FOTOSEPTIEMBRE USA

SAFOTO®

JENNIFER SHAW

Flood State

Curated by Michael Mehl

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SAFOTO Web Galleries Monograph Curated by Michael Mehl

Jennifer Shaw is a fine art photographer whose work is based on both a world observed and a world constructed, often focusing on the fleeting and personal within the sphere of her immediate surroundings. Her photographs have been featured in B&W, American Photo, Shots, Light Leaks, The Sun, and Oxford American magazines, and online publications including NPR, Fraction Magazine, One One Thousand and Lenscratch. Her first monograph, *Hurricane Story* (Chin Music Press), was named a best photo book of 2011 by photo-eye and Brain Pickings. North Light Press published her second monograph, *Nature/Nurture*, in 2012.

Shaw grew up in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, studied photography at the Rhode Island School of Design, and then moved to New Orleans in pursuit of the artist's life. She currently teaches the disappearing art of darkroom photography at the Louise S. McGehee School and serves as creative director of the annual PhotoNOLA Festival, in addition to chasing after two young sons. Shaw's work is exhibited widely and held in collections, including the New Orleans Museum of Art, the Ogden Museum of Southern Art, and the Museum of Fine Arts Houston.

Flood State

In 2016 two major floods affected vast portions of Louisiana, sparking this series about weather anxieties and the precarious act of making a home on vulnerable land. Ever since Hurricane Katrina, my heart breaks and stomach turns every time I see flooding in the news. This year was even more intense, as our weekend camp was among those flooded in the March deluge, and came within inches of flooding again in August.

All of which has left me questioning the long-term viability of living in a place where we are at risk of being inundated from above and below. Heavy rains can drown thousands of homes without warning, and rising sea levels are destroying the coast in a slow but steady creep. With each new storm that blows this way, I fear mother nature is warning us to get out while we still can. I consider heading for higher ground. Yet the frequency and intensity of extreme weather events is predicted to increase, globally, in the coming years, begging the question: Is any place truly safe?

And so I imagine a future where we adjust and adapt to survive in a floating world. In these liquid landscapes there are pods to keep us safe as water rises, tree house colonies in case it doesn't recede, and human transmutations who evolve with crawfish arms to better navigate the submerged universe. The skies may be dark and stormy, but fear is tempered by hope.

