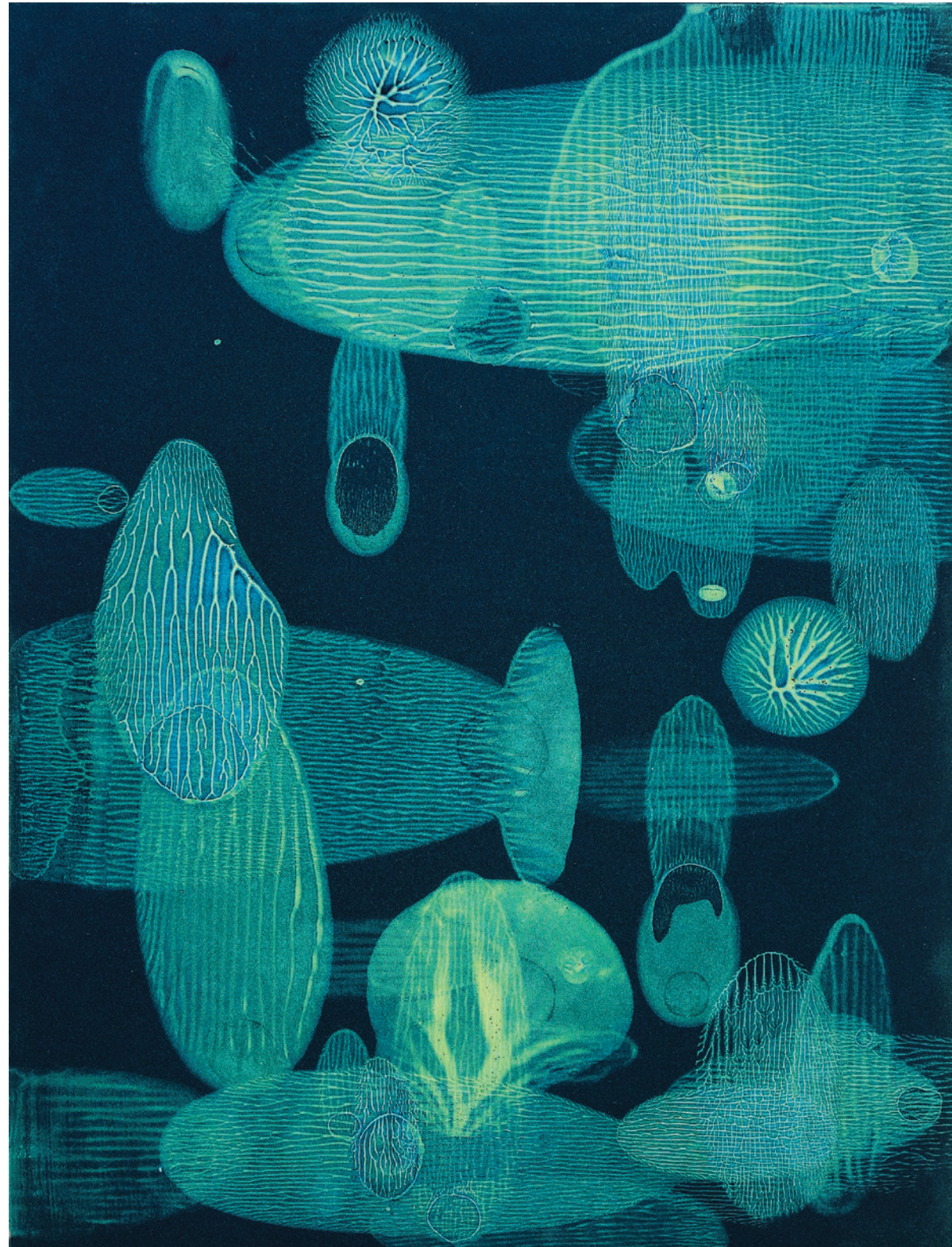


ENRIQUE LEAL

Abyssalia II, 2016.
Silk mezzotint, 10.5 x 8 in



COURTESY THE ARTIST

LISA ALLEN ORTIZ

Stem

Her body also is.
Connecting ground to bloom
the veins and length
the water up and down.

When she was seed
she huddled in the dirt, feet
reached for the underside.
Back then, the sun was.

Pain is stored this way,
not the memory but
the amygdala. What is body
but a battery of tremors?
Back then, song.

What she doesn't recall
grows to tumor
in her throat, words for things
stuck in there like wicked bones.

What she wanted
she gained by growing.
Her body was marked
with nodes, her body
danced marvelously in wind.

A woman comes from where?
A woman becomes what?

A bloom of head
that petals fall from.
Seedpod head
at the desiccated end.

She connects this idea
to that. She stands tiptoe
at the beach and the horizon
lifts just slightly more.

One might say
our bodies change the world—
brief combustion in the dirt.