

Cleveland



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The Flats, a district near downtown Cleveland, was once was the vibrant heart of Midwestern industry and is now in the throes of change: Some of its warehouses and factories have been transformed into nightclubs and restaurants, while homes in adjacent neighborhoods have been replaced by mini-mansions. In "Cleveland," photographer Andrew Borowiec documents the Flats today and evokes the way of life they once embodied. Given the rare opportunity to access one of Cleveland's vast steel mills before it was modernized or destroyed, Borowiec employed his camera to explore the Flats and its monuments of American industry. His striking black and white images reveal the broken power and vulnerability of the once-mighty mill as well as its relation to the surrounding city and its neighborhoods. The commercial buildings, factories, warehouses, and iron bridges that sustained Cleveland's industrial pulse convey a quiet dignity in these compelling photographs, as do the modest frame houses that sheltered those who labored for decades in the Flats. As Clevelanders struggle to redefine themselves as citizens of a twenty-first-century corporate metropolis, the Flats stand as a haunting testament to a time when men worked with their hands and steel was indeed the backbone of our nation. Borowiec's compassionate but unflinchingly honest gaze challenges us to look both at and beyond the images of Cleveland and to meditate on our common history of loss and

rebirth.

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