

John Riddy – ‘Maputo (Train), 2002’

The conflation of time in Struth’s “Pergamon” photographs relies on a dulled, almost monochromatic palette. This is a quality apparent in the photographs of John Riddy when he recently made the transition from working in black and white to colour. His reservations about using colour for his architectural photographs had been that it has a tendency to root the scene in the moment. What interests Riddy is photography’s capacity to conflate time and its ability to evoke the history of a space. In “Maputo (Train), 2002”, the turquoise paintwork and the benches become the fading signs of a moment in the place’s colonial past. Present time is shown in the train carriage at the centre of the image, an element we know will soon depart without a trace. Riddy photographs his scenes from a precise angle where the architecture falls into a symmetry. This conscious choice acknowledges the fact that certain angles make the photographer’s perspective (or experience) more evident to the viewer, and others less so.

Charlotte Cotton © 2004