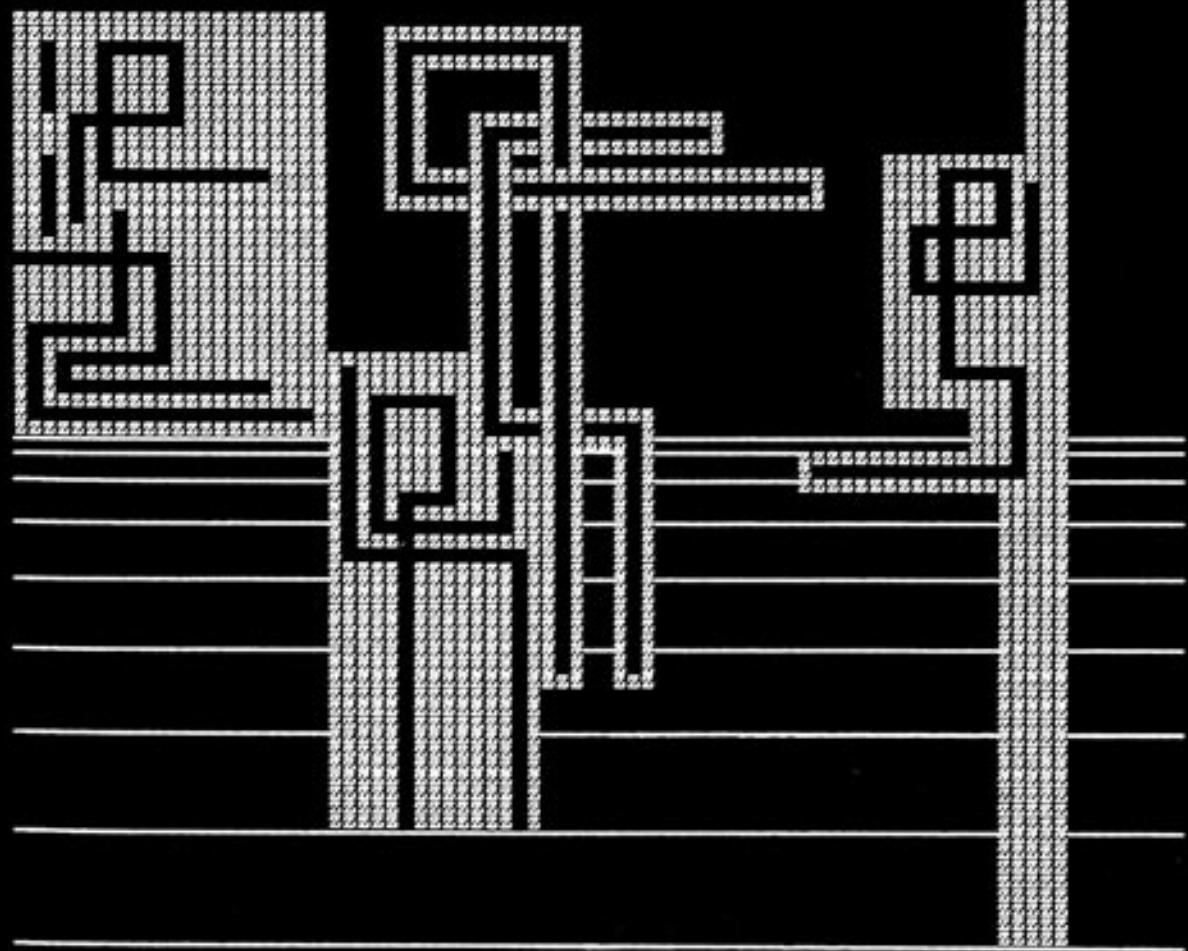


# BLACK STROKES WHITE SPACES



**KARL KEMPTON**

*Books by Karl Kempton*

Visual poems

*typoglifts (typewriter generated poems)*

LOST ALFABET FOUND, West Coast Review Press, 1979

RUNE, Bern Porter Books, 1980

RUNE 2: 26 VOICES/JANUARY INTERLUDE, Typewriter/Bird in the Bush, 1980

PRECINCTS OF THE 5TH APOCALYPSE Rainbow Resin, 1980

EON PULSE, Editions Brian Lane, England, 1981

RUNE, (second edition), KALDRON, 1981

POEM, Curvd H&Z, Canada, 1982

CONSTELLATIONS, Rainbow Resin, 1982

FILM STRIP LOJIK TIIPOGLIF ANSIRZ A KWESCHUN, Curvd H&Z, Canada, 1983

TO TASTE, Laughing Bear Press, 1983

BLACK STROKES WHITE SPACES, Xerox Sutra Editions, 1984

KO, with Loris Essary, SCORE, 1984

THE ALLAH SERIES (in Moore's THE CHRONICLES OF AKHIRA), Zilzal Press, 1986

DEEP SQUARE WAVE STRUCTURE, ACCESS, 1987

4 PLUS 3, Post Neo Publications, Australia, 1987

an ensemble, Post Neo Publications, Australia, 1987

FIRE + WATER BALANCE THE BOOK with Ruth Kempton, Light and Dust Books, 1990

RUNE: A SURVEY, Light and Dust Books, 1992

RUNE 6: FIGURES OF SPEECH, Runaway Spoon Press, 1993

RUNE 7: POEM, A MAPPING, Runaway Spoon Press, 1993

**Computer**

from MEDITATION ON OM and AMBER SANDS, Hybridenland, Germany, 1998

PORTRAITS OF TEXTURE, Runaway Spoon Press, 1999

RUNE 10: ROSE WINDOWS, Runaway Spoon Press, 1999

33: Mathematical Poems 1976-2003, Runaway Spoon Press, 2003

on web @ <http://www.logolalia.com/abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxy/>

RUNE 2: 26 VOICES/JANUARY INTERLUDE

RUNE 10: ROSE WINDOWS

RUNE 18: ROSE WINDOWS FOR THE CATHEDRAL OF THE CHEWED, SCARRED  
AND DISCARDED

*conceptual books (use of alphabet noodles)*

FILM SKRIPT, Rainbow Resin, 1982

TH LETTERZ U ALWAYZ WANTED TO RECEEV, Rainbow Resin, 1982

*lexical and visual poems*

THE LIGHT WE ARE, Konocti Press, 1985

ALIGNMENT, Atticus Press, 1985

FISSION, Runaway Spoon Press, 1988

A/ROUND, Curvd H&Z, Canada, 1988\*

A POND OF STARS, Runaway Spoon Press, 1989\*

CHARGED PARTICLES, Runaway Spoon Press, 1991

THE VOICES OF ARDEN, Runaway Spoon Press, 1993

TASSARAJA: WHERE MEAT IS HUNG TO DRY, tel-let, 1994\*

WATER FROM THE MOUNTAINS OF LIGHT, White Crow Press, 1995

WORKING HIS WAY OUT OF DARKNESS, White Crow Press, 1995\*

*Renderings\**

BHAKTI RAGA, Divine Life Circle, 2001

DATTATREYA'S ADVAHUTA GITA, Divine Life Circle, 2001

\* no visual elements

**Black Strokes White Spaces**

**BLACK  
STROKES  
WHITE  
SPACES**

*TYPOGLIFS BY  
KARL KEMPTON*

2008

**XEXOXIAL EDITIONS**  
WEST LIMA, WISCONSIN

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

a special thanx extended to the magazines, presses and anthologies which publisht some of these visual poems, typoglifs: A CRITICAL ASSEMBLING, Antenna, Cafe Solo, Duck Down Press, The Fault, Impulse, Interstate, kal-dron, Konglomerati, nrg, rainbow resin press, Scree, So & so, SOUTHWEST, A CONTEMPOARY ANTHOLOGY, Spek, Total Abandon. work also appeared in OF MANYWHERE-AT-ONCE by Bob Grumman, editions 1 and 2, Runaway spoon Press, 1990, 1991.

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# circuit

Austin, January 28, 1984

Dear Miekal

Your publication of these glifs comes at a crucial time for all of us who believe that the purpose of literature is to teach without instruction. As the acute shock waves from those who have beaten the black drum of oligarchical economic and social realignment reach the tenuous and brittle ledges of the bedrock on which the writer-as-artist practices his or her craft, survival more and more becomes a matter of saying "Horseman, pass by, for I dress myself in skins of your own kill."

This is not to say that writers are creating a purposefully reactionary art. It is meant to say, however, that yesterday's newspapers are safe reading.

Within that ideal and Romanticized image of the artist with which I'm certain we all nurtured ourselves when we began to write, there is, of course, no room for safety. We are all prophets to the world, destroyers of the old, so that a better new may be built. What we failed to see was that the artist is as human as any to whom the artist would pretend to minister, that we are both less and more than characters in each others poems and novels.

Papers from much further back than yesterday tell us all too clearly that art has long since lost its traditional purpose and values of secular and religious salvation within the world and the cultures of the world. In its most visible form, art today is little more than big business, within the galleries, the museums, the concert halls, and all too absent in any any except the least commerical bookstores.

Given this situation and a more human understanding of the artist-as-writer, it is not surprising, perhaps not even sad, that writers should embrace a view of and an approach to their work which is safe and acceptable precisely because such acceptance is the only evidence they can find that the larger notions of the old art are still viable.

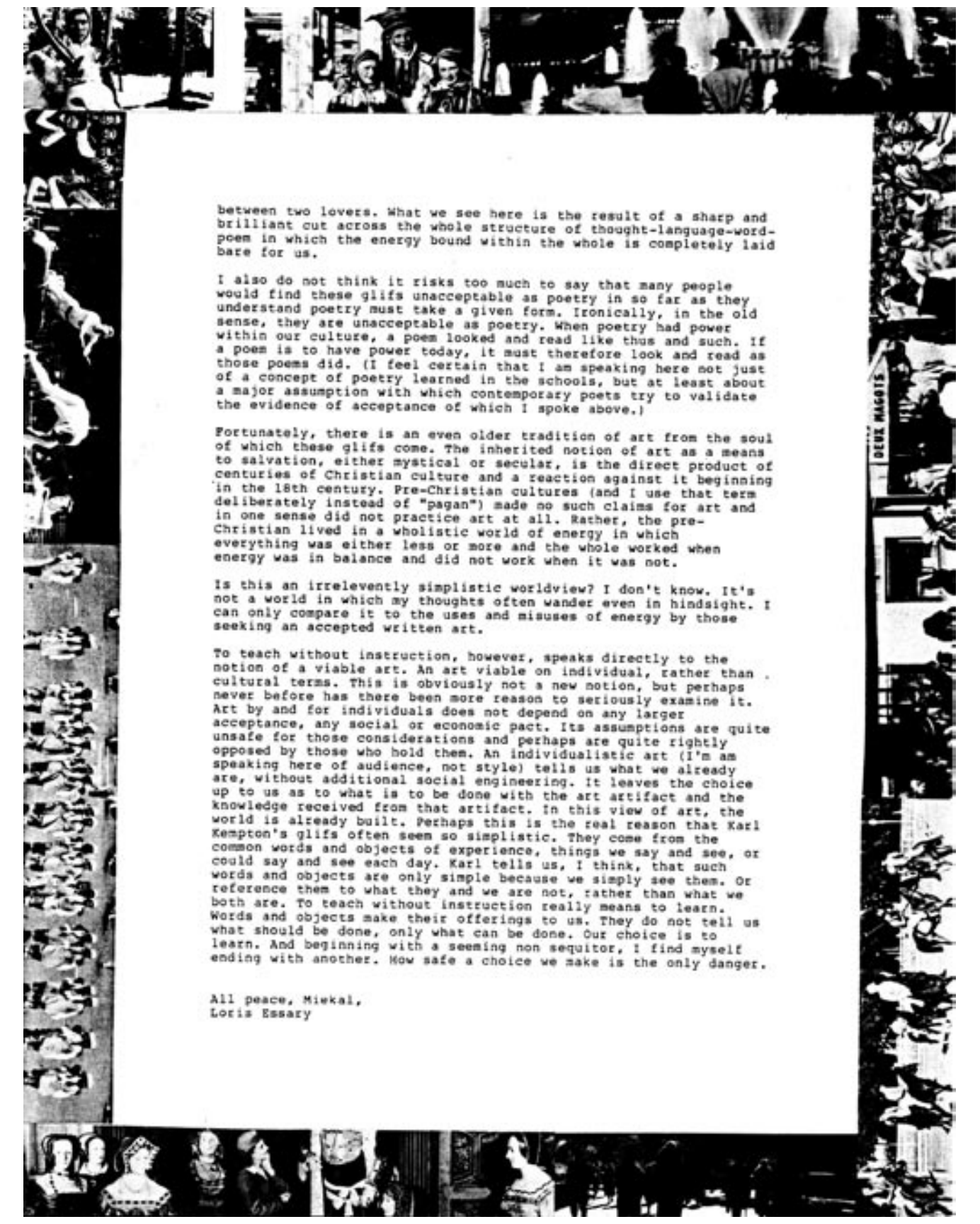
I wrote above that the importance of these glifs lies in part in reaffirming the conviction that the artist must teach without instruction. Perhaps that statement tends toward seeming a non sequitor because it accepts the fact that art does no longer possess its previous power to educate and heal the group. In writing it, I remembered the scene in Tom Robbins' novel *EVEN COMGIRLS GET THE BLUES* in which the young would drive their Volkswagen buses into the hills in search of instruction and enlightenment from Robbins' character the Chink, whom they mistook to be a great and wise Oriental teacher, rather than the escapee from a World War II Japanese internment camp in California that he was. The Chink's consistent response was to pull out his genitals, wave them at the kids and scream "the only lesson is that you don't need any teachers!"

I do not think it wholly accidental that in writing to you about Karl Kempton's glifs the image of waving genitals came to mind. The inherent natural power of language lies very close to the surface in all of his glifs, waiting to be released in the reader in much the same way that the sex act releases a shared energy

constellations

lunar sails

precincts



between two lovers. What we see here is the result of a sharp and brilliant cut across the whole structure of thought-language-word-poem in which the energy bound within the whole is completely laid bare for us.

I also do not think it risks too much to say that many people would find these glifs unacceptable as poetry in so far as they understand poetry must take a given form. Ironically, in the old sense, they are unacceptable as poetry. When poetry had power within our culture, a poem looked and read like this and such. If a poem is to have power today, it must therefore look and read as those poems did. (I feel certain that I am speaking here not just of a concept of poetry learned in the schools, but at least about a major assumption with which contemporary poets try to validate the evidence of acceptance of which I spoke above.)

Fortunately, there is an even older tradition of art from the soul of which these glifs come. The inherited notion of art as a means to salvation, either mystical or secular, is the direct product of centuries of Christian culture and a reaction against it beginning in the 18th century. Pre-Christian cultures (and I use that term deliberately instead of "pagan") made no such claims for art and in one sense did not practice art at all. Rather, the pre-Christian lived in a wholistic world of energy in which everything was either less or more and the whole worked when energy was in balance and did not work when it was not.

Is this an irrelevently simplistic worldview? I don't know. It's not a world in which my thoughts often wander even in hindsight. I can only compare it to the uses and misuses of energy by those seeking an accepted written art.

To teach without instruction, however, speaks directly to the notion of a viable art. An art viable on individual, rather than cultural terms. This is obviously not a new notion, but perhaps never before has there been more reason to seriously examine it. Art by and for individuals does not depend on any larger acceptance, any social or economic pact. Its assumptions are quite unsafe for those considerations and perhaps are quite rightly opposed by those who hold them. An individualistic art (I'm am speaking here of audience, not style) tells us what we already are, without additional social engineering. It leaves the choice up to us as to what is to be done with the art artifact and the knowledge received from that artifact. In this view of art, the world is already built. Perhaps this is the real reason that Karl Kempton's glifs often seem so simplistic. They come from the common words and objects of experience, things we say and see, or could say and see each day. Karl tells us, I think, that such words and objects are only simple because we simply see them. Or reference them to what they are and we are not, rather than what we both are. To teach without instruction really means to learn. Words and objects make their offerings to us. They do not tell us what should be done, only what can be done. Our choice is to learn. And beginning with a seeming non sequitor, I find myself ending with another. How safe a choice we make is the only danger.

All peace, Miekal,  
Loris Essary



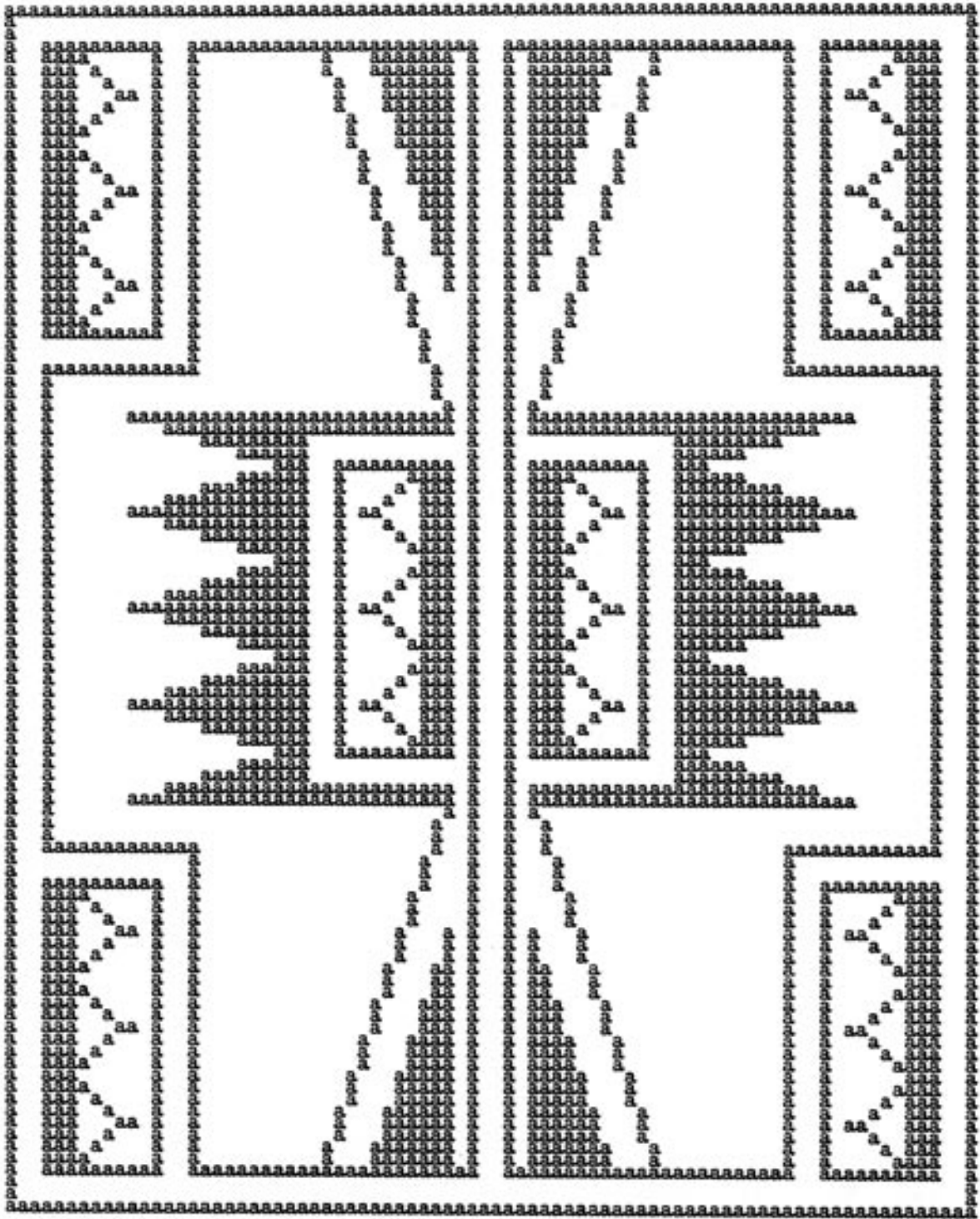
I tell you there are only  
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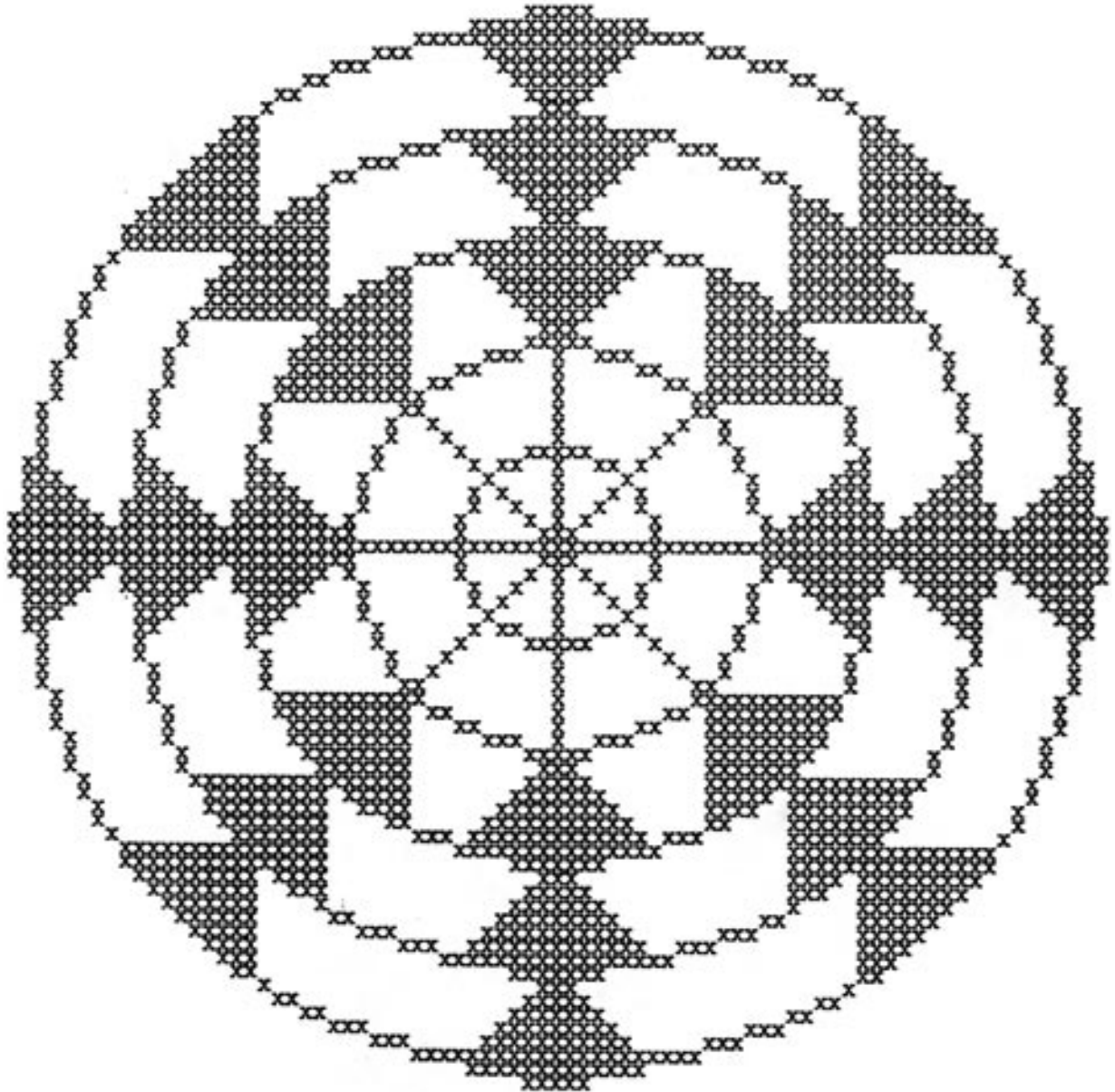
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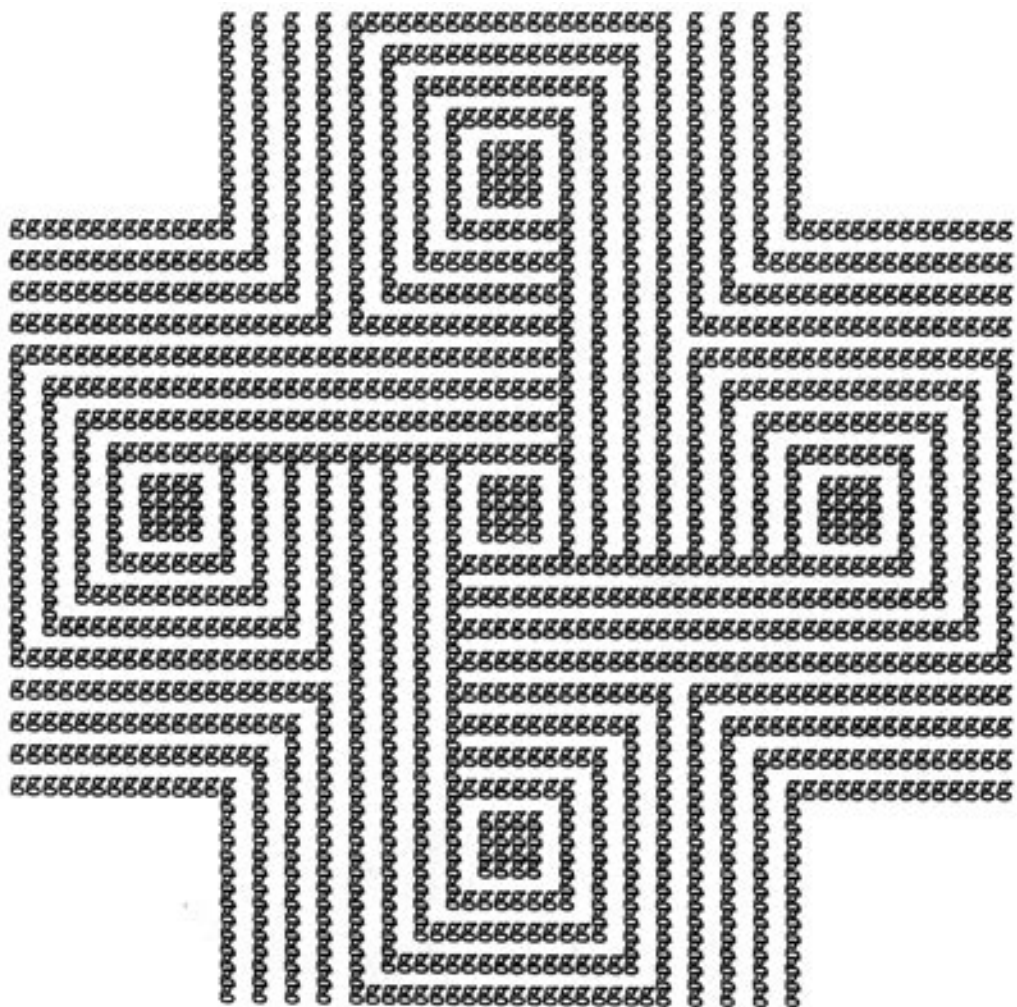
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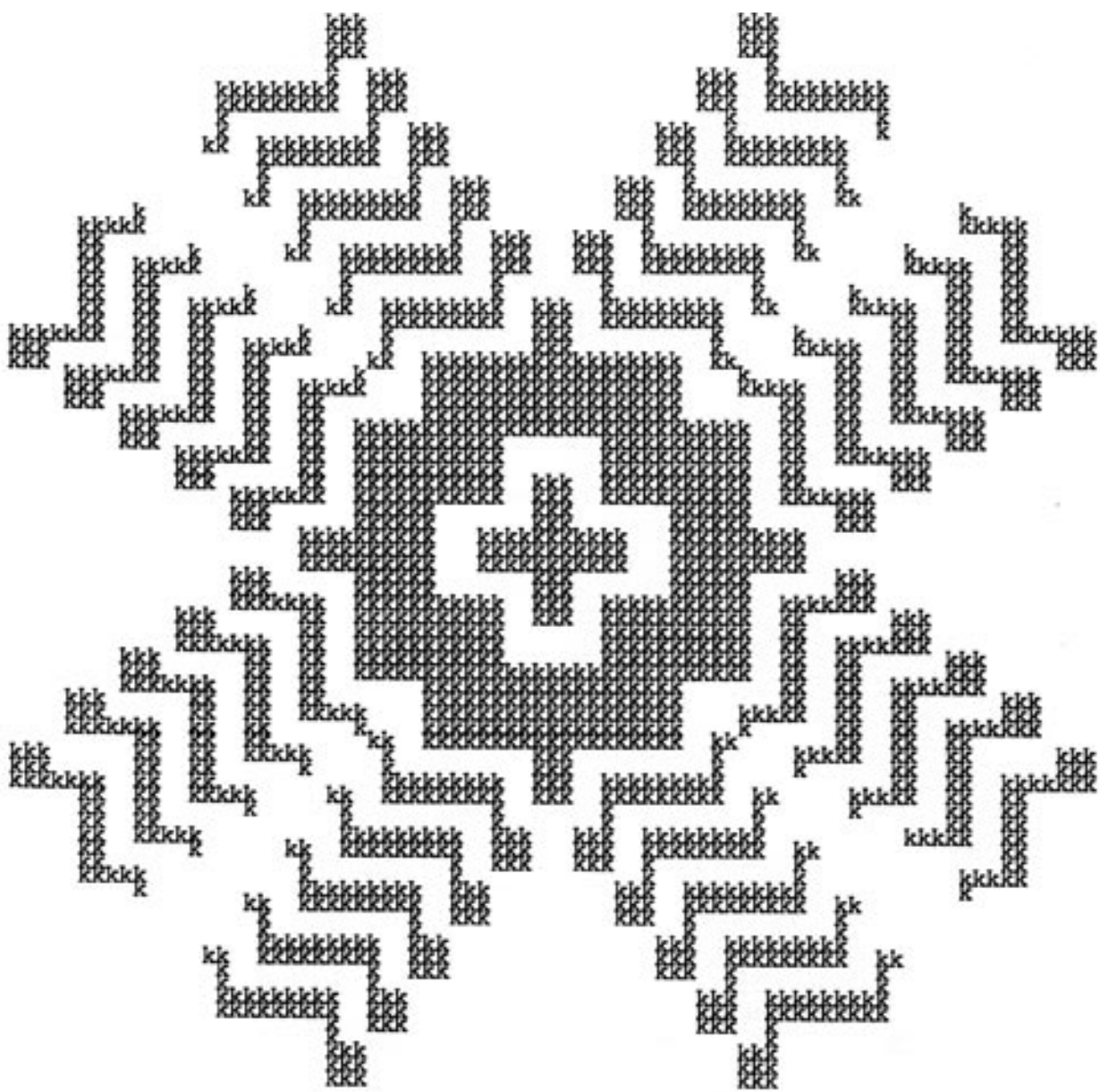
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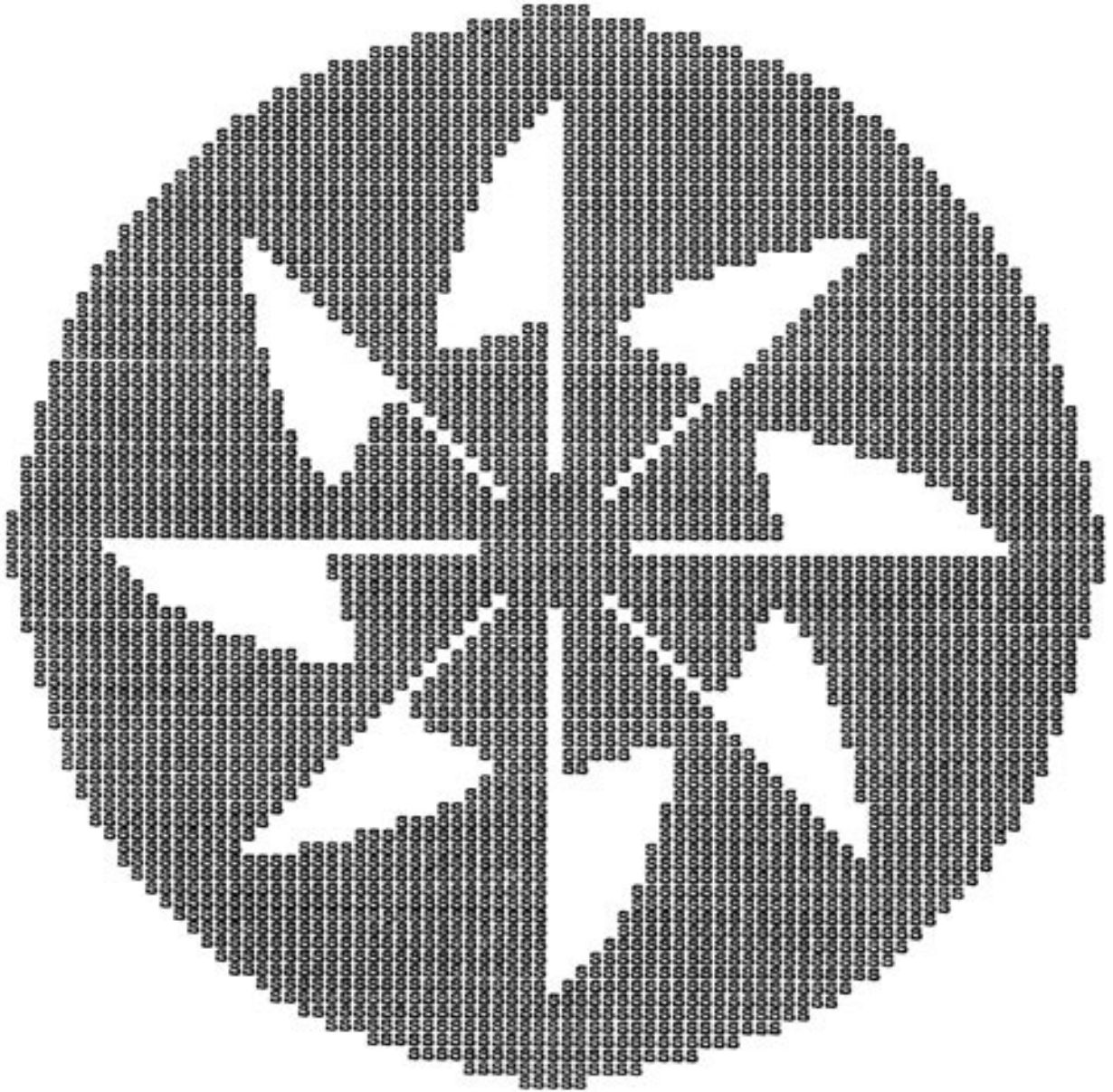
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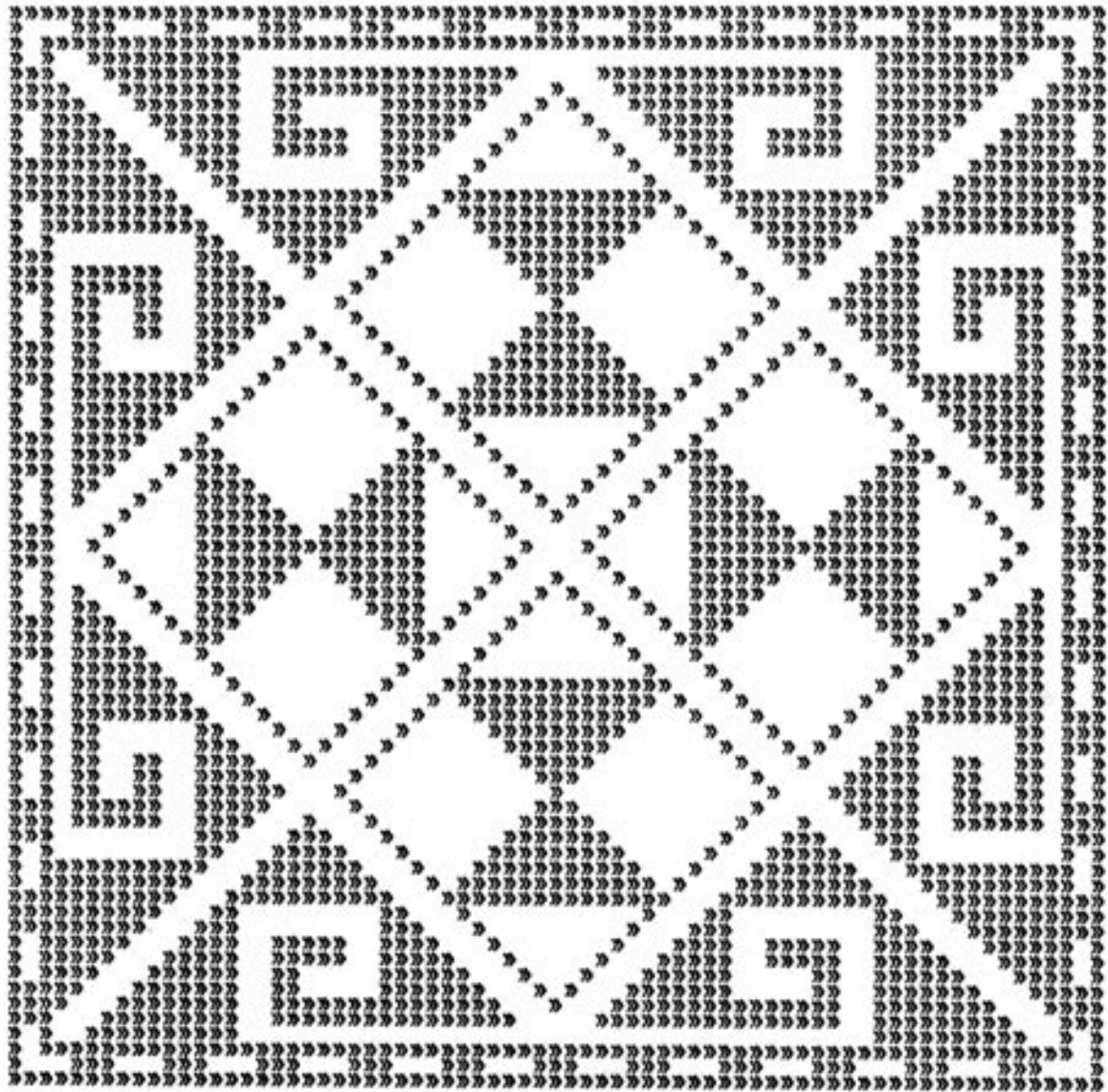




