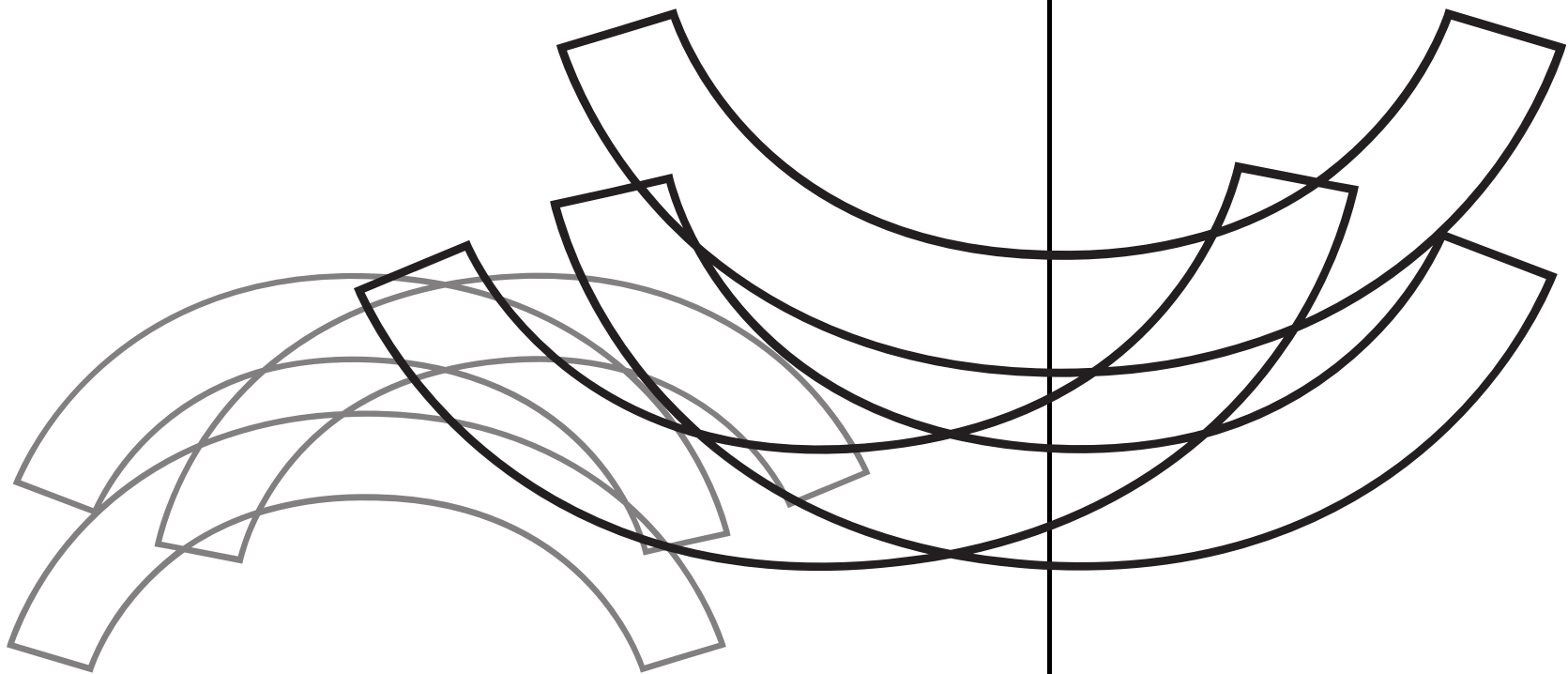


seedling pages

WORKBOOK



therapeuticstudio.ca

Gratitude

Seedling Pages grows out of Other Bodies and Make Space, and out of years of photographing the plants I live alongside. The seed first appeared there, in Germination, one of the Other Bodies stories.

These pages also sit within a lineage of the healing mark, and three teachers are present in them. Shauna Kaendo and the ohHEY Creative Care Community taught me the principle this work is built on: that making marks together, in community, with breath and rhythm and no image to complete, is itself a form of care, and that we heal alongside one another rather than alone. Behind that practice stand two teachers I have never met. Florence Cane, nearly a century ago, showed that a freeing line begins not in the hand but in the breath and the whole moving body, and understood the scribble as a path to the unconscious. Resmaa Menakem, whose somatic work attends to what the body carries, including what it has inherited, meets that material in the body itself, and pairs each practice with the written mark he calls “soul scribing.” I claim no mastery of what any of them teach; these pages simply learn from all three, with gratitude.

