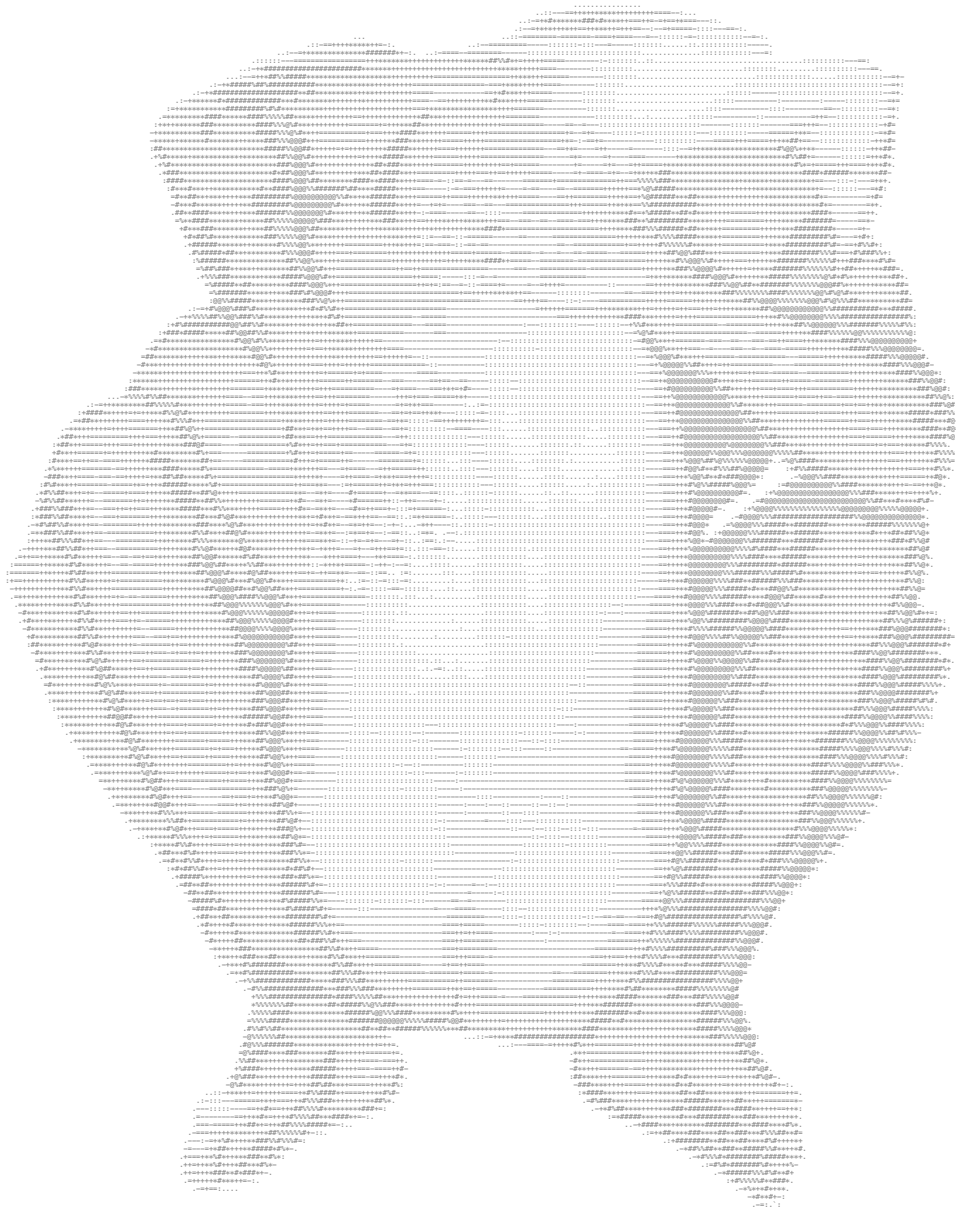


# CHARACTERS

STAGING QUEER DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURES AS SITES OF URGENCY, EROTIC RITUAL AND ARCHIVAL TRACE.

ORIGINAL EROTIC PHOTOGRAPHS TRANSLATED THROUGH A CUSTOM CODE INTO ASCII,  
IMPACT PRINTED ON ARCHIVAL DOT-MATRIX PAPER AT THE SCALE OF THE BODY.



