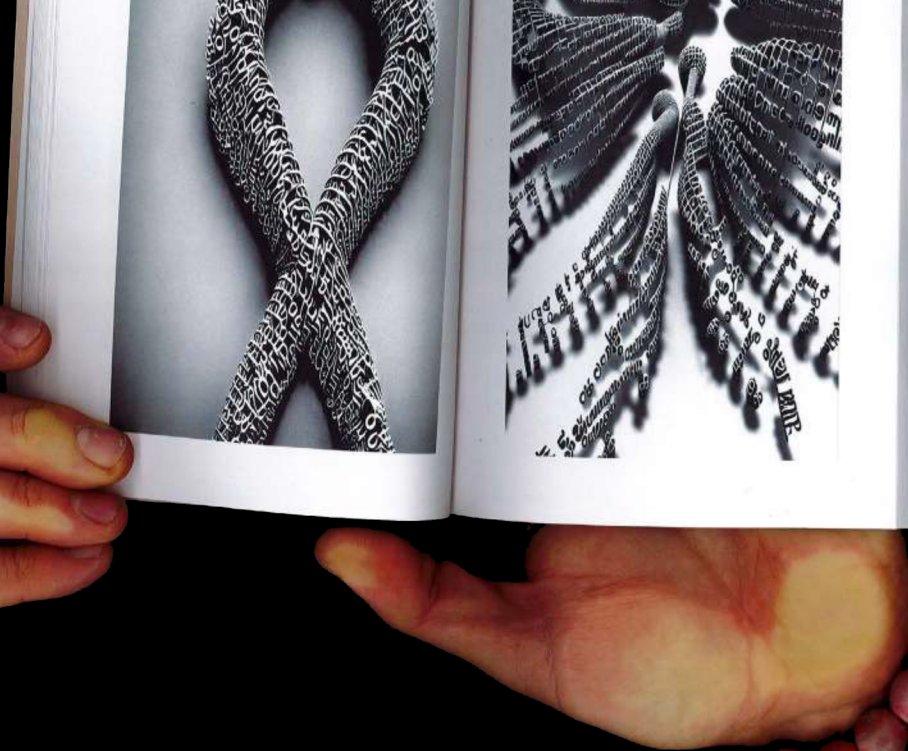