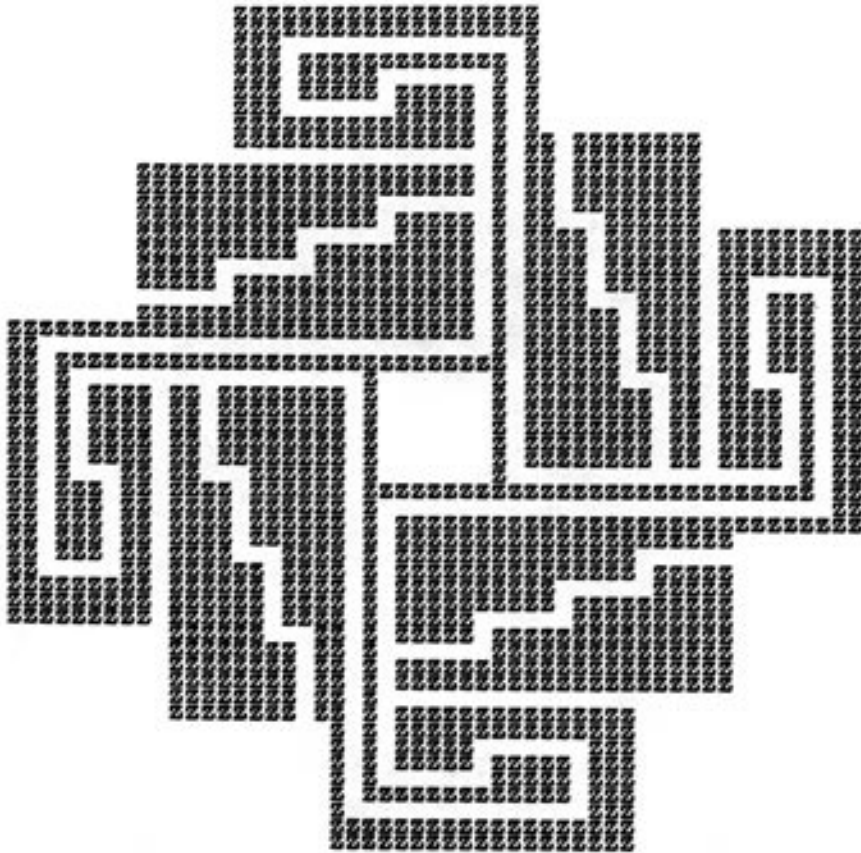


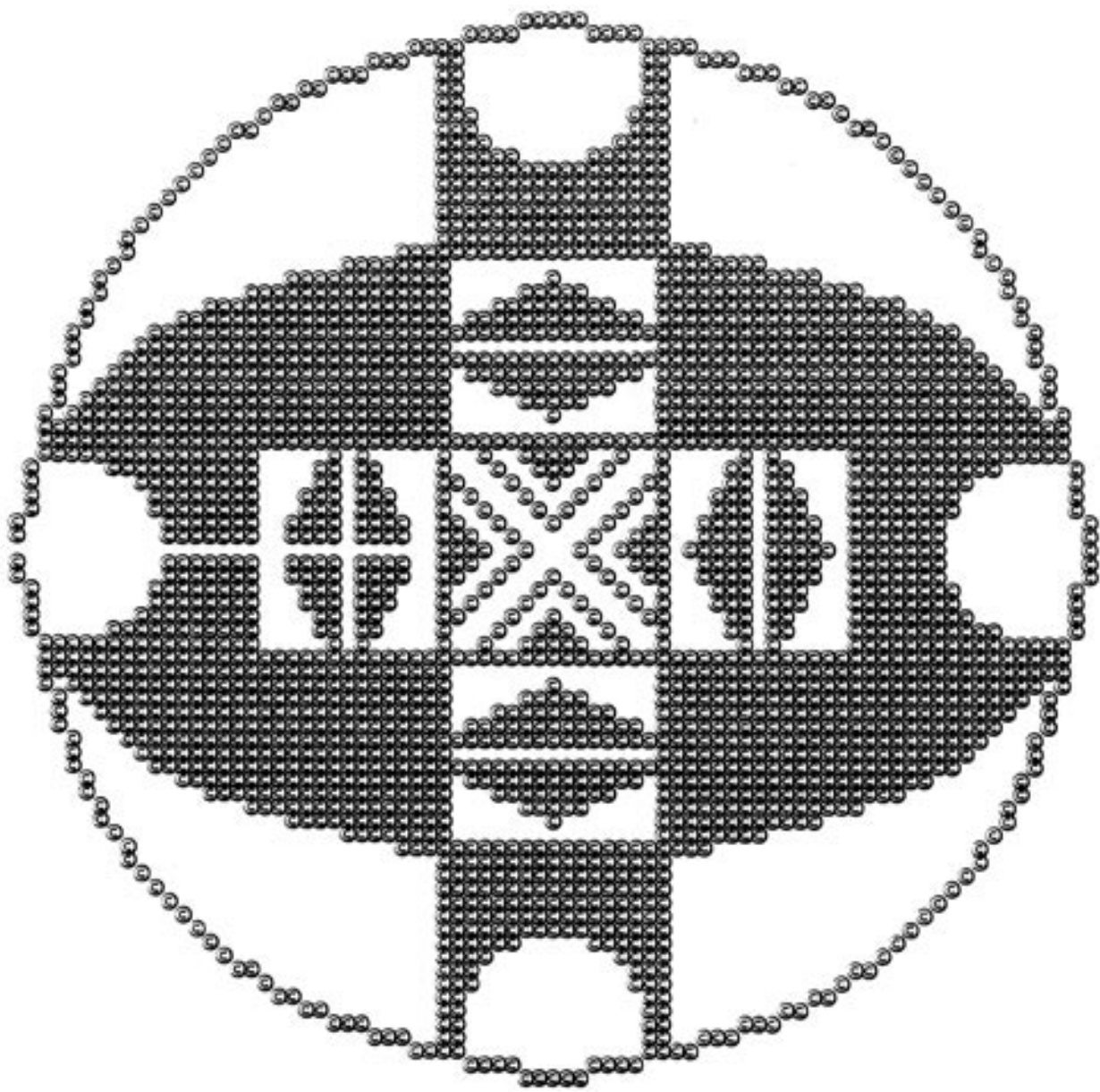


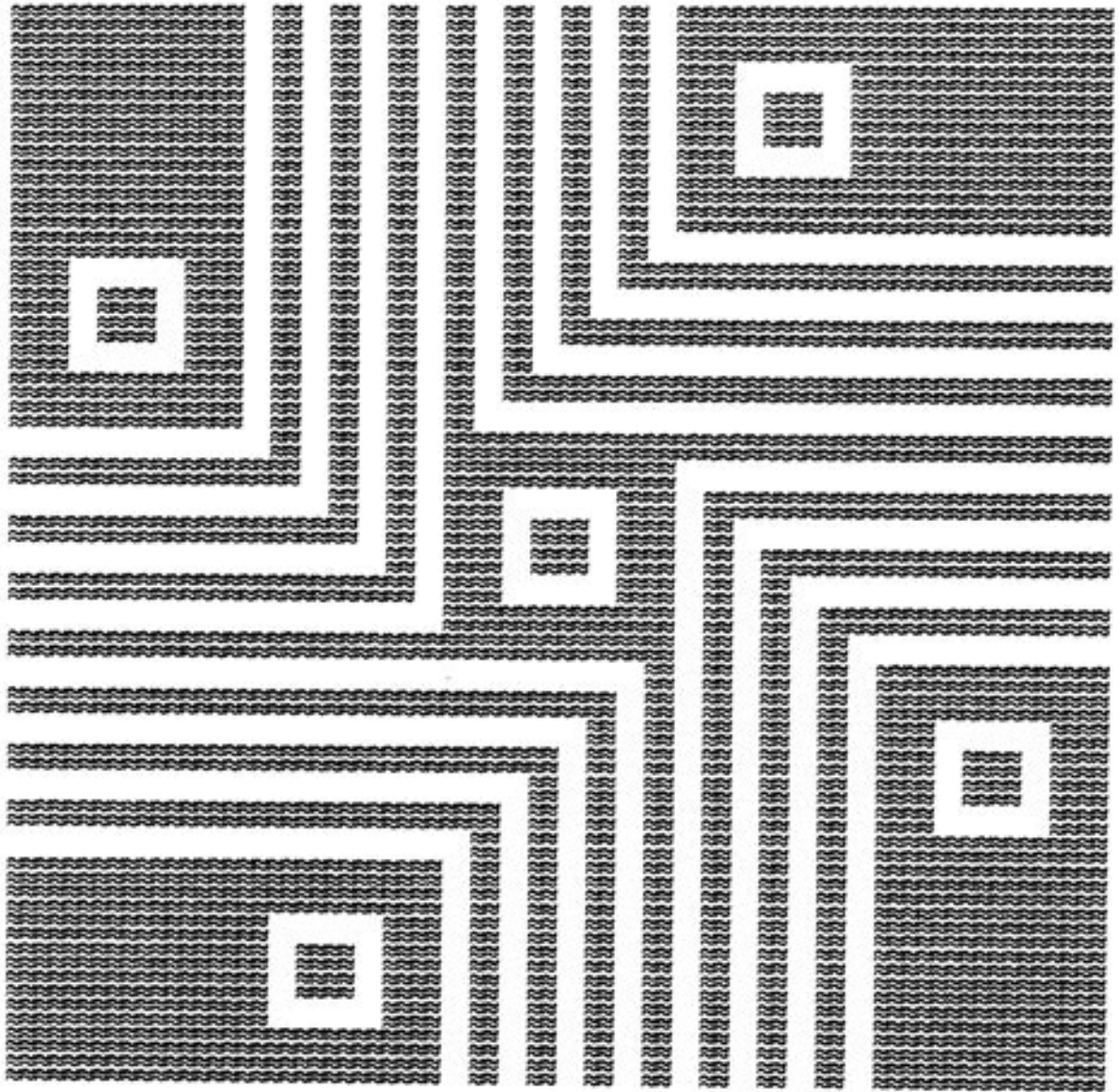


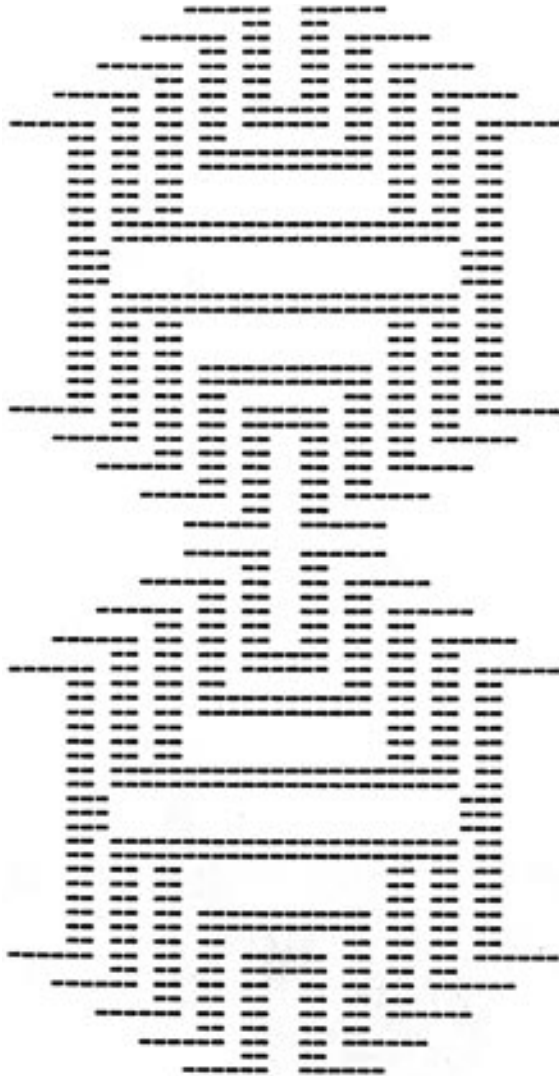




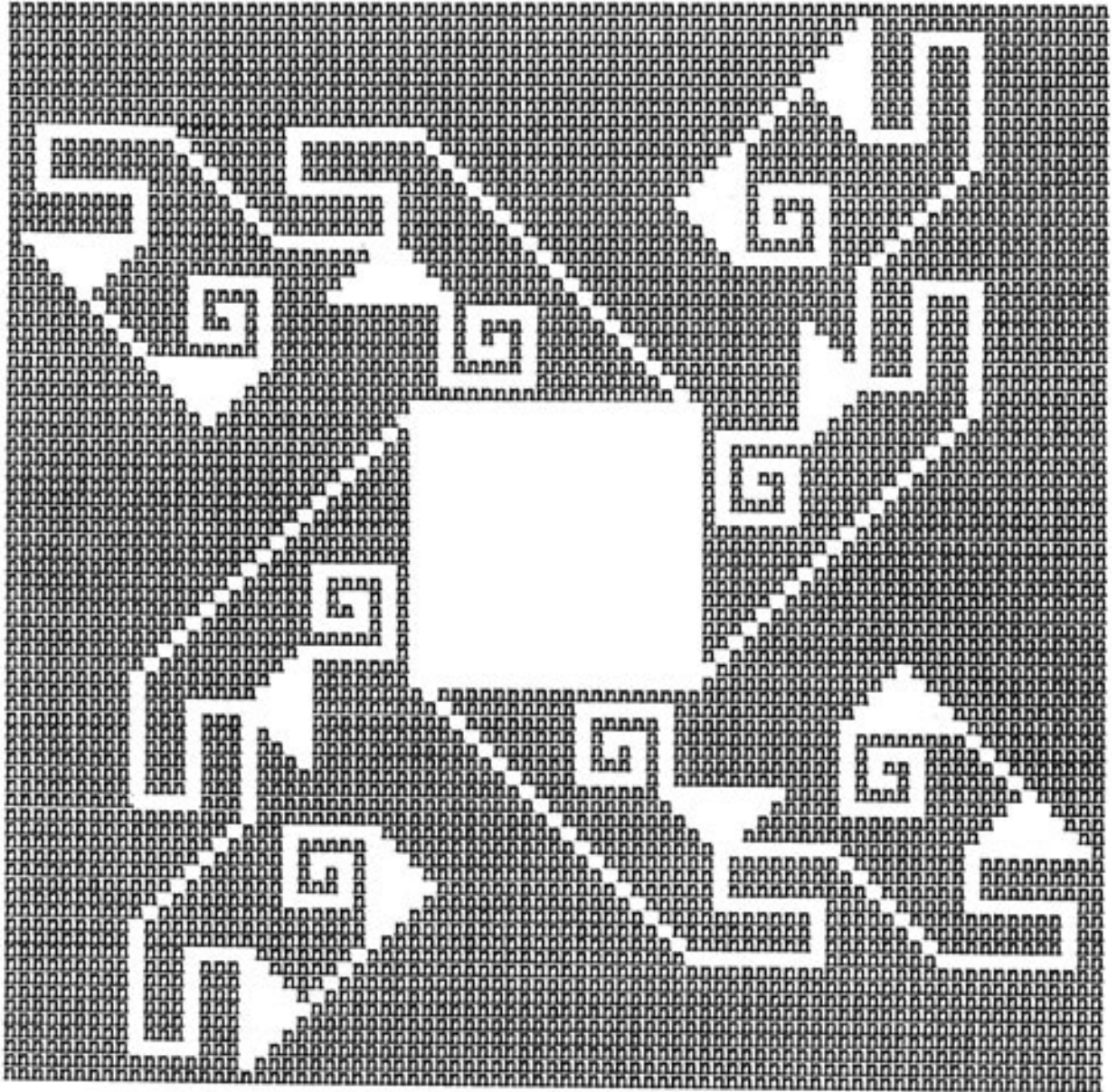




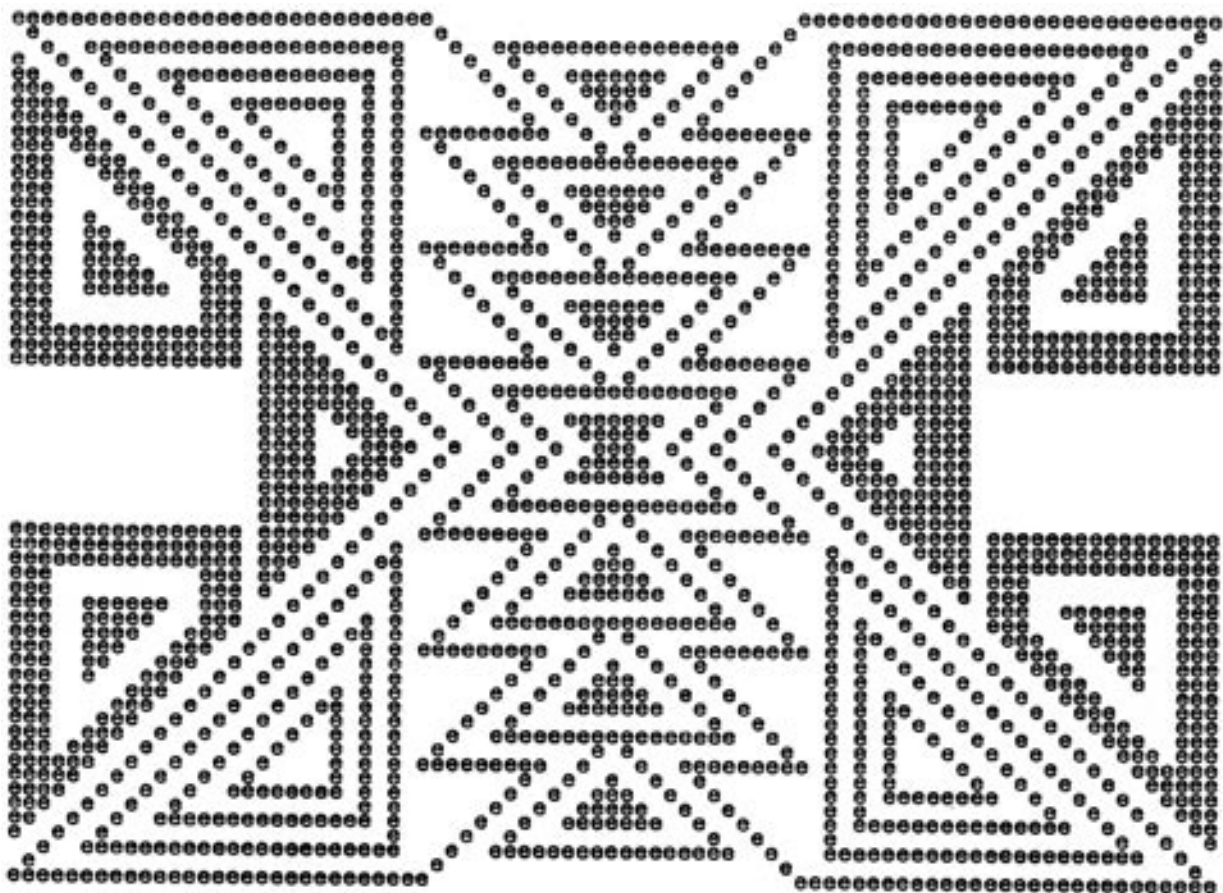


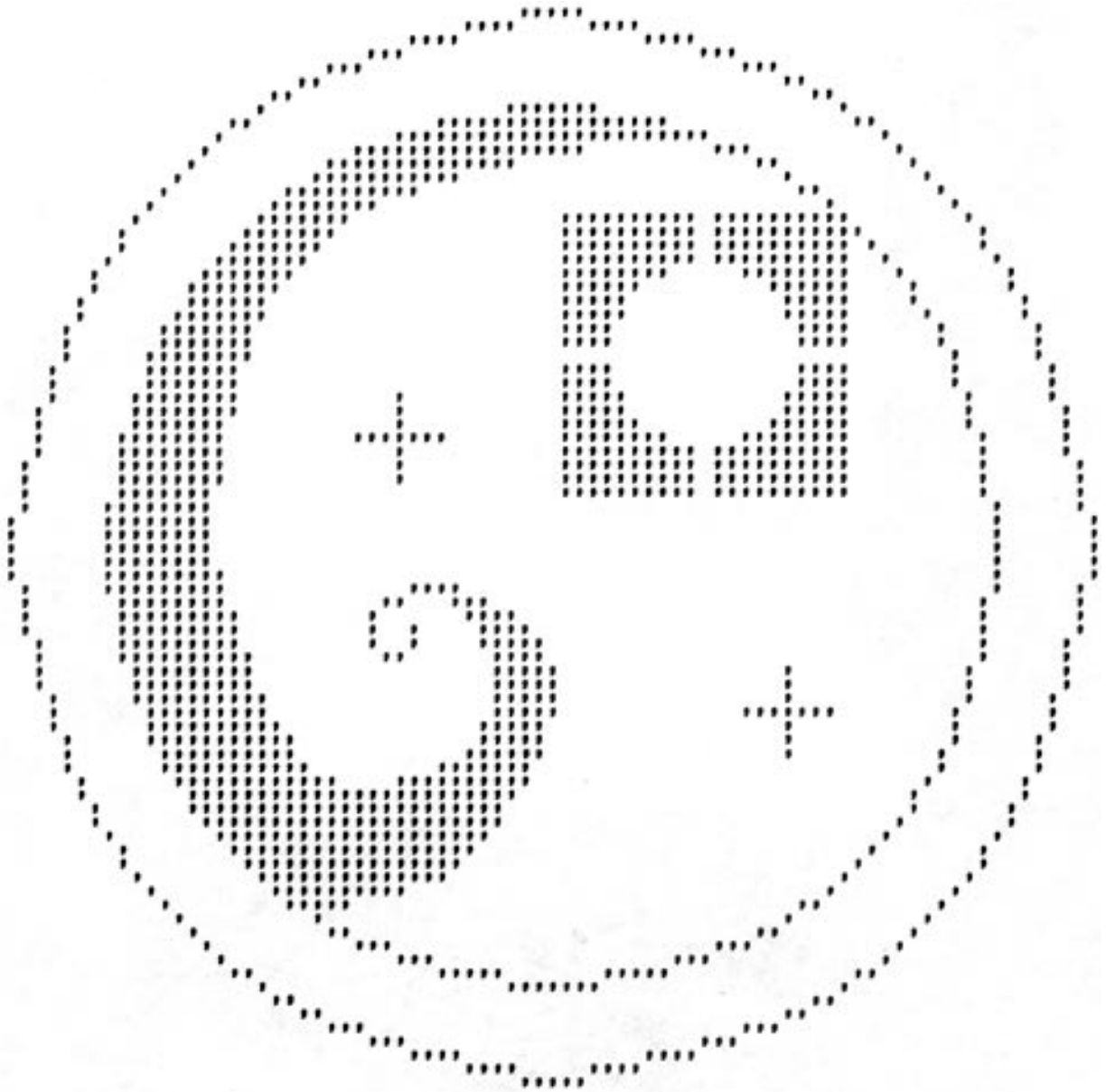




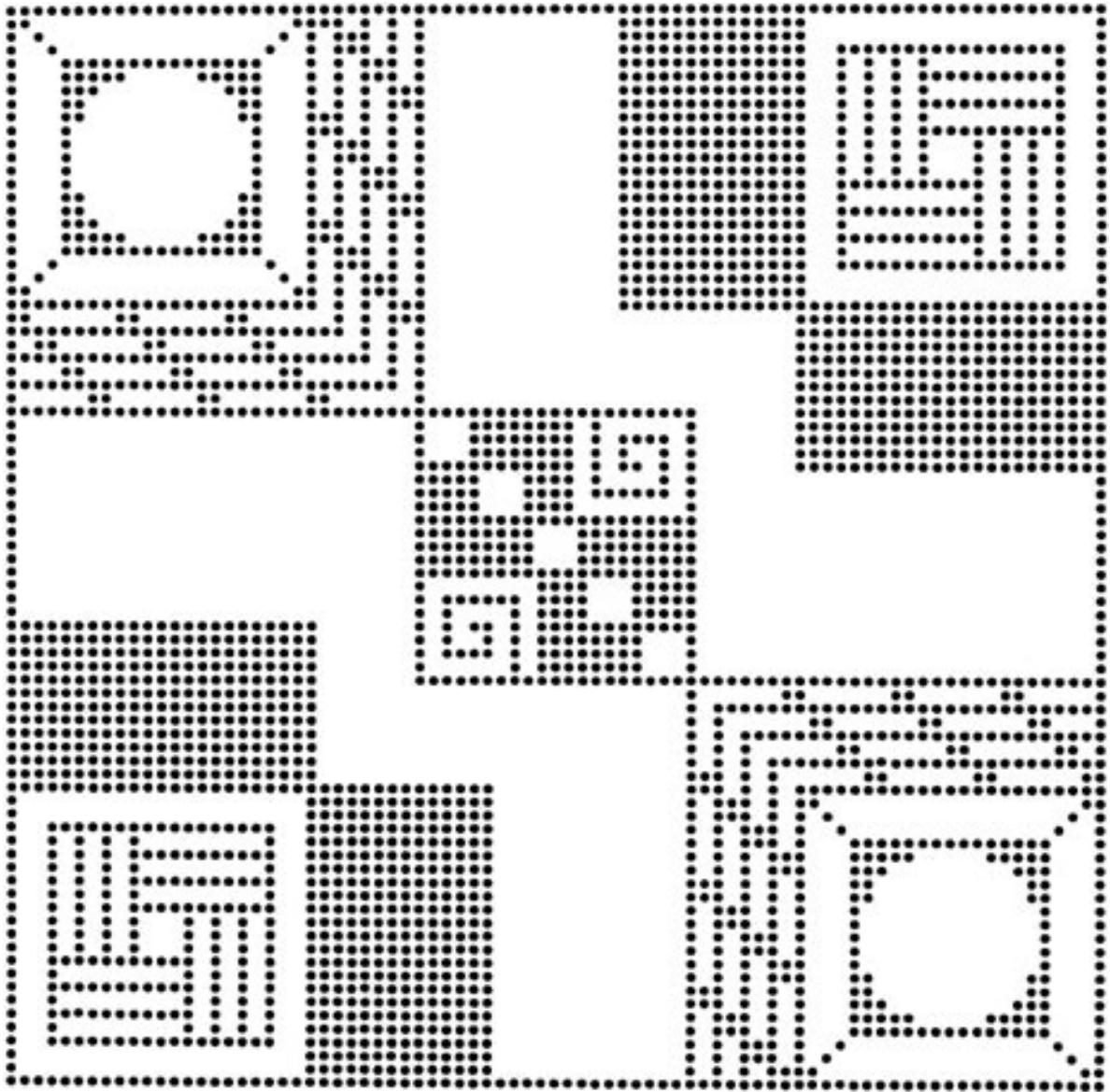


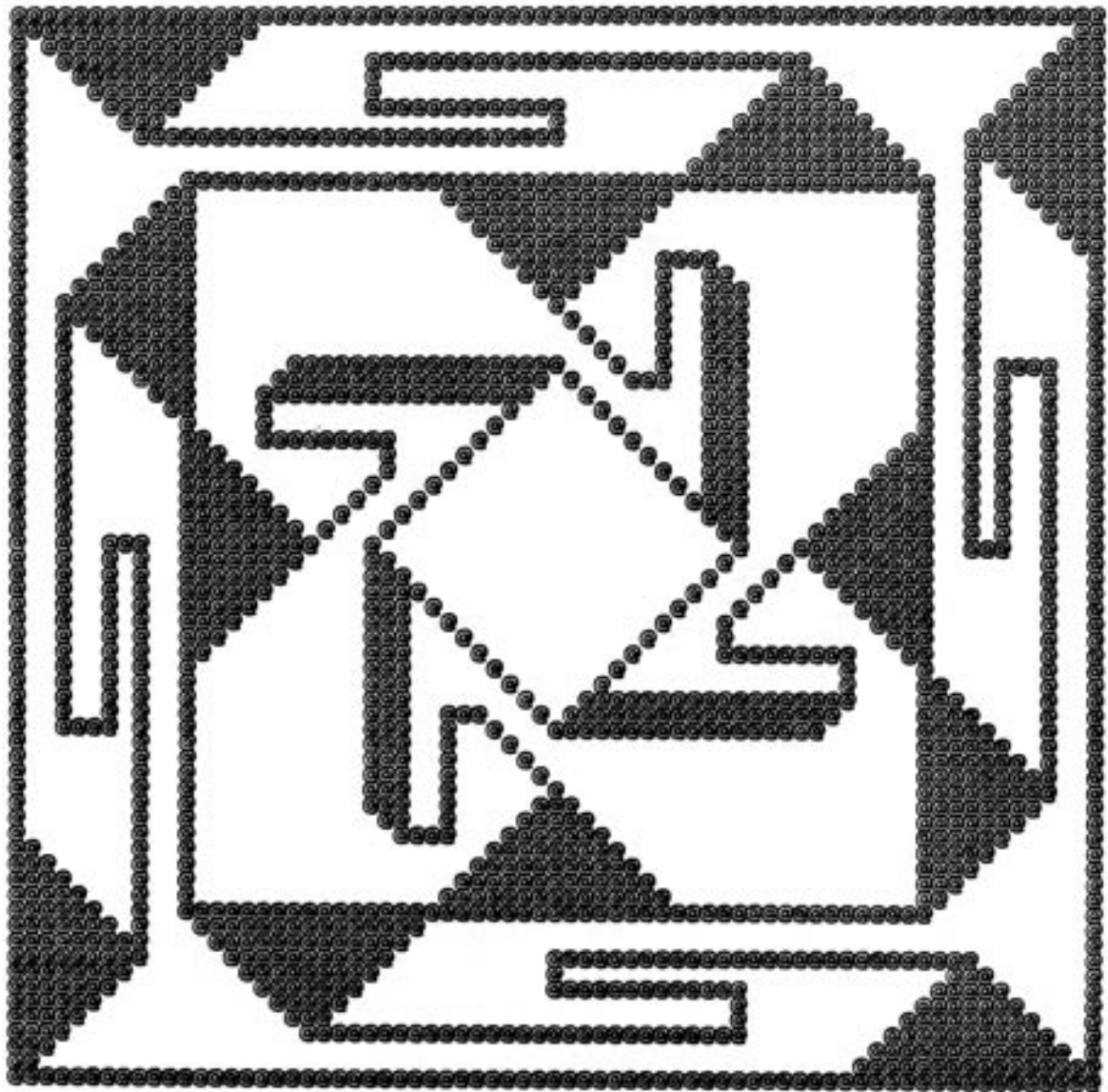


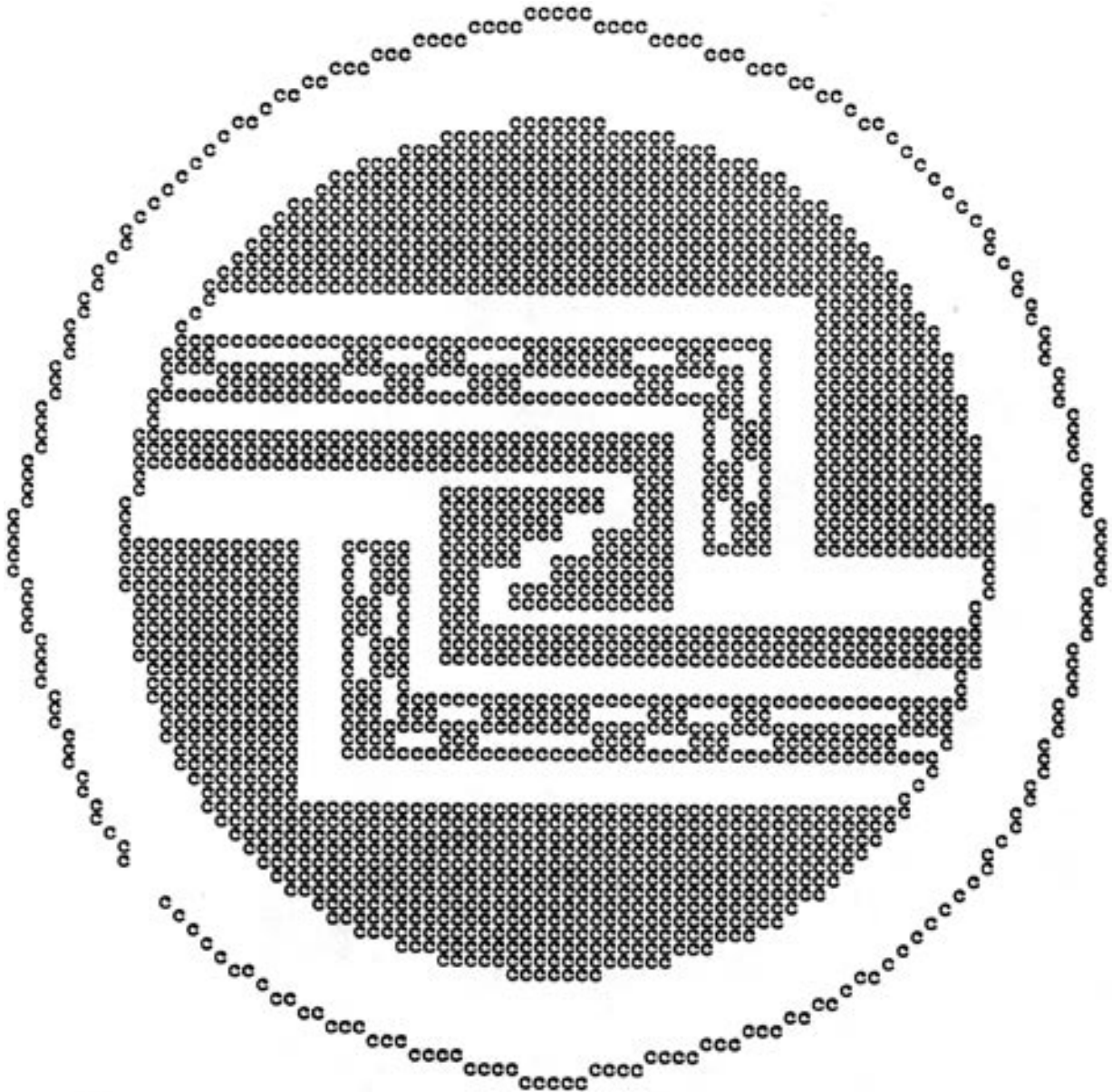


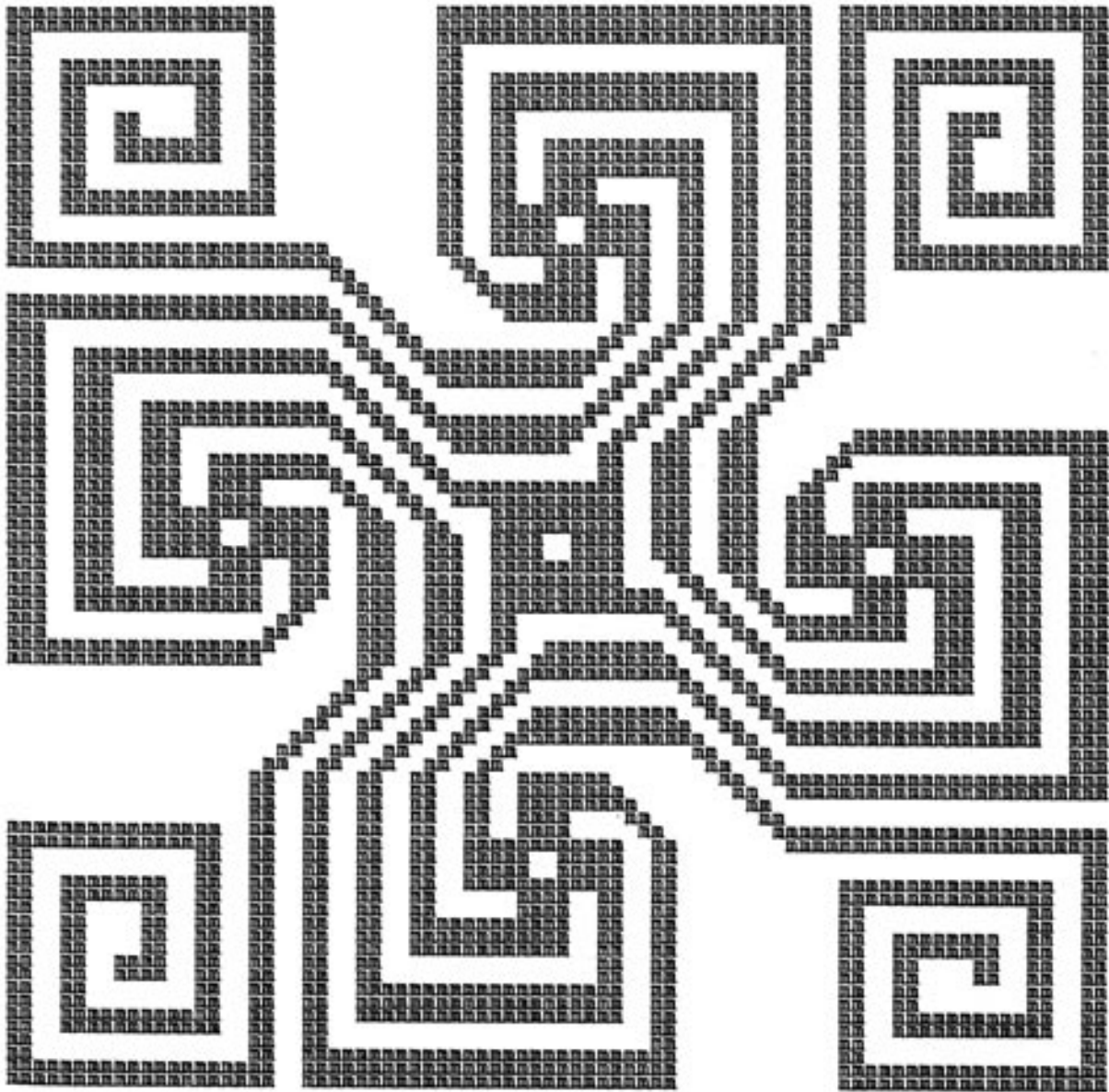










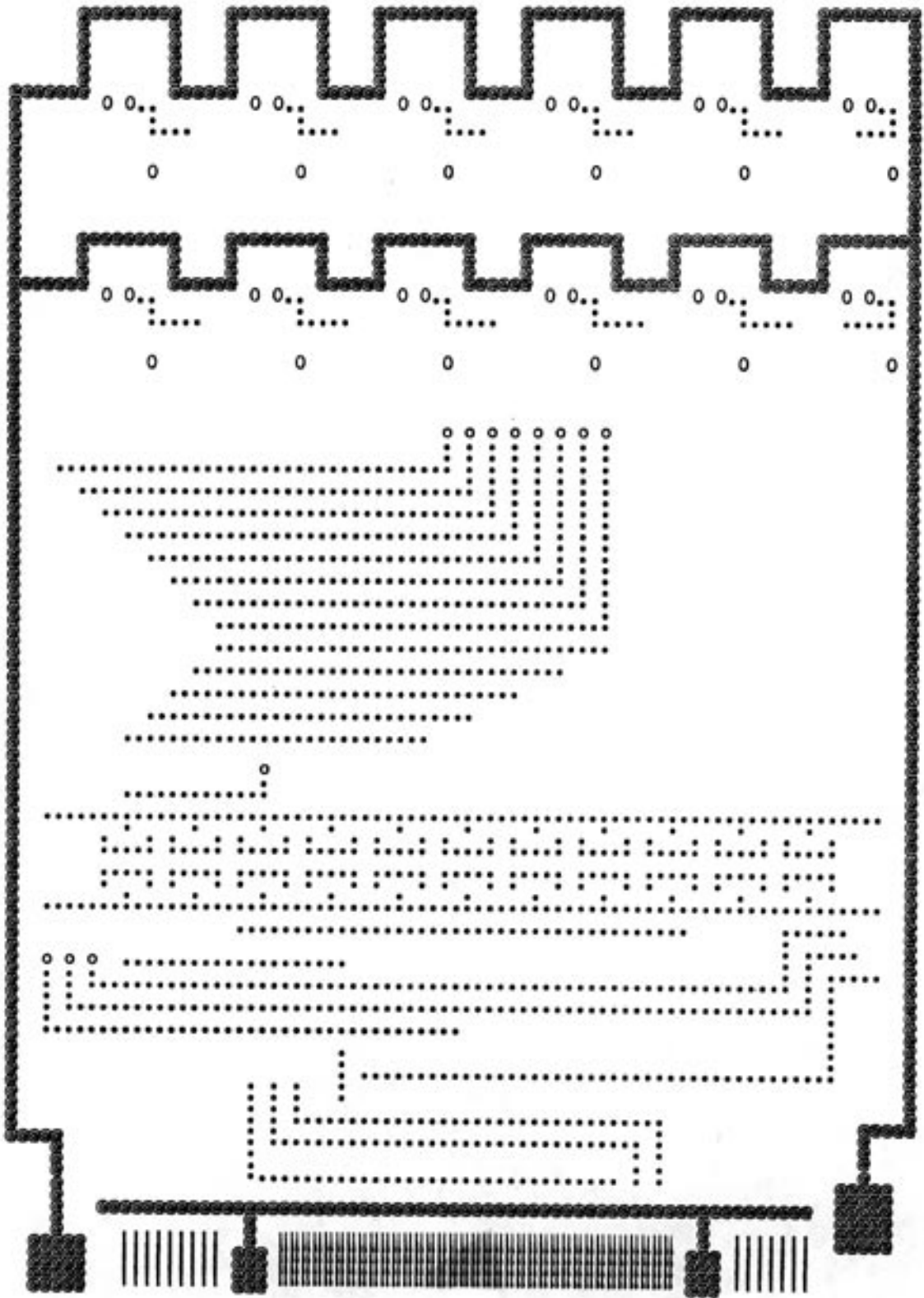


