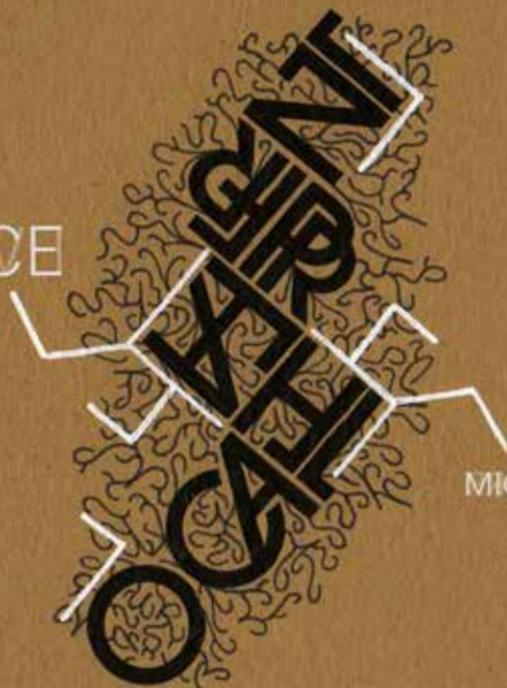


EVIDENCE OF ABSENCE



MICHAEL ORR

EVIDENCE OF ABSENCE  
MICHAEL ORR



*For my grandparents—Ladd, who turns 100 upon the publication of this book, and Barbara Orr.  
Thanks for being a consistent model of health and all things good.  
These poems were created from March 2020 to February 2021.*

**Foreword** by Gary Barwin

Ÿ

**Part One**

**Interlude**

**Part Two**

Ÿ

**Appreciation** by Andrew Brenza, Kristine Snodgrass,  
Astra Papachristodoulou and Sommer Browning



WHAT SHAPES CAN OUR LOOKING TAKE?  
 DOES TACTILITY HAVE FONTS?  
 DOES LOOKING HAVE AN ORTHOGRAPHY?  
 WHAT CAN REPRESENTATION REPRESENT?  
 WHAT IS DIEGETIC? WHAT IS DEICTIC?

# FORWARD

GARY BARWIN

THE TYPOGRAPHY  
 OF A  
 STEAMPUNK  
 INFOGRAPHIC

EMOTIONAL LYRIC  
 OF THE NOWLYX  
 STRANGE ATTRACTOR

\*comp1 003 85 24-74



WHAT IS LANGUAGE WHEN IT

LOREM IPSUM  
 LOREM IPSUM

SPIROGRAPH THE  
 MEANINGS STREETS  
 MAPS TO THE GRAMMAR OF  
 A SPEECHTIME  
 CONTINUUM



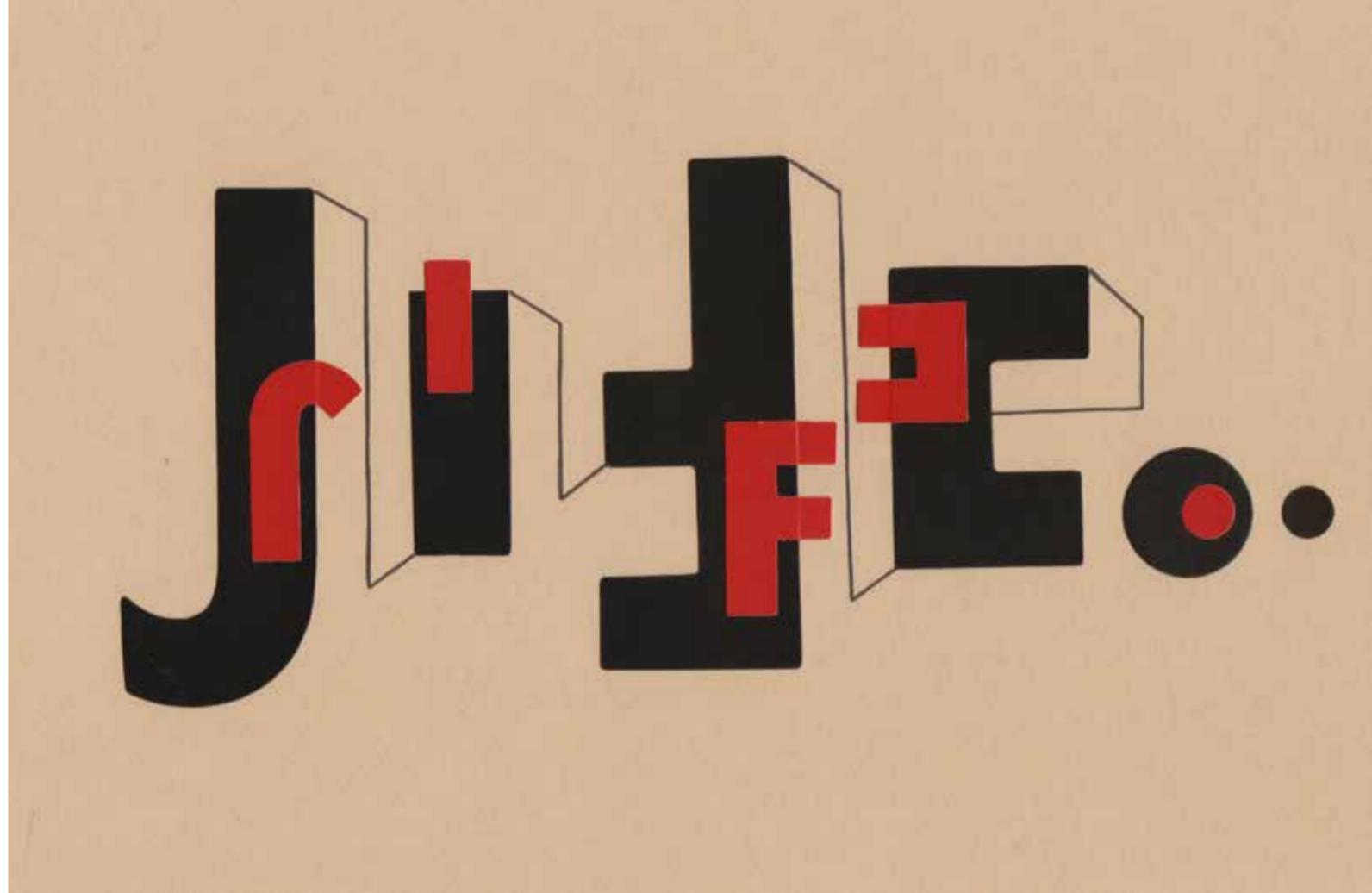
WHAT IS THE ENGINE  
 OF SAID  
 THE TEXT MANAGING  
 THE CONCEPT OF MIND

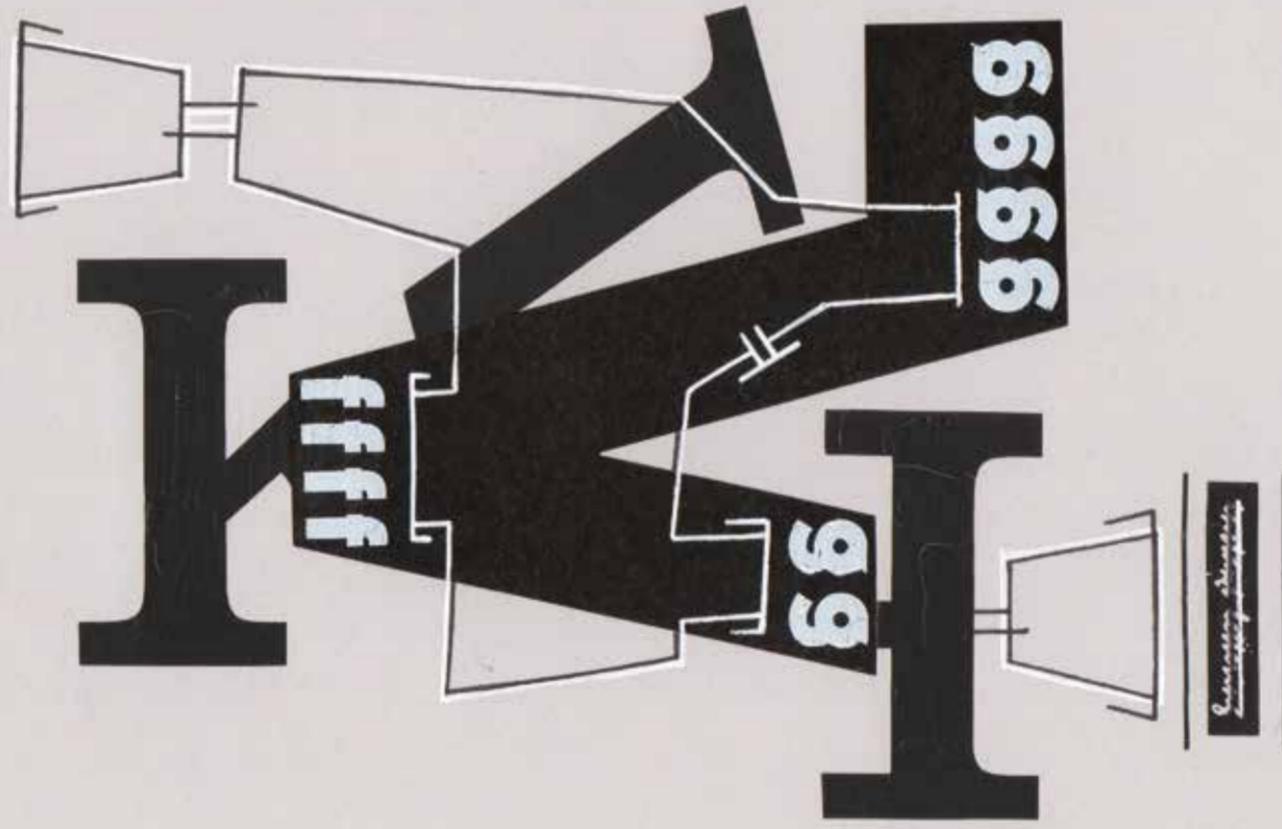
A CLEAR PICTURE OF SOMETHING OBSCURE  
 AN OBSCURE PICTURE OF SOMETHING CLEAR  
 PICTURE SOMETHING OF AN OBSCURE CLEAR PICTURE  
 POETRY DEFINED AS THE  
 MIXED AUDEN OF MIGHT FEELINGS  
 CLEAR BE EXPRESSION

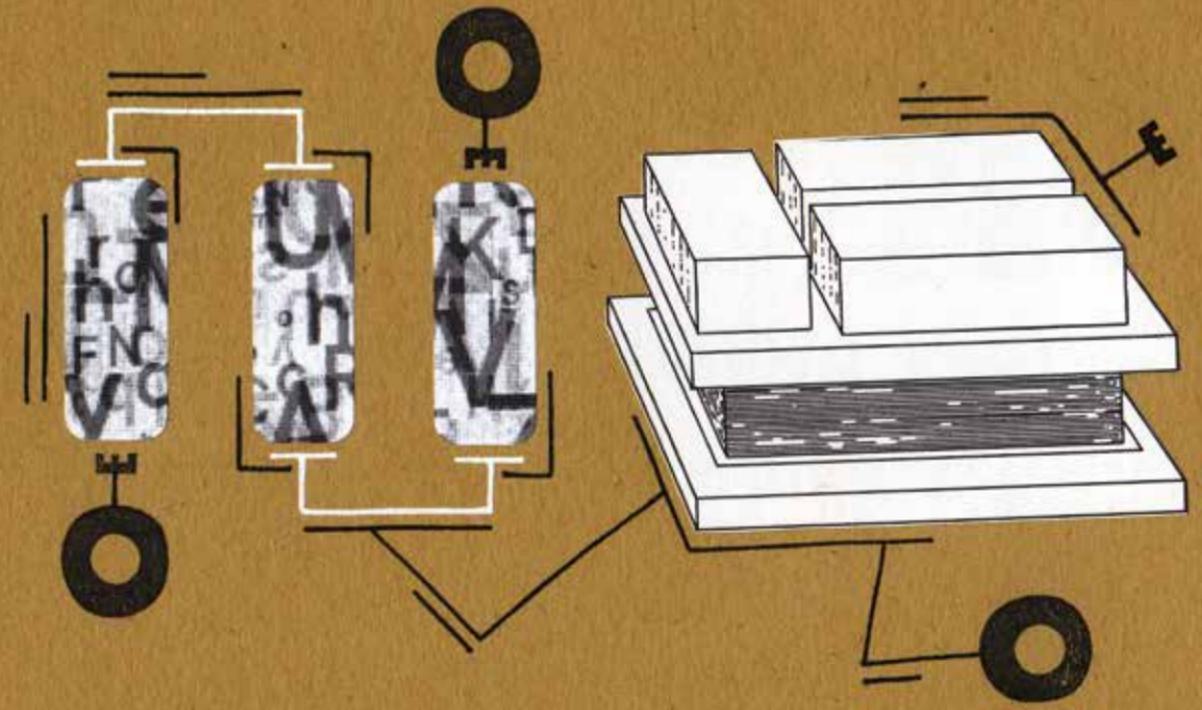
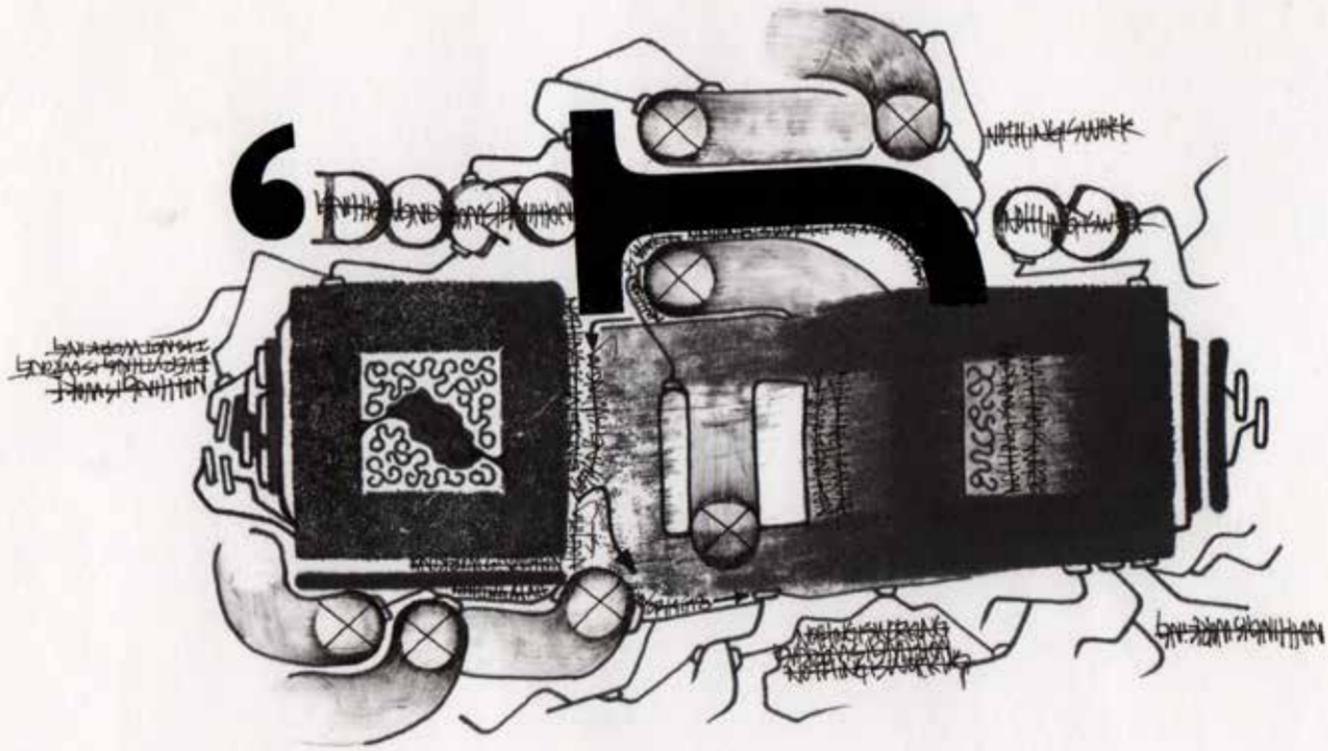
...

