



GEORGES WENGER
THE VARANASI QUESTIONING
VARANASI 2010



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Georges Wenger had a plan. He went to Varanasi, with sculptures in mind - for the public space - built of communication between art students, the local people and him. Questioning Varanasi. Invisible sculptures, but real sculptures. They were never built.

Communication is language, ideally common language. That was not available to him in Varanasi. Questioning Varanasi proved to be difficult. And more was difficult. Varanasi had other plans with Georges Wenger.

Georges Wenger went to Varanasi to stay there, among people, rickshaw drivers, designer colleagues, philosophers, priests, artists, writers, fishermen, farmers, night porters, diplomats, development agents, gurus, charlatans.

He gave lectures in the local university's art department, interacted with students, less with their professors, called on rickshaws again and again to see all of the city. Varanasi's colours, images, sounds, noise,

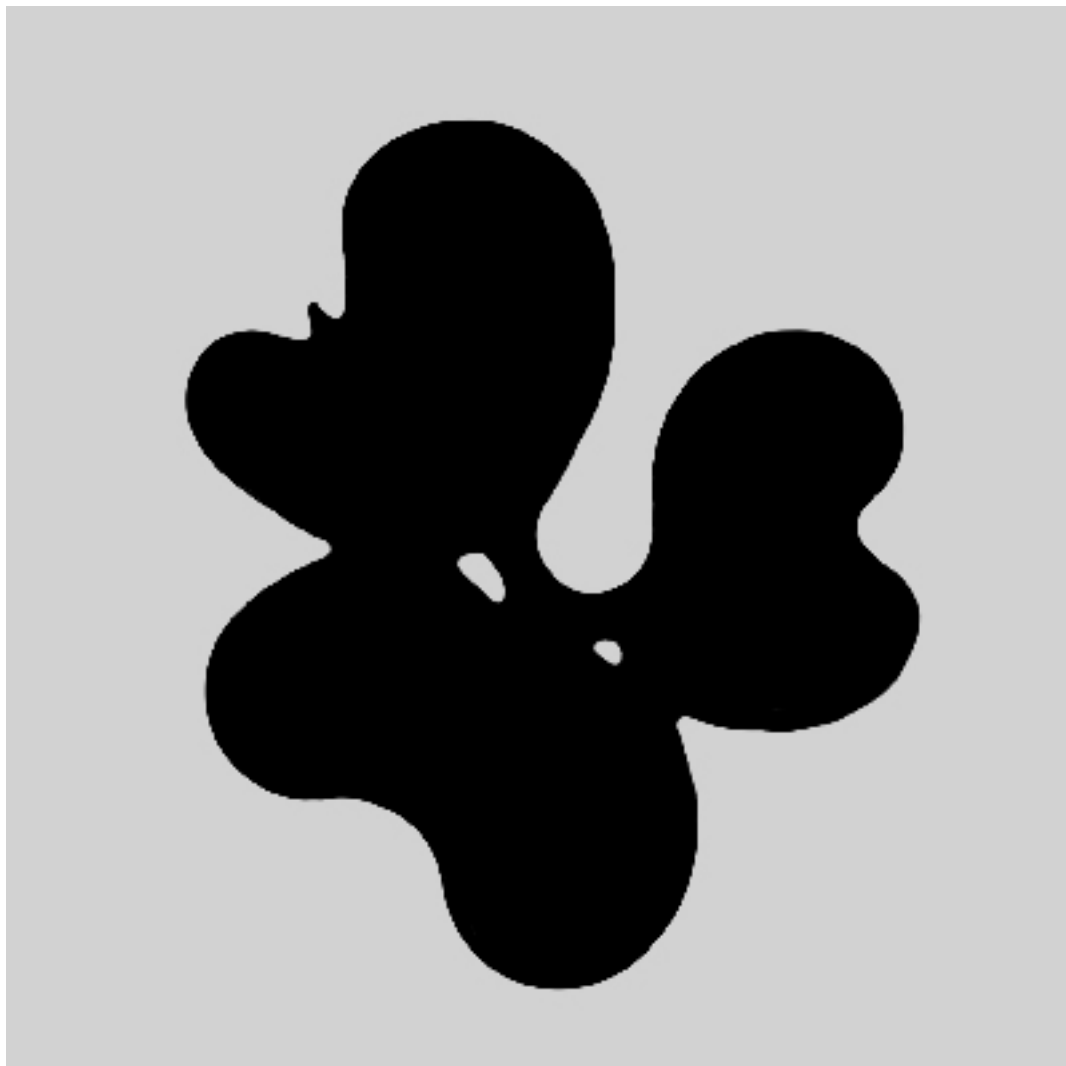
perfumes, smells grew bigger and bigger, more and more oppressive, unbearable. And Georges Wenger never noticed the Java Olive Tree. Why should he? Java Olive Trees do not belong to Varanasi. But one was there, in front of his workshop. Georges Wenger does not belong to Varanasi either, but was there, for a while, a shorter while than the tree.