Website: <https://charactersascii.com>

Instagram: @characters.index

Email: [characters.inquiries@gmail.com](mailto:characters.inquiries@gmail.com)

## 01 – BIO + Curatorial Statement

CHARACTERS is an anonymous artist working at the intersection of queer memory, digital infrastructures, and conceptual photography. Each work begins with an original erotic image – shot and directed by CHARACTERS specifically for the project – translated through custom Python scripts into ASCII and printed on deadstock dot-matrix paper.

The choice of materials is inseparable from the work's argument. ASCII and dot-matrix output are the visual residue of the earliest networked spaces where gay men first built connection under pressure – platforms that required desire to be encoded before it could travel, and identity to exist as handle and symbol in places where visibility carried genuine risk. The work does not cite that history; it performs it, tracing that legacy into the present and insisting on its ongoing necessity: the passage from body into code, from visibility into managed trace, from risk into transmissible form. Installed at the scale of the body, the scrolls make those conditions physically present rather than historically remote.

Drawing on a Caribbean upbringing where these spaces served as genuine shelter for queer communities facing physical danger and systemic hostility, CHARACTERS refuses to treat these materials as relics of an obsolete digital past. What registers in the global North as retro-nostalgia points elsewhere to something still active: a survival architecture that remains urgent wherever connection depends on secrecy, indirection, and fragile digital shelter. CHARACTERS reactivates that survival ritual, restoring its erotic and political force in the present.

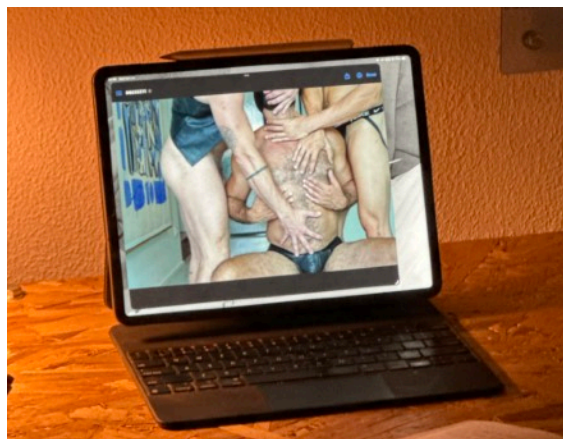
The project's anonymity performs the same queer survival tactics – name replaced by handle, body by symbol, presence reduced to managed trace. CHARACTERS follows in this lineage, letting the work speak through what it conceals.

## 02 – The Process

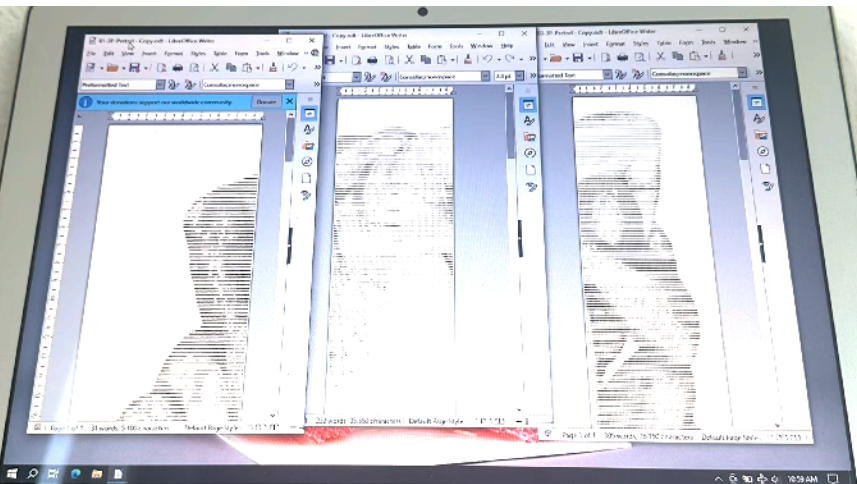
Each work begins with a photograph conceived, directed, and shot specifically for the project. Models are sourced and briefed for each image; photographic composition and framing are determined before shooting begins. Raw source images are colour-corrected and backgrounds removed in preparation for conversion.