The folded box is an old one, made by paperfolders for generations and known today by its Japanese name, masu. The thought that paper might go back into the soil came to me from the Green Newspaper, printed with seeds in it by the Mainichi in Japan in 2016.

About Seedling Pages

Seedling Pages is a creative care practice from Therapeutic Studio. Each page began as a photograph of a plant I live beside. Its lines follow only the spaces between the leaves and stems, close enough that the plant loses its name. You attend to a page in whatever way you choose, fold it into a small pot, sow it with seed that belongs where you live, and keep one strip. In time, the strips are woven. The seed is the other body here: something that can wait a long while in the dark without being finished, and keep an unfinished feeling company.

What this workbook is

Ten pages, each an arrangement of open shapes. There is no picture hidden in them and no right way to fill them.

Use pencil, watercolour, ink, crayon, or nothing but your eyes. Fill every shape, a few, or none. Stay inside the lines or cross them. Use one page or all ten, in any order, over an afternoon or a year.

Each part of the practice stands on its own. You attend to a page. When you are finished with it, you fold it. When you are ready, you sow it. When you have a few strips, you weave them. While you are in one part, there is no need to think about the next; the folding, sowing and weaving are explained over the following pages, so you can read them once and set them aside.

Every page prints the same way: Letter paper (8.5 × 11 inches), landscape, at full size, on plain uncoated paper. The drawings sit sideways on their sheets; turn them whichever way feels right.

Before you begin

Before you begin, you might take a moment to arrive in your body.

Feel the weight of yourself in your seat. Notice what is touching what: hands on the table, feet on the floor. Take one breath that is slightly slower than usual. Ask yourself, without needing a precise answer: what am I carrying right now?

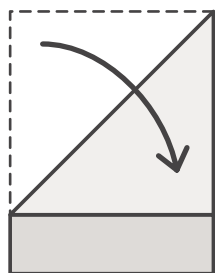
That is enough. Then look at a page before you pick anything up. The lines gather in one place and leave a clearing in another, and your eye will already have gone somewhere without asking you. Start there.

If it stops feeling good, stop. A page with one shape filled is finished.

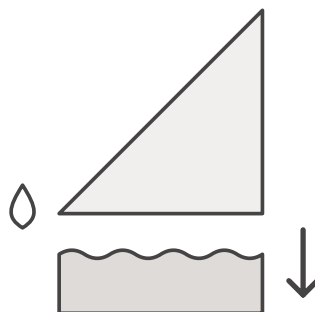
Seedling Pages is not a diagnostic tool, a therapeutic assessment, or a replacement for professional mental health support. It is a creative care practice: a way of tending to yourself through attention, making, and the quiet company of the natural world. If you are working with difficult emotions and would like more support, please reach out to a qualified therapist or counsellor. If you are in distress, please reach someone who can help now: in British Columbia, 310-6789 (no area code); anywhere in Canada, call or text 9-8-8.

Folding *The page becomes a pot.*

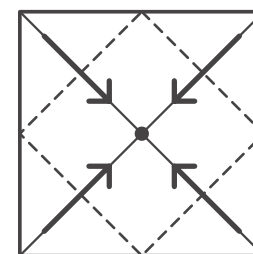
When the page is dry and you are finished with it, it folds into a small open box about the size of a cupped hand. The first fold finds a square and leaves a strip below it. The strip is yours to keep. The box takes a try or two, so you might fold one from a plain sheet of the same paper before you fold a page you have attended to.



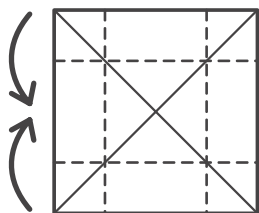
1 Fold the top corner across until the edges meet.



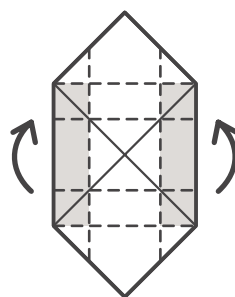
2 Wet the crease and tear. Keep the strip.



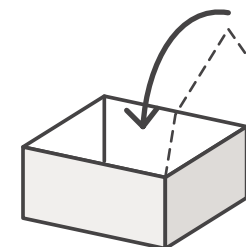
3 Open the square. Crease the other diagonal, then bring all four corners to the centre.