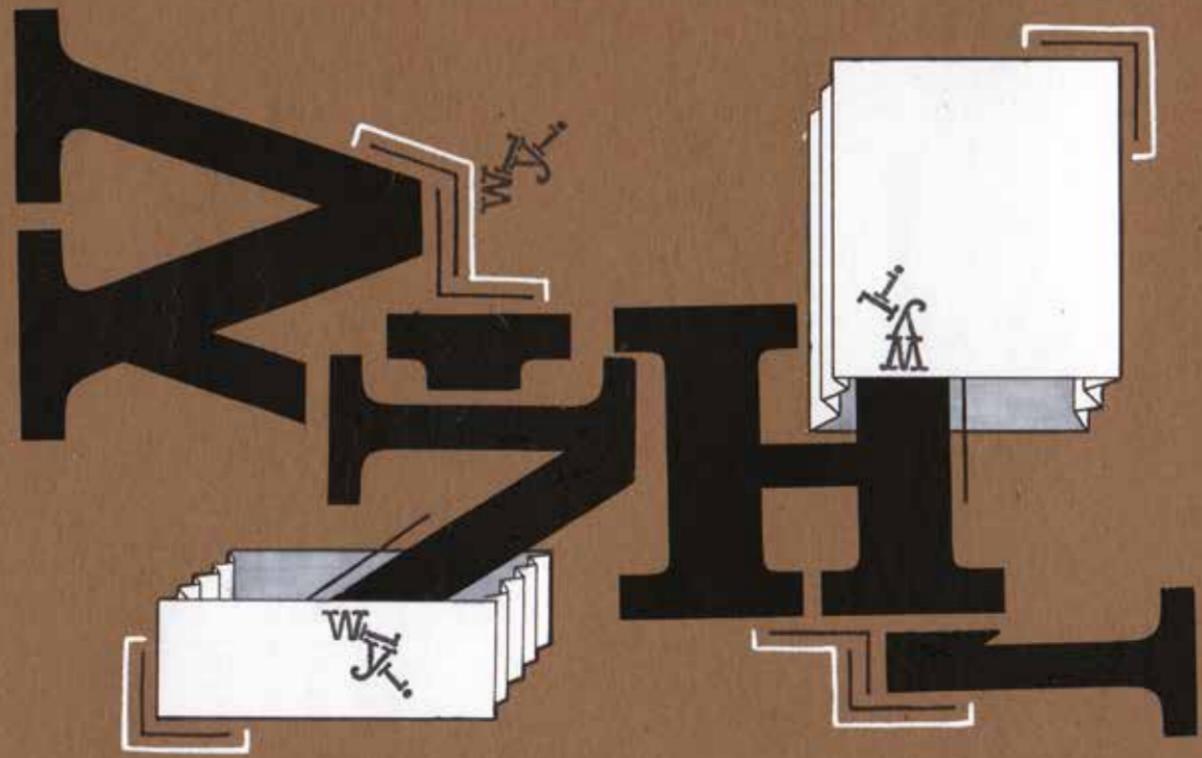
THE BONES AND LOGOS

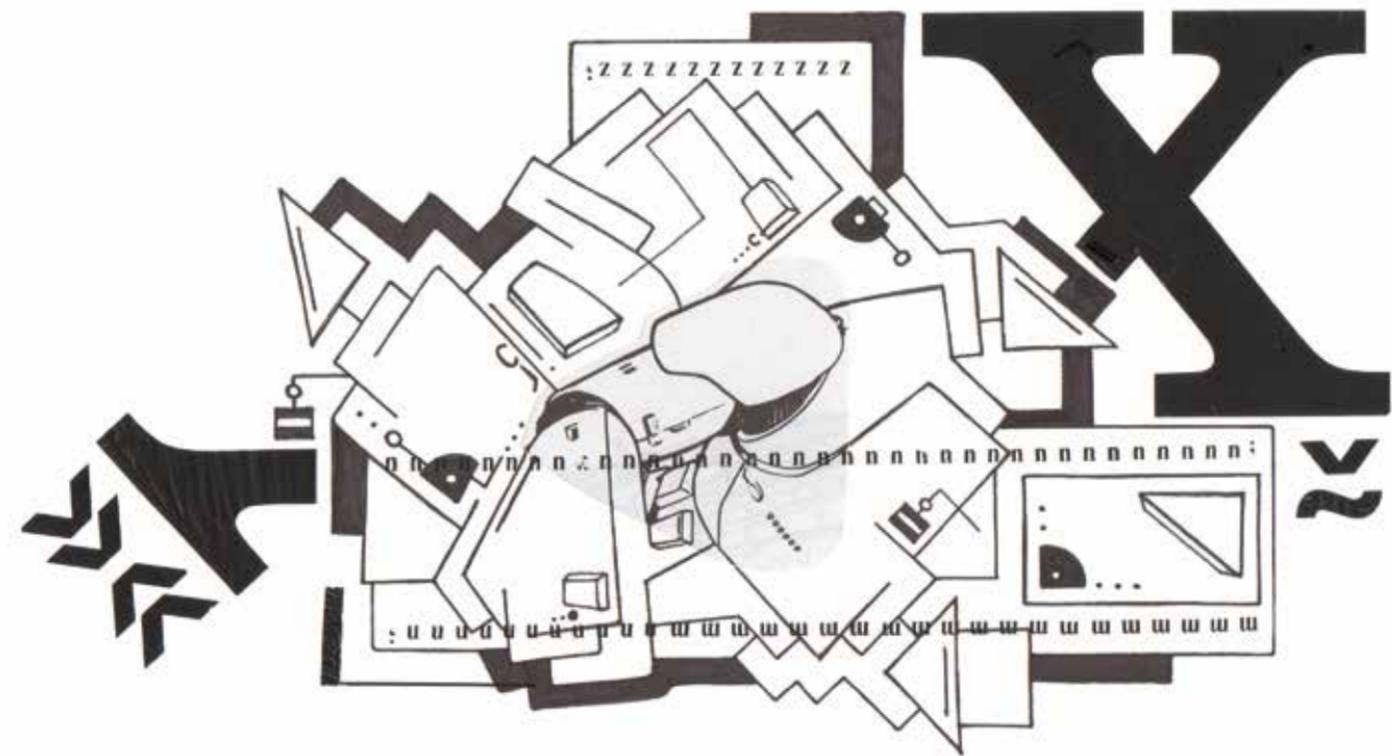
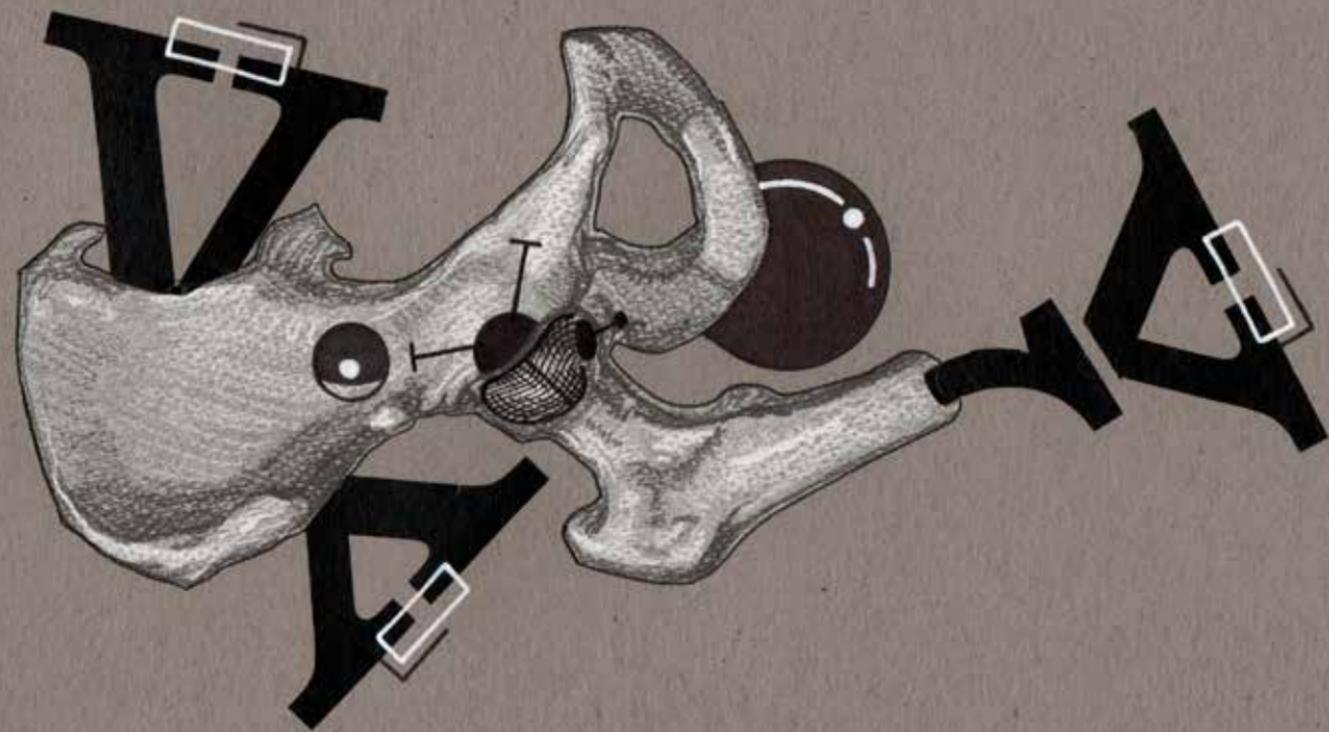
POSTERS FROM THE OPTIC REPUBLIC  
 THE CIRCUIT BOARD BEHIND CODEX SERAPHIMIANUS  
 WHAT CAN BE GRAPHED, DIAGRAMMED,  
 THE PATAPHYSICAL WORLD OF CHARTS, BLUEPRINTS,  
 ILLUSTRATIONS,  
 TATTOOS FOR THE POLYGLOTTAL SKIN OF THE PAGE  
 PLANS FOR AN ITINERANT MUSIC  
 OF THE SENTIENT SIGNIFIER  
 THE NEW GOVERNMENT OF THE ALPHABET

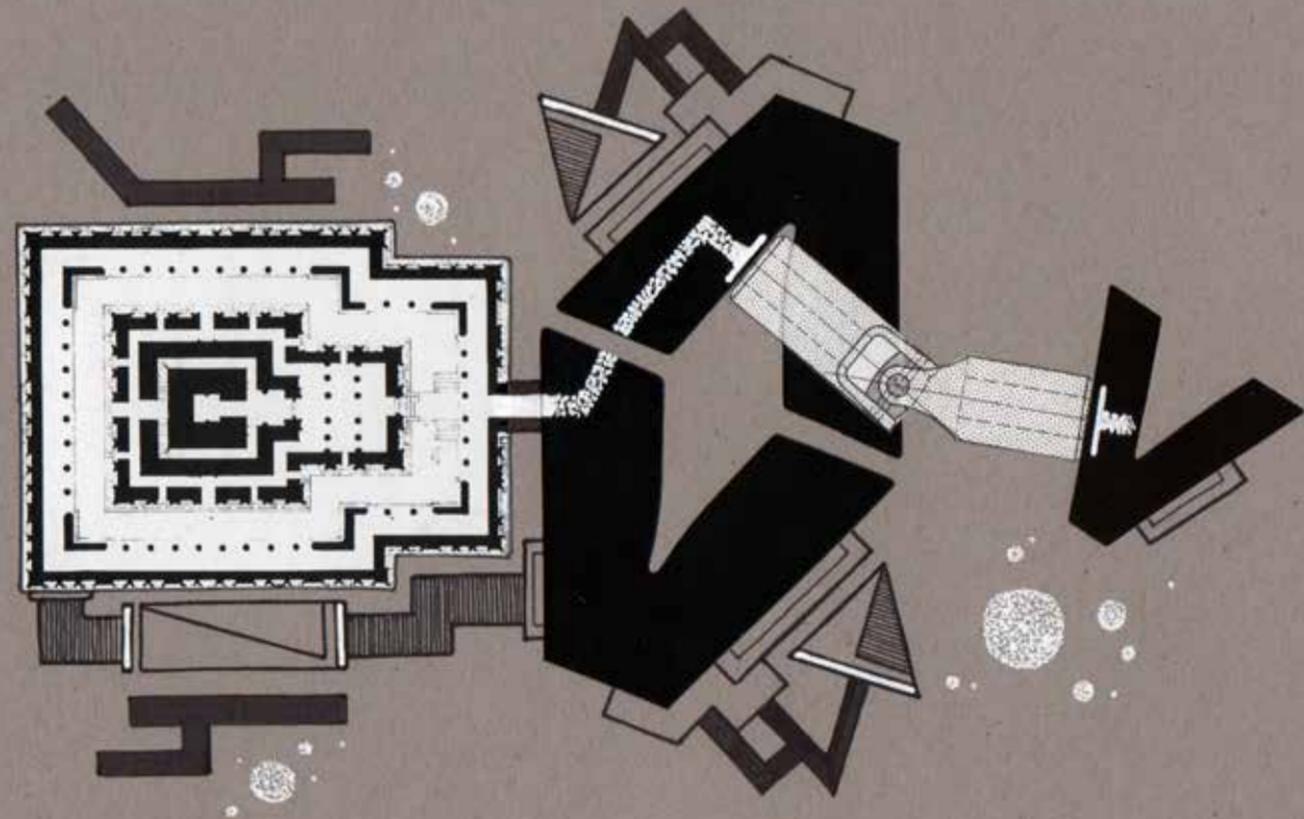


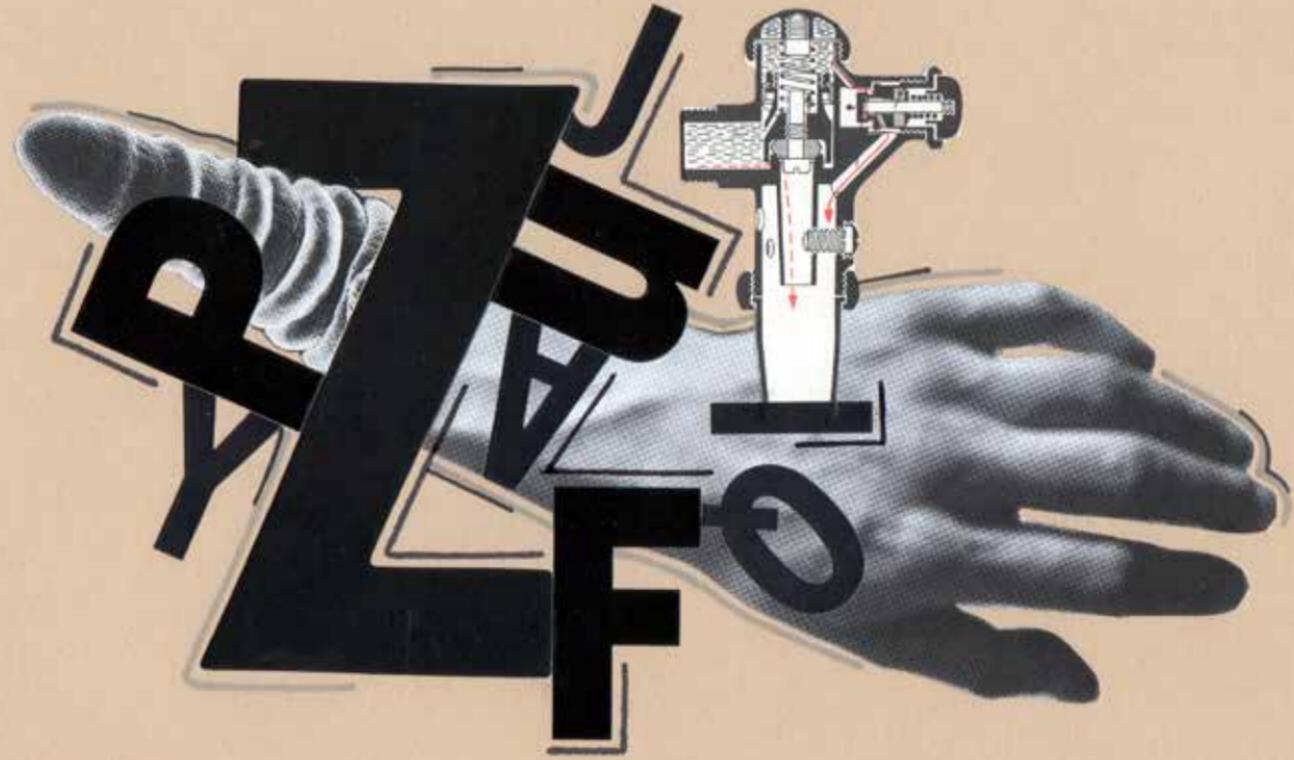
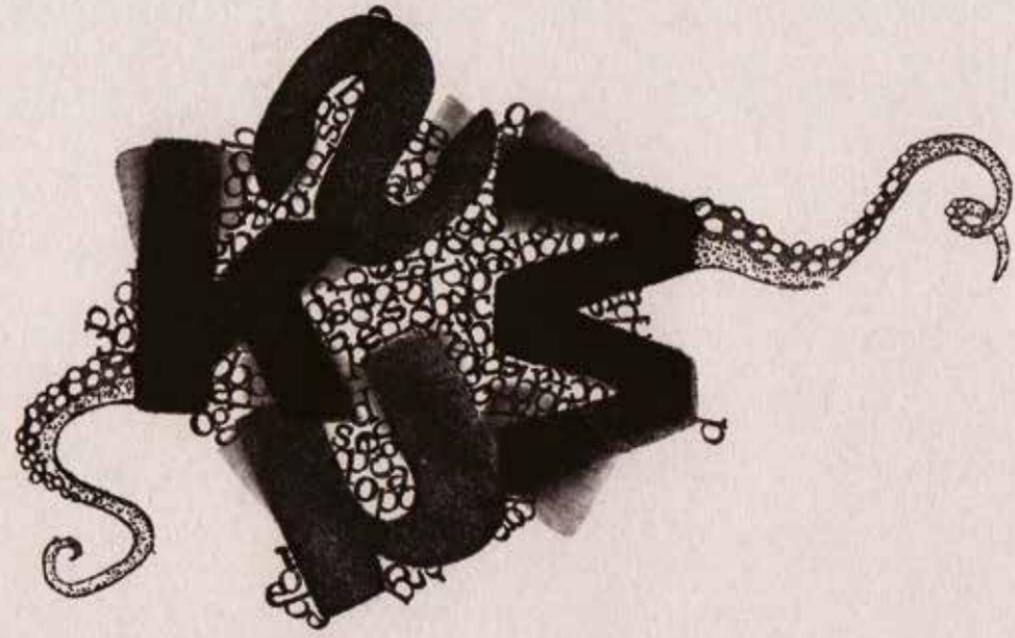