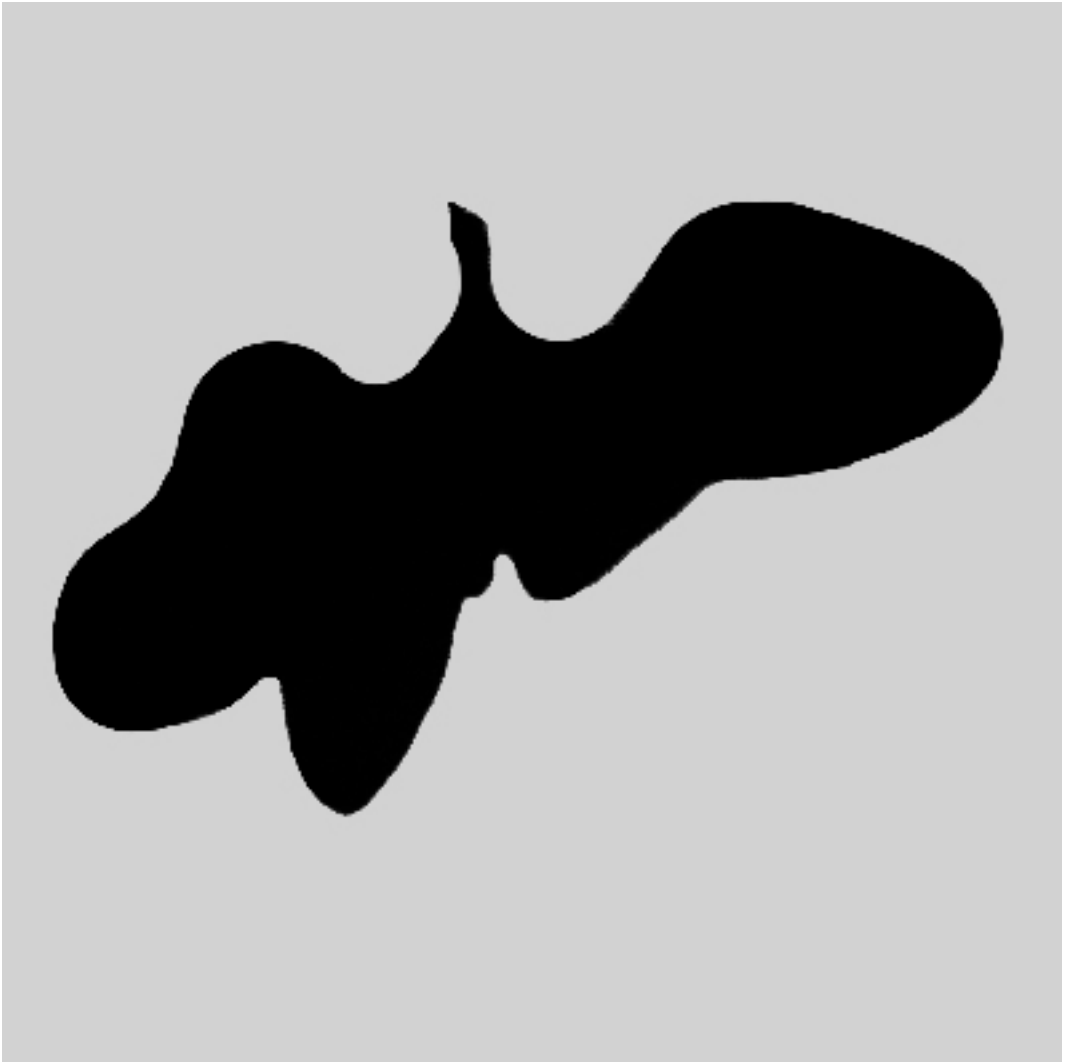
You do not have to be animist to believe that the Java Olive Tree may have tried to communicate with Georges Wenger when it threw a dry, heavy branch at him, missing him just.

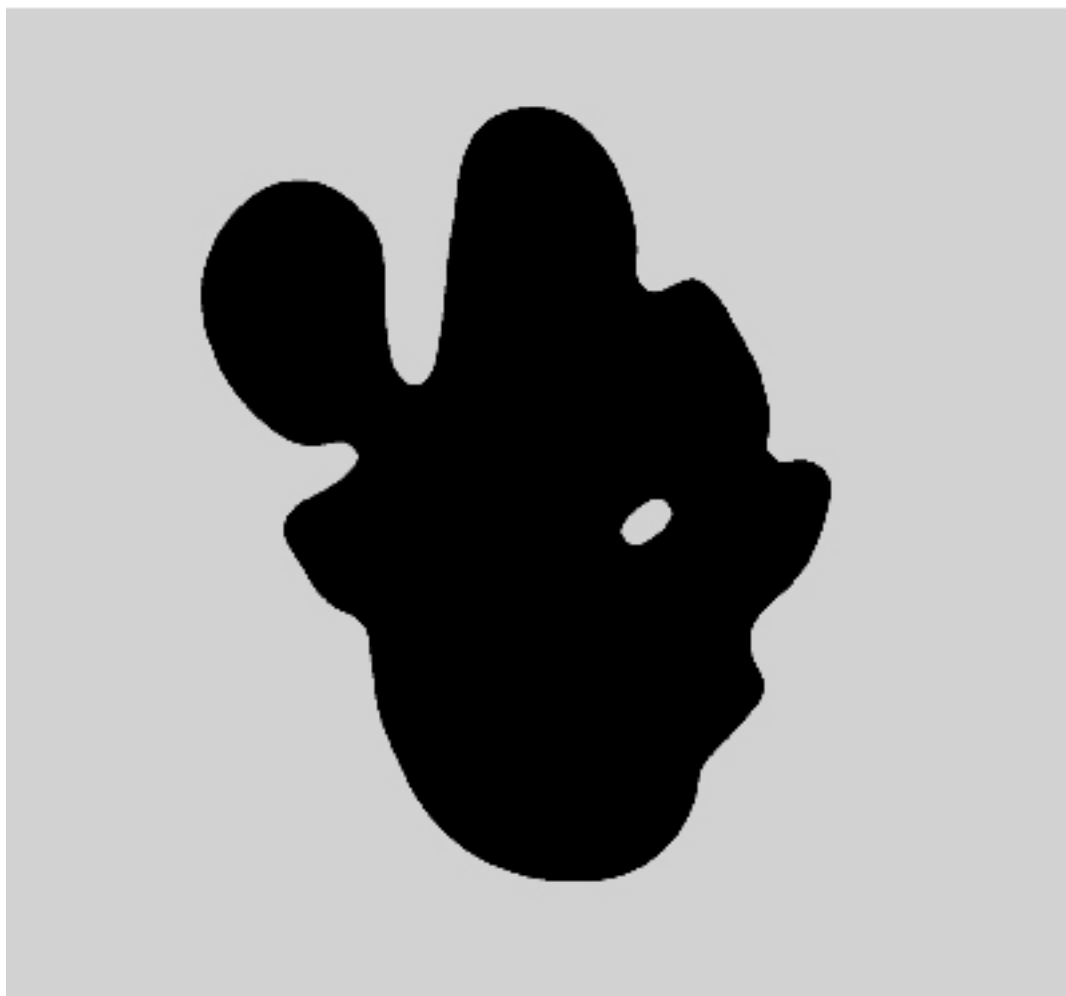
Thus, Georges Wenger noticed the tree, a foreign creature in Varanasi like him. And he noticed the tree's fruit, the Java Olive Tree Almond, wrapped in a green and red shell, which turns brown and hard like wood when it dries out and builds bizarre organic forms. Hans Arp must have seen them when designing his sculptures.

