



CHICKEN & EGG PICTURES AWARDS \$50,000 IN IMPACT FUNDING TO FIVE FEATURE FILMS DIRECTED BY WOMEN

NEW YORK, NY (JUNE 29, 2021)—Chicken & Egg Pictures, a leader in supporting women and gender nonconforming filmmakers, announced today the newest grantees of their Project: Hatched program for feature-length documentary impact. The filmmaking teams behind five projects will receive tailored mentorship and **\$10,000** towards their film's **impact campaigns**.

The first round of Project: Hatched 2021 granted films tell stories of drug detoxification and radical community care (***Dope is Death***); New York's uneven criminal justice system, navigated by two marginalized communities (***Down a Dark Stairwell***); education as a way to heal from the harm of the prison industrial complex (***Since I Been Down***); Black women organizers (***Unapologetic***); and agricultural labor in Central California (***Fruits of Labor***) with a coming-of-age lens.

"Each of these films tells a story about racial, economic, or workers justice in the United States and marks a critical moment in our social history," said Program Director Lucila Moctezuma. *"Their directors are uniquely positioned to create change and propel us toward a more equitable future, and Chicken & Egg Pictures is excited to support them with funding and programmatic support to further the impact of these important films."*

These five directors are visionary women at different junctures of their careers, representing a range of expertises and backgrounds. *Since I Been Down* director Gilda Sheppard is a founder and faculty at Freedom Education for Puget Sound, an organization offering college courses for incarcerated women; and two emerging filmmakers in the cohort (Ashley O'Shay and Emily Cohen Ibañez) bravely made their directorial feature debut in a year of uncertainty and hardship.

Past participants of the Project: Hatched program have used their films to amplify and move the dial on critical social issues: *Coded Bias* director Shalini Kantayya's impact plans fought against the advancement of racist facial recognition technology with the Universal Declaration of Data Rights as Human Rights; and in conjunction with her film's PBS broadcast, *Belly of the Beast* director Erika Cohn launched an action campaign calling for reparations for victims of forced sterilization in California.

Project: Hatched 2021 is generously supported by The New York Community Trust.

The Project: Hatched 2021 participants are:

Dope is Death

Director: Mia Donovan (CANADA)

Producer: Bob Moore

Dope Is Death tells the story of how radical politics and direct community action birthed the first acupuncture drug detoxification program in America.

Down a Dark Stairwell

Director: Ursula Liang (UNITED STATES)

Producer: Rajal Pitroda

A Chinese-American police officer kills an unarmed Black man in a dark stairwell of a NYC housing project, igniting a complicated fight for accountability and justice.

Fruits of Labor

Director: Emily Cohen Ibañez (UNITED STATES, COLOMBIA)

Producer: Emily Cohen Ibañez

A teenage farmworker dreams of graduating high school, when ICE raids in her community threaten to separate her family and force her to become her family's breadwinner.

Since I Been Down

Director: Gilda Sheppard (UNITED STATES)

Producers: Saman Maydani, June Nho Ivers

Producer and Lead Impact Strategist: Bonnie Benjamin-Phariss

Impact Team: YEA! Impact

In America's backyard, a community held captive by policies targeting gangs and drugs sacrifices their youth for a false sense of justice and safety. Nearly forty years later, a true path to justice and healing is led from inside their prison walls.

Unapologetic

Director: Ashley O'Shay (UNITED STATES)

Producers: Ashley O'Shay, Morgan Elise Johnson

Impact Producer: Naeema Jamilah Torres

Meet Janaé and Bella, two fierce abolitionists whose upbringing and experiences shape their activism and views on Black liberation.

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 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 340 filmmakers. For additional information please visit: <http://chickeneggpics.org/>.

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