



## Bing Liu to Return Home as Featured Guest at 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual 815HORTS

*Oscar Nominee Joins 815HORTS Festival Line-Up Alongside Acclaimed Jury, Illinois Film Office*

**ROCKFORD, Ill., October 5, 2023:** Academy Award nominated filmmaker and Rockford native **Bing Liu** will return home to join as a featured guest at the second annual 815HORTS – A 5HORT Film Festival. Set for Saturday, December 2, 2023, at the RPL Nordlof Center, 815HORTS, Presented by the City of Rockford + Rockford Film Office, will feature Liu during the intermission “5HORT Talk”, an interview series moderated by **Peter Hawley**, director of the Illinois Film Office.

Best known for directing “Minding the Gap”—which was nominated for Best Feature Documentary at the 91st Academy Awards and won a Peabody—Liu was also a segment director on “America to Me”, which premiered on Starz and was hailed as one of the best TV shows of the year. Liu also co-directed “All These Sons” with Josh Altman, which won Best Cinematography at the 2021 Tribeca Film Festival and the Maysles Award at the Denver International Film Festival.

“I’m excited to return to the city that first nurtured my artistic worldview and get involved in a conversation about the future of film in the Rockford region,” Liu said. “I’ve seen firsthand that life in this part of the country is a deeply rich and complicated experience and I’m grateful that folks like Nick (Povalitis), Jerry (LaBuy) and so many others are providing a space to reflect on how we might translate some of these stories into cinema.”

Liu’s short documentary “What the Hands Do” had its world premiere at the 2023 Camden International Film Festival. He has been supported by Kartemquin’s Diverse Voices in Documentary, a Film Independent Fellowship and Truer Than Fiction Award, the Garrett Scott Development Grant, the United States Artists fellowship, the SFFILM Westridge Fellowship, the Sundance Screenwriter and Director Labs, the Sundance Institute Asian American Fellowship, and the Concordia Fellowship. Liu is currently developing several fiction and non-fiction projects.

The 815HORTS guestlist also features an award-winning jury including: **Dena Altamore**, founder of SoundLight Entertainment; **Don Hatton**, founder of Dashford Media and Rockford Film Office; and **Jerry LaBuy**, chair of Rock Valley College Mass Communication and executive director of Mosaic World Film Festival.

In addition to a full slate of industry guests, 815HORTS has expanded this year to include educational content, awards for Best 5HORT and Fan Favorite, and film screenings including the 2023 Sundance Film Festival Short Film Tour. Doors open December 2 at 5 p.m., followed by 815HORTS screenings at 6 p.m., Hawley and Liu’s 5HORT Talk at 7:30 p.m., Sundance Shorts Tour at 8 p.m., and the 5HORT Awards at 9:45 p.m.

2023 attendees can also experience an offsite workshop (limited access, details to follow), filmmaker networking, entertainment, and snacks and refreshments. Follow [www.815HORTS.com](http://www.815HORTS.com), the [2023 815HORTS Facebook Event Page](#) and Plus Seven Company social ([Facebook](#) / [Instagram](#) / [LinkedIn](#)) for updates.

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*Page 2 of 2, Bing Liu to Return Home as Featured Guest at 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual 815HORTS*

Plus Seven Company would like to thank the following partners for supporting 815HORTS:

- **Presenting Partners:** City of Rockford + Rockford Film Office
- **Premier Partner:** Illinois Film Office
- **In-Kind Partners:** RPL Nordlof Center, City Stage Studios, District Bar & Grill
- **Nonprofit Partner:** Rockford Public Library Foundation

**CALL FOR 5HORTS REMINDER – SHORT FILM SUBMISSIONS DUE OCTOBER 27!**

Local, national and international filmmakers are invited to submit short films to be considered for screening at the second annual 815HORTS. Filmmakers interested in submitting a short film for review must make submissions via the 815HORTS FilmFreeway page at <https://filmfreeway.com/815HORTS> **by Friday, October 27, 2023**. 815HORTS submission terms and conditions, festival information and ticket information is available on the FilmFreeway page. Filmmakers of selected films will be notified by Plus Seven Company in November.

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