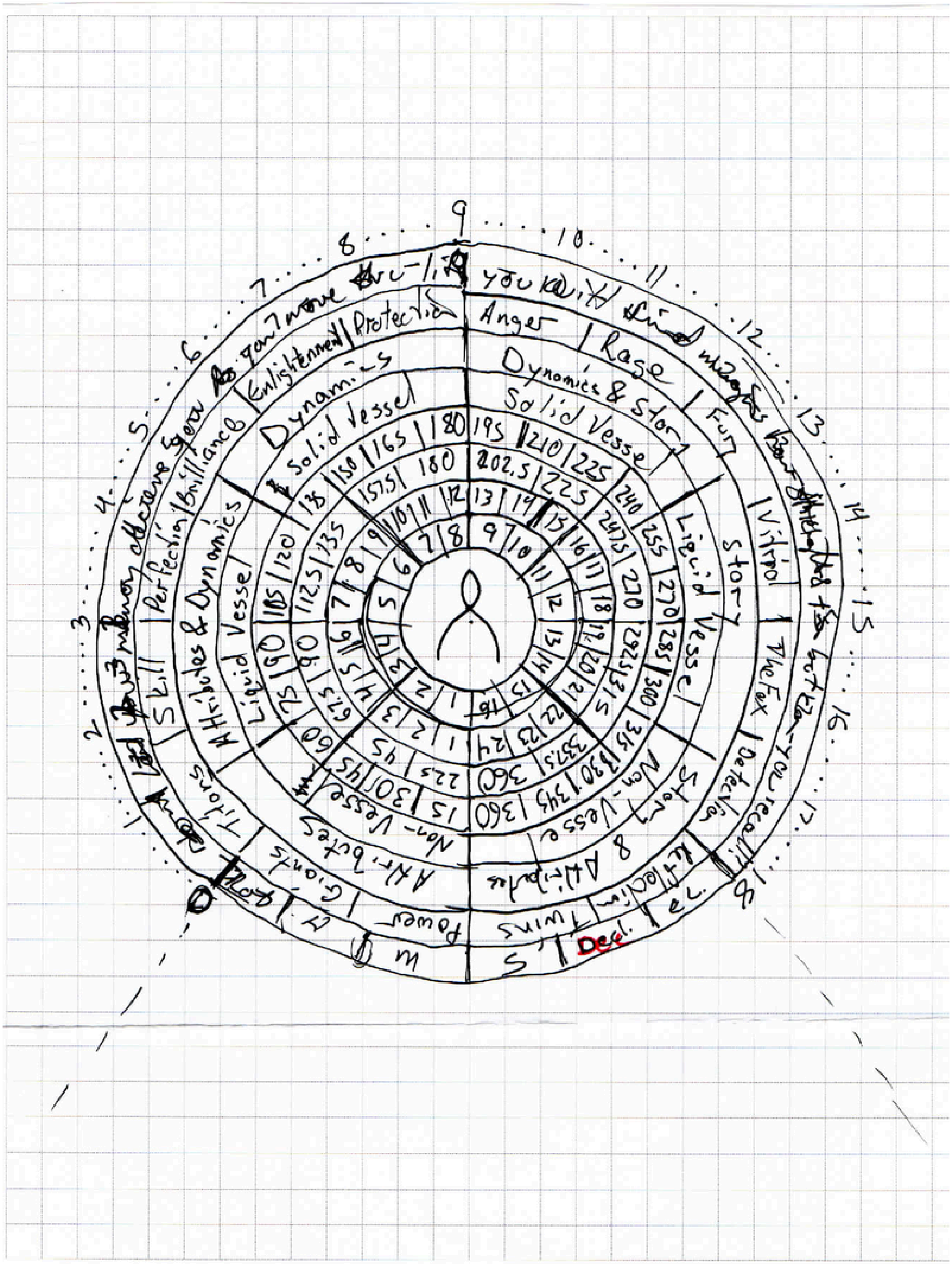
The Codex Mosaicus is diegetic. **The Follies Archive** (coming soon) will be the non-diegetic reference library for builders.





Ideation sketches exploring the relationship between a Follies Contract, its minting block, and Ethereum as a symbolic galaxy

The Mosaicum's golden ratio compass and the architectural font derived from it.

