

VARIATIONS ON THE SQUARE

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**INTRO TO
VISUAL DESIGN**

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Part 1/ Strip Variation 1

Cut four 2 by 8 inch strips of black paper. Place each of the four strips of black paper vertically side by side within the given 8 by 8 inch format constructing the 8 by 8 inches square. The placement of the strips within this format constitutes the basis for each of the compositions you will create throughout this project.

You will begin by making a set of 9 different compositions by manipulating the strips of paper used to compose the black 8 by 8 inch square in each composition. You may cut, tear or fold the strips in any way you choose. The four strips within each composition must be manipulated uniformly: if you fold one strip, you must fold all of them, rather than folding one strip, tearing another and so forth.

In each composition the four strips should remain clearly recognizable as the basis of the composition: the result of your manipulation should visually retain the formal integrity of the strips. The strips should not be used to make pictures, decorative images, simple geometric shapes such as triangles or circles, or graphic symbols. Solutions should not rely on 3-dimensional manipulations. Often the difference between operations performed on the strips which are 'decorative' and those which are not, is whether or not the operation is integral to the defining the form (edges) of the 2 by 8 inch strip, or merely an effect that doesn't help define it as a strip. A viewer must be able to recognize the strip as the origin of the manipulated element.

Your composition should be visually engaging. You must search for creative solutions within the given restrictions. Variations on a single solution do not count as different solutions.

Part 2/ Strip Variation 2

From the 9 compositions created in Part 1, you will choose one composition for further study. The criteria for this choice includes the recognizability and visual integrity of the 2 by 8 inch strips, viability of the manipulations performed on the strips, and the visual interest of the composition.

Choose carefully because from this starting point you will make 9 new compositions which expand upon the visual themes present in the chosen composition. What is the manipulation or operation performed on the chosen composition? Are there many cuts? Large tears? What is the dominant theme of the manipulation? Frequency? Size? Direction? What can be done to exploit the extremes of the operations while still maintaining the visual integrity of the 2 by 8 inch strip?

Your new set of 9 compositions must satisfy the restrictions of the previous compositions, use the same given format. However, this set presents an even greater degree of difficulty based on the limitations of creating compositions that are related to your chosen original.

Part 3/ Strip Variation 3

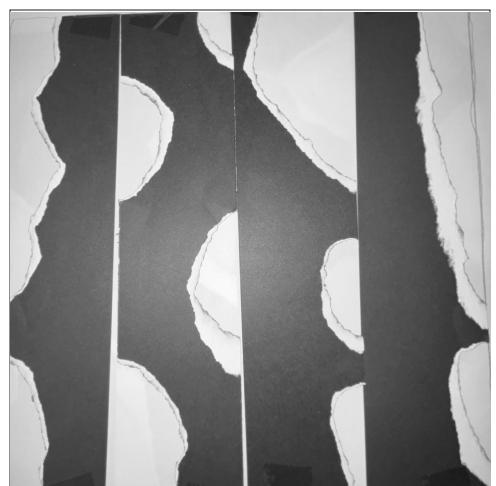
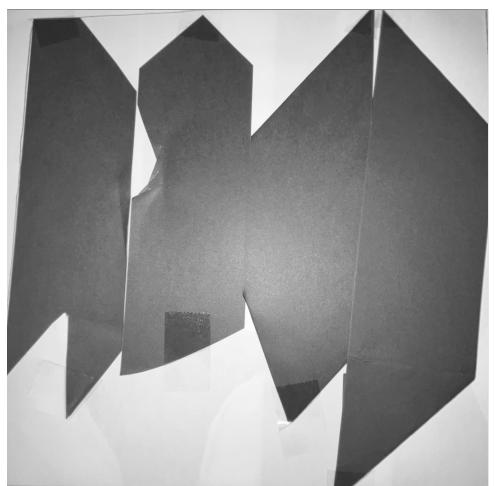
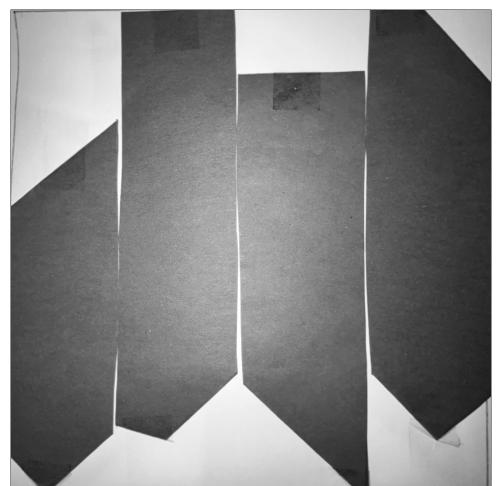
The next step is for you to recognize, define and order the relationships among the manipulations found in the compositions created for Part 2.

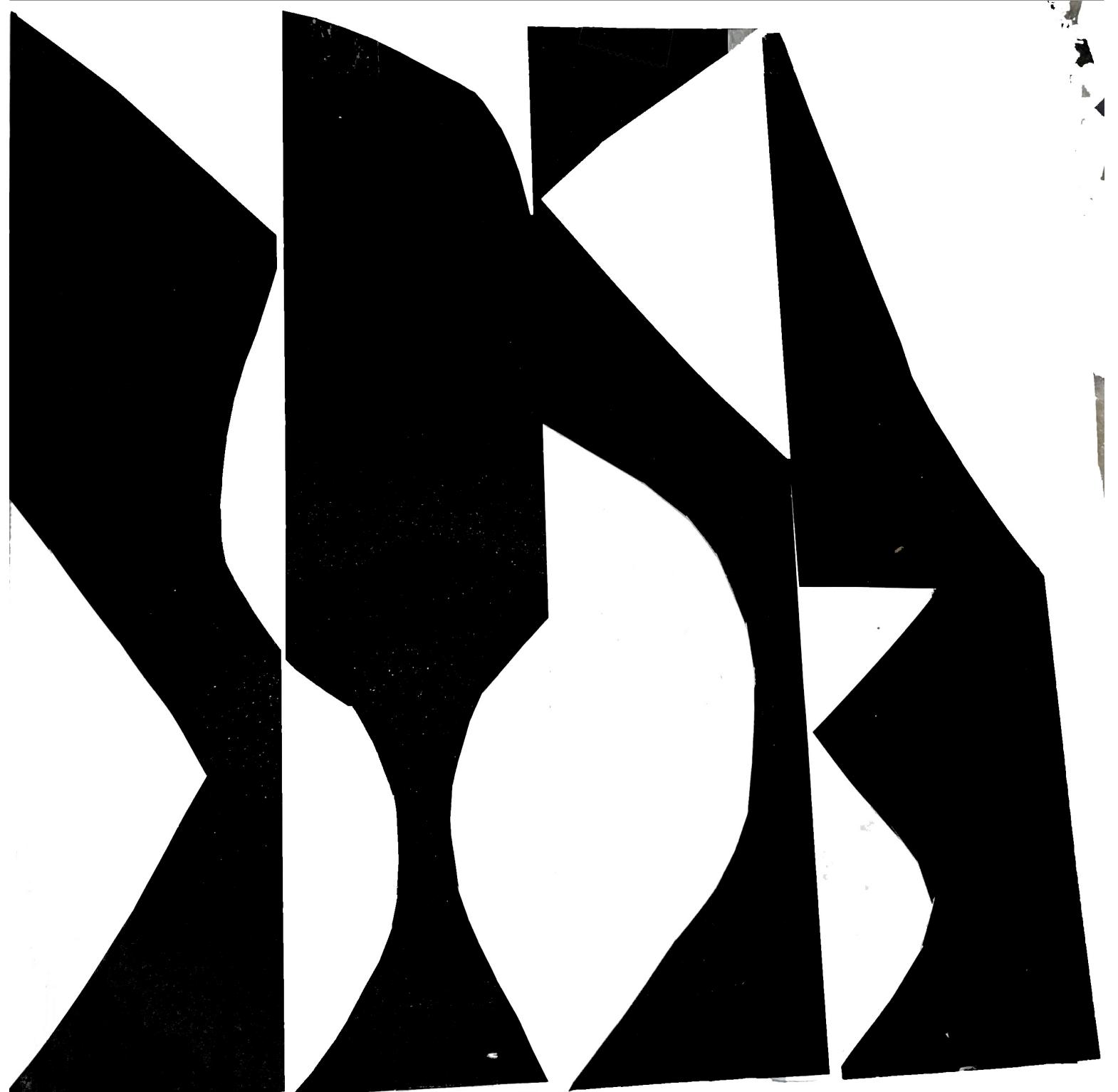
Organize your compositions based on criteria of your choosing which are easily distinguished in the compositions. For instance, if your compositions show a wide distribution of light to dark values, light to dark might be the variation; if the compositions also have a clear variation in the angle of cutting, this might be another.

