

In Proximity
Episode 14: Pete Nicks and Kris Bowers
Final Transcript

[Music/Old Radio Sounds by Ken Nana]

[VOICEOVER]

Paola Mardo: You're listening to P-R-O-X.

[VOICEOVER ENDS]

Pete Nicks: I was reading something. I think it was like—oh, it's on IMDB. Have you seen it?

Kris Bowers: Oh, no, I haven't, actually.

Pete Nicks: Upcoming projects, Anthem, of which you're not just a composer, but a producer, it reads, "It centers on Kris Bowers and Dahi as they venture out on a musical journey across the U.S. experimenting to reimagine the National Anthem." And I'm thinking to myself, "Is that how I pitched this to Kris?"

[LAUGHTER]

[In Proximity Theme Music by Ludwig Göransson]

[VOICEOVER]

Paola Mardo: One thing we're really excited about with our show, In Proximity, is the chance to share our new projects with you, our listeners. On this episode we're honored to feature Anthem, an upcoming documentary streaming on Hulu on June 28th, produced by Proximity and our partners, and directed by our head of nonfiction Pete Nicks.

Anthem features acclaimed composer Kris Bowers, and Grammy-winning producer Dahi as they take a musical journey traveling across America to make a new sound, inspired by what our country's national anthem might be if written in today's time.

Pete Nicks is an Emmy award-winning filmmaker whose works include The Waiting Room, The Force, Homeroom, and the upcoming Stephen Curry: Underrated.

Kris Bowers is an award-winning pianist, filmmaker, and composer, known for his thought-provoking playing style, creating genre-defying film compositions that pay homage to his classical and jazz roots. His remarkable body of work includes Dear White People, Space Jam: A New Legacy, When They See Us, Queen Charlotte: A Bridgerton Story, and Marvel's Secret Invasion. Later this year, we'll hear his work on the highly anticipated The Color Purple Musical, directed by past guest of the pod, Blitz Bazawule. Definitely check out Blitz's episode with our founder, Ryan Coogler if you haven't already.

On Anthem, Kris is not only a composer and producer, he stars in the film, and is in front of the camera, filmed by Pete on their musical adventure. So for this episode, Pete and Kris met up at a recording studio in Los Angeles, California to reflect on their collaboration on Anthem and on their experiences making personal documentaries.

[VOICEOVER ENDS]

Pete Nicks: Hey, my name's Peter Nicks. I'm a producer and director. I'm also the head of non-fiction at Proximity Media. Right now, we're here at Silent Zoo Studios, which is where we filmed the interviews for our film *Anthem*.

Kris Bowers: Yeah. And I'm Kris Bowers, and I'm primarily a composer and pianist, also dabbling a bit in directing and producing.

Pete Nicks: We got to go from, like, dabbling to, like, full-on.

Kris Bowers: Yeah. I feel like I need my own—maybe at least, what, like 10 years under my belt. Then maybe I'll feel like, oh, that's what I do.

Pete Nicks: I'm kind of conflicted because we don't want to lose the brilliance that you have to offer us in the music space, though.

Kris Bowers: But they'll always be combined. At least, what I'm going to focus on will always have a strong focal point in the sound and music.

Pete Nicks: You made a film, a documentary, not just a film but a documentary. Was that your first film, or had you done stuff before that?

Kris Bowers: It's definitely my first, like, public film. *A Concerto Is a Conversation* is a film that follows me writing this violin concerto. And as I'm dealing with imposter syndrome, I have a conversation with my grandfather to ask him questions about his own life and his journey to get advice from him about how what he did in his life might help inform my own journey.

Pete Nicks: What were your motivations? Like, why did you want to tell that story?

Kris Bowers: You know, it's funny because it came about in a pretty organic, like, kismet way. Like, basically, Ben Proudfoot, my co-director, he had originally approached me about making a documentary about me writing this concerto. Like he was originally tasked by the L.A. Phil to do a couple of short docs on LA-based music stories. And he, us being friends, saw that I was doing this show or this piece at Disney Hall, and was like, "Oh, that might be interesting. I know you haven't done that before. Do you mind if we just follow you with the camera, essentially?" And it just so—it turned out that the day that we were meeting to have our first conversation about it, I was coming from this event that was celebrating my grandfather where they were naming the block, the retail square that he owns in downtown L.A. They were naming it after him, like the Bowers Retail Square.