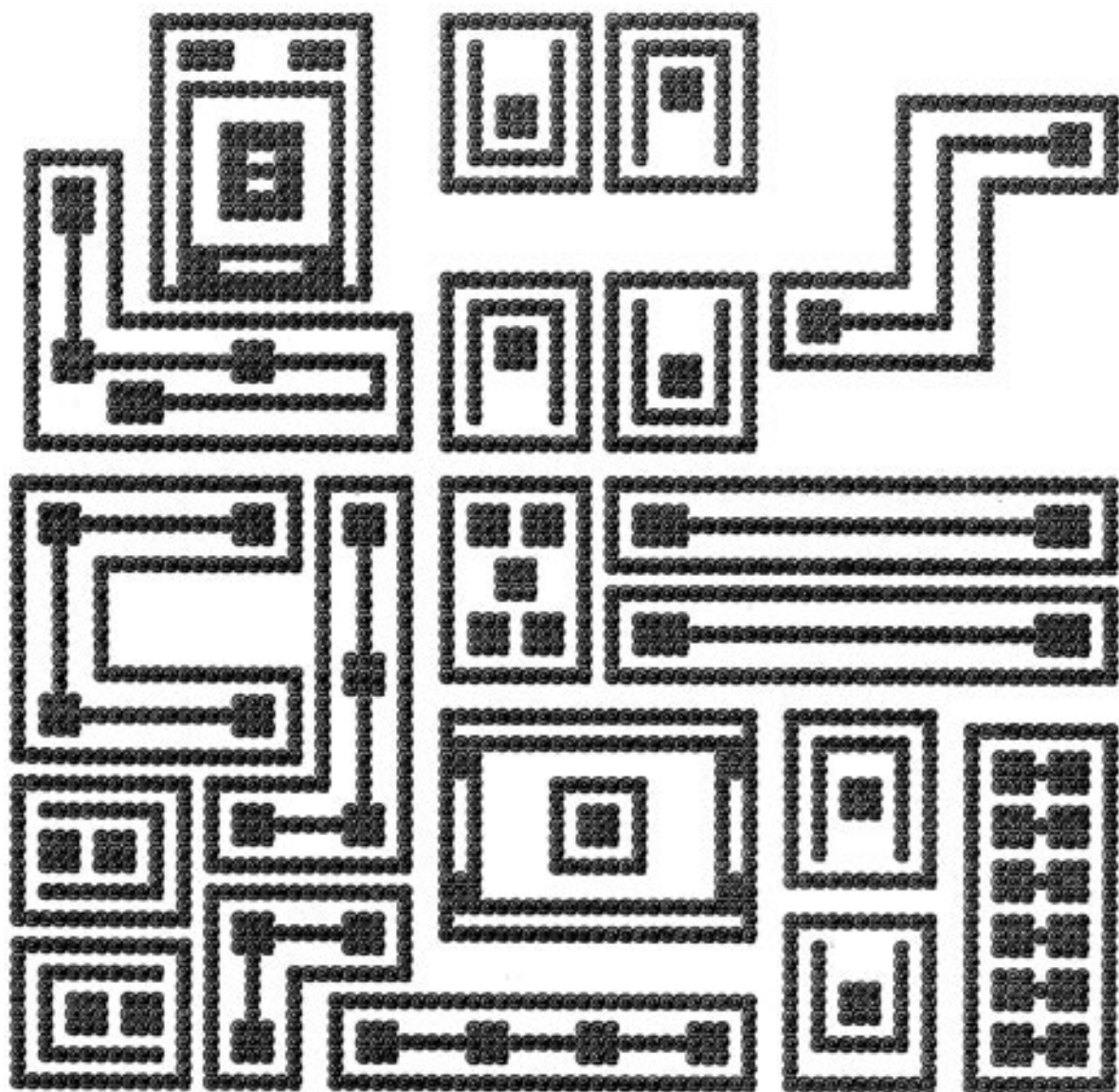
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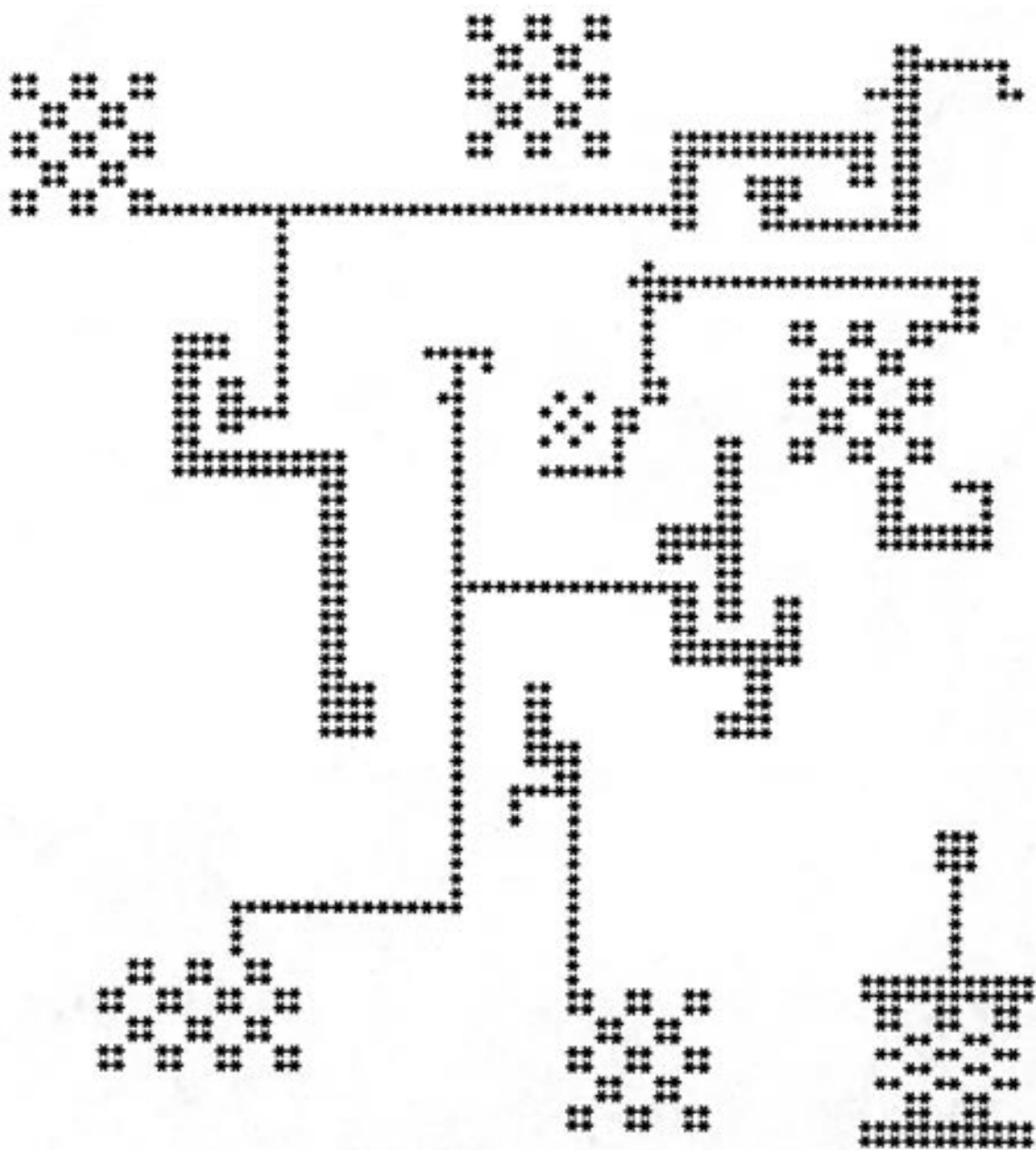
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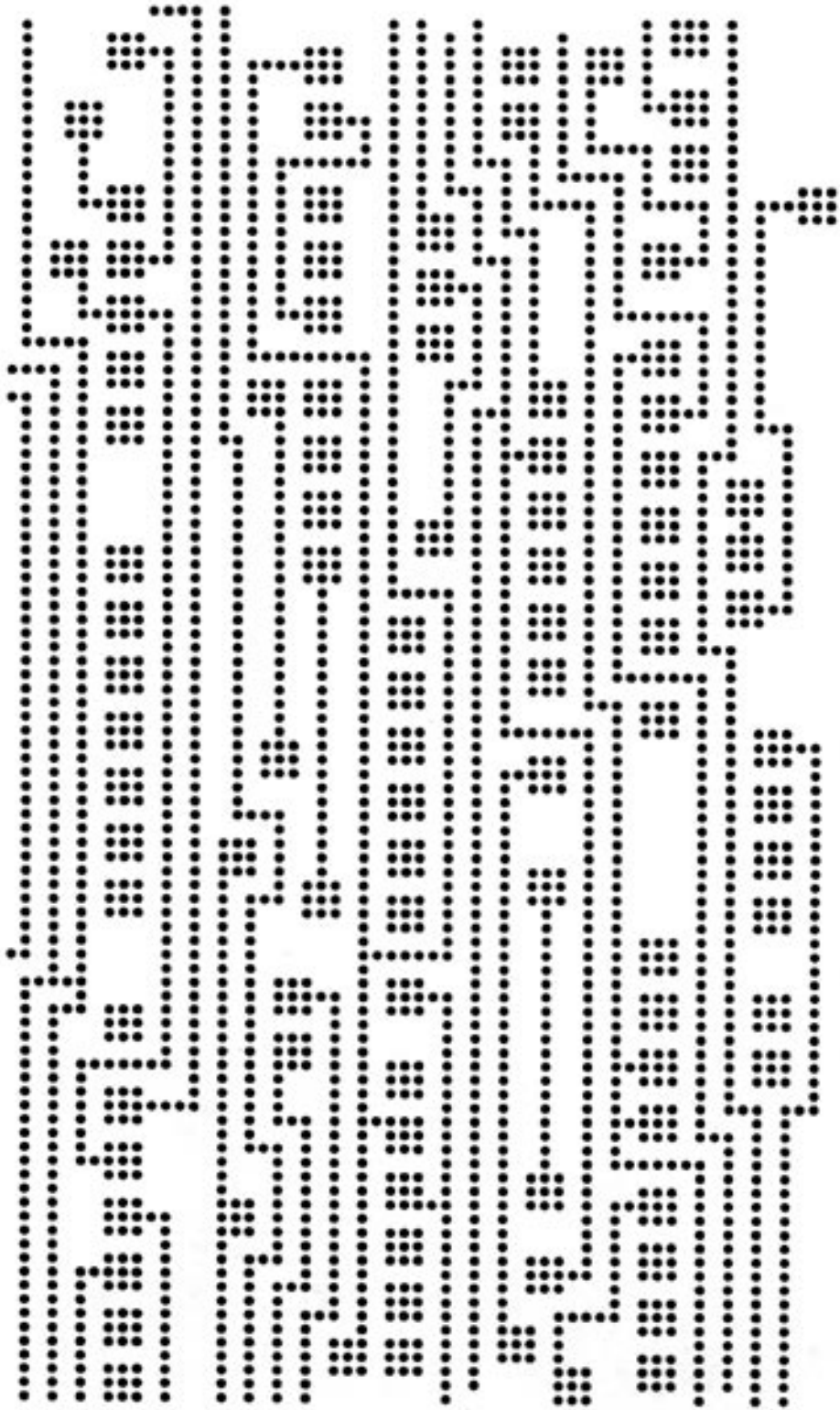


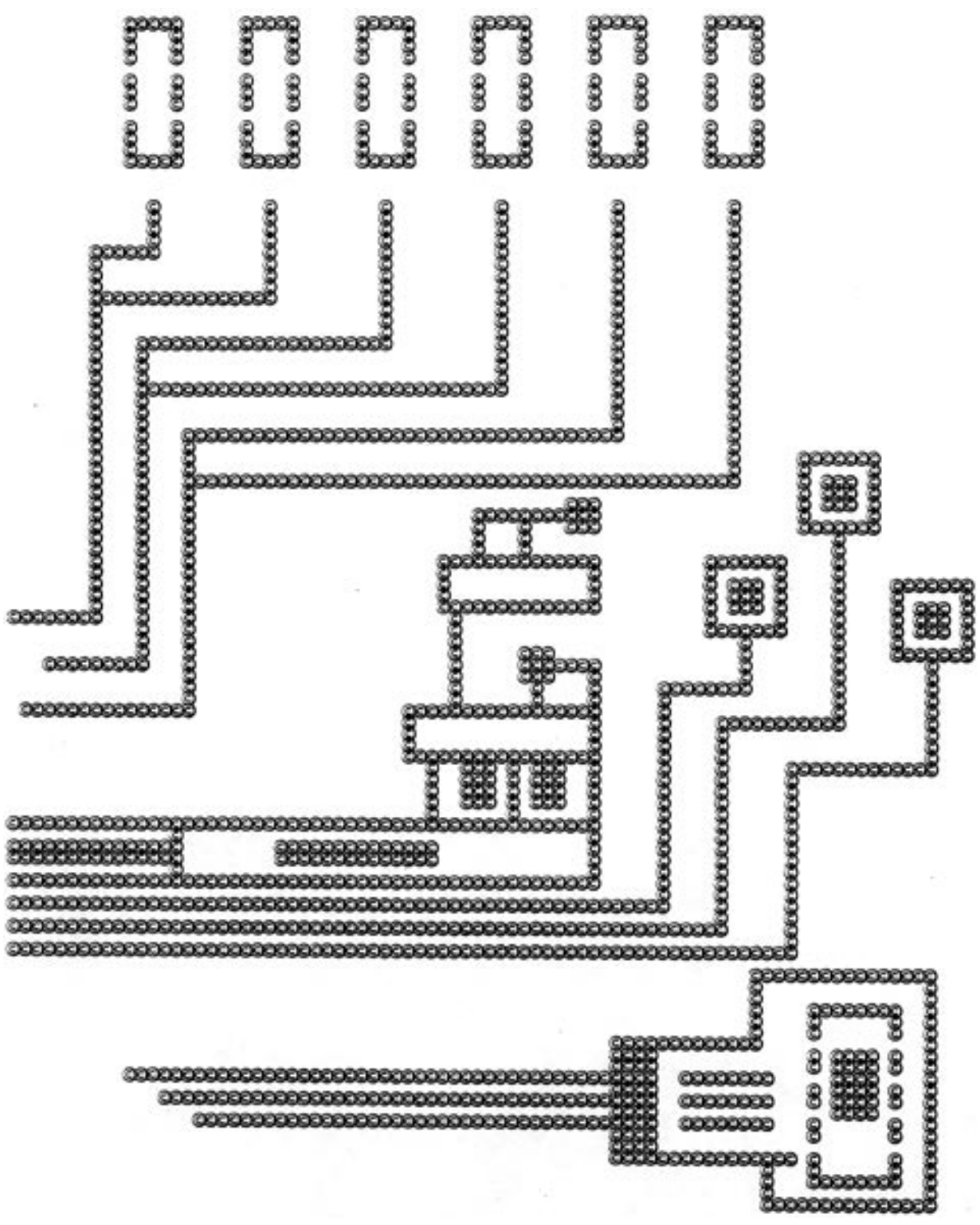


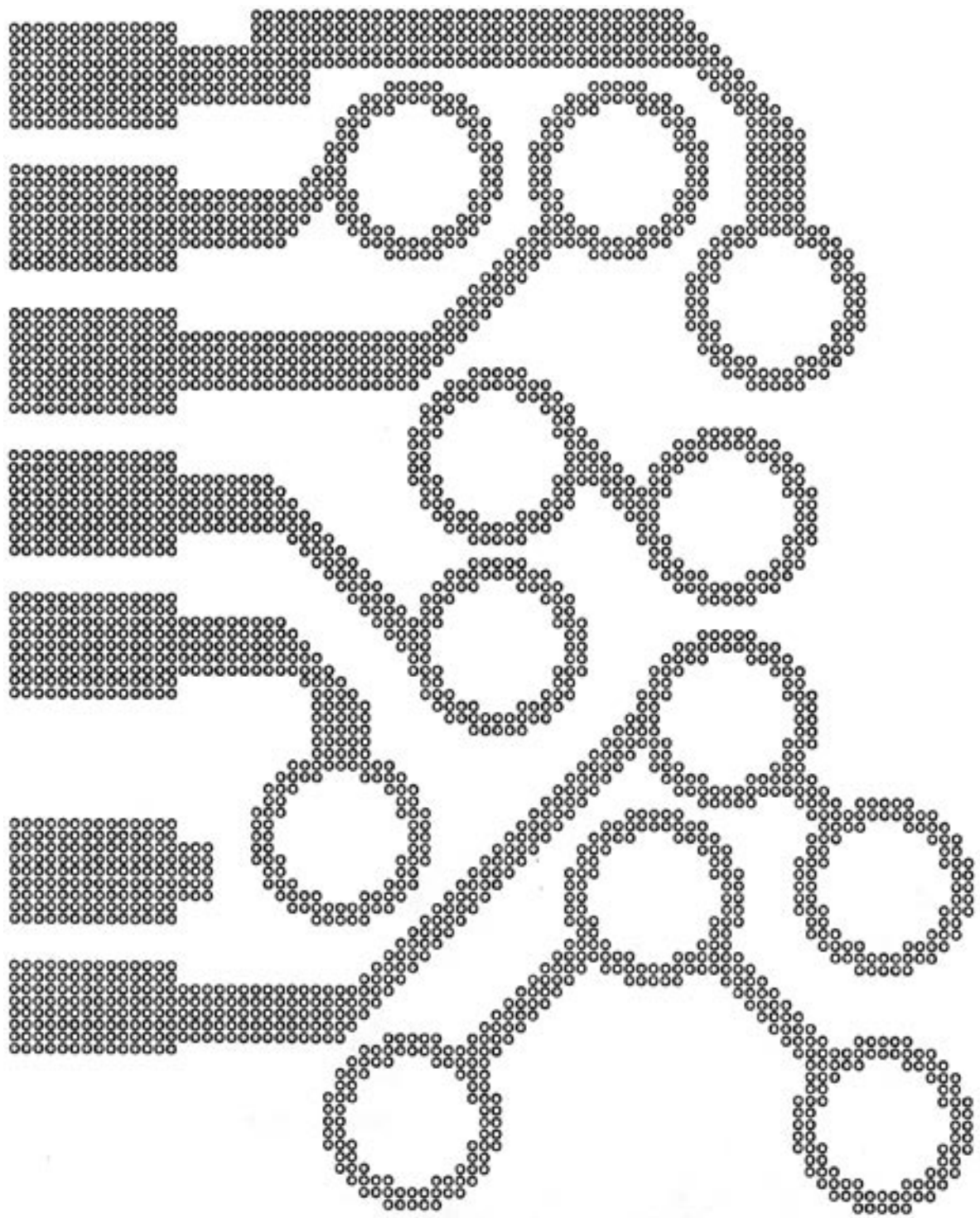


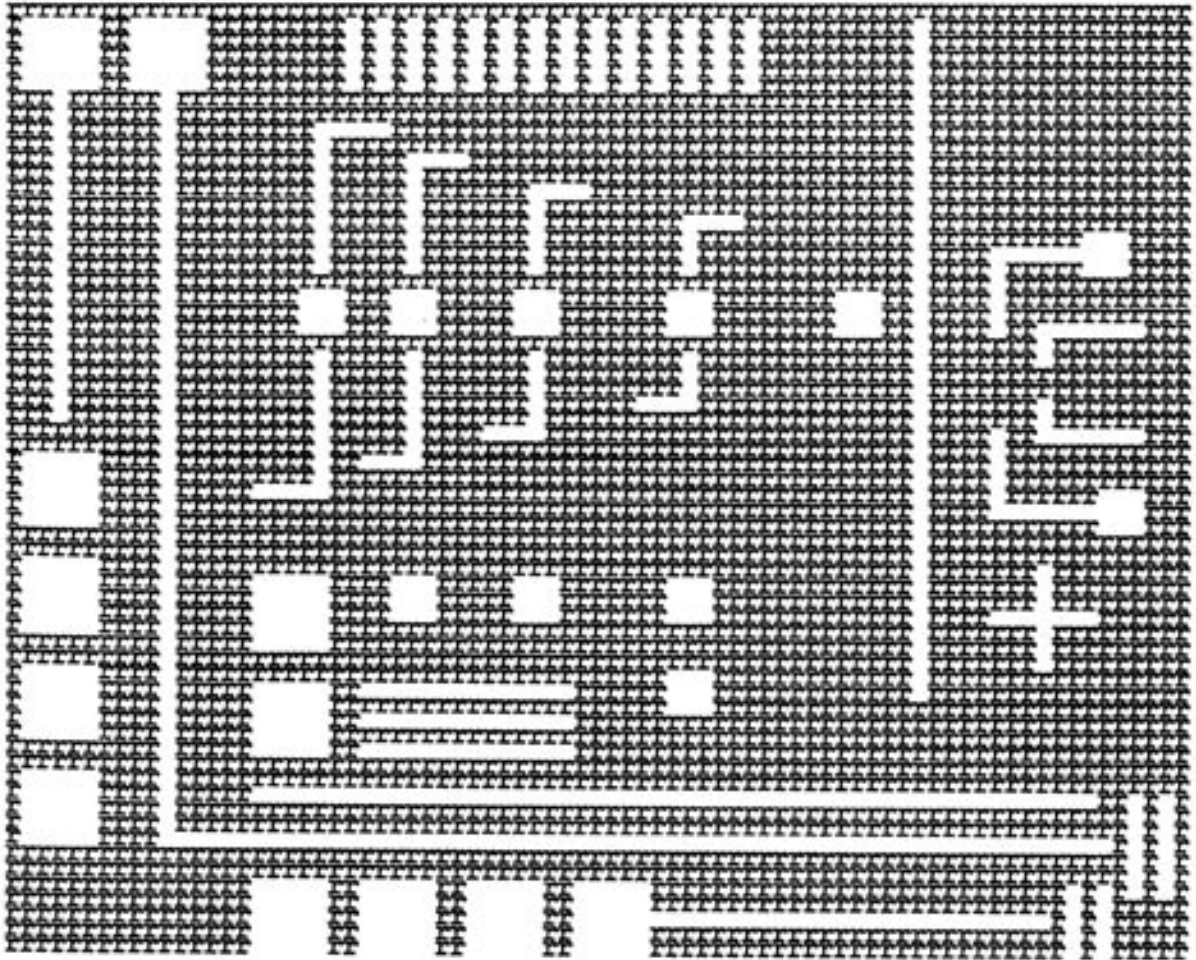


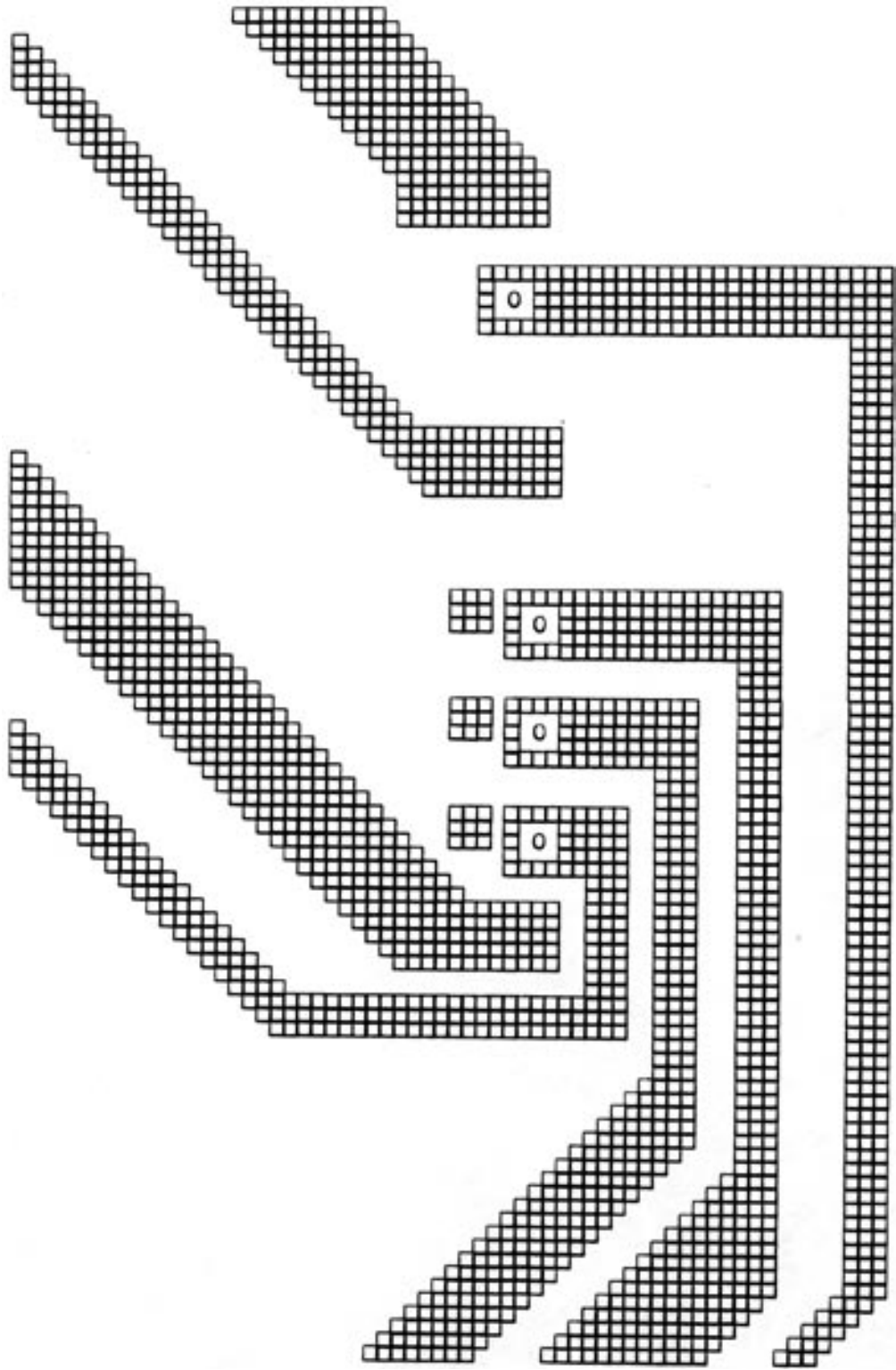


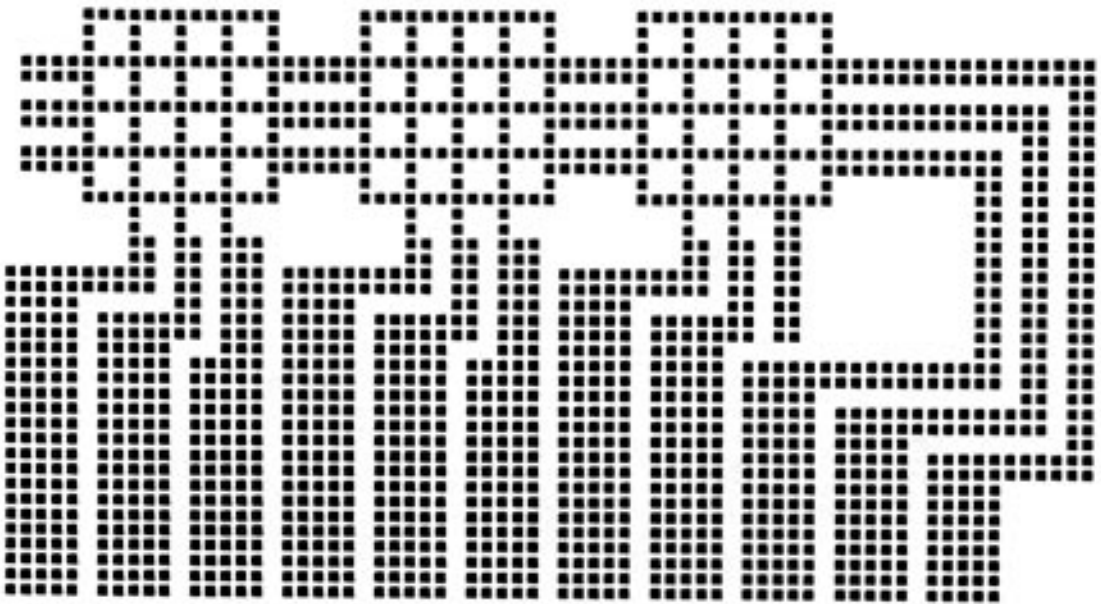
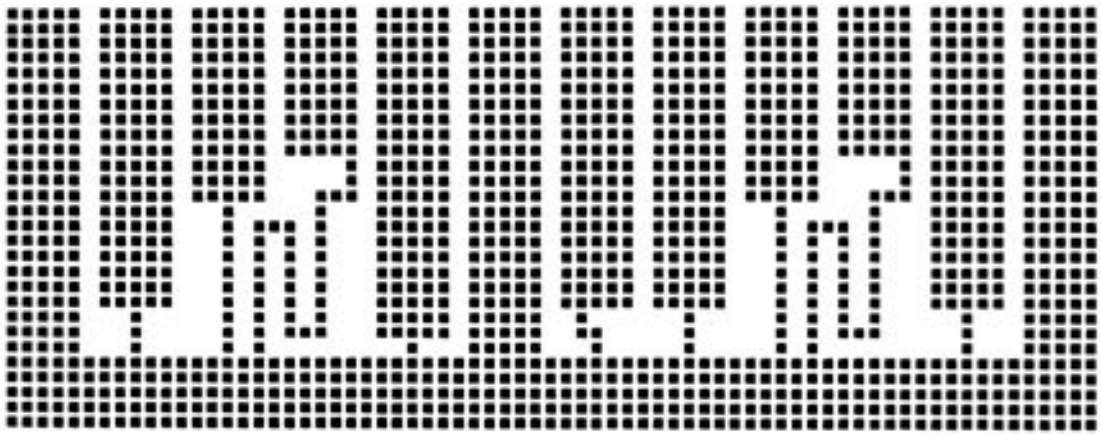




