



CORRA
CORRI!

Sull'orlo

di un lago bizzarro che io amo, verde ai due capi, sottile e torto per sinuose gole di colli selvaggi e di montagne tragiche, sereno a mezzo il corso nell'arco di un golfo idilliaco, si affaccia allo specchio maggiore delle acque [10]una densa e signorile corona di ombra. Sovente per le vie solitarie di quell'ombra fui preso dal senso di una bellezza che più si prometta di quanto si sveli. Non la scoprivo intera nel tremolar lucente del lago tra i tronchi, nelle pensose montagne assise a levante del bosco, nelle alte scene lontane, dorate di sole, che mi apparivano tratto tratto a settentrione. Mi sorgeva invece nel cuore e me lo riempiva di sè l'idea di una possibile parola unica nella quale consuonassero tante diverse voci di cose; di una profonda parola di bellezza, tentante e inafferrabile come la parola di accordi musicali che annuncino, preparino una successiva rivelazione di suoni e invece si spengano senza seguito nel silenzio.

Così [11]penetrato dall'anima occulta delle cose che mi figuravo desiderosa e incapace di esprimersi a me com'ero io di comprender lei, movevo alla più recondita sede di quel regno di ombra dove i maggiori alberi, fronteggiandosi in giro, congiungendosi a grande altezza in un'ascensione unica, fanno di sè ghirlanda e tempio a un cupo fantasma.

Una giovine donna, bellissima, dai capelli scomposti, dalle vesti cadenti, siede là sopra un alto seggio, piegato il busto gentile in avanti, puntati i gomiti alle ginocchia, strette le guance fra i pugni chiusi, fissi gli occhi tordidi nel vuoto. Il viso rivela una intelligenza forte che affonda nella follia. Nessuna cura stringe più costei nè del mondo nè di sè. Nessun [12]vivente presuma, per esserne stato caro, poterle recar conforto. Ella non torcerebbe un momento gli occhi suoi avidi dalla visione di angoscia che la impietra; e tuttavia ci balena che possa repente balzar dal seggio con uno strido, avventarsi là dove guarda, tanto potente vita spirò nel marmo il grande artista che le pose nome «Desolazione». Si soffre davanti all'alta Dolorosa, e si gode intensamente di soffrire. Ci partiamo pensosi e la visione di lei ne persegue al sole, per le ombre che il vento scompiglia, lungo le rive sonore del lago scintillante. Non ci guasta l'incanto dei colori e dei suoni ma vi spira una malinconia segreta che lo rende più soave, infonde alle voci delle cose un accento [13]nuovo e profondo. Pare che l'enigma di bellezza oscura onde avemmo dianzi turbato il cuore vi ritorni, lo prema più forte, quasi vi si disveli. I susurri del fogliame paiono prima dire dire incalzando e poi dolersi, nel venir meno, di non essere intesi.

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Preambolo

Considerato che il riconoscimento della [REDACTED] inerente a tutti i membri della famiglia umana e dei loro diritti, uguali ed inalienabili, costituisce il fondamento della libertà, della giustizia e della pace nel mondo;

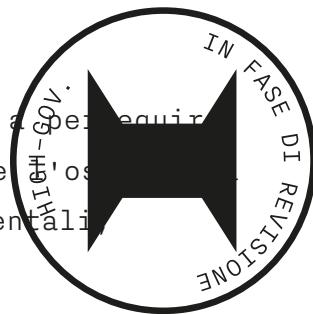
Considerato che il disconoscimento e il disprezzo dei diritti umani hanno portato ad atti di barbarie che offendono la coscienza dell'umanità, e che l'avvento di un mondo in cui gli esseri umani godano della [REDACTED] di parola e di credo e della libertà dal timore e dal bisogno è stato proclamato come la più alta aspirazione dell'uomo;

Considerato che è indispensabile che i diritti umani [REDACTED] da norme giuridiche, se si vuole evitare che l'uomo sia costretto a ricorrere, come ultima istanza, alla [REDACTED] contro la [REDACTED] e l' [REDACTED];

Considerato che è indispensabile promuovere lo sviluppo di rapporti amichevoli tra le Nazioni;

Considerato che i popoli delle Nazioni Unite hanno riaffermato nello Statuto la loro fede nei diritti umani fondamentali, nella dignità e nel valore della persona umana, nell' [REDACTED] dei diritti dell'uomo e della donna, ed hanno deciso di promuovere il [REDACTED] e un miglior tenore di vita in una maggiore libertà;

Considerato che gli Stati membri si sono impegnati a [REDACTED] in cooperazione con le Nazioni Unite, il rispetto e l'oservanza universale dei diritti umani e delle libertà fondamentali;





C'è una strada nel bosco

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There were no prisons, no slums, no insane asylums, no cripples, no poverty, no wars.

Everything was perfectly swell.

There were no prisons, no slums, no insane asylums, no cripples, no poverty, no wars.

All diseases were conquered. So was old age.

Death, barring accidents, was an adventure for volunteers. The population of the United States was stabilized at forty-million souls.

One bright morning in the Chicago Lying-in Hospital, a man named Edward K. Wehling, Jr., waited for his wife to give birth. He was the only man waiting. Not many people were born a day any more.

Wehling was fifty-six, a mere stripling in a population whose average age was one hundred and twenty-nine.

X-rays had revealed that his wife was going to have triplets. The children would be his first.

Young Wehling was hunched in his chair, his head in his hand. He was so rumpled, so still and colorless as to be virtually invisible. His camouflage was perfect, since the waiting room had a disorderly and demoralized air, too. Chairs and ashtrays had been moved away from the walls. The floor was paved with spattered dropcloths.

The room was being redecorated. It was being redecorated as a memorial to a man who had volunteered to die.

A sardonic old man, about two hundred years old, sat on a stepladder, painting a mural he did not like. Back in the days when people aged visibly, his age would have been guessed at thirty-five or so. Aging had touched him that much before the cure for aging was found.

The mural he was working on depicted a very neat garden. Men and women in white, doctors and nurses, turned the soil, planted seedlings, sprayed bugs, spread fertilizer.

Men and women in purple uniforms pulled up weeds, cut down plants that were old and sickly, raked leaves, carried refuse to trash-burners.

Never, never, never—not even in medieval Holland nor old Japan—had a garden been more formal, been better tended. Every plant had all the loam, light, water, air and nourishment it could use.

A hospital orderly came down the corridor, singing under his breath a popular song:

If you don't like my kisses, honey,
Here's what I will do:

I'll go see a girl in purple,
Kiss this sad world tootie-oo.

If you don't want my lovin',
Why should I take up all this space?
I'll get off this old planet,
Let some sweet baby have my place.

The orderly looked in at the mural and the muralist. "Looks so real," he said, "I can practically imagine I'm standing in the middle of it."

"What makes you think you're not in it?" said the painter. He gave a satiric smile. "It's called 'The Happy Garden of Life,' you know."

"That's good of Dr. Hitz," said the orderly.

He was referring to one of the male figures in white, whose head was a portrait of Dr. Benjamin Hitz, the hospital's Chief Obstetrician. Hitz was a blindingly handsome man.

"Lot of faces still to fill in," said the orderly. He meant that the faces of many of the figures in the mural were still blank. All blanks were to be filled with portraits of important people on either the hospital staff or from the Chicago Office of the Federal Bureau of Termination.

"Must be nice to be able to make pictures that look like something," said the orderly.

The painter's face curdled with scorn. "You think I'm proud of this daub?" he said. "You think this is my idea of what life really looks like?"

"What's your idea of what life looks like?" said the orderly.

The painter gestured at a foul dropcloth. "There's a good picture of it," he said. "Frame that, and you'll have a picture a damn sight more honest than this one."

"You're a gloomy old duck, aren't you?" said the orderly.

"Is that a crime?" said the painter.

The orderly shrugged. "If you don't like it here, Grandpa—" he said, and he finished the thought with the trick telephone number that people who didn't want to live any more were supposed to call. The zero in the telephone number he pronounced "naught."

The number was: "2 B R O 2 B."

It was the telephone number of an institution whose fanciful sobriquets included: "Automat," "Birdland," "Cannery," "Catbox," "De-louser," "Easy-go," "Good-by, Mother," "Happy Hooligan," "Kiss-me-quick," "Lucky Pierre," "Sheepdip," "Waring Blender," "Weep-no-more" and "Why Worry?"

"To be or not to be" was the telephone number of the municipal gas chambers of the Federal Bureau of Termination.

The painter thumbed his nose at the orderly. "When I decide it's time to go," he said, "it won't be at the Sheepdip."

"A do-it-yourselfer, eh?" said the orderly. "Messy business, Grandpa. Why don't you have a little consideration for the people who have to clean up after you?"

The painter expressed with an obscenity his lack of concern for the tribulations of his survivors. "The world could do with a good deal more mess, if you ask me," he said.

The orderly laughed and moved on.

Wehling, the waiting father, mumbled something without raising his head. And then he fell silent again.

A coarse, formidable woman strode into the waiting room on spike heels. Her shoes, stockings, trench coat, bag and overseas cap were all purple, the purple the painter called "the color of grapes on Judgment Day."

The medallion on her purple musette bag was the seal of the Service Division of the Federal Bureau of Termination, an eagle perched on a turnstile.

The woman had a lot of facial hair—an unmistakable mustache, in fact. A curious thing about gas-chamber hostesses was that, no matter how lovely and feminine they were when recruited, they all sprouted mustaches within five years or so.

"Is this where I'm supposed to come?" she said to the painter.

"A lot would depend on what your business was," he said. "You aren't about to have a baby, are you?"

"They told me I was supposed to pose for some picture," she said. "My name's Leora Duncan." She waited.

"And you dunk people," he said.