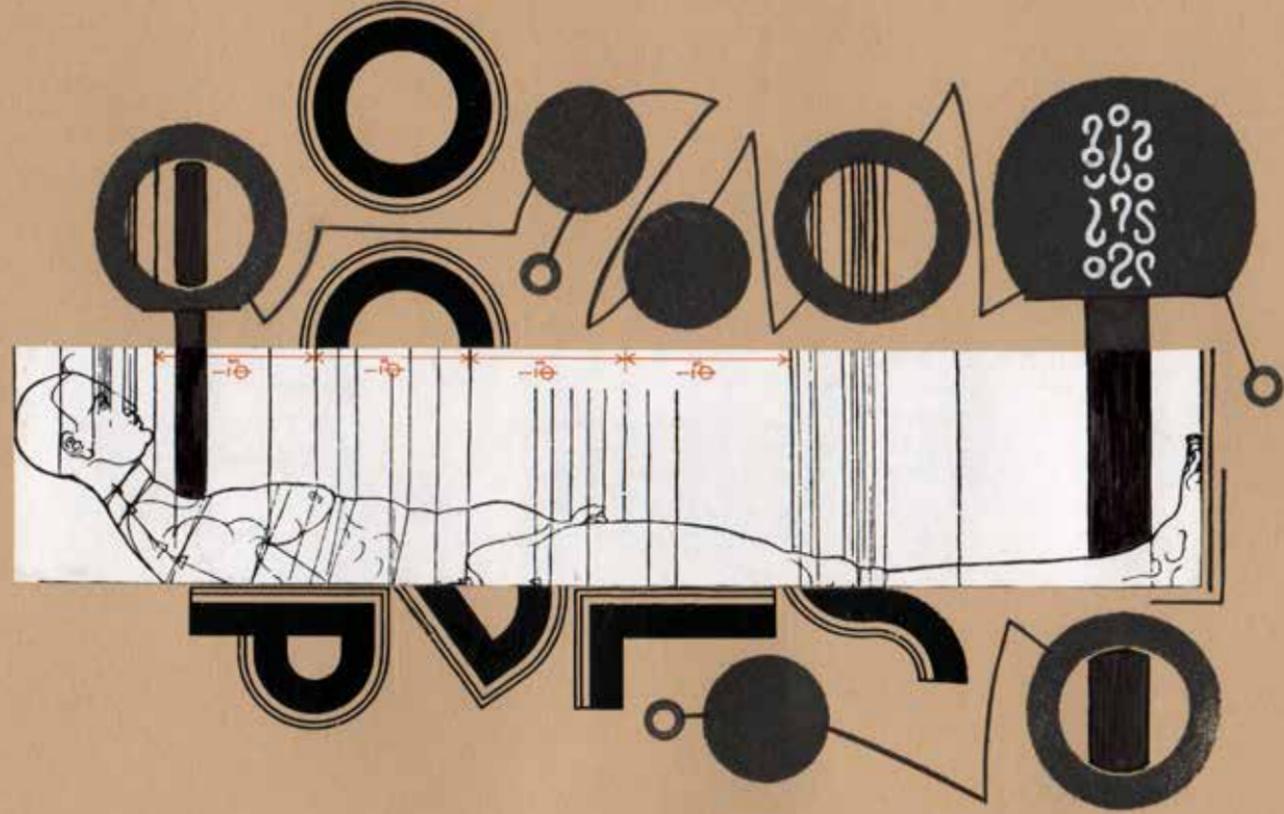
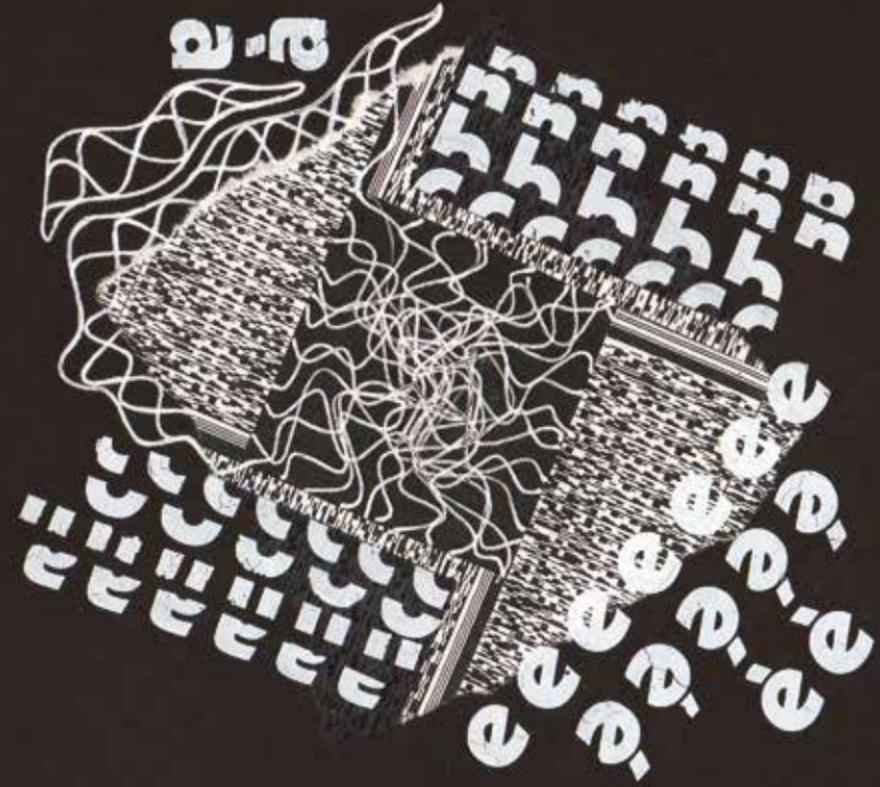


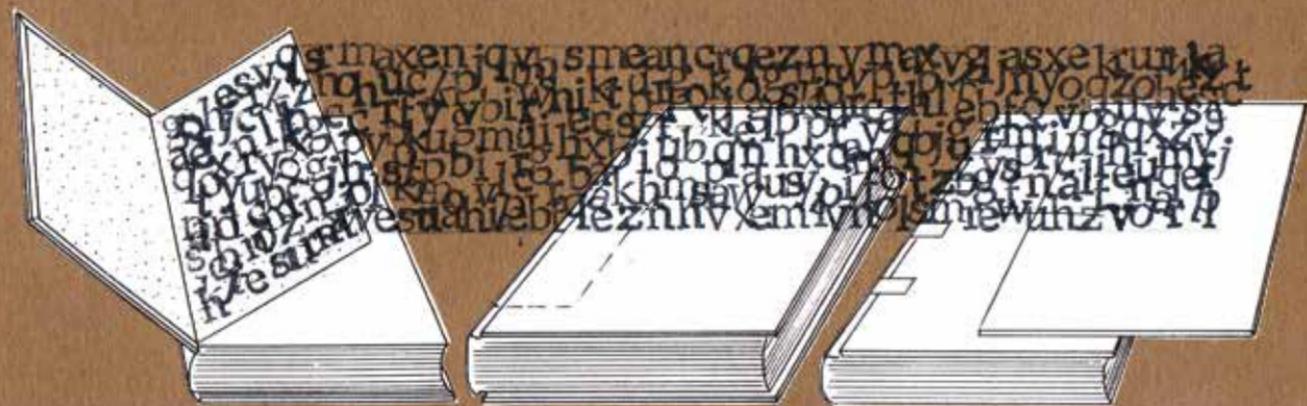






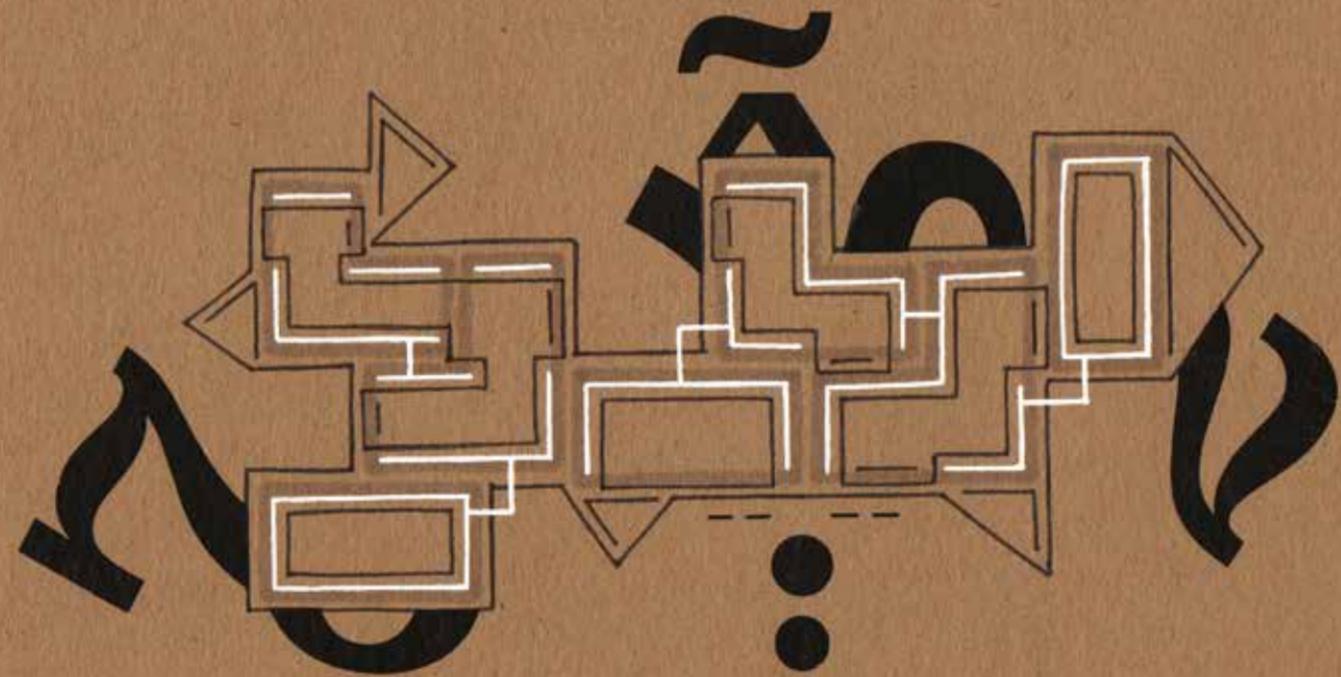
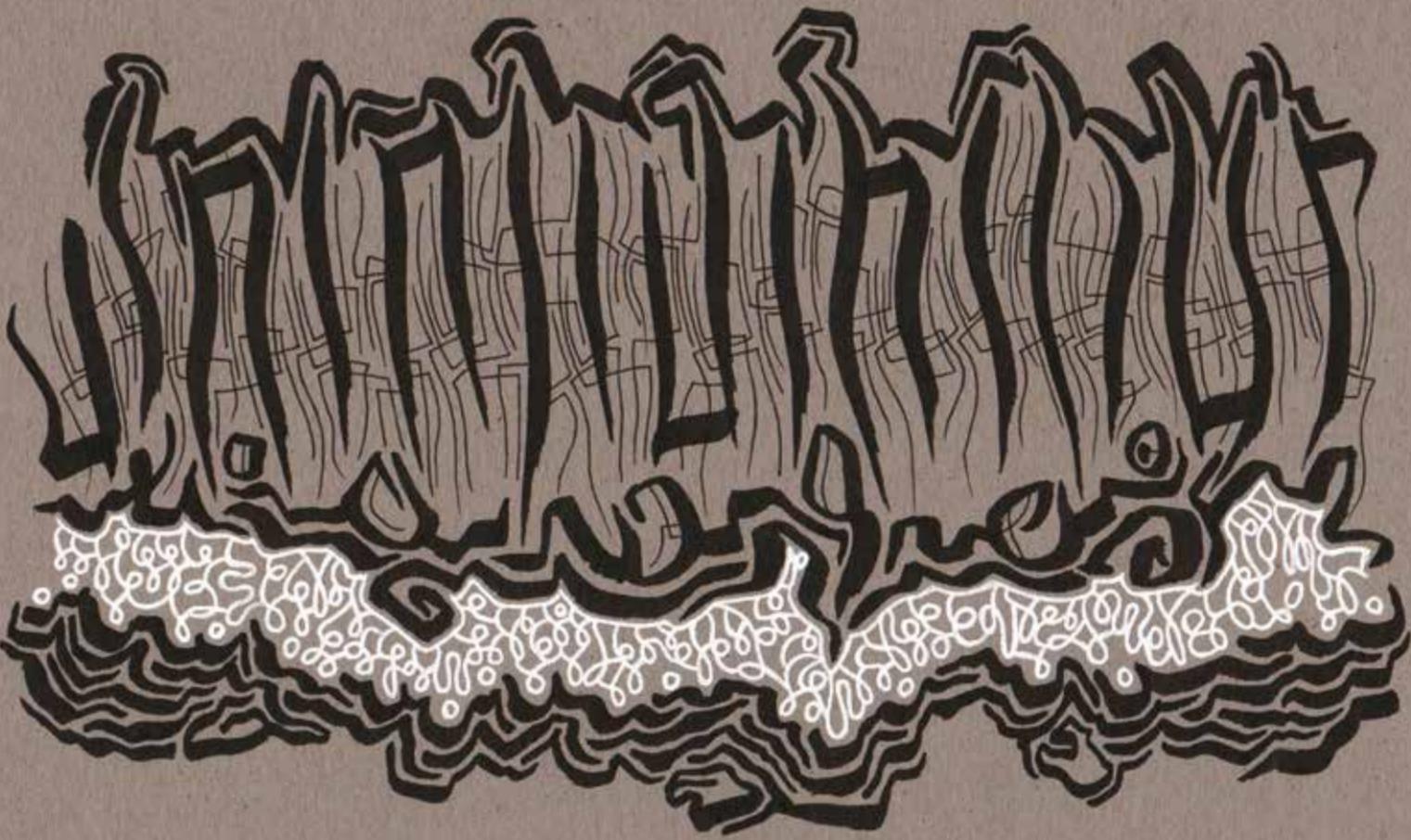


