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The Transfer of Power
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Editor: Tim Marlow

Richard Glover

When Bankside power station was created as the site for Tate Modern, I was commissioned to make some photographs. The engineer acting as a caretaker explained that when the station was decommissioned in the early 1980s they simply disconnected the inner workings of the machines and left. After pointing out the dangerous parts of the building, he just said to me: "Those the locks on the doors when you leave." Those doors were made of plate steel and were twenty feet high, so it wasn't so easy.

It was quite a feeling being left there on your own for the first time in this labyrinthine interior. As an architectural photographer, this was riveting stuff. The massive building, the concrete machinery casing, and decaying, bit as if it were all mine. A great celebrantity was here that day. Gilbert Scott's building is such a fantastic space to work with. Despite being built in the 1950s, it has a lot of an Art Deco feel to it, but essentially it's pure Modernism. Its former life was evident everywhere, but stripped down almost to a shell, it was still possible to envisage the stuff from power house to international museum of modern art.

What you are seeing is a series of images taken over a period of twelve months. Each visit meant looking at the place anew. If I went up to the roof one time, I'd choose to go to the basement the next. I'd like to think that each image could be taken out of context and seen as an entity. At the same time they are part of a narrative, as they exist on several levels. I use a large format camera, five by four, that gives the image a greater depth. I'm interested in the built environment – what architects are doing, how they respond to a space over time. I like to see spaces where things are deliberate, such as painting marks on a wall, or not deliberate, such as the effects of erosion. Scale plays an important part in this too.

I use black and white because it gives you a sense of timelessness. It is less immediate and familiar than colour. Sometimes colour can be distracting. There is not a lot of colour in Tate Modern, therefore there was little reason to use it. Most of the colour is coming from the various light sources. If you make a picture abstract, you can add another dimension to it. You can see different details, even if you take a small section.

I like photographing buildings in London. There are so many layers to the city. I come from Australia, but this country seems older: it's like an old person's skin with lots of wrinkles, but with one wafer-up.