Of all Varanasi's overwhelming visual, acoustic and scent impressions, the Java Olive Almond shell was to become Georges Wenger's inspiration, the answer to his Varanasi Questioning.

Philippe Welti, Dehli

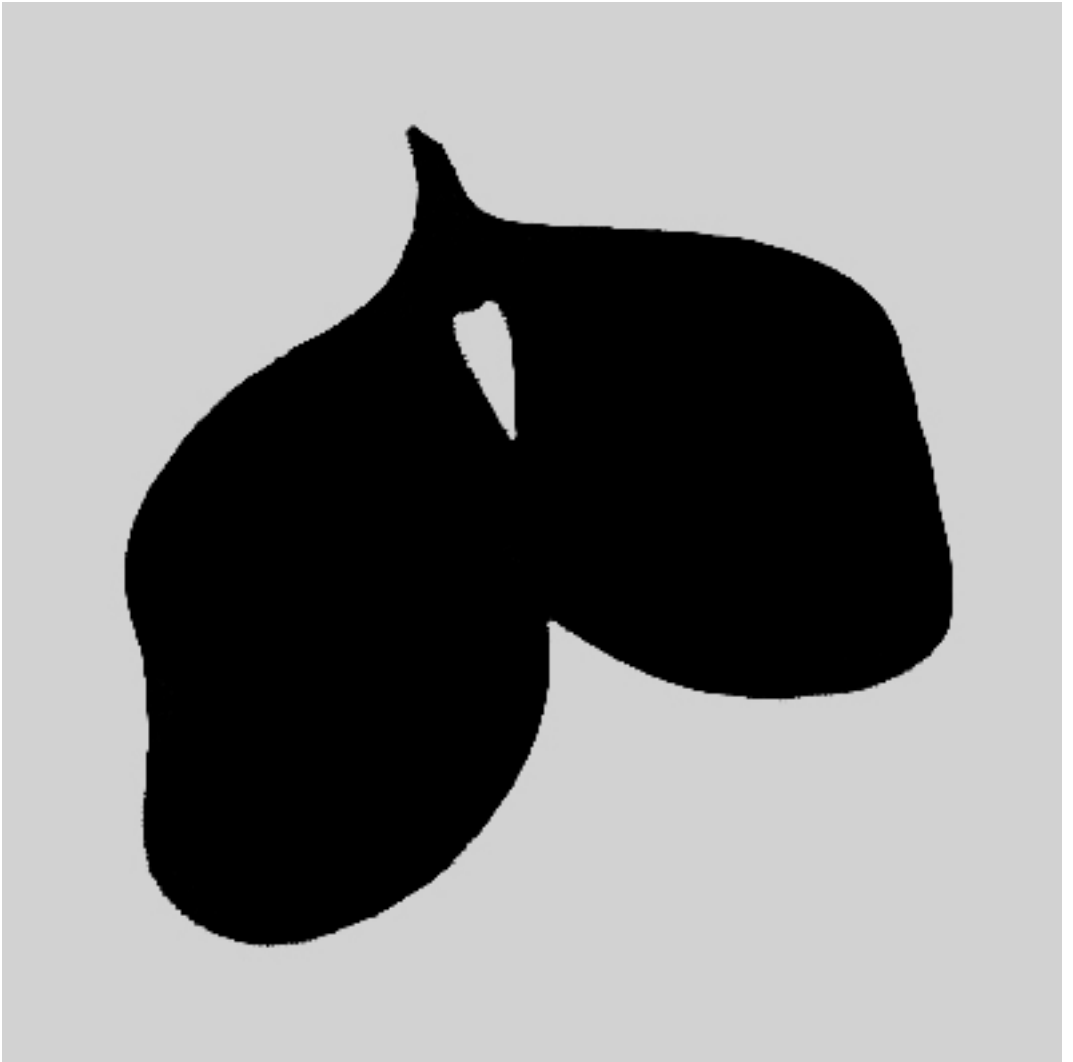




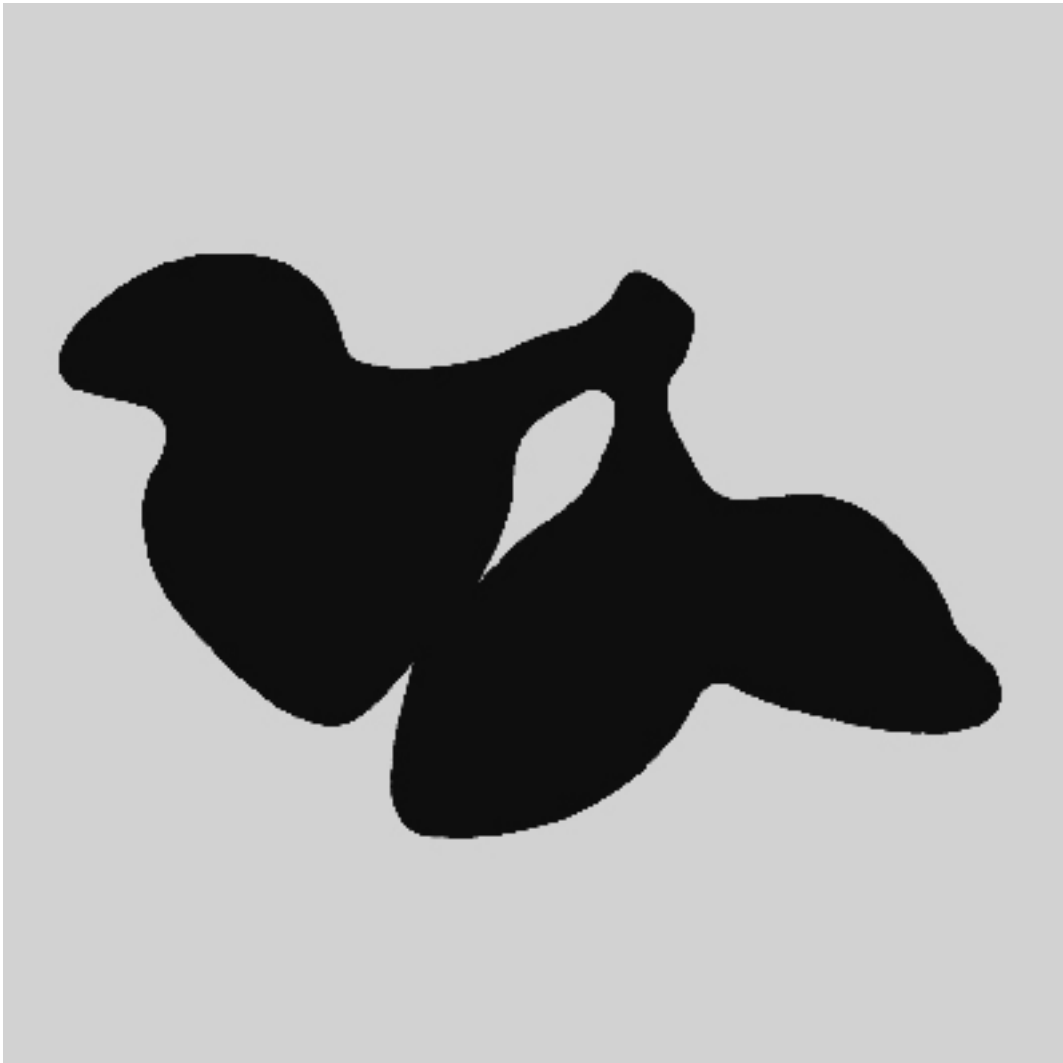


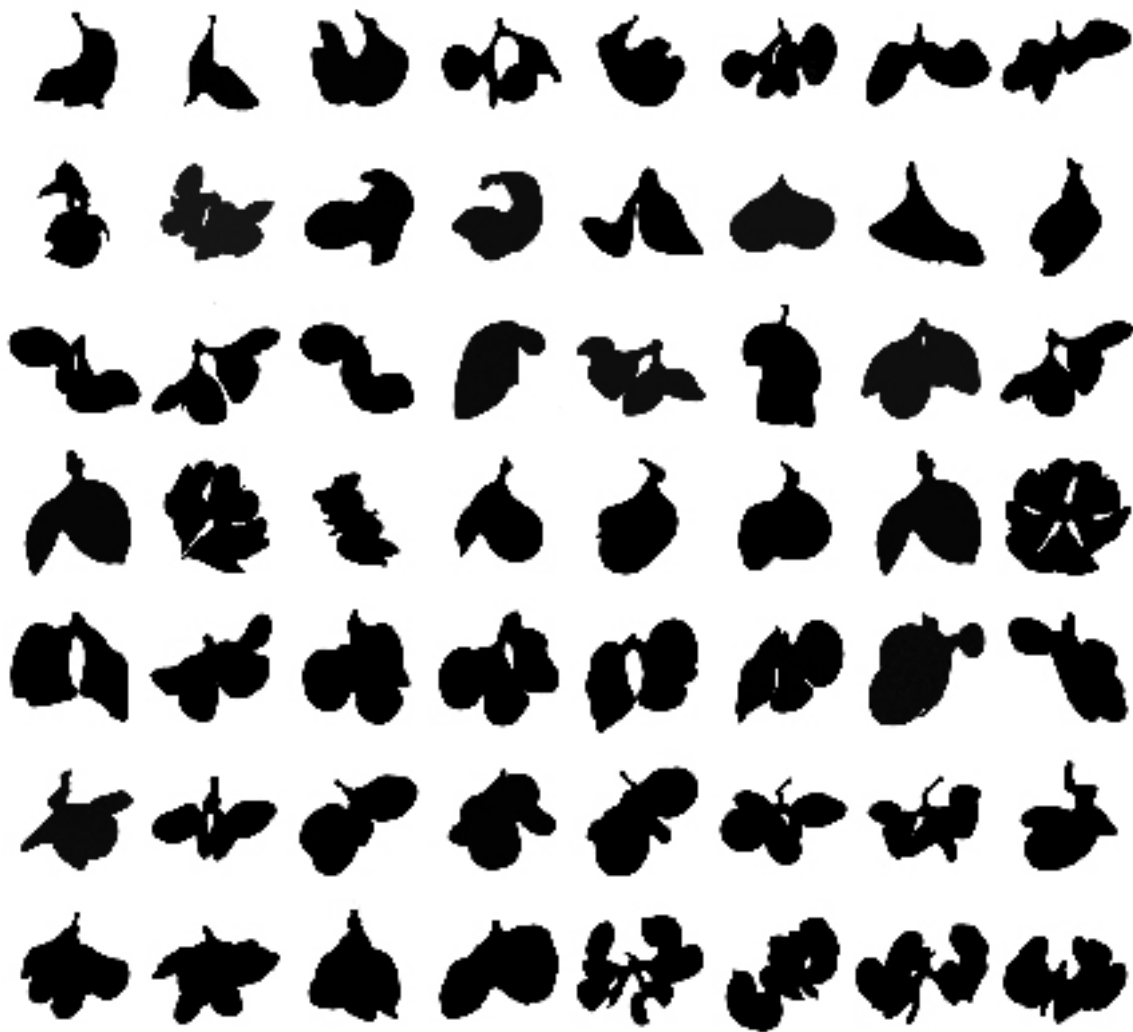