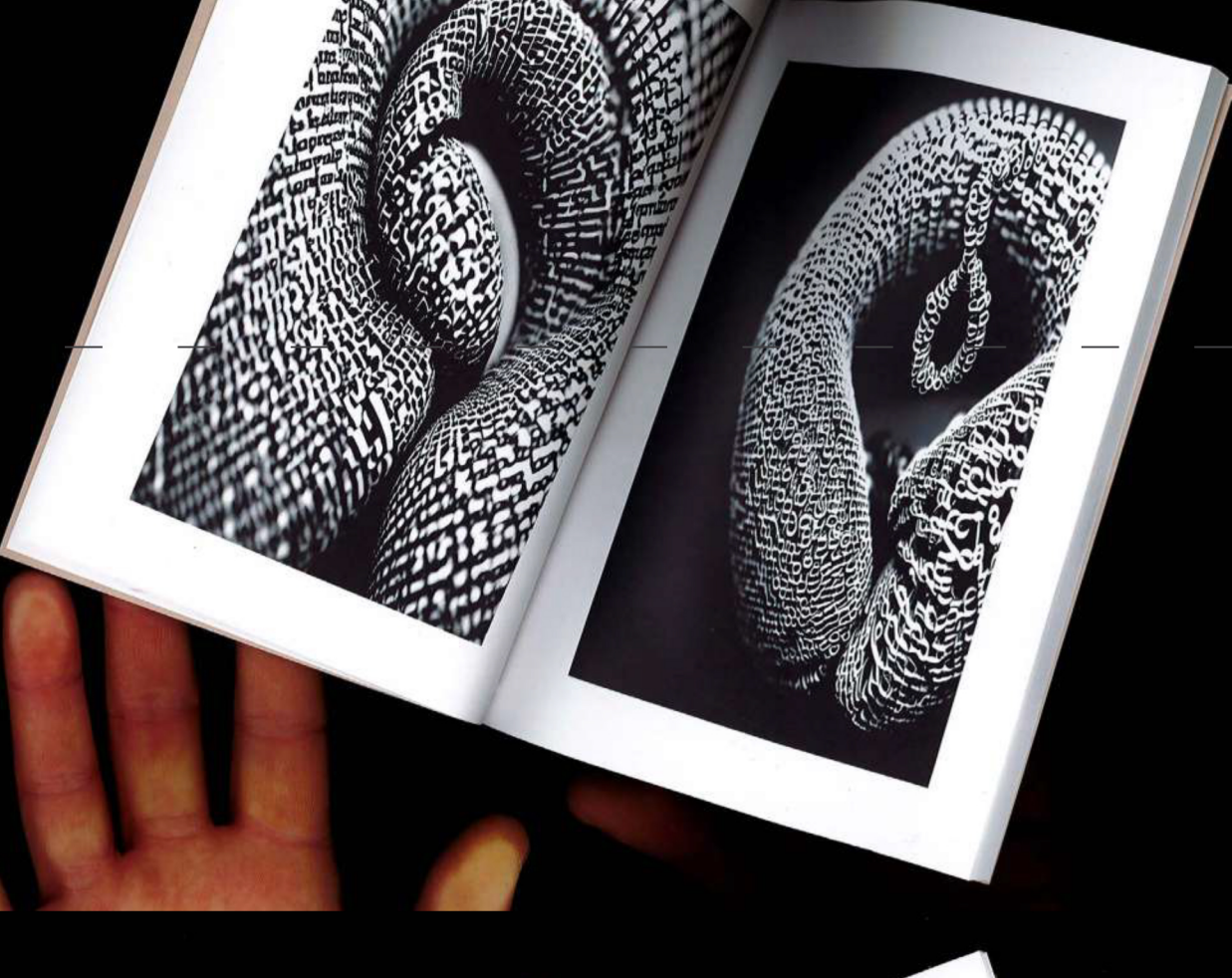
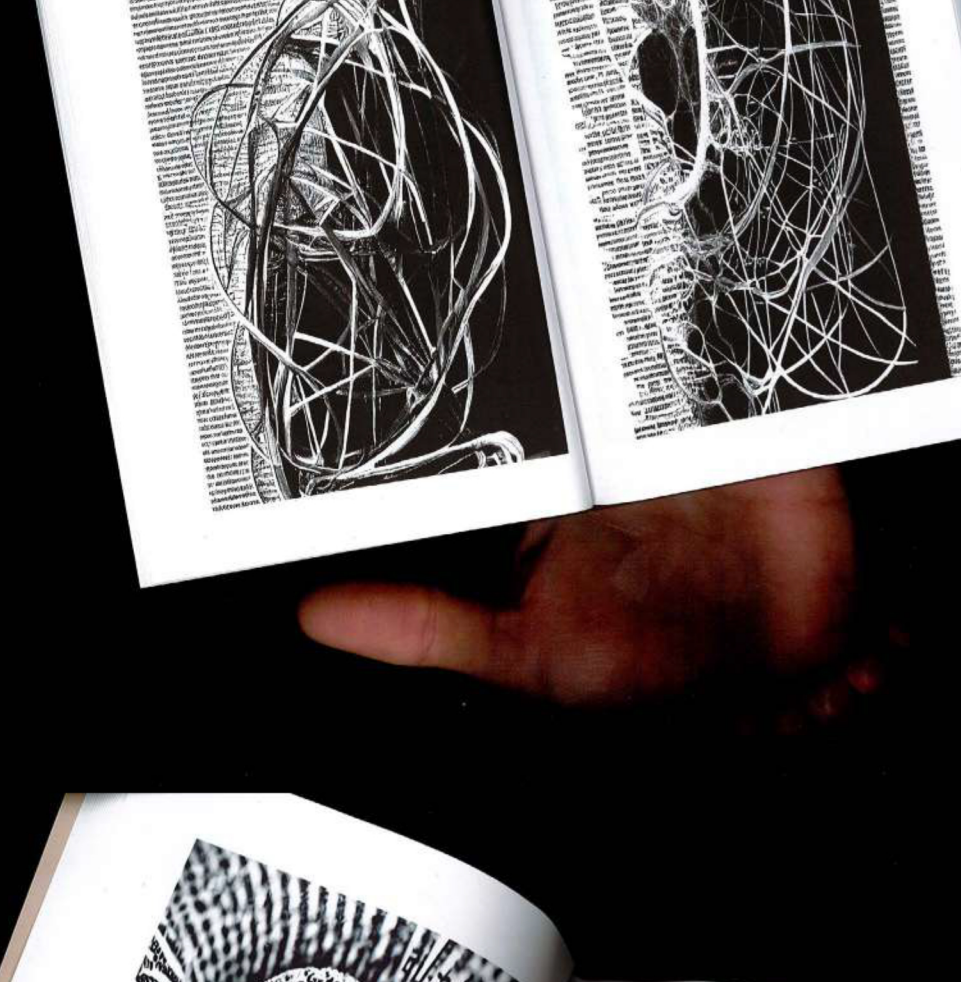