"What?" she said.

"Skip it," he said.

"That sure is a beautiful picture," she said. "Looks just like heaven or something."

"Or something," said the painter. He took a list of names from his smock pocket. "Duncan, Duncan, Duncan," he said, scanning the list. "Yes-here you are. You're entitled to be immortalized. See any faceless body here you'd like me to stick your head on? We've got a few choice ones left."

She studied the mural bleakly. "Gee," she said, "they're all the same to me. I don't know anything about art."

"A body's a body, eh?" he said. "All righty. As a master of fine art, I recommend this body here." He indicated a faceless figure of a woman who was carrying dried stalks to a trash-burner.

"Well," said Leora Duncan, "that's more the disposal people, isn't it? I mean, I'm in service. I don't do any disposing."

The painter clapped his hands in mock delight. "You say you don't know anything about art, and then you prove in the next breath that you know more about it than I do! Of course the sheave-carrier is wrong for a hostess! A snipper, a pruner—that's more your line." He pointed to a figure in purple who was sawing a dead branch from an apple tree. "How about her?" he said. "You like her at all?"

"Gosh—" she said, and she blushed and became humble—"that—that puts me right next to Dr. Hitz."

"That upsets you?" he said.

"Good gravy, no!" she said. "It's—it's just such an honor."

"Ah, You admire him, eh?" he said.

"Who doesn't admire him?" she said, worshiping the portrait of Hitz. It was the portrait of a tanned, white-haired, omnipotent Zeus, two hundred and forty years old. "Who doesn't admire him?" she said again. "He was responsible for setting up the very first gas chamber in Chicago."

"Nothing would please me more," said the painter, "than to put you next to him for all time. Sawing off a limb—that strikes you as appropriate?"

"That is kind of like what I do," she said. She was demure about what she did. What she did was make people comfortable while she killed them.

And, while Leora Duncan was posing for her portrait, into the waiting room bounded Dr. Hitz himself. He was seven feet tall, and he boomed with importance, accomplishments, and the joy of living.

"Well, Miss Duncan! Miss Duncan!" he said, and he made a joke. "What are you doing here?" he said. "This isn't where the people leave. This is where they come in!"

"We're going to be in the same picture together," she said shyly.

"Good!" said Dr. Hitz heartily. "And, say, isn't that some picture?"

"I sure am honored to be in it with you!"

"Let me tell you," he said. "I'm honored to be in it with you. Without women like you, this wonderful world we've got

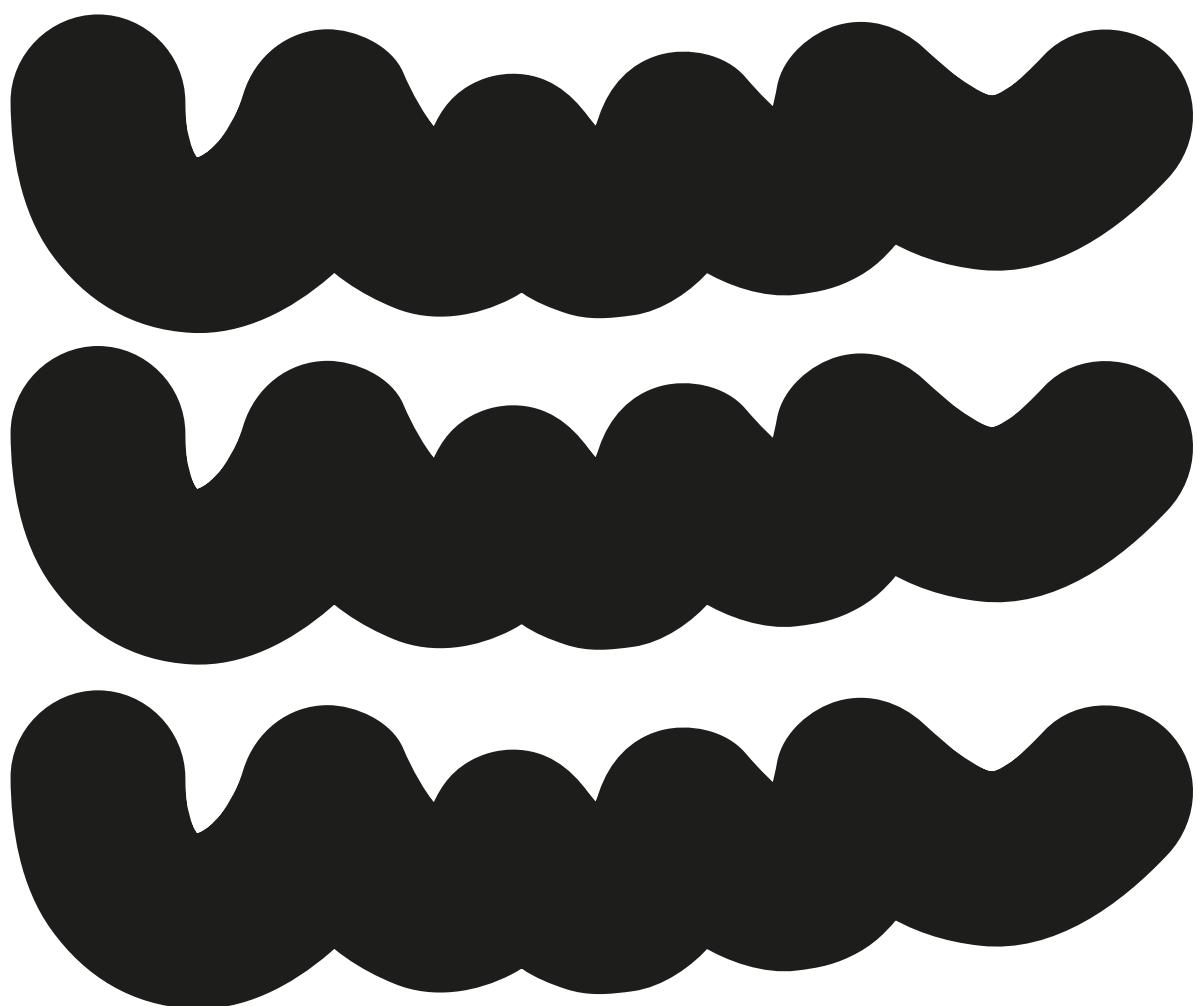


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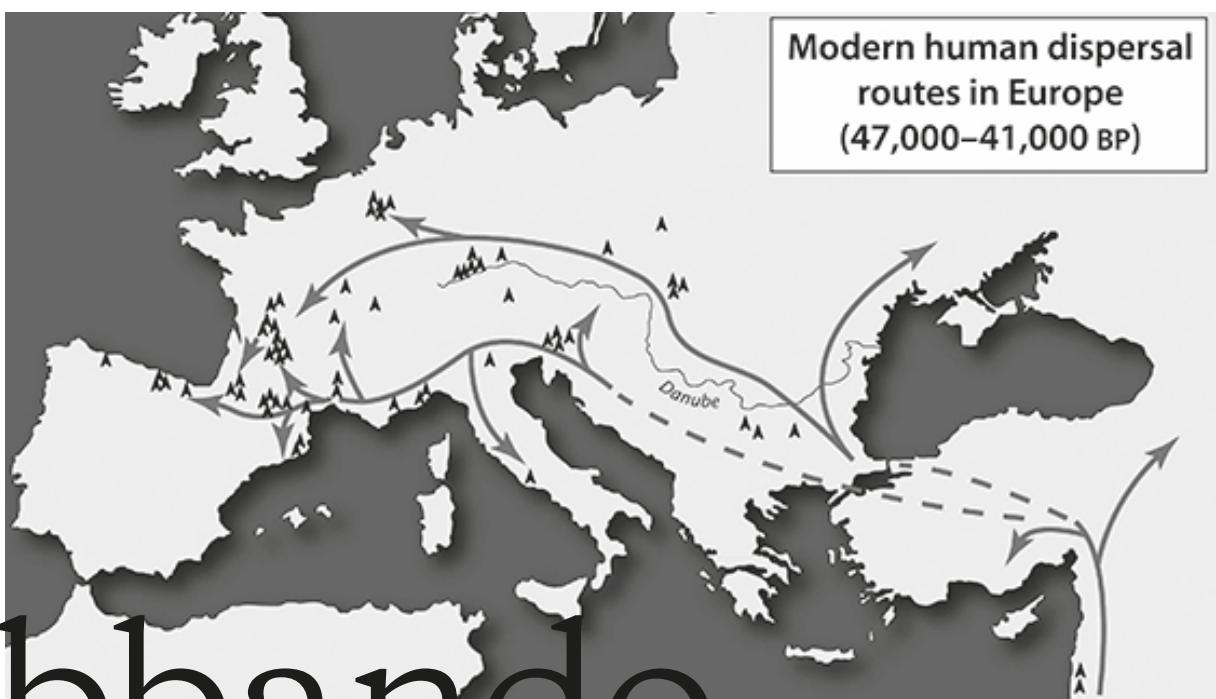