4 Fold each edge to the centre, then open it again. All four.



5 Open two opposite flaps. Stand the two long sides up.



6 Lift each end. The corners tuck in; fold the point down inside.

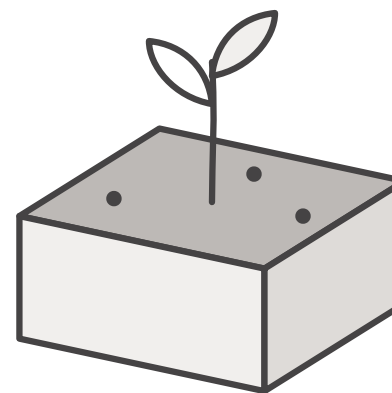
Sowing *The pot goes into the ground.*

Fill the box with soil. Ask someone nearby who knows plants what belongs in the ground where you live: a native plant society, a nursery, or a seed library can tell you. Press one or two of those seeds in, as deep as their packet asks, and water them.

Then the box goes into the earth: the lines, the colour, the hour you spent. Plant it in your own garden, a container, or a place you have been invited to plant. Plain paper breaks down in the soil.

If you used anything that will not break down, such as acrylic, permanent marker or wax crayon, lift the seedling out when you plant it and keep the paper.

You cannot check on what you made, and there is no promise of a seedling. Some seeds wait a year. Some never come up.



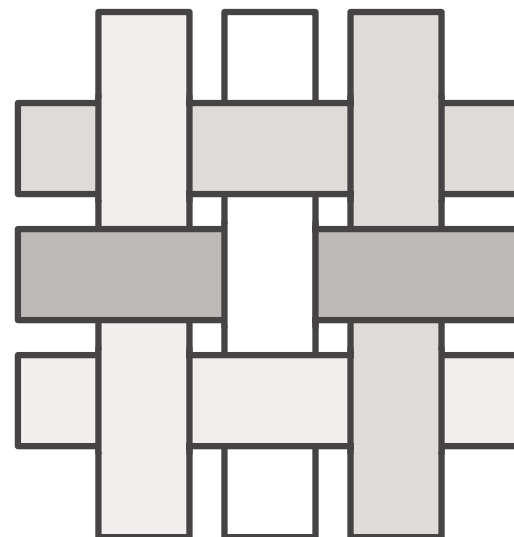
Weaving *The strips become a drawing of their own.*

Each page leaves you one strip. Keep them somewhere flat until you have a few. Three is enough to begin.

Lay some strips side by side, close together, and tape their top ends to the table. Thread the others across them: over one, under the next, then under and over on the row after. Strips of different lengths are fine, and so are gaps.

There is nothing to match and no picture to make. Colours chosen on different days will sit beside one another in a way none of the single pages did. When it holds together, fix the ends on the back with a little tape or glue.

The last page of this workbook is a place to keep it, if you would like one.

