



CHICKEN & EGG PICTURES

CHICKEN & EGG PICTURES ANNOUNCES SELECTED PARTICIPANTS OF INAUGURAL 2015 ACCELERATOR LAB

Ten Non-Fiction Projects Helmed by Women Filmmakers Will Receive Grants & Mentorship

NEW YORK, N.Y. (OCT. 21, 2015) - Chicken & Egg Pictures announced today the selected participants of the inaugural Accelerator Lab. The Accelerator Lab brings together 10 non-fiction projects, helmed by first and second-time filmmakers, as part of the brand new program with the goal of providing the necessary tools and environment for talented filmmakers to tell their stories. The Accelerator Lab is focused on identifying a diverse group of first and second-time women non-fiction filmmakers and supporting their continued success through various means and initiatives.

These include providing financial assistance by way of grants, as well as creative guidance and support through mentorship workshops, industry connections, and peer support. Participants will receive a two-part grant for the production of their film, which they will develop over the course of the 12-18 month program. In addition, mentorship retreats will be held during the program to help build community and build connections within the industry.

"These filmmakers and projects represent a microcosm of the over 200 filmmakers whom Chicken & Egg Pictures has supported over the last ten years. Our goal is to nurture their talent by providing them with a yearlong creative lab program, a grant of up to \$35,000, and a community of women filmmakers who can support and learn from one another," said Jenni Wolfson, Executive Director of Chicken & Egg Pictures. "We selected these women filmmakers because we believe not only that they are going to make artful and compelling films, but because we believe that these stories must be told and will contribute to changing how we see and respond to the world around us."

Recipients will be presented during Chicken & Eggs 10th Anniversary Celebration in New York City on Thursday, October 22 at the Art Directors Club.

For additional information on Chicken & Egg Pictures and The Accelerator Lab please visit: <http://chickeneggpics.org/>.

2015 ACCELERATOR LAB PARTICIPANTS:

A GUANGZHOU LOVE STORY

Director: Kathy Huang

In China, an unprecedented surge in African migration has led to a rise in marriages between Chinese women and African men. *A Guangzhou Love Story* captures the love, heartache, and real life challenges of Afro-Chinese couples attempting to forge a meaningful future together in the face of racism and xenophobia.

BY A THREAD

Director: Rina Castelnuovo & Tamir Elterman

By A Thread tells the story of Muhammad (Muhi), a Palestinian child from Gaza and the son of a Hamas activist wanted by Israel. As a newborn, Muhi is transferred to Israel for treatment of a life-threatening condition. Months turn into years and Muhi, now six, has lived his whole life in the Israeli hospital, confined for security reasons to its premises with his grandfather. The film explores Muhi's contradictory world in which he is treated, raised, and saved by his people's enemy, while his parents remain in Gaza.

By A Thread is an inside look at the Israeli-Palestinian conflict's inescapable presence in everyday life and how it shapes those like Muhi who are unwillingly drawn into it.

CUENCA

Director: Isabel Alcántara

San Miguel de Allende is neatly perched at the draining edge of the aptly named "Cuenca de la Independencia (Watershed of Independence)." While it used to be a town overflowing in natural springs, long-term abuse has left its glorious aquifer practically bone-dry. Tourists flood into the city daily as the native communities that surround it evaporate from Mexico's collective consciousness, their legacy lost forever. *Cuenca* carefully weaves together the personal journeys of a diverse cast of characters who are riding a wave of civil unrest to create a coalition of resistance against unbridled government corruption that places profits ahead of its people. Driven by the necessity to preserve the richness of the culture as well as that of the region's ecosystems, *Cuenca* focuses on the issue at hand and illustrates the steep cost of doing nothing.

FLY AWAY (working title)

Director: LC Cohen

Fly Away is a film about memory, identity, and growing up told through the eyes of seven siblings and their mother. Five of the children are on the autistic spectrum and as they move through adolescence, an event of the past keeps drawing them back. Combining observational footage with a rich archive of home movies and songs, the film is both a detective story and coming-of-age tale, exploring universal themes of memory, family, and love.