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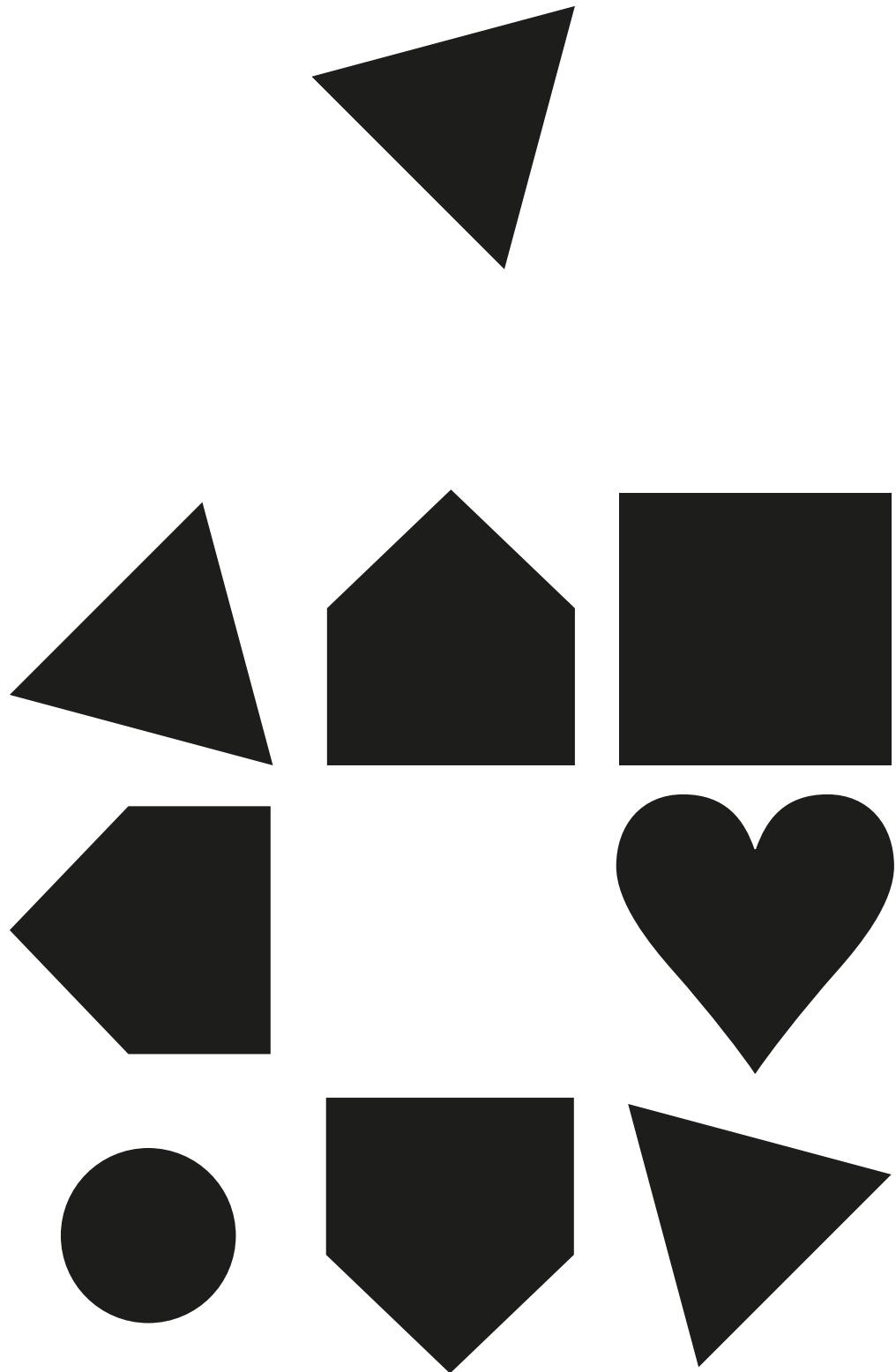
Modern human dispersal
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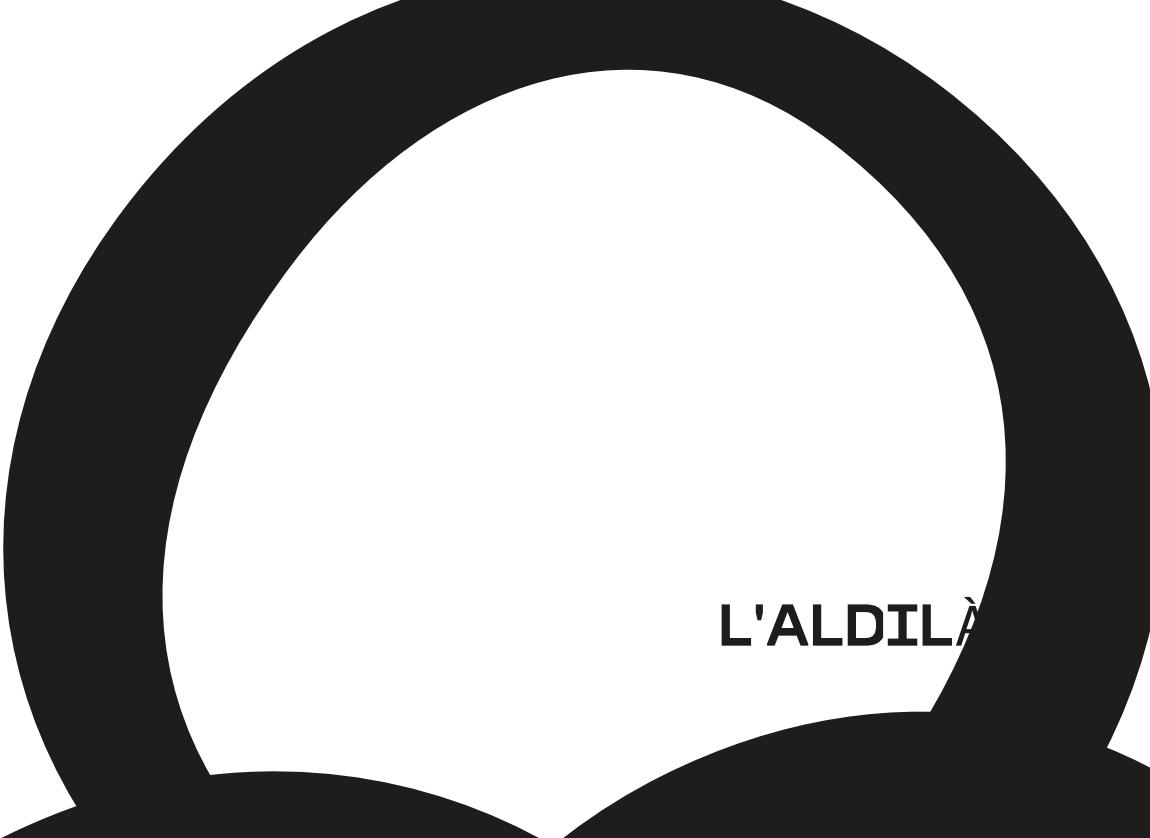