Translation is handled by a custom Python script – built in Pythonista with its own GUI, written specifically for this project rather than adapted from existing tools. The script reads photographic tonal values and assigns character density accordingly, using character sets selected per work for their visual weight and tonal range. That selection is aesthetically chosen, not determined by the code algorithmically: each work's character set is decided per piece.

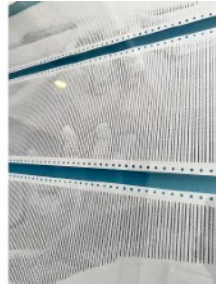
Page count and scroll division are also handled in Python, splitting the full image into the desired number of sheets before manual transfer to text files. Completed files are then impact-printed via dot-matrix printer onto sourced deadstock continuous-feed paper.



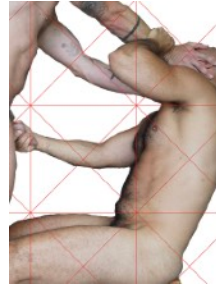
```
asci_ui.py
5 import clipboard
6 import gc
7 from PIL import Image, ImageEnhance
8 import numpy as np
9 from datetime import datetime
10 import os
11 import zipfile
12 from xml.sax.saxutils import escape
13
14 custom_chars = None
15 selected_charset = "@#*+=-., "
16 last_preset_index = -1
17
18 # ----- ASCII Conversion -----
19 def image_to_ascii(img, num_cols, contrast=1.0, brightness=1.0, charset="@#*+=-., "):
20     img = img.convert("L")
21     img = ImageEnhance.Contrast(img).enhance(contrast)
22     img = ImageEnhance.Brightness(img).enhance(brightness)
23     W, H = img.size
24     aspect_ratio = 0.55
25     col_width = W // num_cols
26     row_height = int(col_width / aspect_ratio)
27     num_rows = H // row_height
28     img = img.resize((num_cols, num_rows))
29     pixels = np.array(img)
30
31     global custom_chars
32     if charset == custom_chars:
33         chars = np.array(list(charset))
```



# 03 - C01. 'OVERTURE'



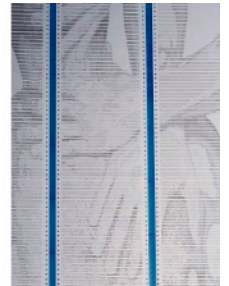
BODY.QUEUE · 72 x 252cm



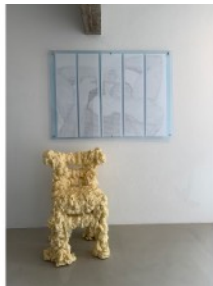
CTRL+SUB · 96 x 112cm



SAFE MODE · 72 x 112cm



SOFT.RENDER · 72 x 140cm



SUBMISSION FORMAT · 120 x 97cm



(TXT)TOUCH · 72 x 112cm

## 04 – Selected Works

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### **BODY. QUEUE**

Year: 2025

Dimensions: 72 × 252 cm (28.3" × 99.2")