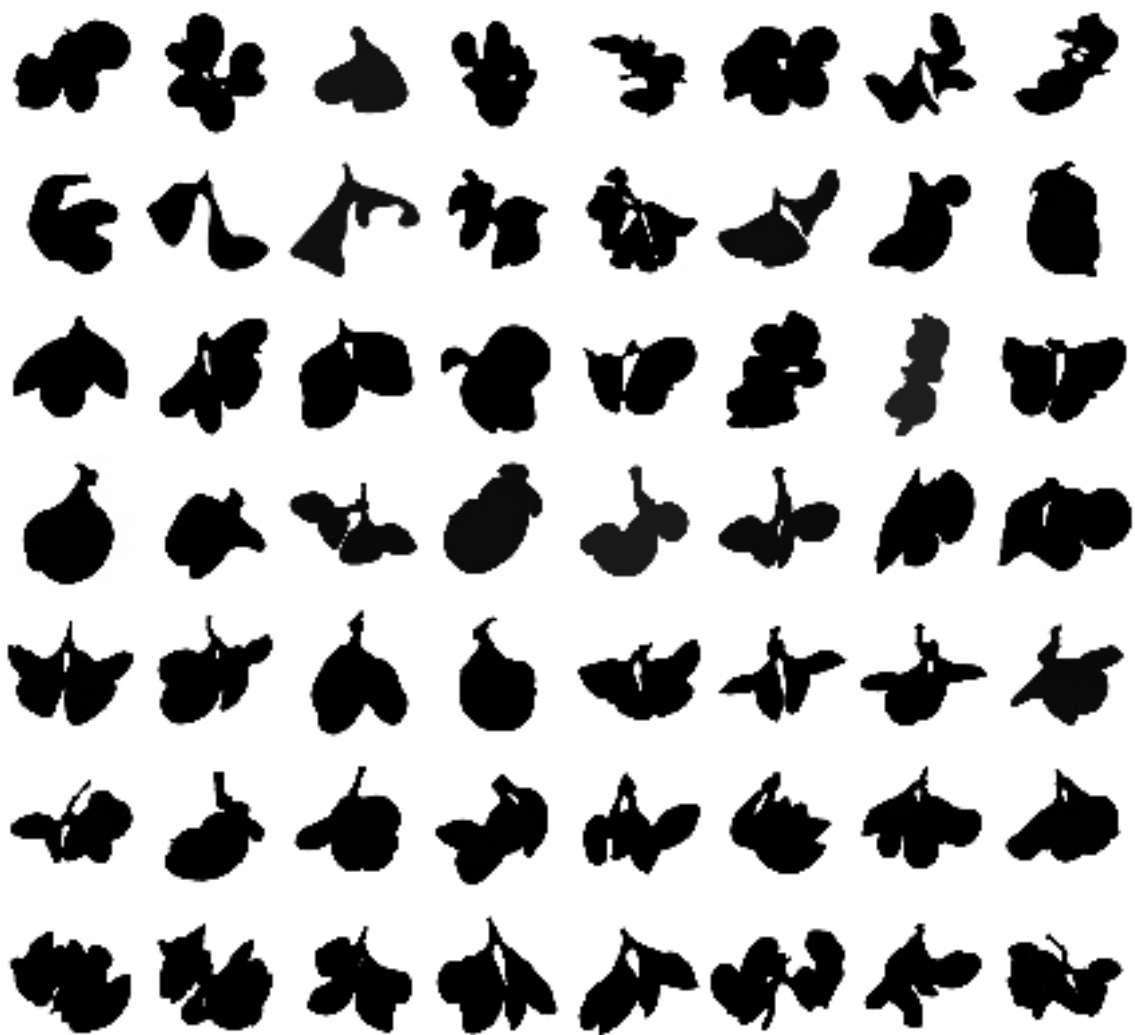


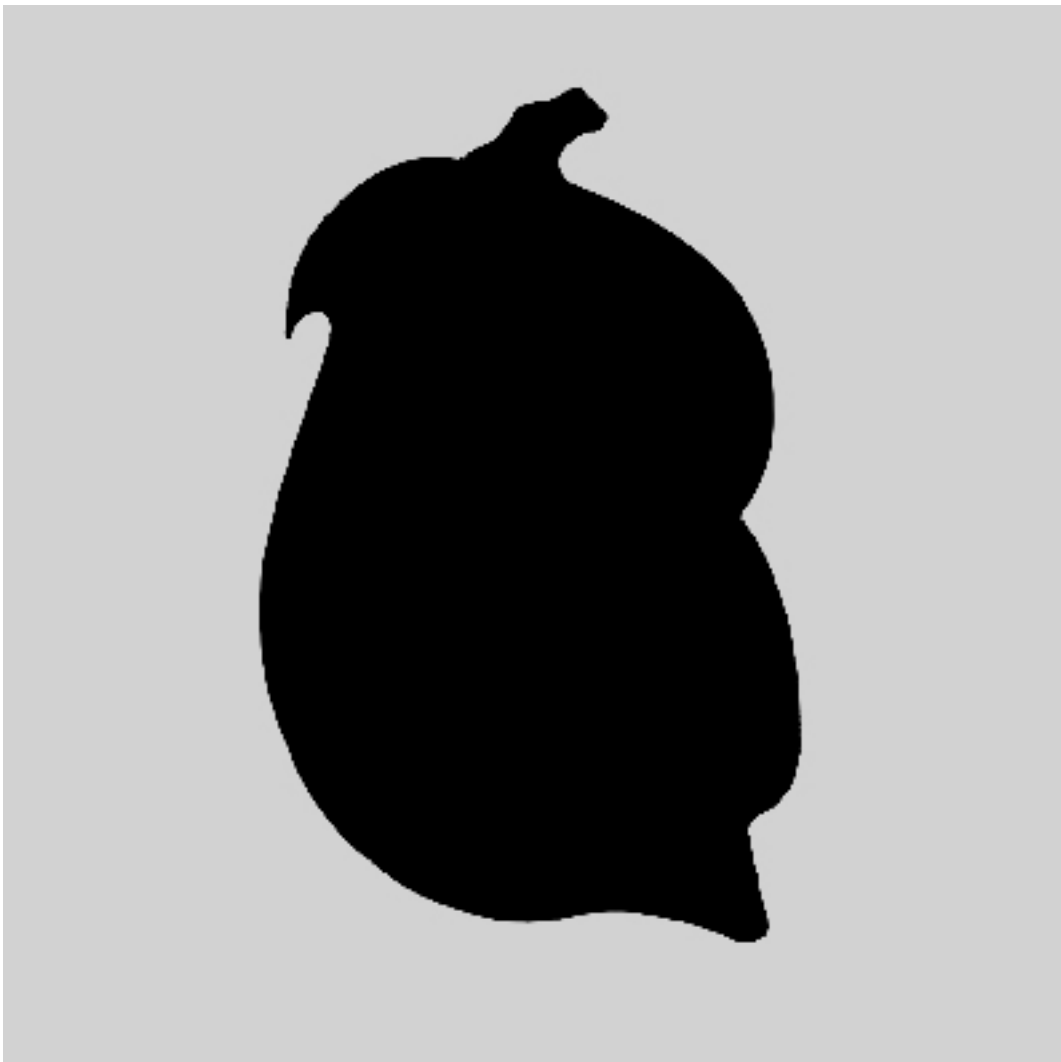


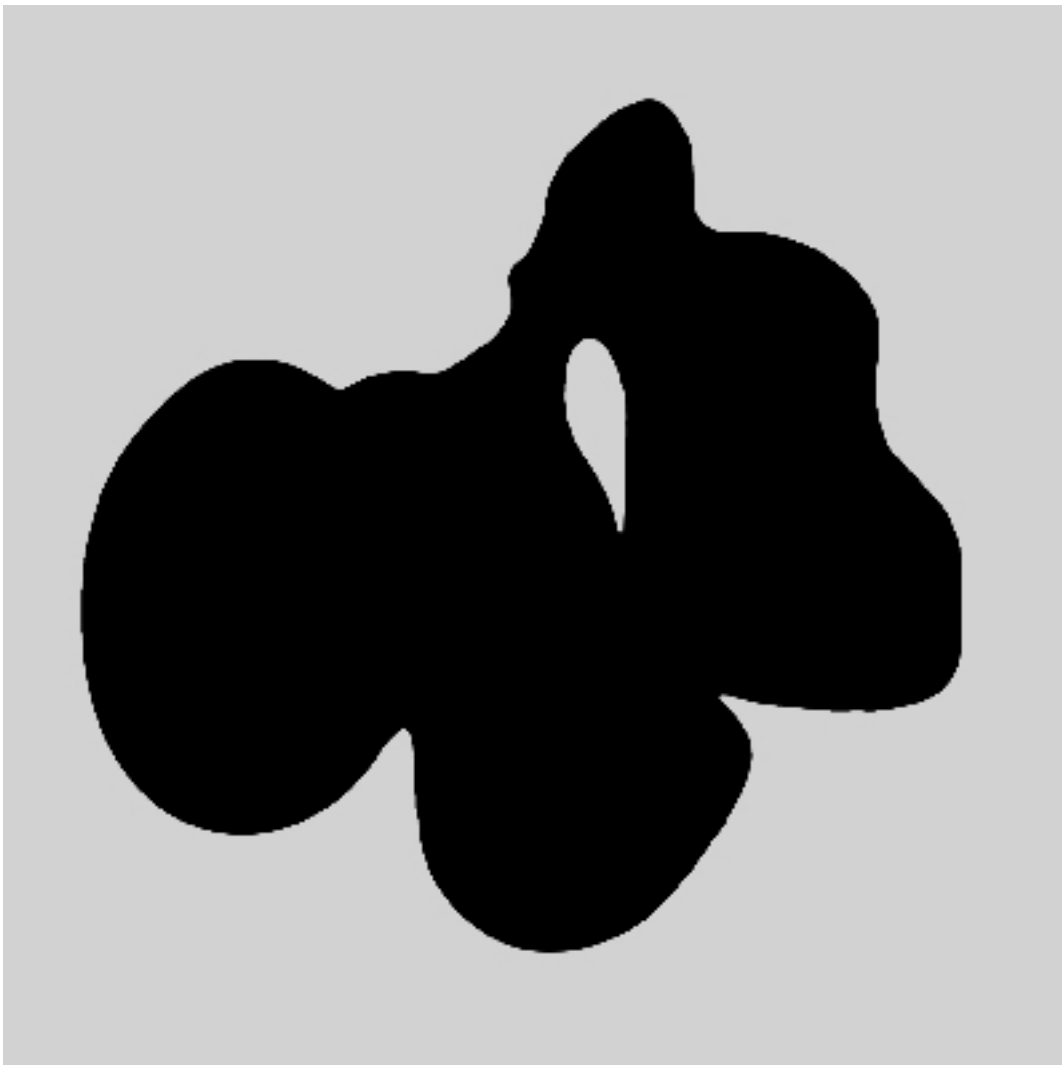




