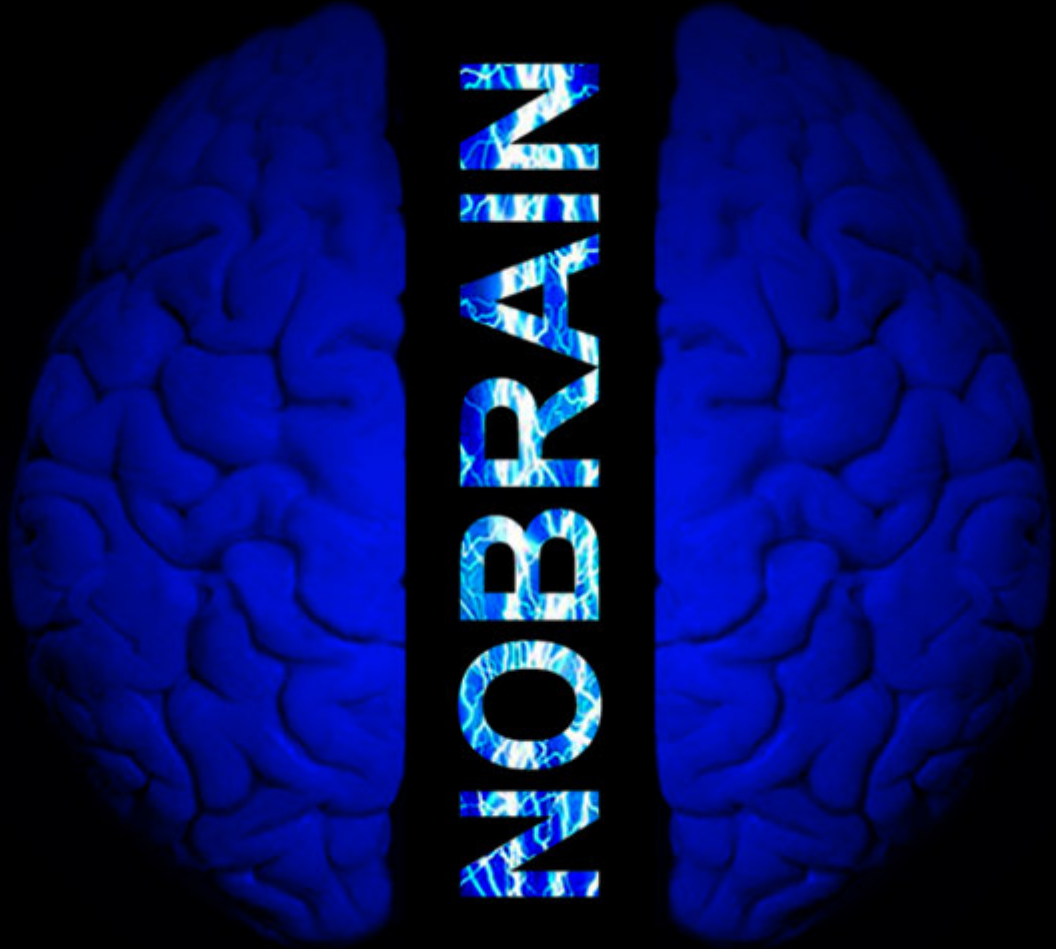


ALEXANDER BARNER

A blue brain is shown from a top-down perspective, split vertically. The word "NOBRAIN" is written vertically in the center, from the bottom to the top, in a blue, textured font that matches the brain's color. The brain's surface is highly detailed with visible gyri and sulci.

NOBRAIN

ALEXANDER BARNER



commenti: Ambra Cascone
Sofia Bianchi

□ Bluspazio Contemporanea

grafica: Massimiliano Eddis

○ ● ○ Whitepoint Gallery
Mirano

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Cosa spinge un artista verso la reiterazione ossessiva del simbolo? Riconoscibilissimo per stile e soggetti, il corpus barneriano appare popolato da poche, sinistre presenze: uomini scarnificati e piranha famelici, simulacri di una catena alimentare invertita in cui è l'uomo l'anello debole, succube dei propri miti consumistici. Accade così che l'universo morale e figurativo dell'artista ci appaia quasi schiacciato e annichilito in una serie di immagini ricorrenti, totemiche, che sfruttano l'allusività evasiva ed eversiva del simbolico per comunicare un messaggio che appare tanto più urgente, quanto più tenacemente ribadito.

L'umanità ferita di Barner non conosce gioia né grazia espressiva. Il segno è violento, rapido, implacabile; il colore acido, aggressivo, accostato per contrasto. È la risposta a un mondo in cui non c'è più margine per la contemplazione ma solo per l'urto, la reiterazione; un mondo chiuso nella ripetitività convulsa dei processi industriali, dei paesaggi urbani sempre uguali, delle logiche di mercato che si fanno religione universale.

Nobrain denuncia la perdita di senso e l'incapacità di pensiero che aliena e allo stesso tempo accomuna, rendendo interscambiabili, i suoi mostri. Non siamo troppo lontani dal messaggio del Goya de *El sueño de la razón produce monstruos*, ma quello di Barner sembra un pessimismo più profondo, radicalizzato perché già realizzato nelle sue prospettive più cupe. Ciò che in Goya agiva in potenza, come rovescio di una fede illuministicamente centrata sull'intelletto umano, in Barner sembra ormai divenuto realtà. Il secolo dei lumi ha ceduto il passo all'era post atomica, di cui egli è figlio e cantore; i suoi umanoidi, i suoi piranha, portano il segno e le cicatrici di questa sorta di nuovo "peccato originale": sono il prodotto di un mondo che ha atrofizzato la logica nella ricerca del profitto e della prevaricazione.

Credo che il messaggio di *Nobrain* rappresenti in primo luogo una denuncia etica. Il suo cielo stellato – altro *topos* barneriano – mi ricorda quello posto da Kant come apice contemplativo nella *Critica della ragion pratica*, privato però della sua controparte dualistica: la legge morale, interna all'uomo e perno connettivo tra esso e il cosmo, viene infatti disciolta dall'artista in un mare popolato di piranha, smarrita nella vacuità orbitale dei suoi volti allucinati; definendo con la sua stessa assenza una sorta di protagonismo necessitante.

In questo scenario angosciante, le piramidi, simbolo di ascesa e di un tempo in cui l'Uomo ambiva ancora a toccare il cielo e misurarsi con esso, ritornano con frequenza, ma ridotte alla loro elementarità geometrica di triangoli, quasi mero motivo ornamentale, *tapisserie*. Come un ricordo ancestrale di cui si conserva traccia ma si è smarrito il senso.

Le creature di Alexander Barner vivono di questa tensione irrisolta; agiscono in preda ad un'automatismo illogico che le imprigiona nel loop, allontanandole inesorabilmente da quella ricerca di senso che è tipicamente umana.

Con cifra personalissima e convincente, Barner eredita la non-lezione dell'Art brut, la potenza emotiva dell'espressionismo nordico, l'ironia irriverente e corrosiva della Street Art e crea un linguaggio che ha la purezza e l'immediatezza dell'infanzia. Ma – e qui sta gran parte del fascino della sua arte – di questo linguaggio volutamente naif, egli si avvale per formulare una critica feroce della società contemporanea, offrendo con le sue opere una potente testimonianza dell'aporia esistenziale che l'affligge.

Ambra Cascone

Volti caratterizzati da semplici e puliti segni come gesti, sfoghi per esprimere il proprio sentimento – forse di repressione sociale – forse di rabbia – dati da pochi e primari colori quali il rosso, il blu e il giallo, ma che rimandano a forze così vive e a sensazioni primordiali. Volti che ricordano le maschere africane alle quali numerosi artisti di inizio Novecento si sono ispirati. Volti che arrivano fino all'Art Brut, colmi della malinconia e dello smarrimento dei soggetti di Jean Dubuffet. Volti con sguardi impassibili in grado di freddarti l'anima con espressioni che denunciano la parte malata di una società alla quale appartengono.

Sono i volti di Alexander Barner che dai graffiti sui muri ha trasposto sulla carta attraverso l'uso di pennarelli e di semplici forme geometriche. Le stesse forme che qui, in questo catalogo, vediamo riproposte per la rappresentazione di paesaggi fatiscanti, che creano spazi non-spazi dove i soggetti presenziano, immobili e inquieti, oramai risucchiati dal consumismo e dal potere monetario: visi antropomorfi e pesci scarni, scheletrici, consapevoli del mondo di cui fanno parte senza volerlo.

Un'arte malata espressione di una società malata, all'interno della quale anche i pesci-banconota indossano cerotti e si mostrano nudi, consumati dalla loro avidità.

In questi lavori si nota l'energia del tratto di Barner, caratterizzata da una gestualità forte, segnata dalla trasposizione della sua interiorità sullo spazio della carta, attraverso l'utilizzo di segni vivi che delineano però una realtà statica e angosciante.

Il suo segno nel tempo si pulisce e diventa più netto, ma rimane carico di quell'energia espressionista dei lavori precedenti. Gli sfondi non sono più contaminati da scarabocchi e altri segni, ma pervasi da figure geometriche in ripetizione. In alcuni disegni lo sfondo diventa protagonista: paesaggio onirico dove i soggetti fluttuanti riportano alla mente figure risvegliate dai più profondi incubi.

Un artista che si nasconde, ma che grazie alle sue opere ci mostra il suo messaggio e la sua necessità di espressione.

Immagini dove la ragione si abbandona a quelle paure invisibili che non vogliono emergere, immagini senza cervello – NO BRAIN.

Sofia Bianchi

What moves an artist to the obsessive reiteration of a symbol?

Easily recognizable for style and subjects, Barner's corpus seems populated by few disturbing presences: men who have been reduced to skulls and ravenous piranha. It looks like an inverted food chain where man is the weakest link, dominated by the same consumer myths that he has created himself.

The artist's moral and figurative universe appears compressed and crushed in a sequence of recurring and totemic images that use both the allusive and subversive symbolic potential to deliver a message as much urgent as tenaciously repeated.

The wounded humanity represented in Barner's artwork, doesn't know about joy or expressive grace. The mark is violent, rapid, implacable. The colour is bright, aggressive, matched by contrast. It's the answer to a world where contemplation has no margins at all: only space for conflict and reiteration. A world that is trapped in the unrestrained repetitiveness of industrial processes; in the monotony of urban landscapes; in the market logics that became universal religion.

Nobrain denounces the loss of sense and the inability of thought that alienates and makes interchangeable its monsters at the same time. We are not so far from the Goya's message in *El sueño de la razón produce monstruos* but Barner's pessimism seems deeper. It seems radicalized because it already took place in its darkest perspectives. What in Goya acts potentially (as the reverse side of a enlightened faith centred on human intellect), in Barner has already become reality. The Age of the Enlightenment has given way to the post-atomic era, whose Barner is son and cantor. His humanoids and piranha bear the sign of this sort of new "original sin"; they are the product of a world whose logic is atrophied in the research of profit and abuse of power.

In my opinion, first of all, *Nobrain* represents an ethics complaint. Another Barner's topos, its starry sky, remembers the same sky that Kant puts as a contemplative peak in *The Critique of Practical Reason* but, here, it is deprived of its dualistic counterpart: the moral law, that represents a man's inner element and his connective fulcrum with the universe. This moral law it is instead dissolved by the artist in a sea populated by piranha, lost in the orbital vacuity of his crazed faces.

In this distressing scenario, the pyramids return frequently. Symbol of rise and of a time when man still aspired to touch the sky and competing with it, those pyramids result reduced to their geometrical essentiality of triangles, almost as a purely ornamental motif, *tapisserie*. It seems like an ancestral memory of which we save a track, but we've lost the sense.

The Alexander Barner's creatures live of this unresolved tension. They act in the grip of an illogic automatism that locks them in a loop, drifting them apart from that search of meaning that is typically human.

According to his very personal and convincing style, Barner inherits the typical lack of rules of Art Brut, the emotive strength of the Nordic expressionism; the irreverent and corrosive irony of Street Art. From these elements he creates a language that has the purity and immediacy of childhood. But – and therein lies much of the charm of his art – he uses this deliberately naïf language, to bring a ferocious critique of contemporary society, offering with his artworks a powerful witness of the existential aporia that afflicts our time.

Ambra Cascone

Faces are characterised by simple and clean signs like gestures, outbursts to express their

feeling – perhaps social repression – perhaps anger – made from a few primary colours such as red, blue and yellow, which refer to alive forces and primordial sensations. Faces that remind African masks which have inspired many artists from the early Twentieth Century.

Faces that arrived till the Art Brut, full of melancholy and confusion like Jean Dubuffet subjects. Faces with unblinking eyes able to cold your soul with expressions that expose the diseased part of the society they belong to.