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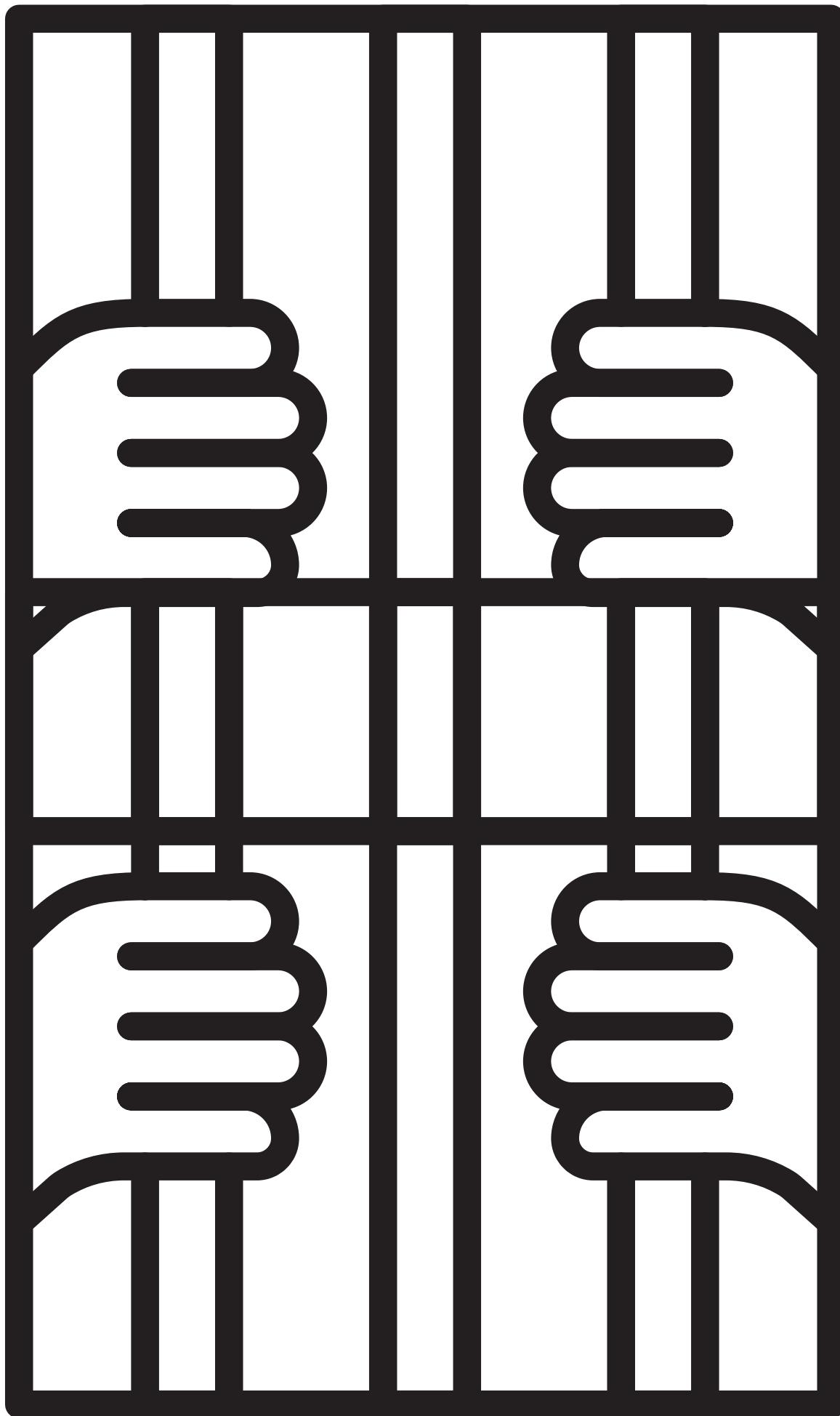
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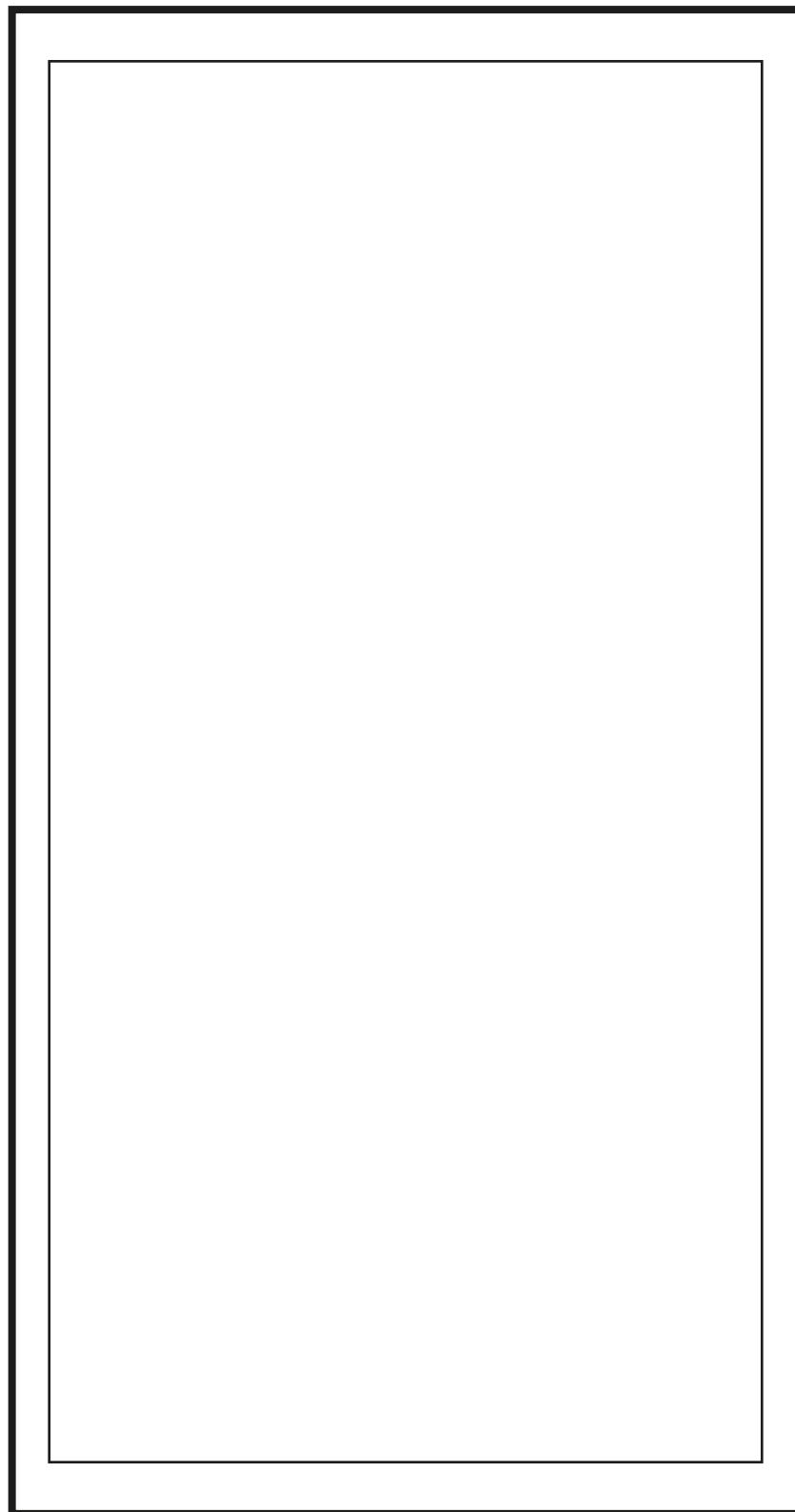
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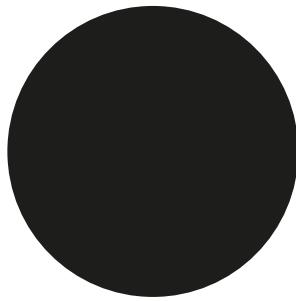