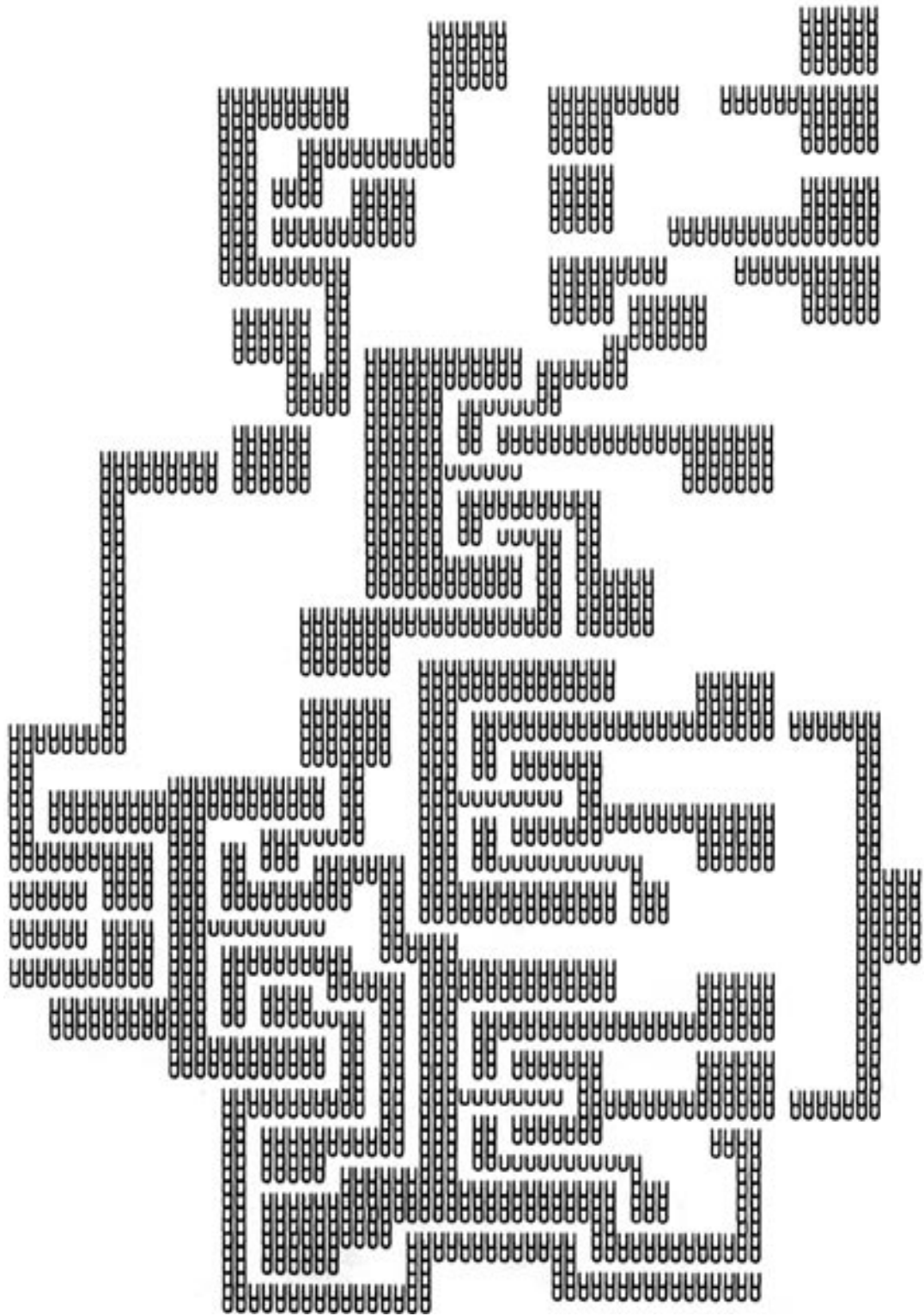


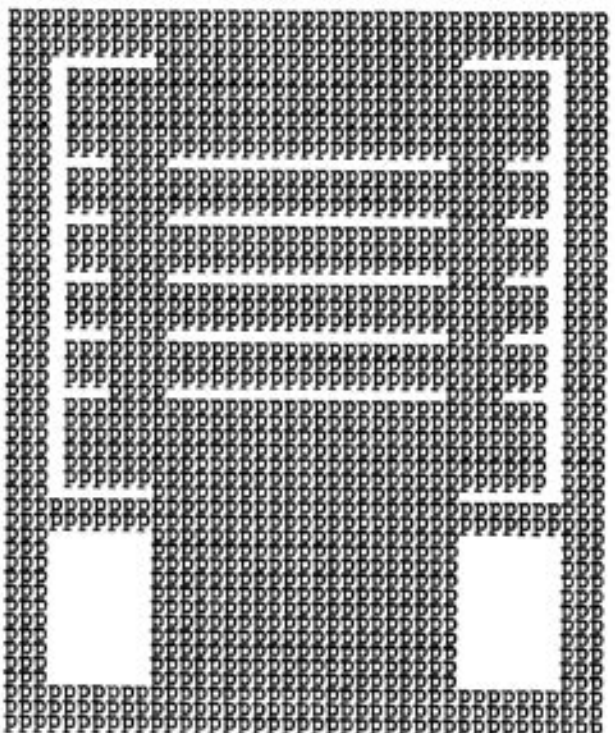
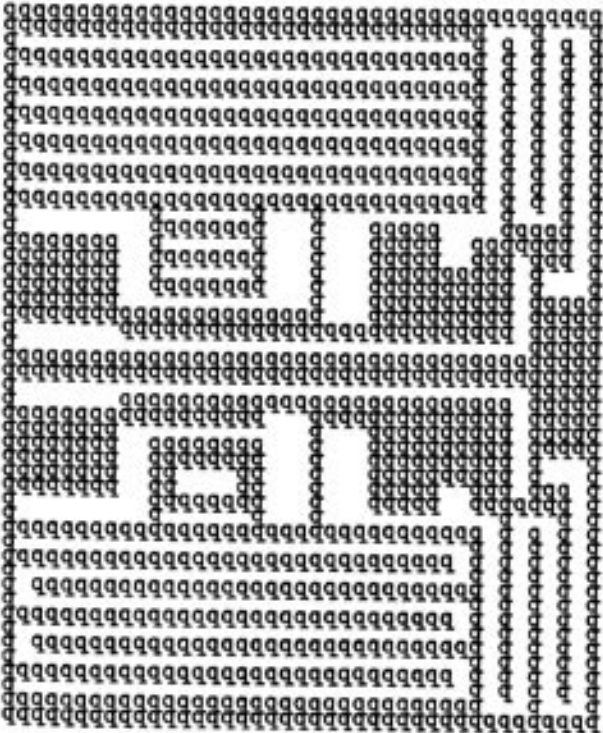
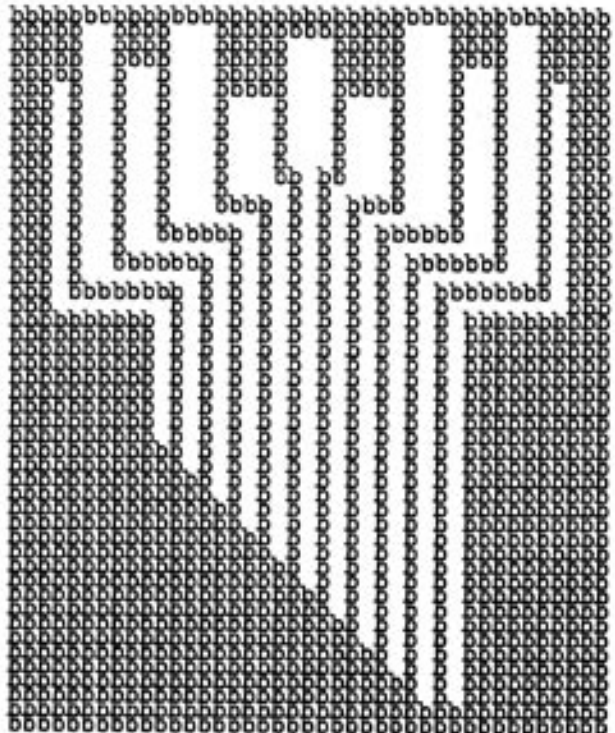
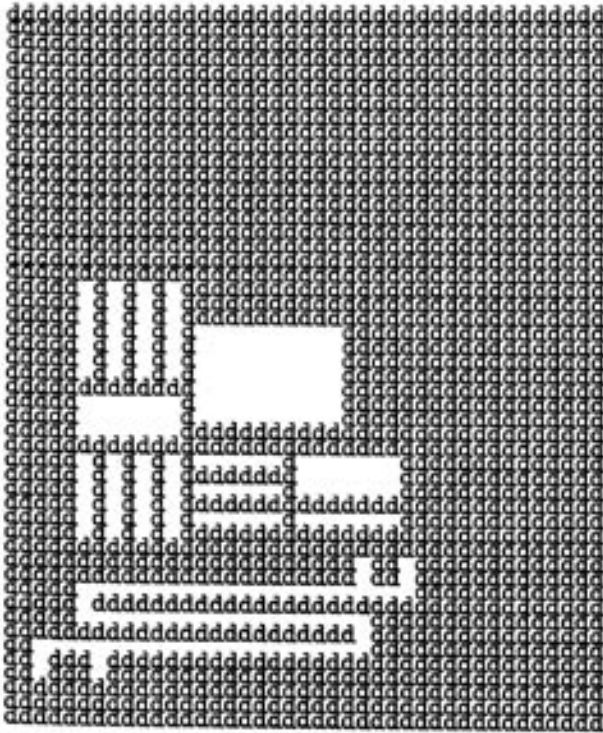




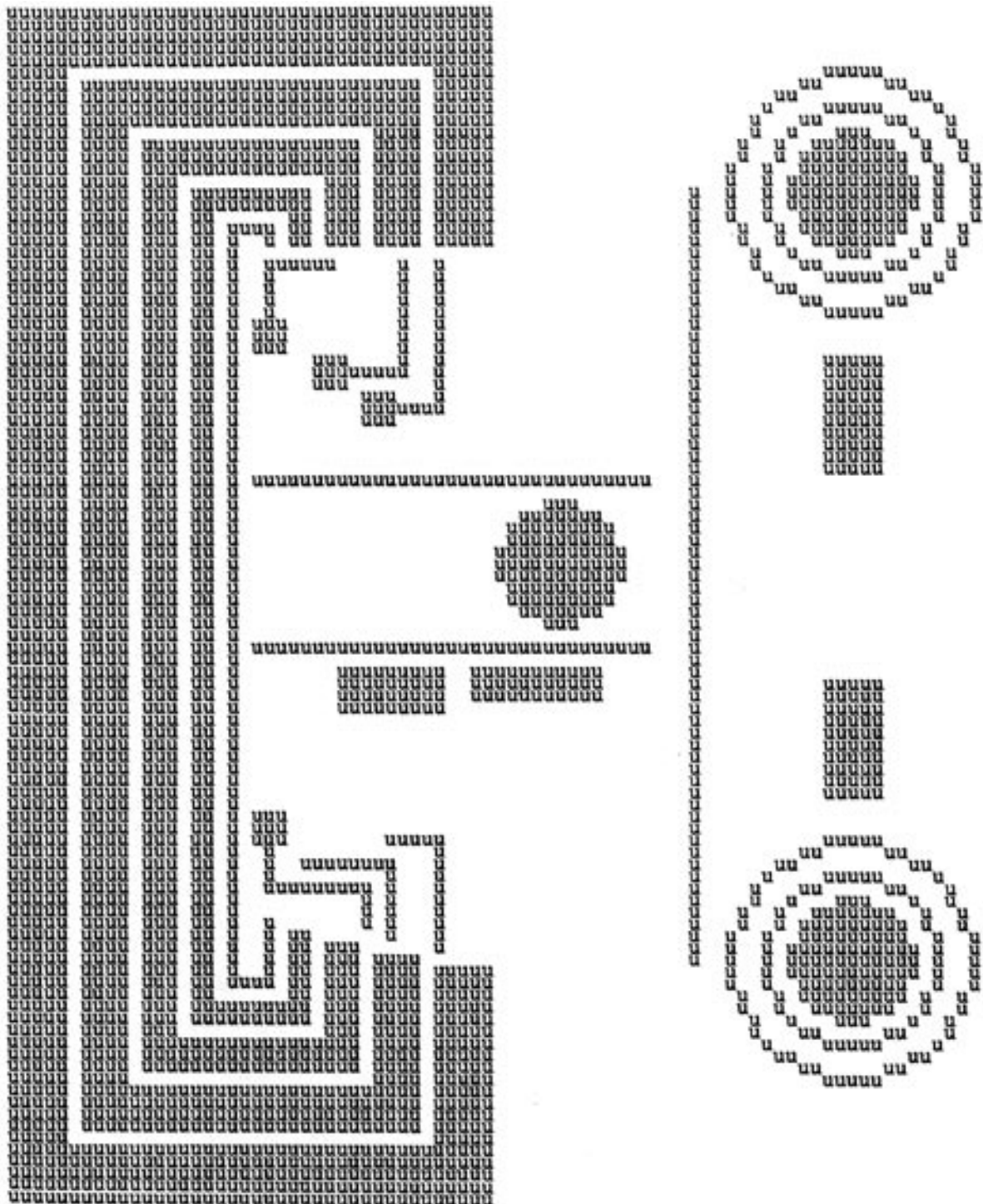


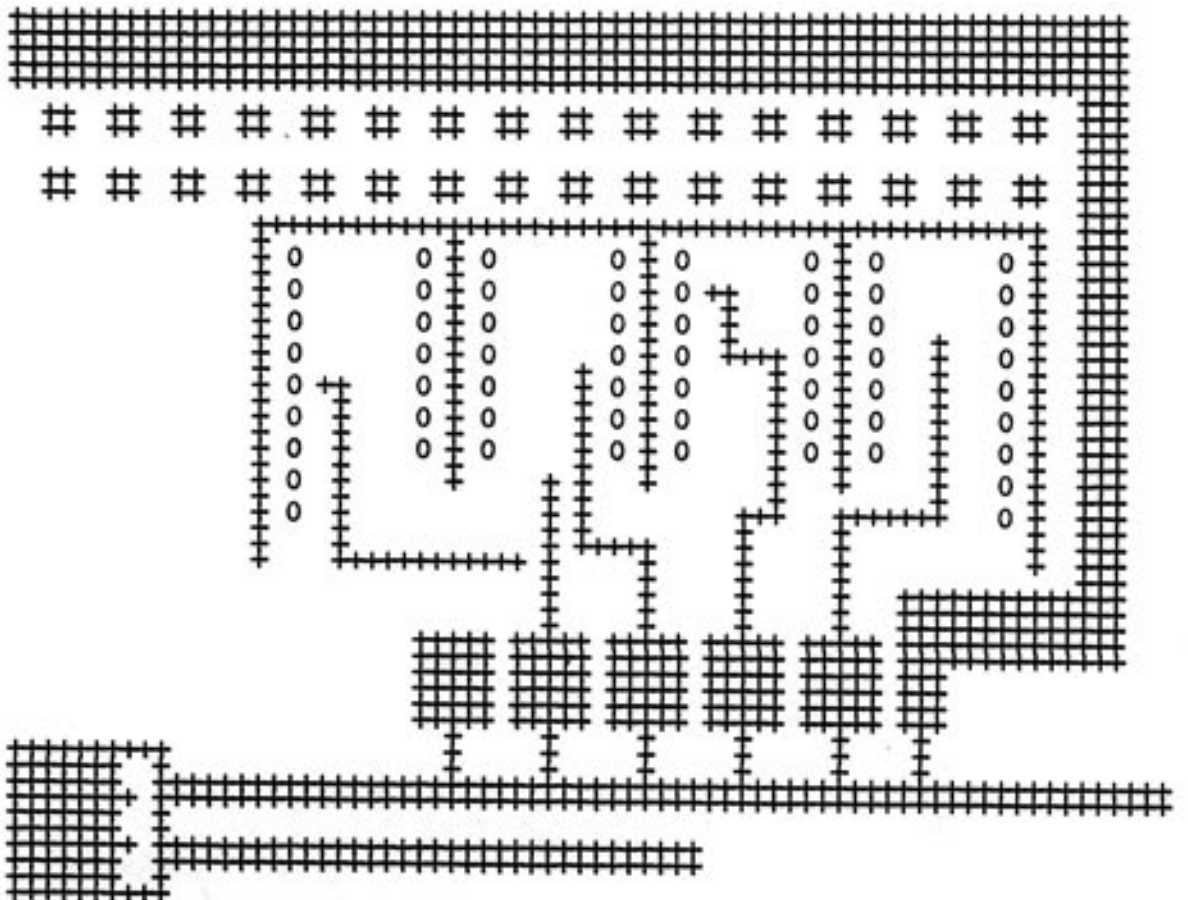
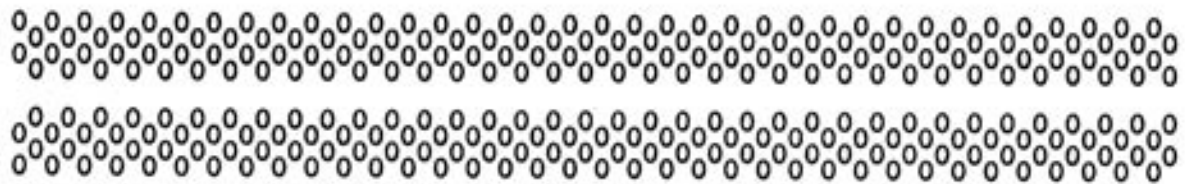
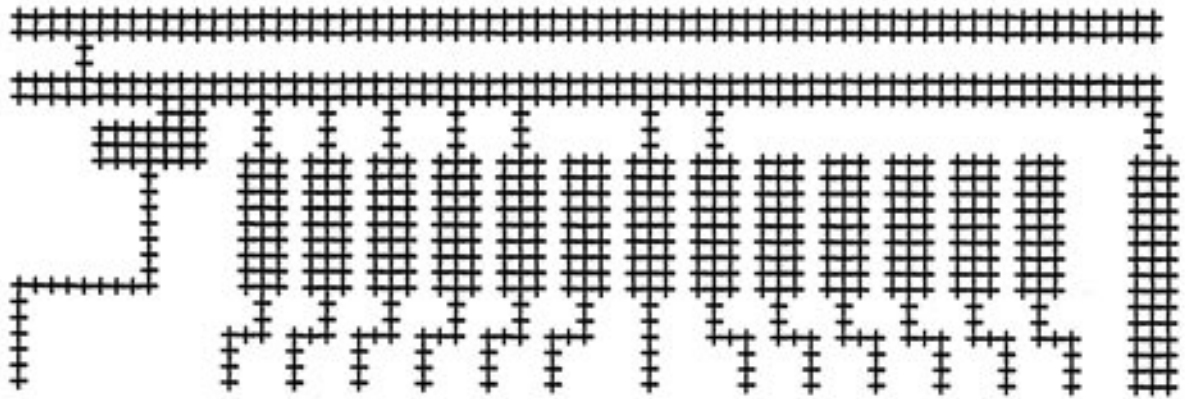