They are the faces of Alexander Barner who from the graffiti wall has transposed on paper through the use of markers and simple geometric shapes. The same forms that here, in this catalog, we see repropose for the representation of dilapidated landscapes, creating spaces no spaces where people attend, stall and restless, wear out by the consumerism and monetary power: faces anthropomorphic and skinny fish, skeletal, aware of the world they belong unintentionally.

A sick art expression of a sick society, where even the banknote-fishes are wearing bandages and show themselves naked, consumed by their own greed.

In these works we note the energetic tracts of Barner, characterised by strong gestures, marked by the transposition of his inner space on the paper, through out the use of alive marks that delineate a static and distressed reality.

With time his mark becomes cleaner and more distinct, but it remains full of expressionism energy of his previous works. The backgrounds are no longer contaminated with scribbles and other signs, but full of geometric shapes repetitions. In some draws the background becomes the protagonist: dreamscape where the floating subjects bring to mind awakened figures from the deepest nightmares.

An artist who is hiding, but thanks to his works shows us his message and his need for expression.

Images where reason indulges in what is unseen fears that will not emerge, mindless images – NO BRAIN.

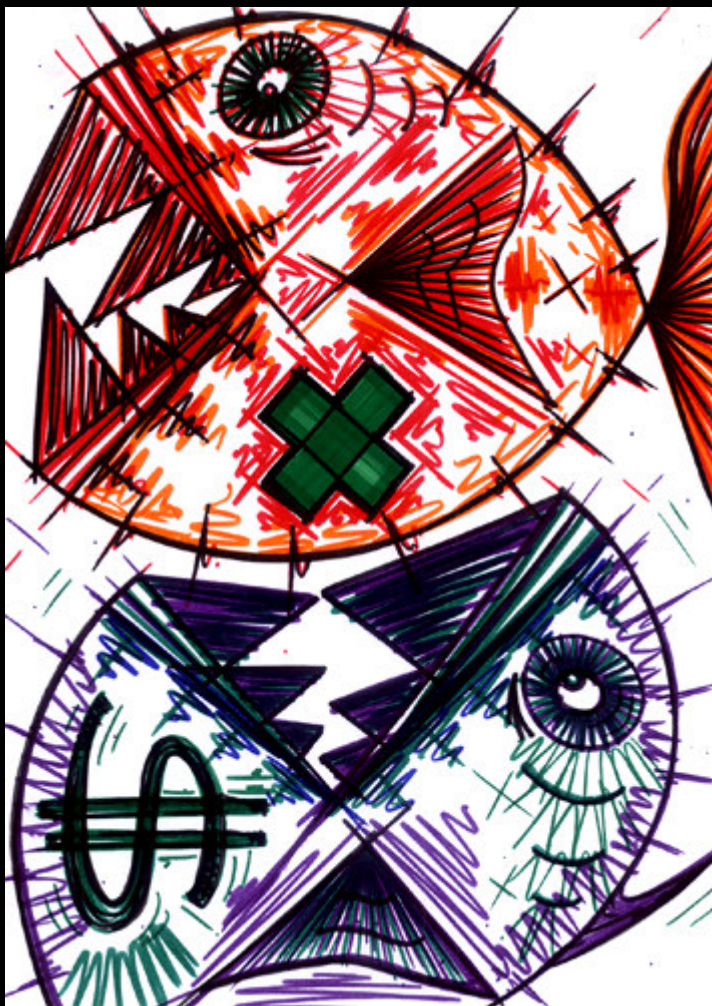
Sofia Bianchi



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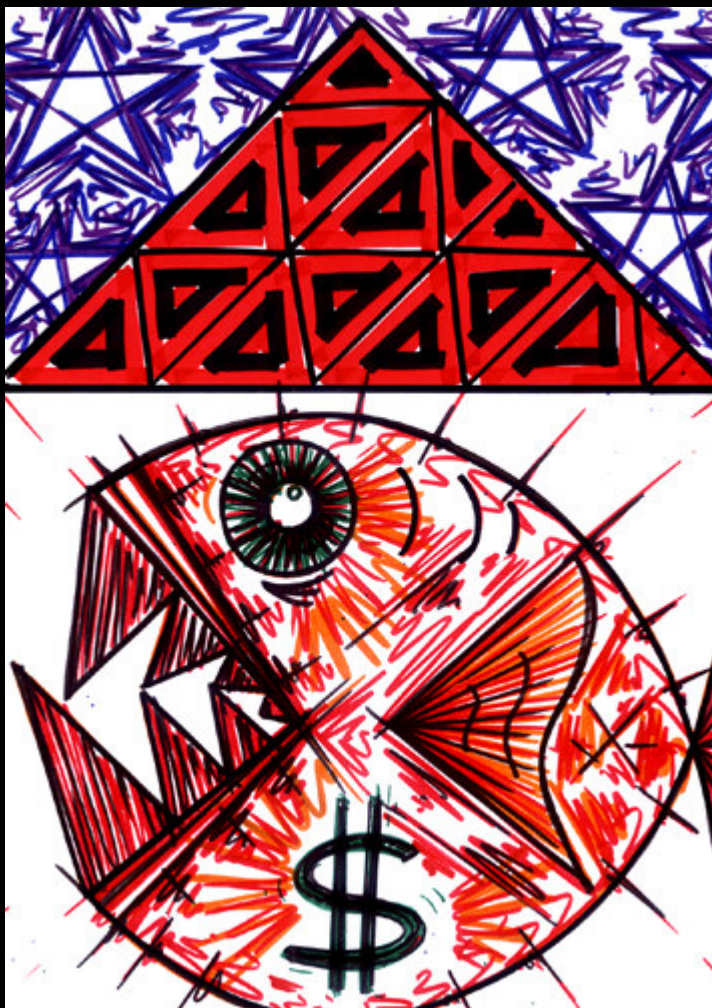
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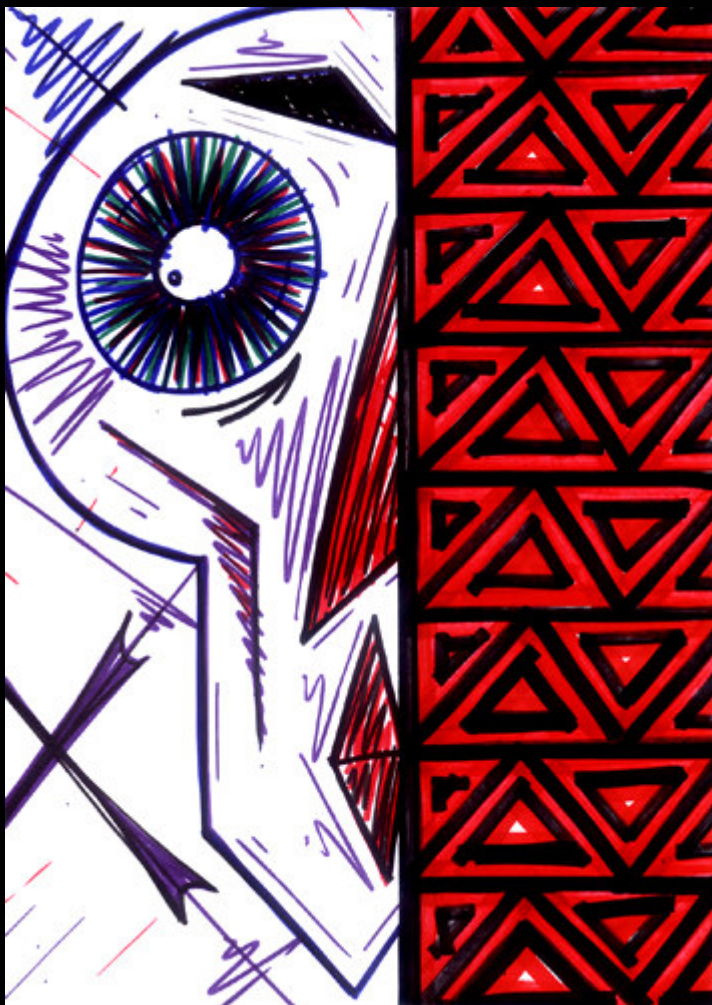
