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Baltimore Museum of Industry Opens New Exhibition by Local Photojournalist J.M Giordano

***Shuttered** Explores the Complicated Legacy of Bethlehem Steel*

BALTIMORE, MD – From 1887 to 2012, the Bethlehem Steel mill at Sparrows Point provided steady if dangerous work for tens of thousands of men and women. Steelmaking was more than just a job to these workers—it was a way of life that built stable communities, strong human bonds, and a unique industrial landscape. With the shuttering of the Point’s blast furnaces, the world inhabited by local steel workers took a number of hits, and the effects continue to reverberate today. The grandson of a steel worker, photographer J.M. Giordano has spent more than 15 years capturing the impact of the mill’s decline and closure on his hometown of Baltimore. *What do you do*, Giordano asks, *when the only lifestyle you’ve ever known—an industrial lifestyle passed down by family, friends, and coworkers for generations—becomes obsolete?*

This question follows visitors as they explore the new exhibition ***Shuttered: Images from the Fall of Bethlehem Steel*** opening May 9 at the Baltimore Museum of Industry. Featuring original photos by Giordano, the exhibition is comprised of four areas—the mill, workers, the union, and the community. When the mill fell into bankruptcy and finally shuttered operations in 2012, it displaced thousands of workers, and many lost the pensions, healthcare, and benefits they had been promised. Much of the labor force never recovered from the loss of the steady and well-paying jobs that the mill once offered, and the photographs of this hopelessness are haunting. “After decades of working in the mills, these people had the carpet pulled out from under them,” says Giordano, who began working on the project in 2004, capturing portraits of retired steelworkers as a reporter for the Dundalk Eagle.

BMI curator Joseph Abel concurs, “As a museum that is focused on work, this exhibition is an opportunity to look at what happens when there is an absence of work, and what impact that has on a community. The loss of steel jobs in Baltimore was devastating, and we continue to see the effects today in the form of long-term joblessness, substance abuse, and economic despair.”

J.M. Giordano is an award-winning photojournalist and co-host of the photojournalism podcast, 10 Frames Per Second. His work has been featured in Playboy, GQ, The Observer New Review Sunday Magazine, The Guardian, The Telegraph, Washington Post, The Baltimore City Paper, i-D Magazine,

Discovery Channel Inc., Rolling-Stone, XLR8R. His work, from the Struggle series is in the permanent collections at the Smithsonian Museum of African American History and the Reginald Lewis Museum. In 2015 he was short-listed for the National Gallery's Outwin Boochever Portrait Prize.

The exhibition was made possible with generous support from Howard Bank and the Delaplaine Foundation.

Images available upon request.

ABOUT THE BMI:

The Baltimore Museum of Industry celebrates Maryland's industrial legacy and shows how innovation fuels ongoing progress. Our exhibitions, educational programs, and collections engage visitors in the stories of the people who built Baltimore and those who shape the region's future.

VISITOR INFORMATION:

The Baltimore Museum of Industry is located at 1415 Key Highway, Baltimore, MD 21230. The BMI is open Tuesday – Sunday, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m., and closed Mondays and some holidays. Free on-site parking is available. Admission prices, general museum information and directions can be found at www.thebmi.org. Follow us on Facebook at [BaltimoreMuseumofIndustry](https://www.facebook.com/BaltimoreMuseumofIndustry) and on Twitter at @BMIatWork.