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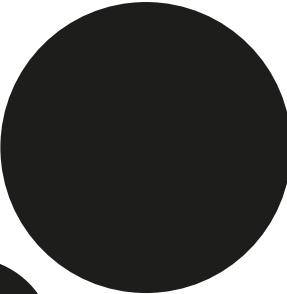
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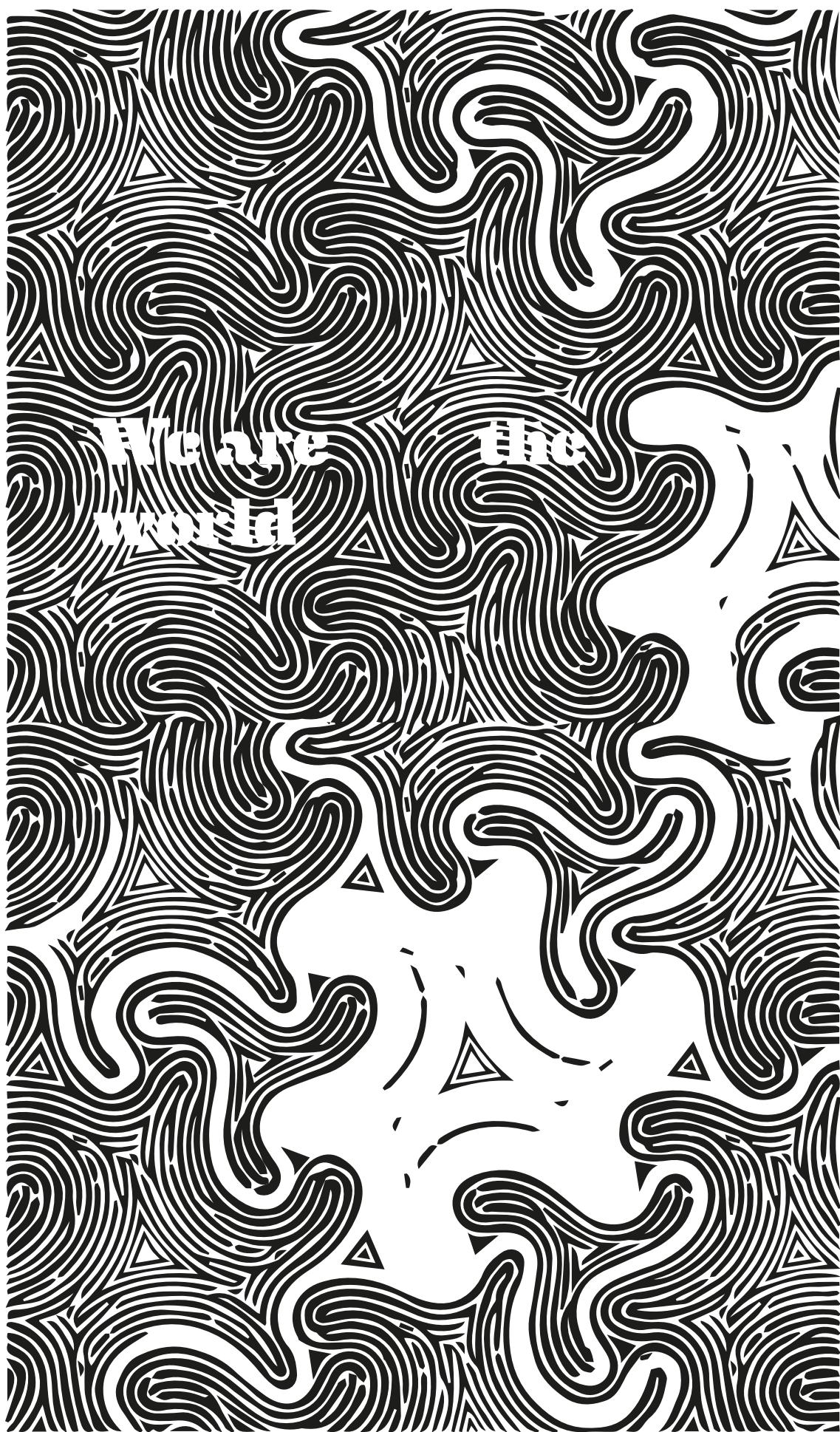
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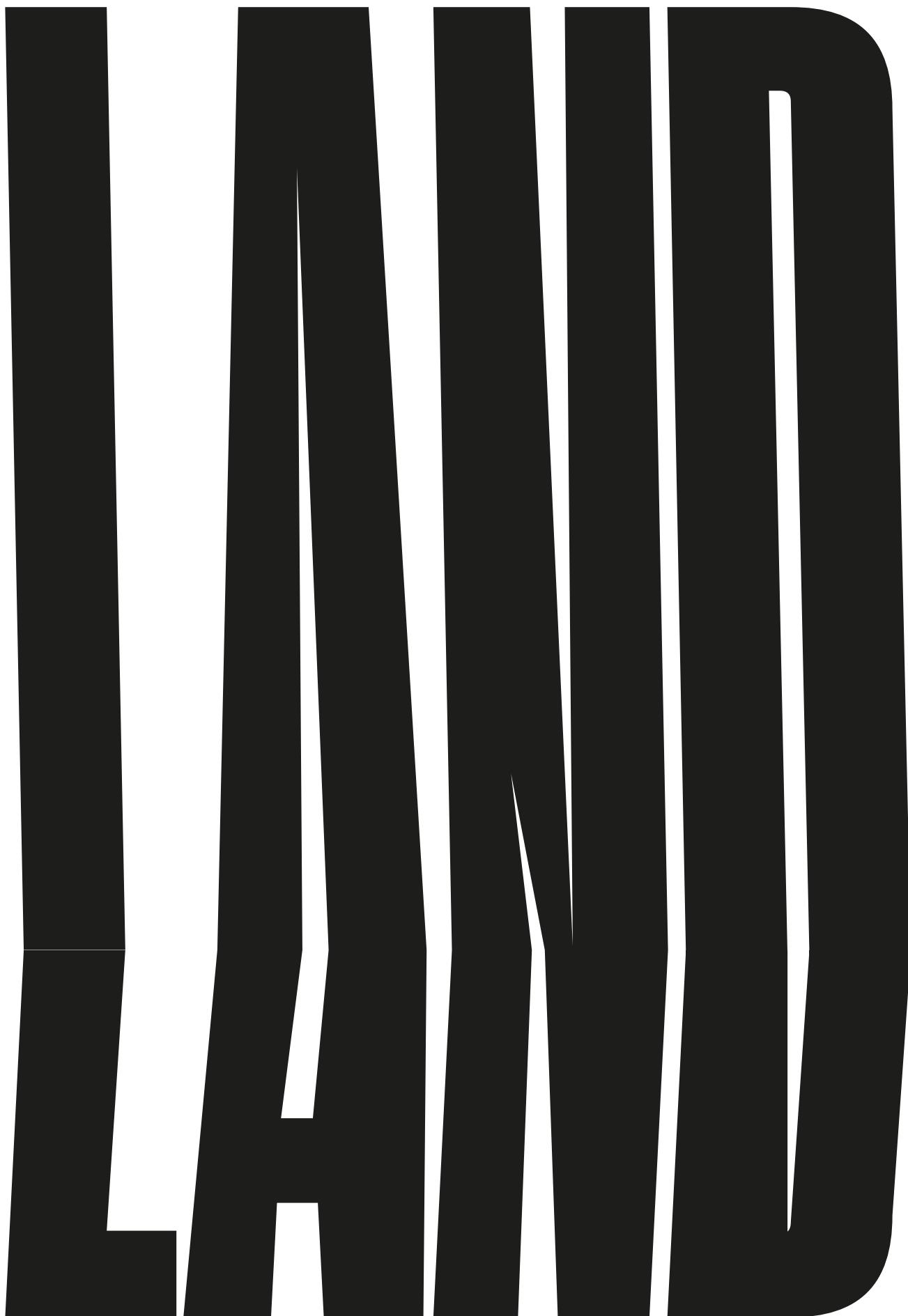