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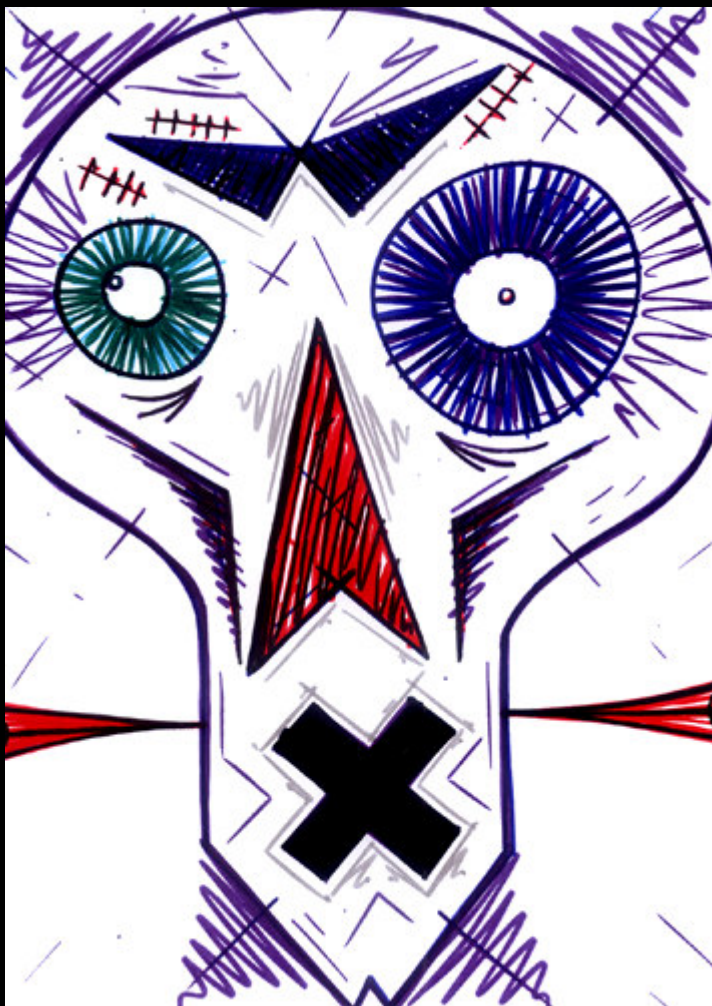
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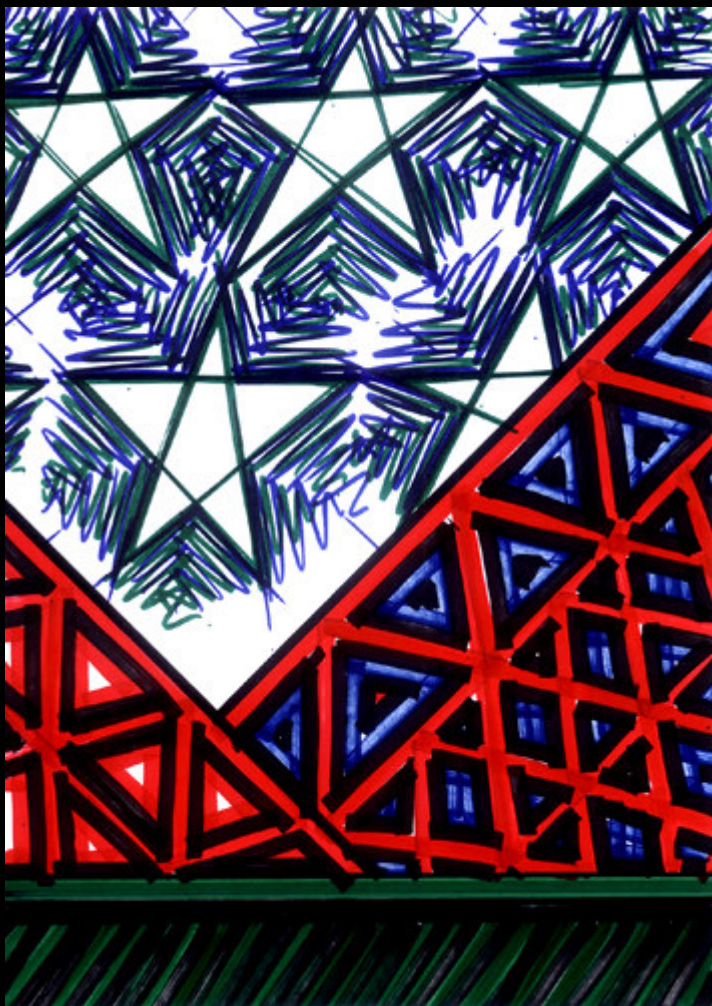
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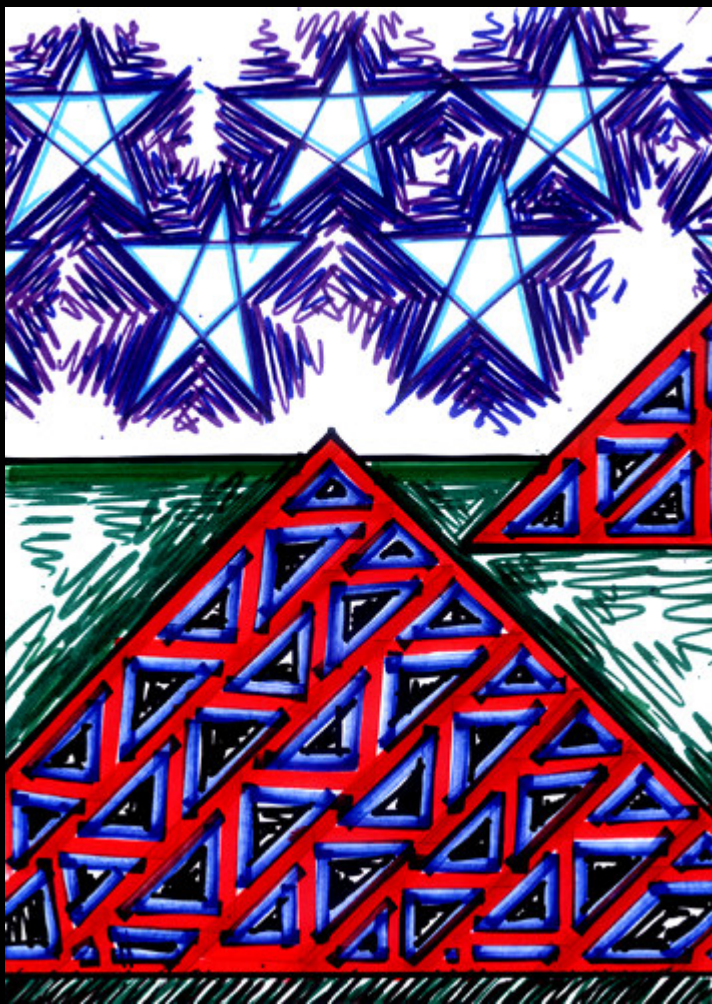
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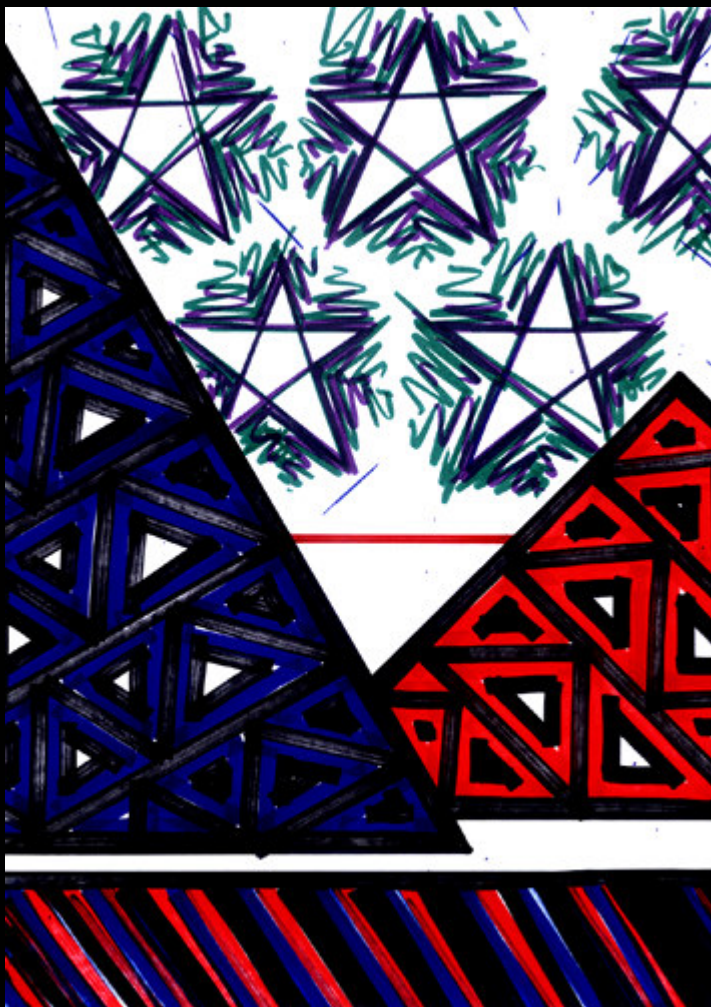
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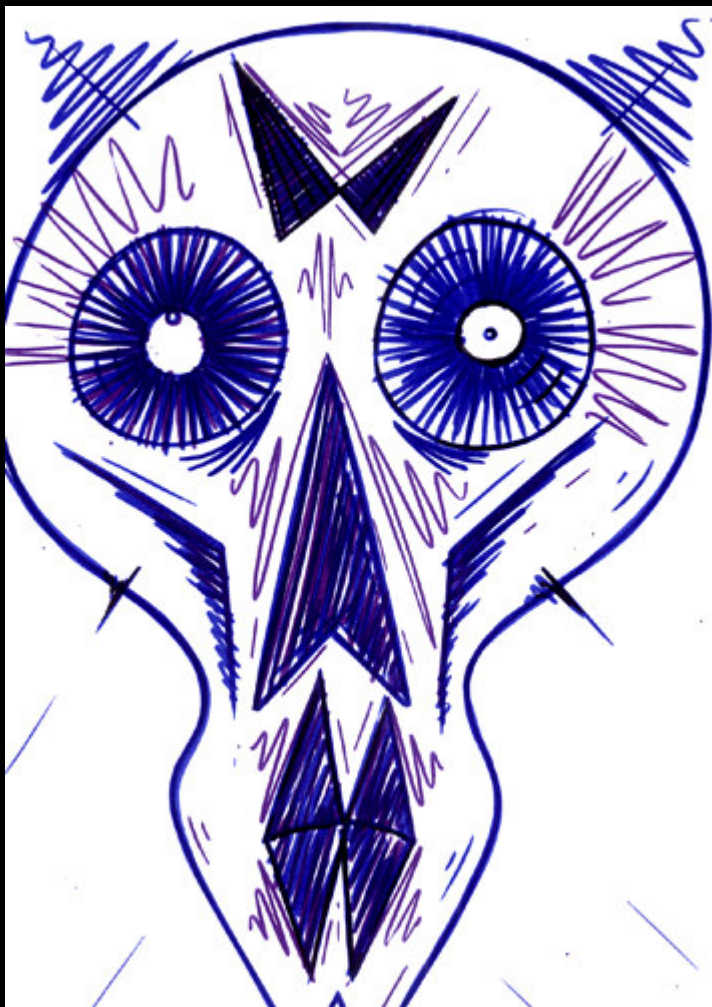
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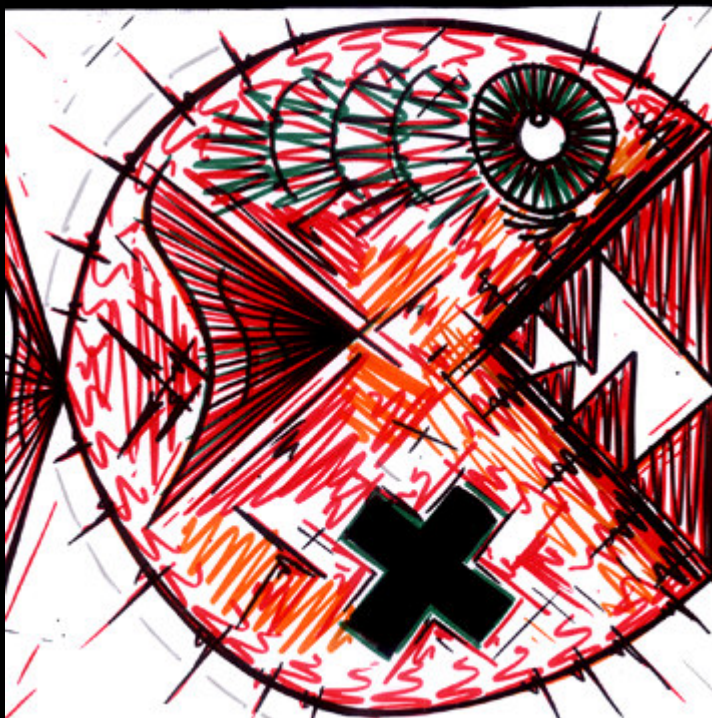
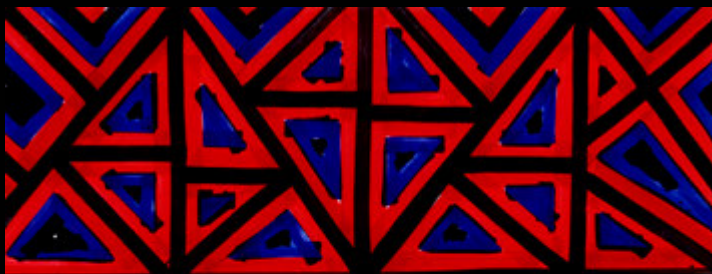
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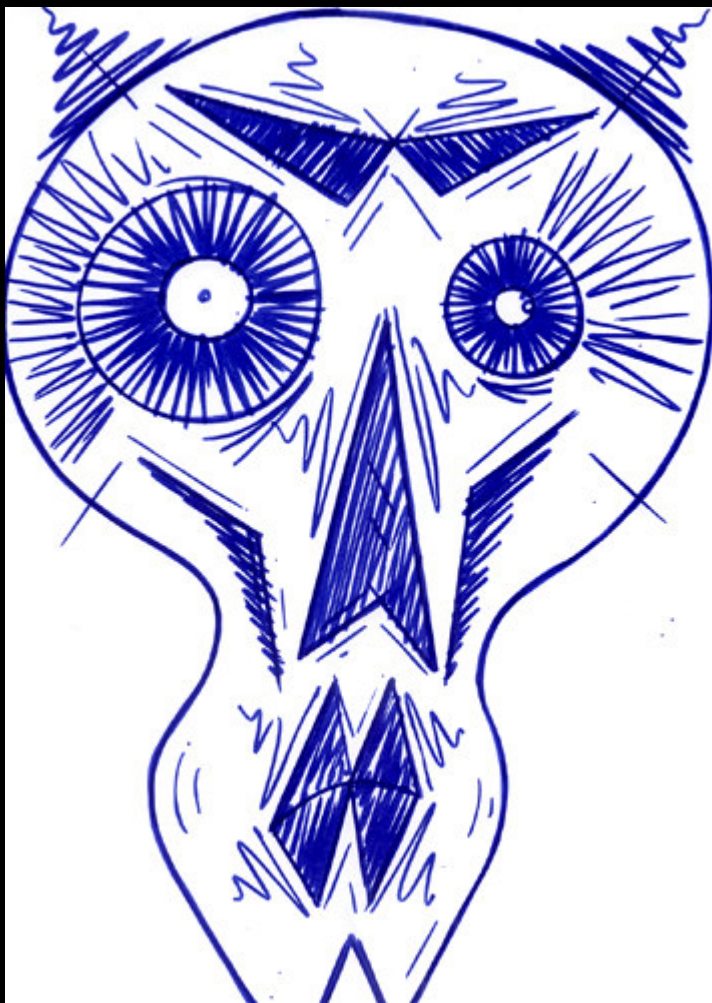
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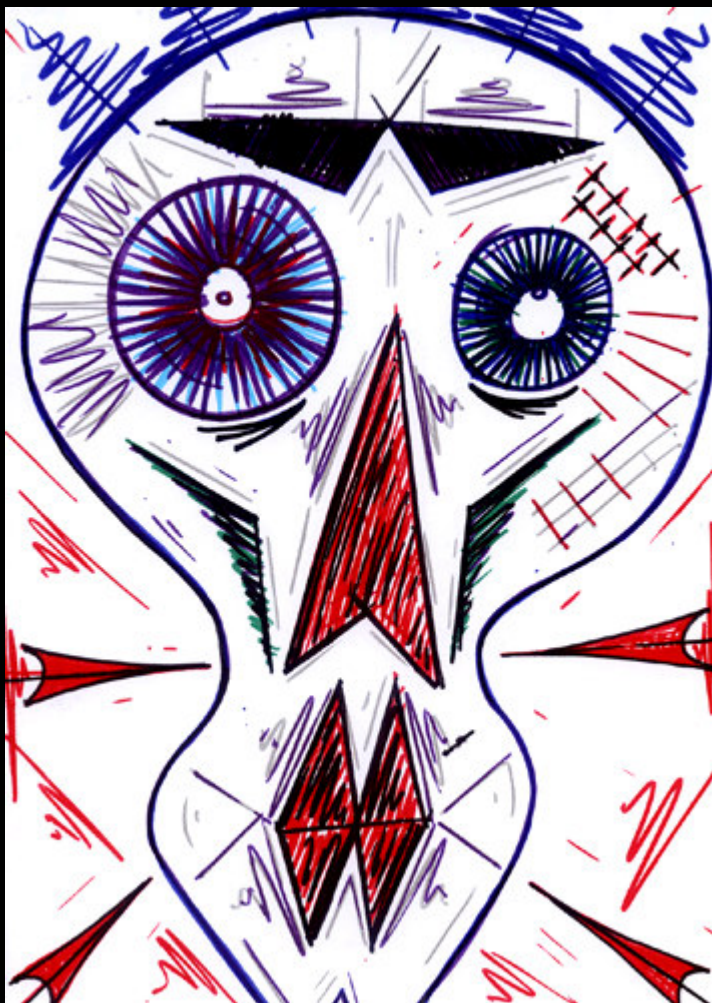
