

Elizabeth P. Fontenot

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Artist Biography

Elizabeth Fontenot is a native of the Southeast Texas region and is currently exploring the relationship of the oil and gas, plastics, and chemical manufacturing industries with the communities who live near these production facilities in her visual work. She completed her Bachelor of Fine Arts degree with an emphasis in Painting from Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge, LA in 2008. Fontenot also holds a Master of Arts degree in Studio Art, earned in 2013 from Lamar University in Beaumont, TX. In May 2022, she completed her Master of Fine Arts degree at Stephen F. Austin State University in Nacogdoches, TX where she taught Printmaking I, Drawing II, and Design I. Fontenot stays engaged with the arts community by teaching workshops and classes as well as making and exhibiting her work.

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HOME/SICK

The content in the HOME/SICK series responds to anecdotal experiences of people living in communities near oil refineries and chemical processing plants and how events at these facilities affect their way of life. Many times, these are communities of color who strive to make their voices and concerns heard while trying to protect their homes and health from harmful toxins. Original and appropriated photographs serve as a foundation for screen printed and collaged elements, creating a layered composite image that is paired with reclaimed windows. The windows are formal elements that function as viewing portals through which the audience takes in a world constructed from memory and shared experience. On a symbolic level, the windows represent the inhabitants and homes located in these *fenceline communities*. This juxtaposition between the domestic realm and allusions to harmful side effects mirrors our collective acknowledgement of the issues raised by communities threatened by chemical and industrial toxins and our resistance to changing cultural behavior so that these problems become resolved.