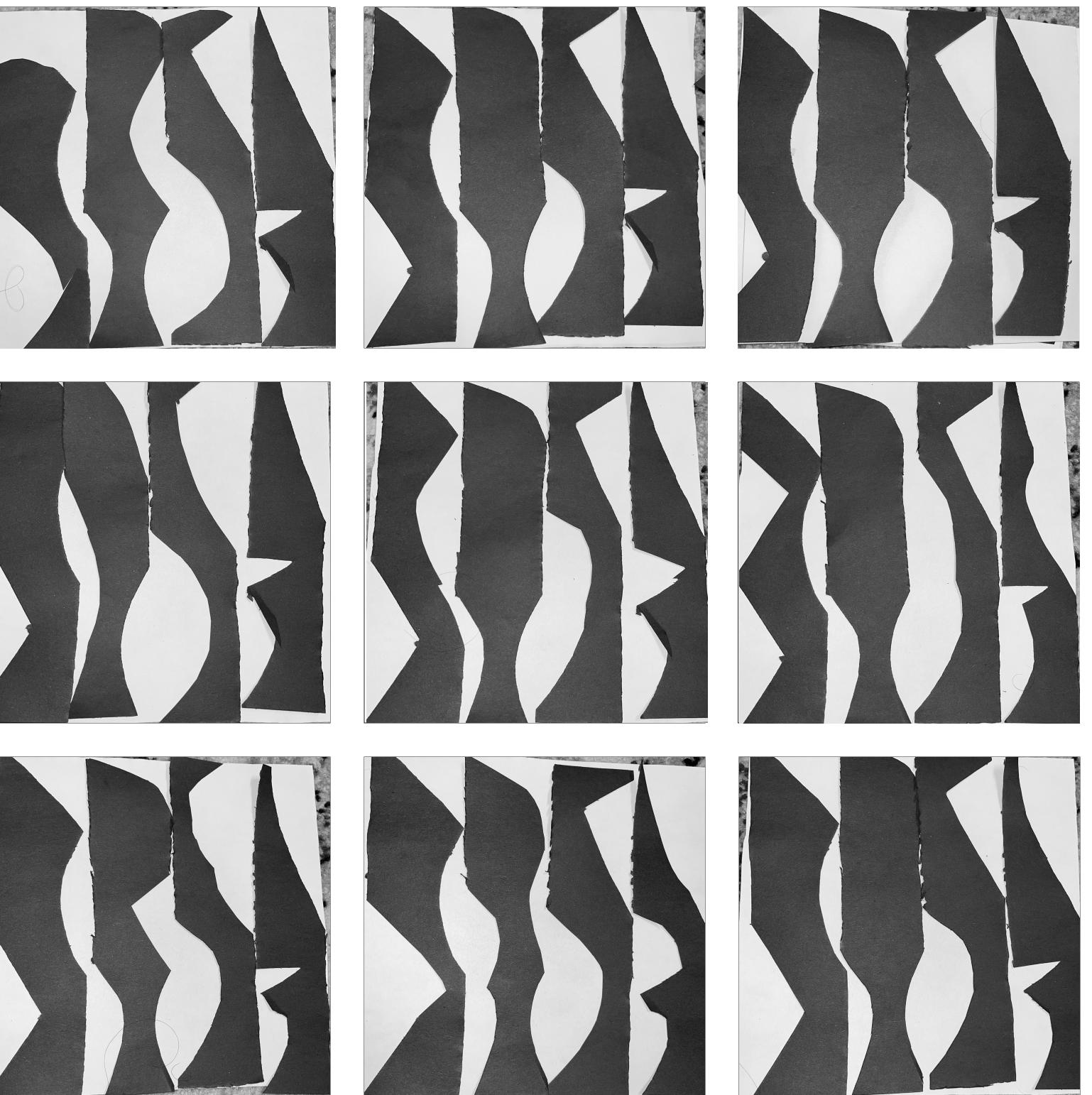
Choosing one of your 9 compositions from Part 2 you will now make a final set of compositions based on one of the variations you have recognized. These compositions should represent a sequential progression, such as darkest to lightest or sharpest angle to dullest. All other variables within the changes should manifest in a controlled manner. In other words, they should present themselves in such a way that the difference between each step is clear, regular, and visually even, as it develops the theme.