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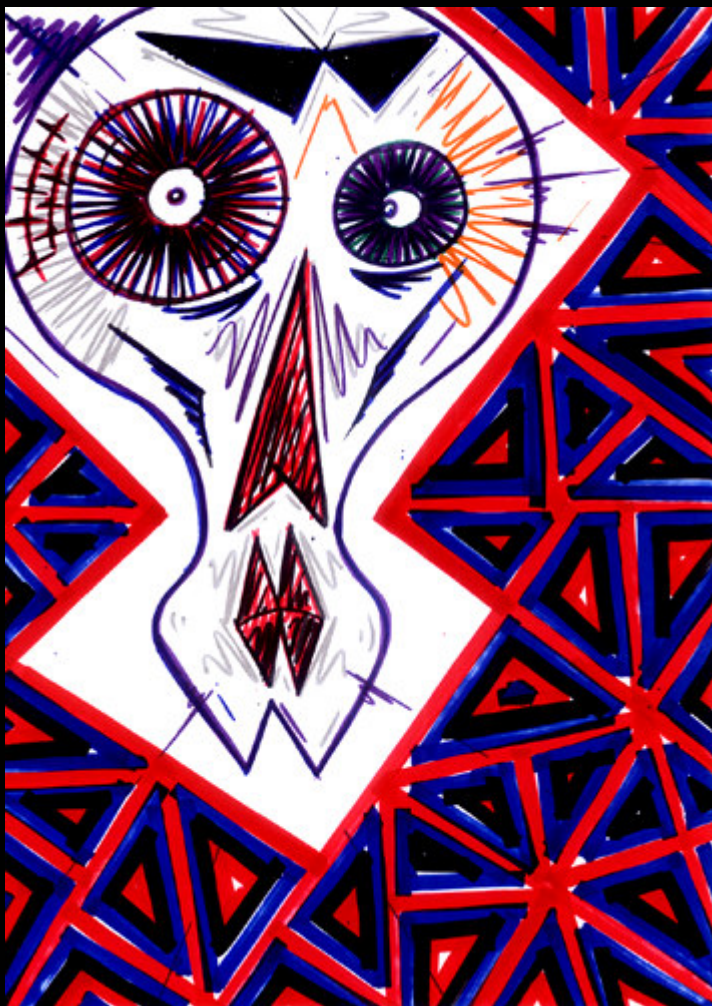
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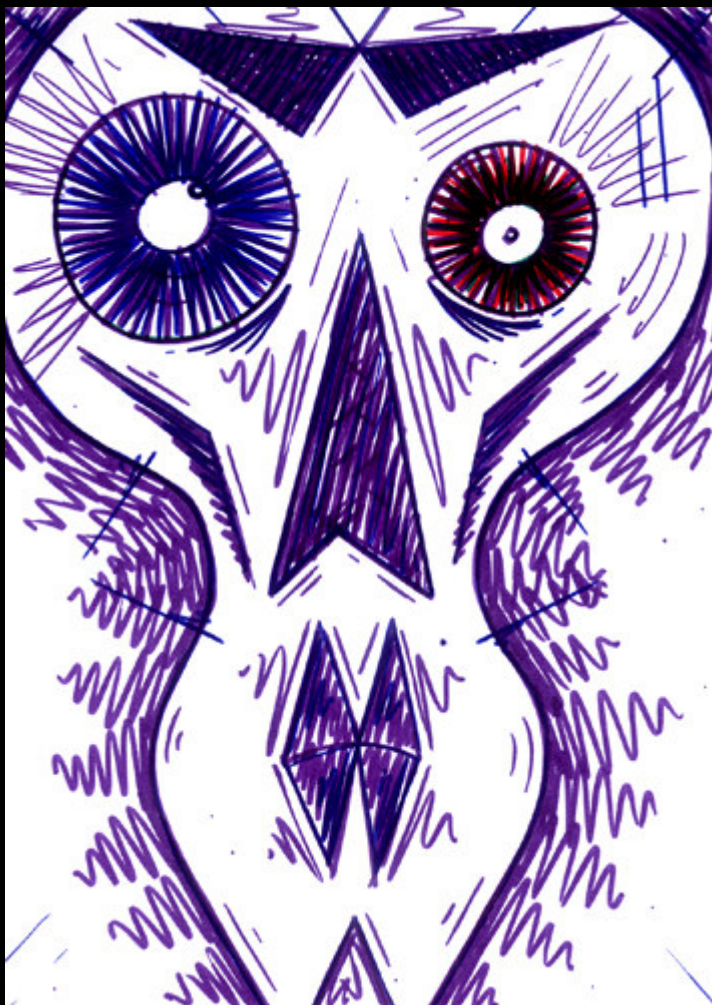
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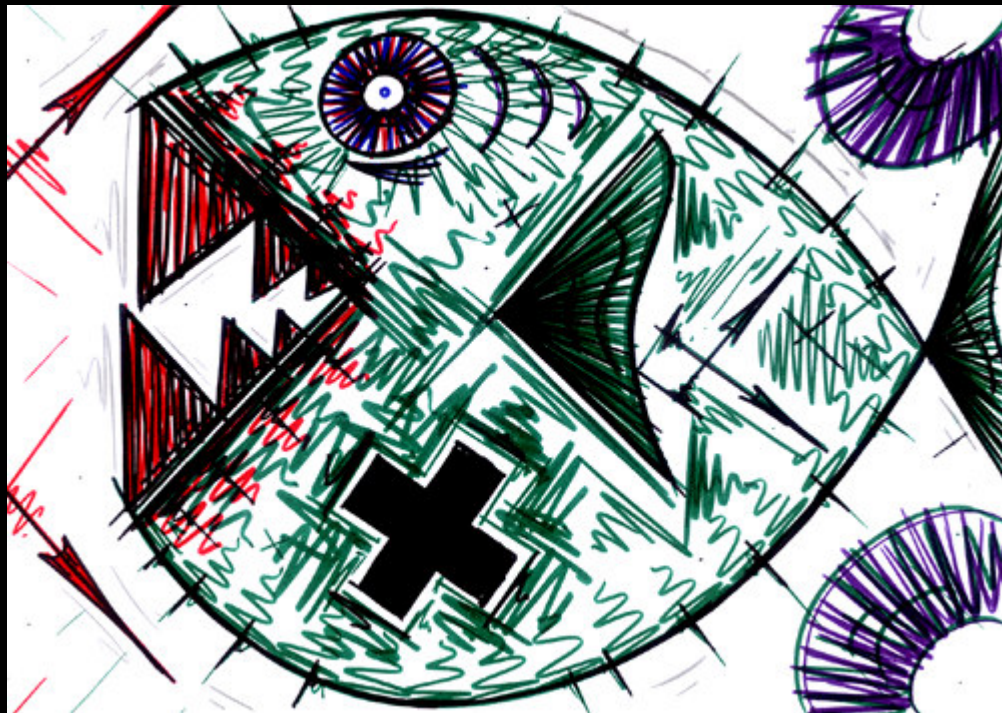
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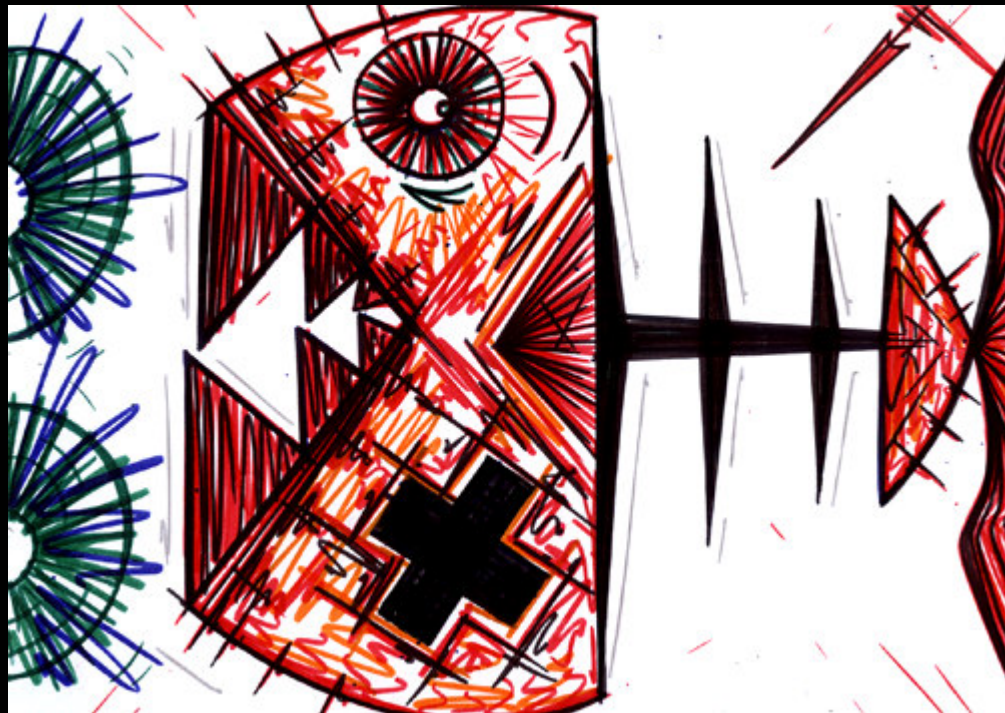
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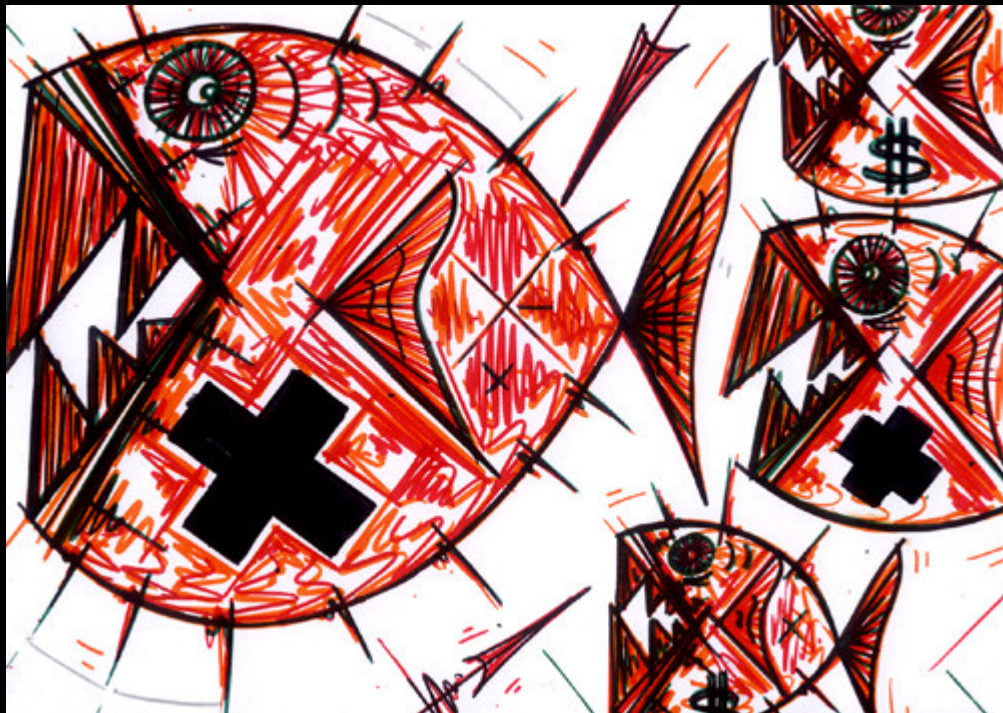
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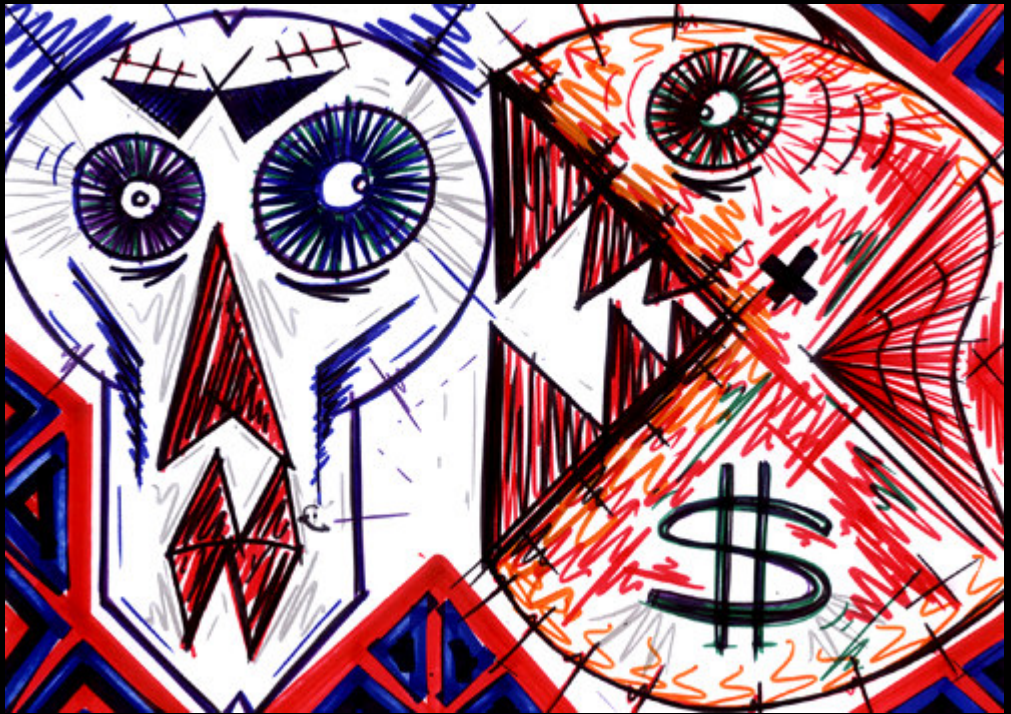
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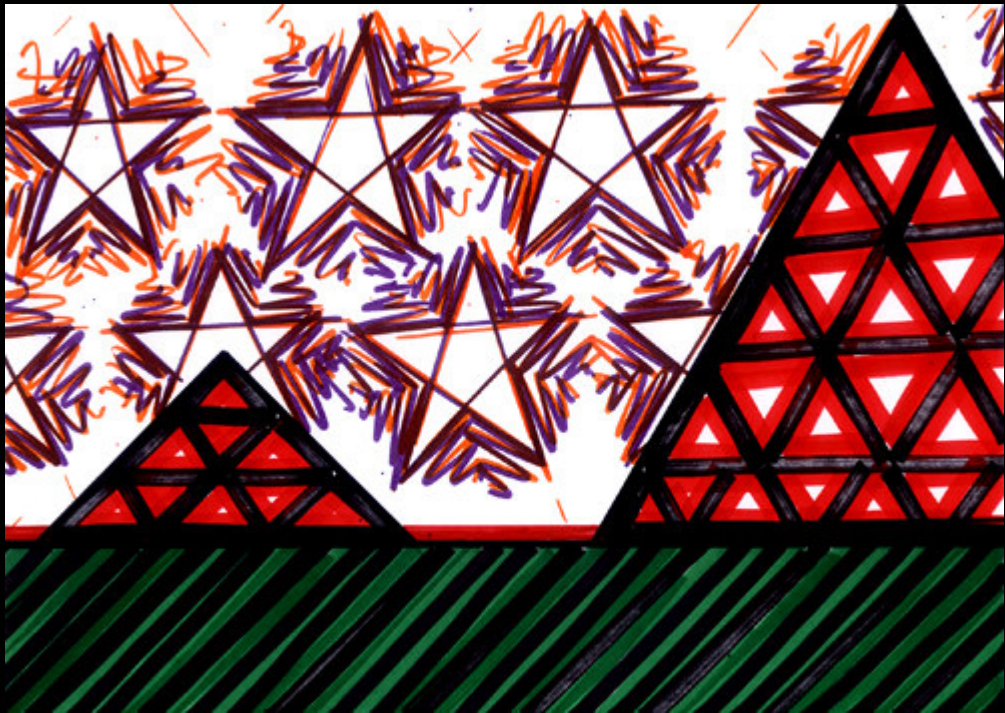
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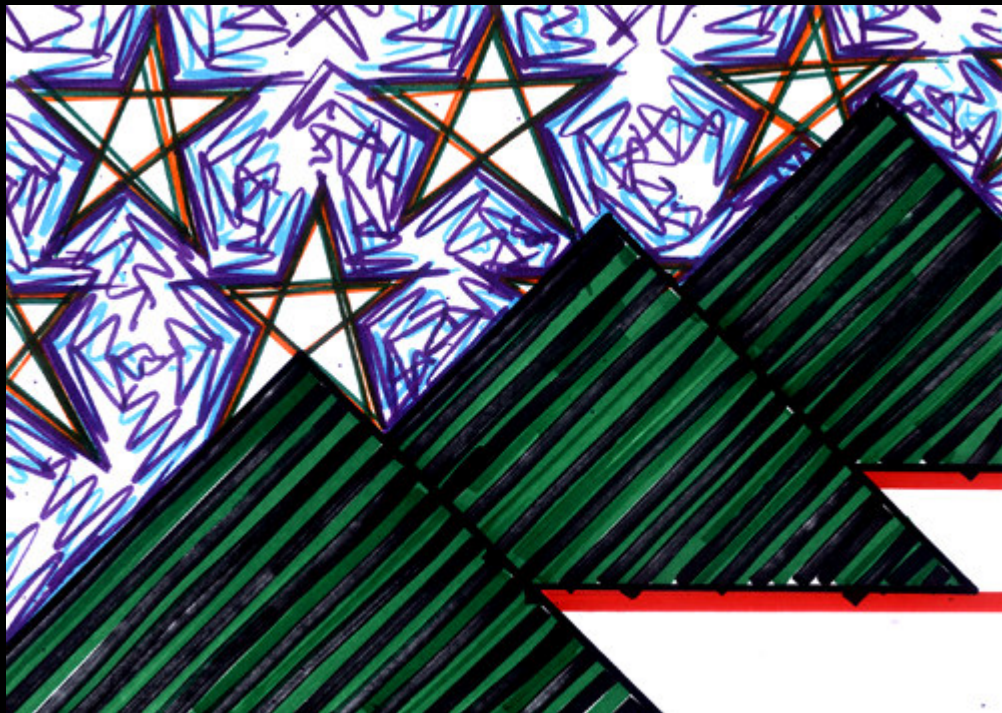
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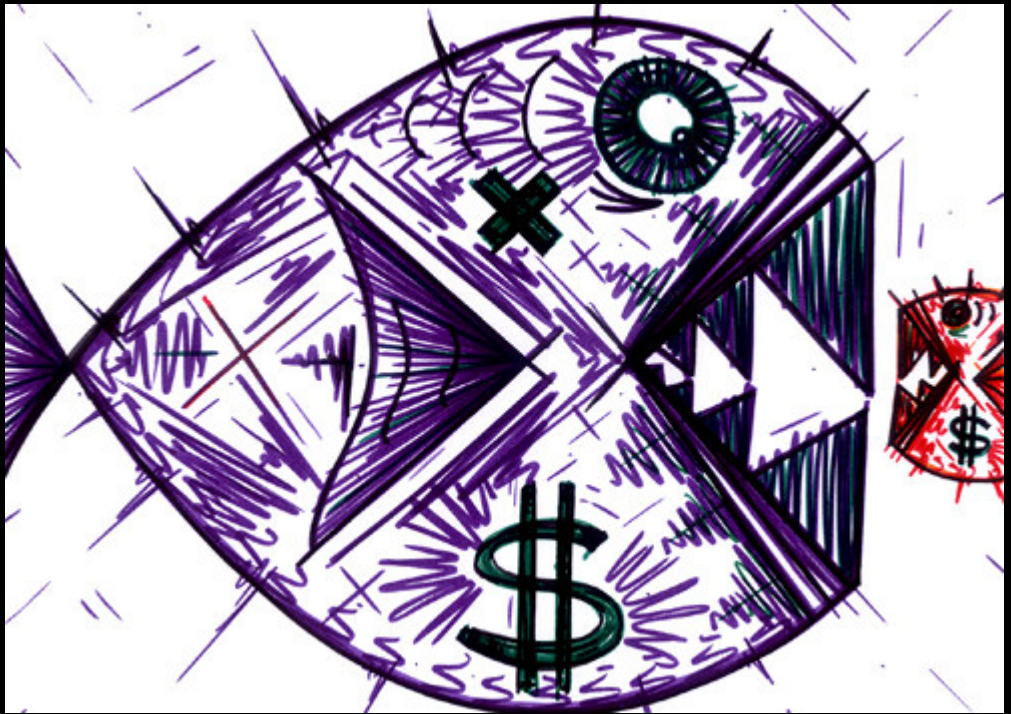