LAWYERS

Director: Hikaru Toda

A story of love, family, and rights, *Lawyers* is a snapshot of Japan in transition. Fumi and Kazu are life partners, both professionally and privately: they run the first and only law firm in Japan run by an openly gay couple. From activists to artists to vulnerable young people, we see a cross section of Japanese society pass through Kazu and Fumi's office – their clients and their cases reveal Japan's changing social landscape and the diversity too often overlooked in its homogenous society. *Lawyers* also follows Kazu and Fumi's quest to raise a family. Faced with a legal system that doesn't allow adoption by same sex couples and having seen firsthand the realities of institutionalized youths, they have begun the process of registering as foster parents.

ROLL RED ROLL

Director: Nancy Schwartzman

The story of a football town divided, *Roll Red Roll* is a true crime thriller examining sexual assault in small town America.

RULES TO LIVE BY

Director: Hope Litoff

A reflection on the life and suicide of Ruth Litoff, a successful artist, a pathological liar, and the filmmaker's sister. By looking back on Ruth's incredible highs and lows, bursts of creative genius, depression, secrets, and lies, a vivid portrait will emerge of the brilliant woman the filmmaker is not sure she ever really knew. This is her attempt to understand what happened.

SONS AND DAUGHTERS OF THE INCARCERATED

Director: Denali Tiller

Growing up is full of challenges, but for Tre, Maison, and Giana those challenges reach beyond friends, school, and middle school crushes. *Sons and Daughters of the Incarcerated* tells the story of three children whose fathers are in prison, and a formerly incarcerated mother who is now working to stop the cycle. How do the stigmas of incarceration shape their identities as they struggle to find their places in their communities and the world? What will it take to break the cycle of violence, crime, and imprisonment that pulls so hard on these kids' lives and millions more like them?

THE FEELING OF BEING WATCHED

Director: Assia Boundaoui & Alex Bushe

The Feeling of Being Watched is the first documentary film to tell the story of the War on Terror from the perspective inside an Arab-American neighborhood. Since the early 90's, people in Bridgeview, IL have stayed quiet about their deep suspicions of living under government surveillance, and no one has ever dug into why the surveillance may have begun. Until now. This film brings to light an under-represented human story and follows the filmmakers as they investigate what really happened, and may still be happening, in Bridgeview.

WHOSE STREETS?

Director: Sabaah Jordan & Damon Davis

A first-hand look at how the murder of one teenage boy became the last straw for a community under siege. *Whose Streets?* is a story of love, loss, conflict, and ambition; the journey of everyday people turned freedom fighters, whose lives intertwined with a burgeoning national movement for black liberation. This is a film for all of America – it provides insight into the unseen reality of racism, the role of media in conflict, state-sanctioned violence, and militarized policing – but at its core it is Ferguson's story, it is our cry of "enough is enough".

ABOUT CHICKEN & EGG PICTURES

Chicken & Egg Pictures supports women non-fiction filmmakers whose artful and innovative storytelling catalyzes social change. Chicken & Egg Pictures envisions a world in which women non-fiction filmmakers, representing a range of diverse experiences and backgrounds, are fully supported to realize their artistic goals and vision, build sustainable careers, and achieve parity in all areas of the film industry.

Chicken & Egg Pictures was founded in 2005 by Julie Parker Benello, Wendy Ettinger, and Judith Helfand. Since inception, Chicken & Egg Pictures has awarded over \$4 million in grants and more than 5,200 hours of mentorship to over 200 films. Films supported by Chicken & Egg Pictures have won numerous awards, including Oscars and Emmys; they have shifted deeply entrenched attitudes; and they have changed policy on a variety of critical human rights and social justice issues. For additional information please visit: <http://chickeneggpics.org/>.

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