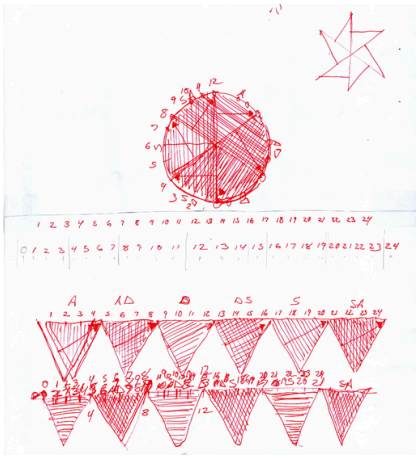


A draft of a radial key drawn by The Mosaicum, revealing the positions and meanings encoded within the CypherGlyph

Why the numbers matter

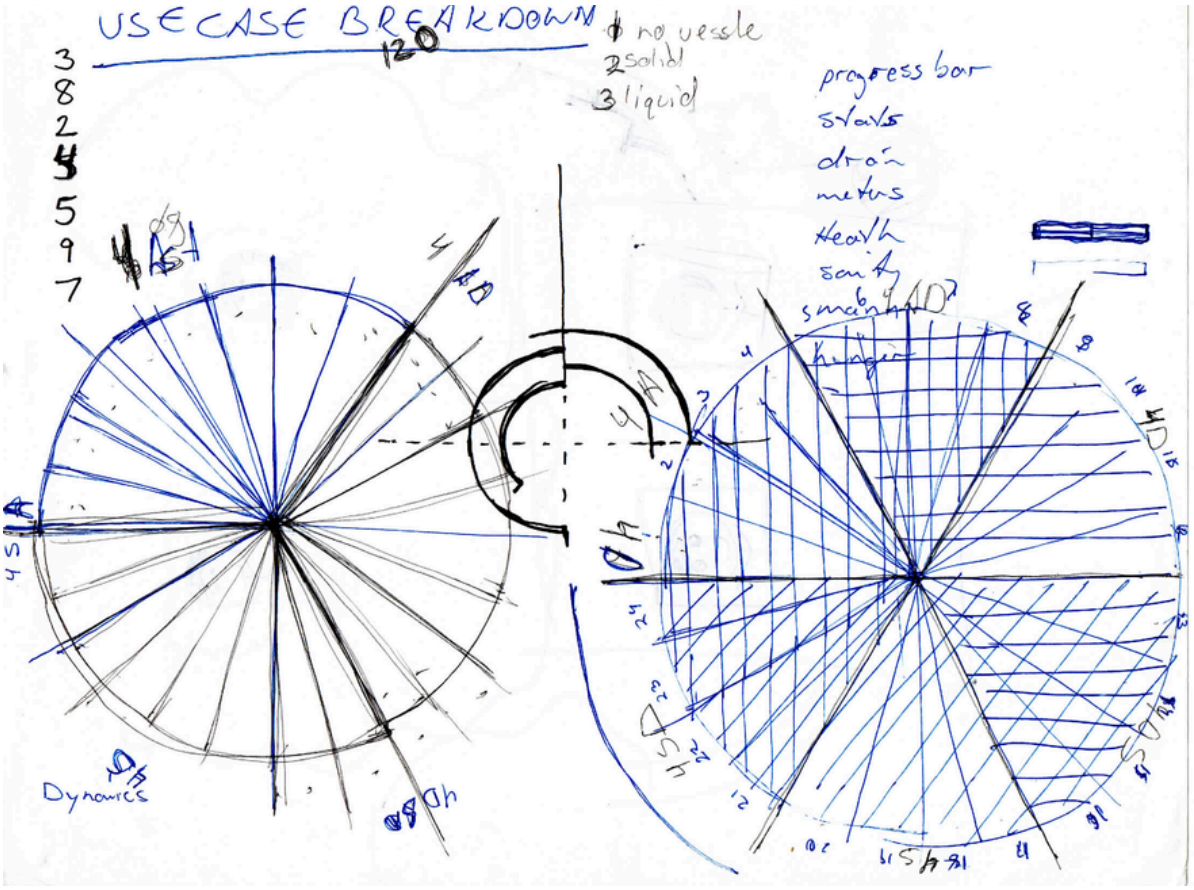
Every Folly begins with a small set of numbers. These values shape its base form, its components, and the small pattern of memory it carries.

While developing the project these values first sat in a linear array. Over time, it became clear the relationships between them were more than linear. They formed a **circuit**— a closed system where each value has a position, and each position has meaning. This is called a Translational Data Structure



Exploring how a linear array of base structures could be reinterpreted as a circle.

This shift from line to circle is what gives the CypherGlyph its logic. The numbers matter because they create relationships, and those relationships give the Folly its structure and imbue meaning.



Ideation sketch capturing the moment the base-structure array became a circular system

Can Others Build With This?

Yes. That is the point. The Follies Project is:

- A framework
- A template
- A starting point

Other communities & worlds can:

- Build their own activations
- Define their own structures and components
- Interpret the numbers differently
- Create new games, stories and art on top

Nothing is locked.

In short

The Follies Project is:

- A system for creating meaningful places
- A way to encode story potential onchain
- A set of building blocks for world builders
- A bridge between data, art, and imagination

It does not tell stories.
It creates places where stories happen.