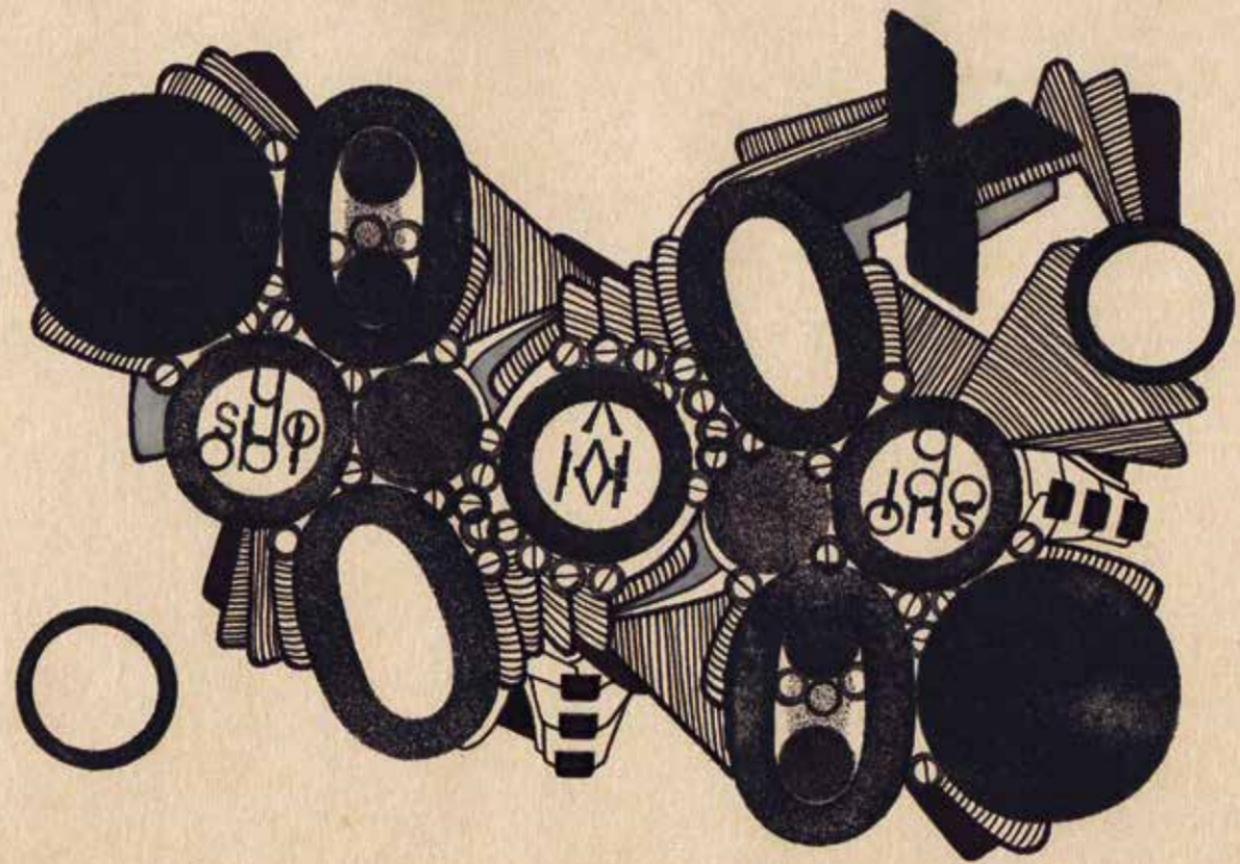
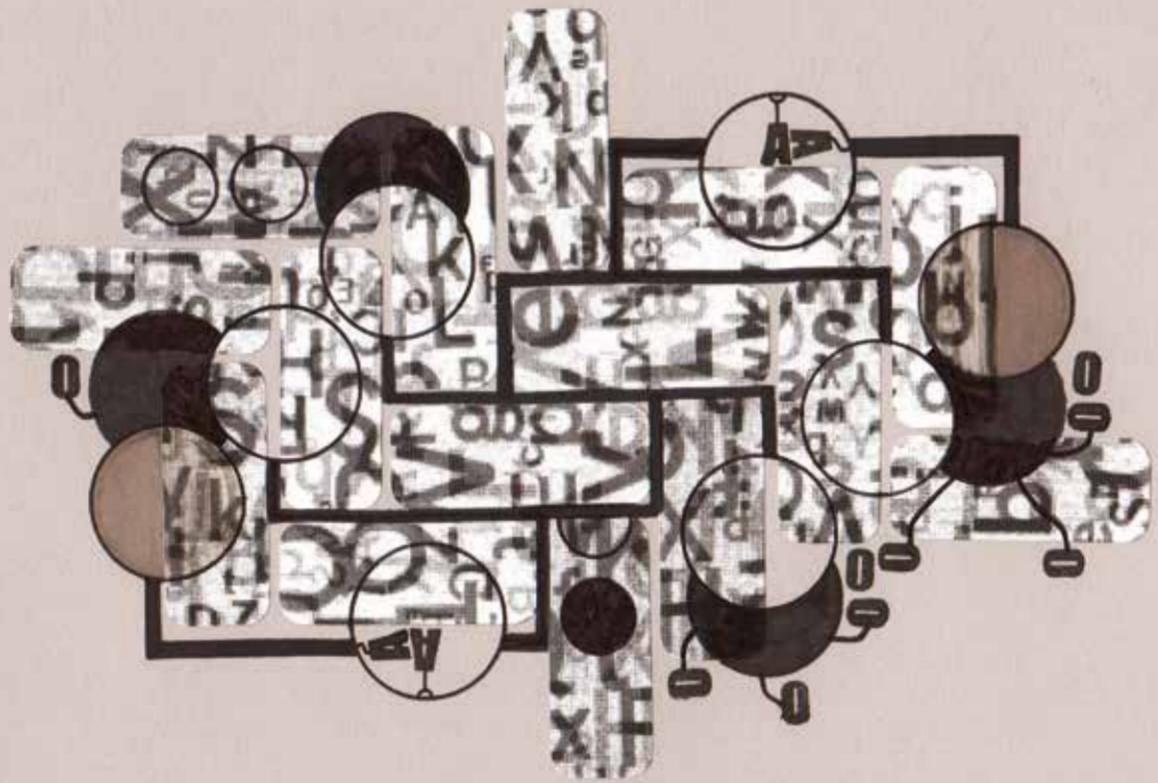




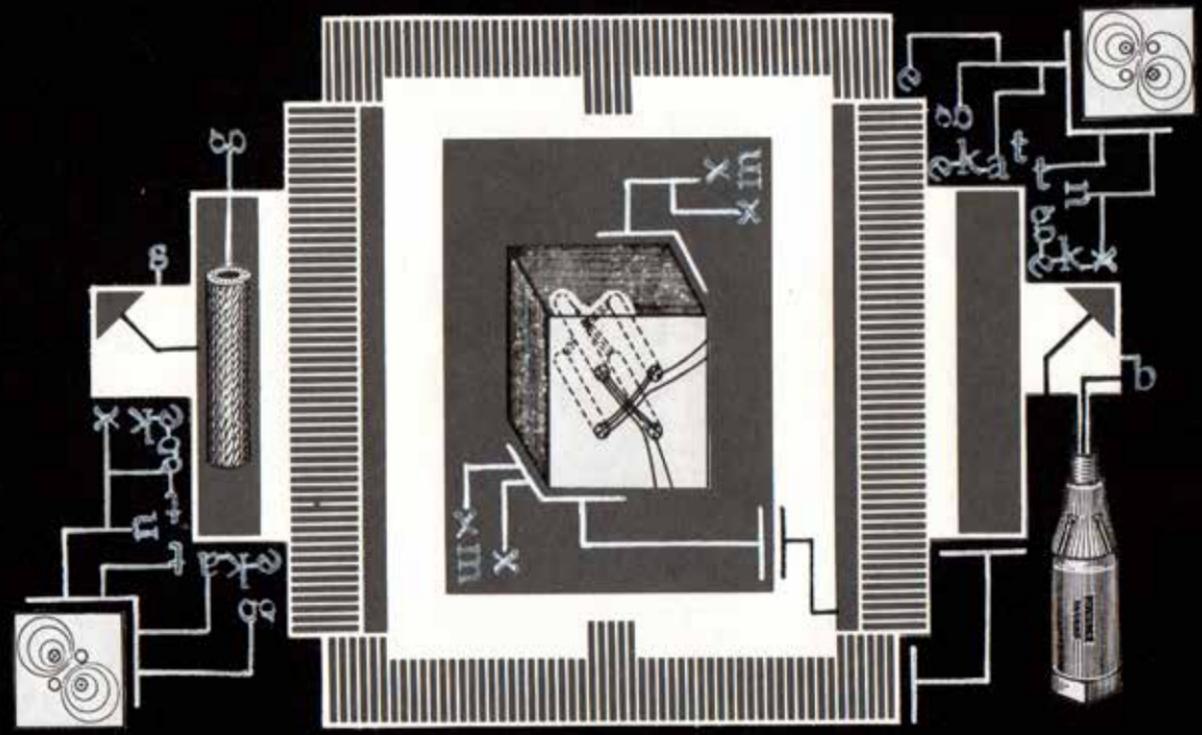
tbu@riwcsnrahtrefuaibodvzysm & lecfuvoritwlebzty

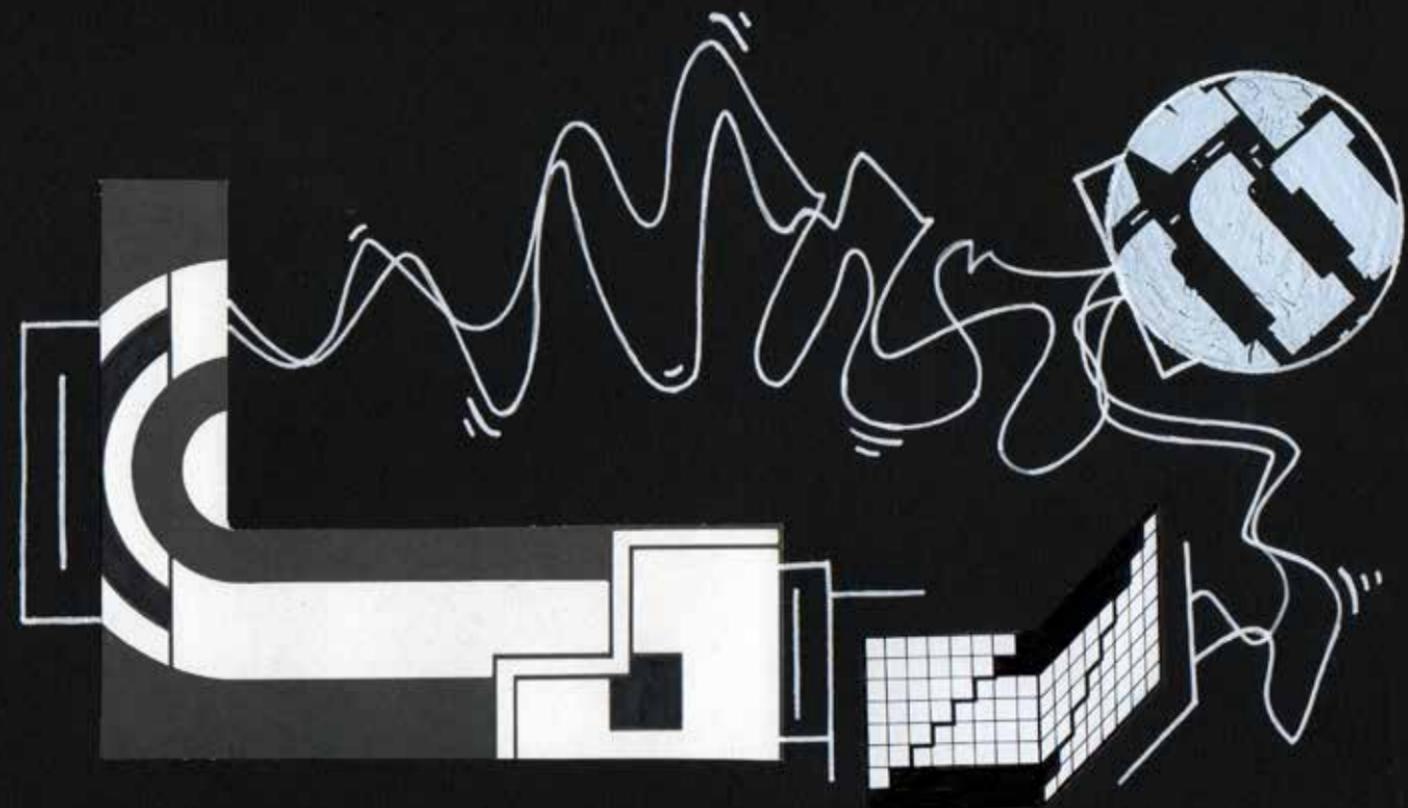
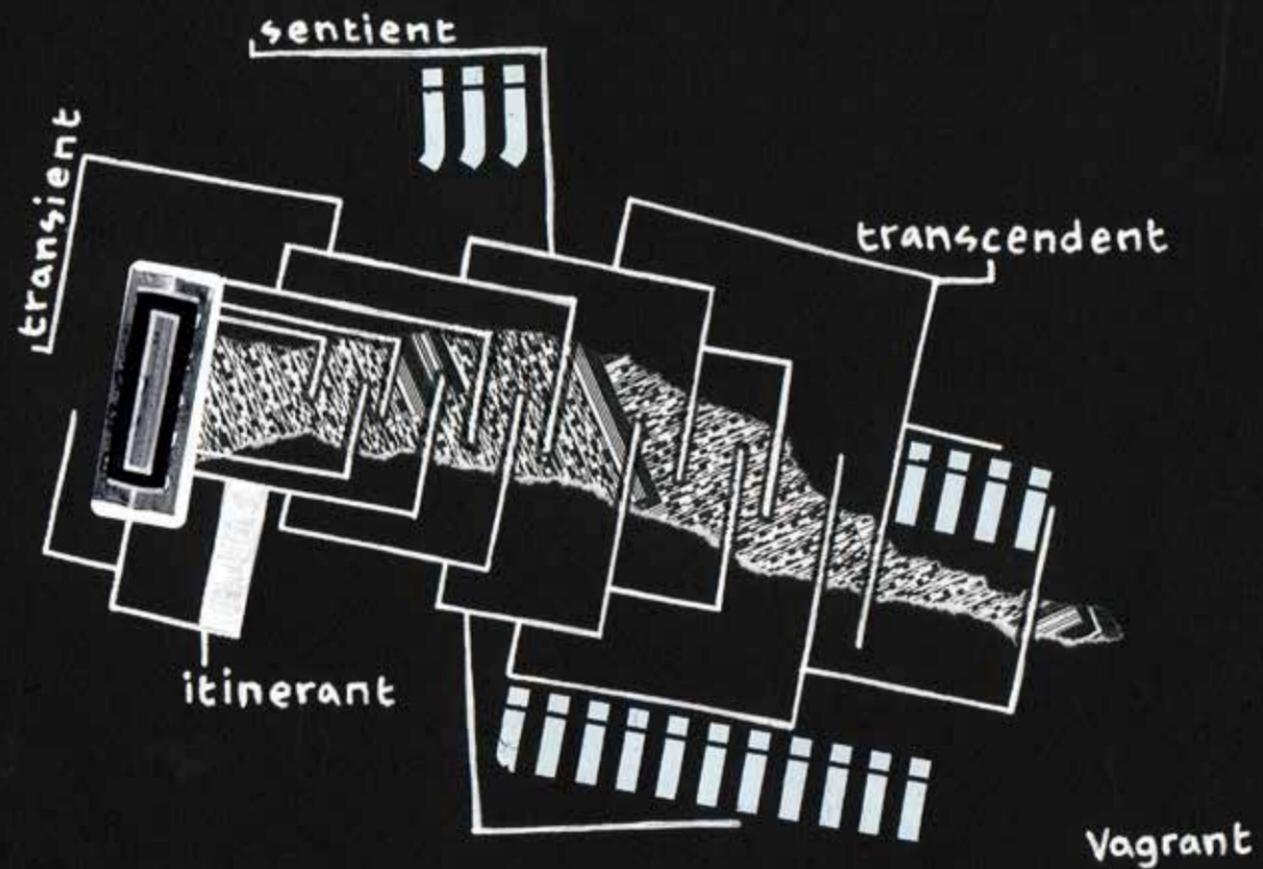






