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Democracy Dies in Darkness

In the galleries:

By Mark Jenkins, Washington Post
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Matt Leedham. "Remote Watchtowers," on view at the Multiple Exposures Gallery. (Matt Leedham)

Bold Planet

Several visual conversations chatter in "Bold Planet," Matt Leedham and Tom Sliter's show at Multiple Exposures Gallery. Sliter's black-and-white horizontal photographs hang on a gray wall in two parallel series: sand on top and ice on the bottom. They speak to each other, as well as to Leedham's color pictures, which are more diverse in format and location — and which pop from a red surface.

Whether shooting Antarctica or New Mexico's White Sands, Sliter displays an austere style and an eye for rippling patterns drawn by wind or meltwater and underscored by shadows. Both ice field and desert offer gradations of white and gray, strongly contrasted by dark areas that include skies whose original blues become intense blacks.

Leedham's pictures are as lush as his cohort's are stark. From India to China to Iceland, Leedham focuses most often on places of abundant green, in either sweeping horizontal or

ascending verticals. The images are crisp but shot with long exposures that turn the action of clouds and waterfalls into cottony blurs. Both photographers place the viewer in the midst of grand natural vistas, but Sliter's images appear incised in time and space, while Leedham's seem about to spring to life.

Matt Leedham and Tom Sliter: Bold Planet Through Feb. 10 at [Multiple Exposures Gallery](#), Torpedo Factory, 105 N. Union St., Alexandria.

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