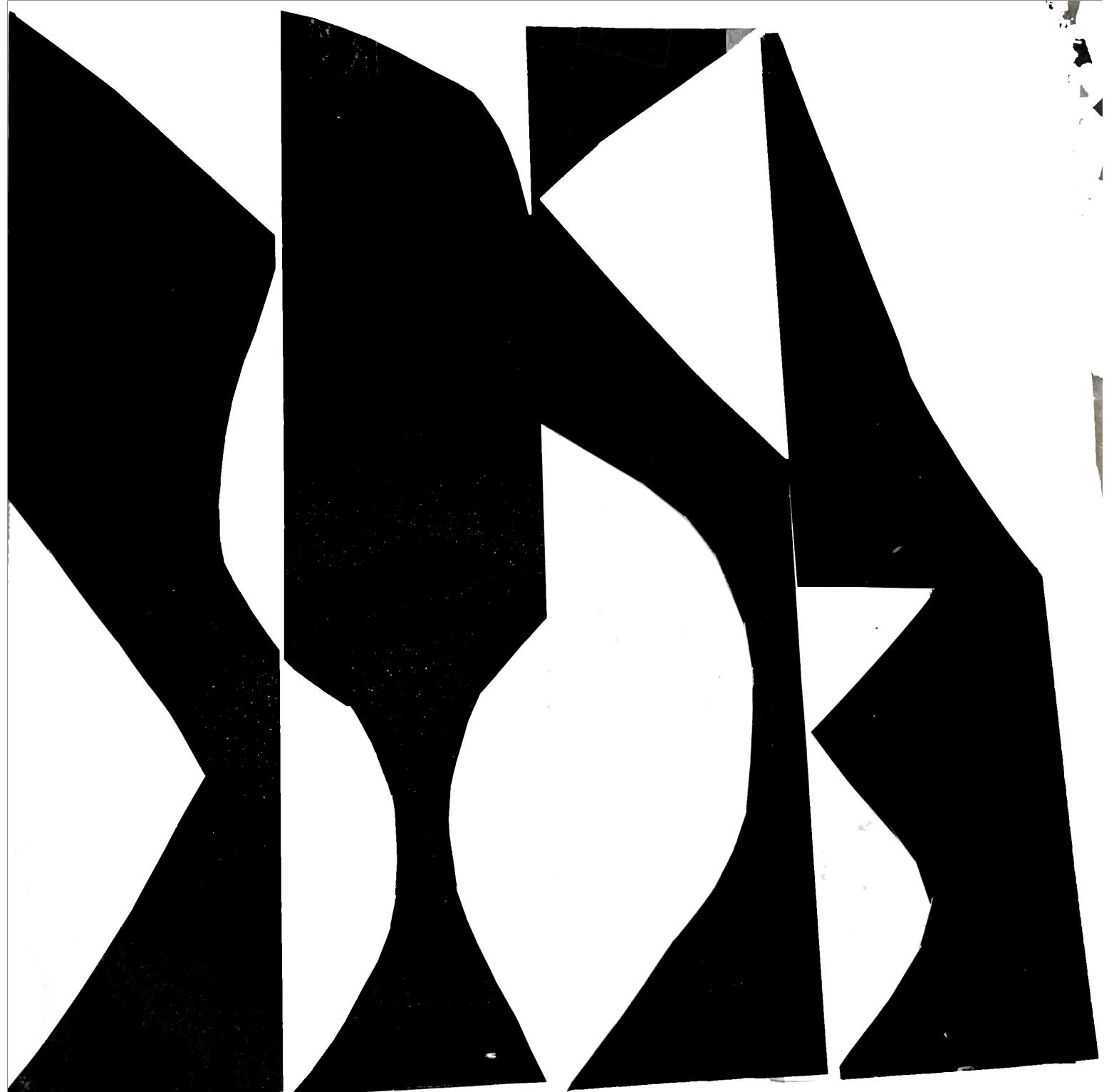
This final series should consist of 5 compositions including the chosen original.

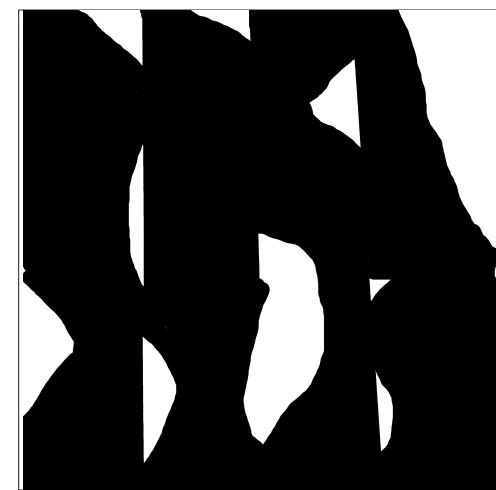
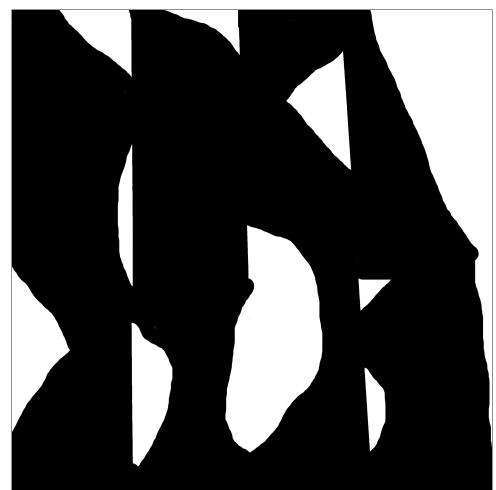