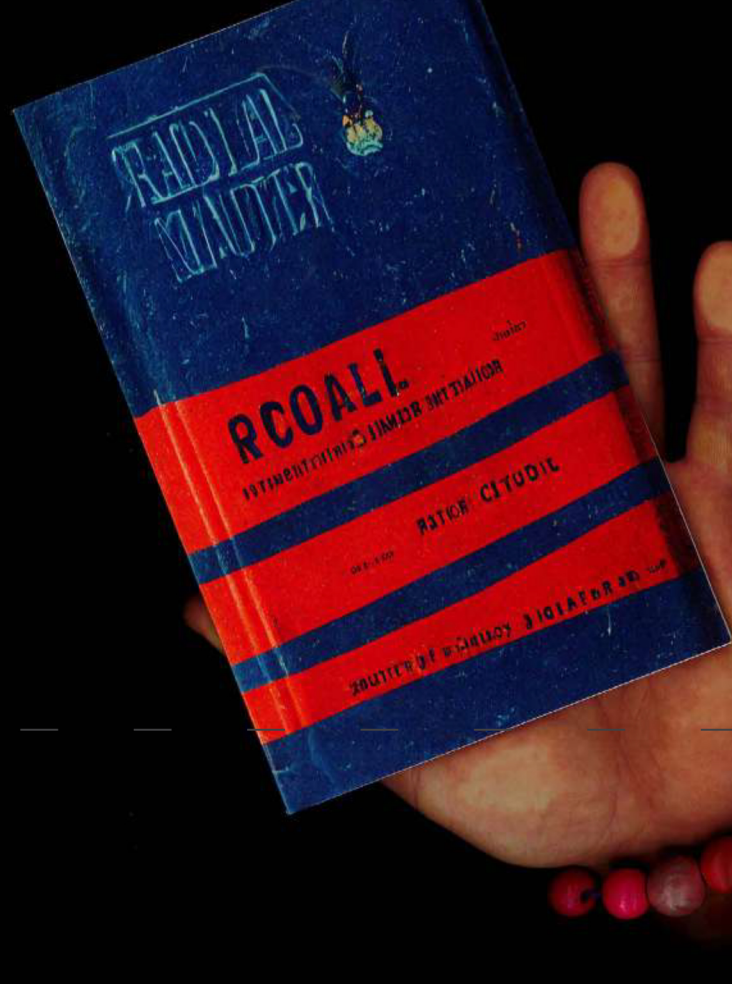