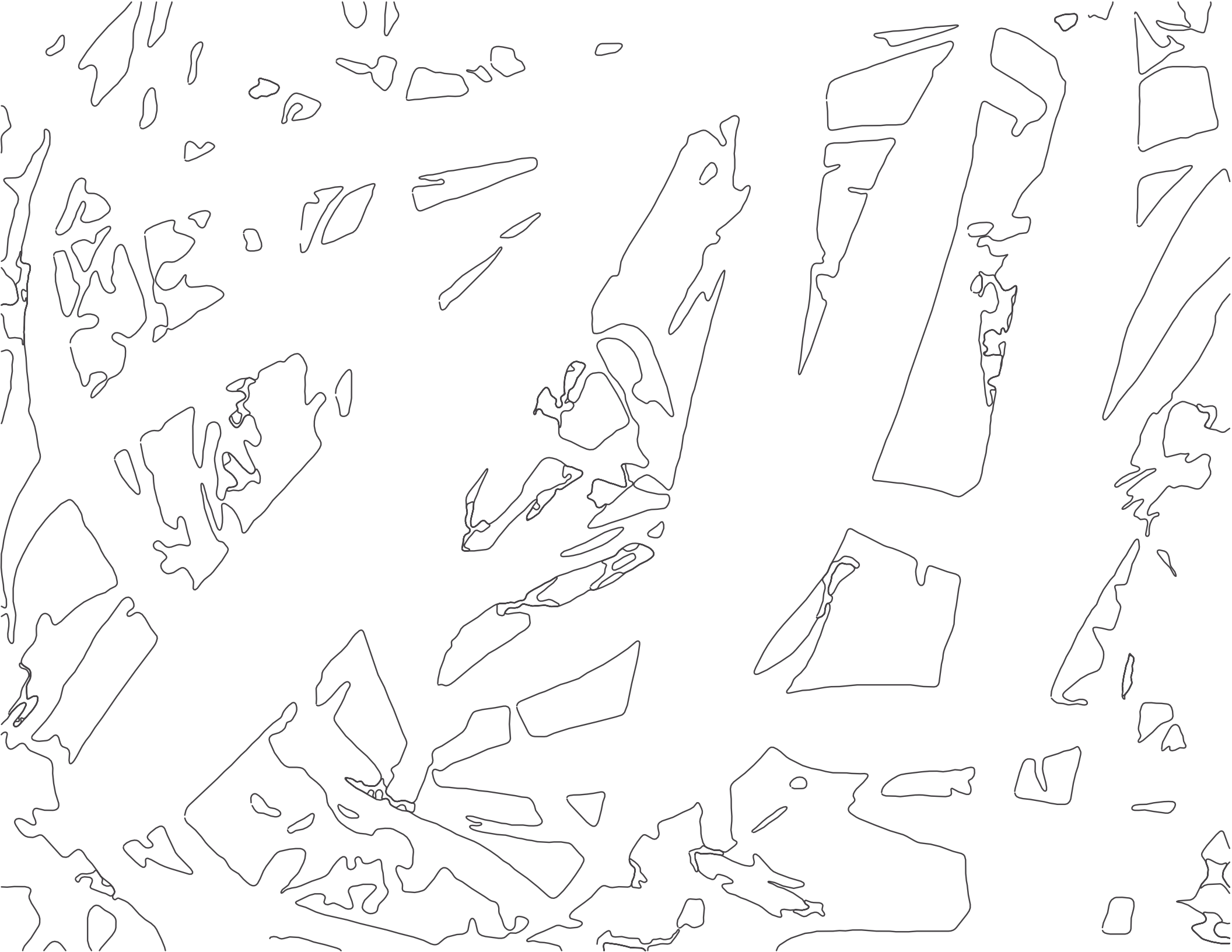


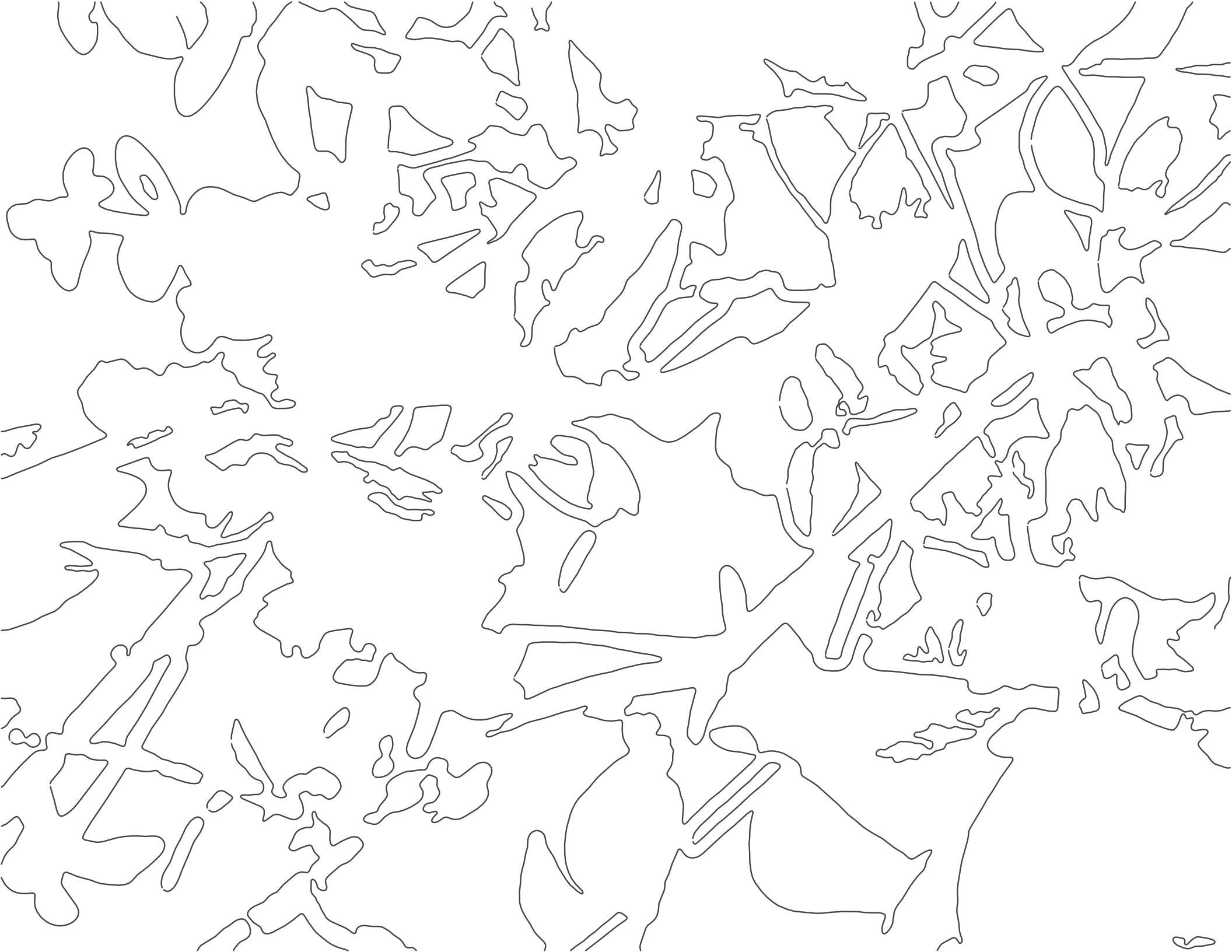


