frieze

LaToya Ruby Frazier
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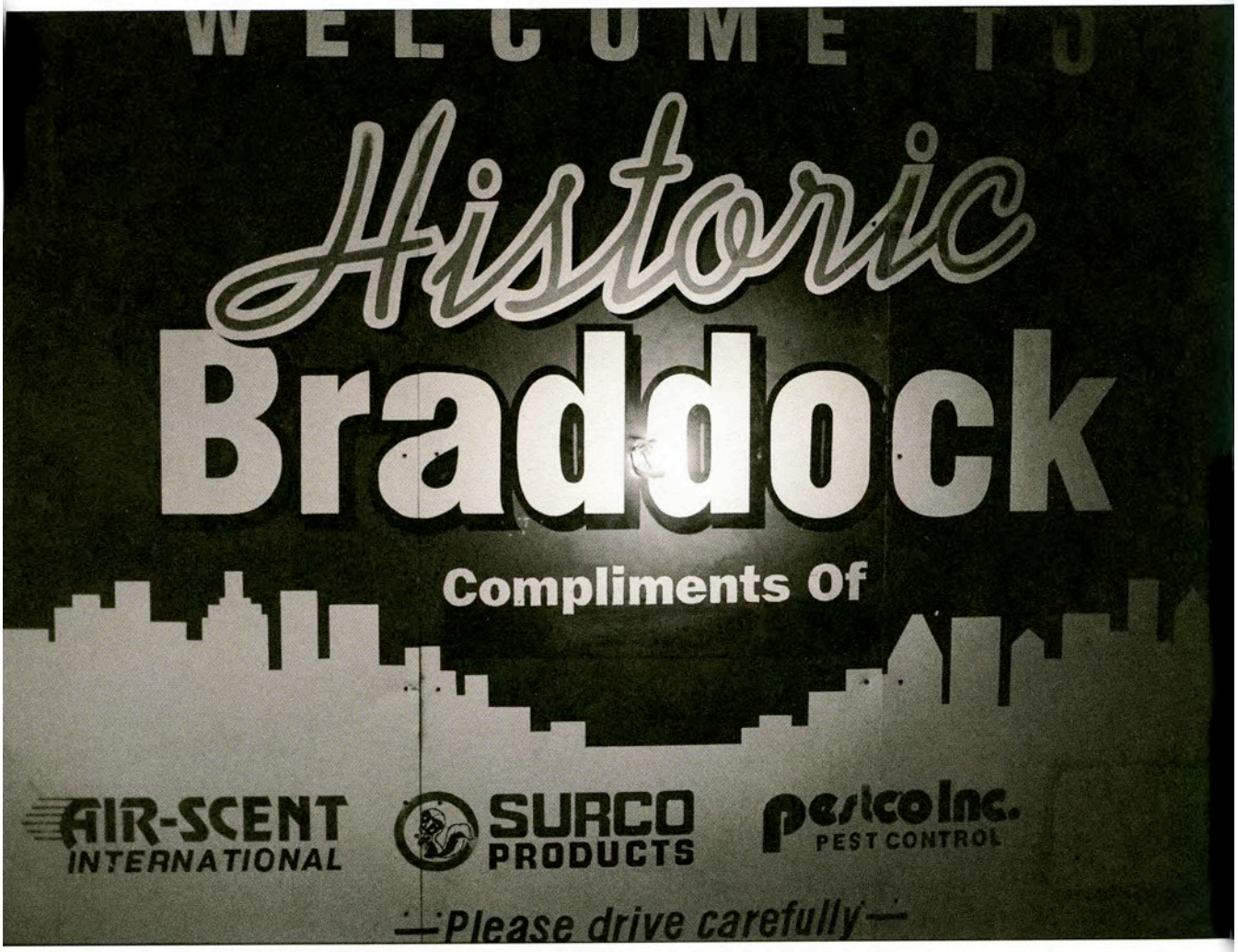
+ livret

A Post-Industrial Paradox

LaToya Ruby Frazier

LaToya Ruby Frazier's specially commissioned project for *frieze* juxtaposes photographs taken in her home town of Braddock, Pennsylvania — an economically struggling suburb of Pittsburgh — with images from a major advertising campaign for Levi's, which made use of Braddock's present gentrification developments. Combining Frazier's family history with documentary photography, *A Post-Industrial Paradox* demonstrates how the stark reality of urban decline is exploited and romanticized for big business.



Welcome to Braddock 1980s signage and a lightbulb, 2009,
silver gelatin print, 41×51 cm

Self Portrait (Disasters), 2010,
silver gelatin print,
41×51 cm

Demolition of Braddock Hospital, 2011,
silver gelatin print, 41×51 cm

Aunt Midgie and Grandma Ruby, 2007,
silver gelatin print, 41×51 cm

Grandma Ruby's Stove Top,
2009, silver gelatin print, 41×51 cm

Momme Silhouettes,
2010, silver gelatin print, 51×41 cm

'This prevalent tendency toward softmindedness is found in man's unbelievable gullibility. Take our attitude toward advertisements. We are so easily led to purchase a product because a television or radio advertisement pronounces it better than the other. Advertisers have long since learned that most people are softminded, and they capitalize on this susceptibility with skillful and effective slogans. This undue gullibility is also seen in the tendency of many readers to accept the printed word of the press as final truth. Few people realize that even our authentic channels of information — the press, the platform and in many instances the pulpit — do not give us objective and un-biased truth. Few people have the toughness of mind to judge critically and to discern the true from the false, the fact from the fiction. Our minds are constantly being invaded by legions of half-truths, prejudices and false facts. One of the great needs of mankind is to be lifted above the morass of false propaganda.'

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. *Strength to Love* (1963)

How can we go forth when our borough's buses and ambulances have been cut?

Above:
Go Forth Where, 2009,
silver gelatin print, 43 × 36 cm

Opposite page:
Houston & Lafayette, 2010,
silver gelatin print, 51 × 41 cm