

THE NOTION OF FAMILY (2001–14)

Frazier was born in Braddock, Pennsylvania, a once-thriving Rust Belt town where American industrialist Andrew Carnegie built his first steel mill, Edgar Thomson Steel Works, in 1874. *The Notion of Family*, begun by the artist when she was a teenager, centers on her hometown and three generations of African American women—Frazier’s Grandma Ruby, her childhood guardian and namesake; her mother, Cynthia, a nurse’s aide and bartender; and the artist herself. Comprising pictures, moving images, and texts, this body of work presents an incisive look at the indelible mark that a long history of racism, industrial pollution, and economic decline has left on a place and its community. A poem by Frazier, silkscreened on one of this gallery’s walls, lists the toxins present in Braddock’s air.

For some of the photographs, the artist shared the camera with her mother or staged visual framings with her grandmother. “The reason I started making collaborative portraits with [them],” she explained, “was to gain the authorship, agency, perspective, and voice that I felt was denied to early [twentieth]-century subjects.”

IF EVERYBODY'S WORK IS EQUALLY IMPORTANT? (2010–13)

Braddock Hospital had served and employed the Allegheny County community for more than a century when the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center made the decision to close it, in 2010. Residents proceeded to protest the losses of this vital health-care provider and hundreds of jobs. Two years later, the denim brand Levi Strauss & Co., in conjunction with an urban renewal project initiated by Braddock's mayor, used the town as the backdrop for a marketing campaign, which positioned it as a gritty "new frontier" for "Urban Pioneers" and featured the tagline "Go Forth." As a citizen of Braddock, Frazier responded: "I would like to know, go forth where?"

In the photographs, lithographs, video projection, and performance works presented in this gallery, Frazier explores the contradiction between the hospital's demolition and idealized depictions of Middle America in commercial advertising. "I always questioned what the media was showing," she has said, "because I was experiencing something that was totally different."

FLINT IS FAMILY IN THREE ACTS (2016–20)

This three-part collaboration with artist-activists Shea Cobb and Amber Hasan documents one of the most devastating cases of environmental racism in US history—the water crisis in Flint, Michigan. For eighteen months beginning in 2014, Flint’s predominantly Black residents were exposed to contaminants in the municipal drinking water. *Flint Is Family* bears witness to the community’s response—in the artist’s words, a “collective act of trust, unity, solidarity, action, and selfless love.”

The film of Act I (2016–17) presents a sequence of still photographs by Frazier of Flint and its residents while Cobb performs her poem “No Filter” in a voiceover narration. Act II (2017–19) comprises photographs that document the “reverse migration” of Cobb and her daughter, Zion, from the urban North to rural Mississippi, where they temporarily moved in with Cobb’s father, Mr. Smiley, who trained them how to live self-sufficiently on family land they will inherit. In Act III (2019) color photographs and interview transcripts mounted on stands commemorate Hasan and Cobb’s efforts to acquire an atmospheric water generator, a machine invented by veteran Moses West that converts moisture from the air into potable water. Made of concrete and metal in reference to the generator, the stands are arranged in a v shape that mimics a tactical troop formation, in homage to West’s deployment of his technology in Flint and to the water operation carried out by Hasan, Cobb, Frazier, and Flint community members.

ON THE MAKING OF STEEL GENESIS: SANDRA GOULD FORD (2017)

Frazier first met artist and steel-industry worker Sandra Gould Ford in Pittsburgh in 2015. “[She] came forward to me because she saw herself in me,” Frazier said. Ford was one of few Black women employees at Pittsburgh’s Jones and Laughlin Steel Company when she worked there in the 1970s and ’80s. During that time, she covertly saved documents, such as grievance reports, and photographed the interior of the plant. *On the Making of Steel Genesis* features Ford’s pictures alongside portraits of her taken by Frazier, and reproductions from Ford’s archive of company documents that Frazier made using cyanotype printing—an early photographic process that creates blue-toned images. The reproductions recall both industrial blueprints and the cyanotype impressions of plants made by nineteenth-century artists and botanists.

The installation’s elliptical shape mirrors the celestial maps in the monumental portrait of Ford at the gallery’s center. Inspired by the polluted sky pictured in one of Ford’s steel mill photographs, the amber lighting references Pittsburgh’s description by a journalist in 1866 as “hell with the lid taken off” as well as photographic darkrooms. An audio recording Frazier made of Ford in 2024 plays over speakers.