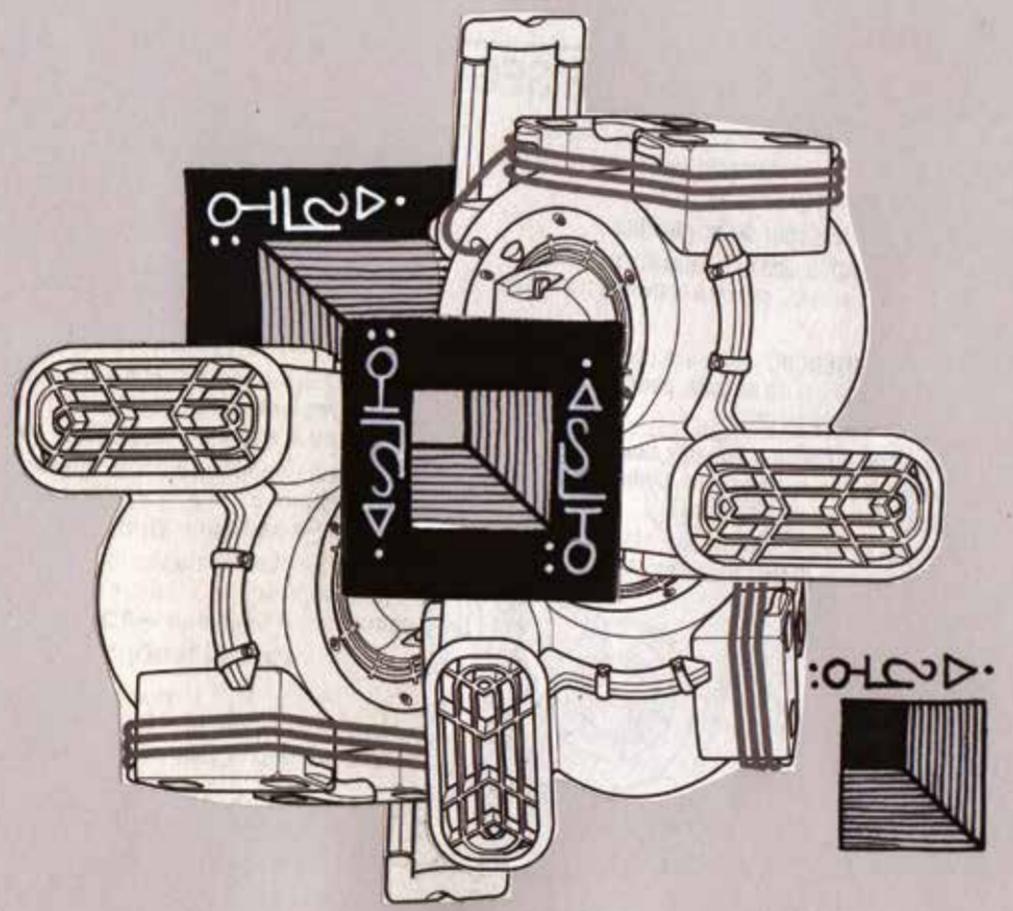
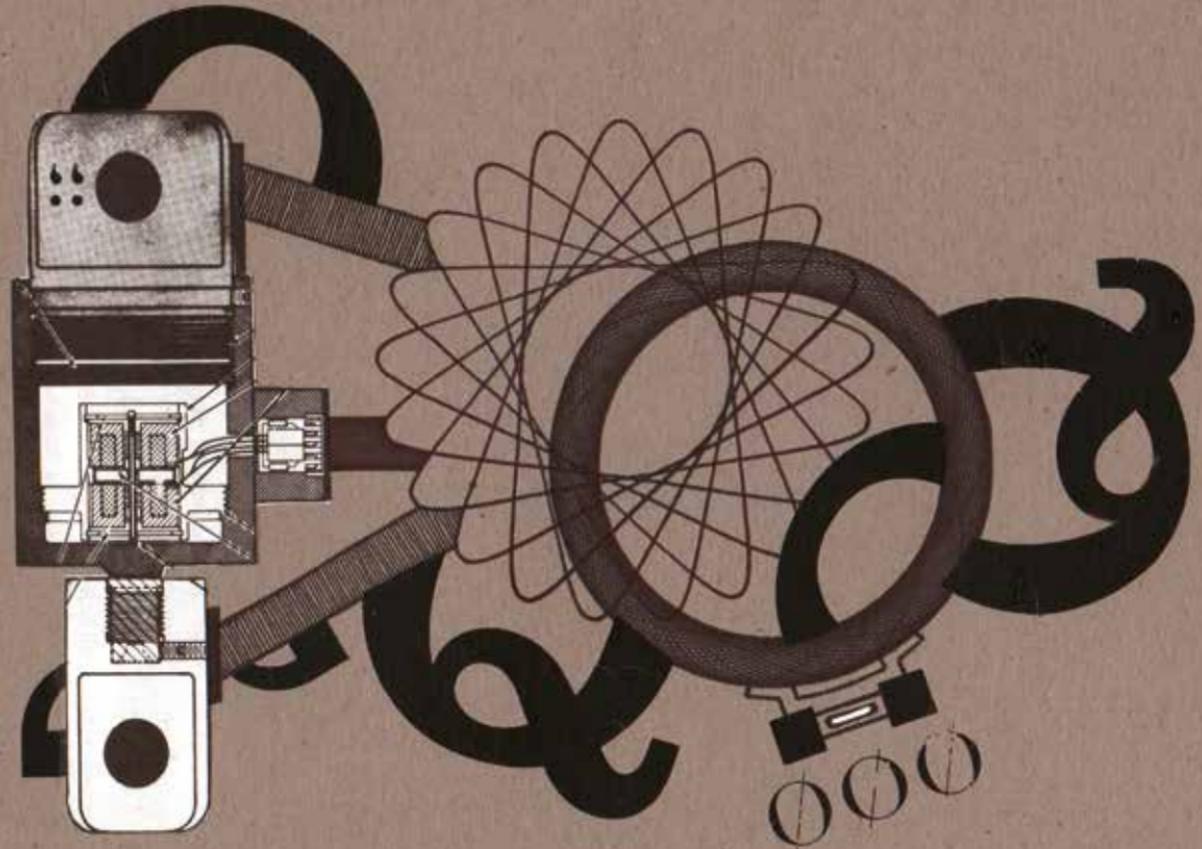


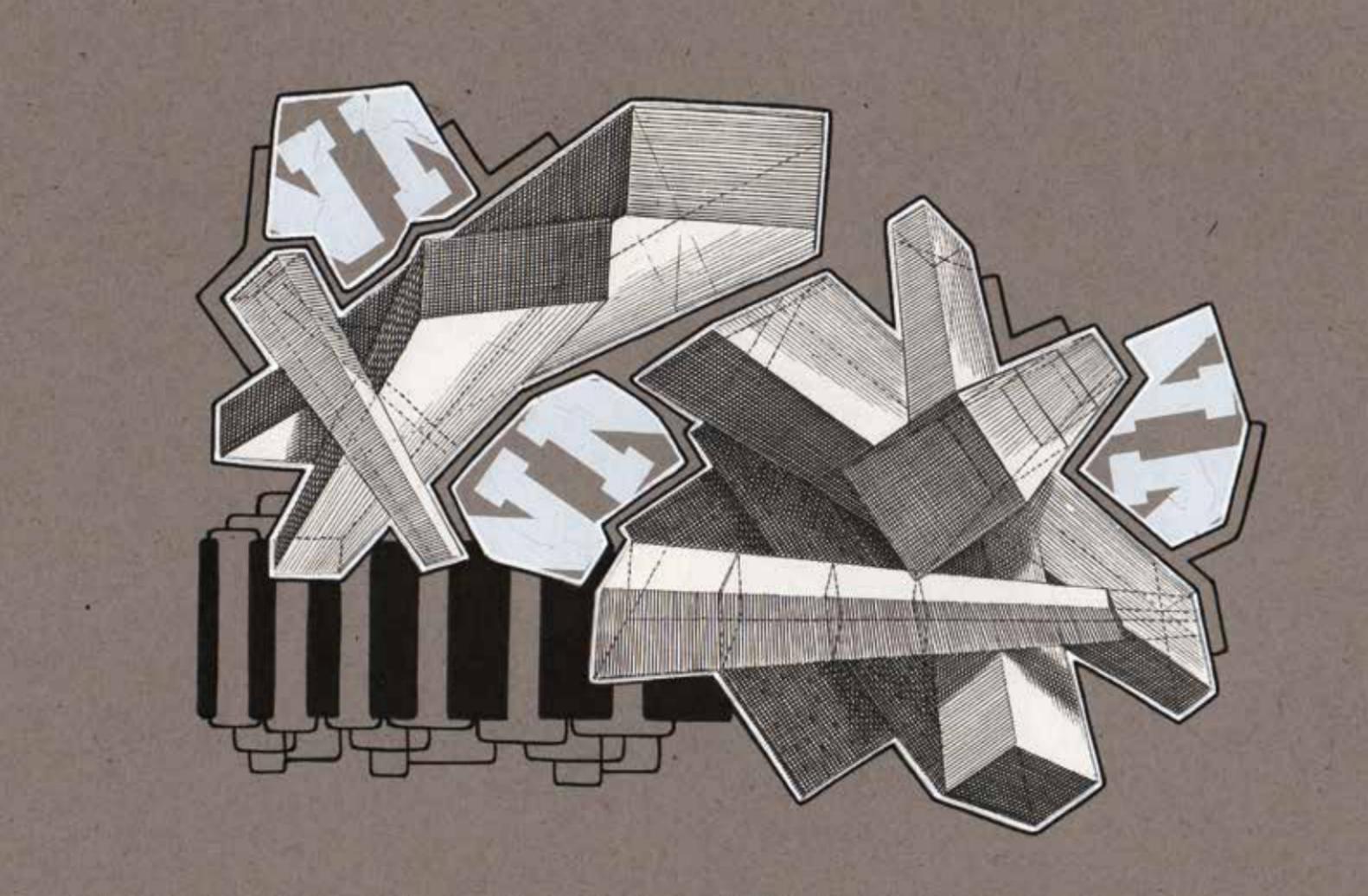
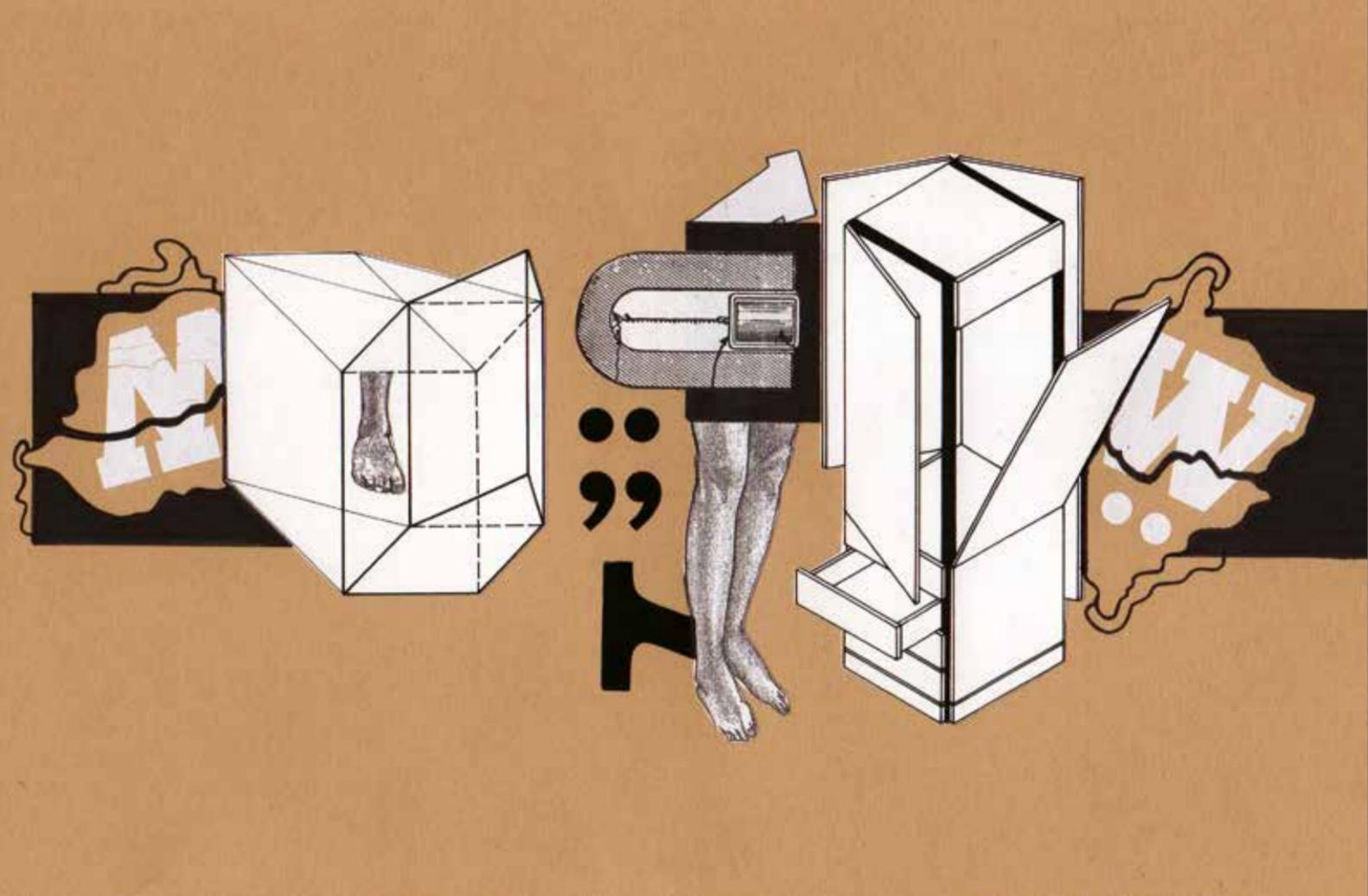