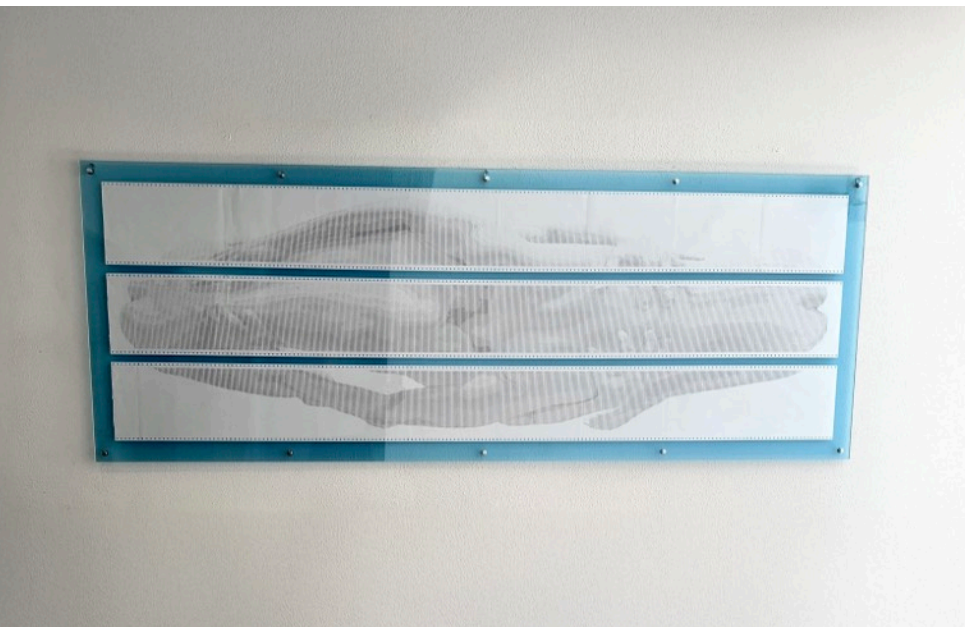
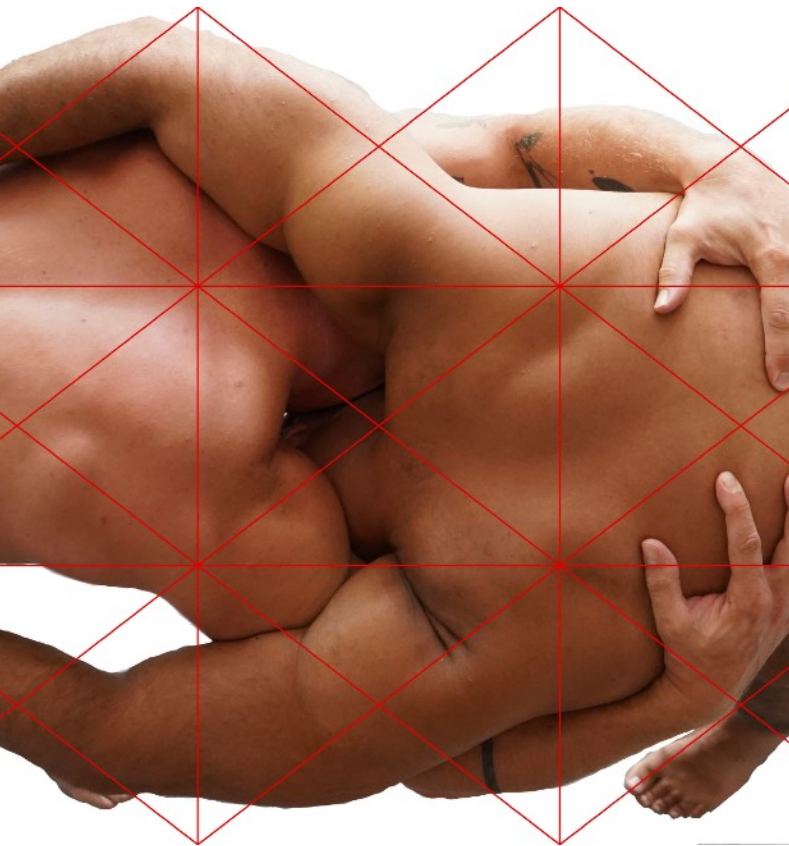
3 sheets • 24 × 252 cm (9.5" × 99.2") each

Printing: dot-matrix impact

Paper: deadstock continuous-feed paper

Edition: 3 per colorway • signed, numbered

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# 04 – Selected Works

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## CTRL+SUB

Year: 2025

Dimensions: 96 × 112 cm (37.8" × 44.1")

