

The Washington Post

Democracy Dies in Darkness

In the galleries: (excerpt)

Review by Mark Jenkins
July 8, 2022

Tom Sliter



“Cold Warriors 1” by Tom Sliter.

The title of Tom Sliter’s Multiple Exposures Gallery show, “Cold Warriors,” acknowledges the theme of his elegant black-and-white photographs: American military aircraft of the mid-20th century. The pictures themselves, however, are often less explicit. These high-contrast close-ups, all but one shot under open skies, can be sleekly aerodynamic or tersely geometric. A few of them convey little more than curves

of shimmering white on deep black backdrops.

Made at California’s Castle Air Museum, Arizona’s Pima Air and Space Museum, and other locations, the photographs appear more futuristic than at least some of their subjects. Propellers are visible in several of the pictures, dating the older planes to before the jet age. The photos were shot from ground level, and in some cases depict craft that are no longer airworthy.

In an email, Sliter noted that he would have liked to see the planes in the air. But his photos portray the objects less as flying machines than as art objects, ready-made sculptures characterized by rounded contours and reflective surfaces. The photographer sets off these pictorial elements with dramatic skies, mostly dark but punctuated by backlit clouds and, in one case, what appears to be a low-hanging moon. Where pilots must execute split-second maneuvers with no time to spare, Sliter patiently waited for just the right moment to make an exposure that ideally juxtaposes metal and sky.

Tom Sliter: Cold Warriors Through July 24
at [Multiple Exposures Gallery](#), Torpedo Factory, 105 N. Union St., Alexandria.