



CHICKEN & EGG PICTURES

CHICKEN & EGG PICTURES ANNOUNCES THE FIVE FILMMAKERS SELECTED FOR THE SECOND YEAR OF THE BREAKTHROUGH FILMMAKER AWARD

NEW YORK, NY (January 17, 2017) Chicken & Egg Pictures, a leader in supporting women non-fiction filmmakers, announced today the recipients of the second year of the **Breakthrough Filmmaker Award**. The five chosen filmmakers are Geeta Gandbhir (*Prison Dogs*), Kirsten Johnson (*Cameraperson*), Penny Lane (*NUTS!*), Grace Lee (*American Revolutionary: The Evolution of Grace Lee Boggs*), and Dawn Porter (*Trapped*). This award consists of a \$50,000 unrestricted grant and a year-long creative support and mentorship program tailored to each filmmaker's individual goals.

The Chicken & Egg Pictures Breakthrough Filmmaker Award responds to the reality that only a few women non-fiction directors in the U.S. are able to work full-time as independent storytellers. The program recognizes and elevates five experienced women directors with unique voices who are poised to reach new heights and to continue to be strong filmmaker-advocates for urgent issues and creative visions.

“After a successful inaugural year, we welcome this new cohort of talented women into the program,” said Jenni Wolfson, Executive Director of Chicken & Egg Pictures. “Through our investment in these filmmakers, Chicken & Egg Pictures affirms its commitment to supporting women from a diversity of backgrounds, with powerful voices, who are driving change through storytelling. They are creative risk-takers who have made their mark and are ready to push the boundaries even further and continue to bring to the forefront critical issues and stories.”

Recipients of the Chicken & Egg Pictures 2017 Breakthrough Filmmaker Award were chosen through an international, confidential nomination process.

For additional information on Chicken & Egg Pictures and the Breakthrough Filmmaker Award please visit: <http://chickeneggpics.org/programs/#breakthrough-filmmaker-awards>.

2017 BREAKTHROUGH FILMMAKER AWARD RECIPIENTS

Geeta Gandbhir

Geeta began her career in editing. As an editor, she has won two Emmy Awards. Her latest feature documentary, *Prison Dogs*, which she co-directed with Perri Peltz, premiered at the 2016 Tribeca Film Festival. Her film with Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy, *A Journey of A Thousand Miles: Peacekeepers*, premiered at the 2015 Toronto International Film Festival; won the Jury award for Best Documentary at The Bentonville Film Festival; and won the Humanitarian Award at the River Run Film Festival. She co-created and was a director on a series about race for The New York Times Op-Docs entitled *The Conversation*, which won an Online Journalism Award. Her

film with Ms. Peltz, *Remembering the Artist, Robert De Niro, Sr.*, for HBO, premiered at the 2014 Sundance Film Festival. She is currently finishing a feature documentary on a bomb disposal unit in Pakistan.

Kirsten Johnson

Drawing on footage she shot for a myriad of documentary directors over the last 25 years, Kirsten Johnson's *Cameraperson* premiered at the 2016 Sundance Film Festival; won the Cinema Eye Awards for Best Documentary, Best Editing, Best Cinematography; and the National Board of Review Freedom of Expression Award. Widely reviewed as one of the top films of 2016, it received awards at nine international festivals, was nominated for the Gotham Independent Film Awards, the IDA Documentary Awards, the Critics' Choice Documentary Awards, the Independent Spirit Awards, and is currently shortlisted for an Academy Award. Johnson's short film, *The Above*, was nominated for 2016 Best Short Film Award by the IDA. Her interest in image-making, collaboration with documentary filmmakers, and the ethical dilemmas faced by camerapeople around the world is ongoing.

Penny Lane

Penny Lane's most recent feature, *NUTS!*, premiered at the 2016 Sundance Film Festival where it won a Special Jury Prize for Editing. Her debut feature documentary, *Our Nixon*, premiered at the 2013 Rotterdam International Film Festival, had its North American premiere at SXSW, won the Ken Burns Award for Best of the Festival at the Ann Arbor Film Festival, and was selected as the closing night film at New Directors/New Films. Lane was named one of Filmmaker Magazine's "25 New Faces of Independent Film" in 2012 and "Most Badass" at the Iowa City Documentary Film Festival in 2009. Film festival screenings span the independent and experimental film worlds, including Sundance, Rotterdam, Images, IMPAKT, Hot Docs, Full Frame, CPH:DOX, and Oberhausen. She is currently a professor in the Department of Art and Art History at Colgate University.

Grace Lee

Grace Lee is a Los Angeles-based filmmaker whose work explores questions of history, race, politics, and community. She directed *American Revolutionary: The Evolution of Grace Lee Boggs*, which won six festival audience awards and aired on the POV documentary series. Other directing credits include *The Grace Lee Project*, *Janeane From Des Moines*, the Emmy-nominated *Makers: Women and Politics*, and *Off the Menu: Asian America*. Lee's work has been supported by the Ford Foundation, Chicken & Egg Pictures, Center for Asian American Media, Film Independent, and the Sundance Institute, where she was a Women at Sundance Fellow. She recently co-founded the Asian American Documentary Network and is currently in production on *Ktown92*, an interactive documentary that explores the 25th anniversary of the Los Angeles riots through the eyes of the greater Koreatown community.

Dawn Porter

Dawn Porter is a documentary filmmaker whose first feature, *Gideon's Army*, won the Sundance Film Festival Editing Award in 2013 and later broadcast on HBO. The film was nominated for an Independent Spirit Award and an Emmy. Dawn's other films have appeared on PBS, OVN and the Discovery Channel. In 2015, Porter interviewed President Barack Obama for *Rise: The Promise of My Brother's Keeper*. Dawn's latest feature project, *Trapped*, explores the impact of laws regulating abortion clinics in the South. *Trapped* premiered at the 2016 Sundance Film Festival, where it won the Special Jury Award for Social Impact Filmmaking. In 2016, Porter was

named to *Variety's* “10 Documakers to Watch” and received the Robert and Anne Drew Award for Documentary Excellence at DOC NYC’s Visionaries Tribute. She also recently created a short film for *The New Yorker Presents*, a digital series executive produced by Academy Award-winning filmmaker Alex Gibney.

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 \$5.2 million in grants and provided thousands of hours of mentorship and creative support to over 220 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/>.

PRESS CONTACT

Jenni Wolfson | jenni@chickeneggpics.org | (646) 460-3776
Sarah Anderson | sarah@chickeneggpics.org | (313) 590-2765