



CHICKEN & EGG PICTURES NAMES 2021 CHICKEN & EGG AWARD RECIPIENTS

NEW YORK, NY (February 8, 2021)—Chicken & Egg Pictures, a leader in supporting women and gender non-conforming filmmakers, announced today their newest slate of awardees for the **Chicken & Egg Award**, which recognizes and elevates experienced documentary makers. Six acclaimed women artists from around the world will receive a \$50,000 grant and participate in a year-long mentorship program designed to take them to the next stages of their careers.

“At a time when women are being pushed out of the workforce in record numbers, sustaining their careers in our documentary film community is vitally important,” said Jenni Wolfson, Executive Director. “Because of our holistic approach at Chicken & Egg Pictures, the Award grant is unrestricted—not tied to their film projects but to their professional growth and wellbeing. We are so honored to welcome six new, talented filmmakers into the program and to be their unwavering advocates in the industry.”

Originally a US-based award, this year’s international **Chicken & Egg Award** cohort also includes filmmakers based in Sweden, Mexico, and Germany. The six Award recipients use their art to document some of today’s most urgent issues, while also experimenting with the limits of form and storytelling. Their previous films explore the lives of working mothers at a 24-hour daycare center (**Loira Limbal**), residents of a small Salvadoran village as they rebuild after trauma (**Tatiana Huezo**), and the relationship between a Russian opera singer and Abkhazian sports minister as they navigate their nationalities (**Elwira Niewiera**). Other projects take on corruption and injustice with the stories of undocumented activists (**Cristina Ibarra**), victims of China’s one-child policy (**Jialing Zhang**), and women incarcerated in post-Taliban Afghanistan (**Maryam Ebrahimi**).

Over the last six years, the Chicken & Egg Award has elevated 32 women filmmakers with unique voices, pushing them to reach new heights in their careers. In addition to a \$50,000 unrestricted cash award and a year-long mentorship program, Awardees receive dedicated support from the Chicken & Egg Pictures creative team geared toward the development of new documentary projects. Projects that have been in development during the filmmakers’ Award years include: Natalia Almada’s **Users** (US Documentary Directing Award at Sundance 2021); Kirsten Johnson’s **Dick Johnson is Dead** (Netflix 2020); Ramona Diaz’s **A Thousand Cuts** (2021 Gotham Independent Film Award for Best Documentary, Winner-Tie); Julia Reichert’s **American Factory**, co-directed with Steve Bognar (2020 Academy Award for Best Documentary); and Yoruba Richen’s **How It Feels to Be Free** (American Masters on PBS 2021).

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Maryam Ebrahimi (IRAN, SWEDEN)

Emmy Award-winning producer and director Maryam Ebrahimi's credits include *No Burqas Behind Bars* (2012) about an Afghan women's prison and *Stronger Than a Bullet* (2017) about war photographer Saeid Sadeghi. Maryam was born in Tehran, where she studied art and art theory at University of Tehran and continued her education in Sweden. As a filmmaker, she has a deep knowledge of visual storytelling and extensive experience in location shooting.

Tatiana Huezo (MEXICO, EL SALVADOR)

Mexican-Salvadoran filmmaker Tatiana Huezo gained an international reputation with her debut feature *The Tiniest Place* (2011), which screened at more than 80 festivals. Her work has been acknowledged by The Mexican Academy of Film Arts and Sciences with four Ariel Awards, among them Best Documentary and Best Director for *Tempestad* (2016), which also represented Mexico at the Academy Awards and the Goya Awards.

Cristina Ibarra (MEXICO, UNITED STATES)

Cristina Ibarra is a Chicana border crosser and award-winning independent filmmaker with roots along the Texas-Mexico border. Her credits include *The Infiltrators* (2019), a hybrid docu-thriller which received the NEXT Audience and Innovator Awards at Sundance; and *Las Marthas* (2014), called "a striking alternative portrait of border life" by the The New York Times and awarded Best US Latinx Film by Cinema Tropical.

Loira Limbal (PUERTO RICO, UNITED STATES)

Born in Puerto Rico to Dominican parents, Loira Limbal is an Afro-Latina filmmaker interested in telling nuanced and revelatory stories about working class women of color. In addition to being the Senior Vice President of Programs at Firelight Media, Limbal is a Sundance Institute Momentum Fellow, DOC NYC Documentary New Leader, and a former Rockwood JustFilms Fellow. Limbal's credits include *Estilo Hip Hop* (2009) and *Through the Night* (2020), a New York Times Critics' Pick and selection for POV's 2021 season.

Elwira Niewiera (GERMANY, POLAND)

Elwira Niewiera is the director of award-winning documentary films *Domino Effect* (2014) and *The Prince and the Dybbuk* (2017). Her work focuses on social and cultural transformations in Eastern Europe; she has won many international awards, including the Golden Dove at DOK Leipzig, Best Documentary on Cinema at the Venice International Film Festival, and the Polish Academy Award for Best Documentary.

Jialing Zhang (CHINA)

Jialing Zhang is an Emmy Award-nominated filmmaker based in Massachusetts. She produced *In the Same Breath* (Sundance Film Festival 2021), co-directed and produced *One Child Nation* (Sundance Grand Jury Prize winner 2019), and *Complicit* (Human Rights Watch Film Festival 2017). Before becoming a filmmaker, she worked in journalism in Beijing for six years. She has a master's degree from NYU's School of Journalism.

Note: The parentheses next to the directors' names indicate the filmmakers' nationalities and/or countries of origin.

ABOUT CHICKEN & EGG PICTURES

Chicken & Egg Pictures supports women and gender non-conforming nonfiction filmmakers whose artful and innovative storytelling catalyzes social change. We envision an inclusive media industry in which women filmmakers, representing a range of experiences and backgrounds, are fully supported to realize their artistic goals, and to build sustainable and fulfilling careers.

Chicken & Egg Pictures was founded in 2005 by Julie Parker Benello, Wendy Ettinger, and Judith Helfand. Since inception, the organization has awarded over \$8 million in grants and thousands of hours of creative mentorship to over 320 filmmakers. For additional information please visit: <http://chickeneggpics.org/>.

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