Jennifer Shaw
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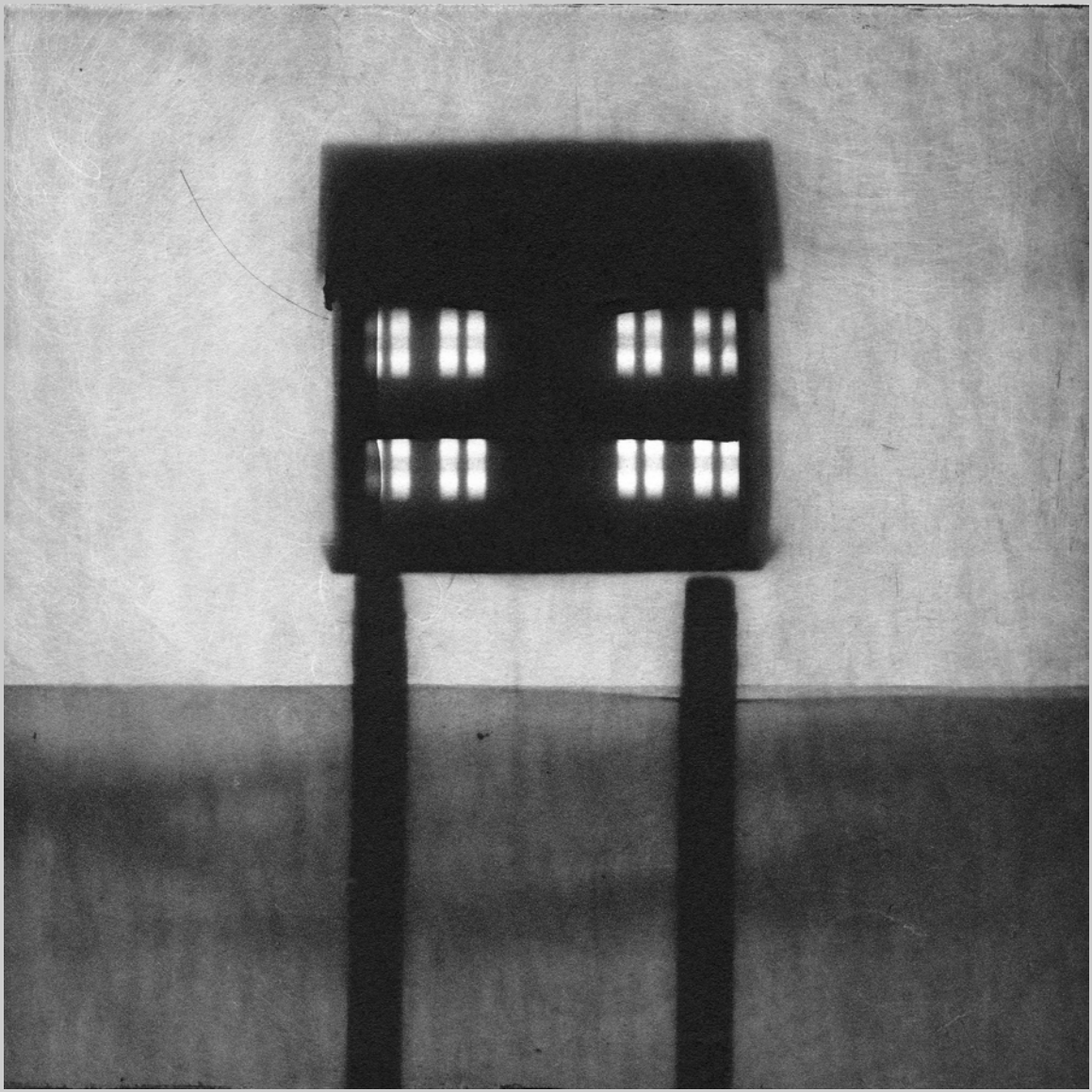
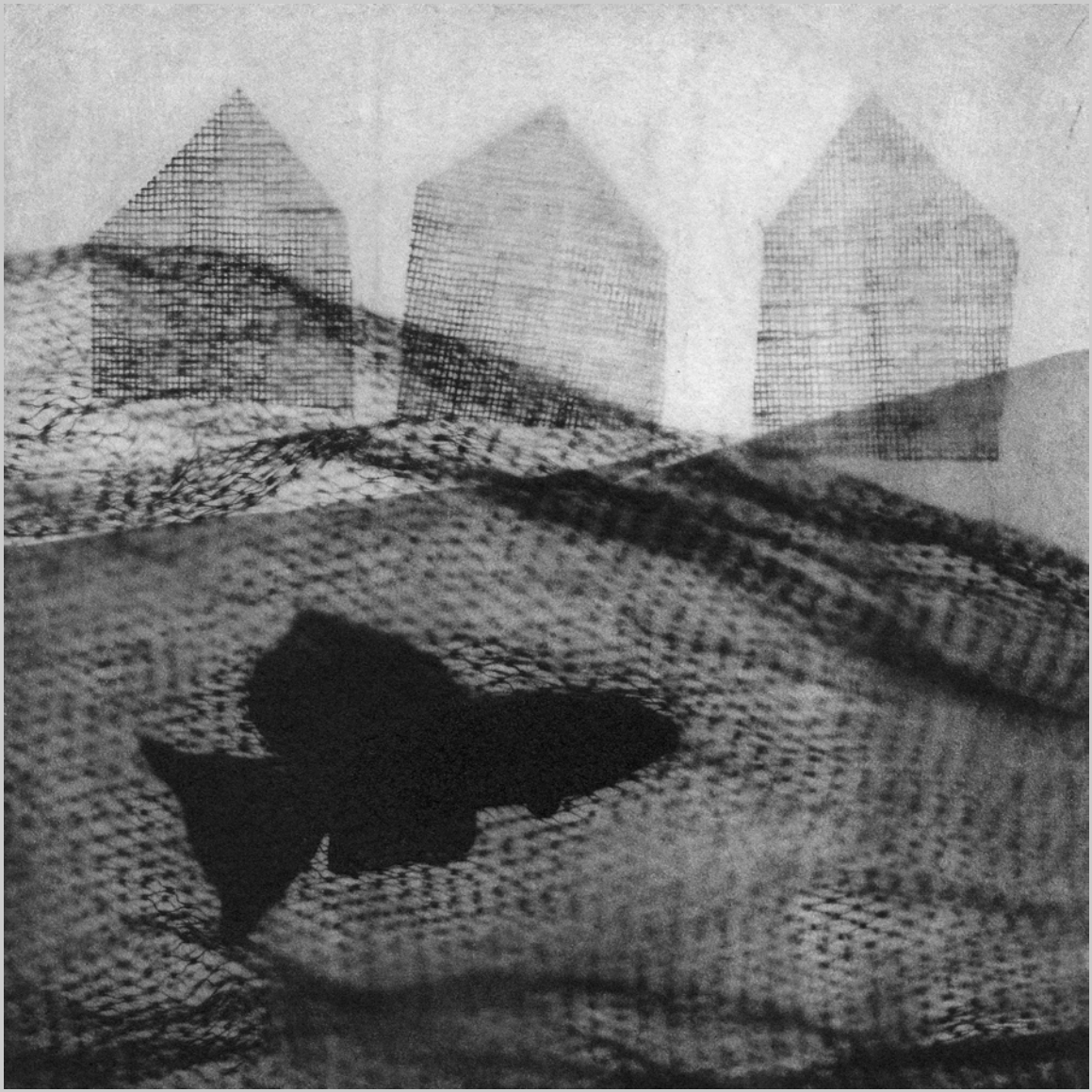


Flood State 1

Flood State 2



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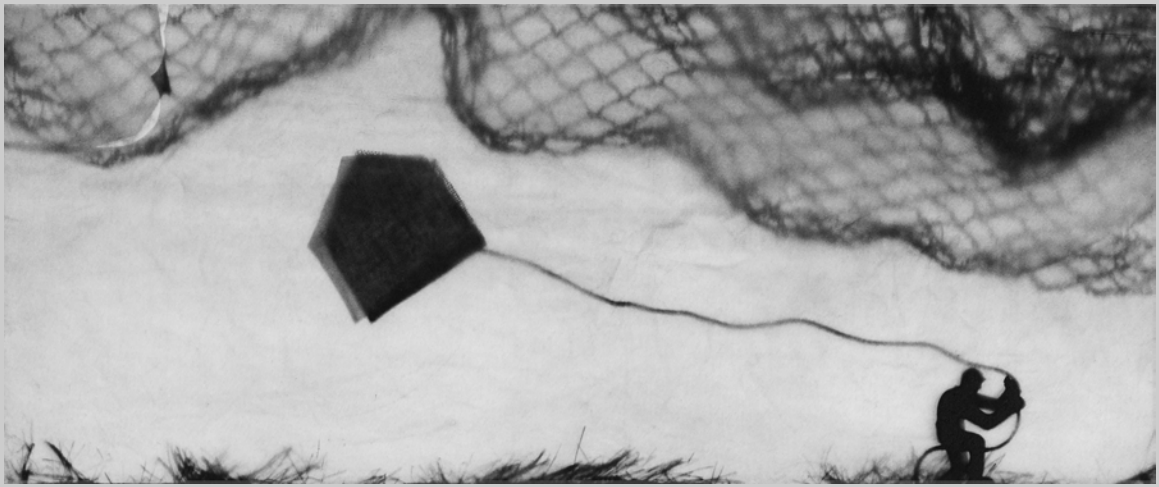