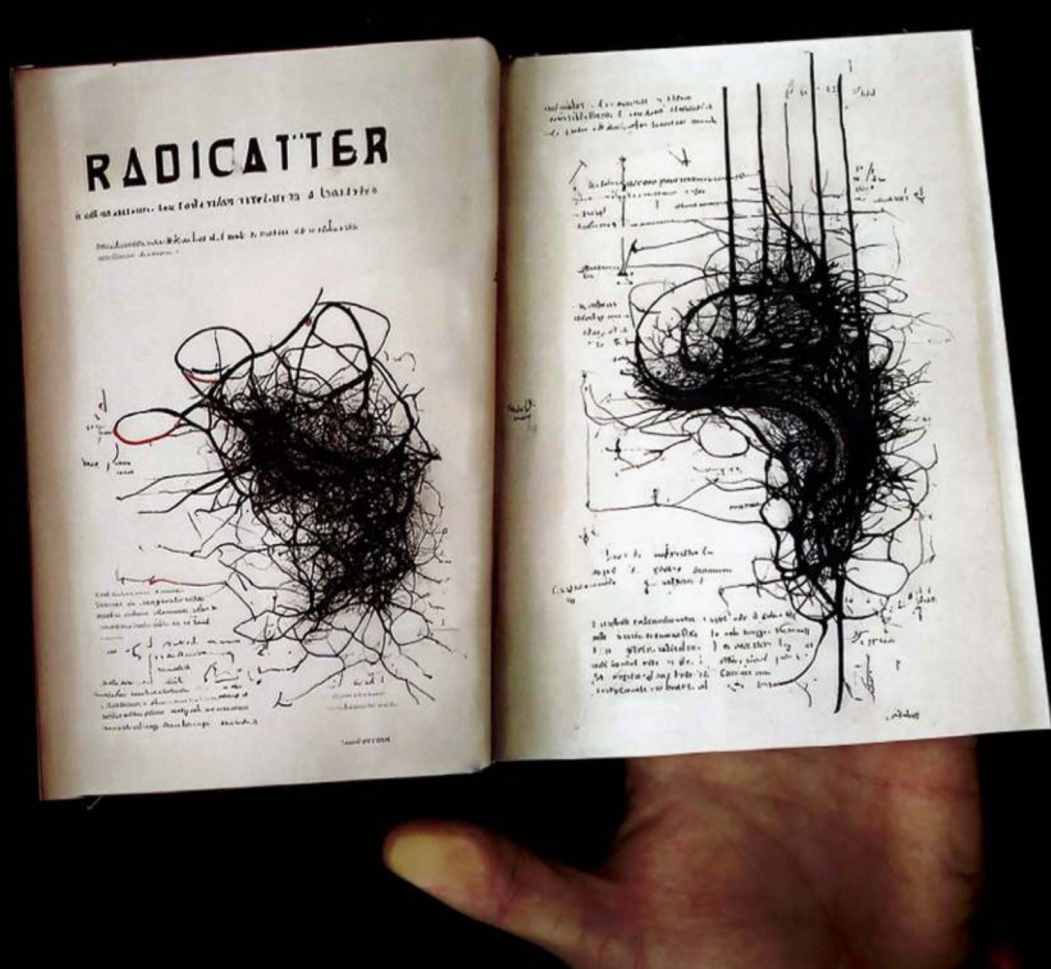