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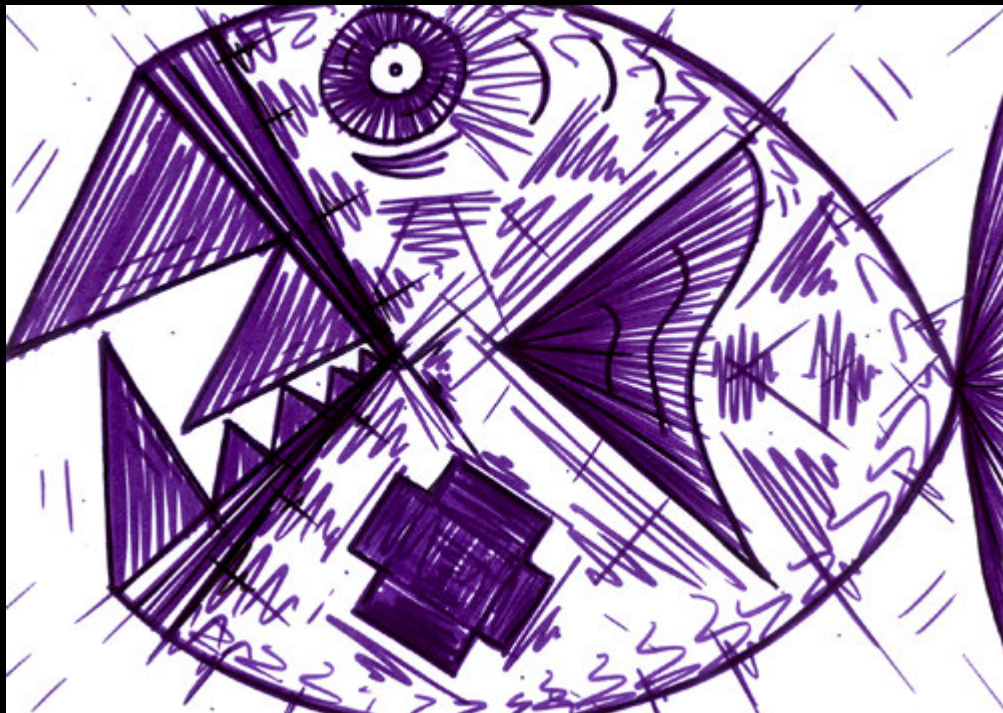
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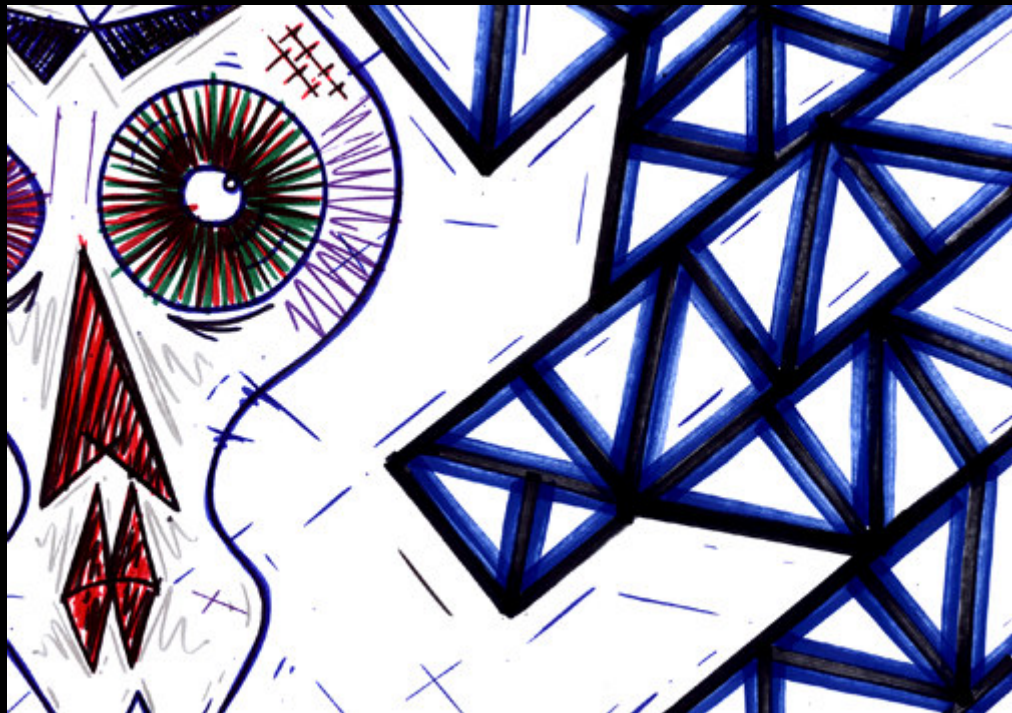
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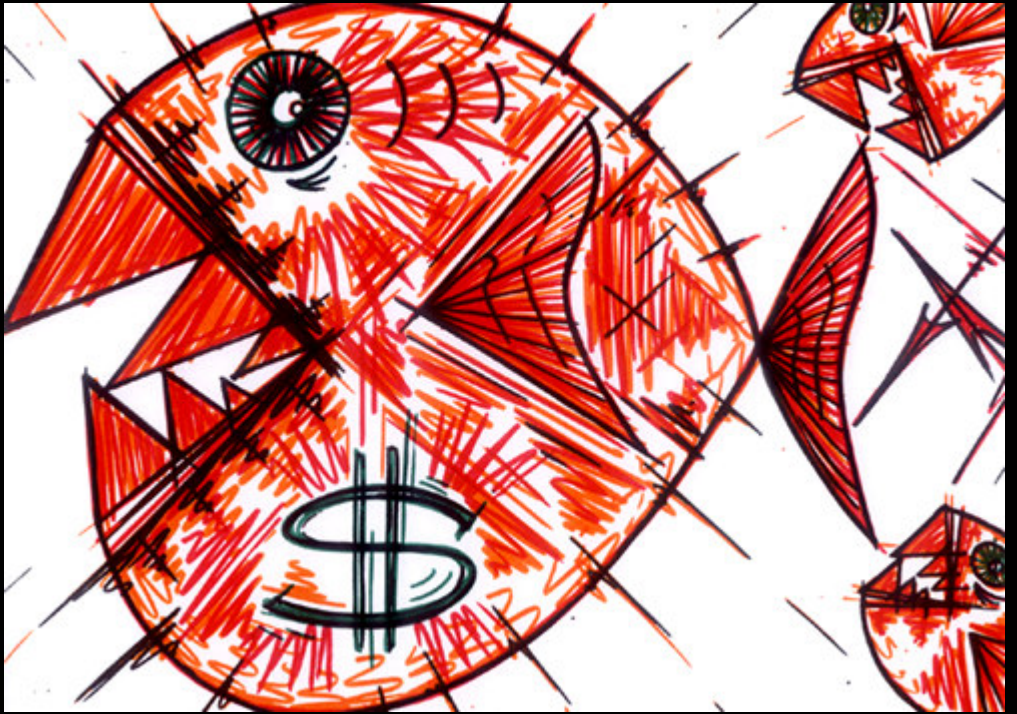
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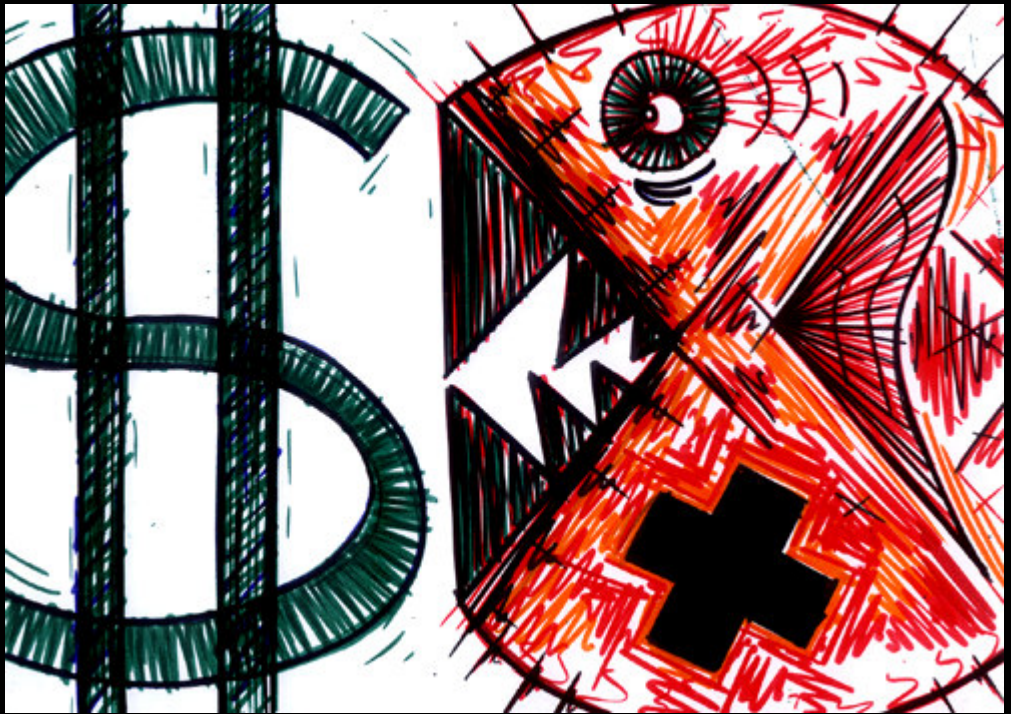
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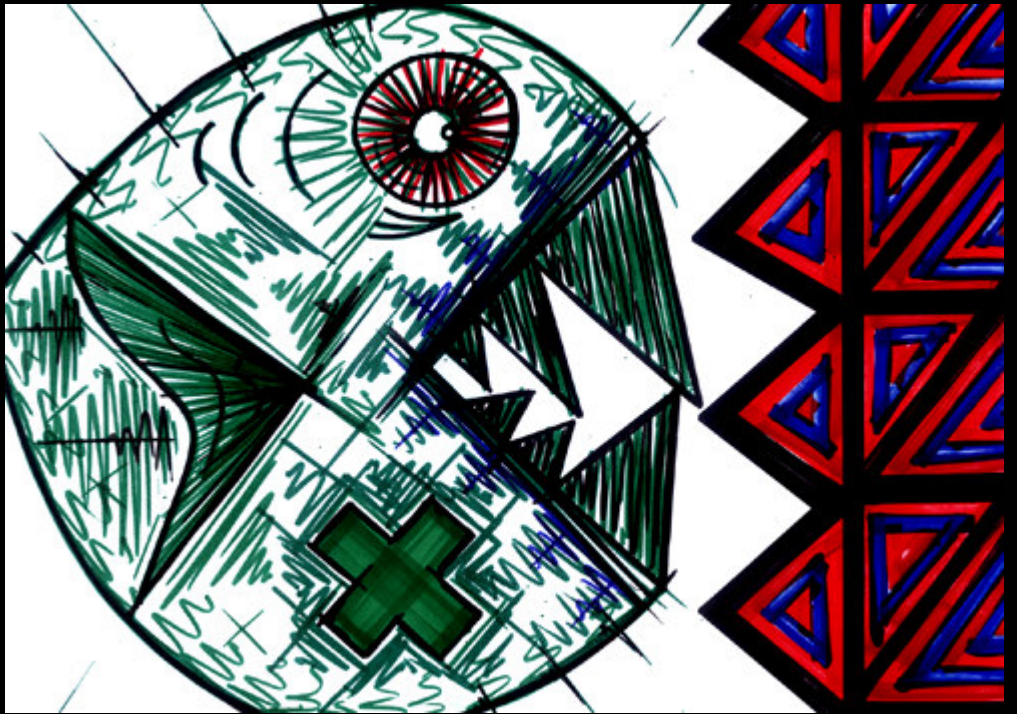
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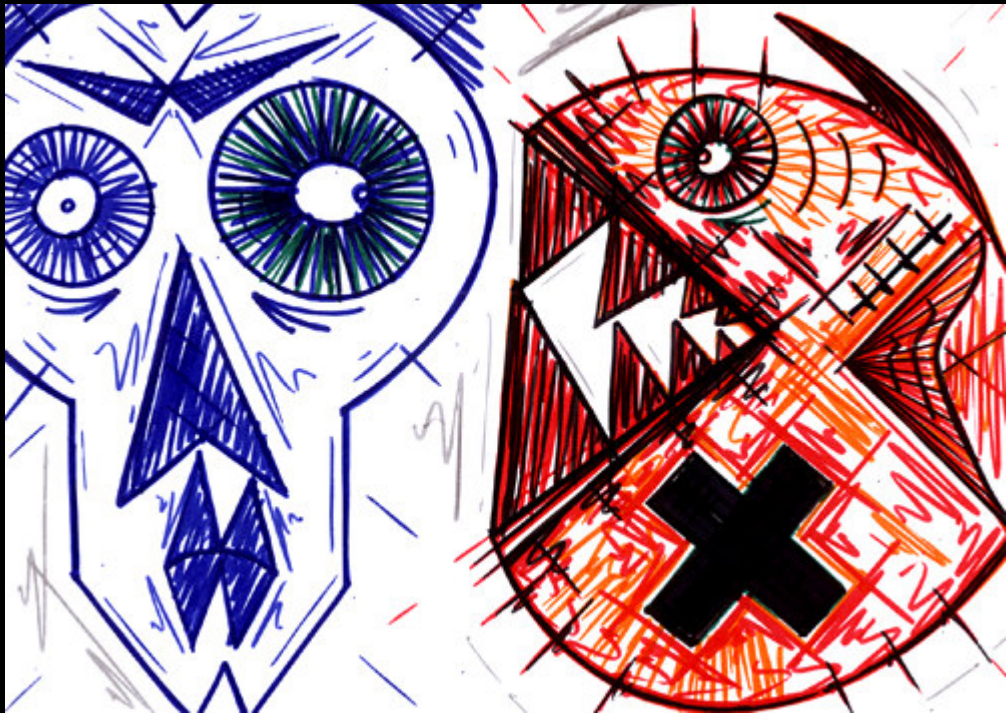
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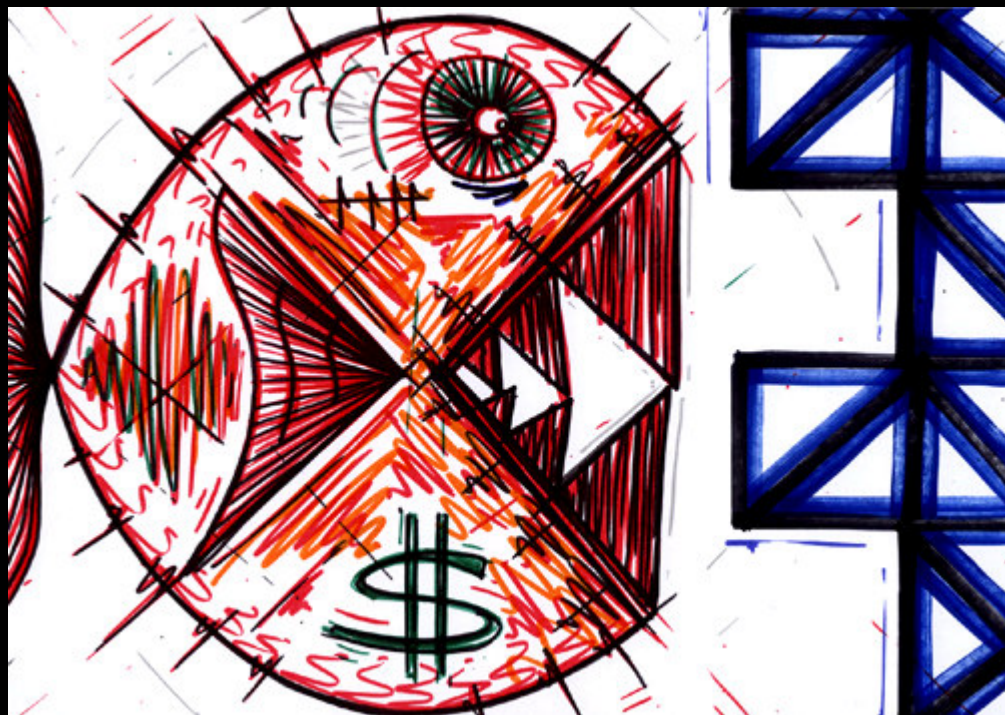
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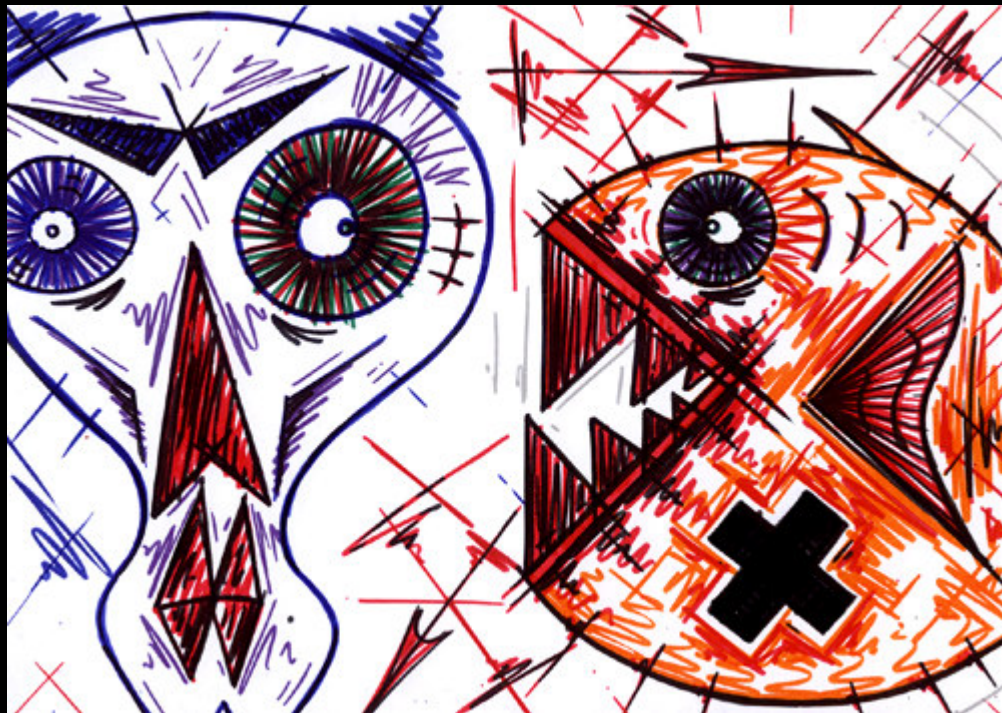
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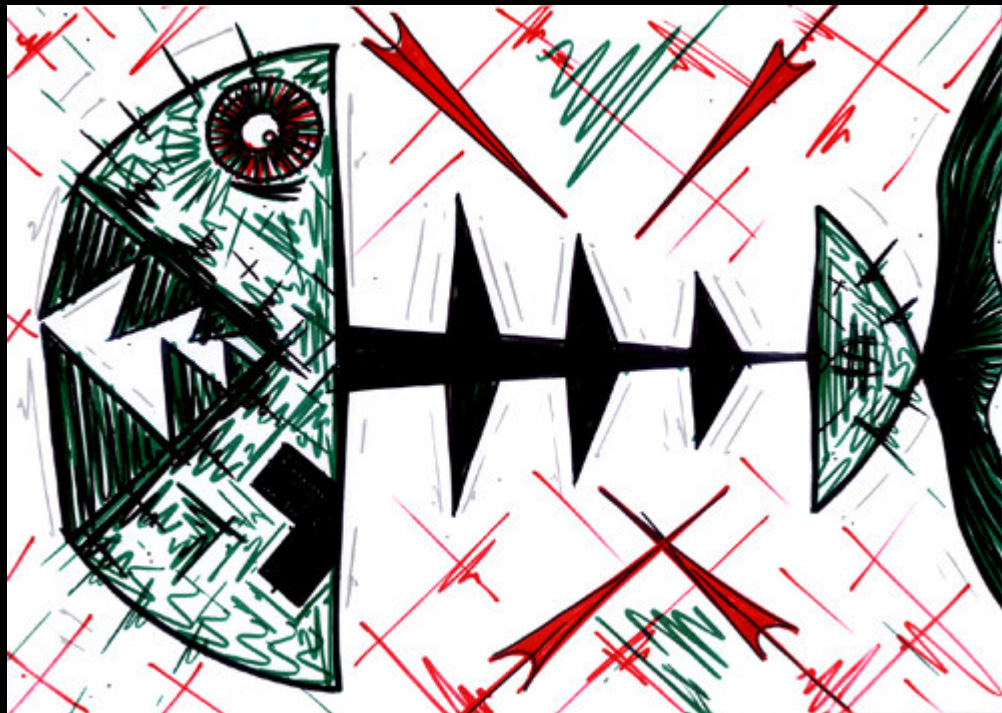