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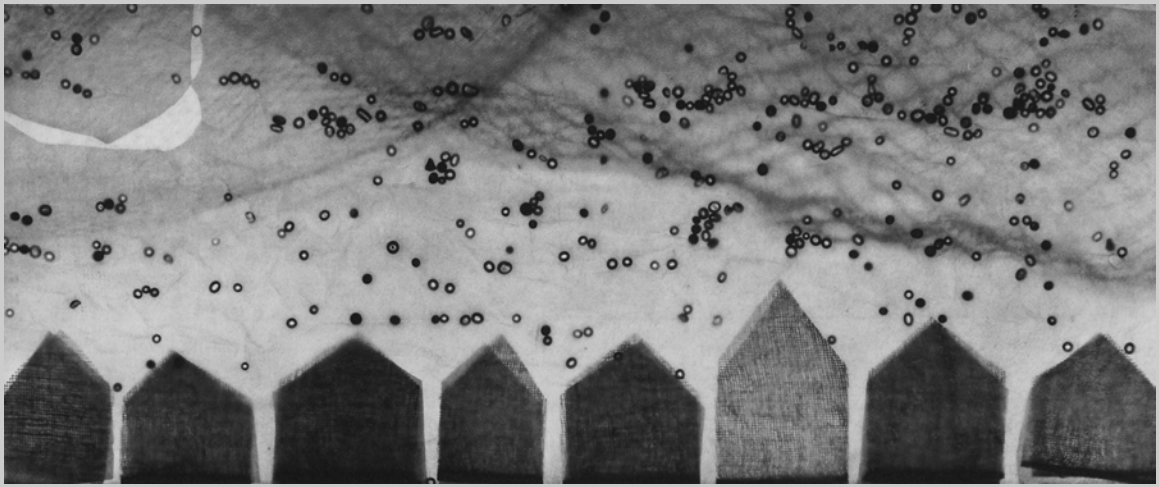

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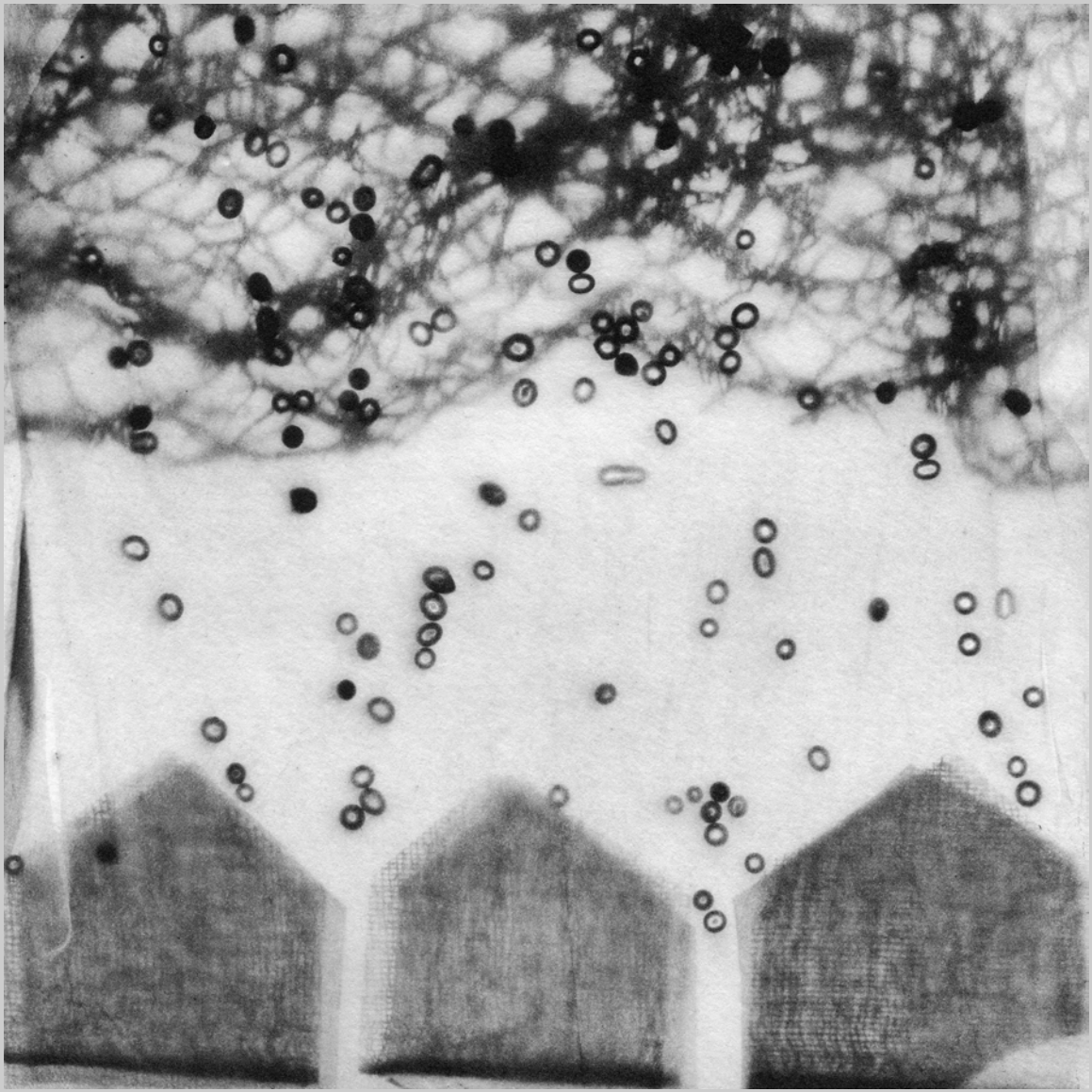

