Dear You,

This space is for my bio. But since they say this is my space, I would like to use it to talk to you, especially if you are trans. I don’t know what sort of world you will live in. Or that I’ve done enough to make it better. Being a trans woman may still be difficult, and you may be wondering what the hell were women like me thinking? I don’t know—but as you are reading this, I hope these words let you know that you were thought of, considered, and loved. You are beautiful, not because everyone is beautiful, but because being trans, in some ways, makes you even more beautiful—why not play favorites? I know I’ve said things that should not have been said, and made more mistakes than I should. I have so often sold myself short, remained silent when I should have spoken, and given up when I should have continued. But here you are, and this is your world. And in all my mistakes, I think I did a few things right. I want you to know that you can find someone who loves you, even if you mess up. That no one can tell you who you are—not even you. Life is meant to be lived, not explained. And being trans, with all its problems, gives you a better grip on a reality that ultimately holds nothing sacred. Oh, I wish I could give you trust in allies, in family, in the kindness and goodness of others. But I don’t have that kind of trust. I’ve been let down too many times, and God knows I’ve returned the favor. What I can give you, though, is this: even if you cannot trust people, you can believe in them. And your belief—the belief of a trans woman—is such a wonderful, special thing. It’s something we trans women can do like no one else. With everything, everyone out there doubting us, we are given a belief that can create worlds, make what is impossible real. Remember, in everything you do, to believe in yourself. Your belief is your greatest gift and power, and magic. Like nobody else, when you, my future, believe—you love. And I believe in you.

Love,
Ryka

Ryka Aoki
Poet, Musician, Teacher, Human

The TransFigures Poster Project was launched in 2012 by the LGBT Resource Center at the University of California, Riverside. For more information about the project, for additional trans* resources or to download PDF posters for educational use, please visit out.ucr.edu or architect.lgbtcampus.org.