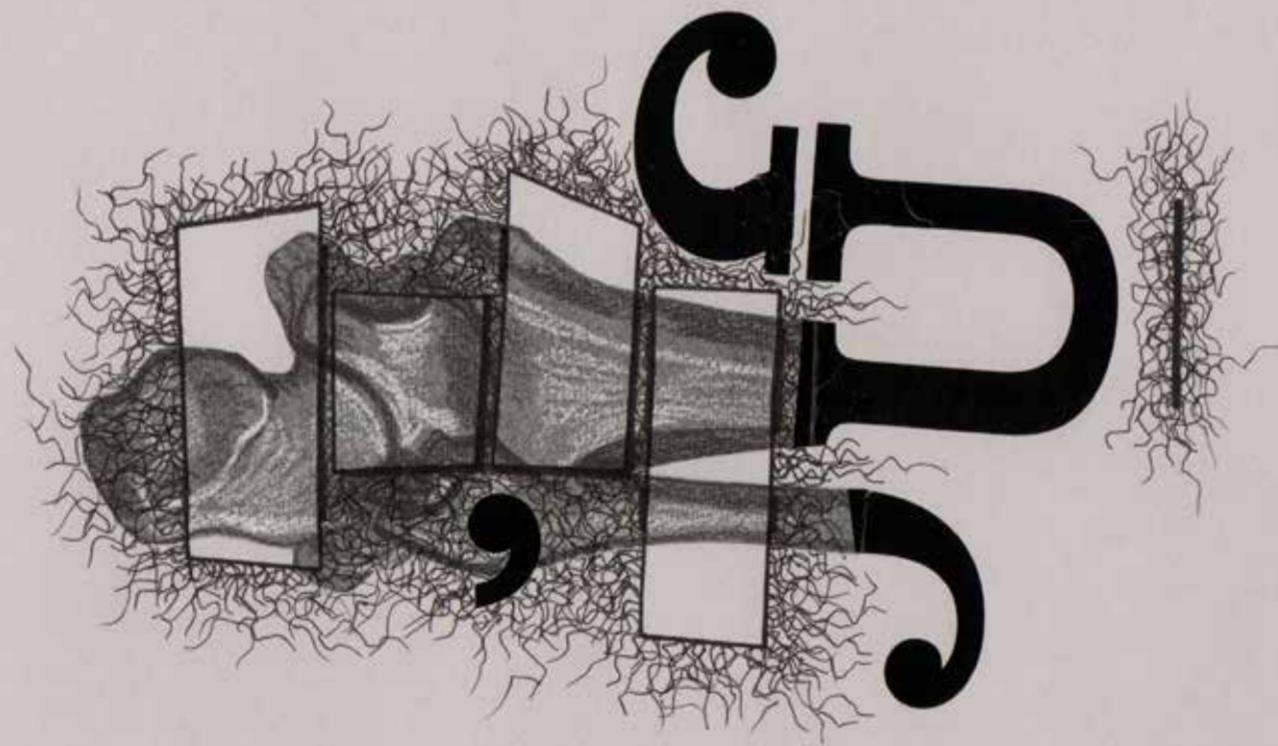


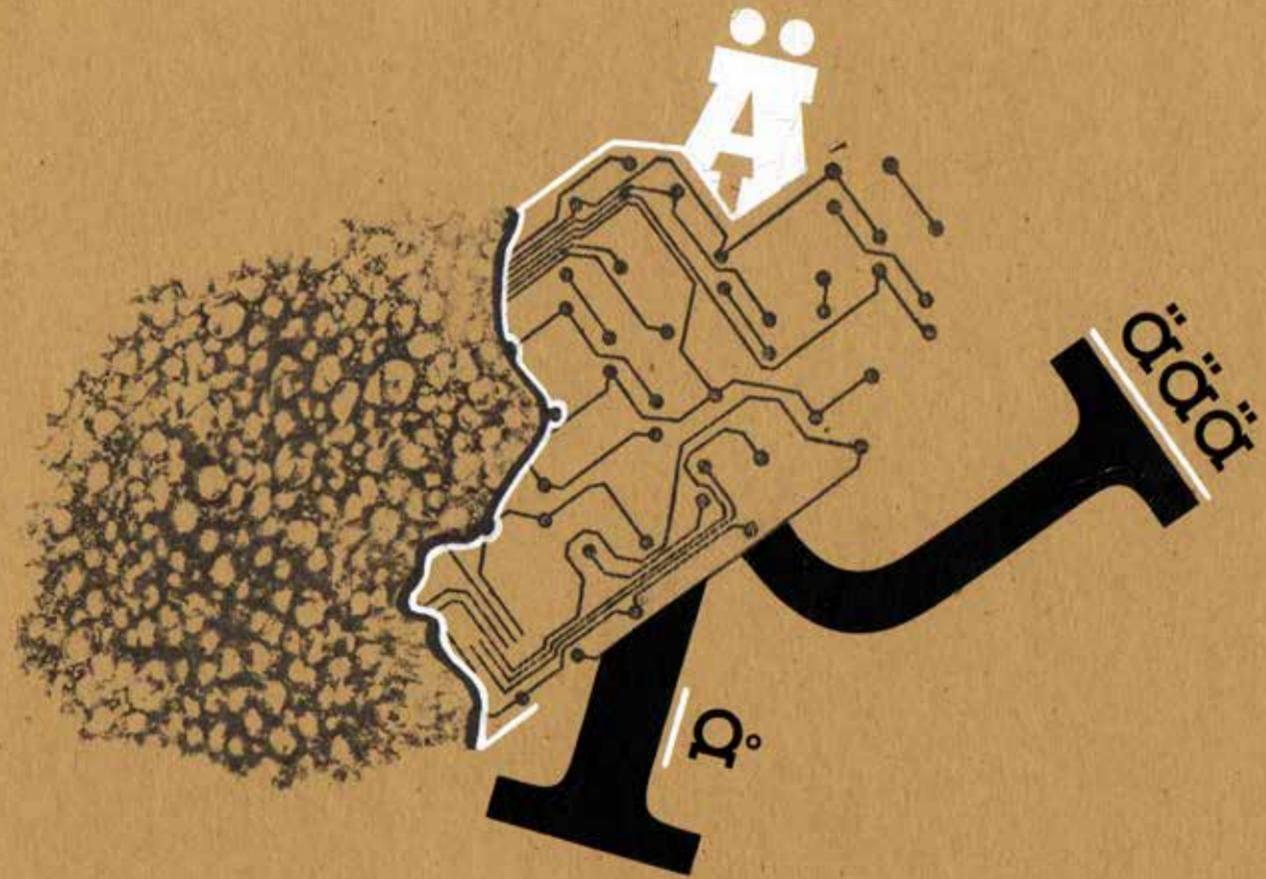


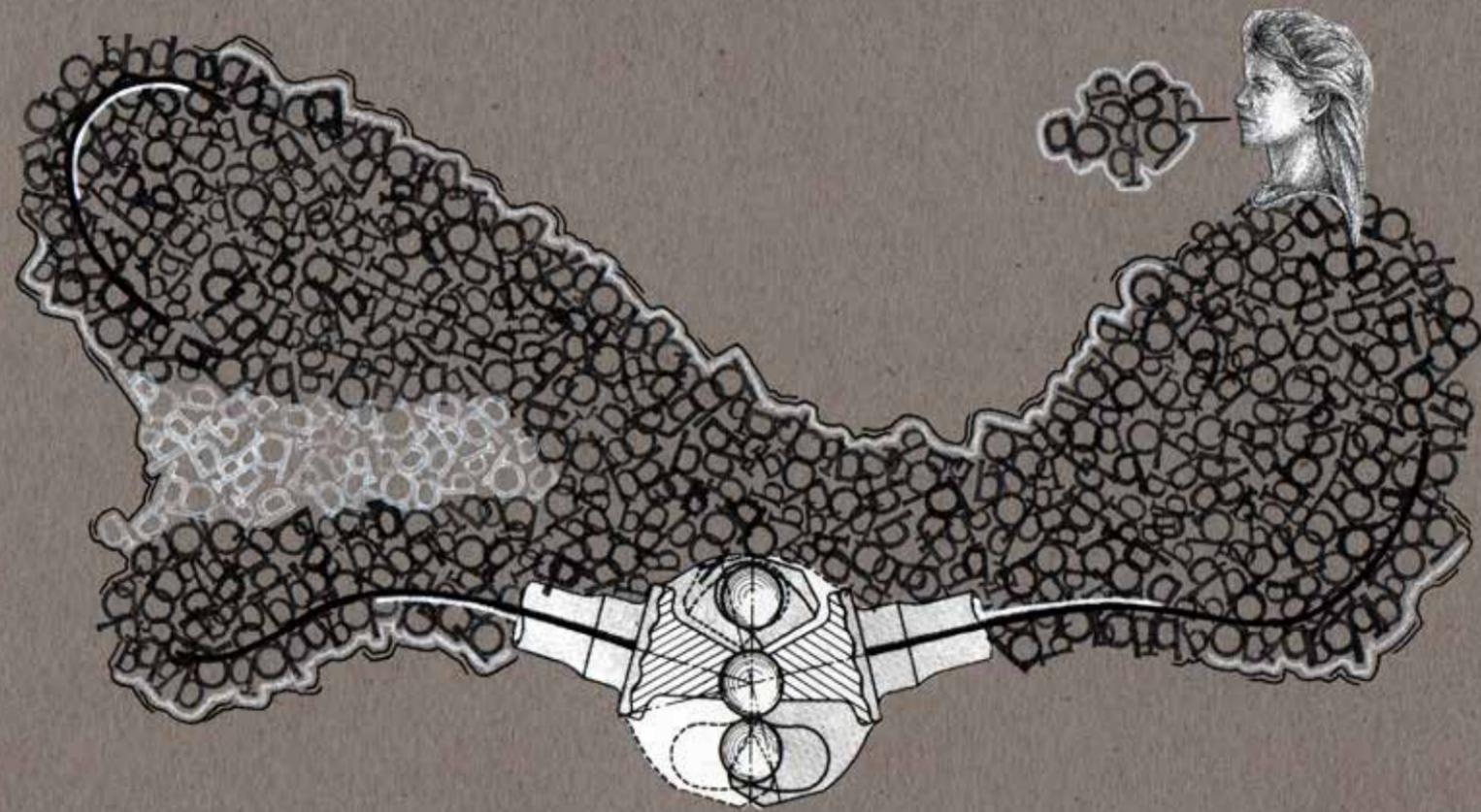
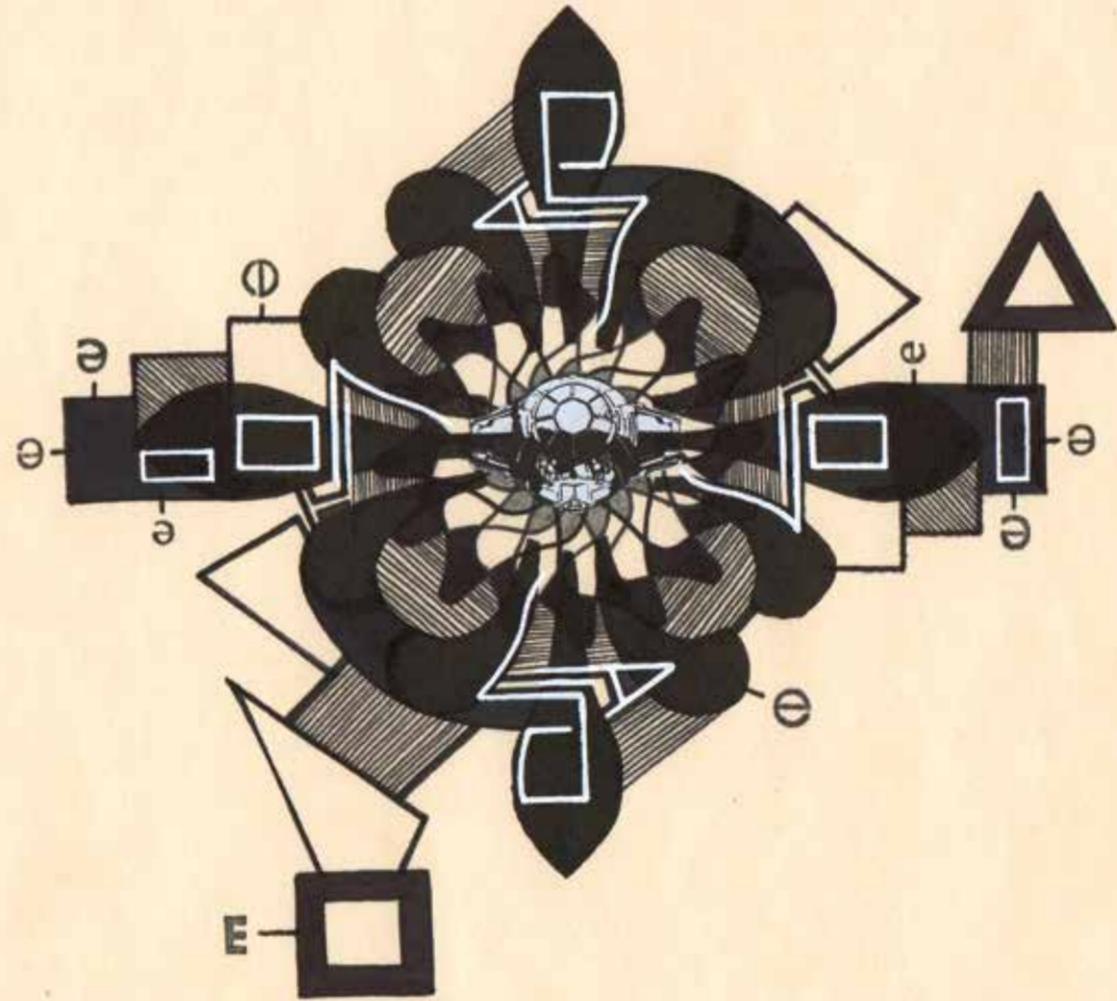


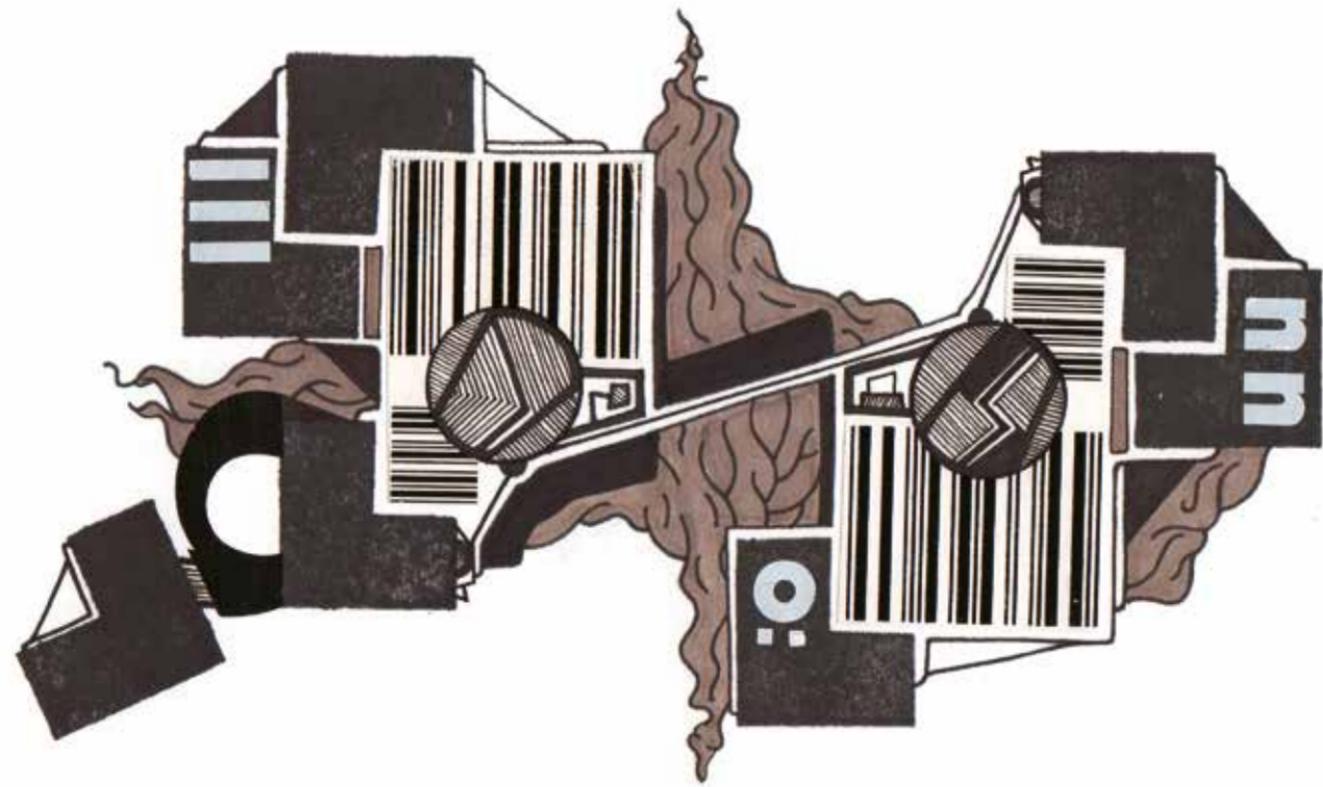
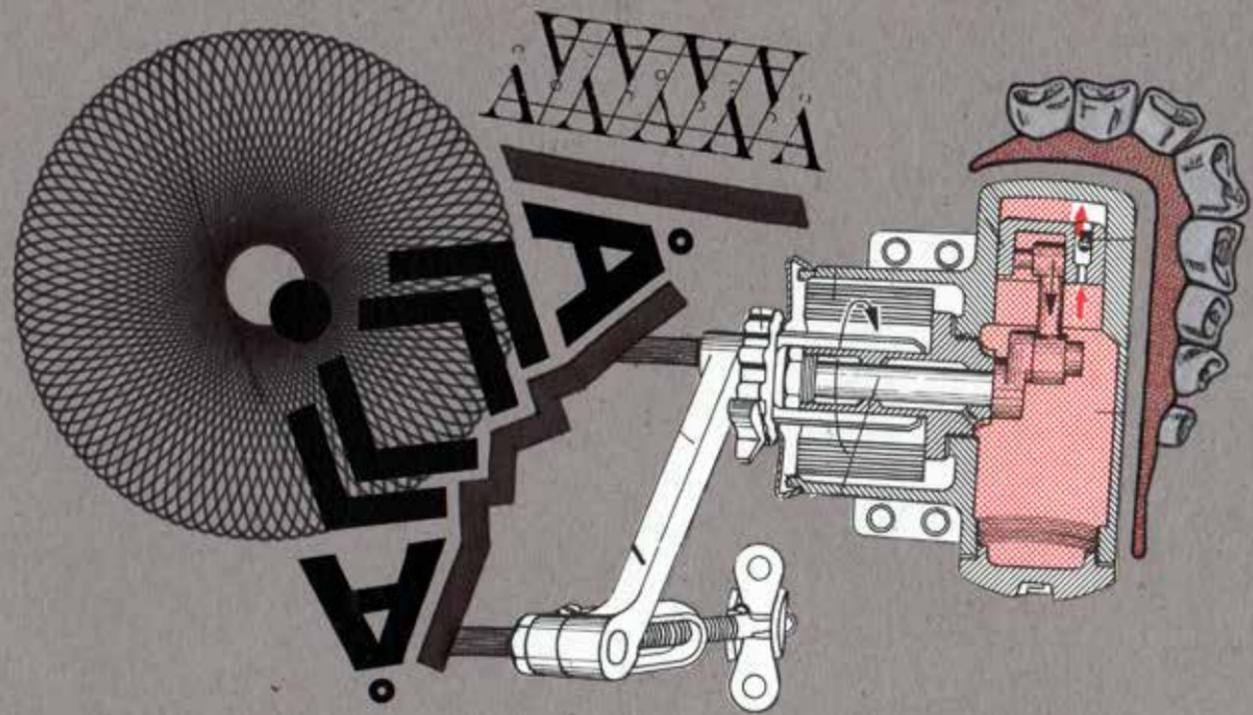