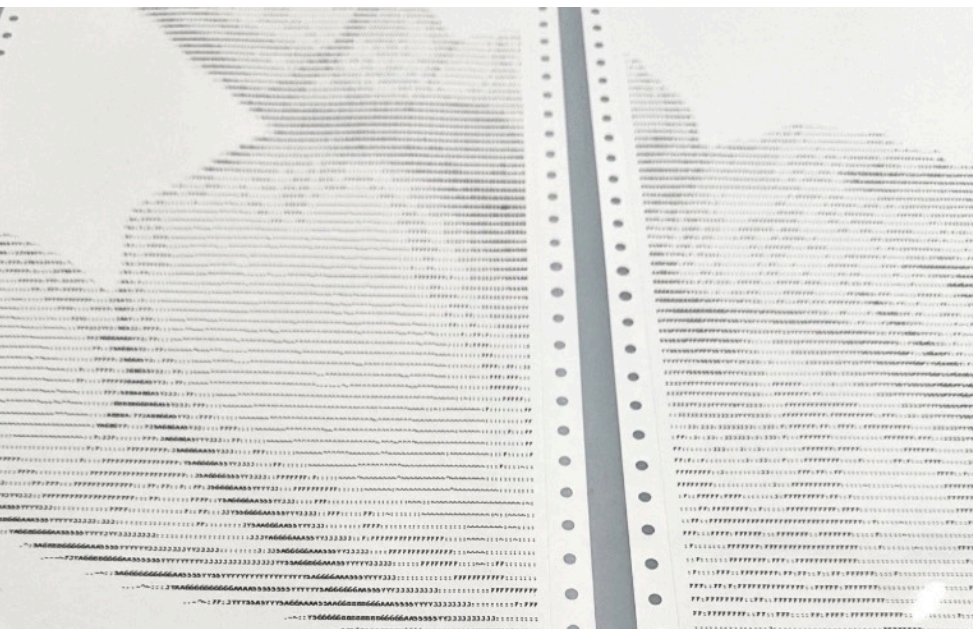
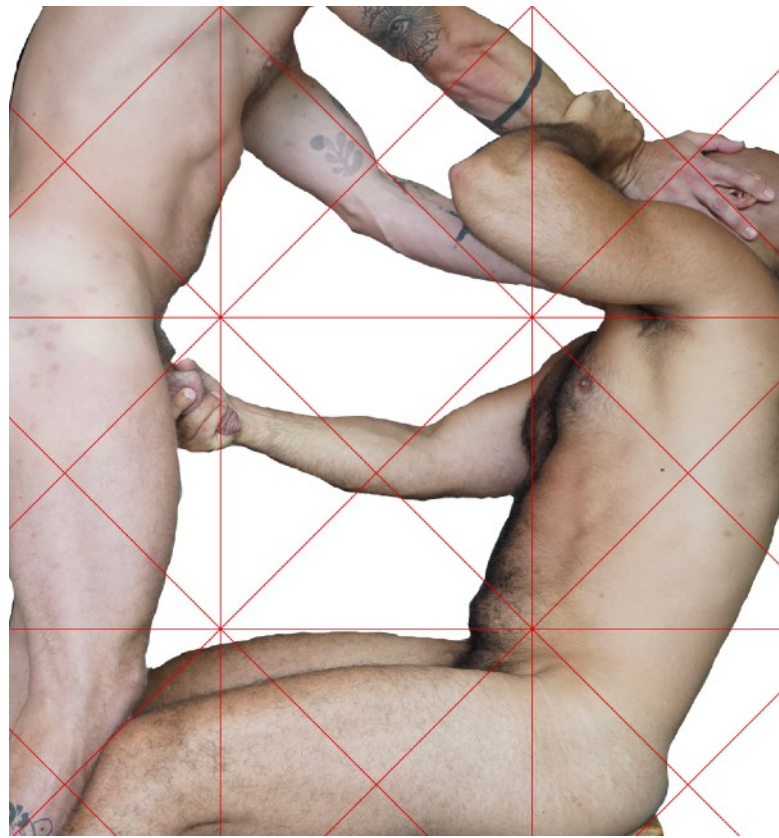
4 sheets • 24 × 112 cm (9.5" × 44.1"), each

Printing: dot-matrix impact

Paper: deadstock continuous-feed paper

Edition: 3 per colorway • signed, numbered

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## 04 – Selected Works

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### SAFEMODE

Year: 2025

Dimensions: 72 × 112 cm (28.3" × 44.1")