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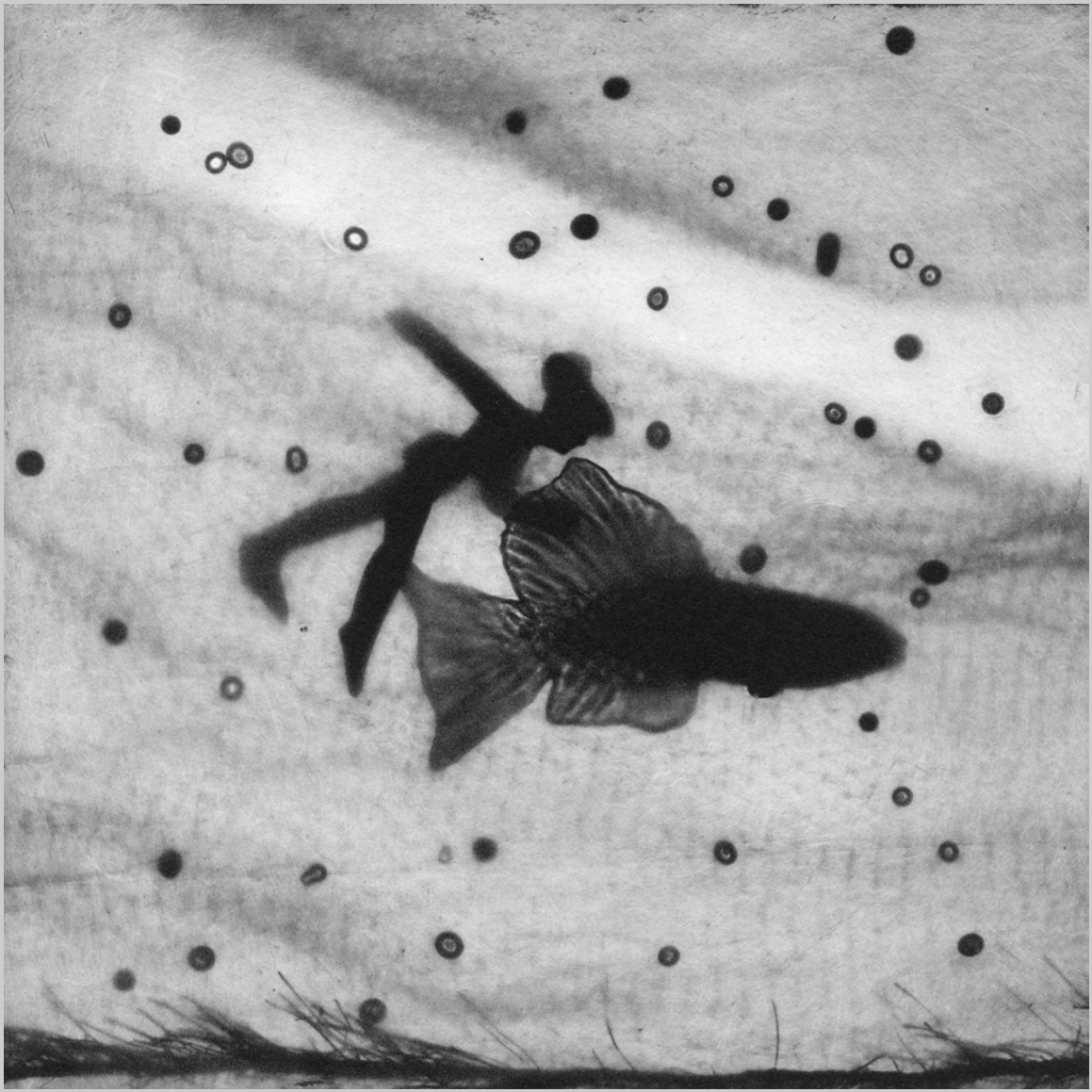