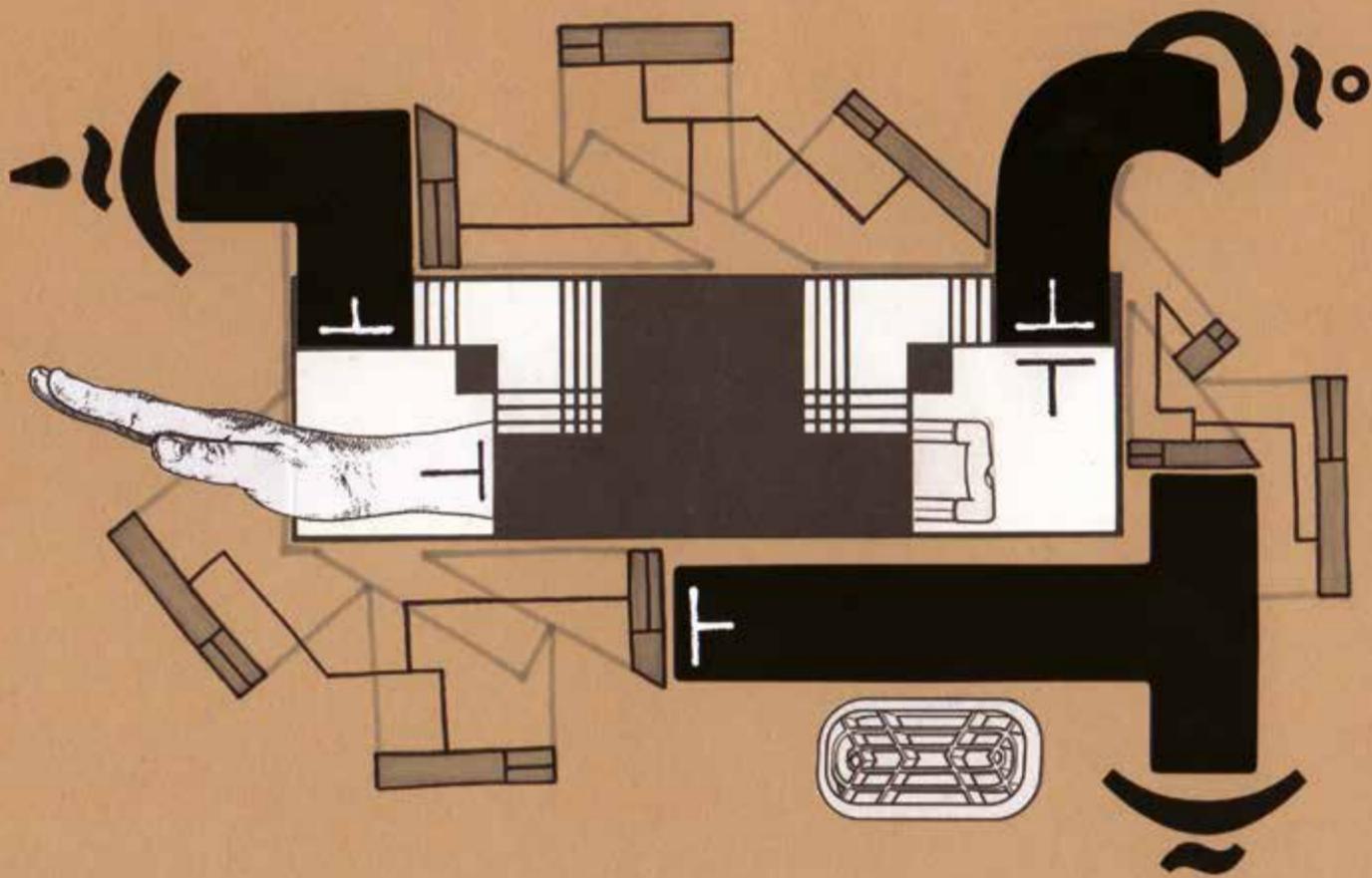


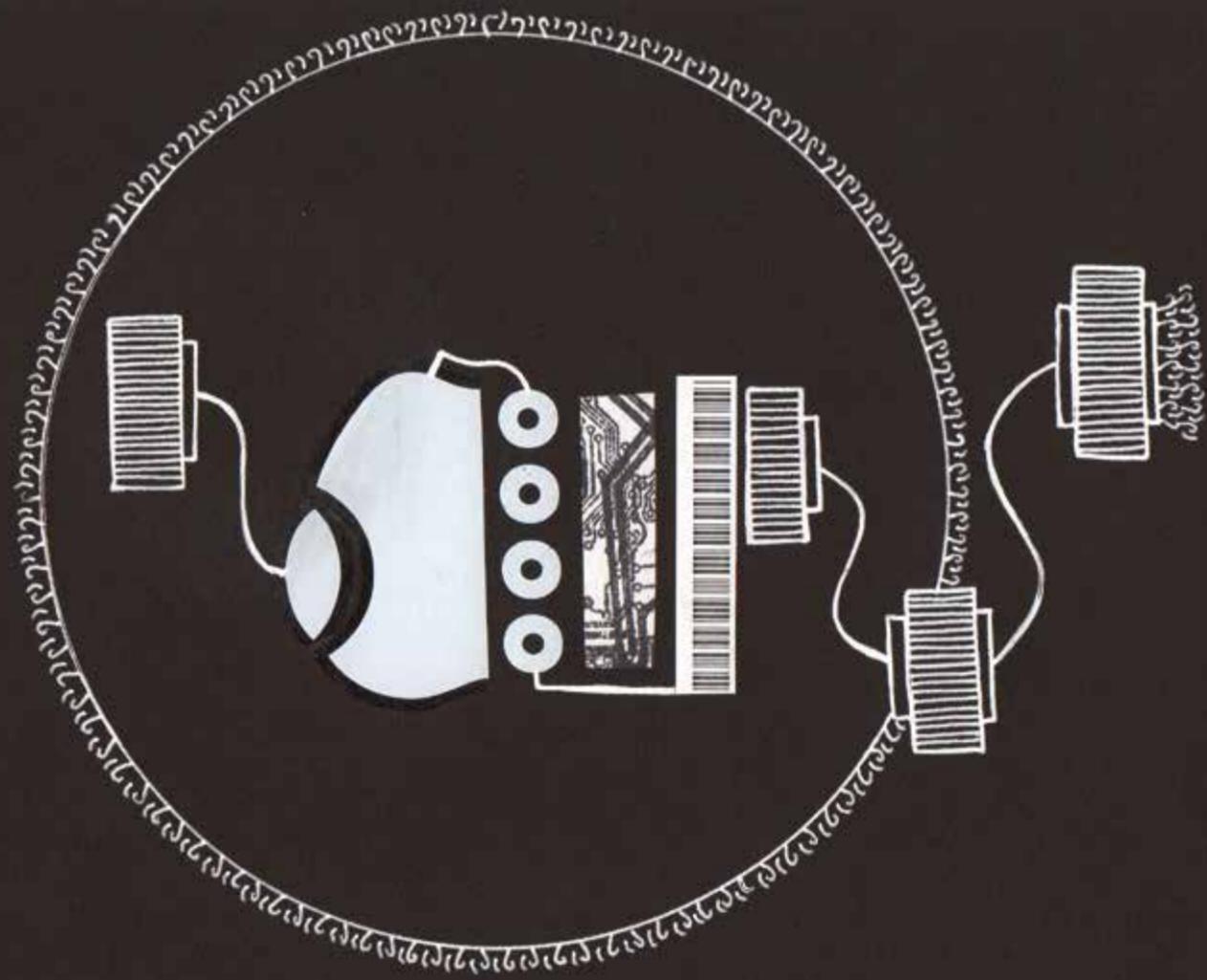
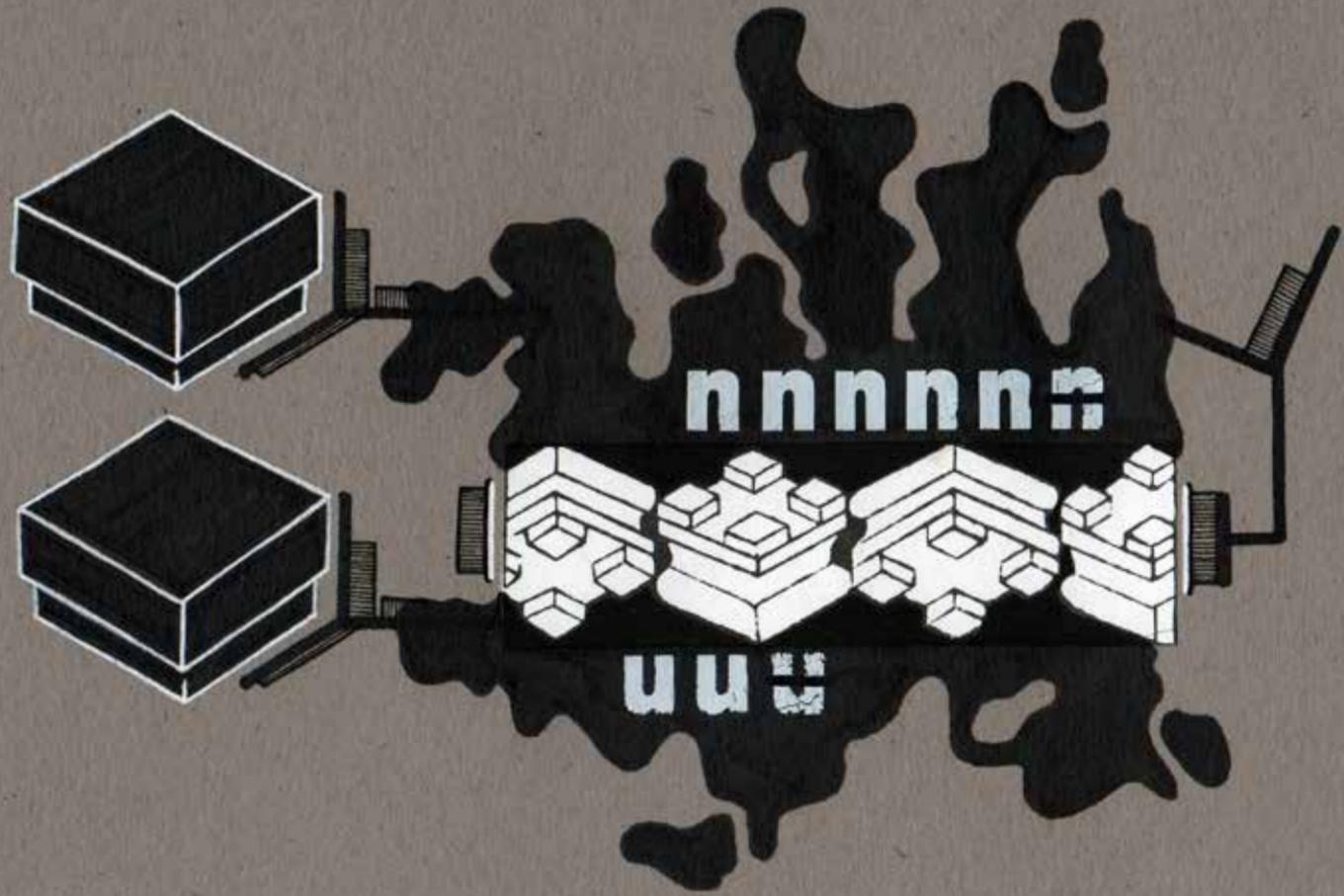


