

Washington Post review of Regatta series prints.



Review by Mark Jenkins

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Kate Lowman

Squares, triangles, grids and vibrant primary colors dominate most of Kate Lowman's abstracted digital-photo collages, now on view at Washington Printmakers Gallery. As hinted by the show's title, "Sails Away," the pictures begin with photographs of sails. (These came from model boats, not full-size ones.) The shapes and textures, as well as elements such as large black numbers, can give away the images' sources. Yet some of the collages are far removed from their real-world origins. The Northern Virginia artist streamlines and occasionally softens the found forms, yielding such evocatively watery compositions as the blue-and-yellow "Regatta #2, Pinwheel."

Lowman also conjures depth by manually adding light and shadow and then printing on Japanese-style unryu ("cloud dragon") paper. The near-translucent medium contains curving, barely visible fibers that subtly alter the pictures' character. Having reduced her subjects to their geometric archetypes, Lowman then engagingly tempers the sails' right-angled simplicity with biomorphic complexity.

Kate Lowman: Sails Away Through Sept. 24 at Washington Printmakers Gallery, 1675 Wisconsin Ave. NW. washingtonprintmakers.com. 202-669-1497.