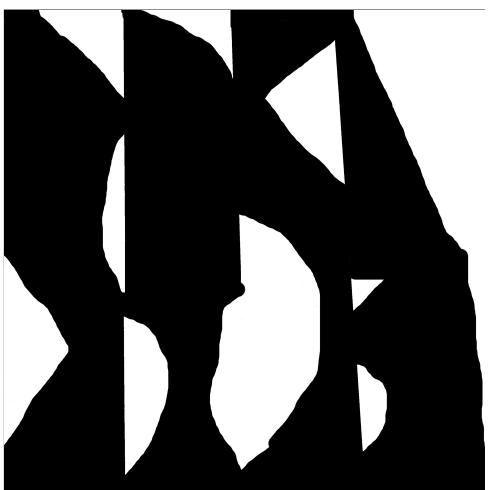
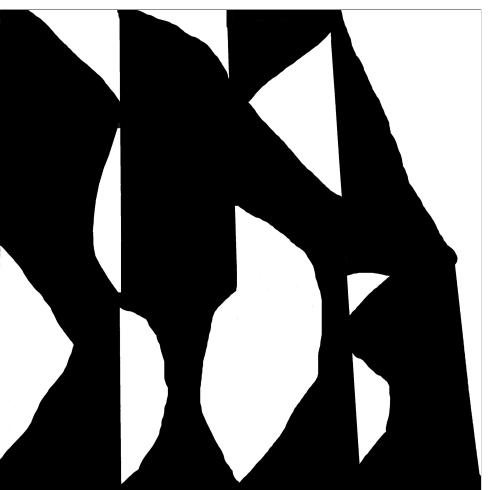
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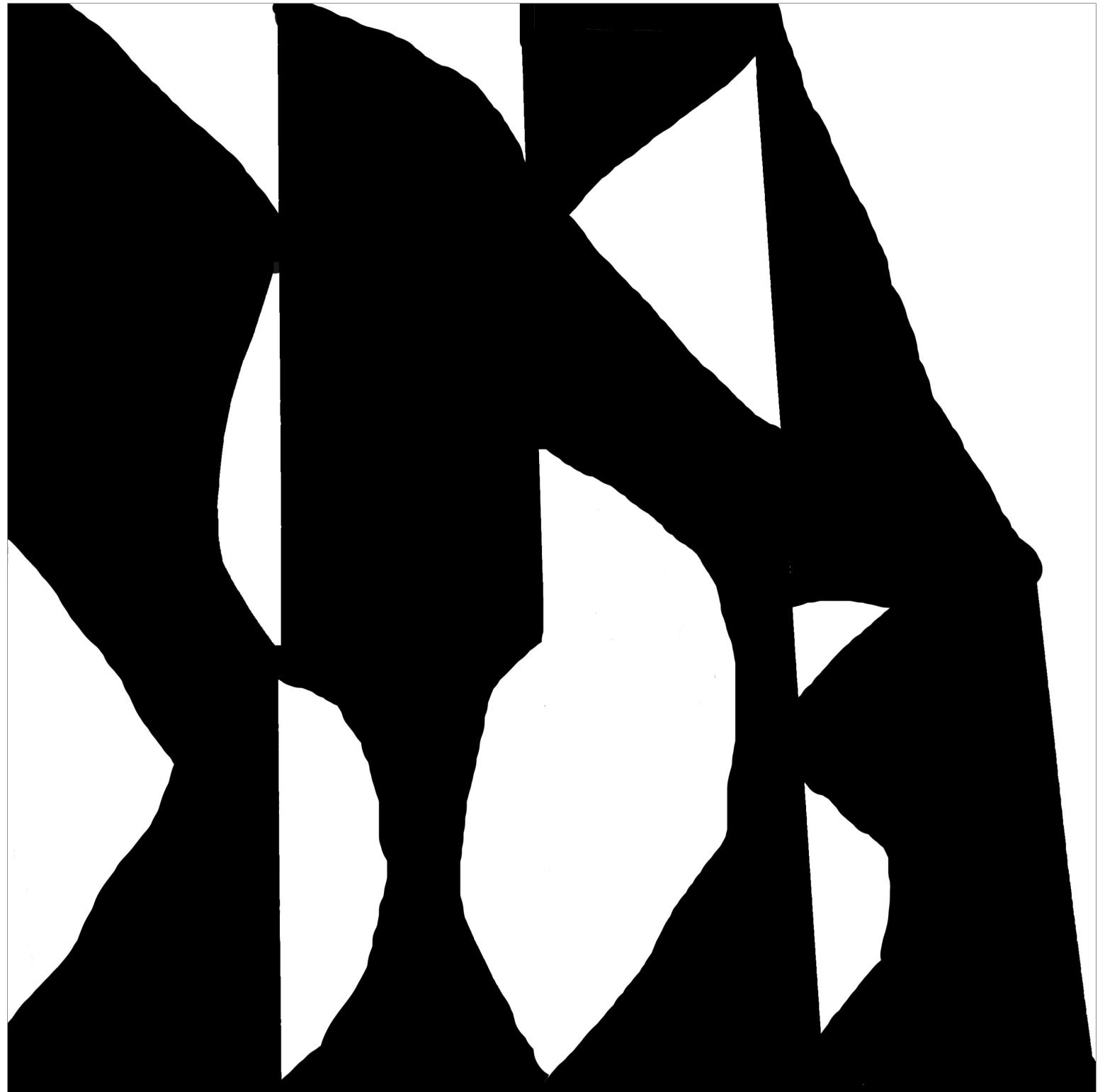


