

# Time Out

**'The Attempt of Seduction' by Rut Blees Luxemburg**



## **'Is There Anyone Home?'**

**Gallery Westland Place East End**

**D**eserted interiors and anonymous street scenes are such staples of contemporary photography that presenting ten artists who work in a similar vein seems like curatorial suicide. How much can one project on to countless shots of forgotten corners? Yet 'Is There Anyone Home?' embraces enough contrast to prevent the expected ennui. Luke Gottelier uses bits and bobs – offcuts of wire and piles of sugar – to create model still-lives and interiors; through subtle lighting and soft-focus, his photographs of them bristle with sophistication. The twist is that the transformation is never complete: his materials soon expose their humble origins. They are far more rewarding than the colour-saturated, open-windowed rooms

photographed by Charlotte Gibson, who seems happy to rely on one's imagination without actually firing it, or Elisa Sighicelli's views into a kitchen. Presented as light-boxes, they try to cover all bases by referring to artists as varied as Edward Hopper and Barnett Newman.

Rut Blees Luxemburg strikes a fine balance between blank formality and peripheral activity. In 'The Attempt of Seduction', the shadow of some foliage tickles an exterior wall under the yellow glare of a street-lamp. Robert Davies' 'August', on the other hand – a shot of the rain-sodden backs of houses taken from the TV – is a straightforward essay in English miserablism.

Gallery Westland Place is far from the ideal venue, though; noise from the café above interrupts one's engagement with these images of absence and silence.

*Martin Coomer*