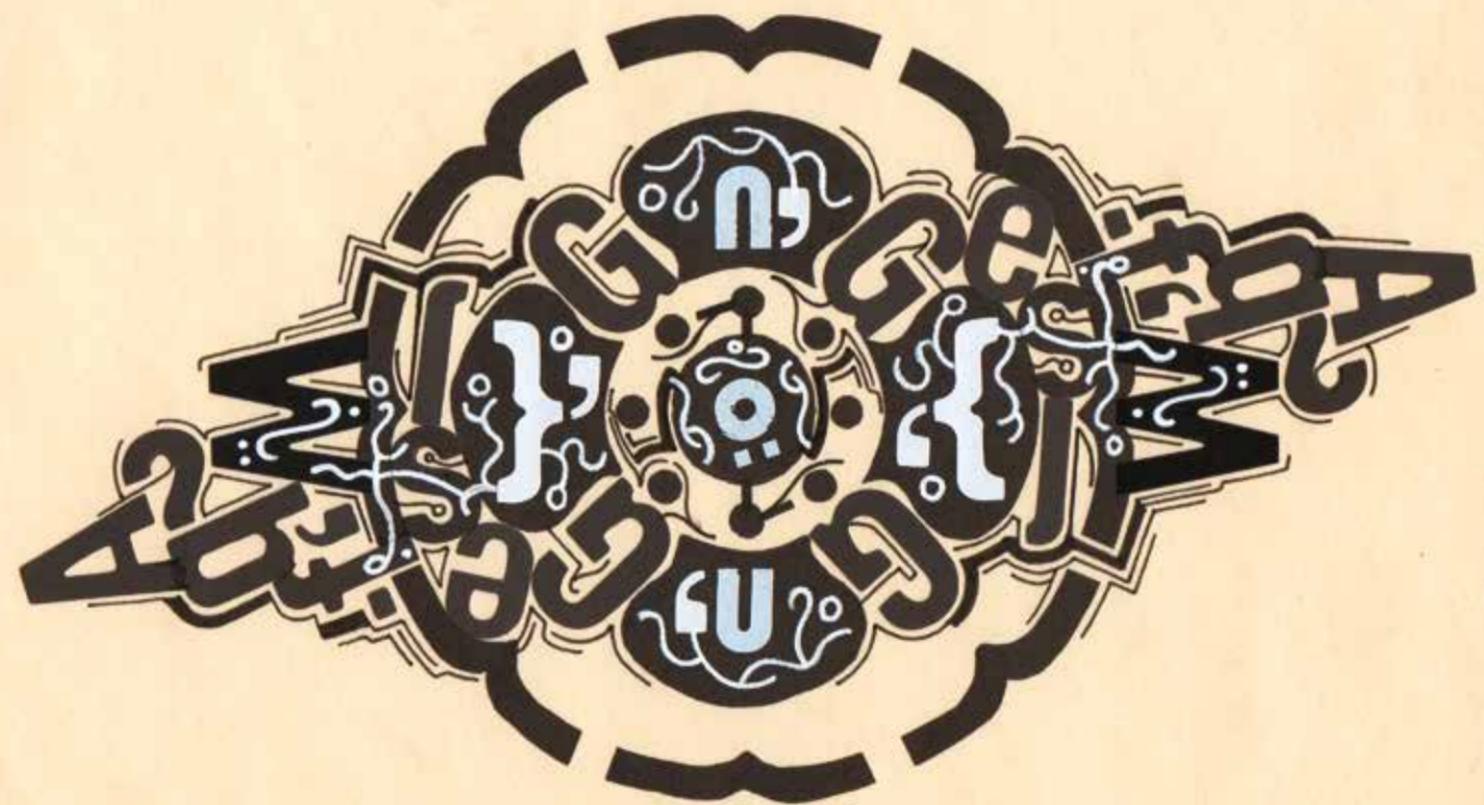


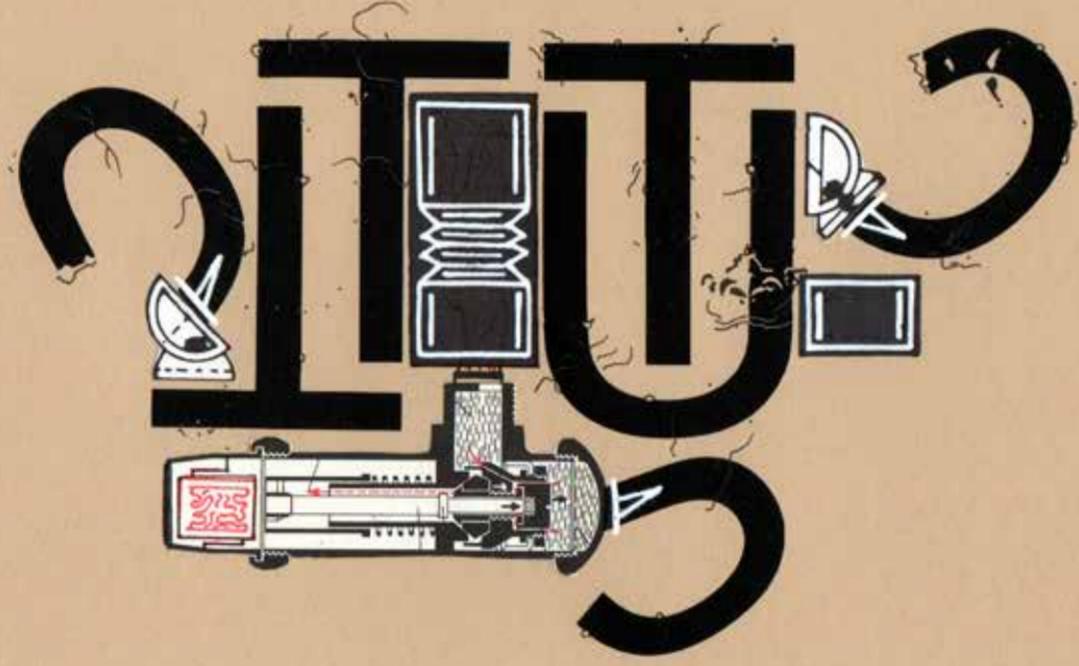


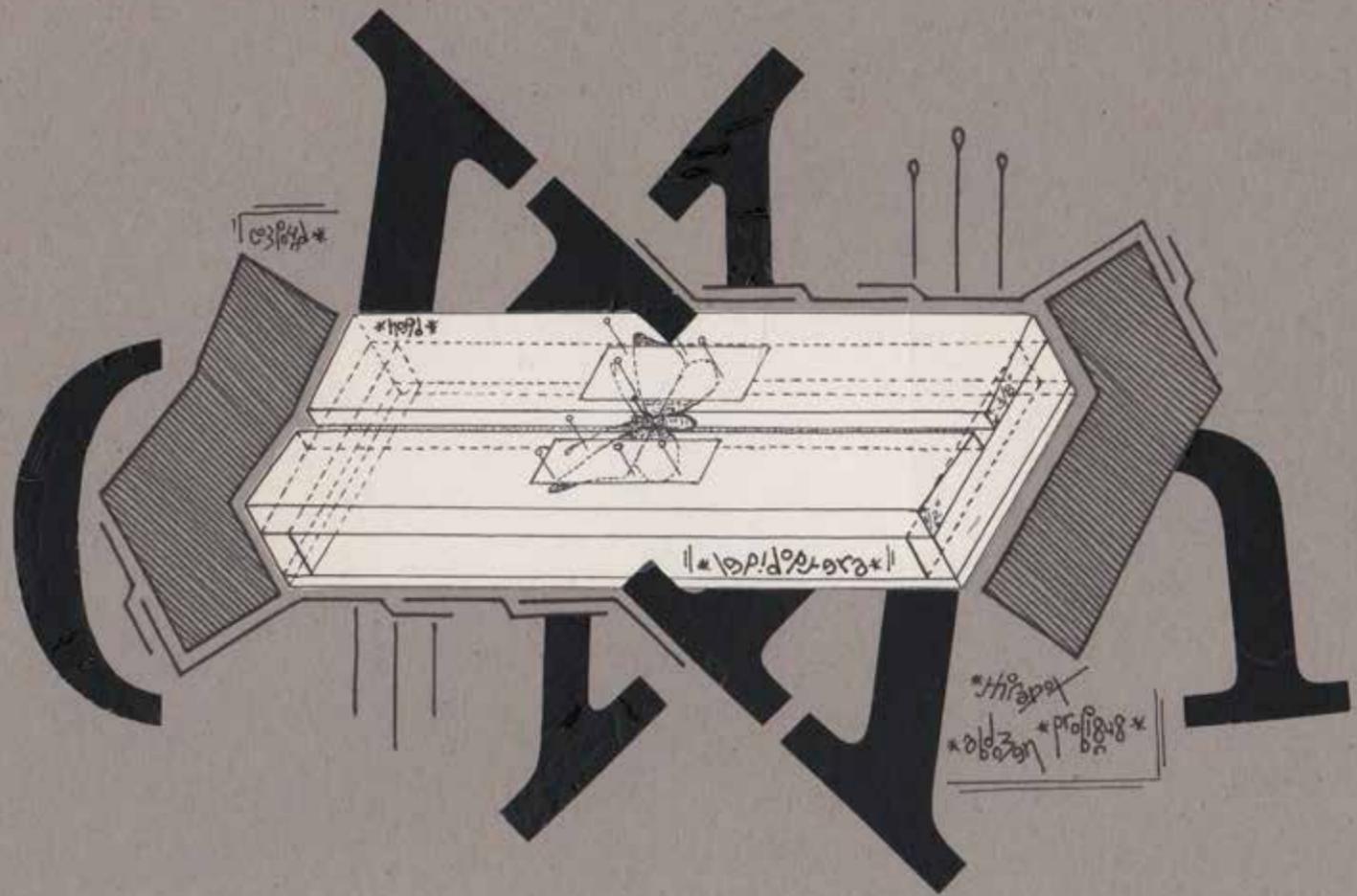


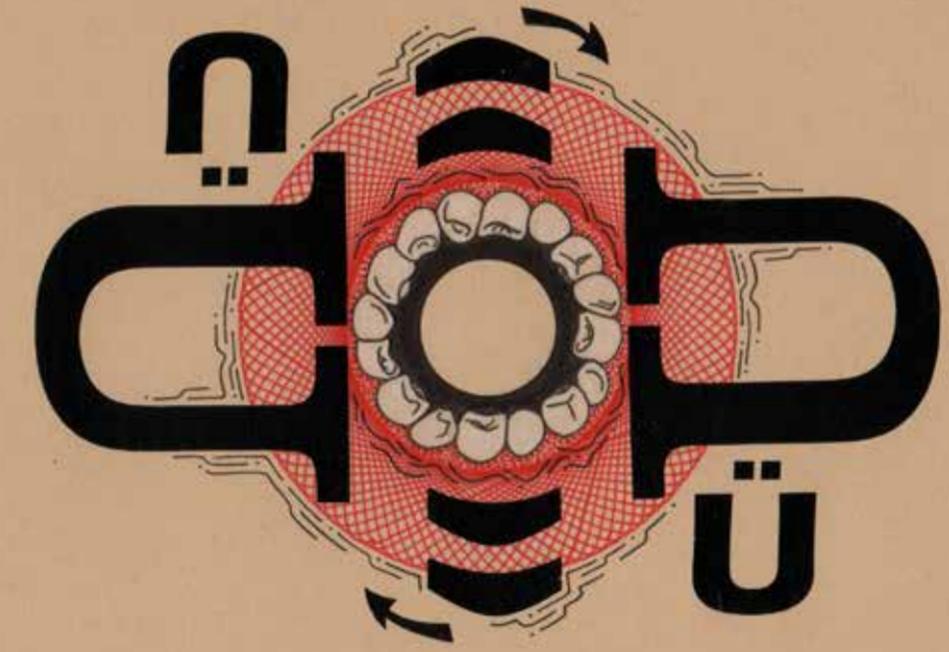
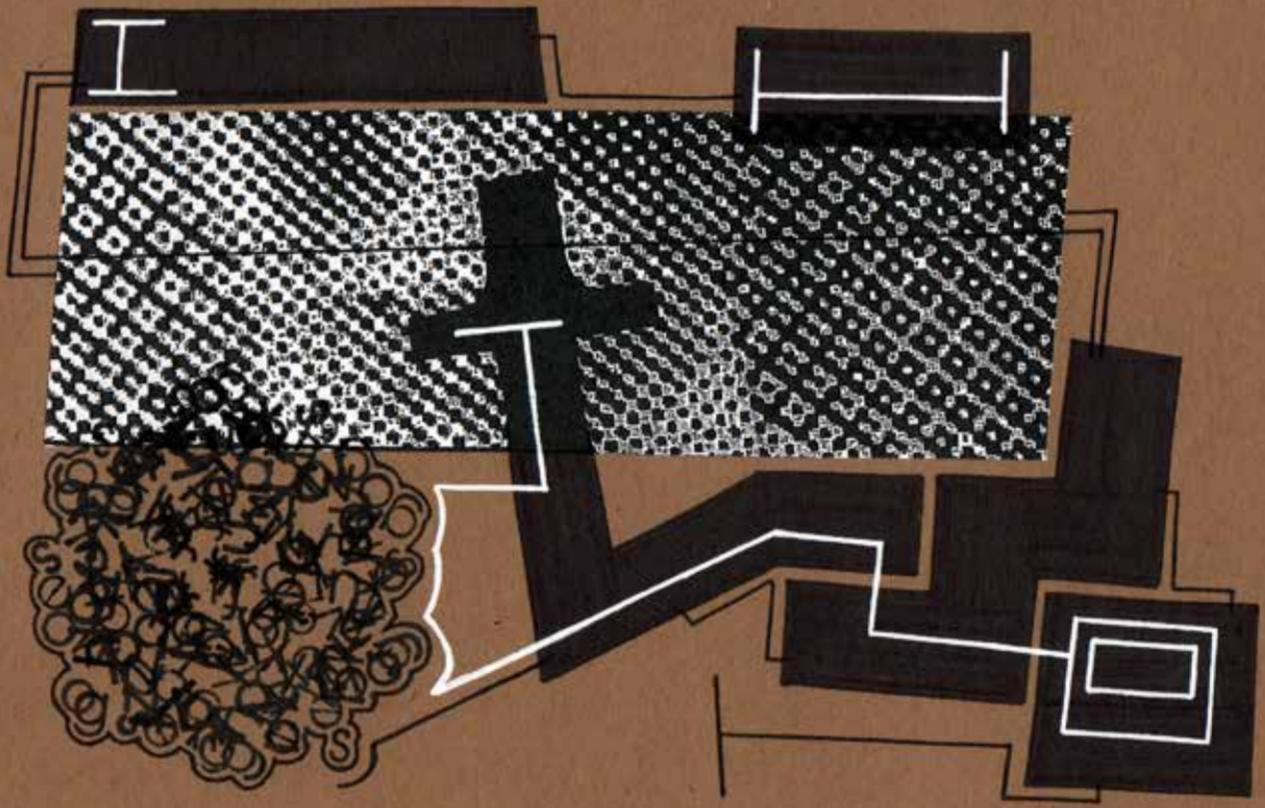


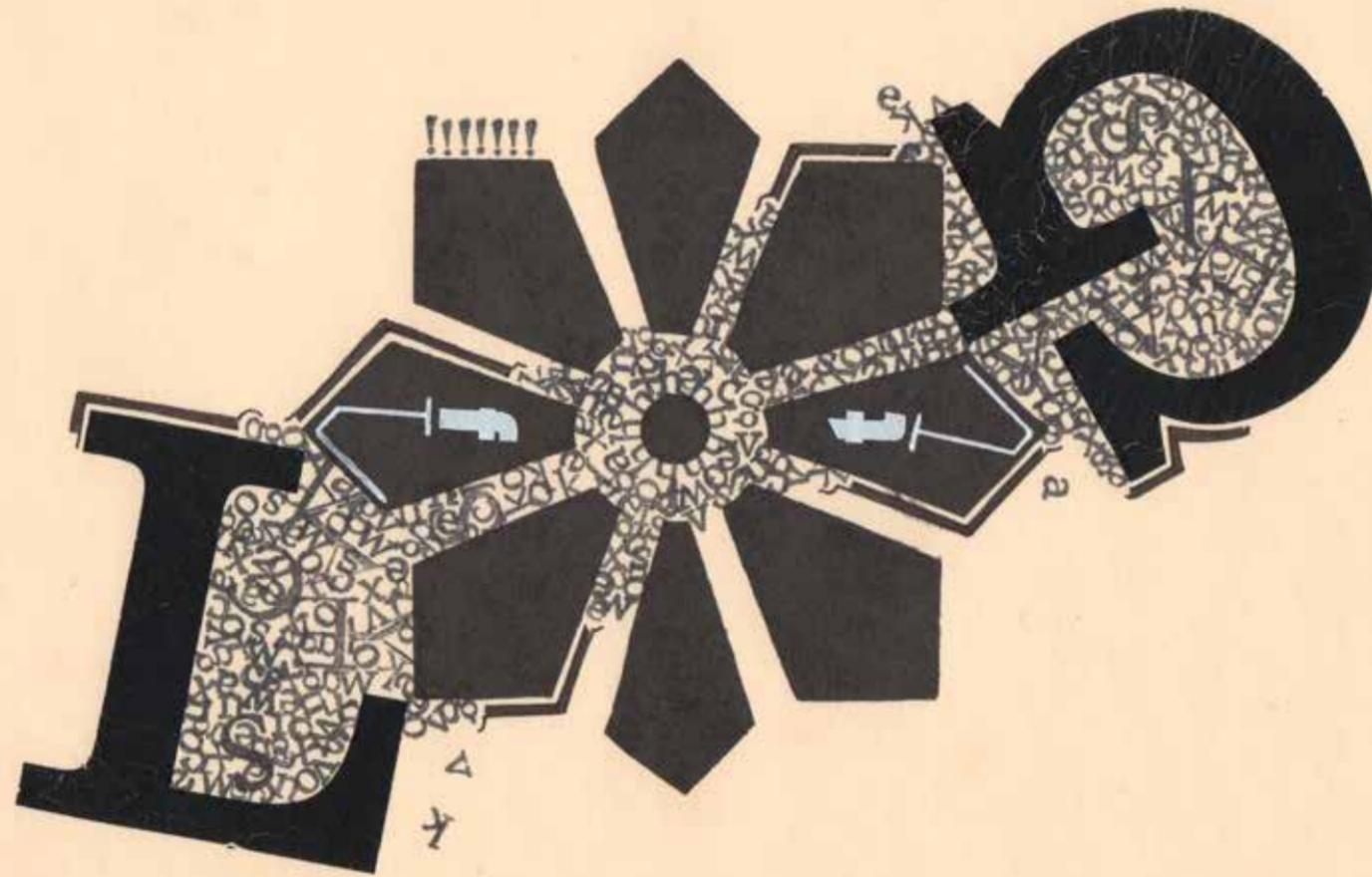
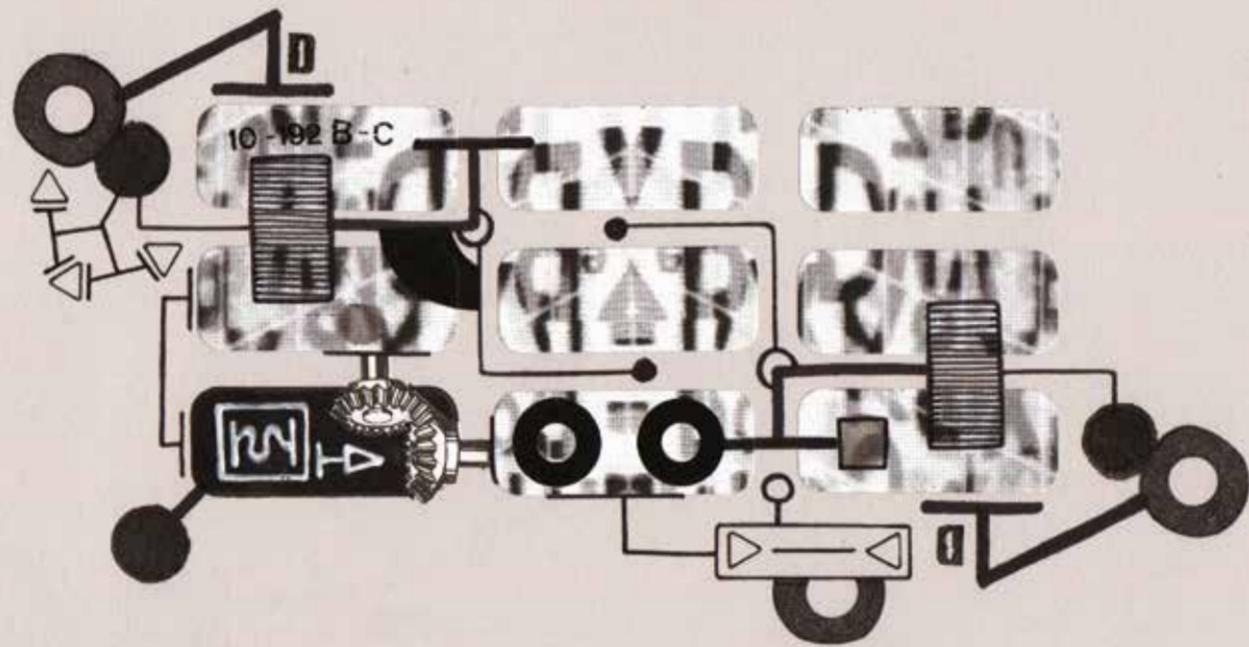














Part graffiti, part constructivist collage, part electrical blueprint, Michael Orr's *Evidence of Absence* utilizes a multitude of techniques and artistic reference points in the construction of its images. At first, this would seem to suggest that the images might devolve into meaninglessness, that the fragments of language and the nods to various artistic styles and epistemologies accumulate to form what is ultimately the nothingness of being, and thereby constitute the evidence of absence that is its title. However, these visual poems go well beyond the modernist tendency to juxtapose fragmentation in the service of representing a fractured self and world. These images are stylistically connected within and between themselves through the wonderfully

understated hand of the artist. Through a muted palette and a balance of tension, these images create a dynamic harmony of shape and form which resists emptiness. In fact, the very existence of these images stands in defiance to nothingness, to absence, to void. So, it seems that absence exists as context for the emergence of these pieces: All of the images seem to float in space, materializing inexplicably from the nothing that surrounds them, and going nowhere beautifully. In short, *Evidence of Absence* is a secular hymn to the wonderful fact of being, to the presence that is both evidence of and evidence against what Wallace Steven's called "the nothing that is."

– Andrew Brenza

Michael Orr is one of those artists whose work is so distinguishable you can see it from a mile away. That is a compliment. This collection is no different. A huge beauty of a book that is filled with products and processes of our current pandemic climate, his analog work seems surreal, Lettrist, concrete, and scientific (in artifacts and technology) all at the same time. I see formulas for a possible future. 54 pages of black, white, cardboard, and surprise bodies, teeth, and red. Michael Orr's visual poetry offers an honesty to the fields of visual and concrete poetry and also a contribution to the world's defining elemental processes and final objects—if things are ever final! I am excited to see it produced into book form.

– Kristine Snodgrass

A playful interaction of text and shape interlaced with bold colours and vivacious energy. Each poem dares the reader to strip down the individual compositions to their core semantic value—it tells a story through typographical, originary, and collaging techniques. A fine example of the possibilities of concrete poetry—its skill, originality and ambition illuminate every page. Another Timglaset wonder for visual poetry creators & readers!

– Astra Papachristodoulou

*Evidence of Absence* by Michael Orr  
Published by Timglaset Editions, Malmö, Sweden  
[www.timglaset.com](http://www.timglaset.com)  
[info@timglaset.com](mailto:info@timglaset.com)

Printed by Grafo Tryck, Limhamn, Sweden  
First edition, 99 copies, June 2021

isbn 978-91-985539-8-7

© Michael Orr. All rights reserved.

You know that Robert Frost poem, "For Once, Then, Something"? Frost titles and ends a poem about the ungraspable with that handsome, mysterious sentence which is itself ungraspable. Michael Orr's *Evidence of Absence* has that same lovely slyness. Orr arranges letters, numbers, schematics, bones, diagrams, and other familiar architectures of knowledge in such a beguiling way that they highlight not themselves but the spaces between themselves. When I look at the concrete poems in this book, I realize there's some kind of magic sitting between letters that I didn't see before. His poems visualize the mind's aim to mean, its desire to be understood. They are dazzling, deft depictions of that wish, and they convey how truly beautiful the urge to connect is—even when the outcome, so often, can be muddled and wrong.

His concrete poems are as comforting as the marginalia in an old friend's book, and as delightfully strange.

– Sommer Browning

TIMGLASET  
T T  
TTTTT  
TTT  
T  
T I  
T I  
TTTTTIT  
TTTTTTTT