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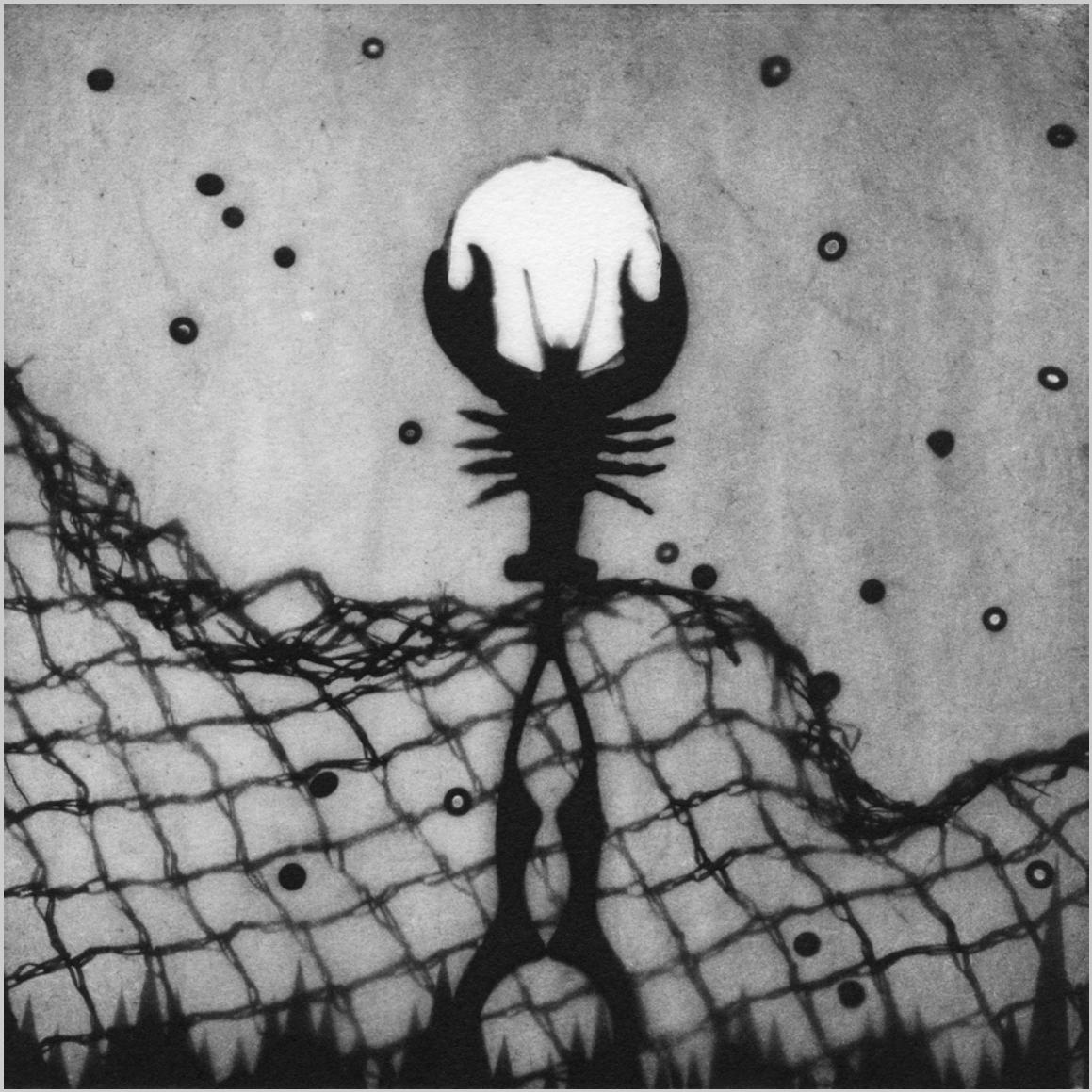

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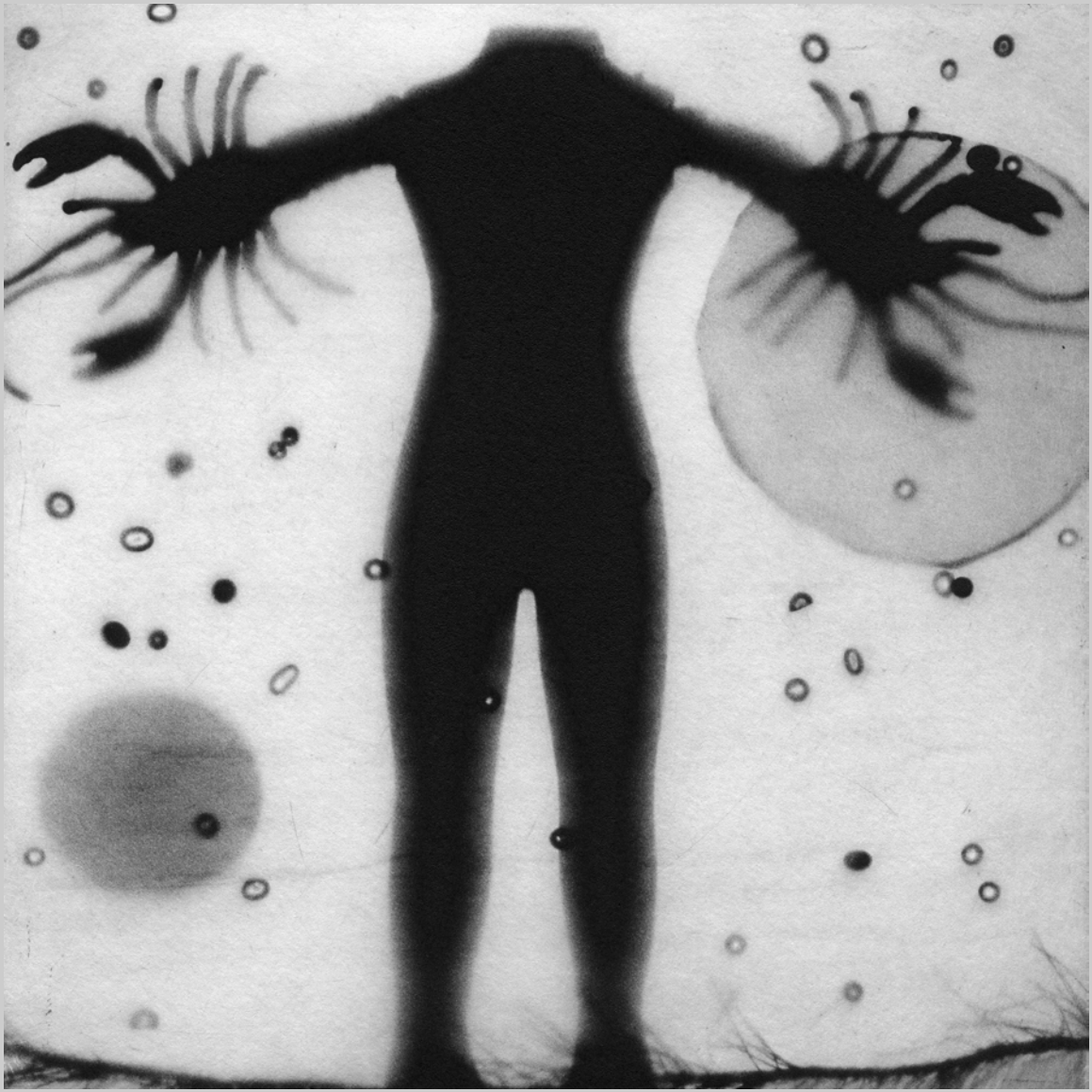