And it's like, you know, 9:00 in the morning. And I show up late to my own studio, and I'm dressed up. And Ben was like, "What's going on? Like, why do you look like this?" essentially. And I just kind of talked about why I was late and this event. And then the more we talked about me and my life in my career, the more that I was like, I mean, I keep having to point back to the fact that I wouldn't be here without my grandfather making all these sacrifices and doing this—this incredible journey. He hitchhiked here when he was 17. He didn't have anything when he got here. And he built this—a lot of our family wealth and foundation himself and with my grandmother and them as a family. And so the more I talked about it, at some point in that

conversation, Ben was like, "This is the movie." Like, "Can we bring your grandfather in? Can we talk to him? Like, what do you think about that? And would you mind interviewing him?"

And I even got more excited at that point just because before I felt, like, a bit more self-conscious about what is this documentary going to be? And then as soon as it felt like, oh, I can have a conversation with my grandfather, and I knew Ben's work as a filmmaker. And so I was like, for nothing else, if I just have this conversation with my grandfather captured in the way that I know it's going to look based on the other films he makes, that's going to be, like, something I'm going to treasure forever that I'll share with my kids and my grandkids, hopefully. And so, for me, that was like the win, was just, like, I get to record a conversation with my grandfather.

And when we got to my grandfather's house, Ben was, like, "Just ask him, like, what's on your heart? Like, just, you know, talk about whatever." And for me, at that time, I was dealing with so much imposter syndrome that felt like it was the loudest it had ever been in my mind up until that point. And in my mind, I was like, I know my grandfather, being this, you know, barely high school-educated Black man from the South that moved here, didn't know anybody, and built a business and raised a family, must have dealt with moments of imposter syndrome. And so let me ask him about that. And the conversation that came from it was so amazing and enlightening just in terms of, like, the mental toughness that he had in order to survive the time he lived in.

Pete Nicks: That—you know, that's the thing. Part of me wishes I could have seen that movie before I talked to my dad because my process—when I made my film it was the first time that I really spoke to my parents about what happened to me and the problems that I had in college and with drugs and getting arrested and dealing with that and the shame that that brings to a family. But it was the first time that I ever asked my dad point blank, "Are you an alcoholic?"

And there's so much more to his story than just his drinking. In fact, most of what people know about my dad are, he was a clinical psychologist and incredibly well-respected. What he had to navigate to get to where he was, I can only imagine. And we didn't really find out until much later, the imposter syndrome, the things that really pulled at him are probably those things that led him to self-medicate, you know?

Kris Bowers: Sure.

Pete Nicks: And his father, my grandfather, you know, came from the South, Charleston, South Carolina, Gullah. We were sort of, you know, part of the Gullah community there and ancestors of slaves from that region. And a lot of those stories were kind of locked in and never explored. And there's one interview I have of my grandfather before he passed away.

Kris Bowers: Oh, wow.

Pete Nicks: And, you know, when I saw your piece, I did have that pull of regret that, you know, it's so rare that we have an opportunity for our generations to have conversations with each other. And when you do, when you set the context right, the power of that is undeniable, and you get this sort of range of storytelling. So I—you know, I think that that's part of why your—your film touched me so deeply.

Kris Bowers: Oh, I appreciate that.

Pete Nicks: Yeah.

Kris Bowers: Do you feel like with your film—like, what struck me is the vulnerability and the honesty of like the conversation you're having about the experience that you had gone through. And to be at a point where you're not looking for a way to either vindicate your actions or to, like, point to some sort of reason—like, you definitely give context as far as like binge drinking and colleges, and, like, colleges providing alcohol and, like, some of the generational things that maybe led to it. But just in terms of, like—you know, the thing I've always loved about you as a filmmaker is your unbiased approach to very difficult topics. And I imagine there must have been a lot of difficulty with being unbiased with your own personal life. Like, how did you approach that?

Pete Nicks: My mind's going in like three or four different directions right now. You know, I had my own sort of imposter syndrome, right? So sort of being this mixed-race kid who was adopted into a Black family and trying to find my own identity within that. And I think it's going to be a lifelong process for me, trying to understand that. That's why part of the reason why I think I was drawn to storytelling was it was a way for me to be able to express that.

But my family never—there was never a framework for being able to sort of engage these difficult questions, you know, to acknowledge my father's story, which was never really sort of talked about. I found out after he passed away that, you know, when he was a young man, he had to step into the gutter when white people approached. That this is what he was—this is what he was taught, you know, and that sort of becomes part of your identity, yourself, that narrative that you tell yourself. And those self-destructive tendencies become kind of burned into the DNA. They talk about sort of like epigenetics and sort of generational trauma.