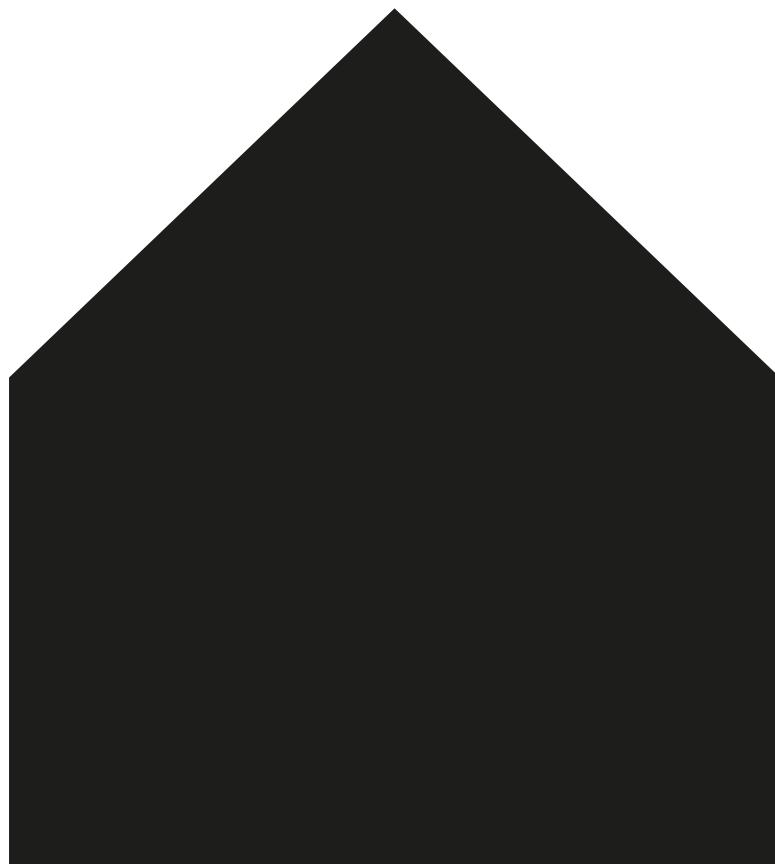
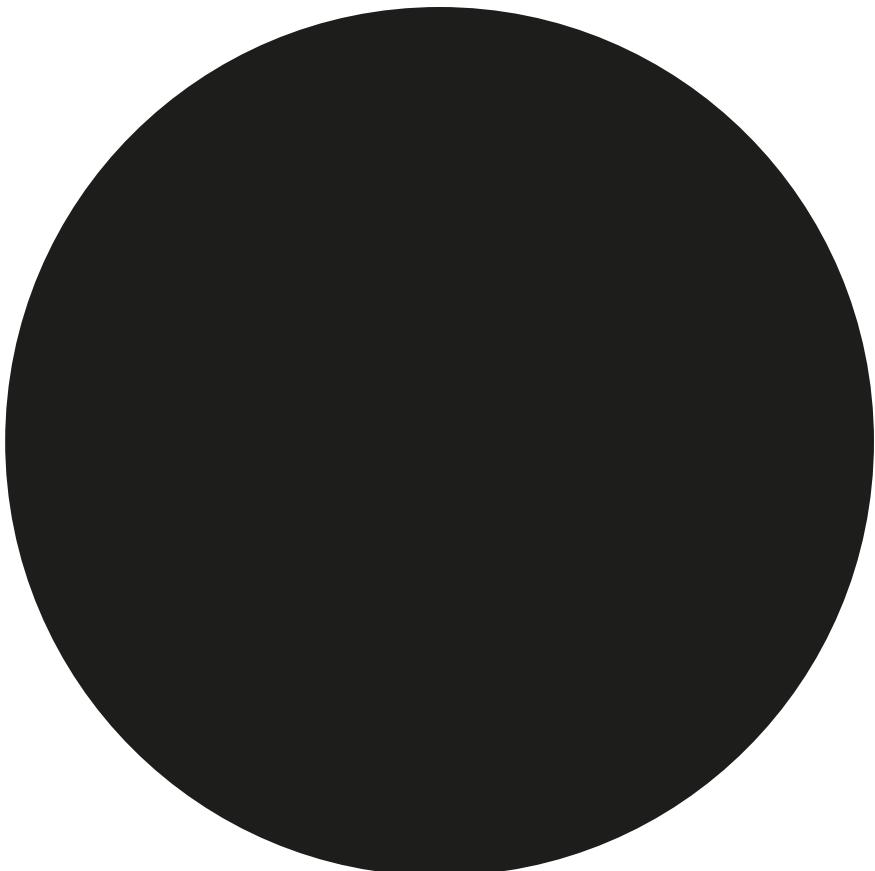
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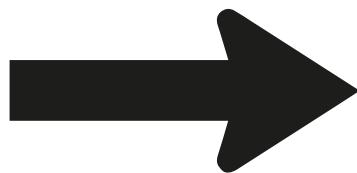
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THAILANDIA 1, INDIA 1,
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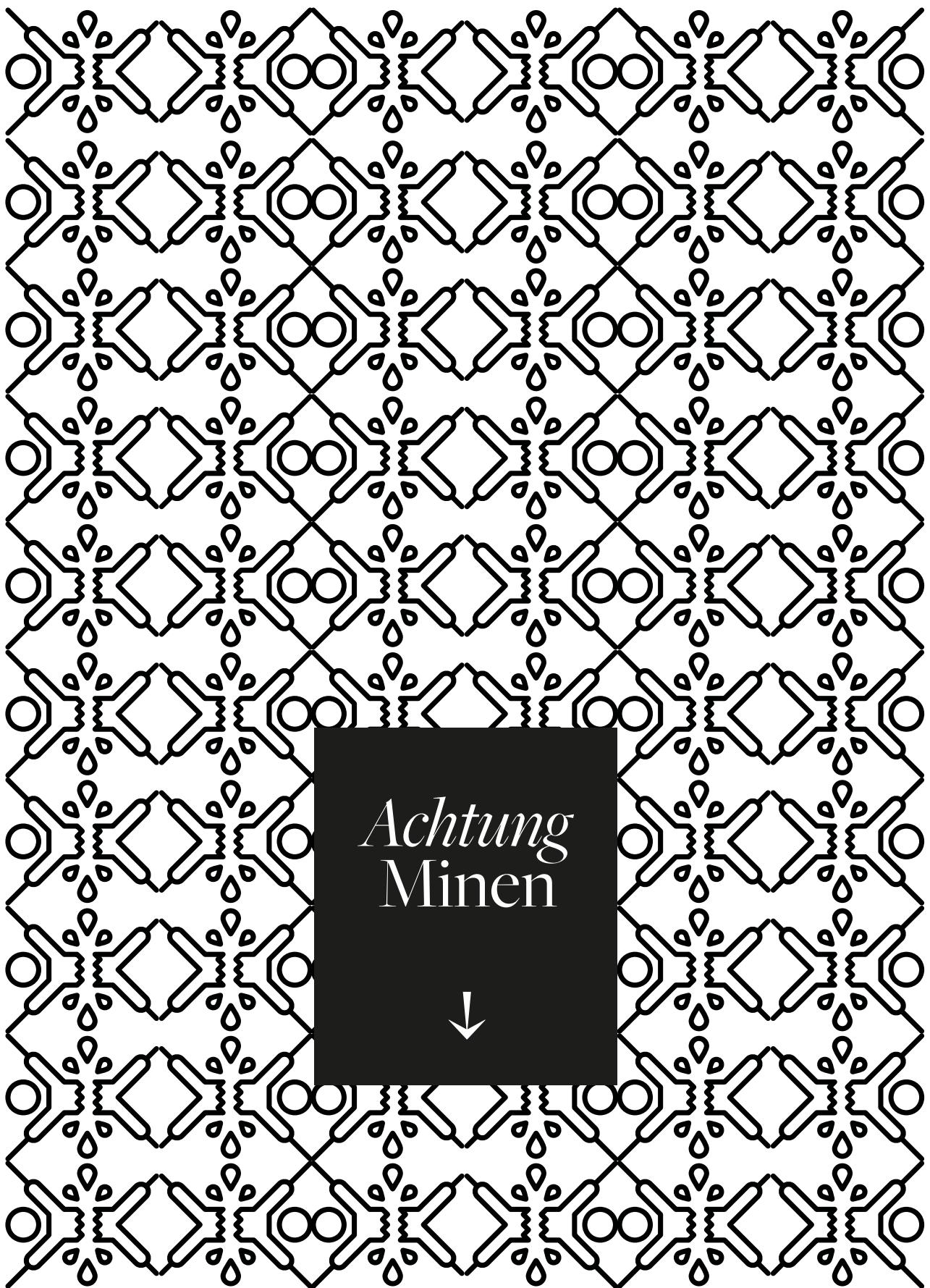
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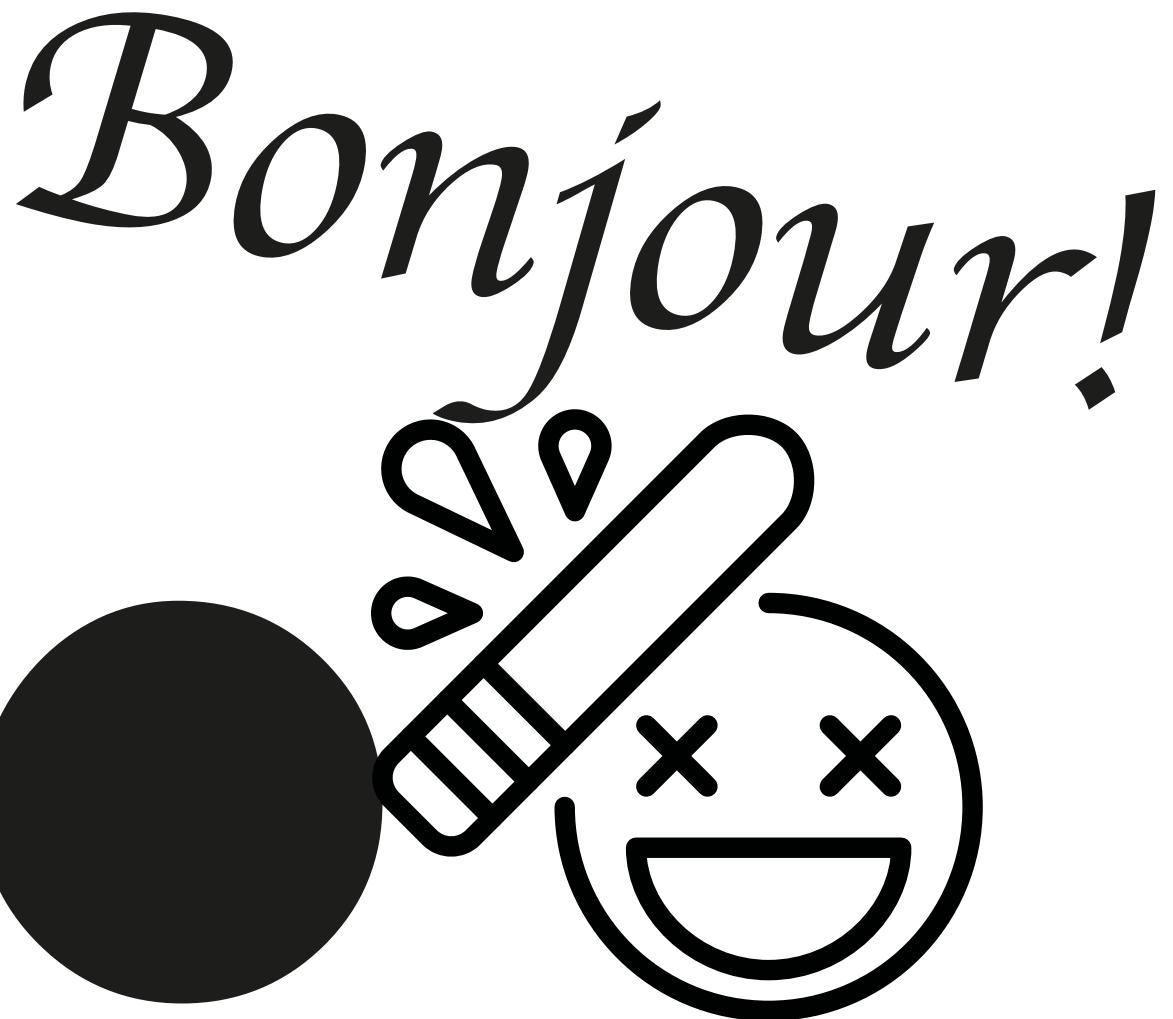
“Il sonnambulo,
nel suo cappotto
grigio chiaro (i
nostri ricordi
di lui si sono
fatti così grigi
e sgranati)
anela a essere
un altro Gunnar.
Non è forse un
apripista anche
lui? Non è forse
stato abile a
incantare tutti
i serpenti fino
a quel momento?
E la sua
Germania sarà
Gúthrun. La
Germania deve
morire feroce,
mettendo a fuoco
ogni cosa...”