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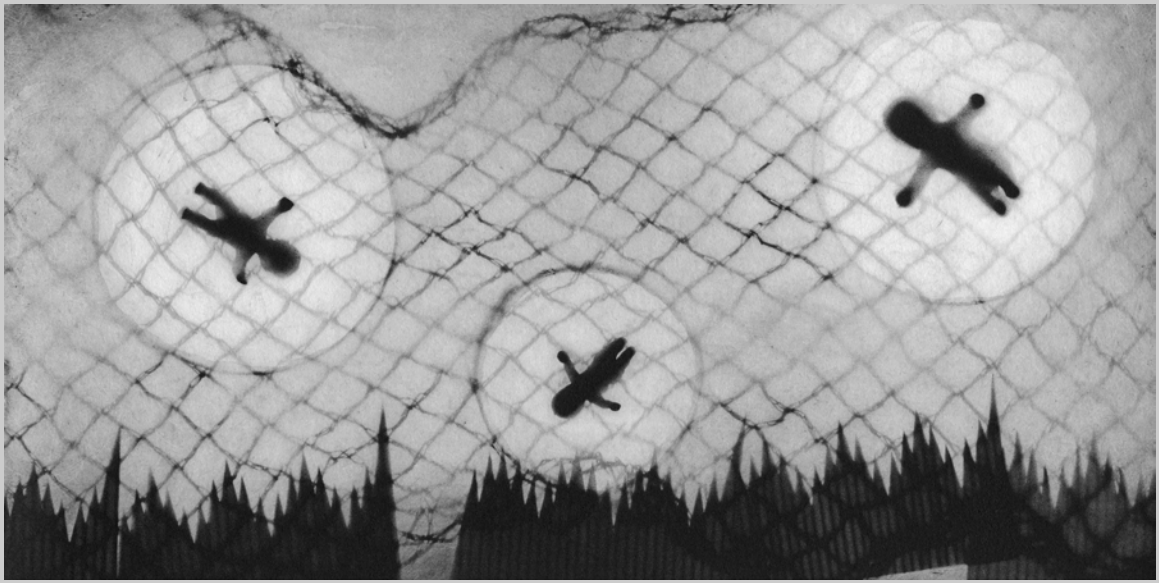