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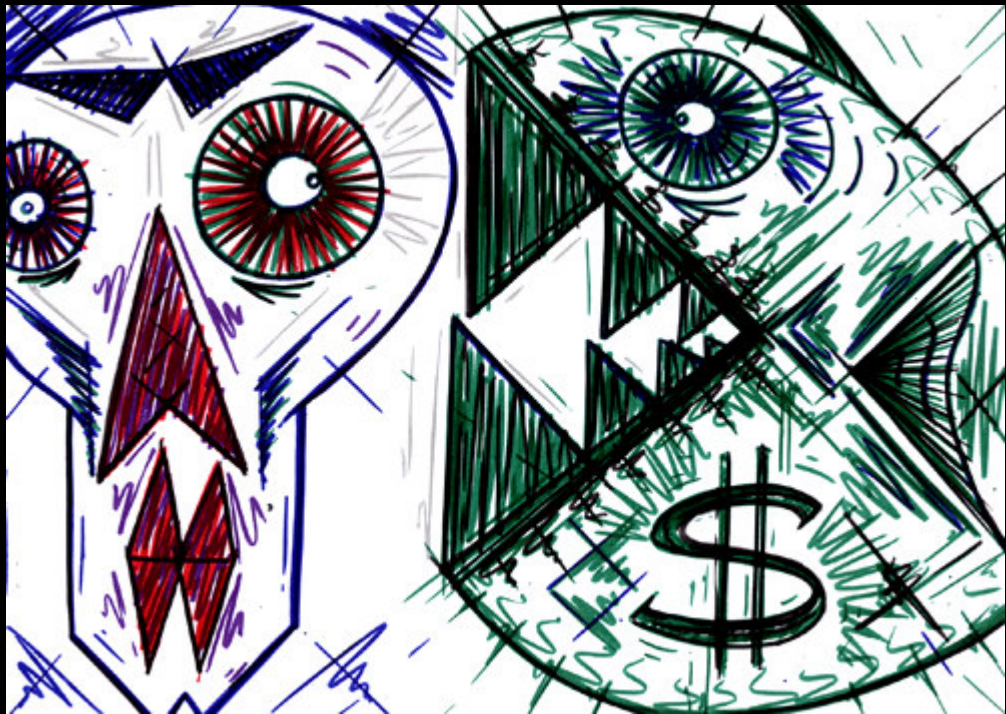
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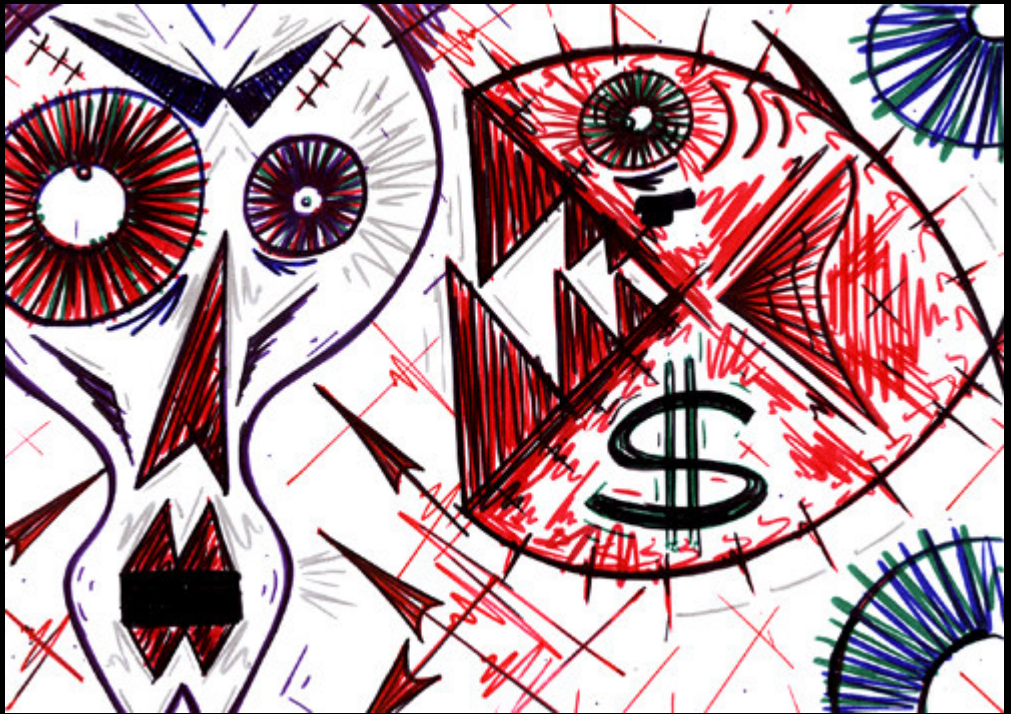
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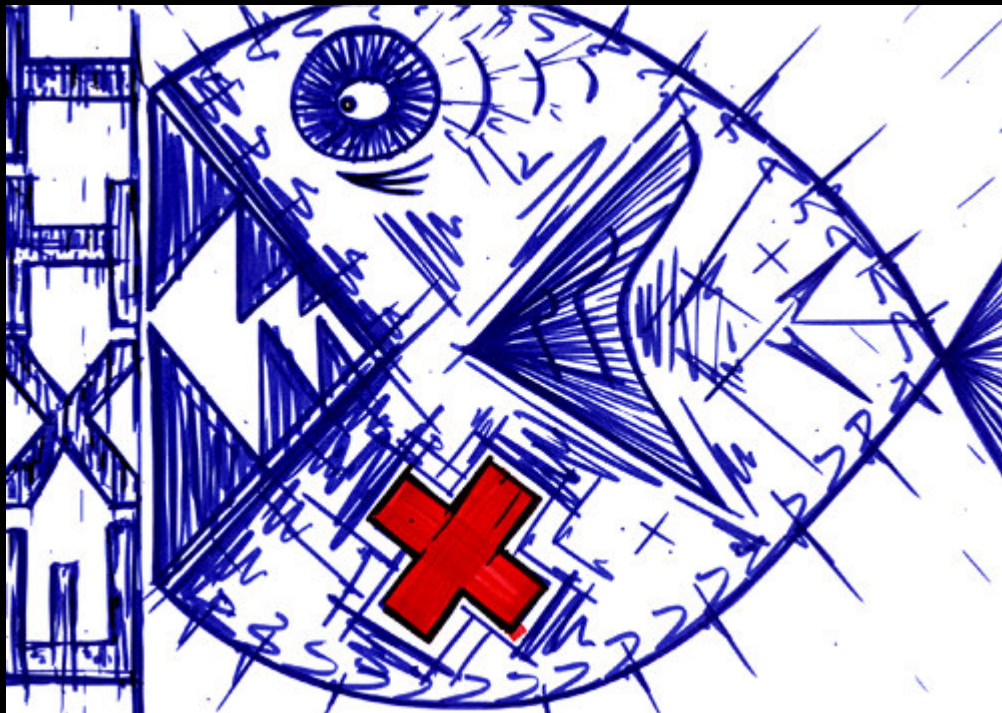
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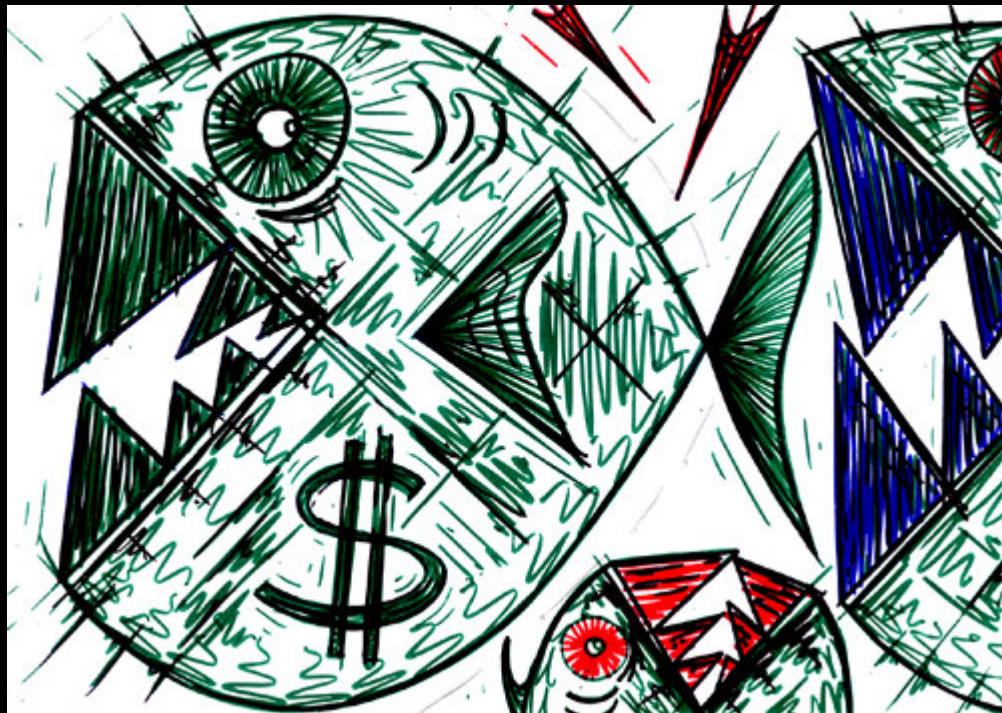
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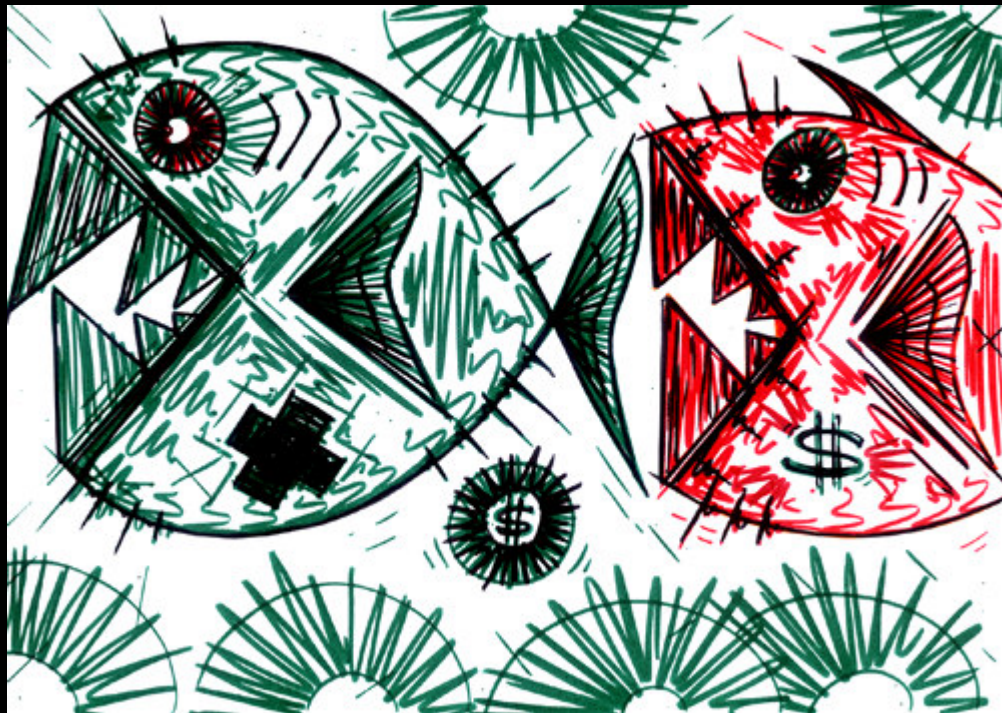
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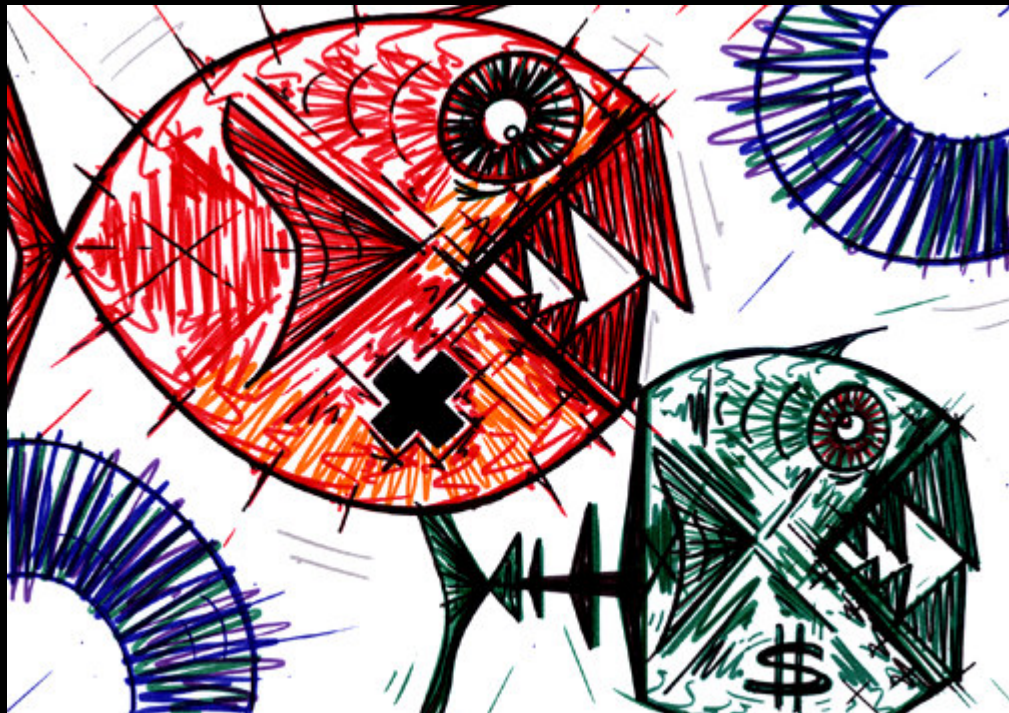
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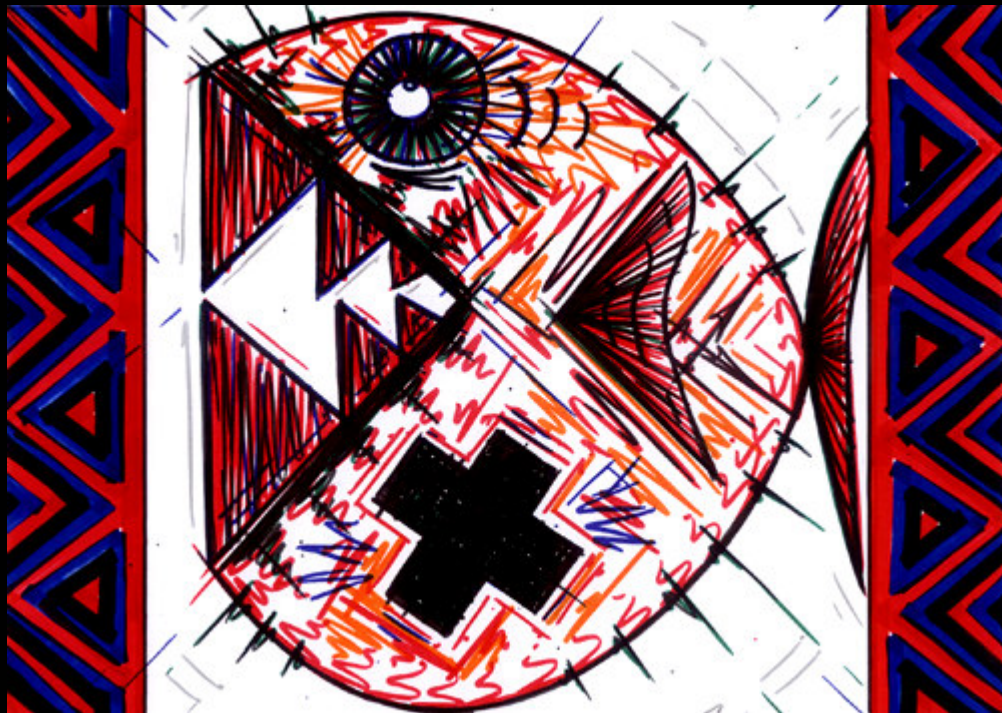
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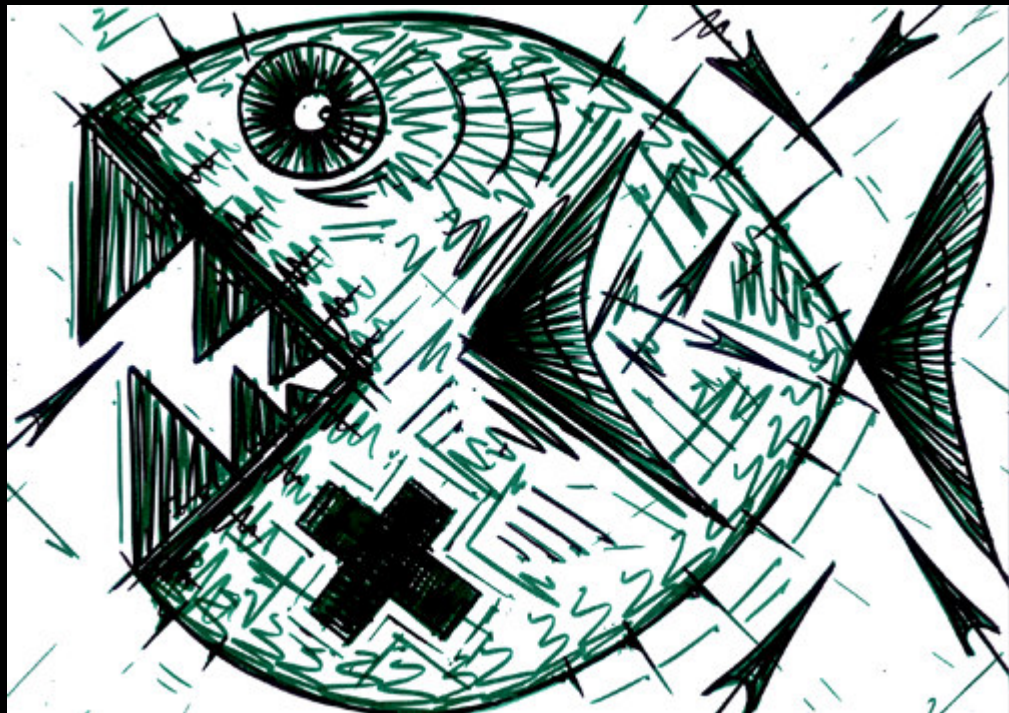
" untitled " acrylic pens on cardboard cm 30x21 inch 11.8x8.26 2016