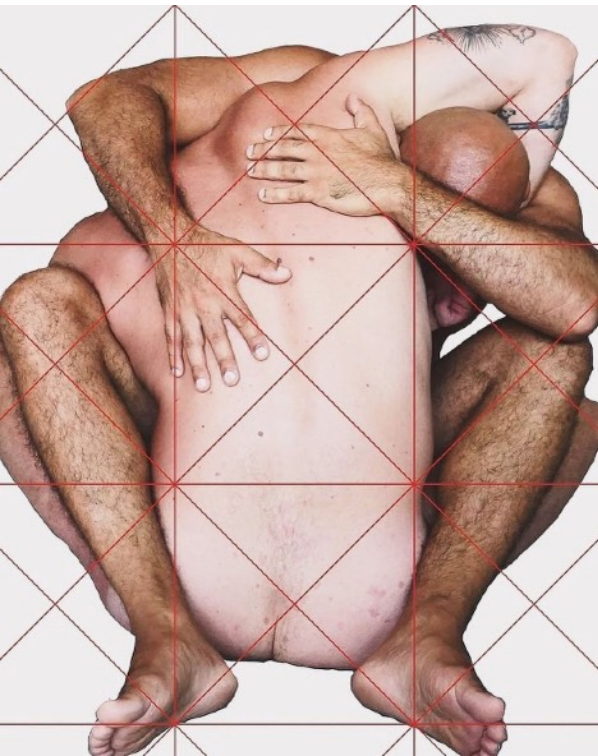
3 sheets · 24 × 112 cm (9.5" × 44.1") each

Printing: dot-matrix impact

Paper: deadstock continuous-feed paper

Edition: 3 per colorway · signed, numbered

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## 04 – Selected Works

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### **SOFT.RENDER**

Year: 2025

Dimensions: 72 × 140 cm (28.3" × 55.1")

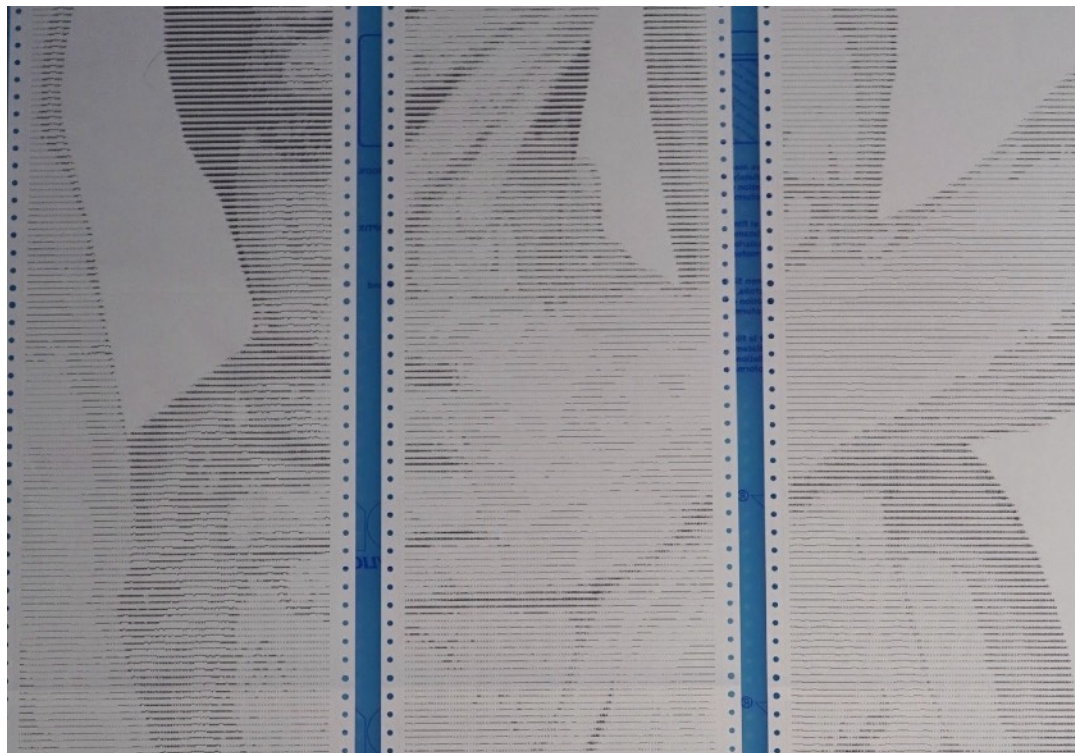
3 sheets · 24 × 140 cm (9.5" × 55.1") each

Printing: dot-matrix impact

Paper: deadstock continuous-feed paper

Edition: 3 per colorway · signed, numbered

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## 04 – Selected Works

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### SUBMISSION FORMAT

Year: 2025

Dimensions: 120 × 97 cm (47.2" × 38.2")

