



NEWS RELEASE
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Documentary Artist Valery Lyman Examines the Boom & Bust Cycle of American Industry with Multimedia Work at the Carrie Furnaces

Homestead, PA (July 31, 2019)—Rivers of Steel Arts is excited to present documentary artist Valery Lyman’s multimedia installation *Breaking Ground* at the Carrie Blast Furnaces for a three-night showing on August 22nd through 24th from 8:00 to 10:30 p.m. at a cost of five dollars per person; union members (any union) are admitted for free.

Lensed through the rise of the oil industry in North Dakota, the *Breaking Ground* exhibition examines the rapid expansion and abandonment as a result of industrial boom and bust cycles that are a recurrent phenomenon in American history—ones that have forged not only our national character and defined our migrations, but are also reflected in Pittsburgh’s industrial heritage.

An immersive meditation on the tale of dreams sought and abandoned, *Breaking Ground* considers the impact on the American psyche and the physical landscape of the country itself.

“Lyman’s *Breaking Ground* exhibition will lend our region’s unique voice to the context of her important work in the Bakken oil fields,” said Chris McGinnis, Director of Rivers of Steel Arts. “The project’s manifestation at the Carrie Blast Furnaces provides something truly special and an experience unlike anything Rivers of Steel Arts has yet featured. Lyman’s timely photographic and sound work reveals a narrative all too familiar to those who have grown up in southwestern Pennsylvania—it captures the hopes and dreams of individuals versus the harshness of industry and the landscape itself. The play of subtle light projection and movement fitted over rusted steel and intricate pipes emphasizes the peculiar stillness of this once-indomitable giant, with a nod to the toils of the workers who gave themselves to the Carrie Furnaces.”

Valery Lyman has an extensive background in documentary film, working for 15 years as a sound recordist, cinematographer, and director. Lyman’s enduring interest in short, impressionistic works, unencumbered by the narrative imperative, landed her at the Sensory Ethnography Lab at Harvard in 2014 to study and work with the renowned filmmaker Lucien Castaing-Taylor. Lyman’s work with photographs and audio separately breaks the time-based visual-aural bind to allow each more textural integrity. This work, including *Breaking Ground*, is heavily contingent on immersion and wandering, and invites the body into the experience of film.

The Carrie Blast Furnaces will be the fifth location where *Breaking Ground* has been exhibited, each iteration adapted to make it site-specific. Previous venues include the Metropolitan Waterworks Museum in Boston, MA; Living Arts of Tulsa in Tulsa, OK; Silo City

in Buffalo, NY; and the Central Utilities Plant, MIT Campus, Cambridge, MA. After its run at the Carrie Blast Furnaces, *Breaking Ground* will travel to the Donovan Mill in Silver City, Nevada.

For more information, visit BreakingGroundExhibit.com or contact Chris McGinnis, Director of Arts, cmcginnis@riversofsteel.com.

About Rivers of Steel

Founded on the principles of heritage development, community partnership, and a reverence for the region's natural and shared resources, Rivers of Steel strengthens the economic and cultural fabric of western Pennsylvania by fostering dynamic initiatives and transformative experiences.

Rivers of Steel showcases the artistry and innovation of our region's industrial and cultural heritage through its historical & 21st-century attractions—offering unique experiences via tours, workshops, exhibitions, festivals, and more. Behind the scenes, Rivers of Steel supports economic revitalization—working at the grassroots level to deepen community partnerships, promote heritage tourism, and preserve local recreational and cultural resources for future generations.

About Rivers of Steel Arts

Rivers of Steel Arts celebrates creative inquiry by crafting opportunities to interpret the region's past, reimagine its future, and explore a sense of place. Through exhibitions, festivals, workshops, tours, and happenings, Rivers of Steel Arts helps individuals connect with their communities in meaningful ways.

About the Carrie Blast Furnaces

Once part of legendary U.S. Steel Homestead Steel Works, the Carrie Blast Furnaces are a vestige of Pittsburgh's 20th-century domination of the steel industry. In 2006, Blast Furnaces #6 & #7 were declared a National Historic Landmark. Today, visitors to the site can connect with the region's industrial and cultural past through a myriad of public tours and programs offered by Rivers of Steel.

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