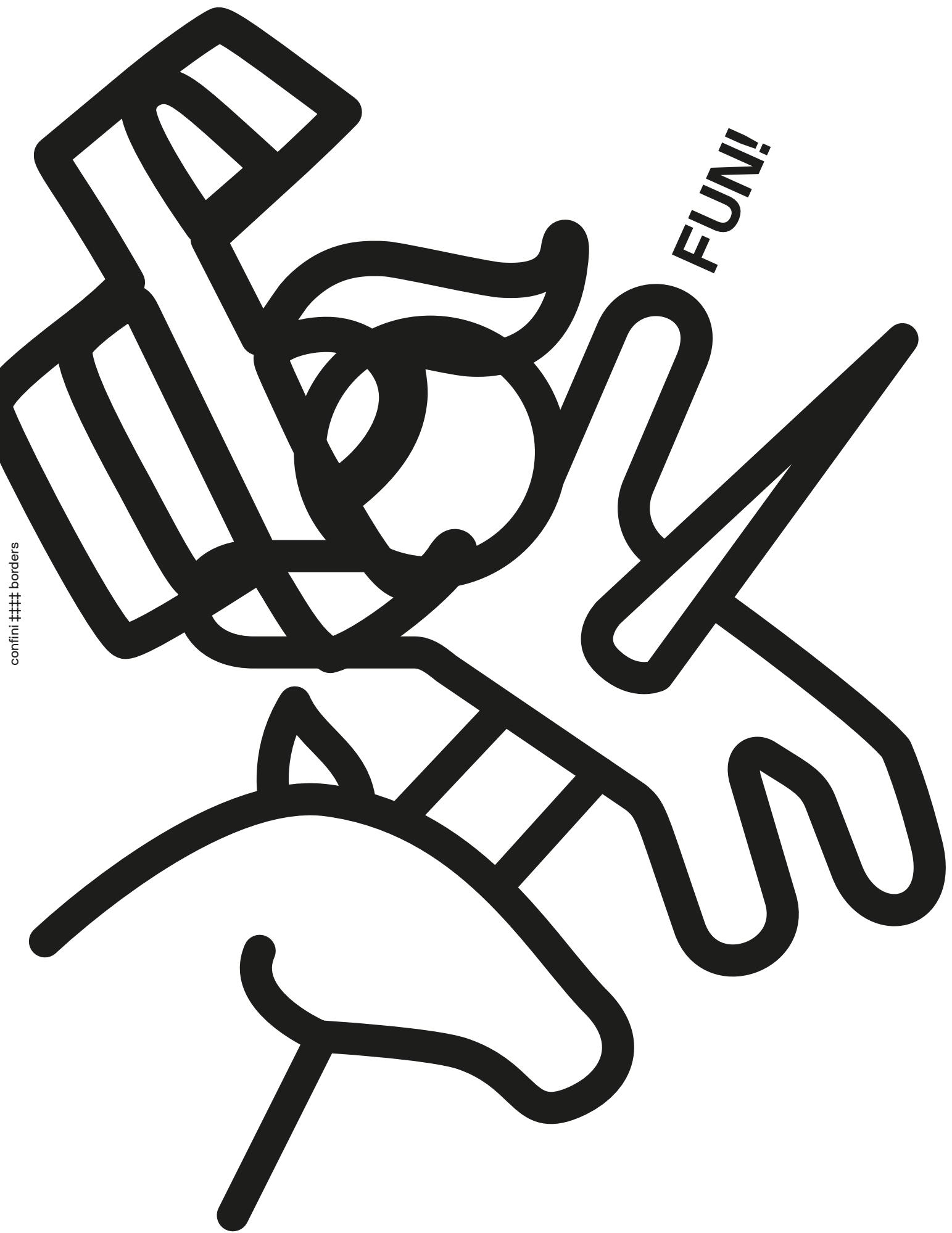


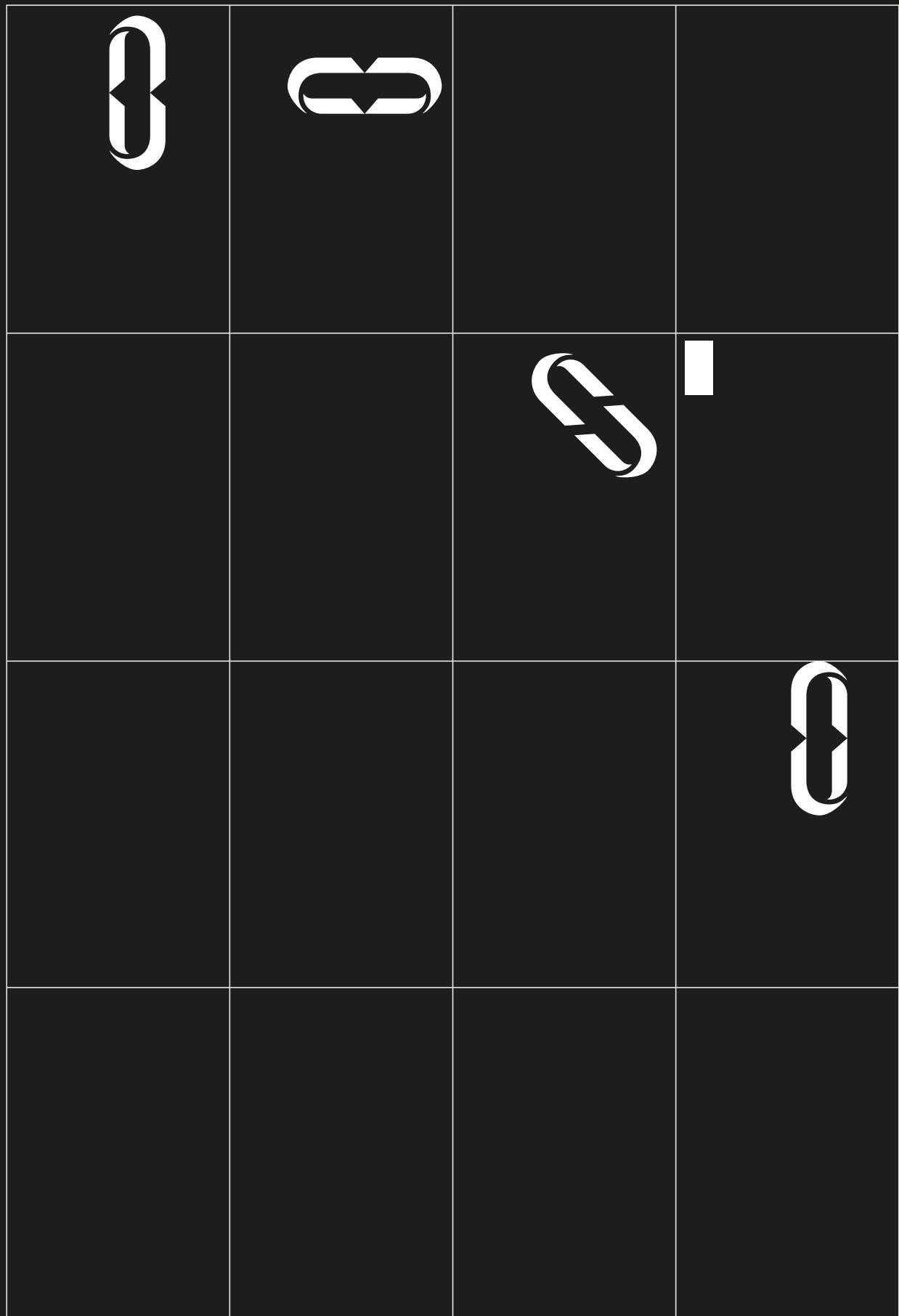
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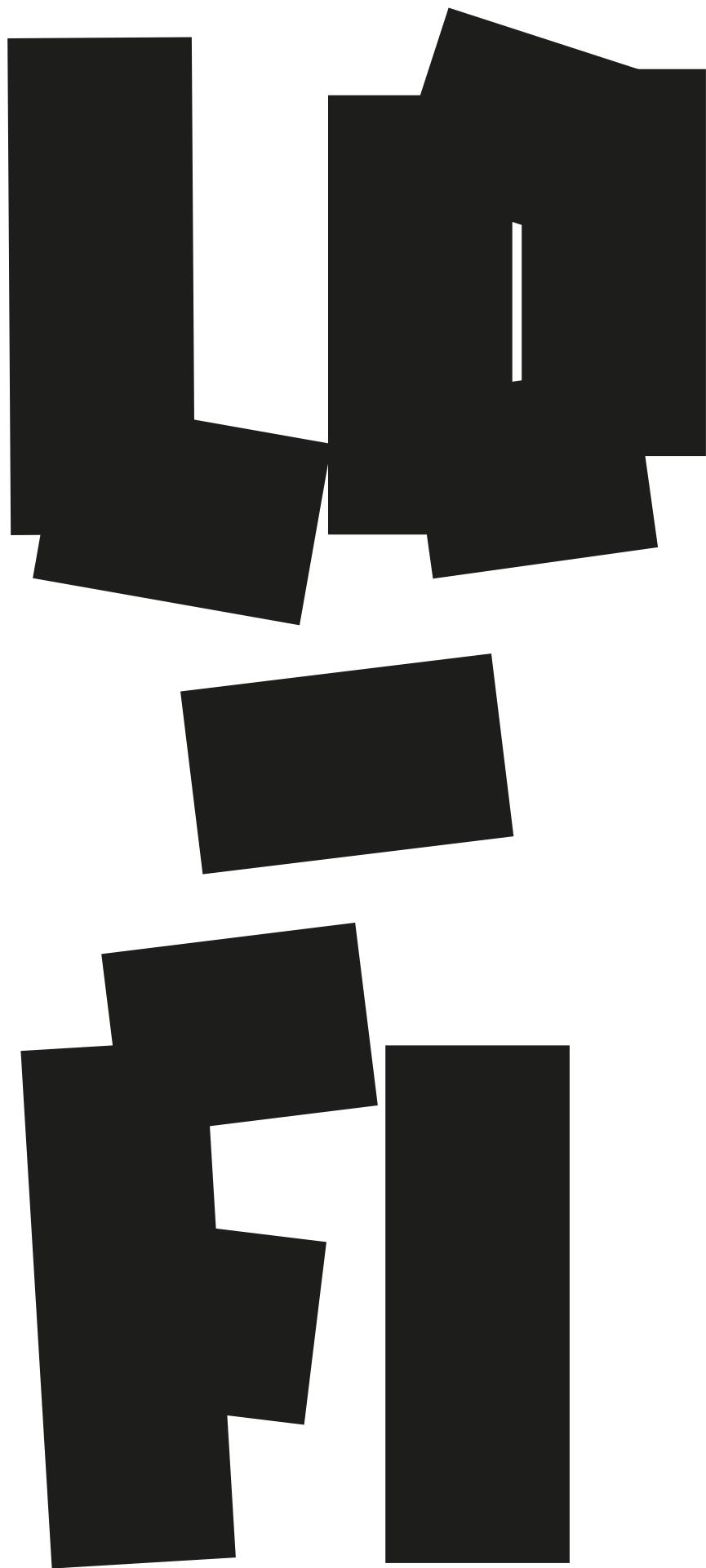