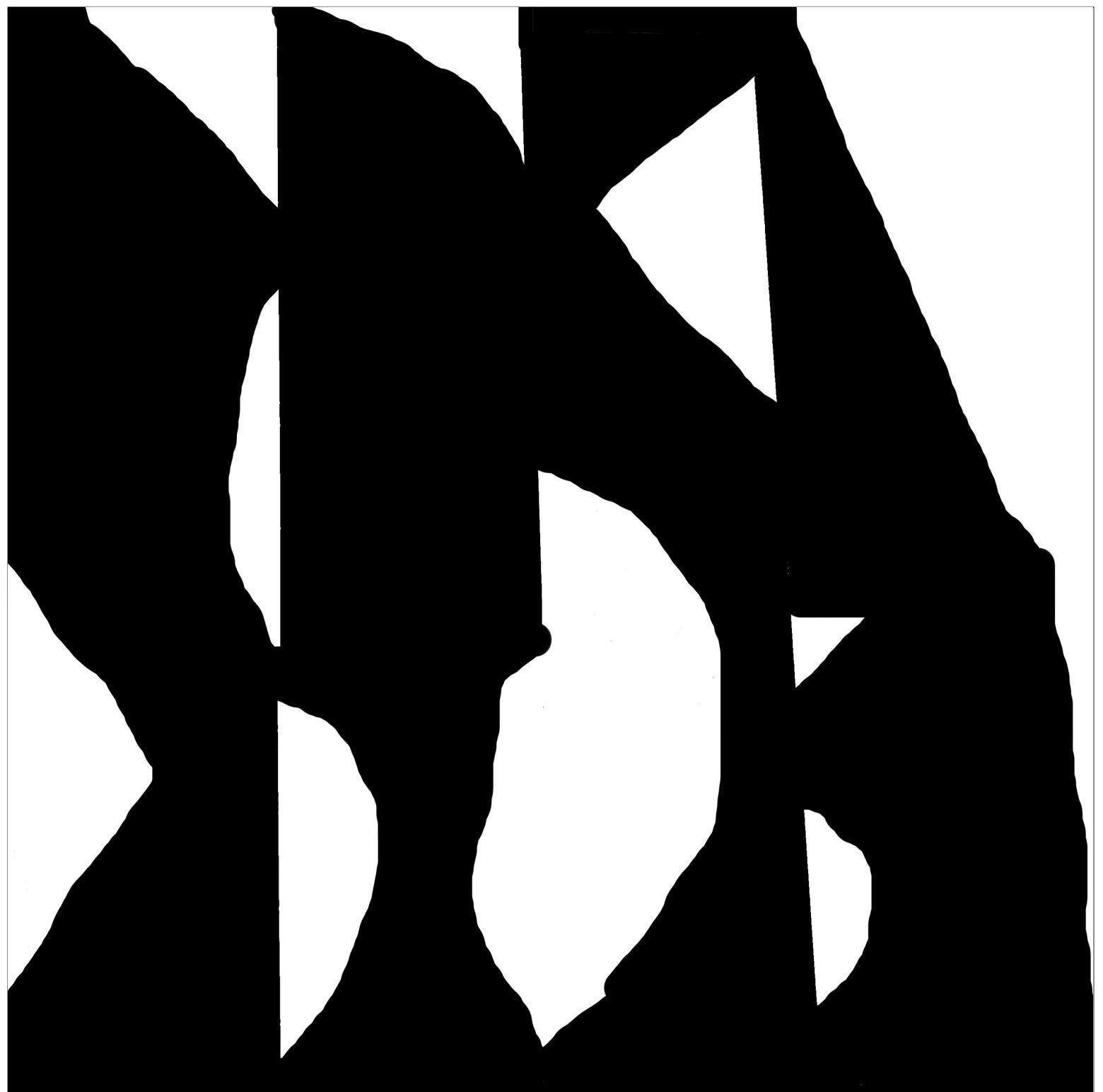


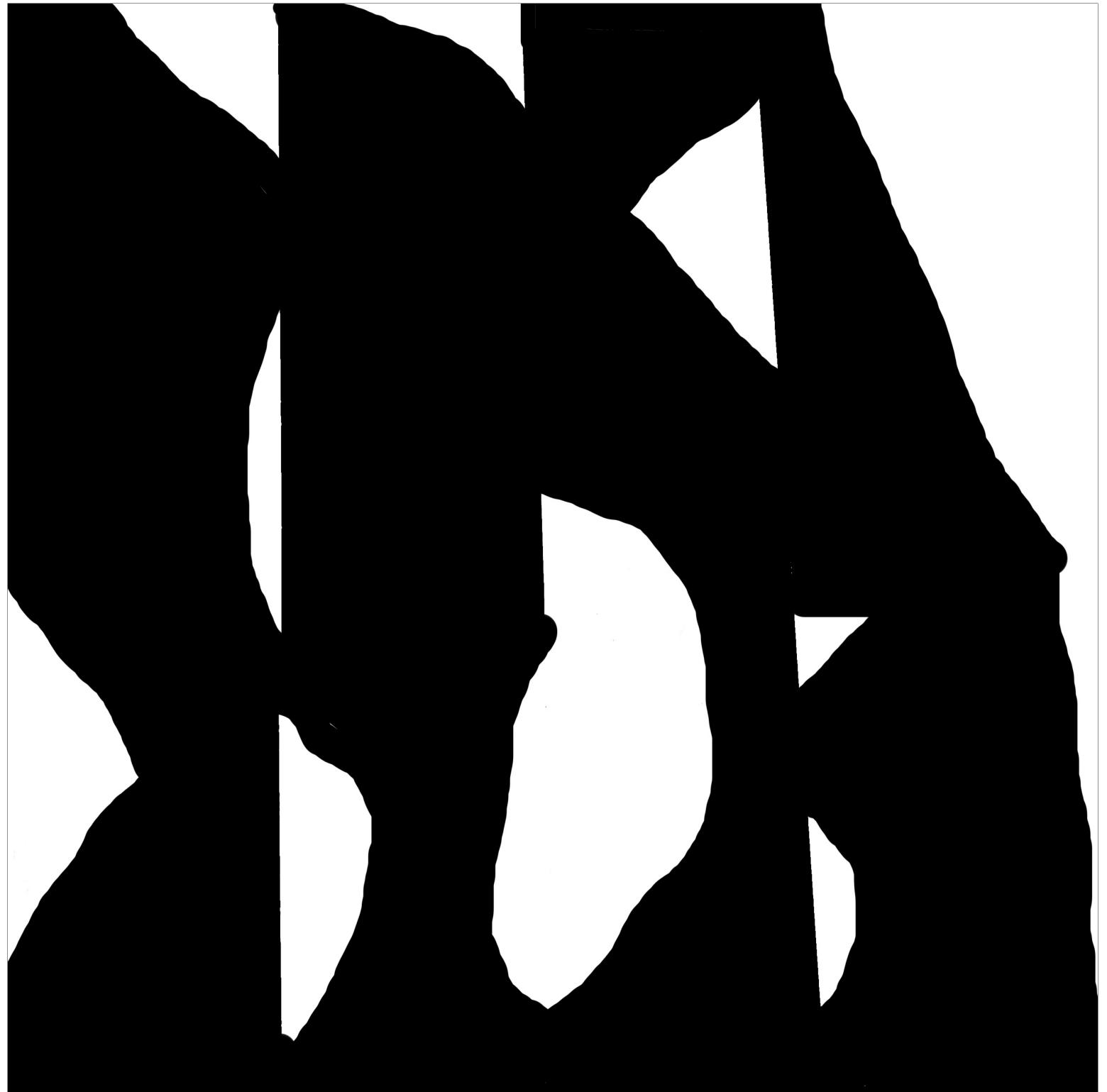


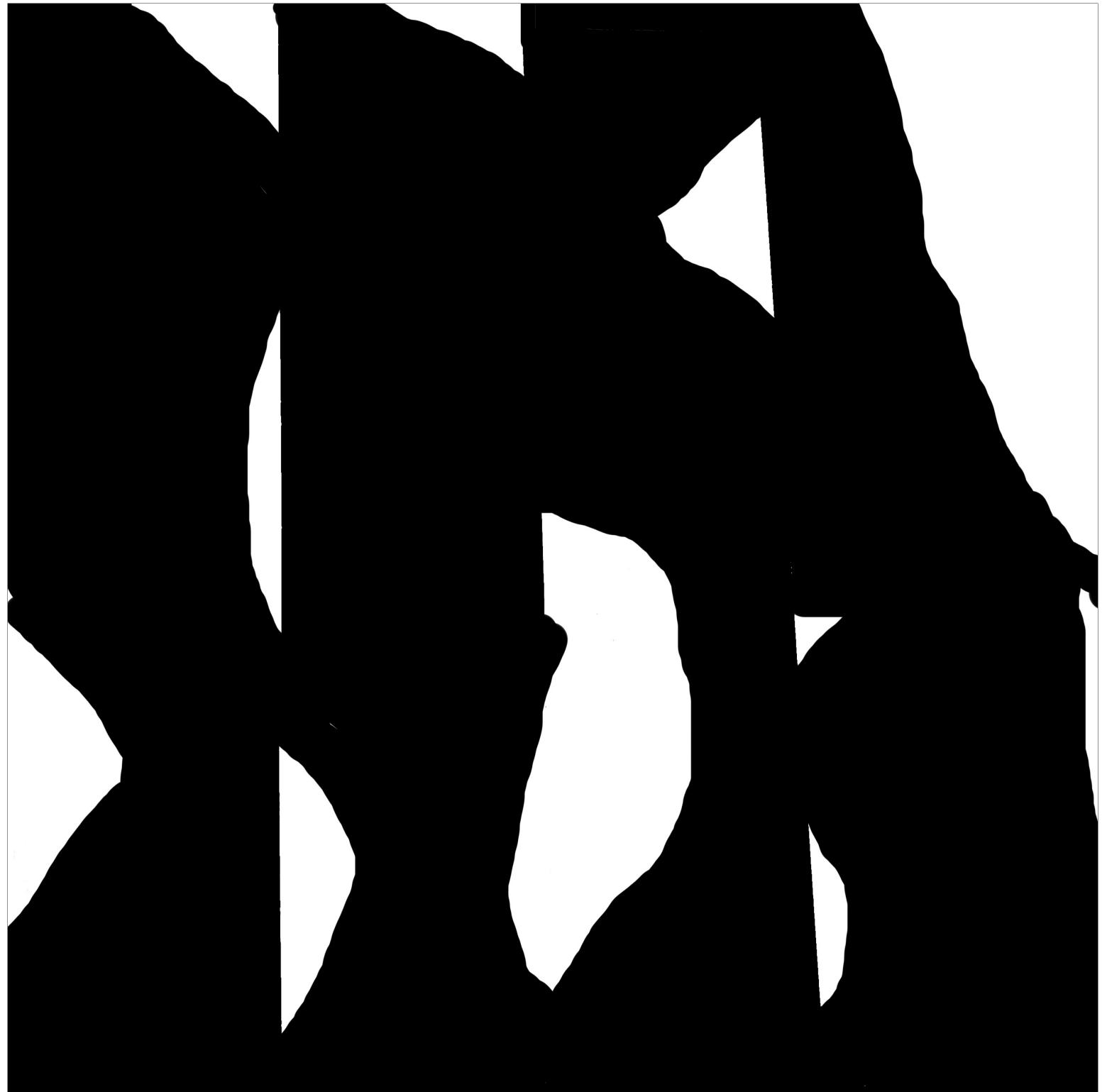


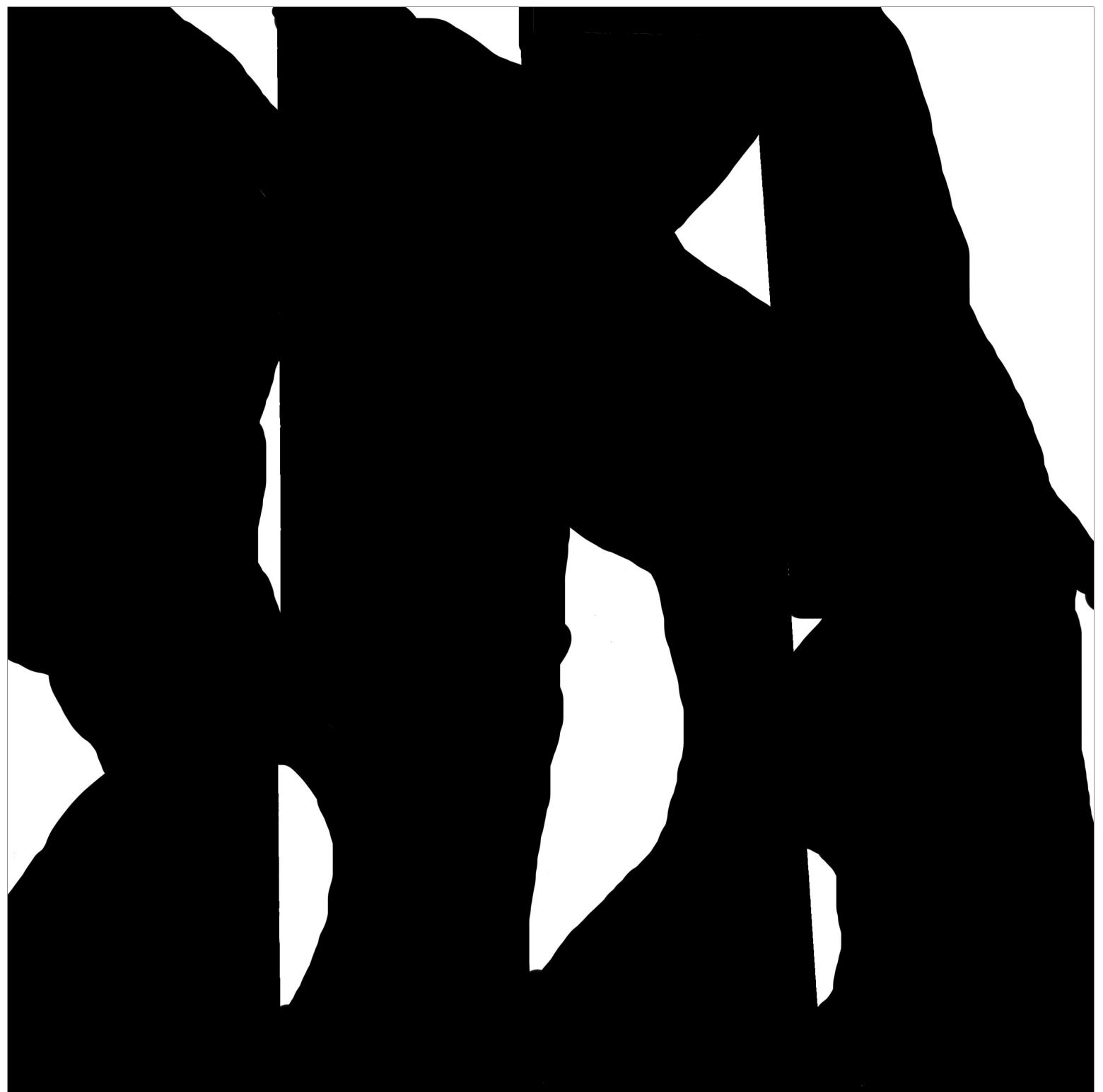












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Part 4/ Letterform Variations

Based on the rules and insights from Parts 1—3, you will now incorporate the use of letterforms for further study.

In this exercise, you will be given a pallet of 26 uppercase san serif letterforms that are the same size and weight. Using these letterforms, you will create 6 new compositions.

You will begin by recreating the previously given format using the computer. Using Illustrator create 6 8 by 8 inch squares. In a separate layer create four vertical 2 by 8 inch rectangles in each 8 x 8 inch square. Lock this layer. Then work on the first layer. Copy and paste the letterforms into Illustrator. You may position and crop the letterforms anyway you would like within the 2 by 8 inch strips, but their placement must clearly define the formal integrity of the strip. This means that the relationship of the positive to negative space will be extremely important in this exercise. You may not rotate, skew, enlarge or reduce the given letterforms.

Success in this project will be achieved by studying the relationship of the different letterforms, the positioning of the letterforms and by ensuring the black strips created by the forms represent the space of the 2 by 8 inch strip.

These layouts should not include six variations of the same letterform, therefore, do not use the same letterform twice. If you use the letter "S" in one layout you cannot use the letter "S" in another layout.