(This excerpt comes from a longer essay documenting the thinking and positioning of these images)...

Jonathan Boyd



... these fictionings are assigned to a *patheme-matheme* designation and look to provide alternative models for understanding the poetics and materialities of artificial intelligences...working somewhere between order and disorder...utilising rationalised computational systems and human intentionality...they offer a (dance)assemblage of emotional desire and the computational indifference...a searching for new poetic languages that speaks to a need outlined by nora n. khan in her essay *'towards a poetics of super intelligence'*...khan lists several poetic descriptors...the 'hurricane'...the 'swarm', the 'architect'...the 'sovereign'...the 'frontline' among others...evocative...although...they do not soften/blur/question the naïve<sup>2</sup> (binary) perceptions/preconceptions (*not that soft is easy*) of the human/nonhuman relation...where is the mud<sup>3</sup> of ai, the thread of ai, the fat of ai, the wax of ai?... these are the (imagined/and not) materials that nestle amongst the connected events of the rhizome...these are the matters of thought...they give the rhizome its support (and stop it from descending into vague conceptions of an invisible network-linear (straight(ened)) mappings which hide from view) and it feeds off them...wax's softness allows it to be morphed and changed through embodied acts of making ...it provides an unsettling uncanniness...the 'blob'<sup>4</sup> offered science-fictioning and uncanny<sup>5</sup> terror within 'b-movie' genres...the thread, or knot provides an equal uncertainty...never a solid structure, always in a shift of loosening or tightening...the images evidence acts of iterative creation...of scanning, prompting and scanning and so on...a soft (ie. pliable) approach...which...in its plasticity...continually folds back on itself as part of an ongoing feedback looping...in this sense, these images are transformations of transformations, of transformations, of transformations...the act of the (continual) 'prompt' (or) 'variation' goes beyond the sparkling new-newness (of the generated image) towards a type of the 'boredom' or 'dull'-ness...and the sifting and editing of these images becomes a type of processing...more admin...the image here becoming comparative to the mass produced-'dull' object<sup>6</sup> (a contemporary ready-made)...

<sup>1</sup> "...where the conceptual meets other kinds of thought...and non-thought...art practices engage(s) with patheme-matheme assemblages, where the, mathemic corresponds to the formal character of subjectivity, and the pathemic names an equally abstract - in a different - sense - but more creaturely and affective character". In David Burrows and Simon O'Sullivan (2019), *Fictioning: The Myth-Functioning of Contemporary Art and Philosophy*, (Edinburgh Press), 357.

<sup>2</sup> "...asimov's three laws of robotics...asimov's ethical precepts are mechanical, reductive and naively humanist...They are premised on a rather restricted idea of the robot as the human's truncated, and inherently obedient other, which fails in real life scenarios..." J. Zylinska (2020), *Perception at the End of the World (or how not to play video games)*, (Creative Commons: Flugschriften), 30. flugschriften.com/

<sup>3</sup> an assemblage comprising of various metals, fungi, sodium etc....

<sup>4</sup> "Is plasticity of material means a multiplicity of functions.... plasticity facilitates multiplicity, sanctions it, is its very medium...plasticity means instability...., there is nothing more unstable, nothing more changeable, than the state of a piece of wax...wax is an aesthetically viscous material, it dedicates its own function of resemblance the simultaneous of deterioration and excess. in both cases, it is a disaster that threatens the ordinary concepts of form and imitation. wax in the matter of resemblance, always goes too far..." See G Didi-Huberman and Dietmar Rubel (2015 [1999]), in *Materiality* edited by Petra LanaBerndt, (Whitechapel, MIT Press), 42.

<sup>5</sup> "the image of the object, blob-like alien is part of a long history of images of foul heavenly masses...literary sources and scientific journals from the sixteenth to twentieth centuries cite descriptions of 'gelatinous meteors' falling stars that when located, reveal themselves as lumps of stinking white goo..." in Mike Kelly (1997), *Aesthetics of UFOs* - Blastitude, v13, 105.

<sup>6</sup> "a viscous substance like pitch is an aberrant fluid, at first, with the appearance of a fluid it manifests to us a being which is everywhere fleeing and yet similar to itself...the viscous reveals itself as essentially dubious (louche, because it exists in slow motion; there is a sticky thickness in its liquidity; it represents in itself a dawning triumph of the solid over the liquid...this fixed instability in the viscous discourages possession..." Jean Paul Sartre (1943), *Being and Nothingness*, (Gallimard) 48.

<sup>7</sup> prompt and variations tools in text-to-image generators that allow continual iterative image generation.

<sup>8</sup> "...based on a reaction of visual indifference, with at the same time a total absence of good or bad taste..." (marcel duchamp, the art of assemblage, a symposium, the museum of modern art, new york, october 19, 1961)