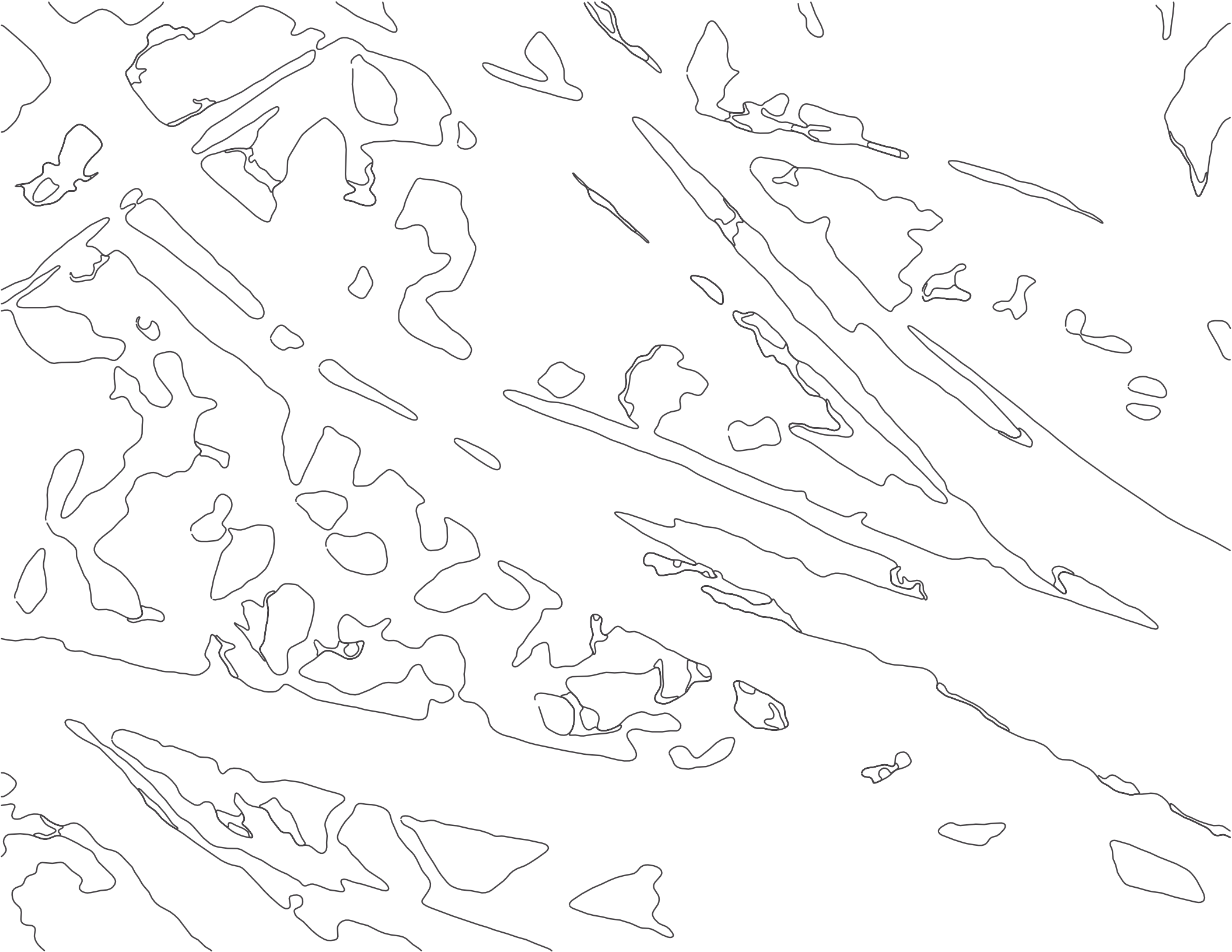






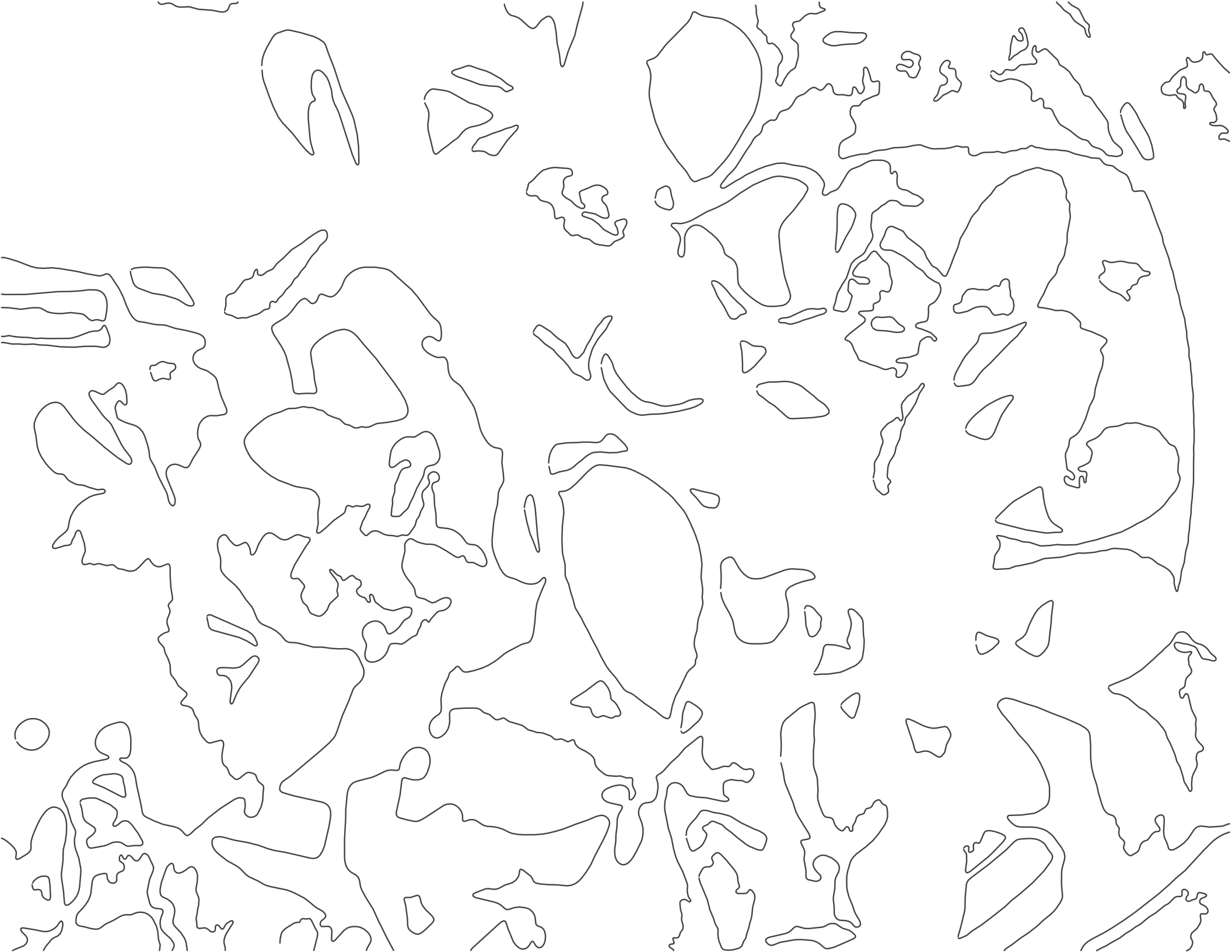












Your weaving *Keep it here, or anywhere.*

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