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Part 5/ Photo Variations

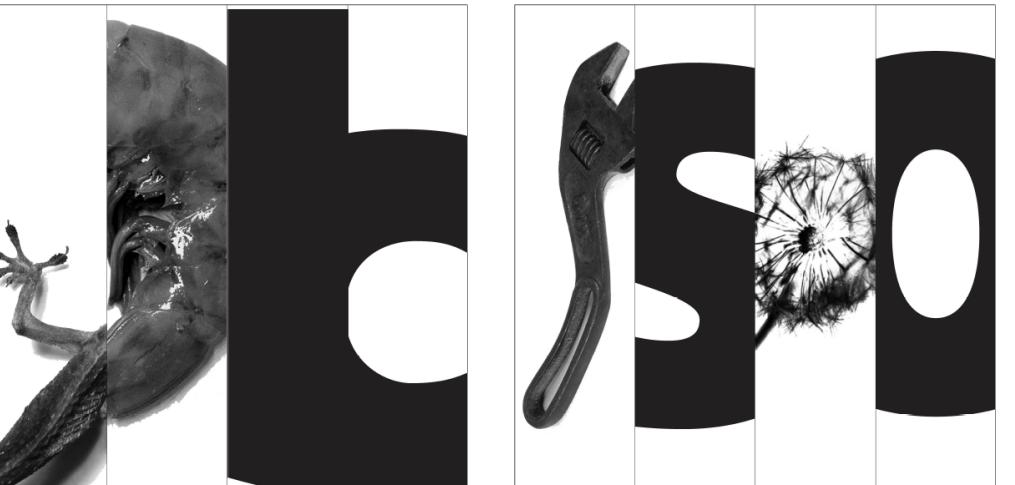
Based on all the previous insights and explorations, you will now study the effects of photography with the strip studies.

Using the given selection of 40 grayscale images and a new pallet of 26 lowercase sans serif letterforms, you will create another set of 6 compositions. In these compositions you will combine two letterforms and two photos in the 4 strips that are 2 by 8 inches.

You will again need to recreate the original given format using Illustrator. Letters will again be added to compositions by copying them from the given pallet and pasting them into the layout. Photos will be added to your compositions by also copying them and pasting them into your layout then reposition them and crop them to your satisfaction. Consider the relationships of image you are selecting both formally and conceptually; what do they represent? How do the photos relate to the letterforms chosen in each composition?

Once again the basis for each composition will be the elements placed within the strips. However, in this exercise it will no longer be your goal to maintain the visual integrity of the 2 by 8 inch strip. Regardless, the relationship of the positive and negative space will once again be extremely important to a successful composition. Consider the formal relationship of the letterforms and photos: what happens when the grayscale variations present in the photos are juxtaposed with the hard edges of the letterforms.

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Part 6/ Drawn Objects Sketches

Using everything you've learned from Parts 1—5, think of this next part as a test of what you have learned. Next, you will be drawing objects. Choose two small made-made objects, for example, a spool, a thimble, an s-hook, key, a button. These two objects should be different from each other in a number of ways: materials, shape, 3D character, presence, surface, edges, texture. These objects should be compelling to you as objects in some way—they should inspire curiosity and investigation.

Analyze your objects. What are their characteristics? If you look at them from different directions, distances, and perspectives, how do they change? Are they symmetrical or not? What do they look like in silhouette or from the top? How do they seem like or unlike each other?

Using your tracing paper, pencil, and ruler draw a grid of 9 1 by 1 inch squares in the middle of your piece of tracing paper.

Sketch 9 of your observations of both objects in the 1 inch squares you just made. Use only black markers to draw your observations.

Again using your tracing paper, draw a grid of 4 4 by 4 inch squares in the middle of 6 different pieces of tracing paper. Choose 6 terms from the following terms: form, repetition, structure, similarity, gradation, radiation, anomaly, contrast, concentration, and space. Label each piece of tracing paper with one term.

Using only your black marker and the observations you derived from your two objects make 4 drawings in each grid that embody the term labeled on the grid.

Part 6/ Drawn Objects Refine

Once aging using all your insights you've gained from Parts 1—6 you will evaluate your drawings from Part 6 Drawn Objects Sketches and choose the strongest image on each grid. Make sure the sketches you choose use your two objects in the drawing.

Now you will refine your sketches by remaking them with black and white construction paper.

Translate each 4 by 4 inch sketch into an 8 x 8 inch drawing made from black and white construction paper.

As you translate your sketches to black and white construction paper carefully study the original drawings. Refine and rework each of these drawings as you remake them with black and white construction paper. You may need to change or add information. The change in scale will require you to evolve each drawing. You will need to change or add information. If you only make the small drawings bigger they will not be successful.

Part 6/ Drawn Objects Recreate

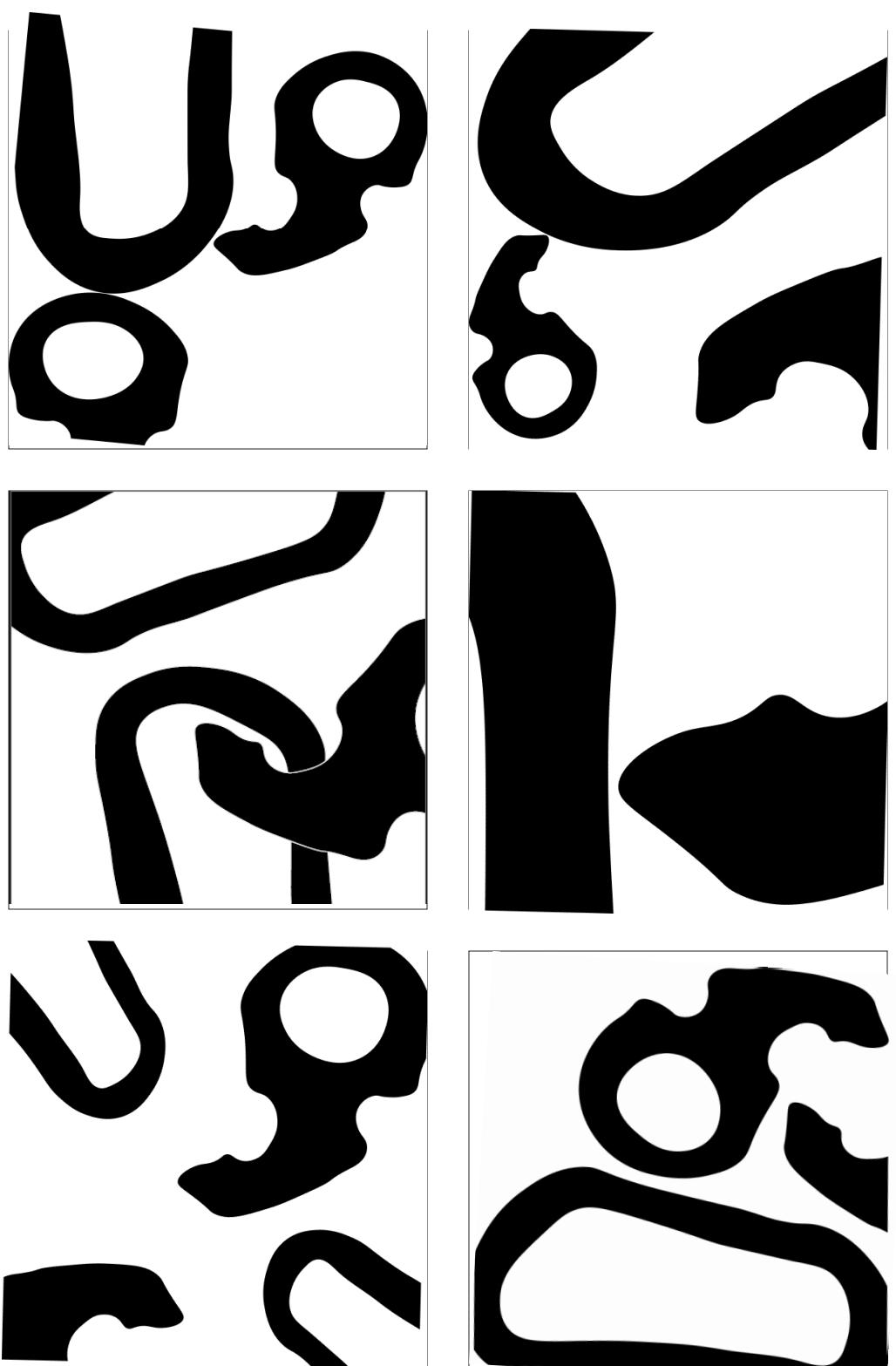
Next, translate each 4 by 4 inch black and white refined drawing from Part 6 Drawn Objects Refine into an 8 by 8 inch digital design using Illustrator. Exploit the digital environment to make each one of these images express the word as specifically as possible.

