

tasty tv

BY GEORGE DICKIE

Designers immortalize celebrities in cake on 'Cakealikes'

Those who like their cake-design contests with a side of pop culture will want to check out one of the charter series on the new streaming service Discovery+

In "Cakealikes," three teams of cake artists are tasked with creating realistic, life-size cake replicas of celebrities such as Lady Gaga, Kim Kardashian or RuPaul at different points in their life, so one might be a current-day likeness while another might have a 1990s style. The winner, as determined by Tregaye Fraser ("Tregaye's Way"), Natalie Sideserf ("Texas Cake House"), YouTube performer Kalen Allen and a rotating panel of judges, receives a \$10,000 grand prize and a one-of-a-kind celebrty souvenir.

"There's a lot of ways that you can approach making a realistic human cake," says Sideserf, a cake artist who owns and operates Sideserf Cake Studio in Austin, Texas, "and I like to see how innovative they are. Are they capturing certain textures like a sweater texture versus maybe like a leather texture? And how can they replicate that using an edible material? So I'm definitely looking for those details, and then of course the likeness of the person. I always hope that the cake ends up looking as close to the real person as possible."

And that starts with the materials used. The three teams start with a welded metal frame in the shape of the celebrity's pose and then add platforms as needed. The artists can use any edible material they see fit, like chocolate ganache or buttercream frosting, though each has their advantages and disadvantages.

"A lot of (artists) are using chocolate ganache for the outside in place of buttercream, which is going to be more firm," Sideserf explains. "Some of them don't, and then you never know how that's going to turn out. But a big thing that I use on the outside of my cakes to sculpt them and make them look realistic is modeling chocolate rather than something like marzipan or fondant. Modeling chocolate is more like an edible clay so you can blend it really easily. It's a really, really great material to use, so I notice that some of the teams will use that."

And then, of course, there is some good, old-fashioned outside-the-box thinking, such as one team's idea for recreating the shine on a dress made from a flashy material.

"They actually used oil ...," Sideserf says. "It was a speedy option and when you're competing you have to be very quick. But it also really created an effect that looks super-realistic, like a shiny texture. ... And it was just like, hey, that's edible. It totally works."



Natalie Sideserf

celebrity q&a

Michael Chiklis

BY GEORGE DICKIE

OF 'COYOTE'
ON CBS ALL ACCESS



What kind of research did you do to play a retired U.S. Border Patrol agent in "Coyote"?

We talked to a lot of different people. I mean, we had one of the top investigative journalists from down in Mexico City. ... But we had people and voices from both sides of the border explaining people's points of view, what they were like on the ground. And we had a border patrol agent who was our technical adviser on set and he obviously talked to us about not just the protocols and the practical aspects of things but also the viewpoints, what kind of pressure that they've gone through and the difficulties of the job that they face.

And then we talked to folks in Mexico – over 85 percent of our crew is Mexican, South and Central American and half the writing staff is Mexican, South and Central American. So we were very keen to say, "Look, when we're telling this part of the story or that part of the story, if something doesn't ring true, if something feels false to you, jump on it. Tell us." ... We really also wanted to go down there and be at the border. I mean, it's extraordinary that in 2020, we shot those sequences on the Mexican-American border and had six lanes of the border locked up.

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