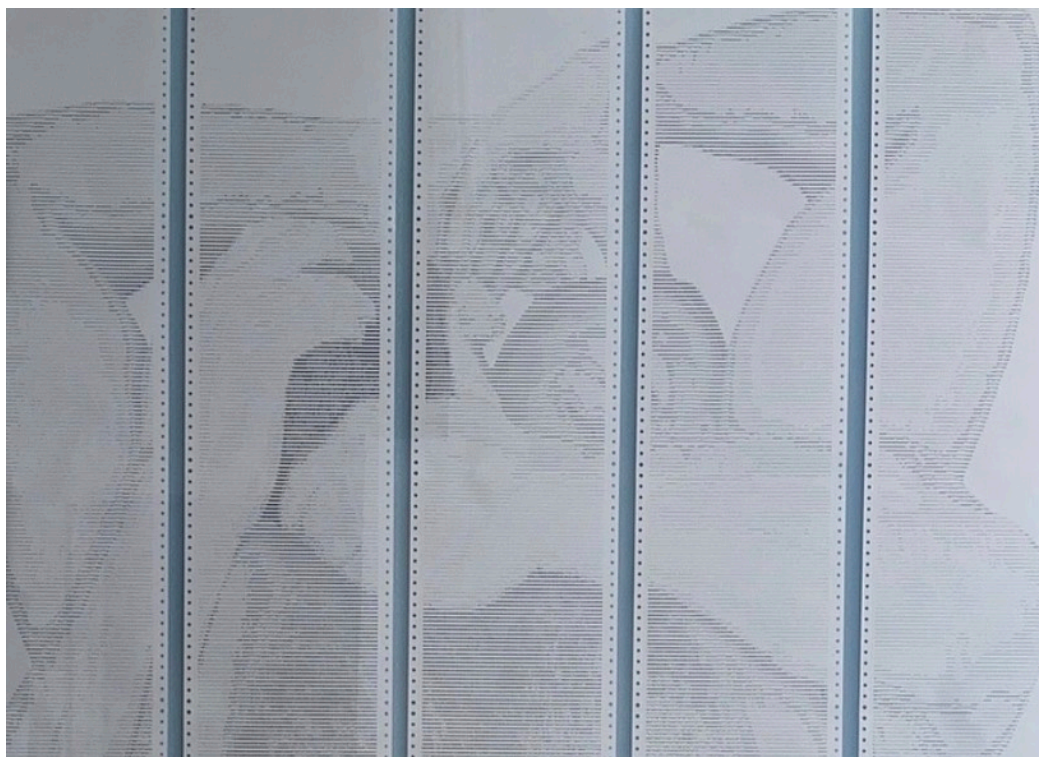
5 sheets • 24 × 97 cm (9.5" × 38.2") each

Printing: dot-matrix impact

Paper: deadstock continuous-feed paper

Edition: 3 per colorway • signed, numbered

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## 04 – Selected Works

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### **(TXT) TOUCH**

Year: 2025

Dimensions: 96 × 96 cm (37.8" × 37.8")