MORE THAN CONQUERORS: A MONUMENT FOR THE COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKERS OF BALTIMORE, MARYLAND (2021–22)

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Frazier collaborated with a group of Baltimore-based community health workers (CHWs) and medical professionals, whom she photographed and interviewed over three months. Trusted members of the populations they attend to, CHWs play an essential role as liaisons with medical services. Frazier’s interviews are presented here as image-and-text panels affixed to IV poles, set six feet apart—the CDC recommendation for social distancing at the onset of the pandemic.

Frazier became connected with the CHWs through Dr. Lisa Cooper, a Liberian American professor of medicine and public health at Johns Hopkins University and the founder of the Johns Hopkins Center for Health Equity in Baltimore. Cooper told Frazier about her experiences in medical residency, where she became aware of “how many problems were related to differences in life experiences between patients and the health-care professionals caring for them.” Long histories of racist government policies and neglect have left many communities in Baltimore without access to quality health care, housing, and food. *More Than Conquerors* celebrates the workers who were on the front lines of multiple crises and underscores the fact that our collective survival rests on solidarity in action.

THE LAST CRUZE (2019)

“A monument to the working-class people in this country,” as Frazier has characterized it, *The Last Cruze* was created in solidarity with the United Auto Workers Locals 1112 and 1714 in Lordstown, Ohio. In 2018 General Motors decided to cease North American production of the Chevrolet Cruze, leading to the “unallocation” and shuttering of the Lordstown assembly plant. Collaborating with Locals 1112 and 1714 members, Frazier made photographs that documented union-led efforts to prevent the closure.

Here more than sixty portraits of white, Black, and Latinx workers as well as images of factory labor are paired with printed excerpts from interviews Frazier conducted. These photographs and texts are displayed on a massive cadmium-red structure that resembles both an assembly line and cathedral buttressing. Framed by walls painted in two blue hues to match General Motors' logo colors, a film featuring photographs by autoworker and photographer Kasey King follows the very last Cruze coming off the assembly line and the employees whose livelihoods depended on the plant.

Installation with sixty-seven gelatin silver prints, one 4K video (color, sound; 58 min.), and aluminum and steel sculptural display system

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A PILGRIMAGE TO DOLORES HUERTA: THE FORTY ACRES, ARVIN MIGRATORY LABOR CAMP, NUESTRA SEÑORA REINA DE LA PAZ, DOLORES HUERTA PEACE AND JUSTICE CULTURAL CENTER (2023–24)

While conducting research for *The Last Cruze*, Frazier encountered photographs of Chicana union activist Dolores Huerta at a 1968 rally in Delano, California, with UAW leaders. A prominent leader in the American labor movement, Huerta, together with fellow Mexican American activist Cesar Chavez, cofounded the National Farm Workers Association in 1962. Inspired by the photographs, Frazier decided to pay homage to this often-trivialized figure within male-dominated narratives of American labor history, traveling to Bakersfield, California, to meet Huerta, her children, and grandchildren in 2023.

Comprising twenty-six text and image panels, *A Pilgrimage to Dolores Huerta* chronicles the trip, including the two women's visit to the Arvin Farm Labor Supply Center. It was there that American photographer Dorothea Lange famously documented migrants who fled the Dust Bowl in the 1930s. The installation culminates in a majestic portrait of Huerta, set within an arched niche reminiscent of Mission Revival architecture. The image shows her posing at the César E. Chávez National Monument in front of a mural-scale photograph of a demonstration during the 1965 Delano Grape Strike, a historical touchstone of cross-racial solidarity, in which Huerta played a decisive role.

A HUMAN RIGHT TO PASSAGE (2014)

***A Human Right to Passage* reactivates New York Harbor's histories of arrival, blocked passage, and forced removal. Performing on Manhattan's disused Pier 54, where ocean liners once docked, Frazier brandished flags printed with archival photographs that recalled the harbor's role in policing the United States' borders. They included images of the federal immigration station at Ellis Island, where arriving immigrants were once screened and deportees detained, and of the cargo vessel USAT *Buford*, which, in 1919, carried American soldiers returning from World War I and expelled suspected anarchists to Russia. Frazier staged her performance for the camera, the flags overlaying views of the surrounding cityscape.**

Installed in the passageway between the exhibition's entrance and exit, these photographs combine to form a monument to migrants who have crossed and continue to cross borders with great difficulty and at extreme risk. The pictures are paired with a new sound piece in which Frazier performs, on guitar, American activist Ralph Chaplin's 1915 song "Solidarity Forever"—an anthem for labor movements throughout the world.