As you translate your black and white construction paper drawings to Illustrator carefully study the original drawings. Continue to refine each of these black and white construction paper drawings as you remake them in Illustrator.

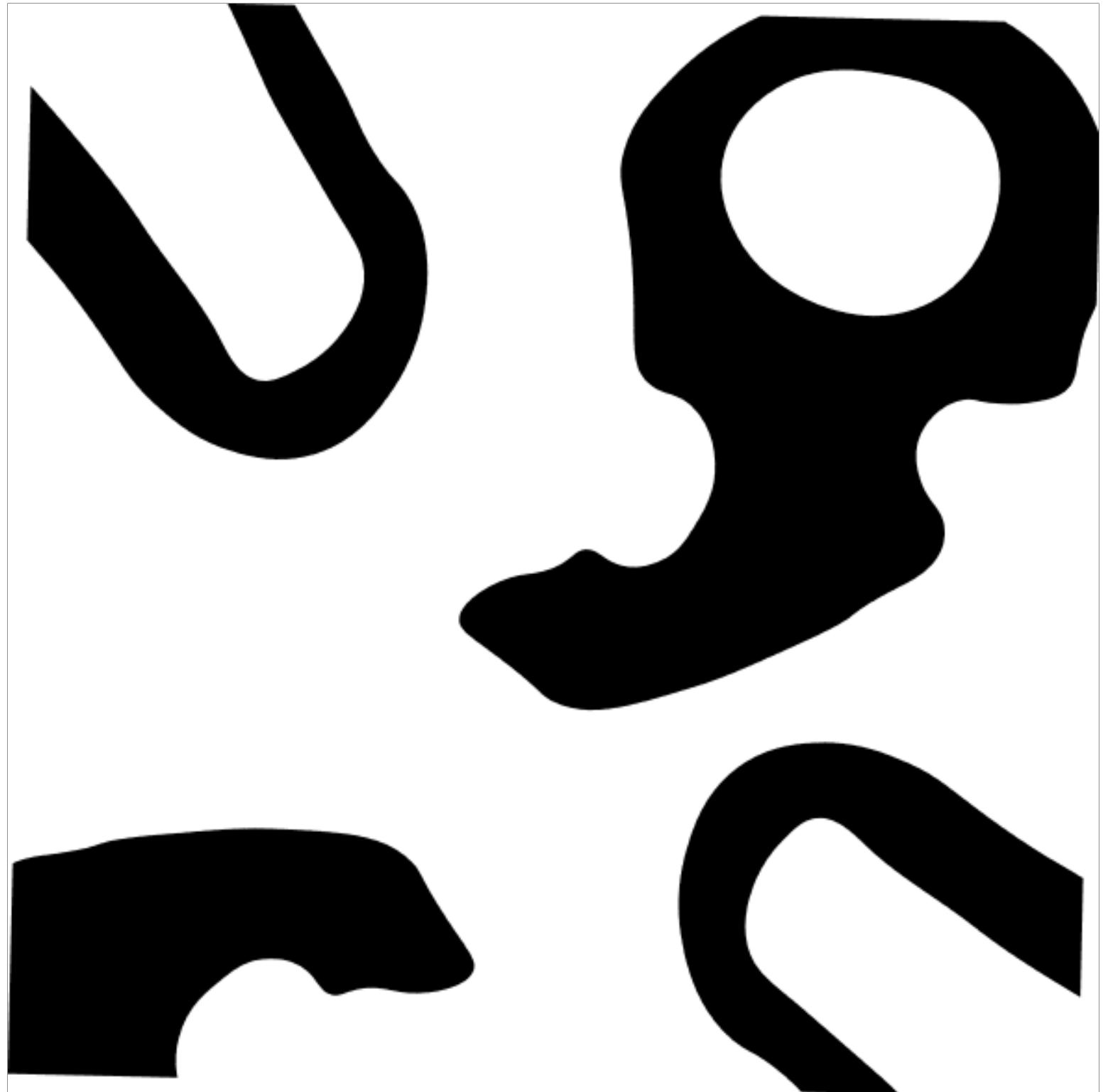
For the past weeks, you have been making excellent compositions. Don't forget to use the positive and negative space well. You can use all the design elements: dot, line, shape, direction, dimension, scale, and movement. Scale and the idea of making great shapes in the background as well as using great shapes in the foreground will help you make excellent compositions. Experiment with line weight, outlines, solids, and fills.

Don't worry about making these illustrator designs representational make these designs very abstract. By making them abstract you'll be able to focus on expressing each labeled word specifically as possible.

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Part 7/ Color Harmony

For this last project of the quarter keep in mind all the insights you have gathered from the last nine weeks. Now armed with your compositions from Part 6A—the ones you've been working on for three weeks you'll look at color harmonies. Johannes Itten in "The Elements fo Color", writes, "By color harmony I mean the craft of developing themes from systematic color relationships capable of serving as a basis for composition".

There are six color harmonies. They are complementary, monochromatic, split complementary, analogous, triadic, and tetradic.

Using your six compositions that you remade in Illustrator from Part 6A Drawn Objects 2 you will use the 5 different color harmonies and your own made up color idea to add color to your six compositions.

Use color in both the negative spaces and the positive spaces. This is for you to see how you can use color to manipulate how your compositions are working in other words, how the viewer will see your composition.

Keep utilizing all the insights you've gained from the past nine weeks. You will need to continue to rework your compositions...making sure you've composed your 8 by 8 inch composition from Part 6A using all the insights you've gained from Parts 1—6A.

When you are using the color harmonies you have a few options: you can use five different color harmonies and your own made up color idea; or you can choose to reuse any of the color harmonies and your own made up color idea. For this second option, use at least

three different color harmonies—if you did this you would use three different harmonies, reuse two of these harmonies, and create your own made up color idea.

You'll again use Adobe Illustrator to add your color.

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