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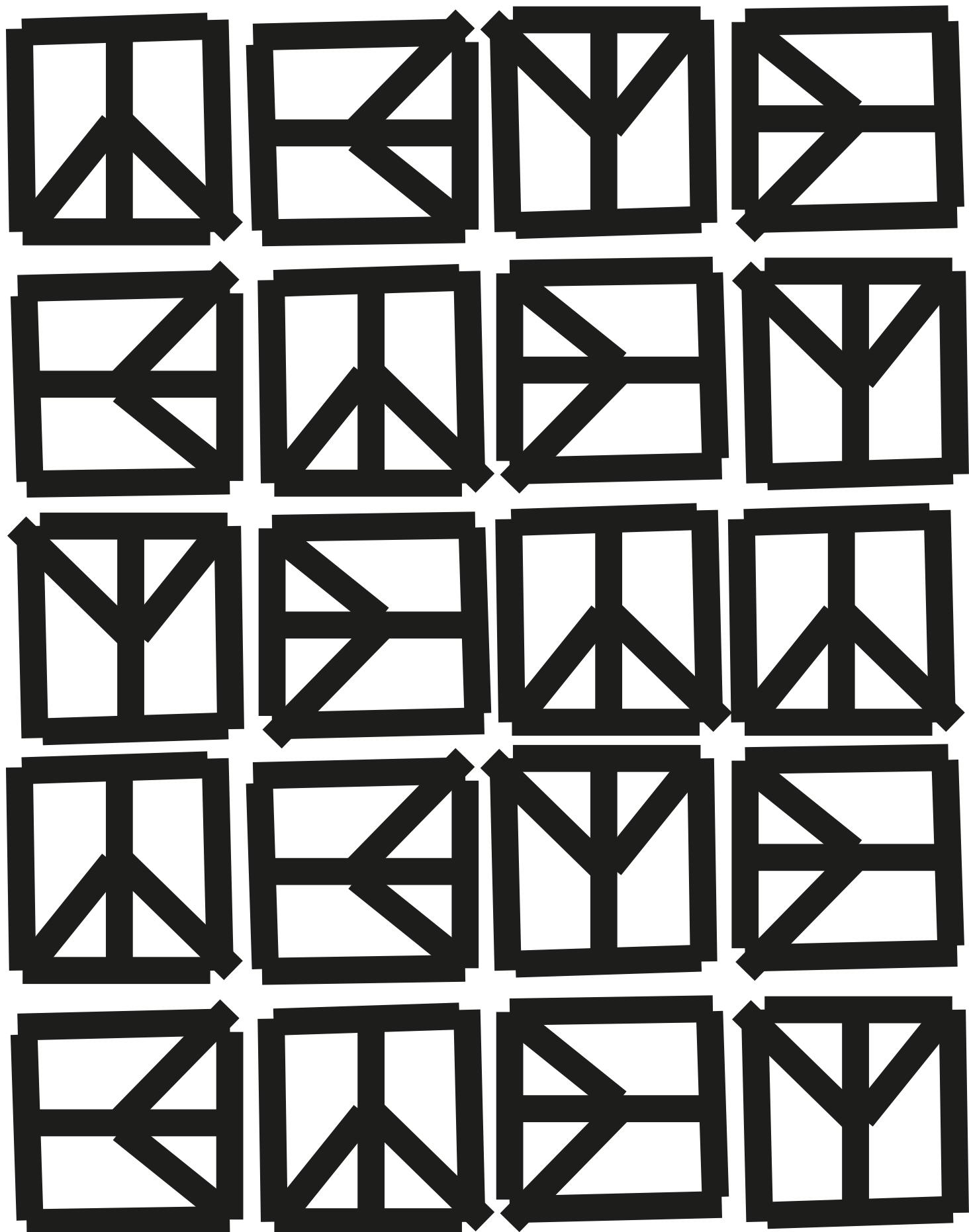


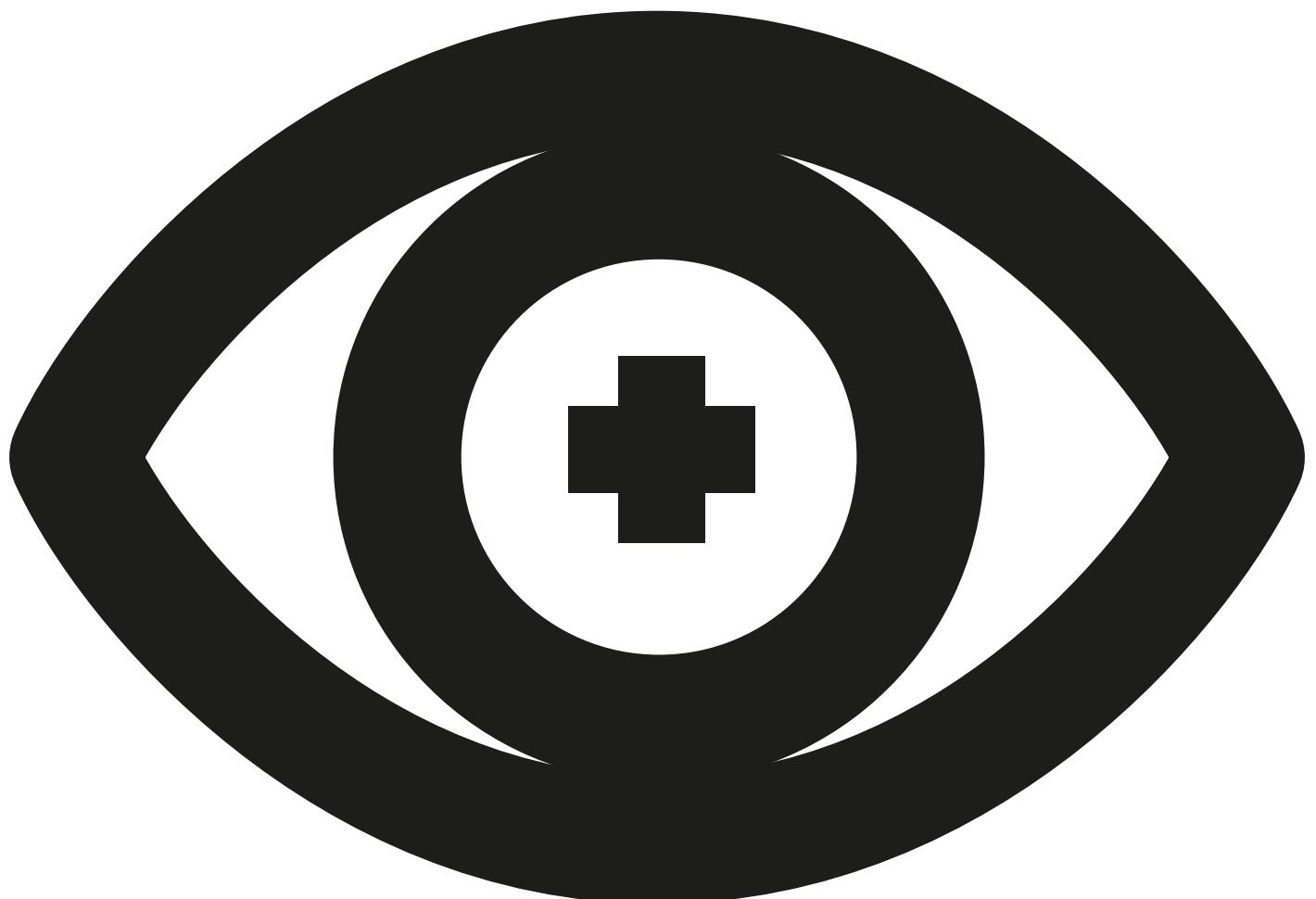


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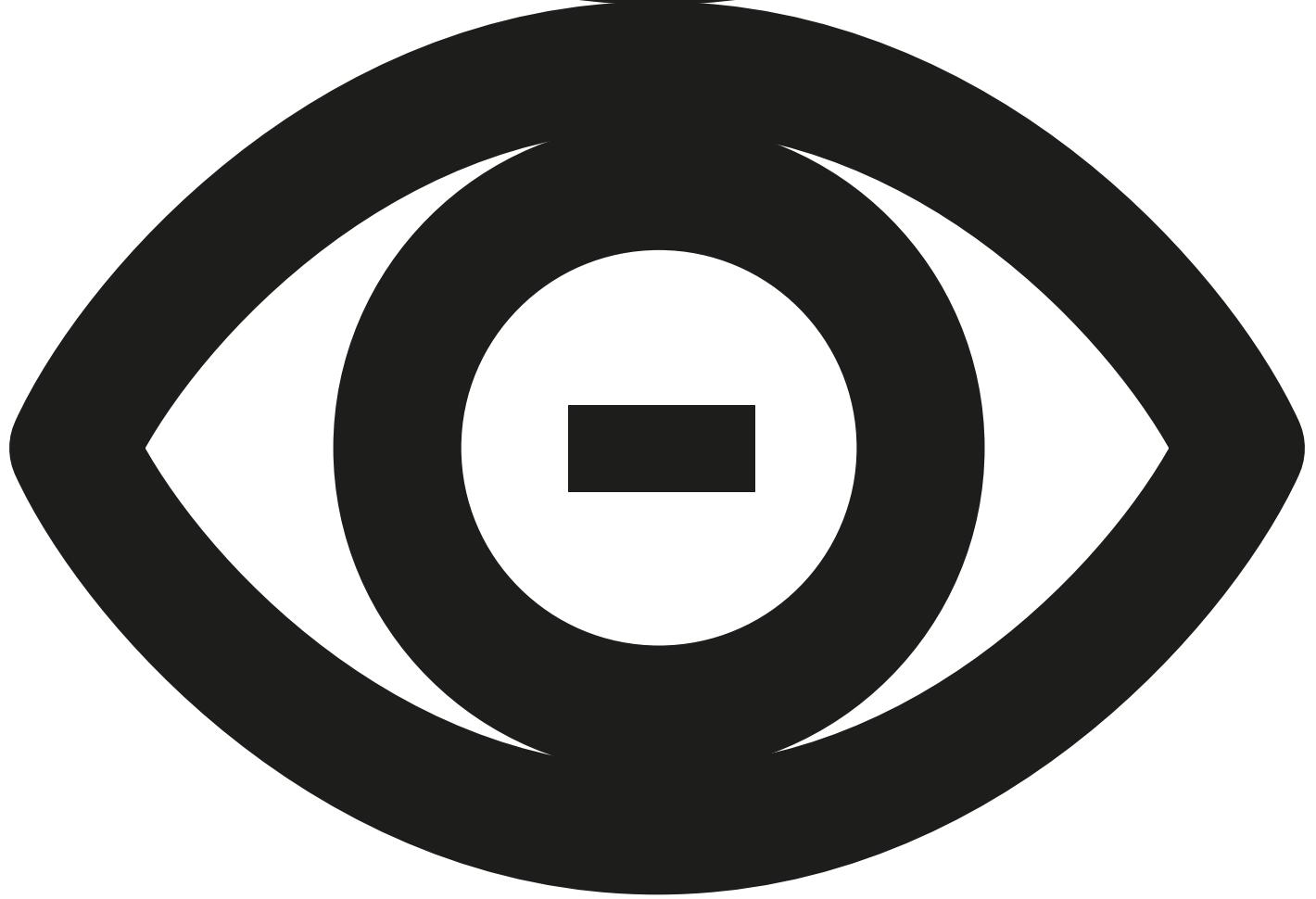
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