



Media Release:

## Global Fund for Women Launches Artist Changemaker Program

For immediate release: October 4, 2021

Global Fund for Women is launching an Artist Changemaker Program with two inaugural artists: Kearra Amaya Gopee from Trinidad & Tobago, and Lujain Jo from Iraq. Lujain Jo is an Iraqi filmmaker, activist and performance artist currently living in Lebanon and Kearra Amaya Gopee is the Denise Allen Emerging Artist, awarded annually to an emerging artist working at the intersection of art and gender justice in any medium. More information about both is below.

The Artist Changemaker Program is part of Global Fund for Women's commitment to support movements and recognizes that media, art, and culture are cornerstones of gender justice movements. The program will support eight artists annually with a one-time unrestricted financial award to each artist, and provide them with platforms to amplify their work in movements with a focus on artists based in the Global South, women artists, LGBTQI+ people, people of color and/or artists from a marginalized community.

Global Fund for Women has supported grassroots gender justice organizations working at the intersection of art and activism for nearly 30 years. Since 1994, Global Fund for Women has supported more than 200 organizations in 80 countries worldwide who use art as a strategy for social change. In 2014, Global Fund for Women merged with the International Museum of Women, launching award-winning creative online advocacy campaigns including most recently *Fundamental: Gender Justice. No Exceptions*, an Emmy-nominated series of docu-shorts featuring gender justice movement leaders in five countries.

"We are committed to support and work with artists in their movements to counter the injustice and inequity in the world," said Latanya Mapp Frett, President and CEO of Global Fund for Women. "Art can be used to make the invisible visible, and start expansive, inclusive conversations bringing perspectives that are often missing from mainstream media and culture."

"Unrestricted awards like this one can be quite beneficial," said Kearra Amaya Gopee. "It requires an organization to understand that art is not made in a vacuum, and that sometimes the most helpful thing one can do for an artist is not only tending to the creation of their work but also their material needs."

Global Fund for Women created the program recognizing that art has been central to feminist movements. Performance as protest, poetry as care, and visuals as archives of resistance have been critical tools of feminists to organize, advocate, and build.

The program is shaped, curated, and led by [an advisory council](#) that consists of ten feminist creatives, artists, and activists from across the globe. Two members of Global Fund for Women's Adolescent Girls Advisory Council, Polina Vyzhak and Awequawe Mda help align the program with the needs and priorities of young activists and artists.

### **About the Inaugural Cohort of Artist Changemakers**

Kearra Amaya Gopee is an anti-disciplinary visual artist from Carapichaima, Kairi, living and working in Los Angeles, CA. Their work attempts to consider the myriad qualities of violence present in Black, queer and/or Caribbean communities as an observer/participant. "Through this



act, I reflect, celebrate and posit us with new questions that might encourage healing and/or dissent," said Kearra Amaya Gopee.

As part of Lujain Jo's strong interest in the manifestations of movement in life, her work includes collaborations with musicians and dancers such as Michaela DePrince and Khansa. She has also worked with multiple media platforms and organizations from Megaphone News and Anti-Racism-Movement to Khateera and Amnesty International on issues related to social movements, migrant workers, police brutality, and feminism. "As a woman who was brought up in a strict household, I was also taught that women should assume certain roles and not question the authority that enforces these roles. I never understood why I can't have the same dreams and ambitions as men in society," said Lujain Jo. "I fought for my freedom and was able to work in film and be behind the camera, which made me feel responsible to use every tool I have to challenge the authorities that control our bodies, our minds and our ability to dream."

### **About Global Fund for Women**

Global Fund for Women envisions a world in which movements for gender justice have transformed power and privilege for a few into equity and equality for all. As a feminist fund, we offer flexible support to a diverse group of partners—more than 5,000 groups across 175 countries so far—to create meaningful change that will last beyond our lifetimes. To learn more about our work, visit [www.globalfundforwomen.org](http://www.globalfundforwomen.org) or follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), or [Instagram](#). Donate to support Global Fund for Women's work [here](#).

*Available for interview:*

- Kearra Amaya Gopee (artist)
- Lujain Jo (artist)
- Latanya Mapp Frett (President and CEO of Global Fund for Women)
- [Artist Changemaker Advisory Council members](#)

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