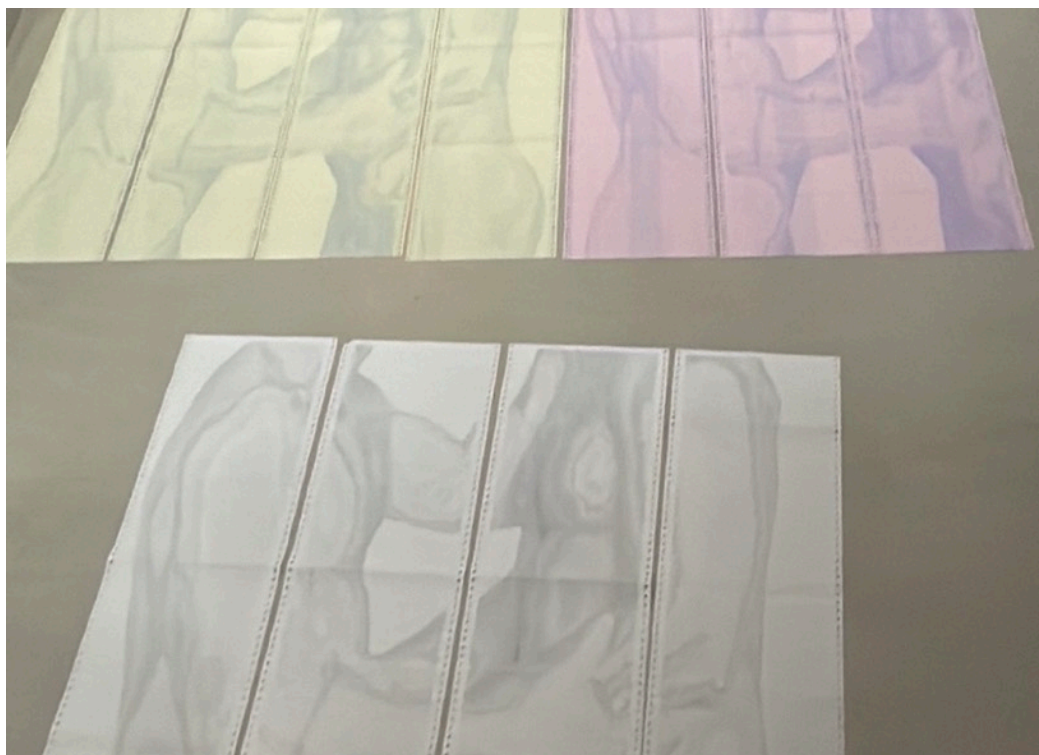
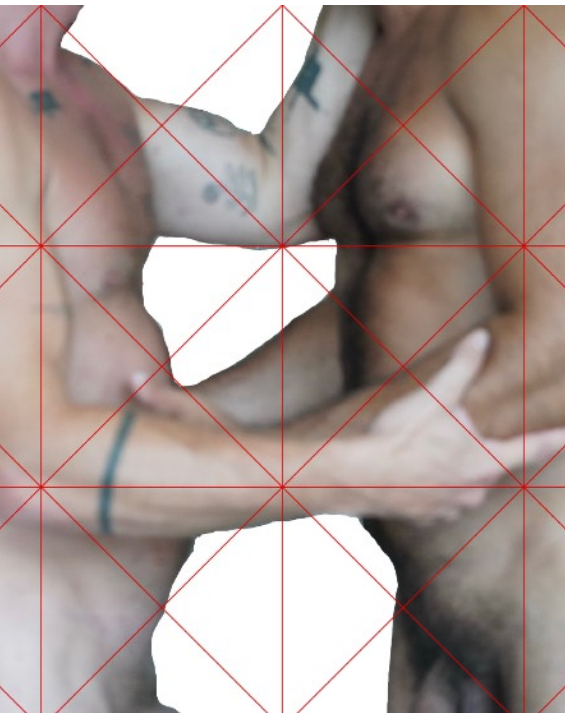
4 sheets • 24 × 96 cm (9.5" × 37.8") each

Printing: dot-matrix impact

Paper: deadstock continuous-feed paper

Edition: 3 per colorway • signed, numbered

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## 05 – Exhibitions

2026

### **Art Number 23**

Group exhibition

Michael Cacoyannis Foundation, Athens, Greece

26 June – 13 July 2025

Curated by okay\_captain & cyber\_daddi

Work shown: SOFT.RENDER · AWAITING INPUT

2025

### **Radical Rest (an act of resistance)**

Group exhibition

OKAY – Initiative Space & Gallery, Athens, Greece

26 June – 13 July 2025

Curated by okay\_captain & cyber\_daddi

Work shown: SAFE MODE

2025

### **HeArt of Change Festival**

Group exhibition

PLEX, Athens, Greece

21 – 30 May 2025

Works shown: BODY.QUEUE · (TXT)TOUCH

## 06 – Contact Information

Website: [charactersascii.com](http://charactersascii.com)

Instagram: @charactersascii

Email: [characters.inquiries@gmail.com](mailto:characters.inquiries@gmail.com)

### **Documentation Requests**

High-resolution images and press kit are available on request for editorial and curatorial use.

### **Issued – April 2026**

For the most current press kit edition, contact via email directly or visit <https://charactersascii.com>.

### **Note on Anonymity**

For curatorial, press, or legal purposes, full identity and documentation can be provided on request. The alias CHARACTERS is integral to the project's engagement with coded presence, latency, and queer survival.