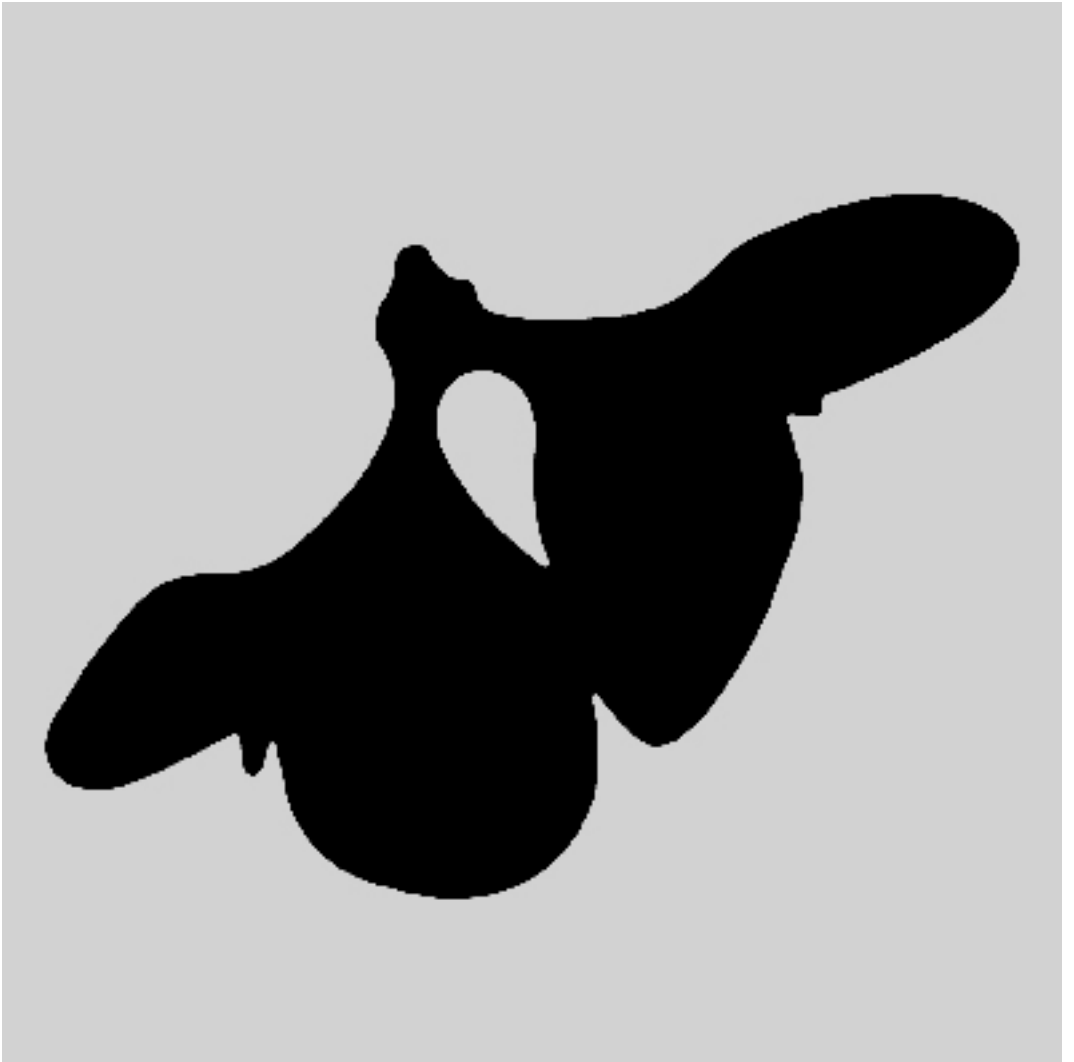


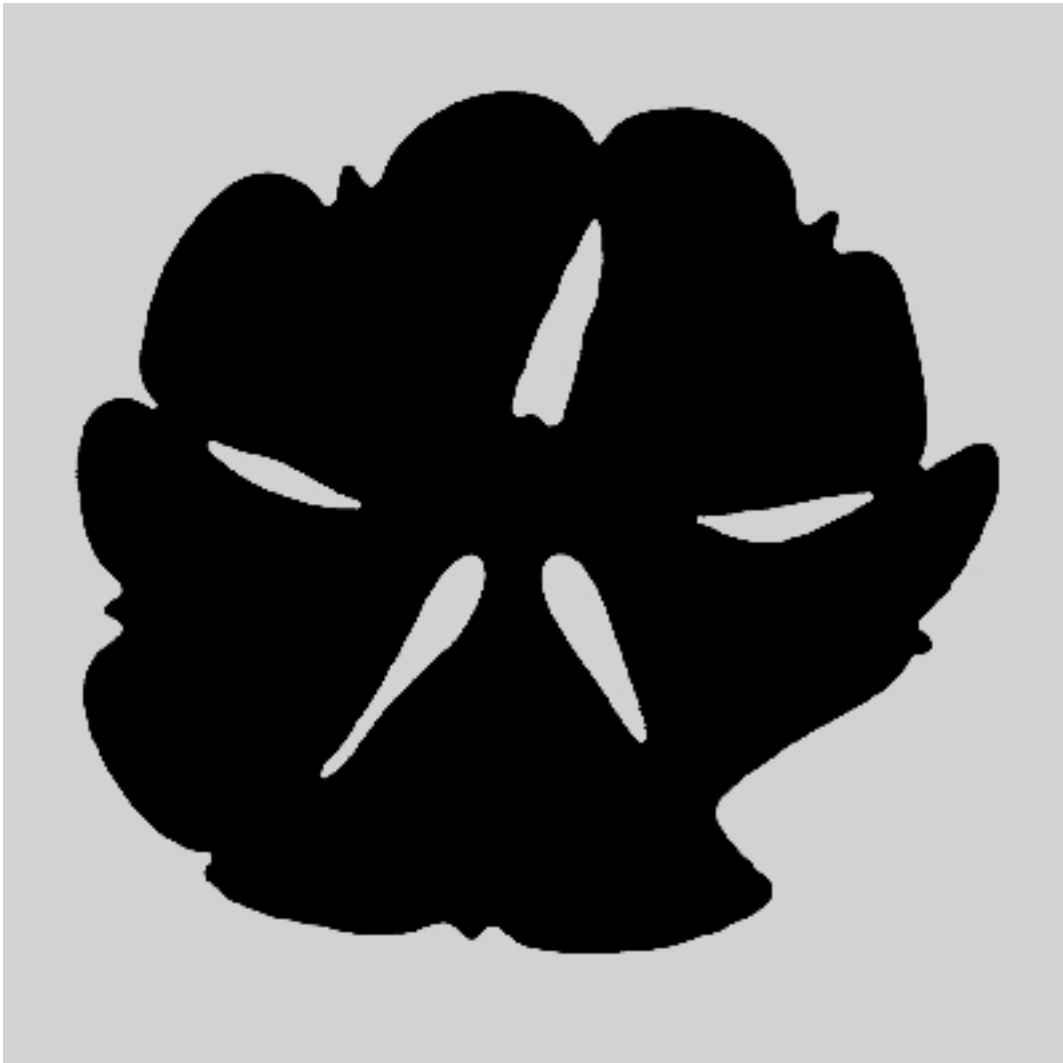


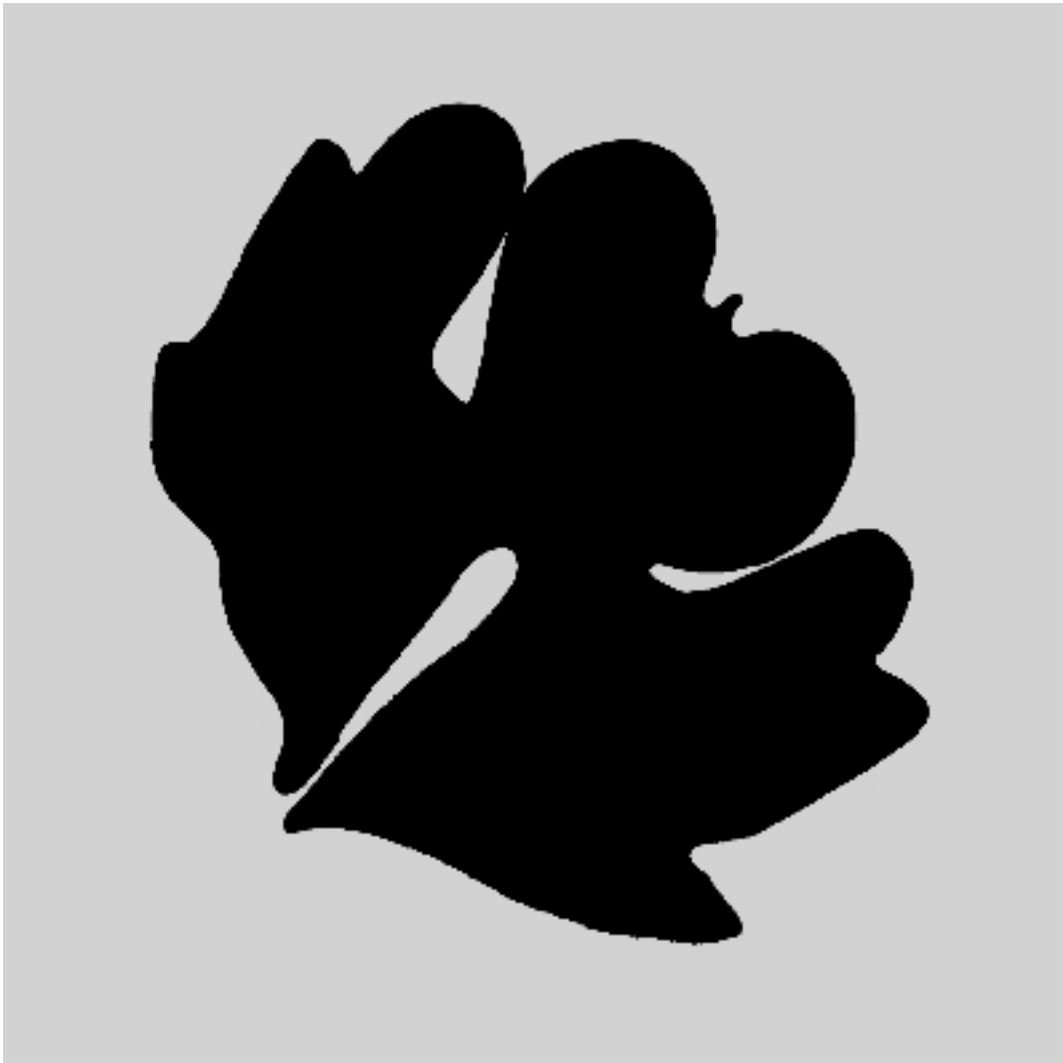


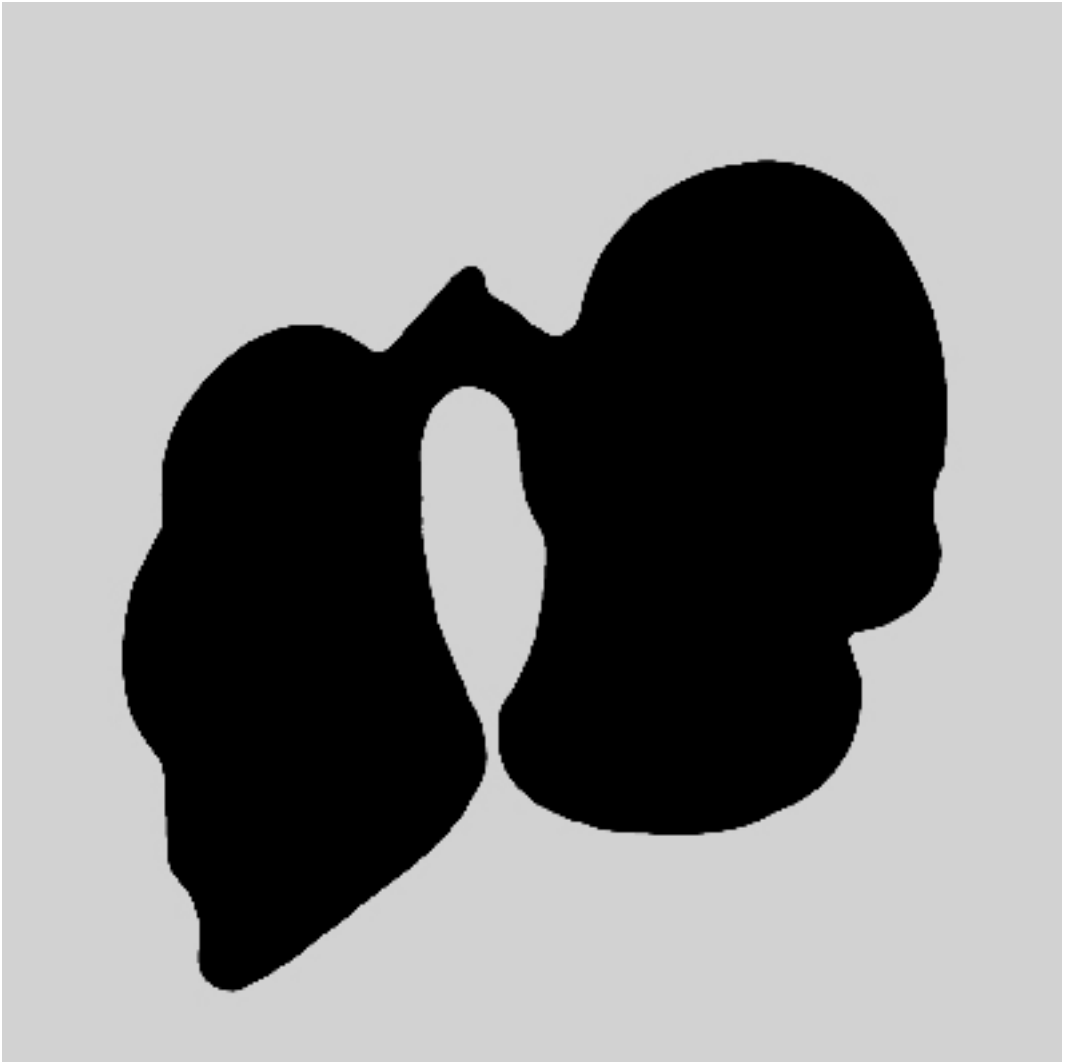


















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This printed selection is the beginning of Georges Wenger's Varanasi creations, his gesture of gratitude to the City of Winterthur for the grant allowing him to go to Varanasi with a plan, and of gratitude to *RIETER*, who made this booklet possible.