Edie Fake
UC Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive
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Interviewed by Stephanie Smith
August 27, 2019

Edie Fake
With vibrant abstract architecture, your project for the BAMFF Art Wall addresses the very real housing crisis in the Bay Area for transgender and gender-nonconforming elders. What was the genesis of this work? What specific needs does this encompass?

Edie Fake
The idea for this work began as I was helping a trans elder search for housing out where I live, in the high desert in California near Joshua Tree. It was a real struggle, and they were on the verge of being homeless for quite a while. There were continual issues that we came up against, from income insecurity and limited mobility to discrimination against queer bodies and older bodies. From that experience, I wondered how we are thinking about housing insecurity and limited mobility to discrimination against queer bodies and older bodies. From that experience, I wondered how we are thinking about housing.

Stephanie Smith
With vibrant abstract architecture, your project for the Art Wall speaks to a trans community for me. It speaks to a trans community for me.

Edie Fake
I use the term “ecstatic architecture” to describe my work because it’s a celebratory, imaginative, and inviting. So, the best thing that it can do is to inspire the viewer to get involved in making these kinds of spaces a reality.

Stephanie Smith
I hope the work will activate viewers, whether they’re from an LGBTQ community or not, about housing needs for trans elders. I mean, it’s very basic, the title of the work, but it’s also about approaching the issue in a way that isn’t necessarily built for you with the resourcefulness to make what you need.

Edie Fake
How does this deep space relate to the concepts you’re exploring?

Stephanie Smith
The blackness almost feels like an entry point to allow a viewer to dream deeper into it. There’s this wading, winding rainbow patterning on the facade. And it also has the idea that the building behind it is still undefined. In terms of building actual affordable housing for trans elders in the world, I think there’s an element of “Let’s build it” but also “what is it?”

Diverse audiences will come see this work and engage with the questions and ideas it poses. What do you hope visitors will take away from this experience?

Edie Fake
I hope the work will activate viewers, whether they’re from an LGBTQ community or not, about housing needs for trans elders. I mean, it’s very basic, the title of the work, but it’s also about approaching the issue in a way that isn’t necessarily built for you with the resourcefulness to make what you need.

Stephanie Smith
1. Fake references the following organizations: SAGE, Openhouse, National Resource Center on Elder Housing for Trans Elders.

Excerpted and condensed from my interview with the artist conducted by Stephanie Smith, in the BAMFFA Marketing Communications Manager.

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The Artist Wall features works from Frances Hellman and Warren Breslau.