

The Washington Post

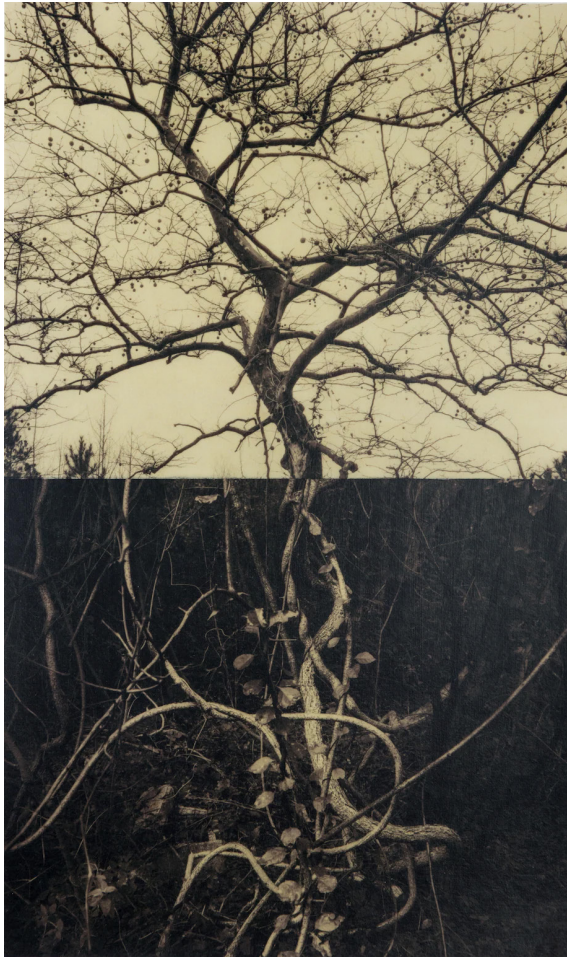
Democracy Dies in Darkness

Museums Review

In the galleries: A pictorial stew examines the seamy side along the corridors of power

By Mark Jenkins

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"Portal" by Janet Matthews. (Janet Matthews)



“Contemplation” by Janet Matthews. (Janet Matthews)

Janet Matthews

The organic forms of Janet Matthews’s “Tangled” are external, not internal, but the Maryland photographer sees them as revealing her inner life. The twisted trees and looping vines depicted in her show at Multiple Exposures Gallery “seemed analogous to the chaos in my head,” the artist’s statement notes.

That information deepens the impact of the pictures, which are printed on Japanese kozo paper, but it’s not necessary to appreciate the expert compositions. “Tangled” is divided between two series, both originally monochromatic and focused on sinuous vegetation. One consists of single shots, hand colored with muted hues. The other splices dual images so that branches and tendrils appear to continue across the whole. If these are metaphorical, they represent not chaos, but a keen eye for affinity and continuity.

Janet Matthews: Tangled Through March 9 at Multiple Exposures Gallery, Torpedo Factory, 105 N. Union St., Alexandria.