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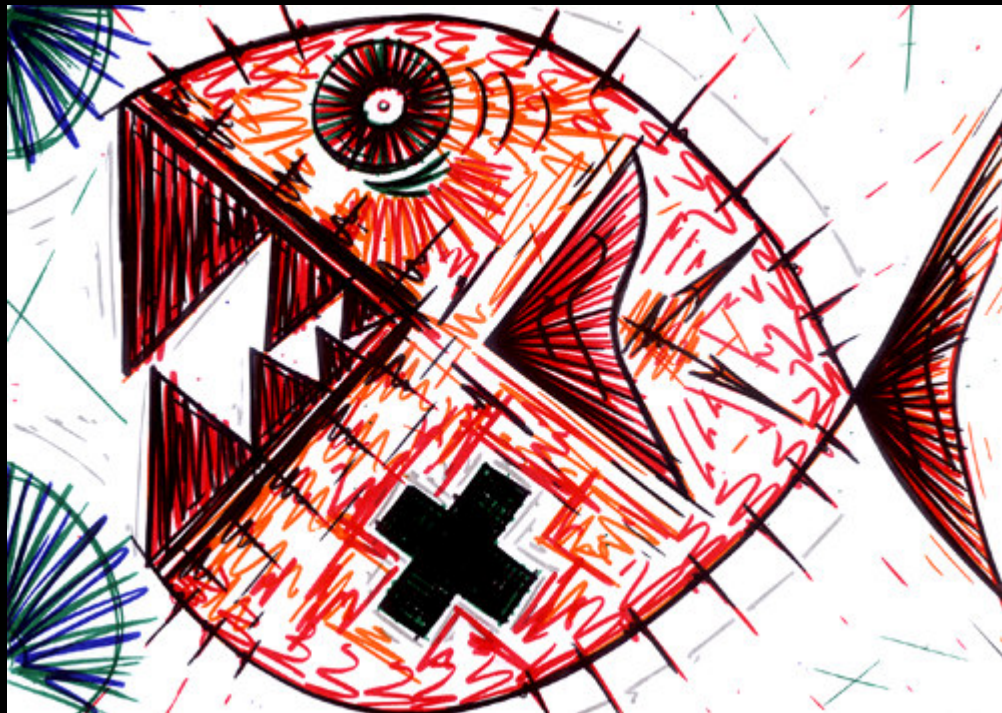
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