

# SHOTS

JUNE 2001 NO. 72

\$4.95 U.S. / \$5.95 CANADA



## JEFF ALU

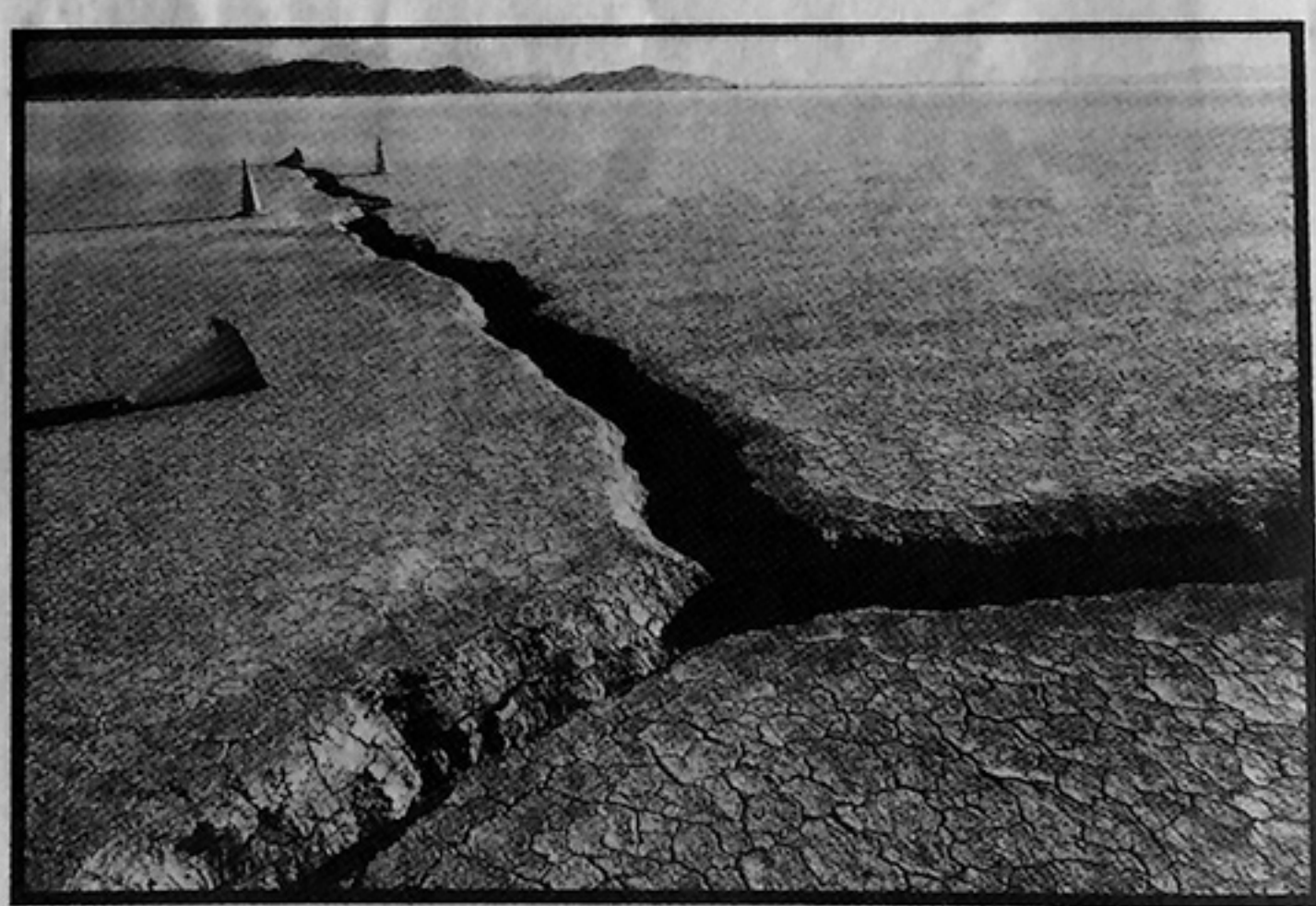
I'm a 3D Artist/Animator who has begun taking black and white photographs in an attempt to get back to the basics of light and shadow. Many of my clients demand high-impact, colorful graphics, which have their place to be sure. But it can often become overwhelming, and the act of doing black and white photography clears my mind a little.

My photos tend to be graphic in nature, and I try to look for strong leading lines. Some have described my photos as "3D", which I suppose comes from doing so much 3D work. I do allow myself to alter the images in Photoshop, using dodging and burning. I've found this to be such a great technique for isolating subjects or bringing out emotions. I didn't dodge and burn at first, but now I do it on every image.