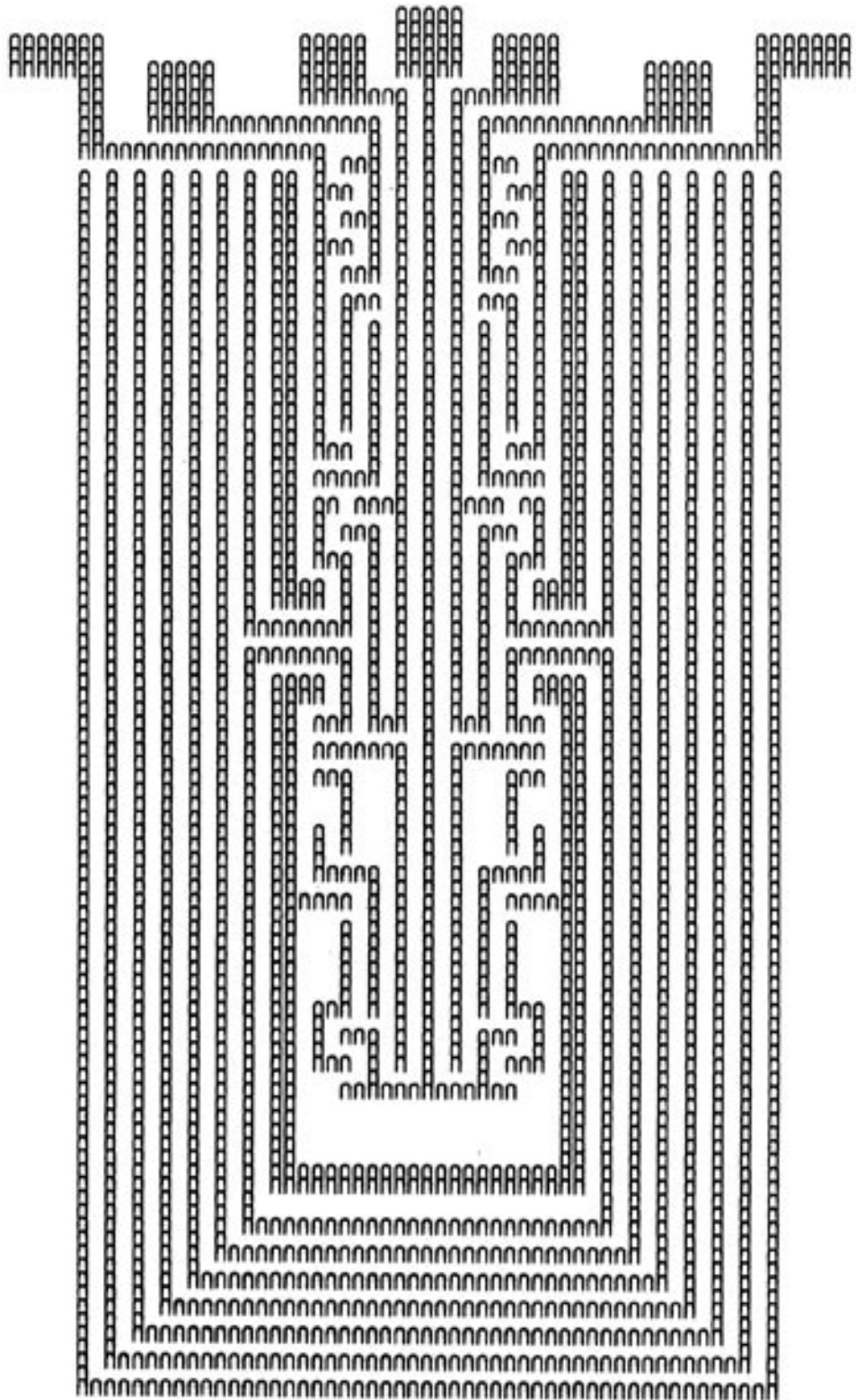


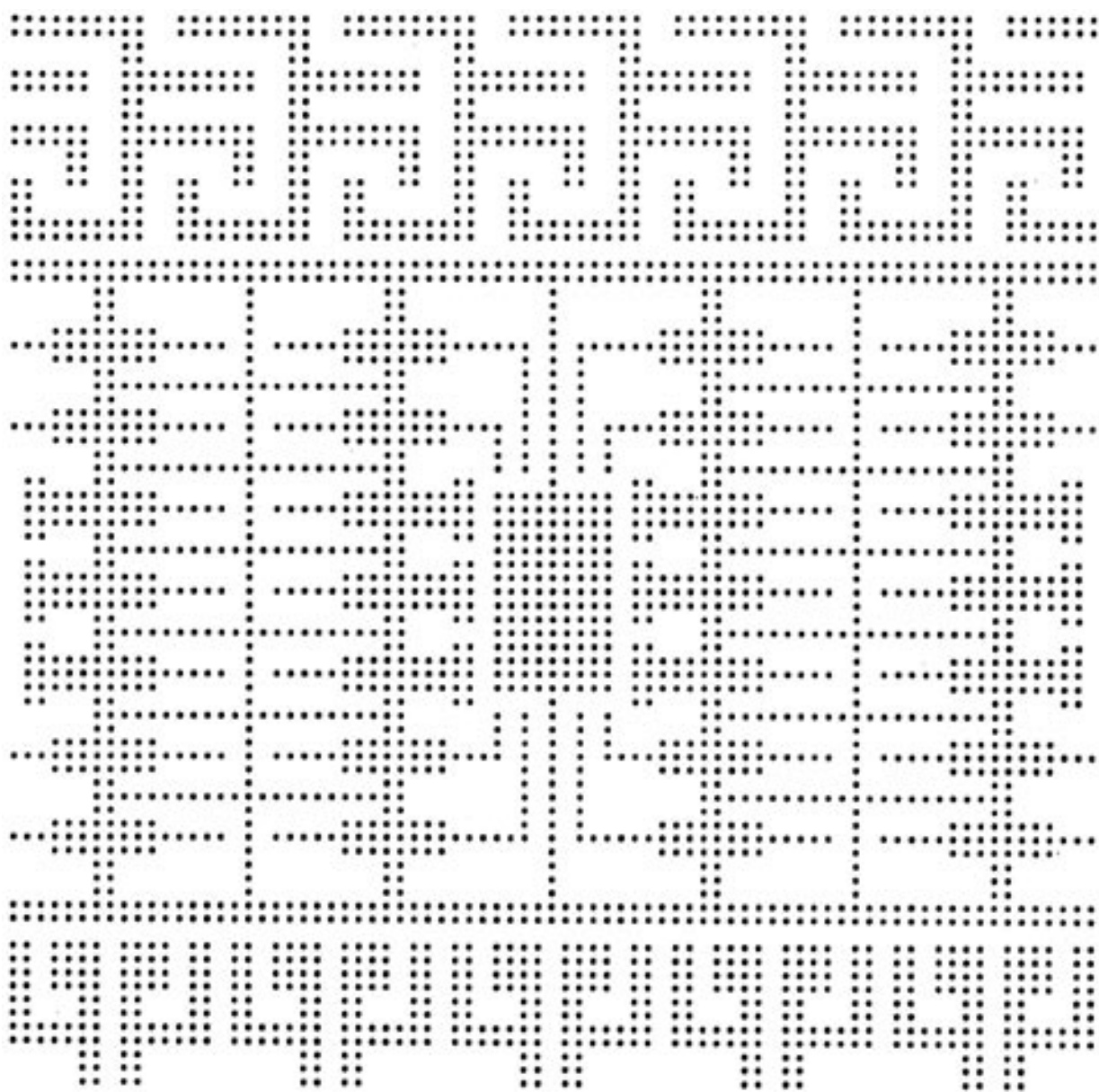


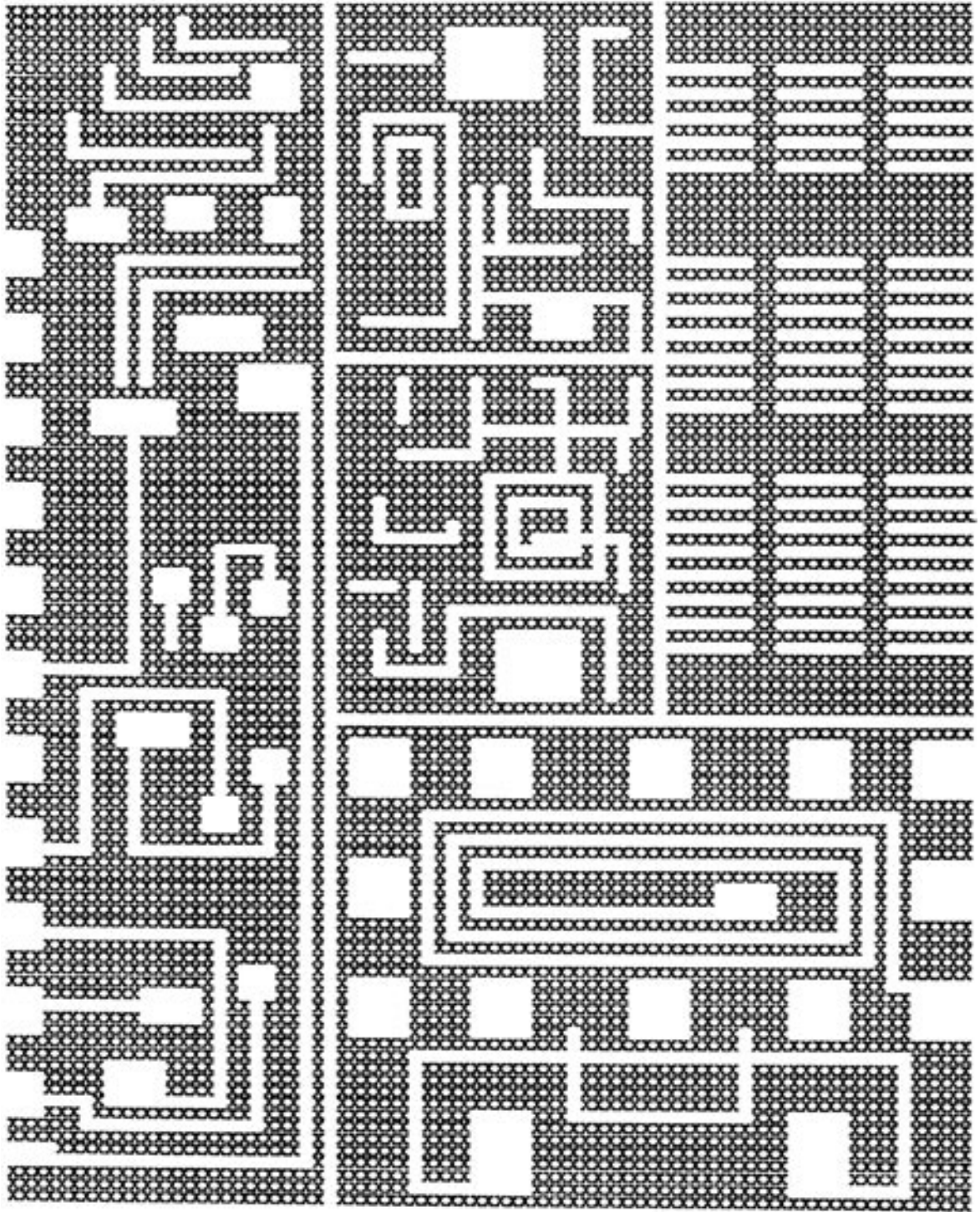




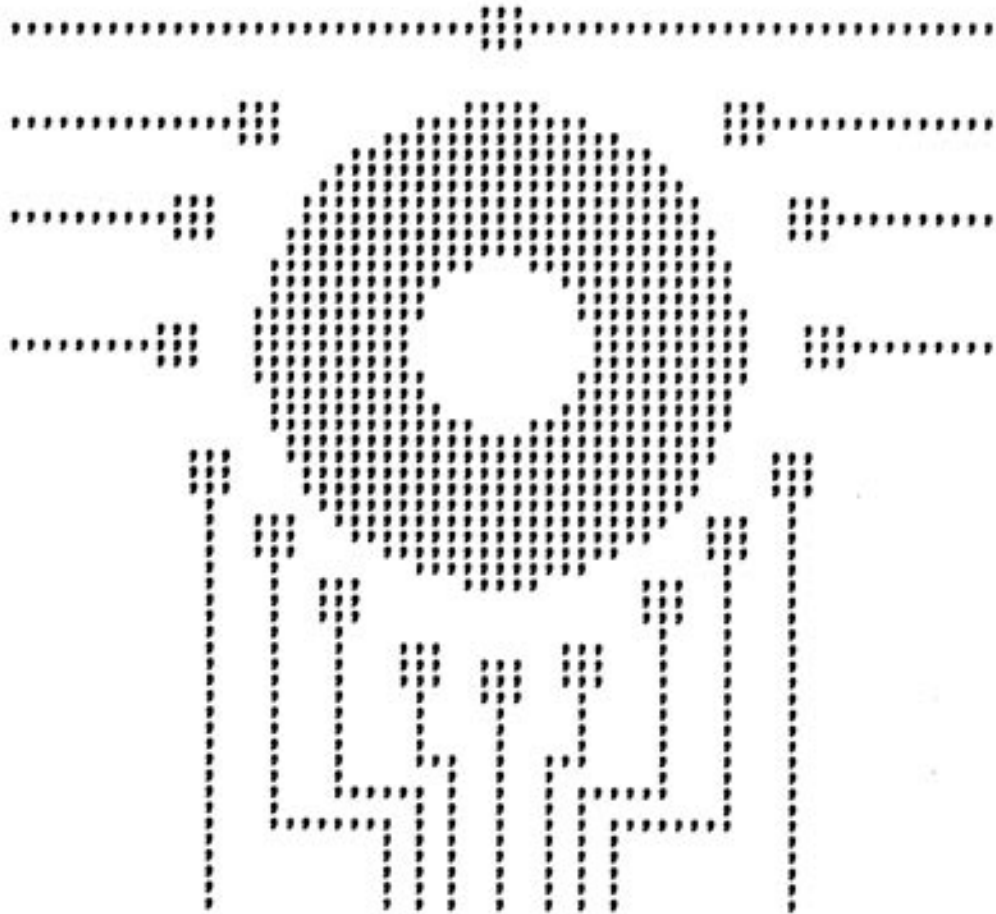


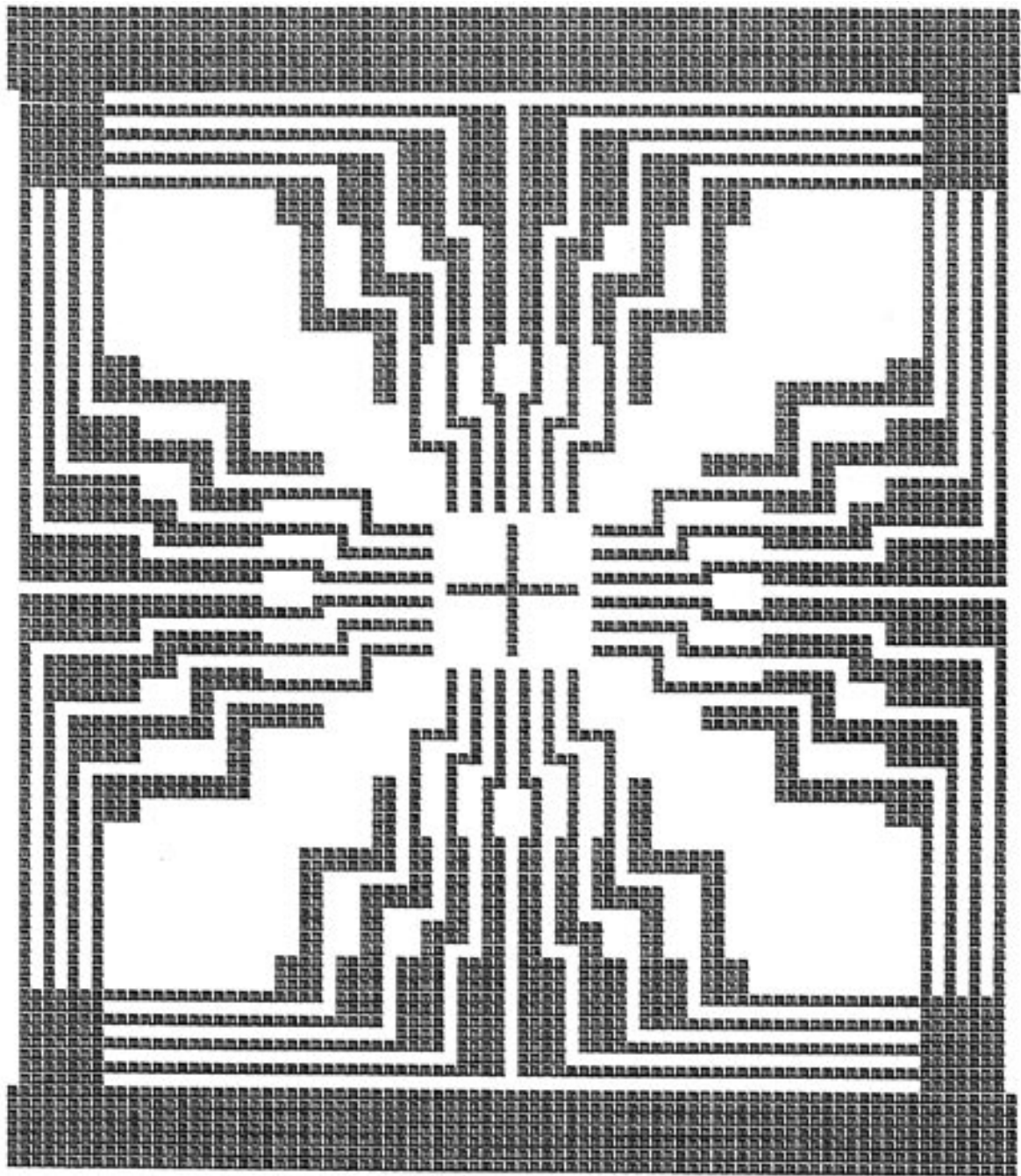














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5th apocalypse

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michael hannon and nancy dahl

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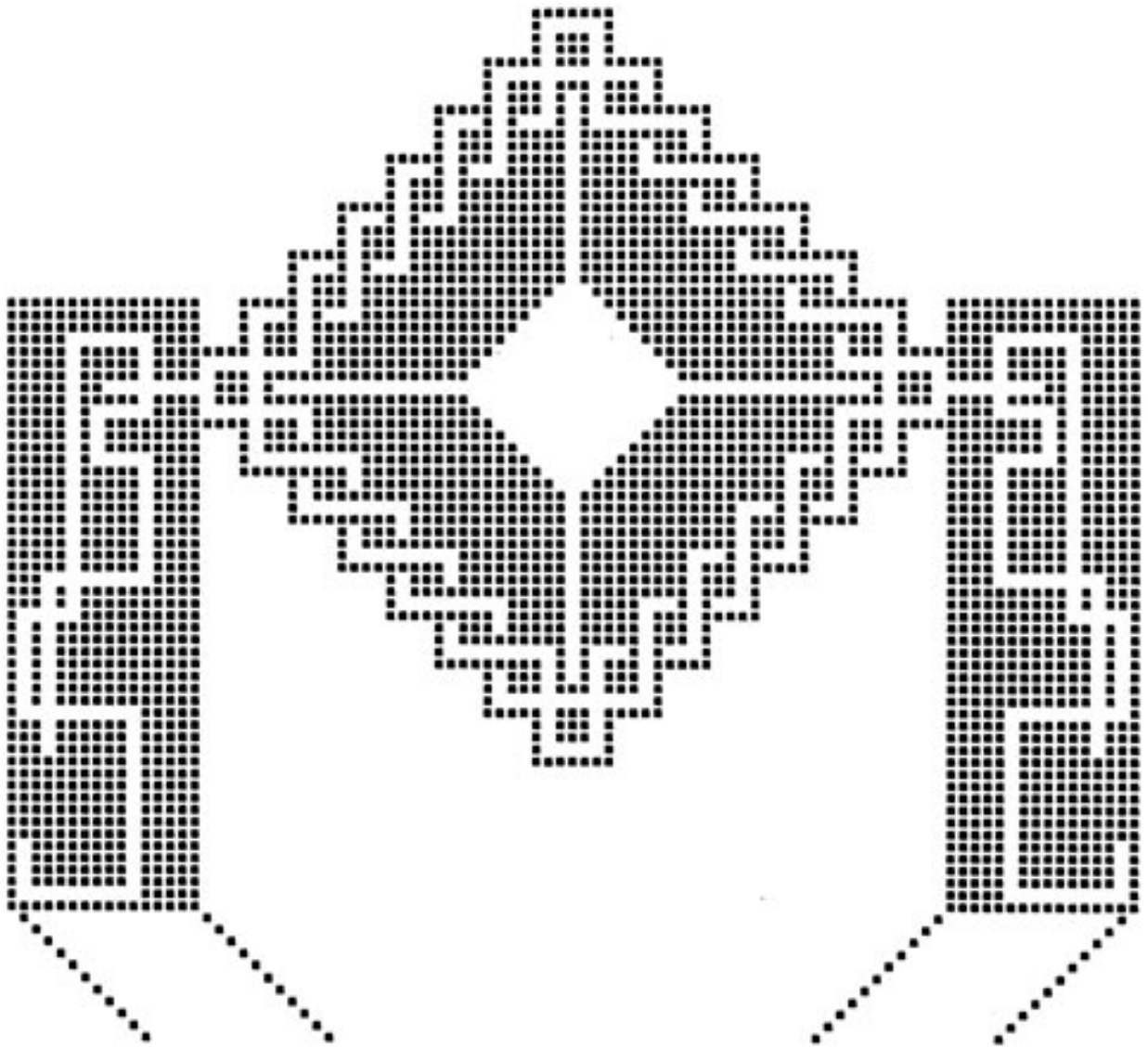
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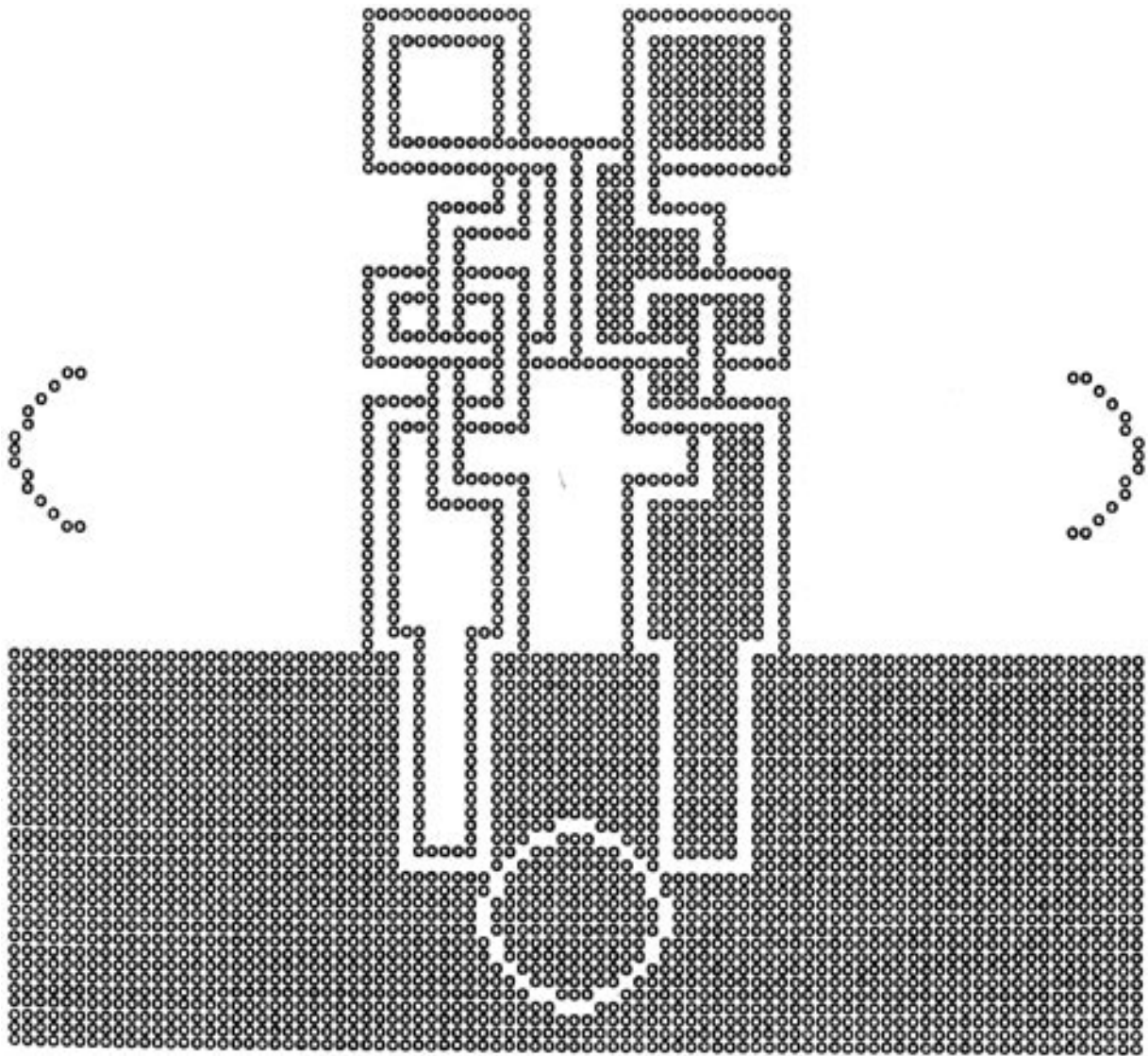
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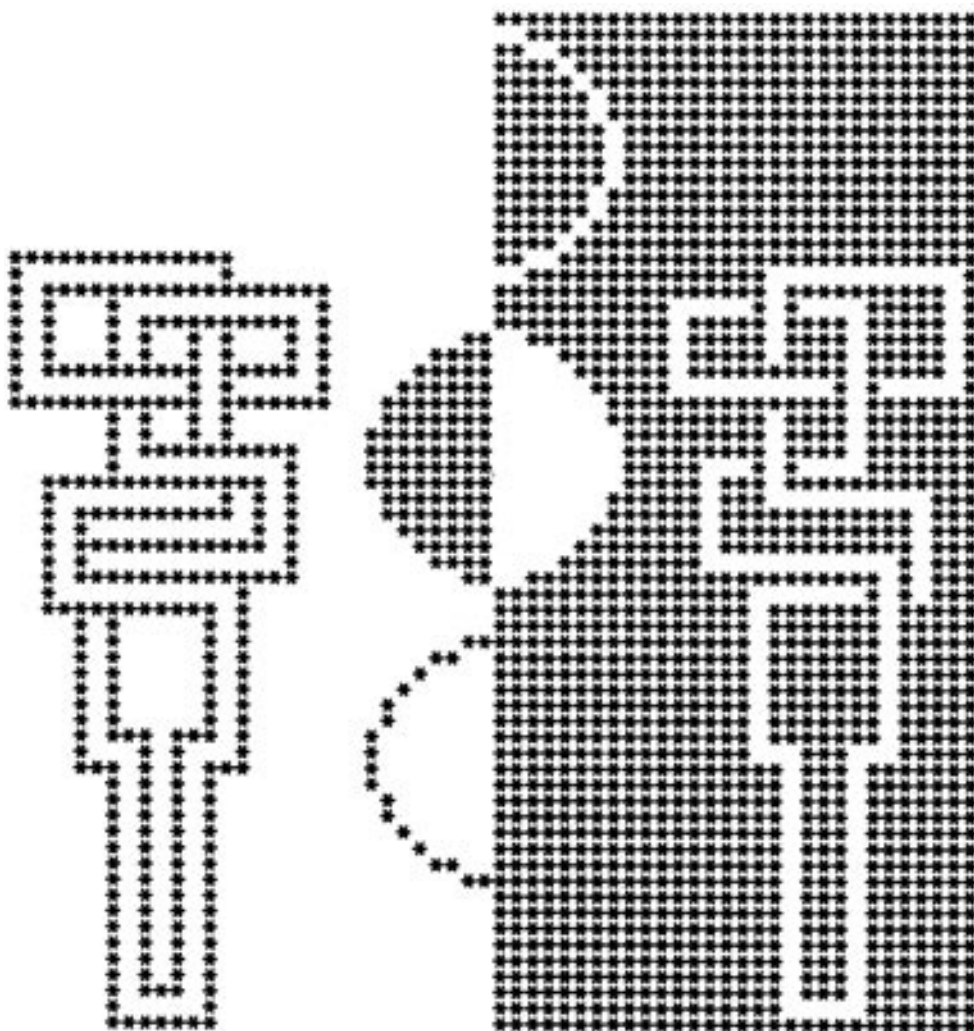
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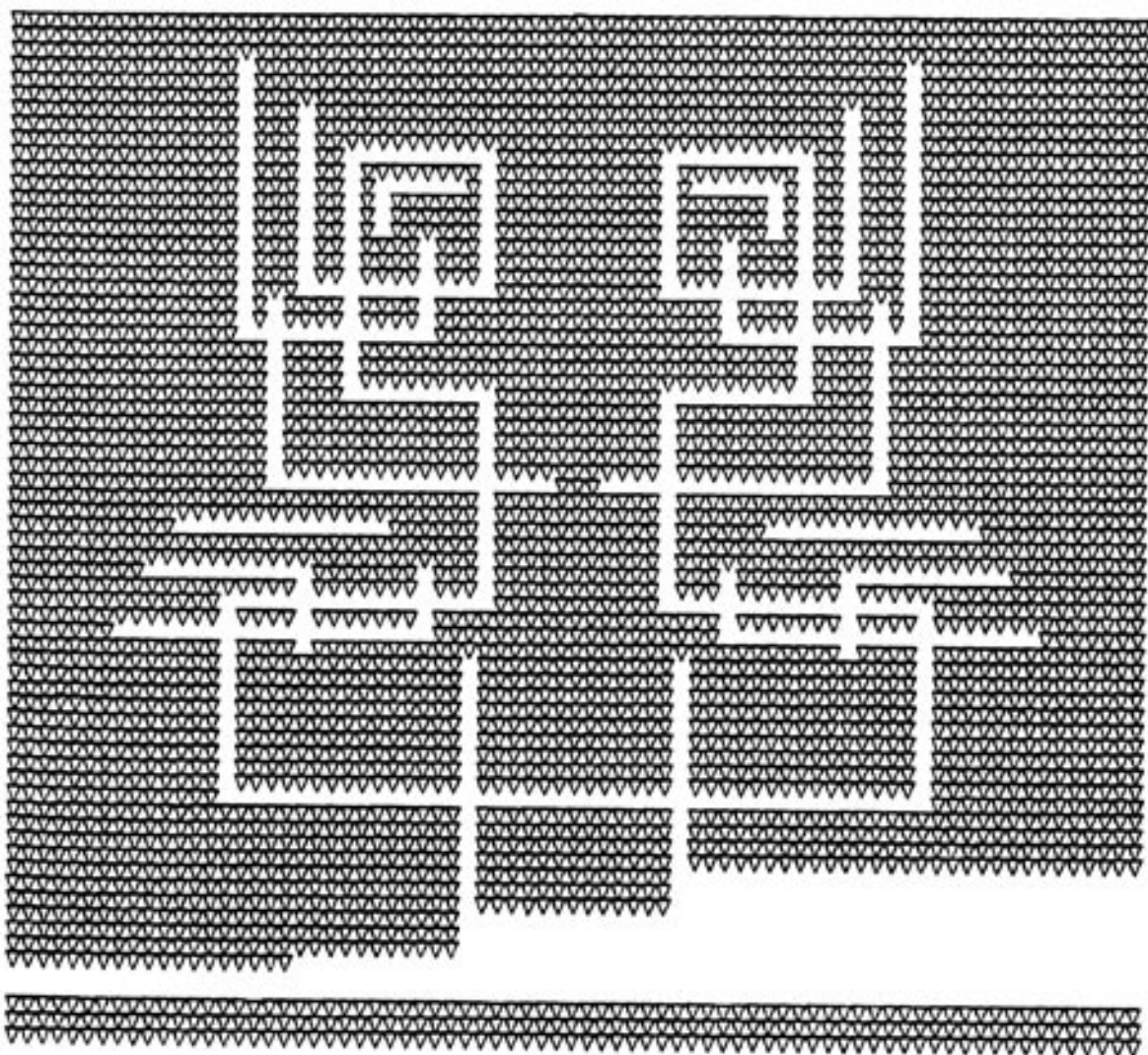
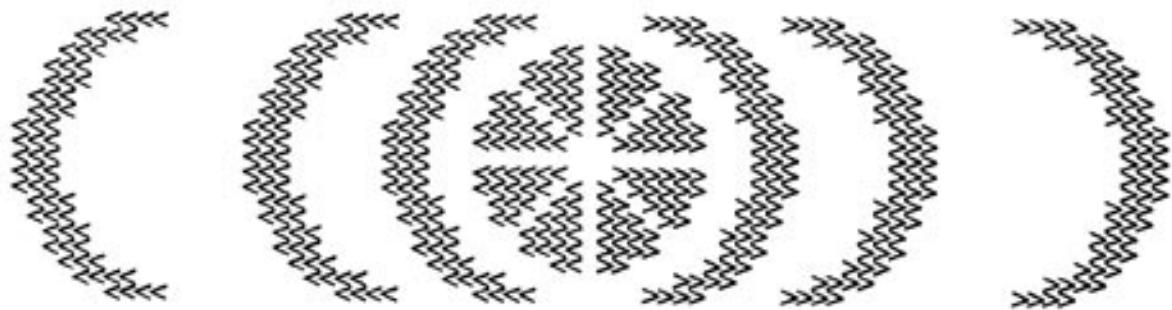
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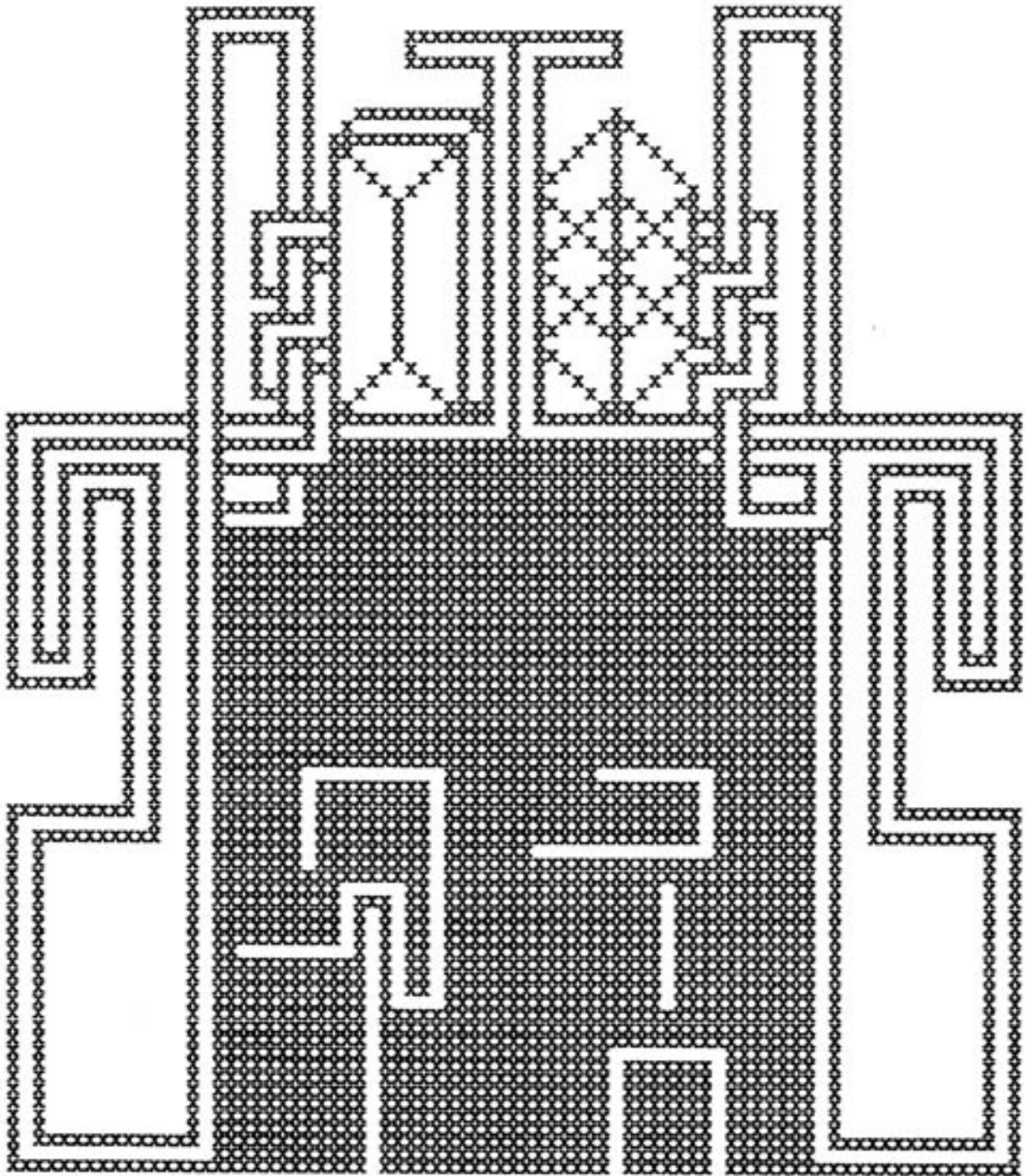
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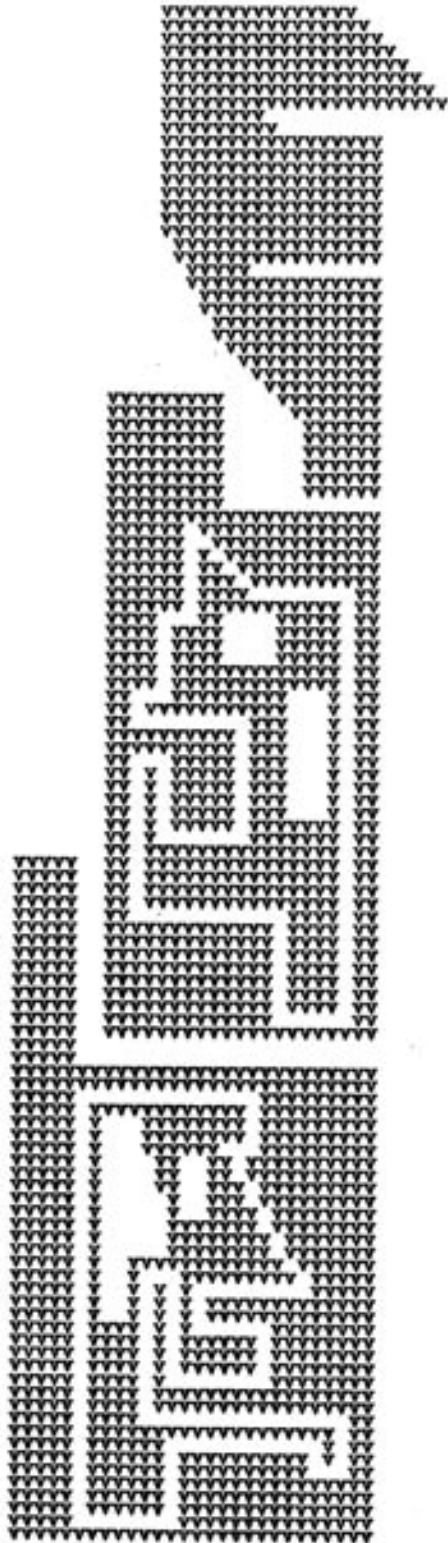




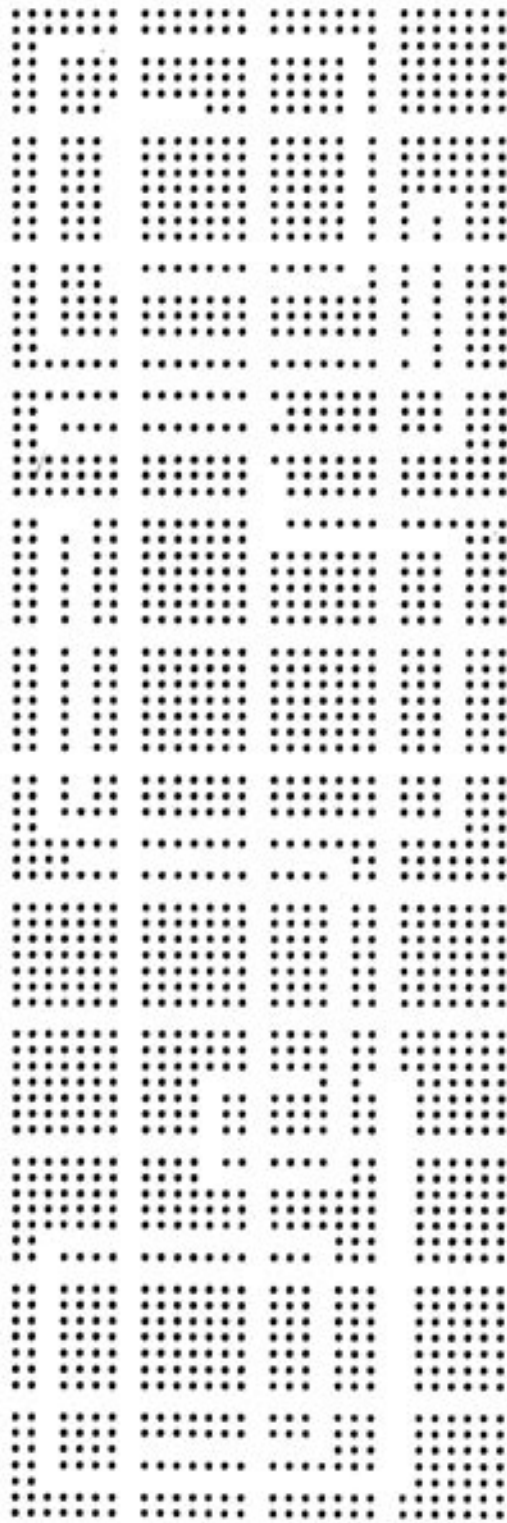
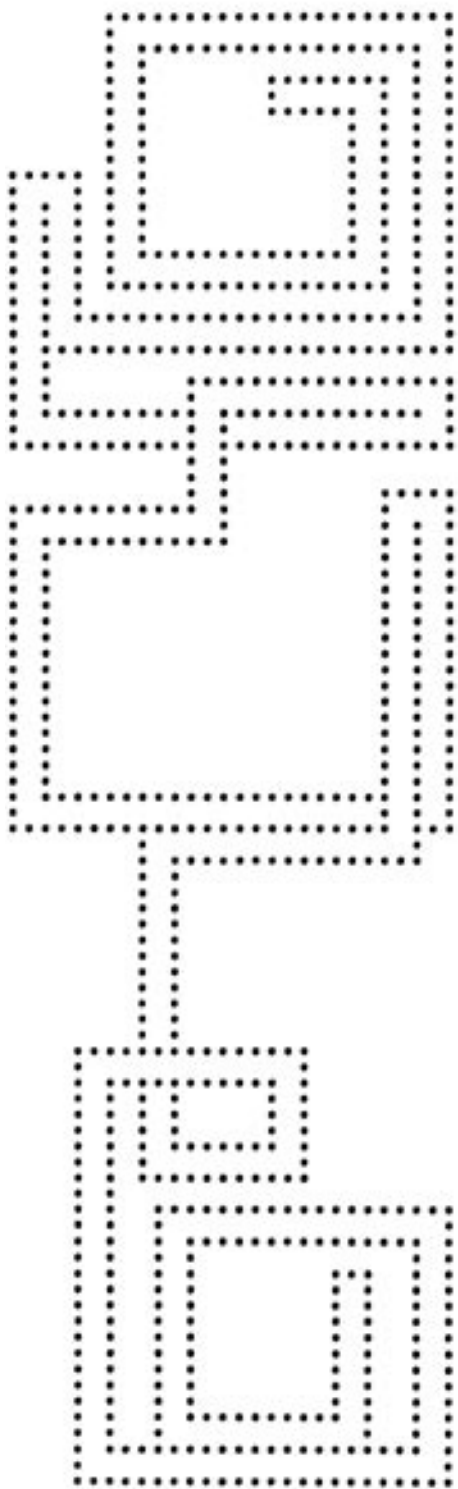


