

GLADSTONE GALLERY

“LaToya Ruby Frazier, and from the Coaltips a Tree Will Rise - The Eye of Photography ,”
L’Oeil de la Photographie, February 17, 2017

L’OËIL DE LA
PHOTOGRAPHIE

THE EYE OF PHOTOGRAPHY

LaToya Ruby Frazier, And from the Coaltips a Tree Will Rise - The Eye of Photography

Coming from a working class family, LaToya Ruby Frazier was born in 1982 in Braddock, a city in the Rust Belt ravaged by America’s steel crisis under the Reagan administration. In this former steel mills bastion , afflicted by unemployment, pollution, and health safety, the artist grew up in the center of an African American family whose story she is telling through a network of portraits, self-portraits, and photographic mise-en-abymes. Titled *The Notion of Family*, this series, begun with rigour and empathy at the age of sixteen, allows her to renew social documentary by showing a critical reality from” inside”.

Outraged by the closure of Braddock’s only hospital in 2010 and by the following use of this “ghost town” as the setting for jeans commercial, LaToya Ruby Frazier became increasingly more activist and conjointly condemned the cynical abandon of her city by public powers and its opportunistic reconquest through the gentrification of its deserted neighborhoods. Internationally recognized today, the artist was the winner of the 2015 MacArthur Fellows Program. Last year, her residency at MAC’s gave her the opportunity, in Borinage, to pursue, through other industrial landscapes, stories of workers, and family memories, her critical inquiry on postindustrial society. The exhibition, which opens this week at MAC’s, is presenting the series *And from the Coaltips a Tree Will Rise*, the result of this residency, which will be discussed along with the older series dedicated to the industrial decline of her hometown (Braddock, in the Rust Belt region).

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Latoya Ruby Frazier, *And from the Coaltips a Tree Will Rise*
Musée des Arts Contemporains (MAC'S)
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Site du Grand-Hornu Rue Sainte-Louise, 82 B-7301 Hornu
Belgium