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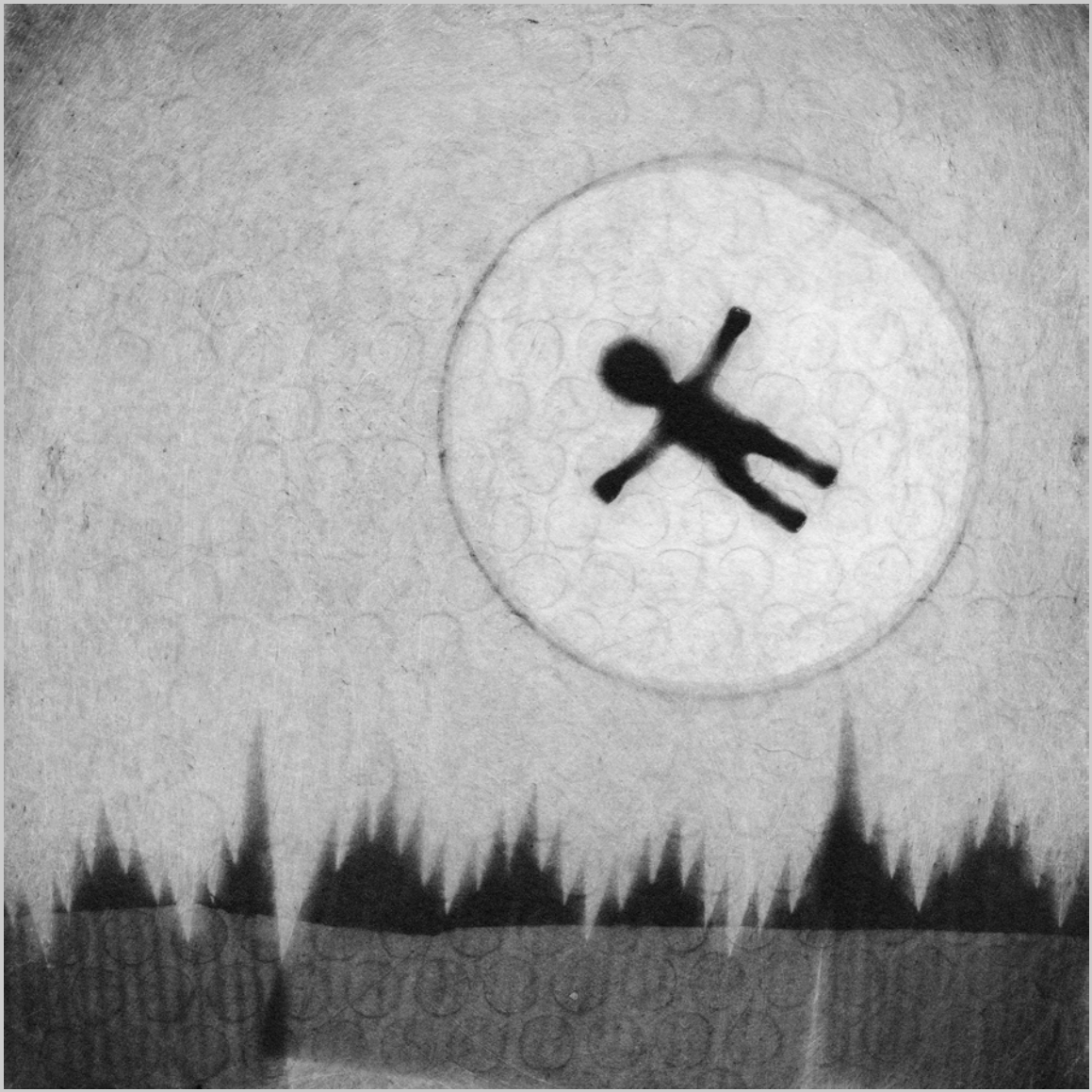

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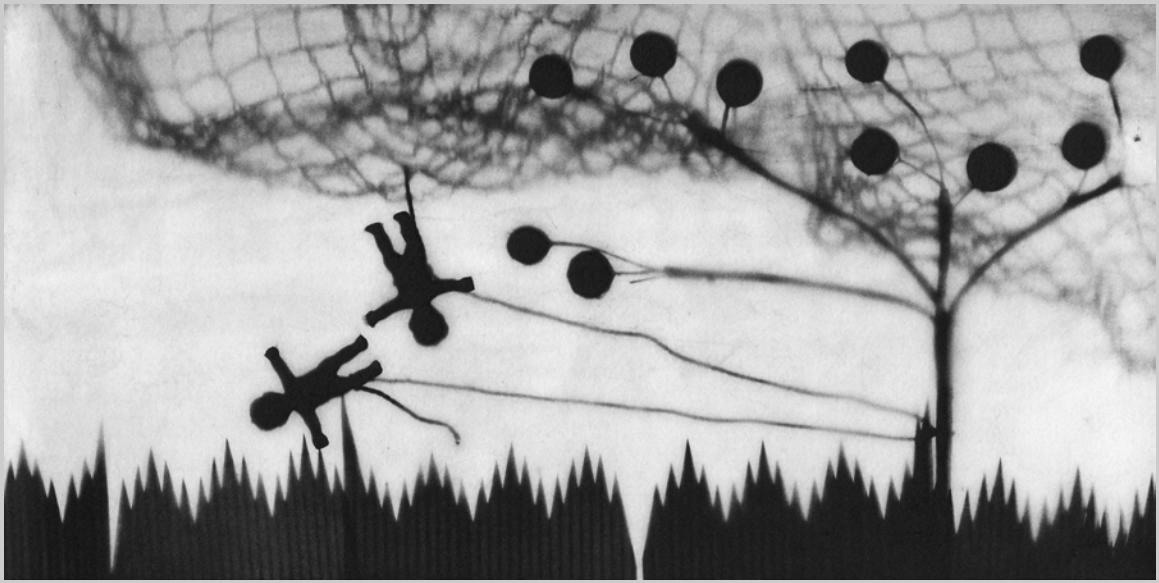

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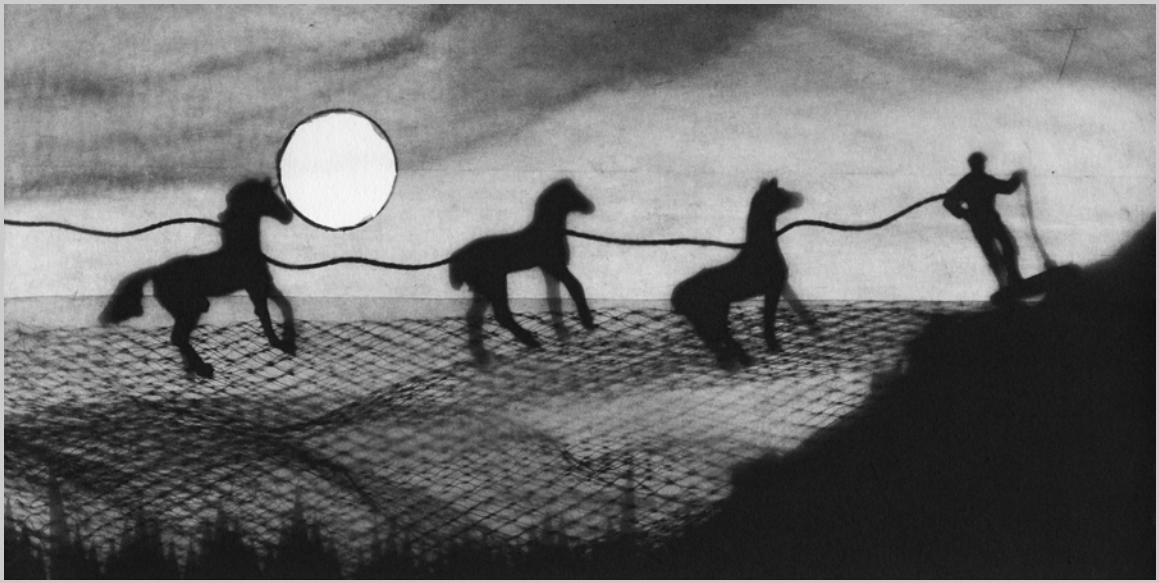
Flood State 16