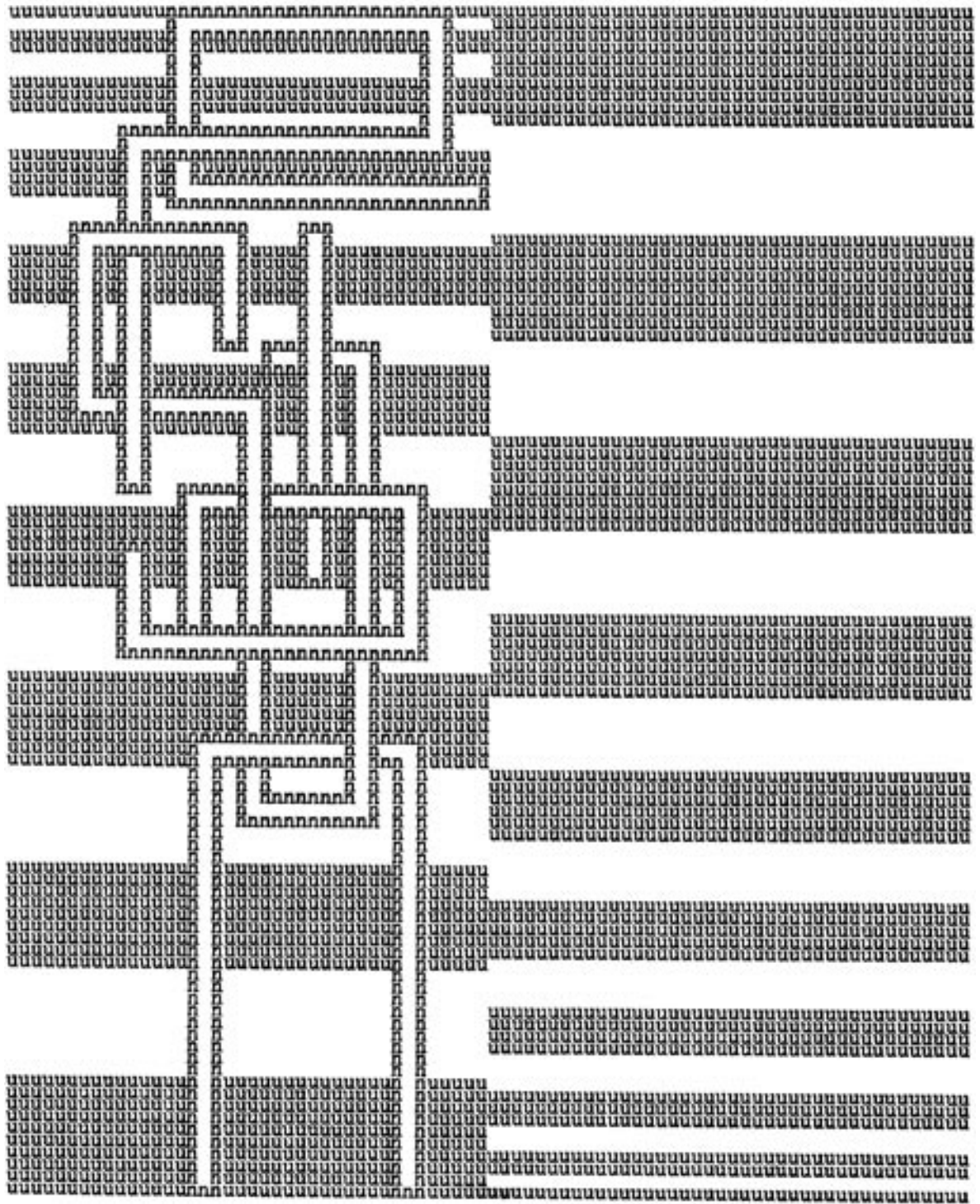


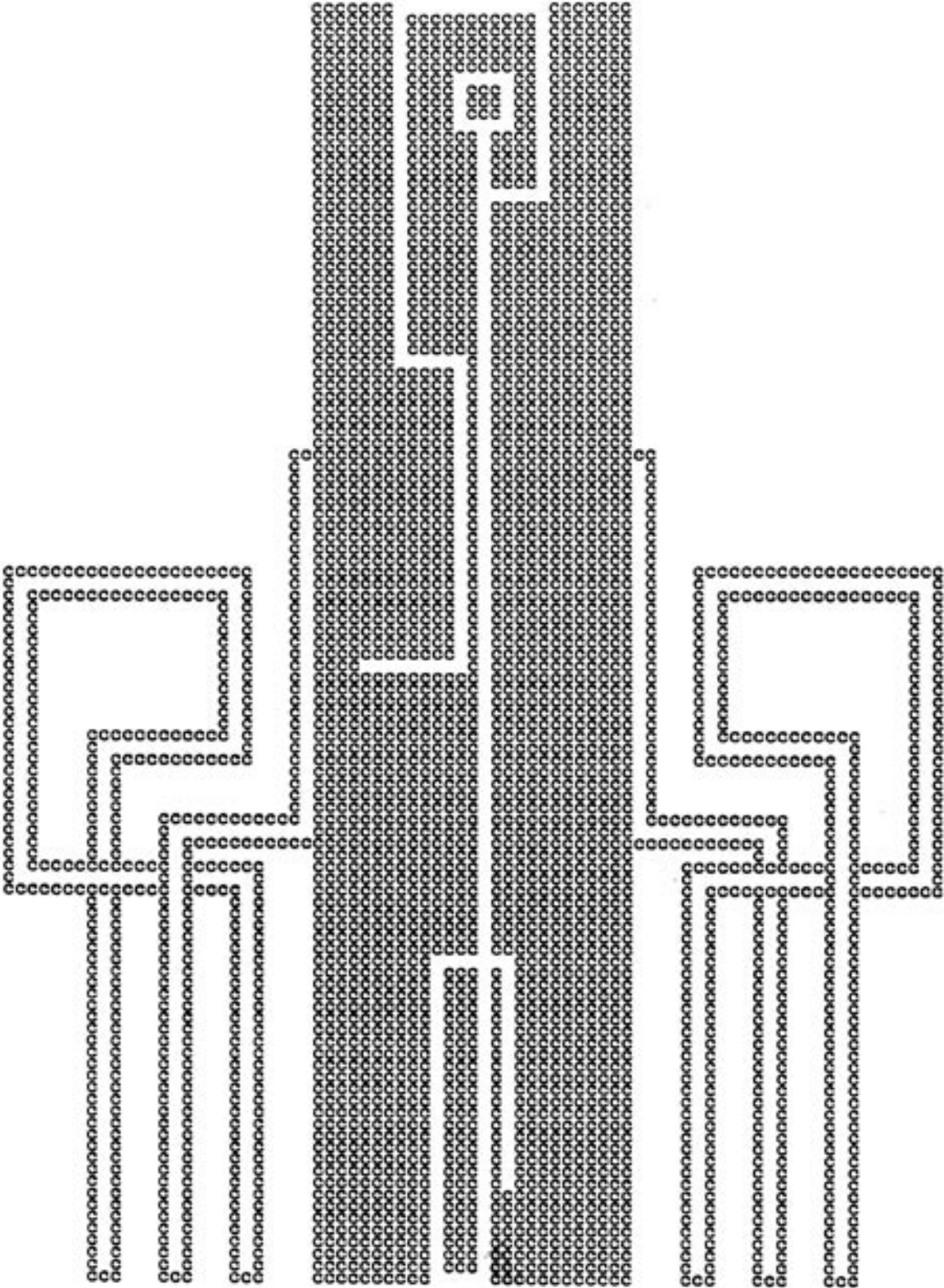


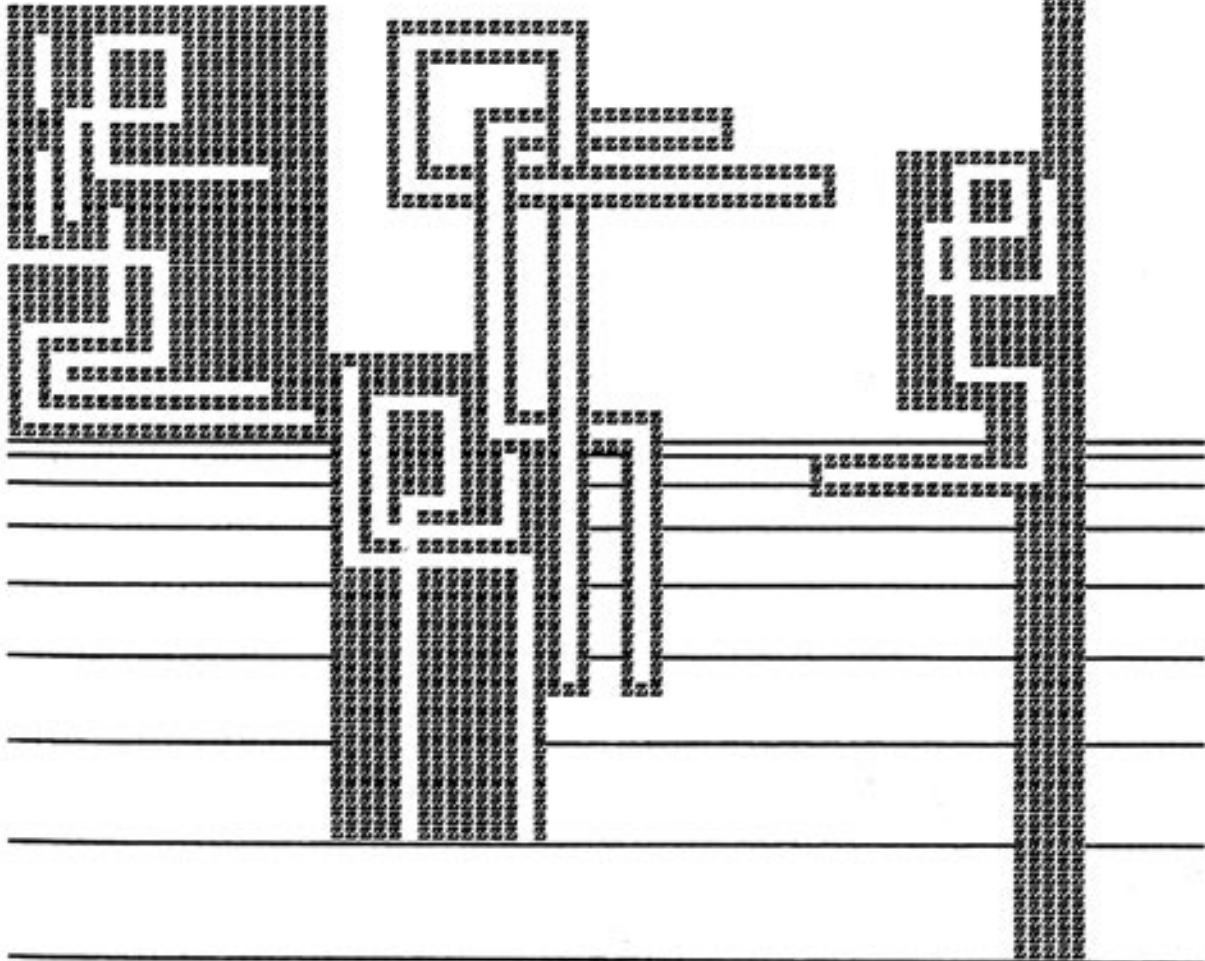






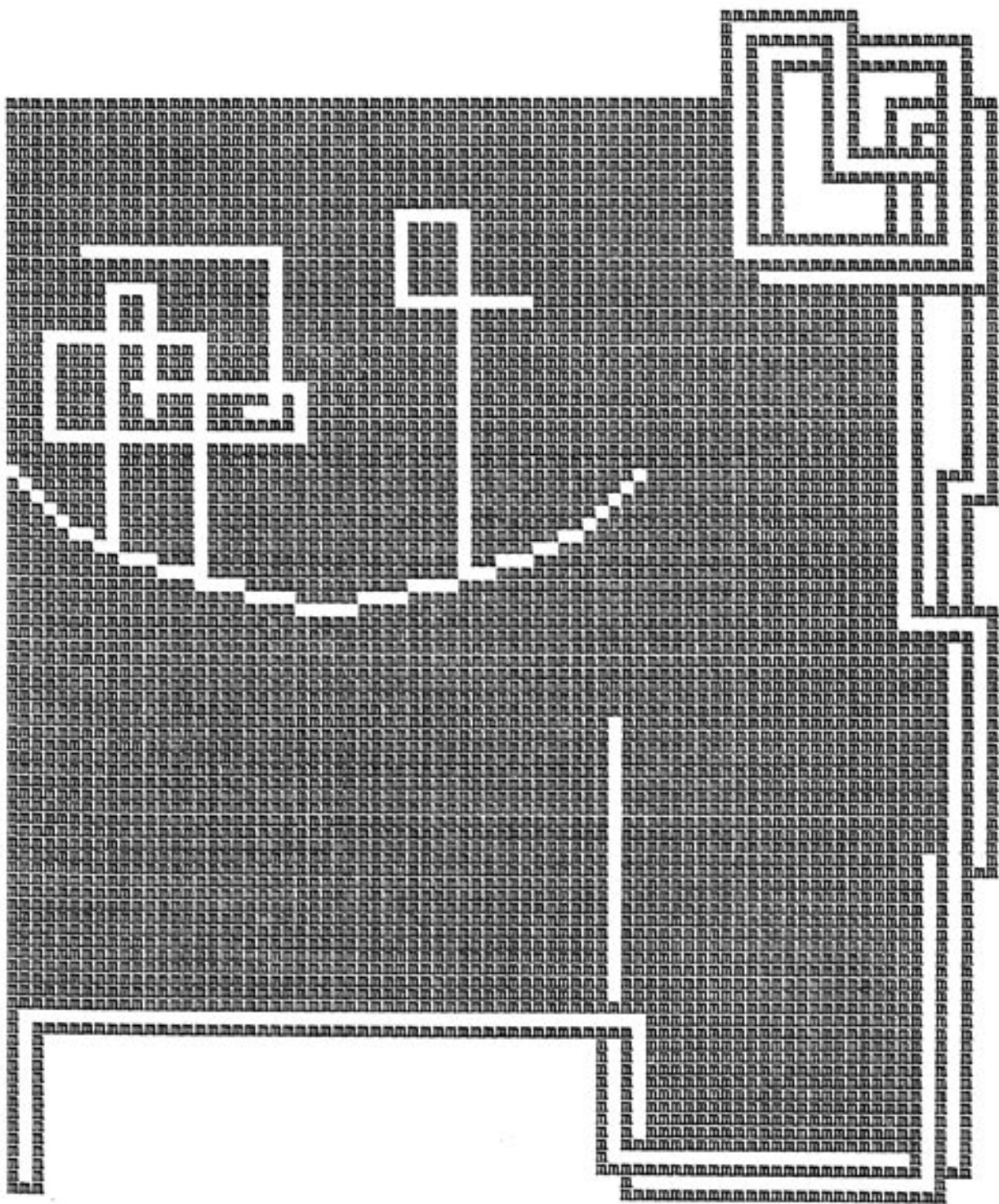


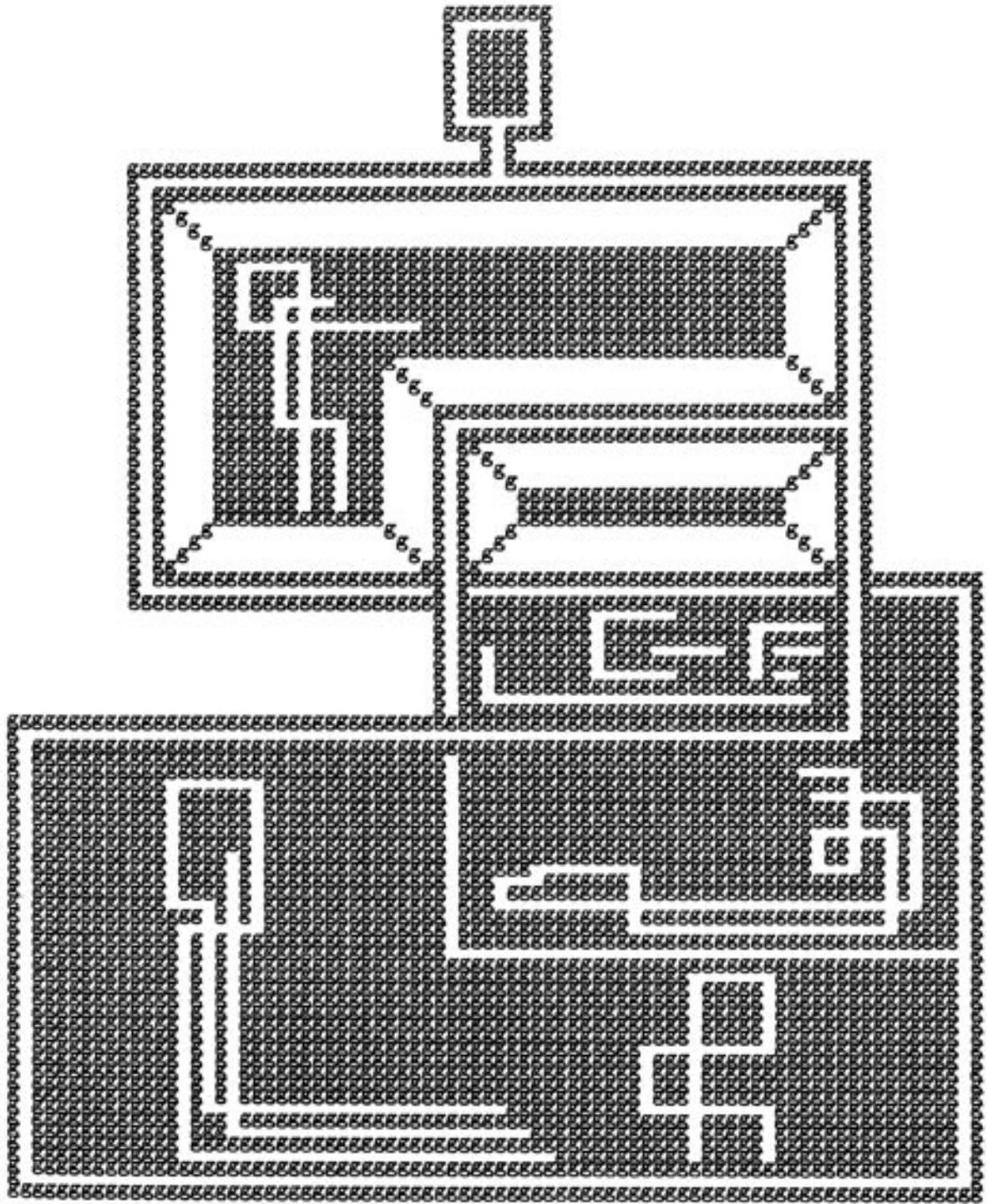




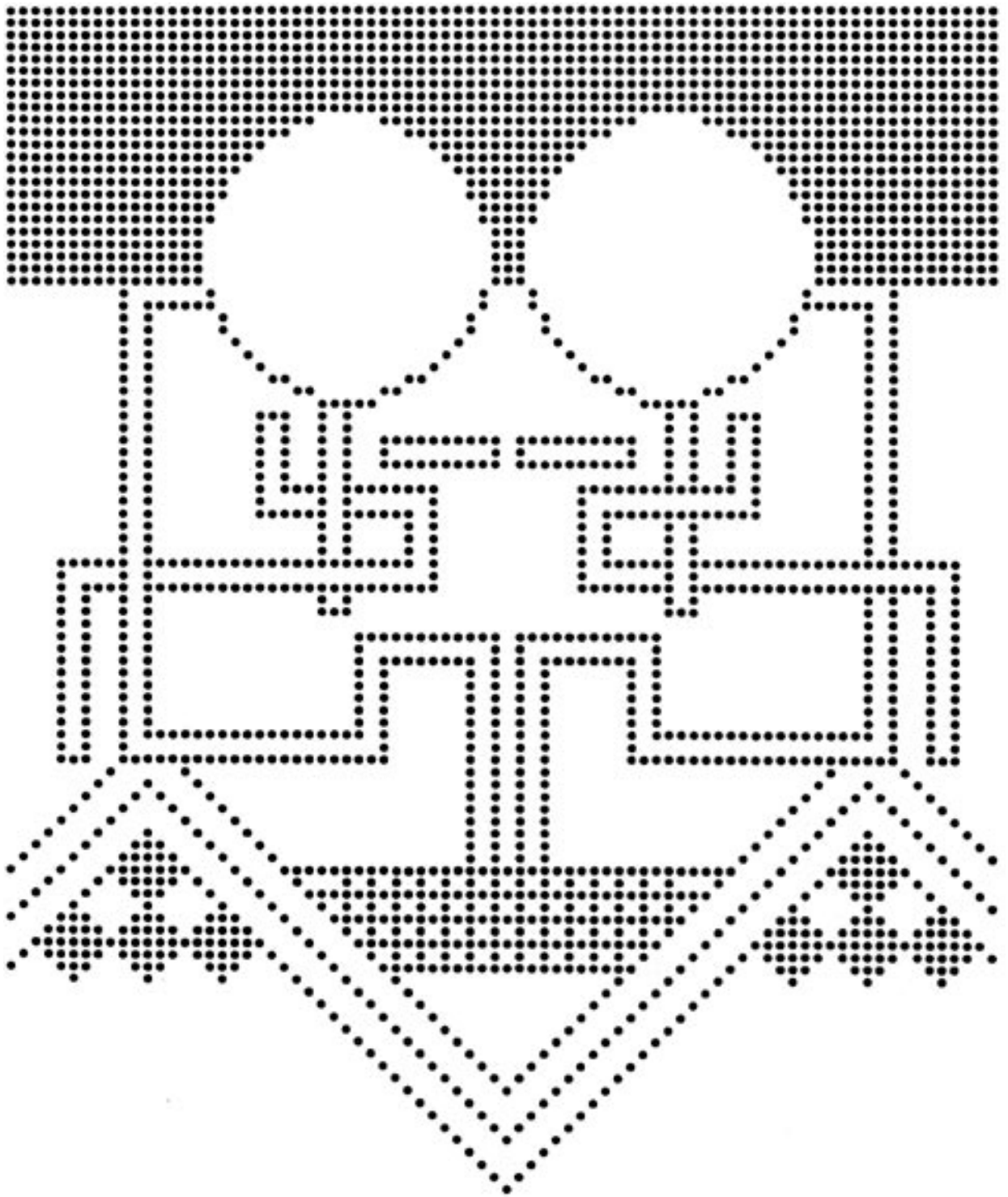


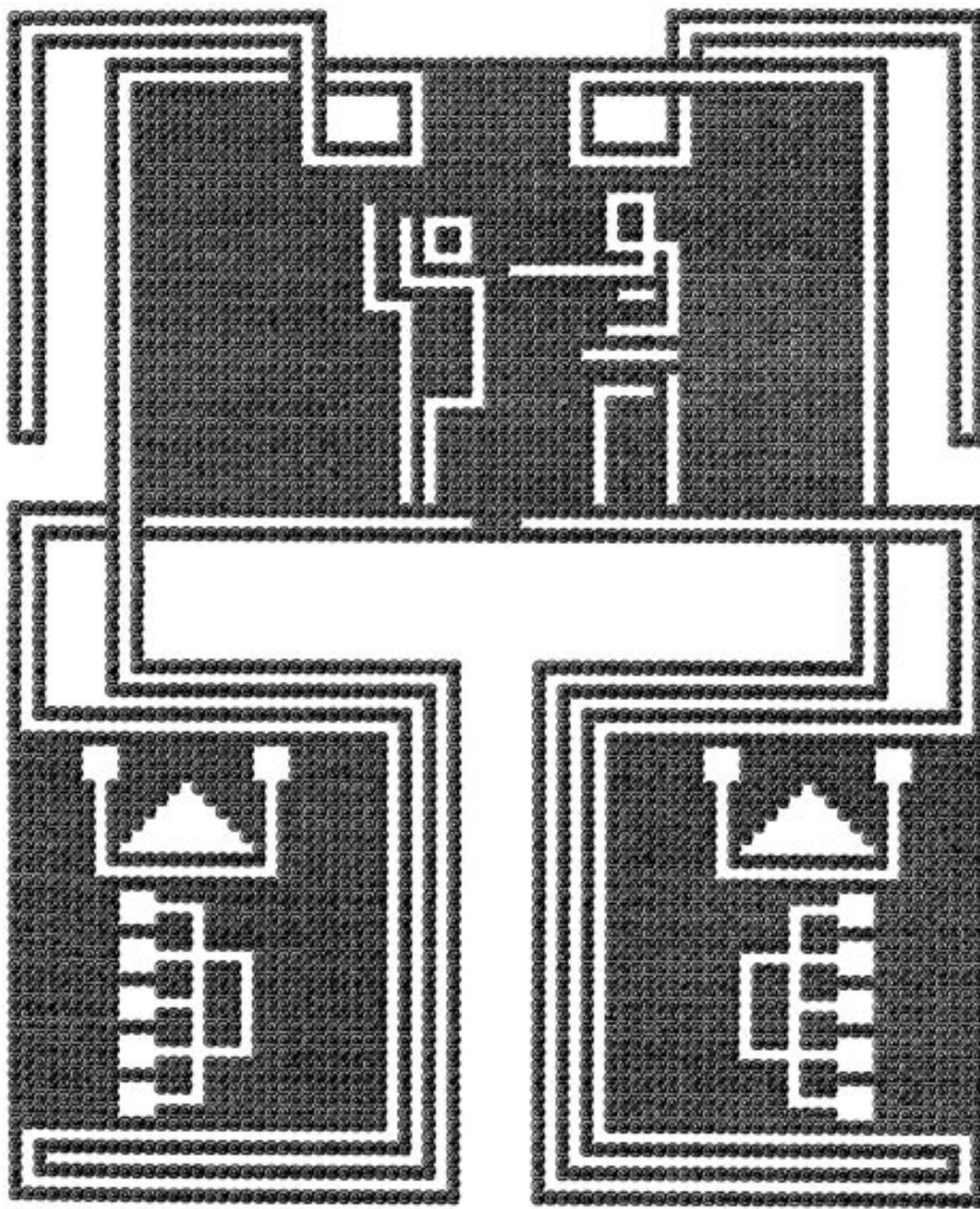


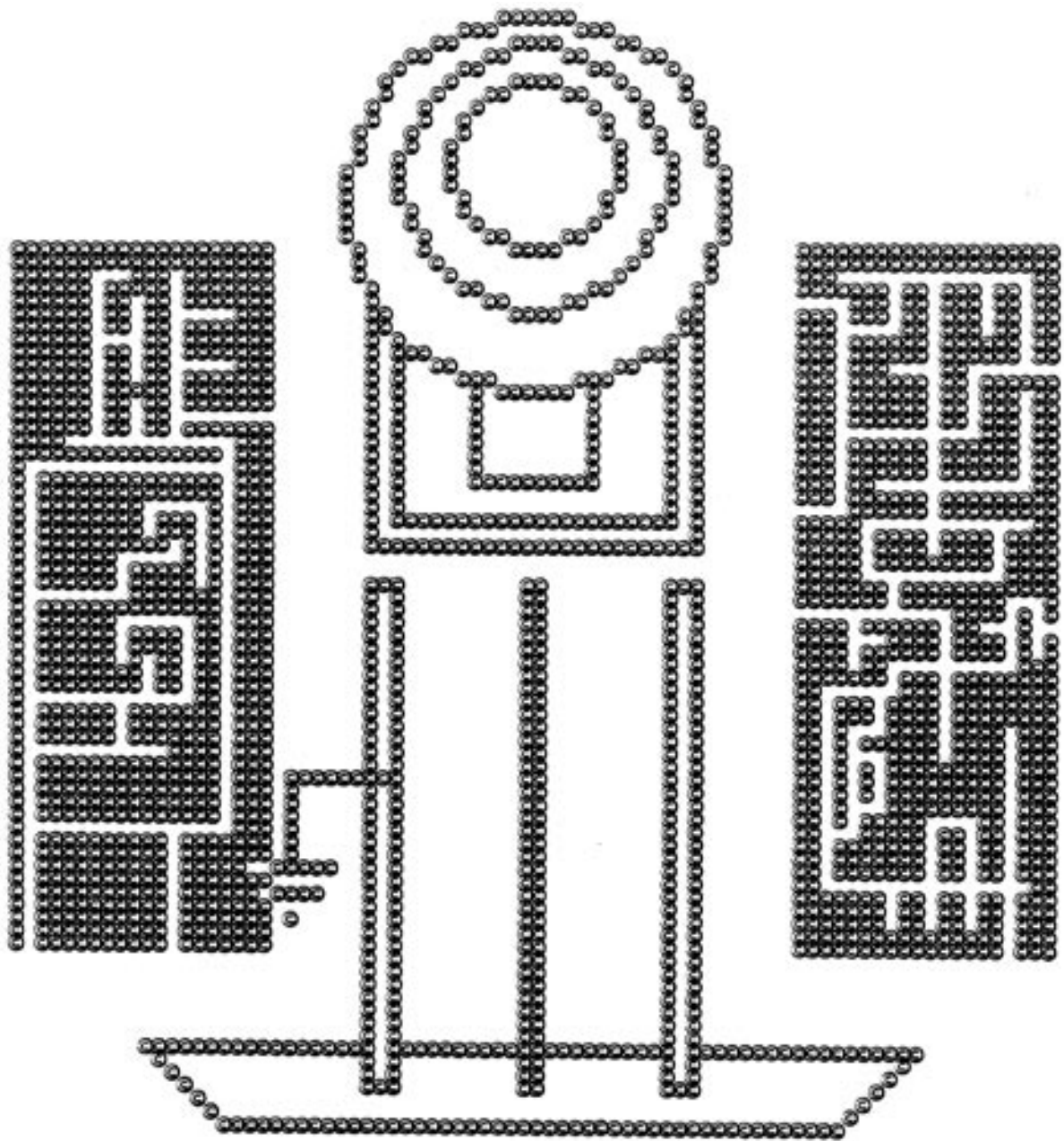


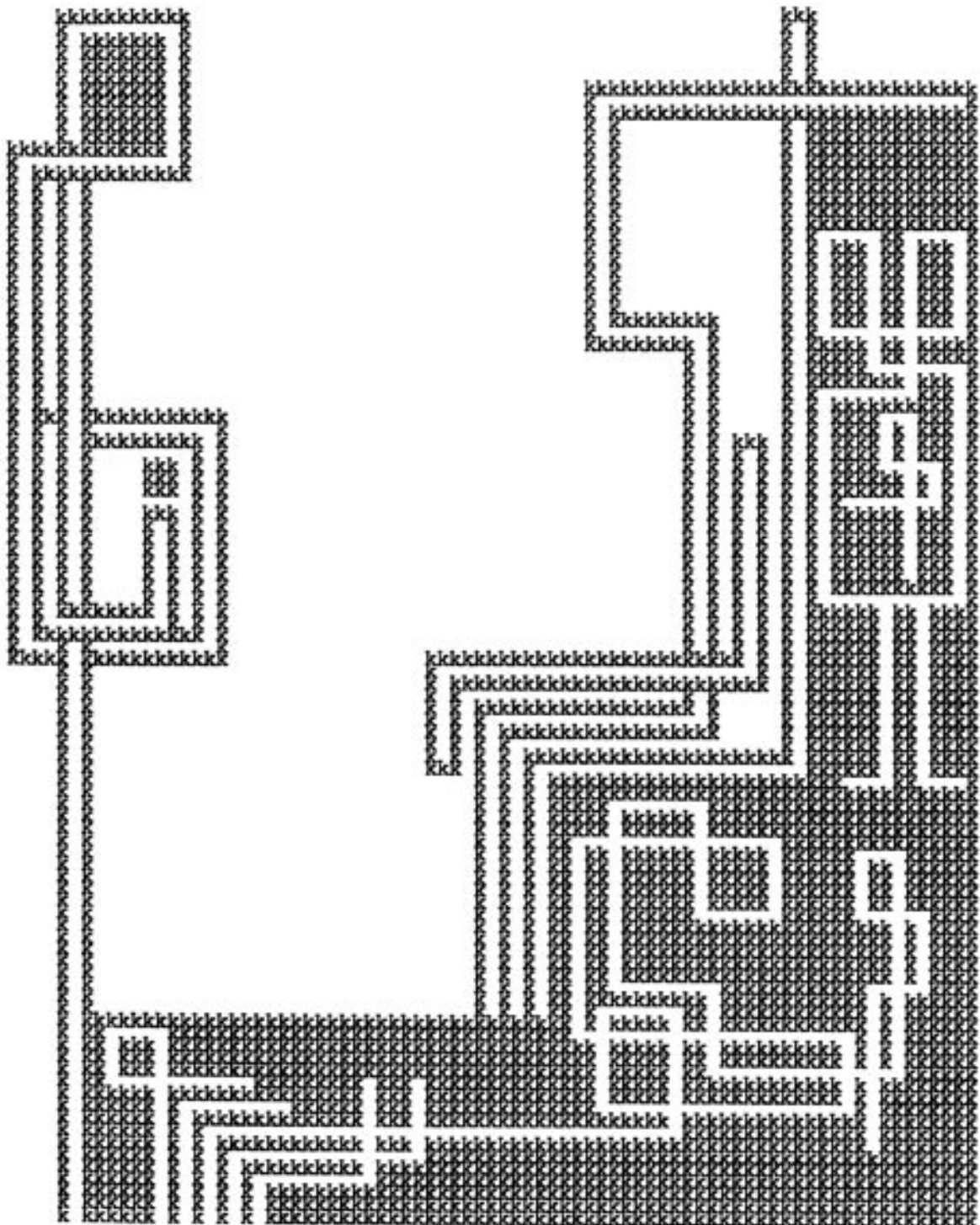


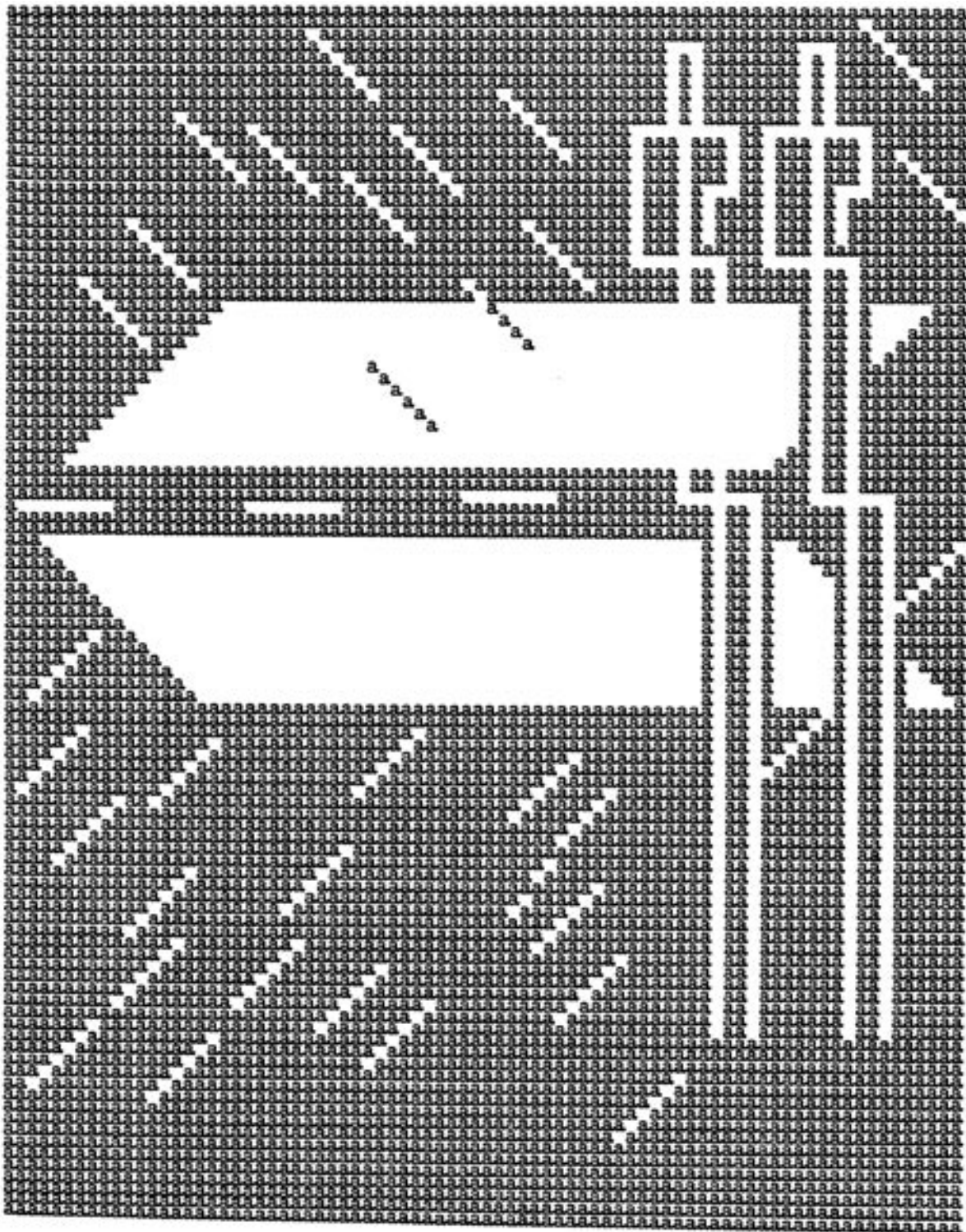












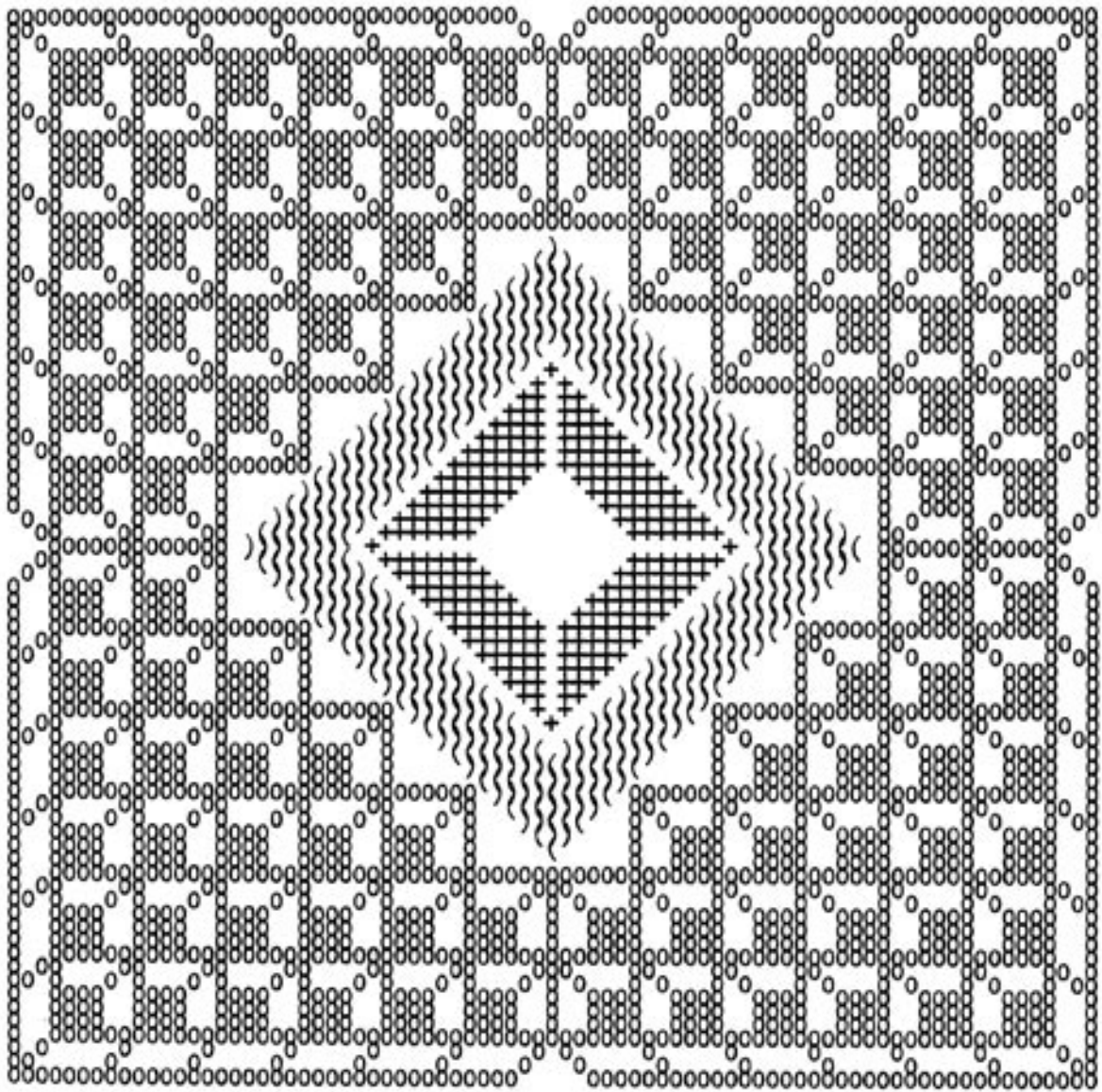




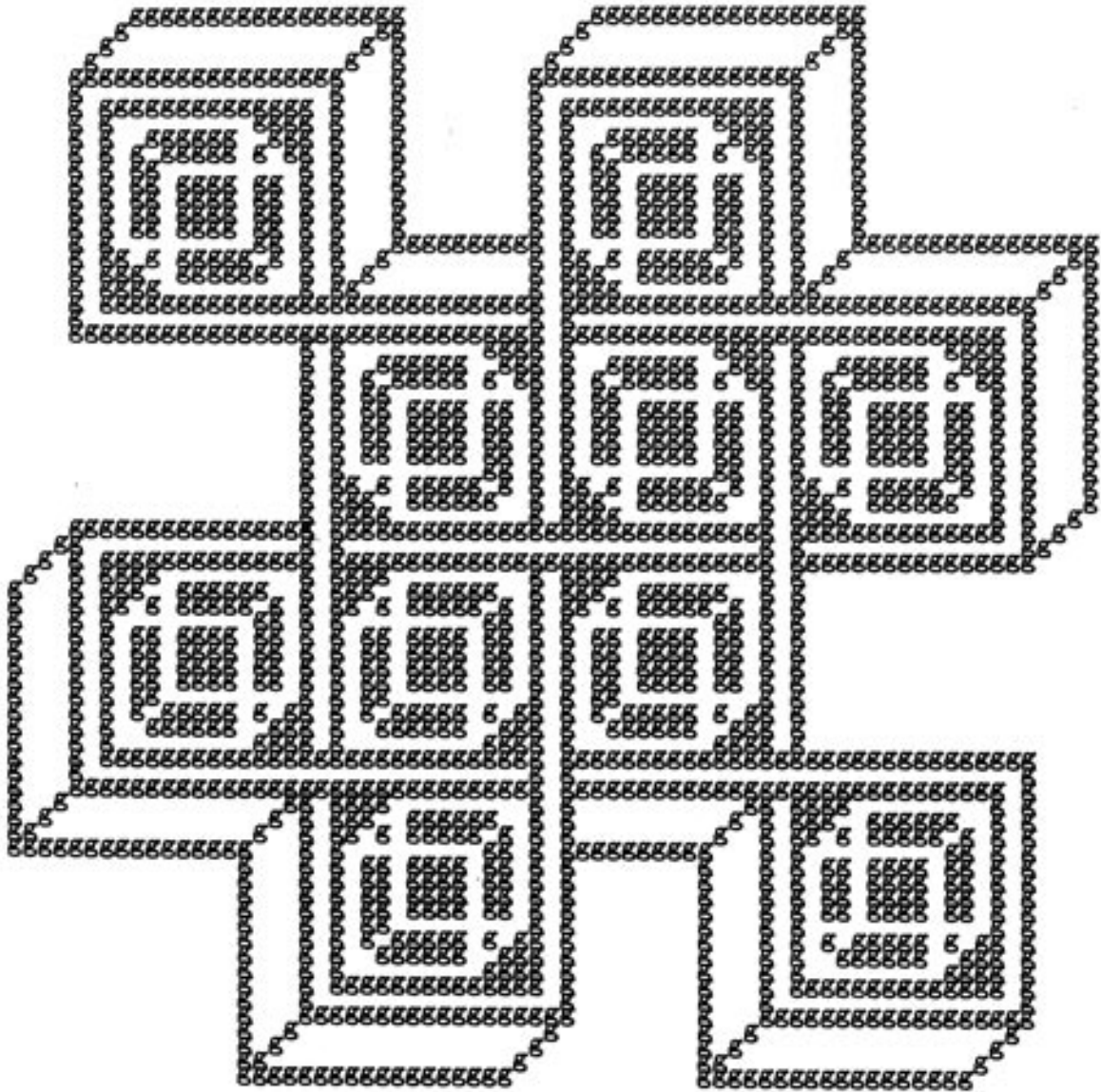
lunar sails

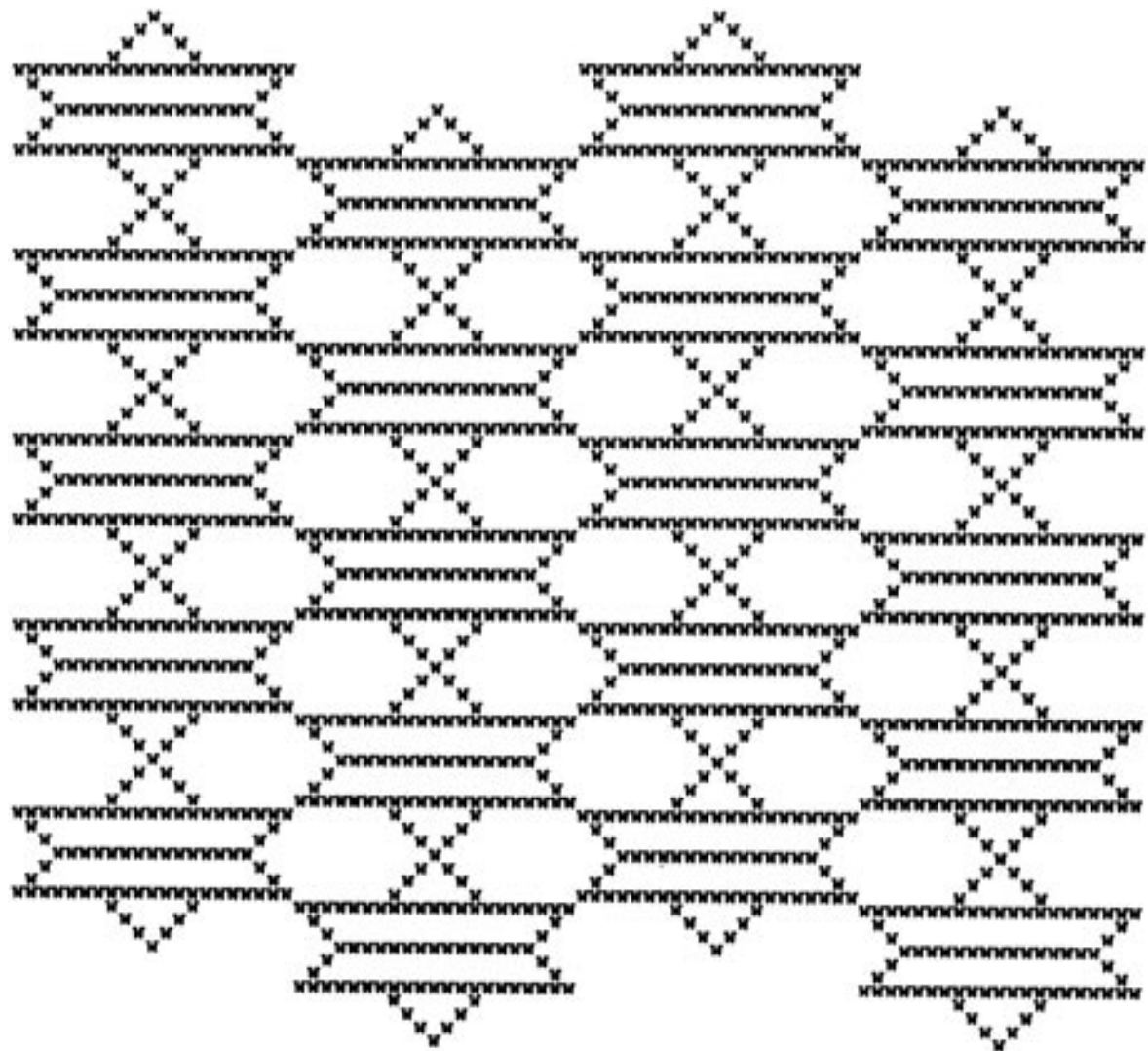
for

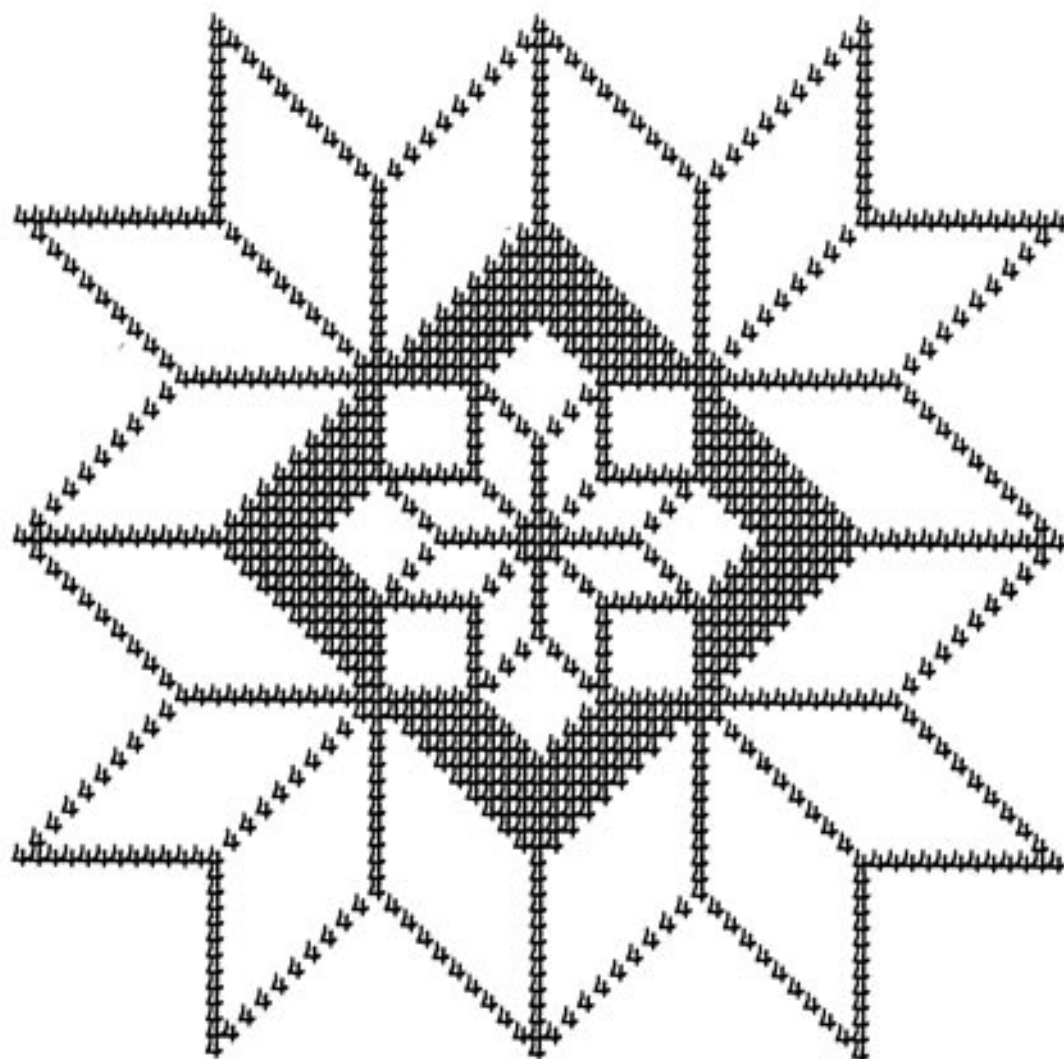
the lady

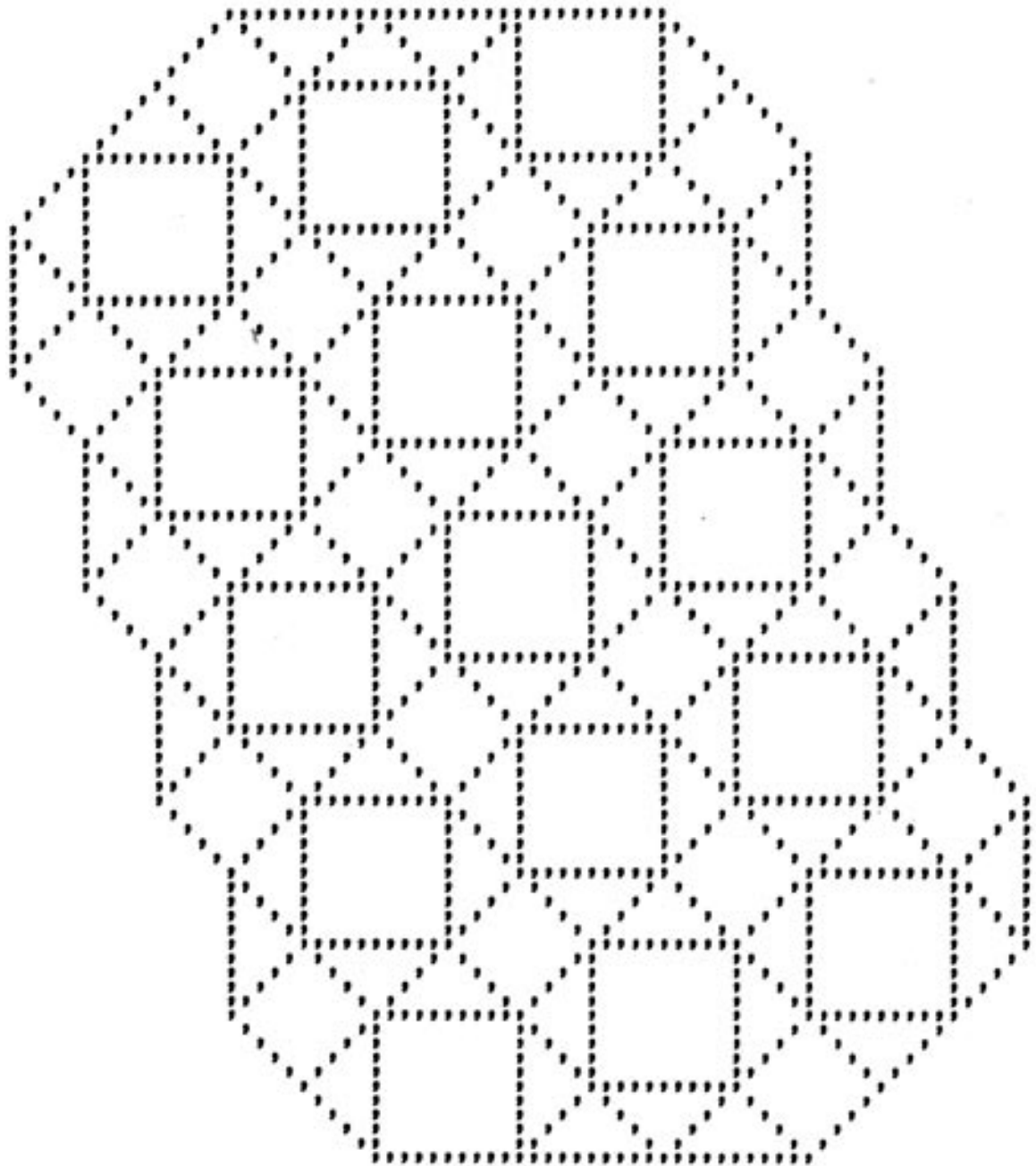


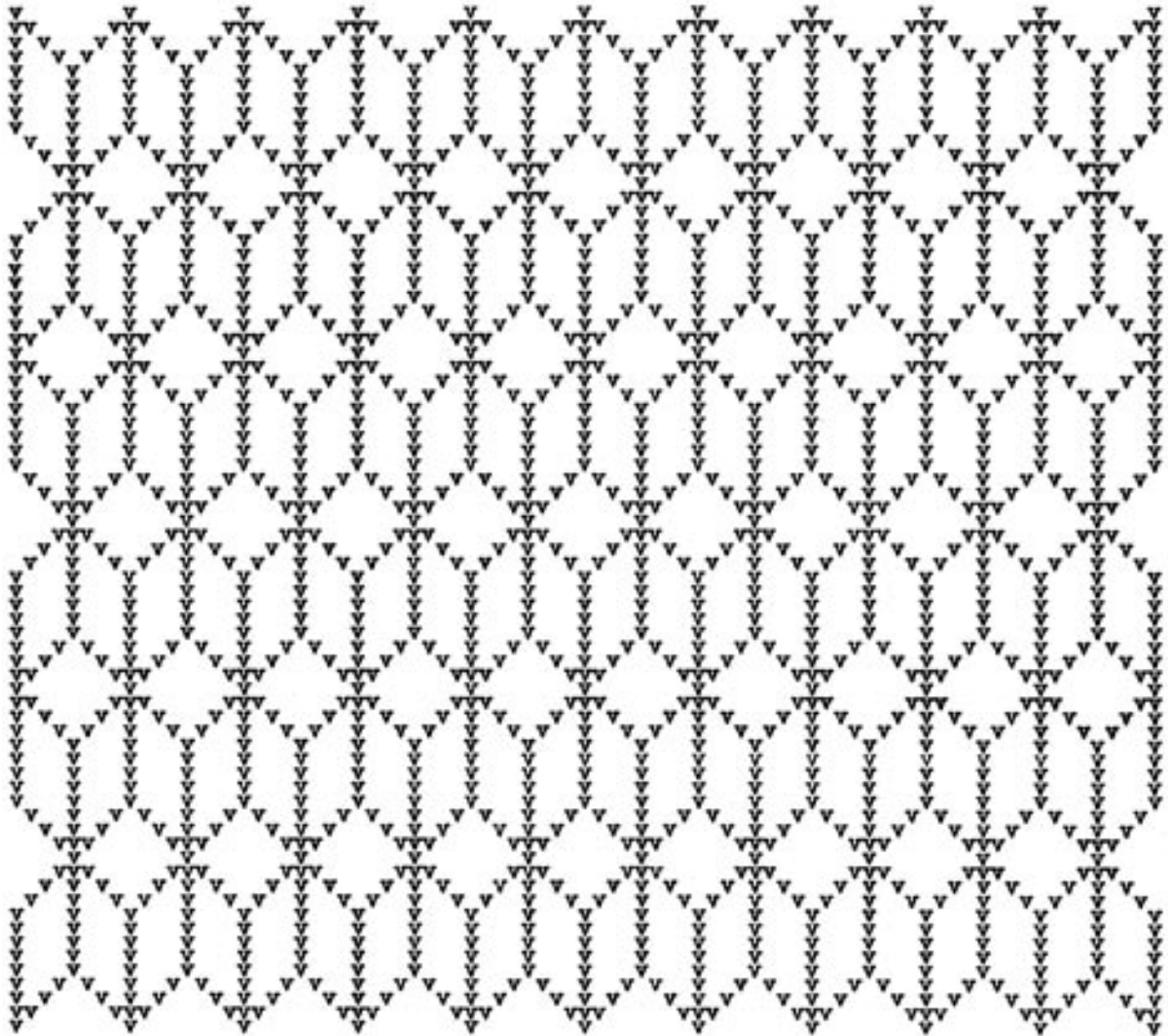


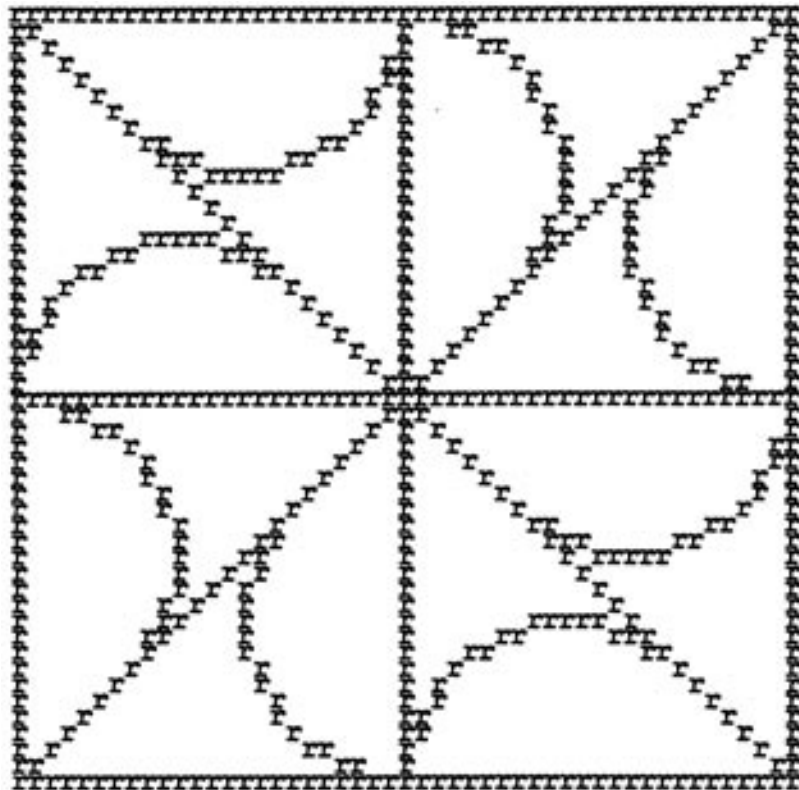




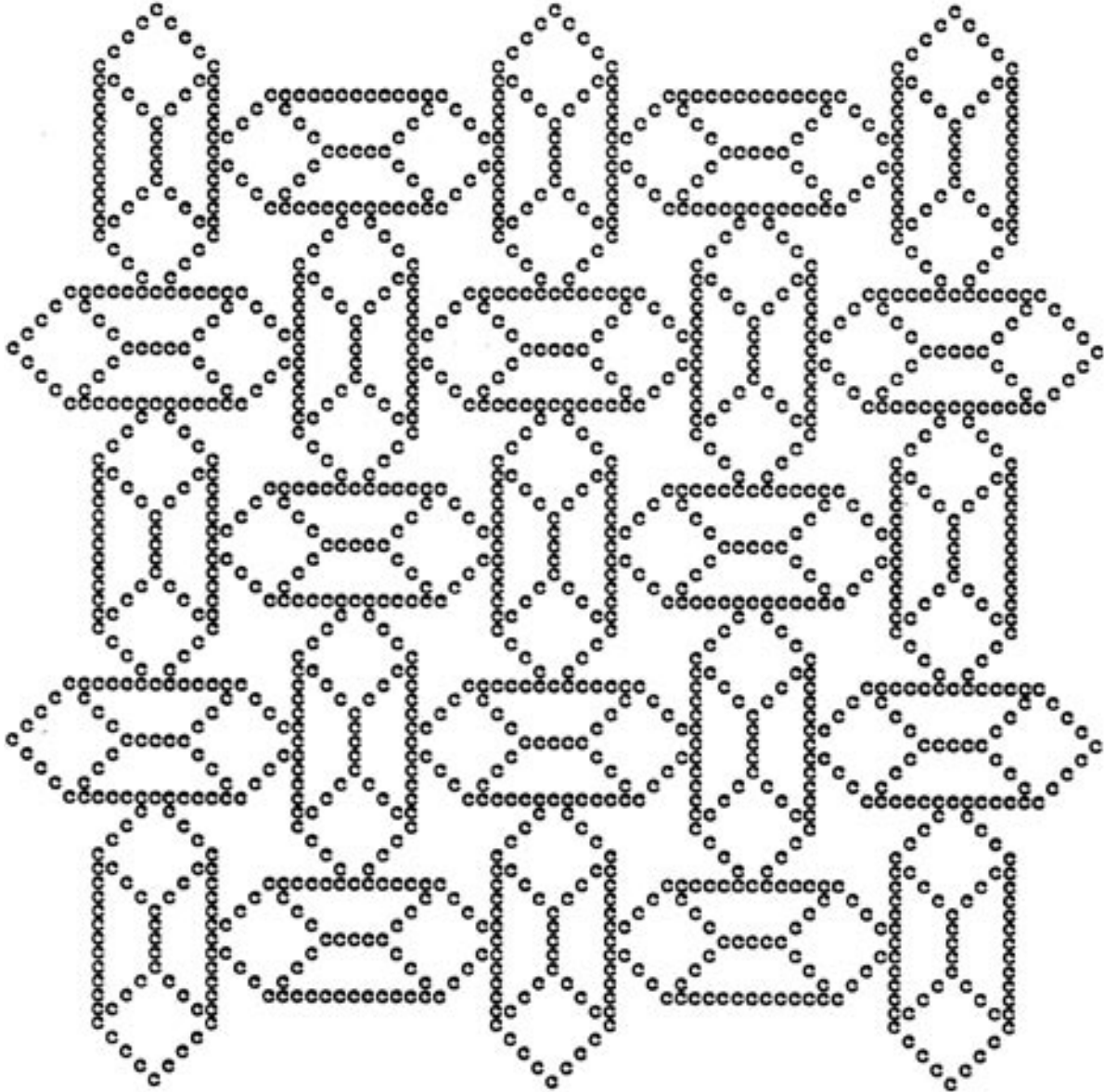


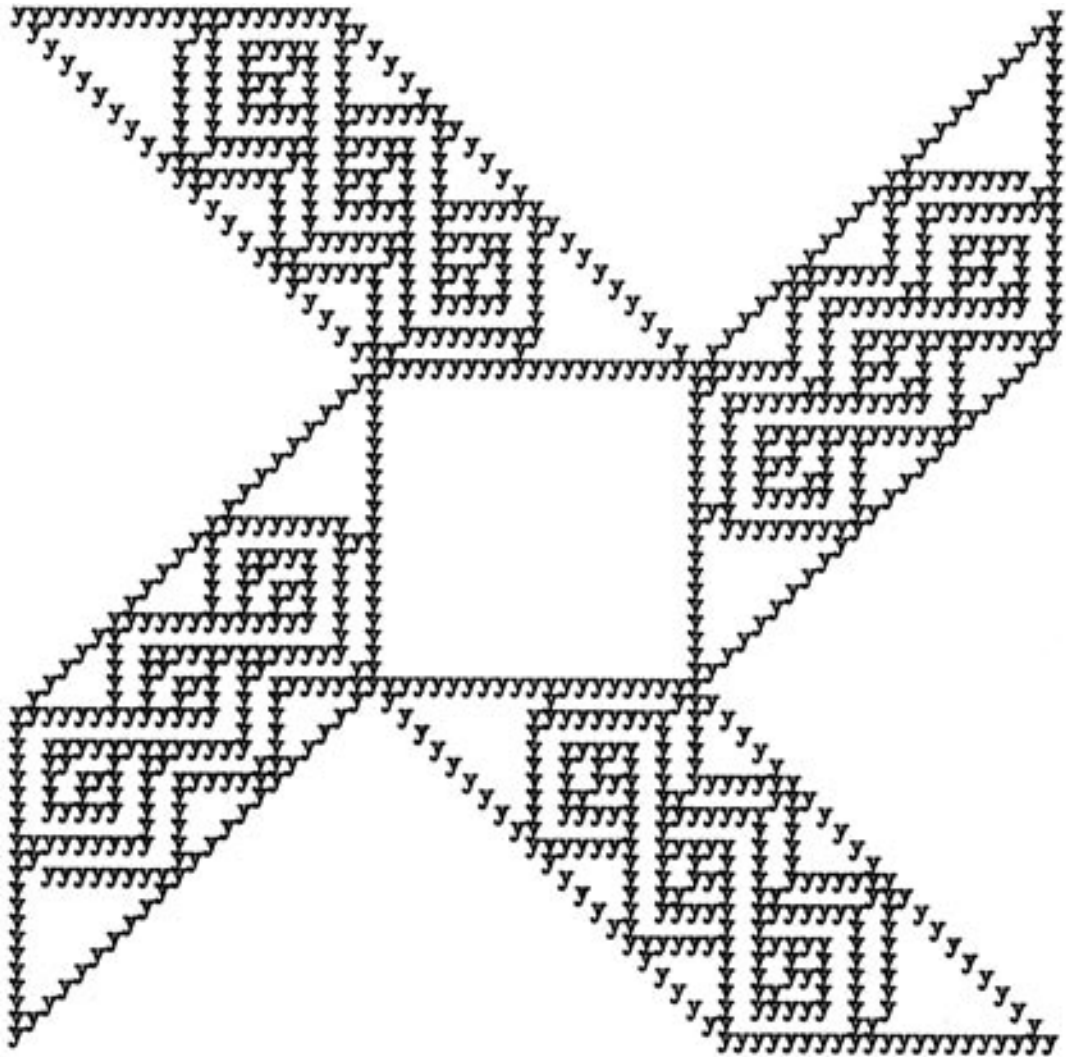


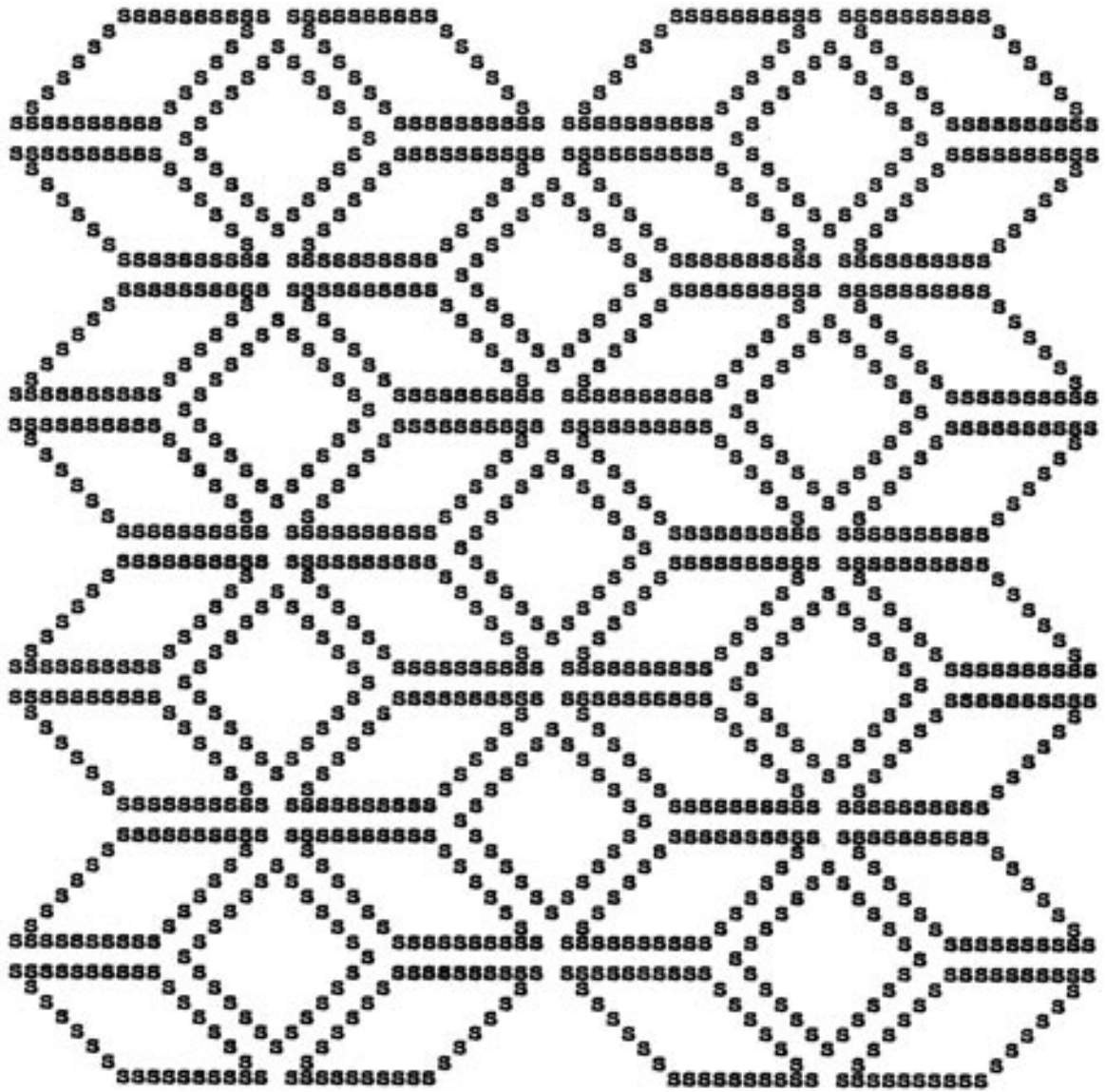


