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## **CHICAGO FILM OFFICE NAMES DANIEL NEARING AS FIRST “FILMMAKER IN RESIDENCE,” PART OF CITY’S INDEPENDENT FILM INITIATIVE**

The Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE) is pleased to announce Chicago filmmaker Daniel Nearing as the inaugural “Filmmaker in Residence” at the Chicago Film Office. Nearing was selected for both his filmmaking experience and his commitment to sharing Chicago stories through independent film. As part of the year-long residency, Nearing will film his project *Sister Carrie* – the third and final installment of a Chicago trilogy directed by Nearing and an adaptation of a landmark feminist Chicago novel of the same name.

“Daniel has been an integral part of Chicago's independent film community and holds a remarkable track record as a filmmaker,” said Mark Kelly, DCASE Commissioner. “We are excited to offer this first-ever Filmmaker in Residence opportunity to facilitate the telling of diverse, dynamic and compelling Chicago stories.”

The Independent Film Initiative (IFI) – a first-of-its-kind program of the Chicago Film Office – is designed to attract, retain, promote and provide career-enhancing opportunities for local film industry professionals and media makers. The program aims to grow the number of locally-produced independent features, documentaries, short films and web series and to make Chicago a place where films and series are not only made but where they are made by Chicagoans.

A centerpiece of the IFI, the Filmmaker in Residence is a one-year commitment by the Chicago Film Office with a \$10,000 cash grant plus a package of industry discounts on equipment rentals and permits, meeting space and other incentives to assist in the completion of an original work. The filmmaker also receives assistance from an advisory team of established industry professionals, technical consultation with digital imaging, audio and lighting specialists AbelCine, and camera packages from Panavision. In turn, Nearing will mentor five “production apprentices” through a paid training program that provides hands-on production experience and strategic career development to emerging producers who currently lack industry access and resources.

*Sister Carrie* is a love story that takes place in 1909 Chicago, Montreal and Paris. *Sister Carrie* is co-produced by Herman Wilkins and will include women in the key roles of cinematographer, line producer, co-editor and story consultant. With a budget around \$200,000, the project is set for completion at the end of 2017. Development of the *Sister Carrie* screenplay was supported by fellowships through the Guggenheim Foundation and The MacDowell Colony.

The first film of Nearing’s series *Chicago Heights* (2009) was named by Roger Ebert to his last list of Best Art Films in 2010. The film received wide distribution through its award-winning screenings at national and international festivals, as well as through Netflix. The second film *Hogtown* (2014) has been called “the most original film about Chicago made in Chicago to date” by the Chicago Sun-Times. The Chicago Reader named it both the best film about Chicago made in 2015 and the best film made in

the city in 2014. *Hogtown* won Best Picture prizes at the Los Angeles Black Film Festival, International Black Film Festival of Nashville and the 30<sup>th</sup> Black International Cinema Berlin Festival.

Nearing was recently named one of Chicago's top 50 in film by Newcity magazine, and runs the production company 9/23 Films. He has worked as producer, director, writer and editor for numerous films on several international networks. His documentary have ranged in subject from juvenile homicide for CBC, the longest bridge in the world over ice-forming waters for Discovery Channel, Russians playing in the National Hockey League for The Sports Network and a look at the stagecraft of some of the world's finest writers on Bravo. He moved from documentaries to dramatic projects and founded 9/23 Films in 2008 and currently coordinates an MFA program in Independent Filmmaking at Governors State University, in the South Chicago area.

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#### Chicago Film Office

The Chicago Film Office, part of the Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events, leads the City's efforts to attract and enhance the production of feature films, television series, commercials, documentaries and all forms of local screen entertainment. For filmmakers, it is a one-stop liaison for all City of Chicago production needs, including permits, City services and logistical support. For more information, visit [chicagofilmoffice.us](http://chicagofilmoffice.us).

#### Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events

The Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE) is dedicated to enriching Chicago's artistic vitality and cultural vibrancy. This includes fostering the development of Chicago's non-profit arts sector, independent working artists and for-profit arts businesses; providing a framework to guide the City's future cultural and economic growth, via the 2012 Chicago Cultural Plan; marketing the City's cultural assets to a worldwide audience; and presenting high-quality, free and affordable cultural programs for residents and visitors. For more information, visit [cityofchicago.org/dccase](http://cityofchicago.org/dccase).