Flood State 17

Flood State 18



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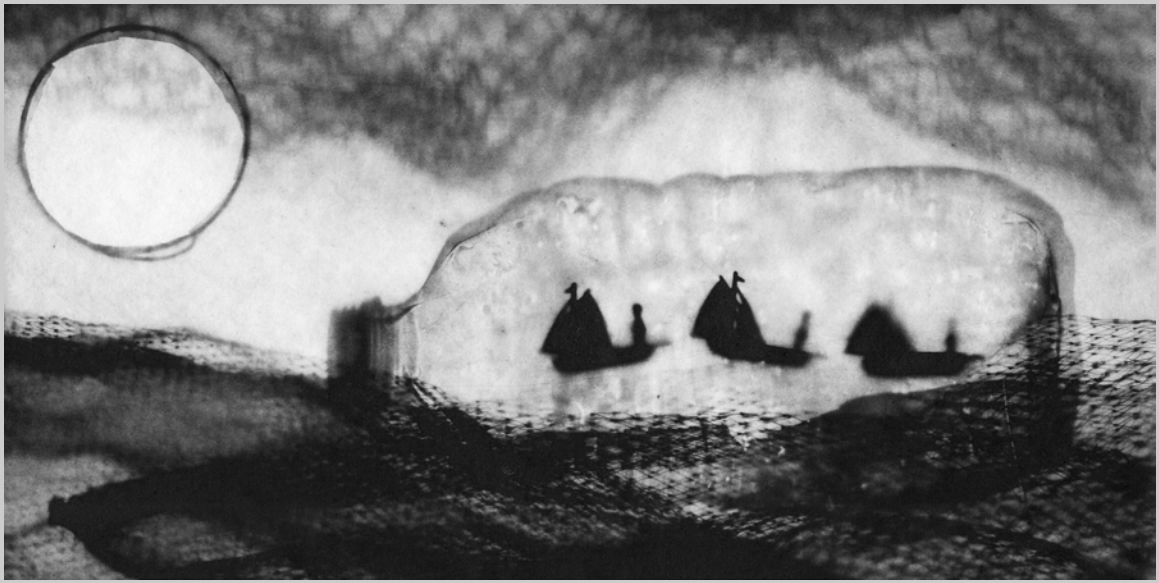

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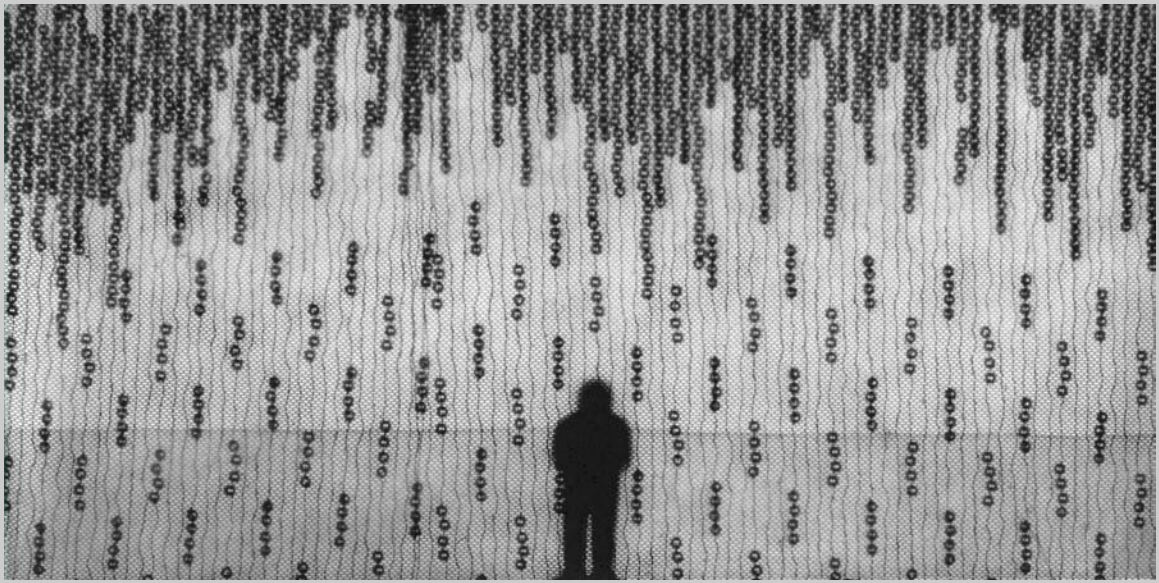

Flood State 21

Flood State 22

Flood State 23