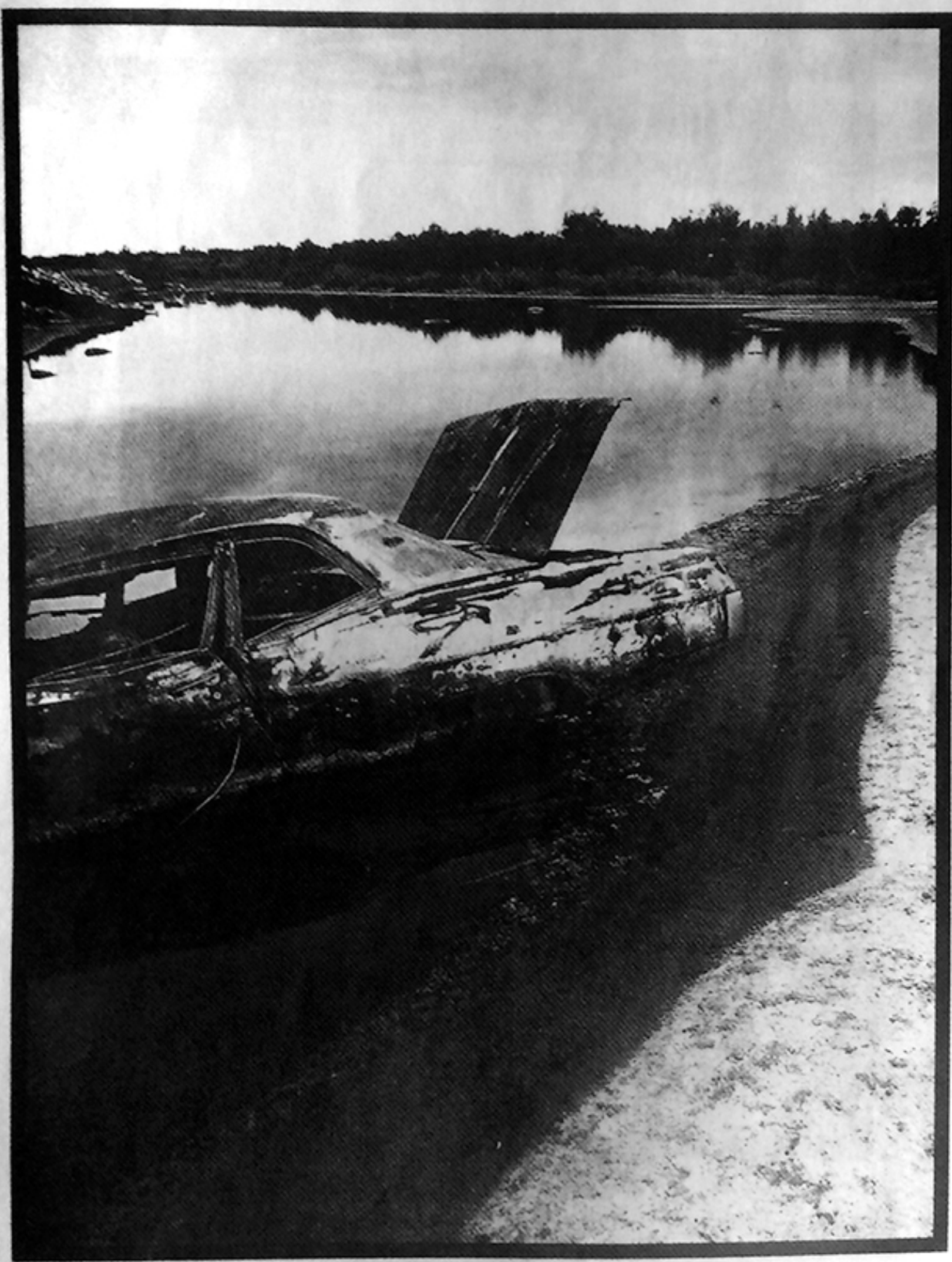
I had my fill of darkroom work when I was working at JPL/Palomar Observatory. We would venture up to Palomar each month for six nights and take pictures of the sky using the 18" Schmidt camera. We used hypered 4415 film and usually processed about 100 films per night. We took pairs of films of different areas of the sky with a 40-minute separation. We would then take a pair of films and look at them under a stereomicroscope, trying to detect near-earth asteroids and comets. It was fun work, but also hard work, and I learned to really hate darkrooms in the process.

For the most part, my actual shooting technique is point and click. The act of photography for me has come out of my love for hiking through the deserts on very hot days. I drive out to locations in my Jeep, and then usually hike in the rest of the way. I'm not one to wait in one spot for very long, I'm much happier taking pictures while I'm on the move. Since I've started doing photography, I'm seeing the desert in a new way, and this in turn gives me new ideas about photography.

I'm usually more interested in finding new areas to photograph, rather than taking pictures in more popular areas. I think this state of mind dates back to the Palomar days, searching for comets—the thrill of the hunt. But in this case I'm hunting for new areas, new meanings, new questions. I feel very satisfied when I find a subject, because I know that I had to work for it. I was searching for *something*, and I found something. Three hours from home, in the middle of nowhere, I found something. It always reminds me how much more there is to see, and how little I've seen.



28



29