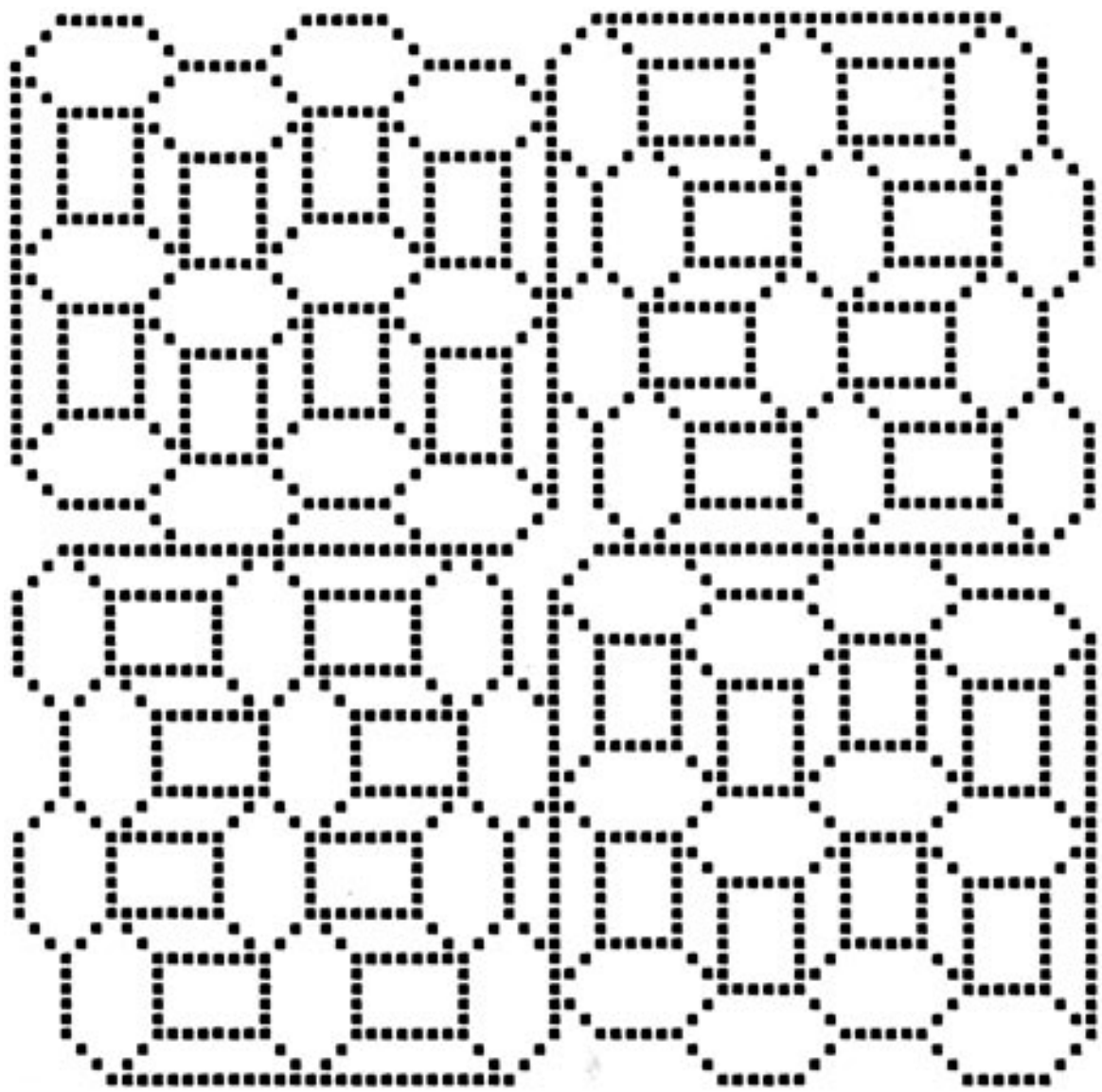


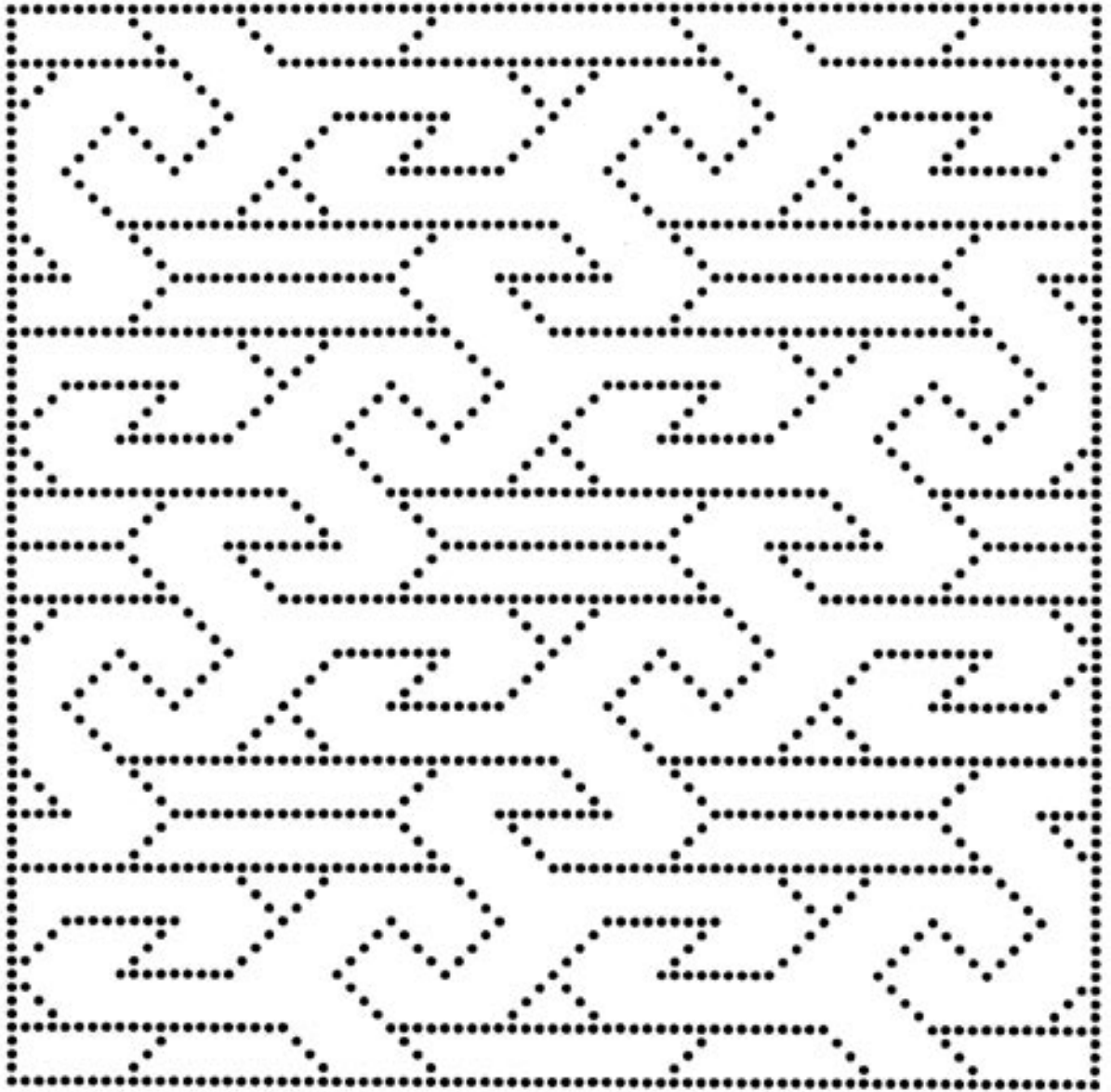


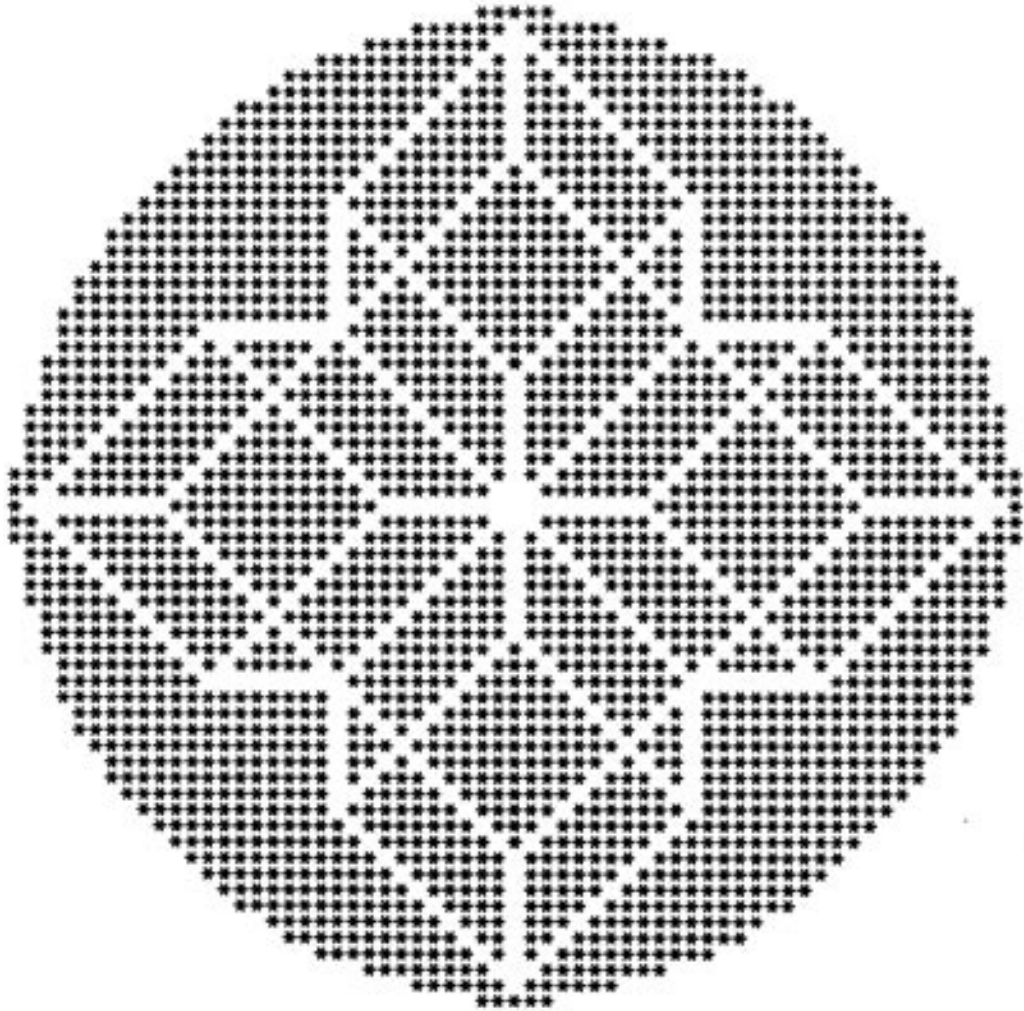




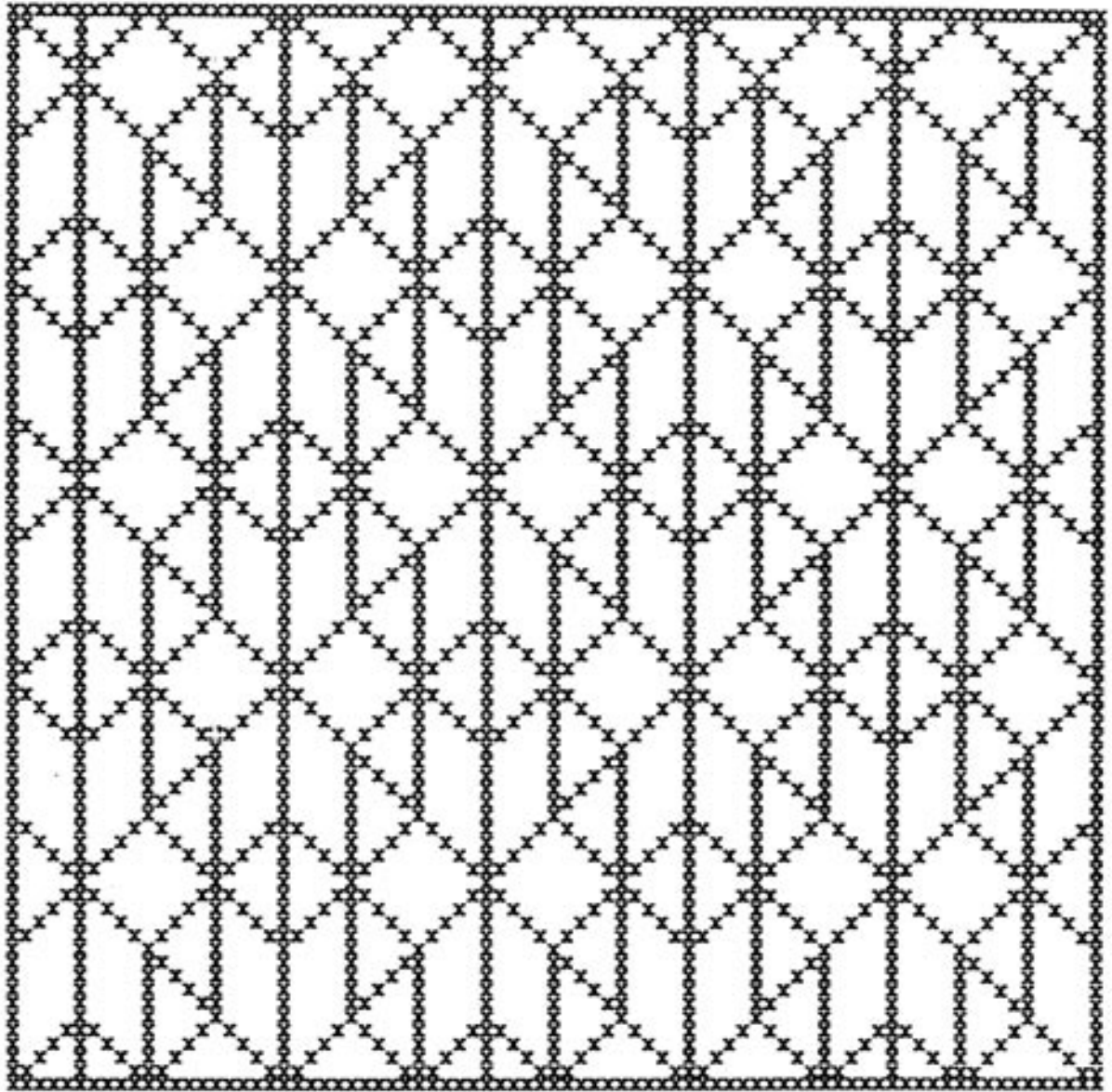


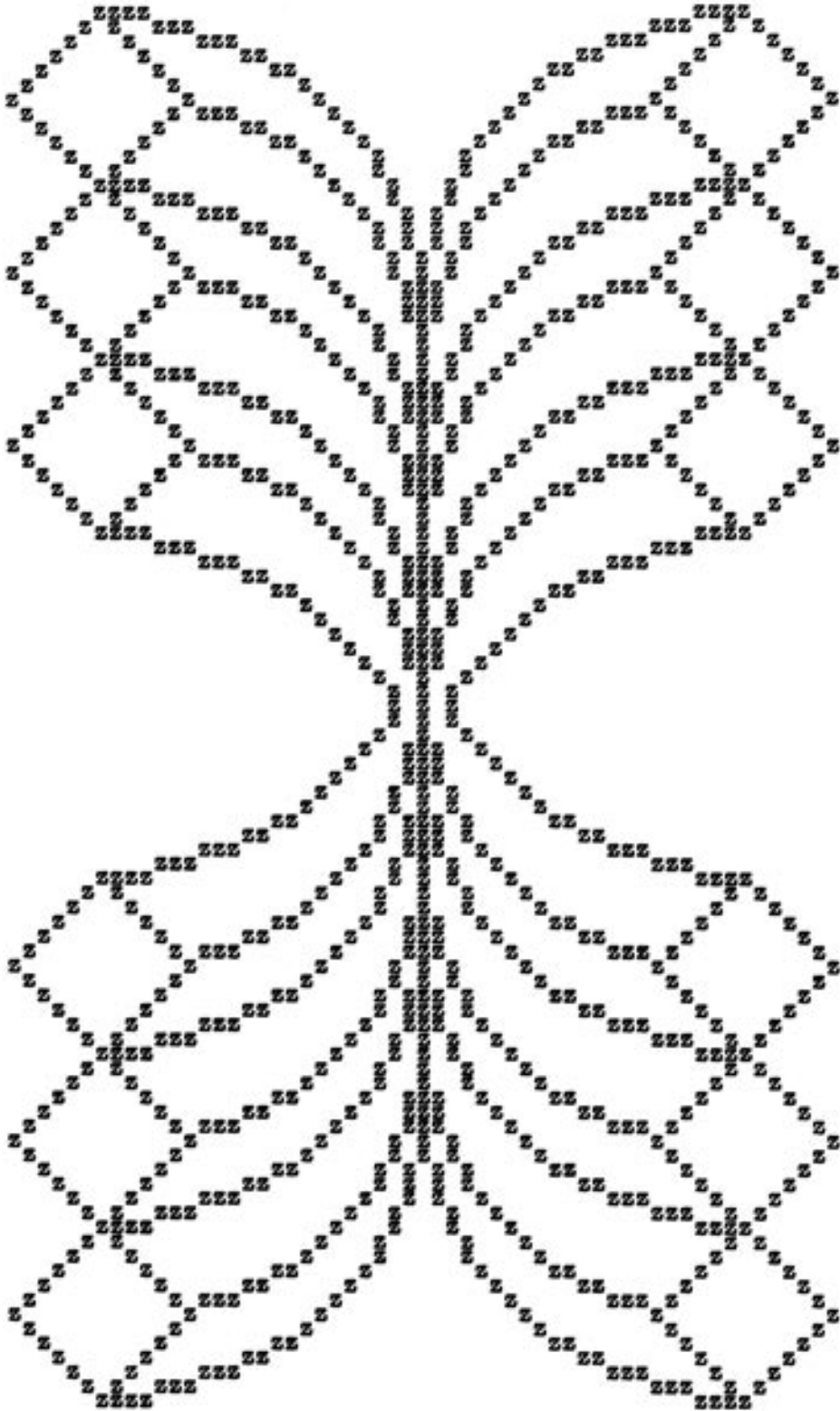


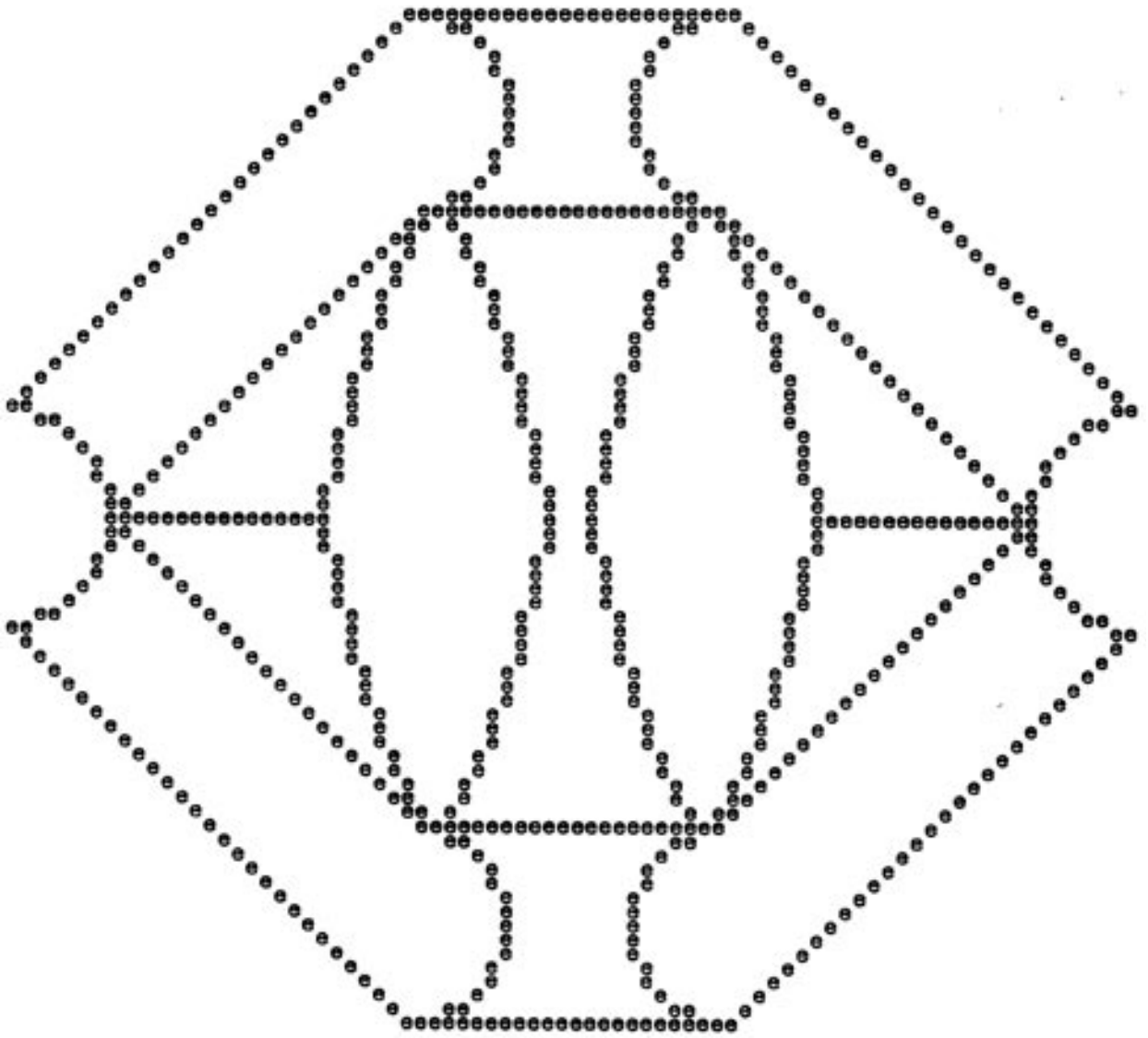


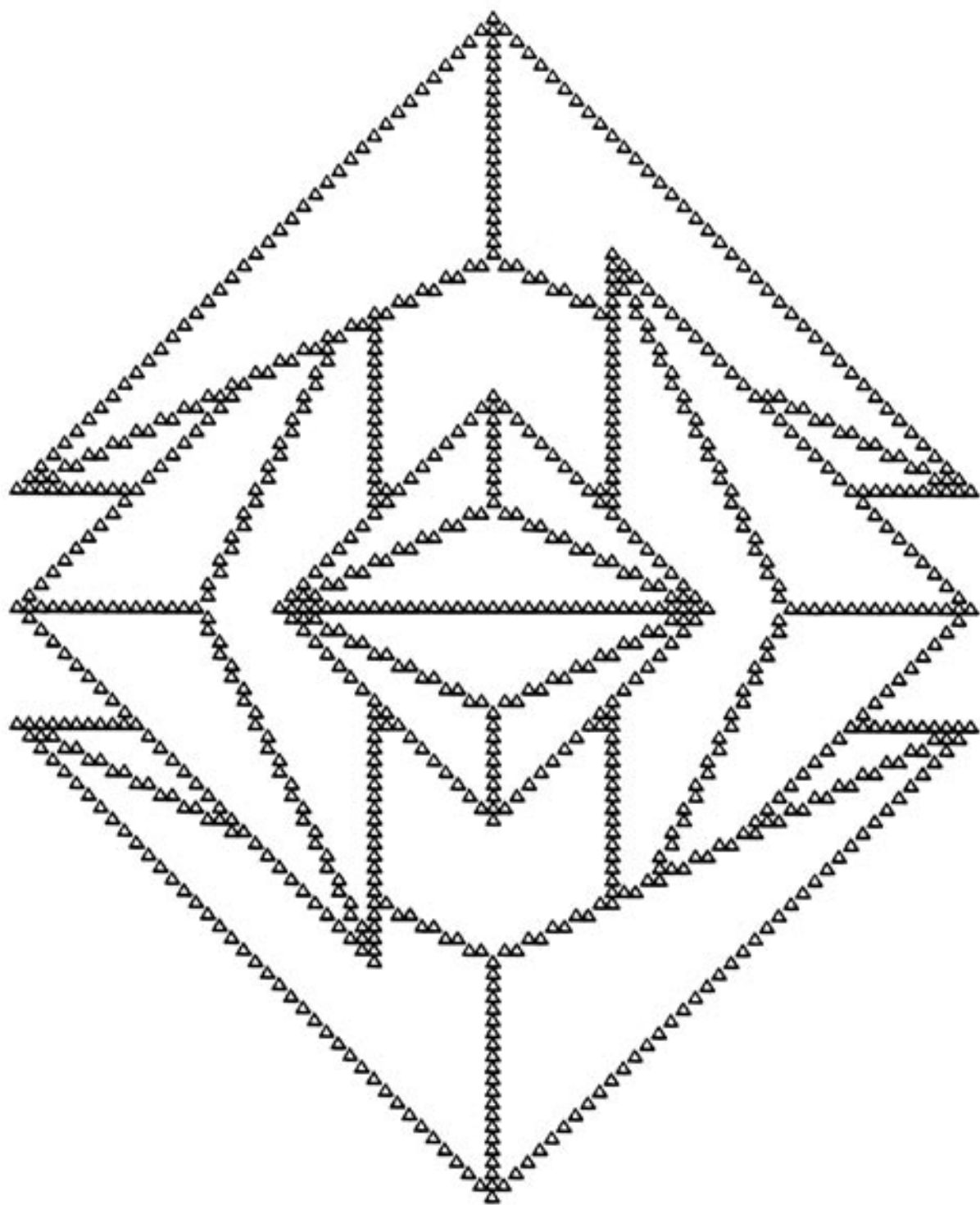


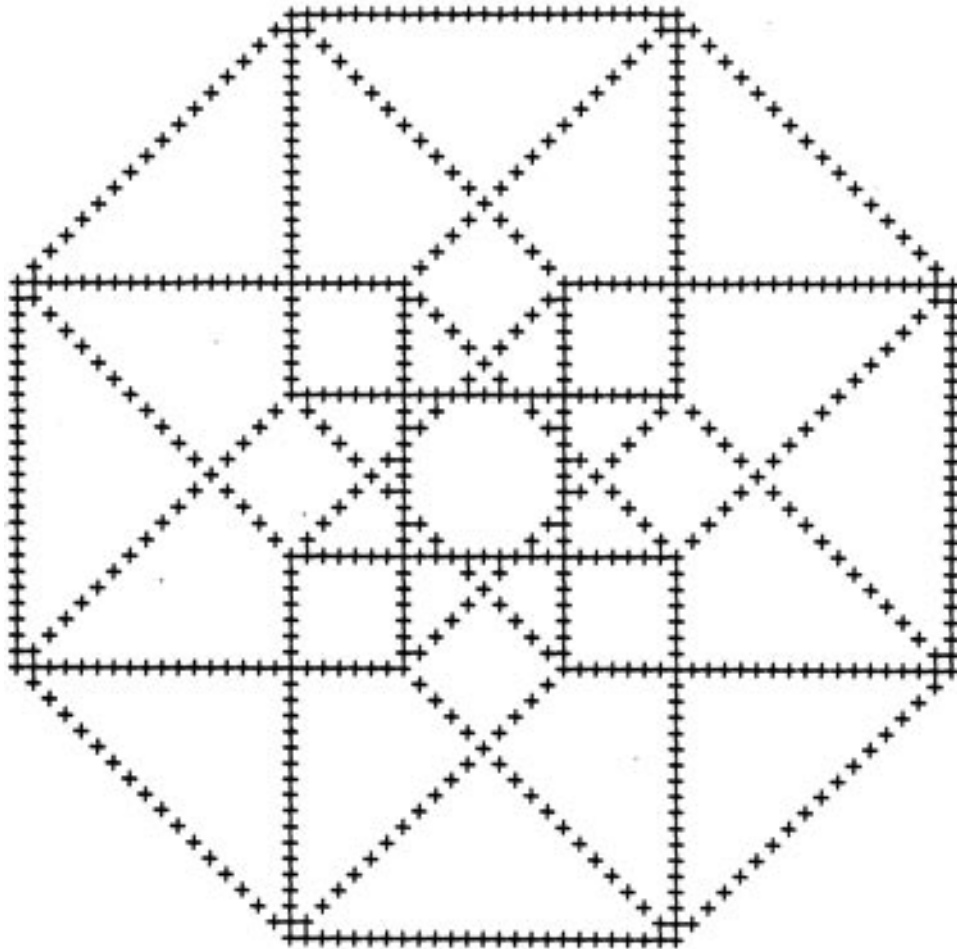












## backward

suggestion: do not read the following unless there exists a desire to have the reading and viewing of the vizual text conditioned by my intentions.

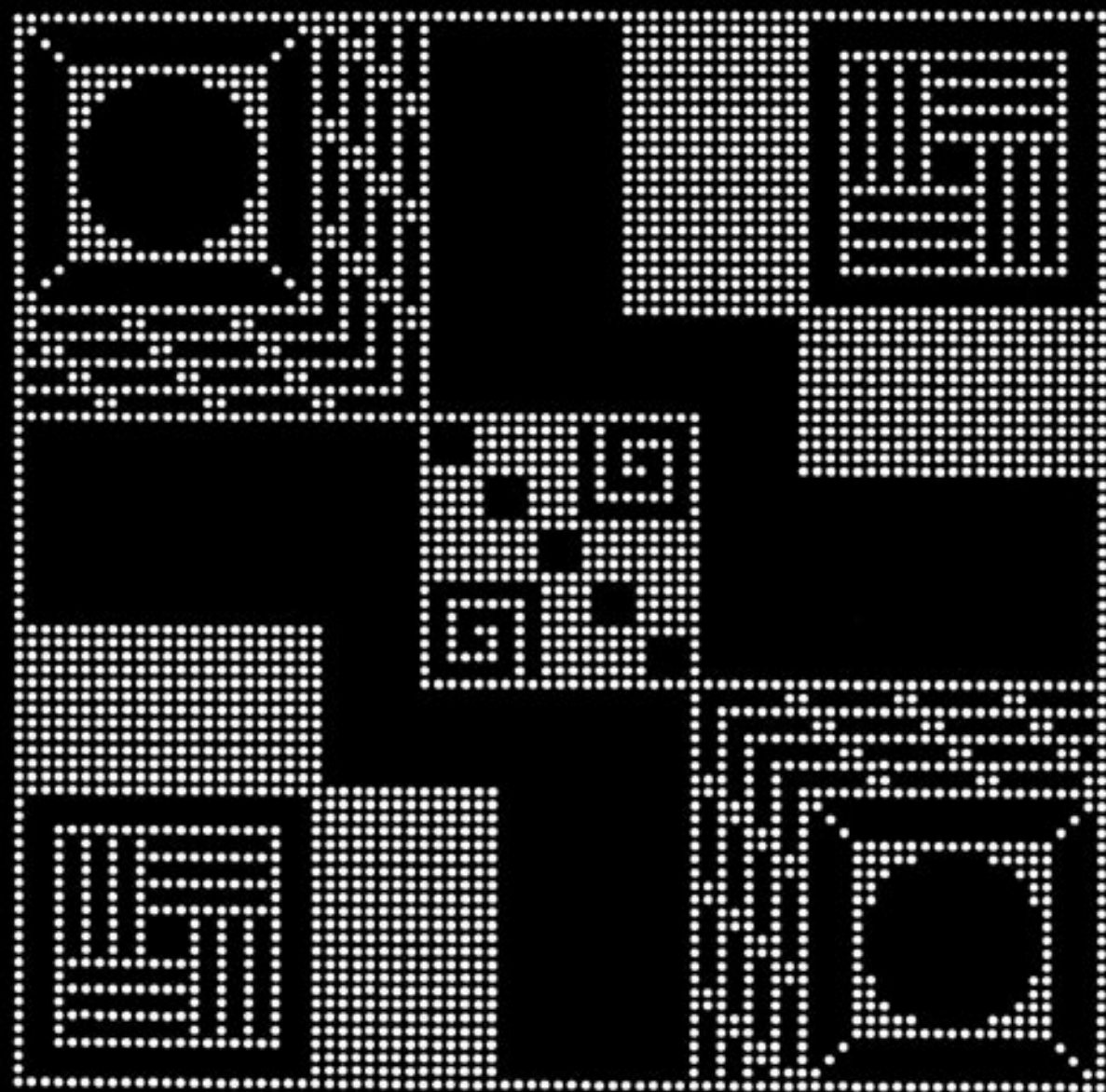
black strokes white spaces follows a sine wave, peek to peek with sections 2 & 3 az the trof. this iza movement from what thot ideal to a posibl ideal with the present moment lookt upon with somewhat jaded eyeballs. the past, generally on this land b4 the dubl edged white skinned fok handshake, iz wisht to b an ideal zone, and hence the gesture tords this point of view by kompozing worx whose foundation extends into the north american pre-white homesteading akt. section 2 illustrates the patterns our current generation allows itself to become hypnotized by. #3 deals witha concept accepted by many peeplz that already the world 4 times has been destroyed and that we r klose to the 5th destruction. and all around us there is the talk of latching solar sails to spacecraft; in order to balance this act, to move tords a more harmonious attitude i designed lunar sails. which brings the book full cirkl due to the many matriarchies existing once upon a time tho since i deal in 3-d the sirkl is but a slice viewing of our actual track i feel we aza body consciouness iza spiral az we break out of the spells we kast upon ourselves.





**Black Strokes White Spaces by Karl Kempton**  
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20TH CENTURY TYPOGLIFS



XEXOXIAL  
EDITIONS