But because I had such a diverse experience being a mixed-race kid adopted into a very African American family, going to mostly white private schools, then getting in trouble, going to prison and getting out of prison, falling in love with a refugee from Laos, you know, having mixed-race kids who are white, Black, African American, it allowed me to sort of see life from all these different angles. And it kind of set me up perfectly for the way we met, which was *The Force*, which was a film exploring the impact of policing on our communities, particularly African American communities.

It allowed me to step into that film in a way radically different than, say, my partner Ryan Coogler would be able to approach it because we just—I was never thrown down on the ground, you know, by a cop. I was never followed around in a store. You know, and I think I was called "nigger" on a handful of occasions, but that was usually when I was with my other family, you know? I only knew these stories through my grandfather telling the stories or through my father telling the stories, but those stories weren't often told, you know? And so, in a weird way, my experience allows me this whatever you want to call it, objectivity or dispassionate position to observe and to try to make sense of the world that as I see it around me. And that is sort of a big part of the DNA of me as a filmmaker.

Kris Bowers: Do you think you would ever do anything as personal as *The Wolf* in the future?

Pete Nicks: Well, we're adapting *The Wolf* into a fiction piece, which is loosely based around the time that I spent in federal prison in the early '90s. So I—I am continually trying to understand and make sense of my own story, my family's story, the story of our country. I like to say I was born into the story of race in America in 1968. You know, my birth mother was white. My birth father was Black. Her family threatened to—I don't know if threatened to disown her is

too strong, but there was tension in 1968 around a white woman, for sure, marrying a Black man and having a child. And so she made the difficult decision to give me up for adoption.

So that's always been the sort of origin and genesis of my story, and it's part and parcel of what we struggle with increasingly as a country today with matters of race and identity and how we fit together as a country and our histories. There's so much tension now around this notion of critical race theory, of sort of looking back and trying to allow our history to inform our present. And it's really no accident that led me to sort of meet you when we were making *The Force* and then ultimately when this idea of taking a look at the national anthem came up, like, you were the first person—

Kris Bowers: Appreciate that.

Pete Nicks:—obviously, I thought of because, in some ways, you're—to me, like, you're—I don't know what the word is. You're not my doppelganger, but you're some—you complement me in a certain way, just the same way that Ryan compliments me. Like, we—we're all Black artists, but we have different life experience. And I learned this when I was at Howard. Like, being Black doesn't mean one thing, doesn't mean one way of talking, doesn't mean one way of dressing. It doesn't mean one story that you come from.

[MUSIC FADES IN]

And that's always—that's increasingly fascinated me, and something that I feel like that we need as a country. We need these stories to be told in diverse, surprising ways.

[KN 9 to 5 by Ludwig Göransson]

Pete Nicks: I was just going through the email, and I saw that we have this air date for *Anthem*.

Kris Bowers: Yeah.

Pete Nicks: And it's like, oh, man, it's starting to get real.

[LAUGHTER]

Not that it's not real, but it's been a journey. And we completed the film a while ago, and there's been this sort of gap as we prepare to take it out to the world. And I was reading something. I think it was, like—oh, it's on IMDB. Have you seen it?

Kris Bowers: Oh, no, I haven't, actually.

Pete Nicks: Upcoming projects, *Anthem*, of which you're not just a composer, but a producer, it reads, "It centers on Kris Bowers and Dahi as they venture out on a musical journey across the U.S. experimenting to reimagine the National Anthem." And I'm thinking to myself, "Is that how I pitched this to Kris?"

[LAUGHTER]

Kris Bowers: Sure.

Pete Nicks: I'm not totally sure. So do you remember, like, when I first pitched this to you?

Kris Bowers: Yeah. It was either 2019, I think, maybe 2018.

Pete Nicks: I think 2018, actually.

Kris Bowers: Okay, yeah. I remember you—

Pete Nicks: Yeah, the beginning beginning.

Kris Bowers: Yeah, I remember you came to my studio, and we talked about it. And I feel like it was, you know, in the beginning, such a vague idea of exploring the national anthem and how—I guess, essentially, how relevant it is to today's time or how—whether or not there's room to explore the idea of our relationship with it at this point. And in the beginning, I think, like we were just talking about, kind of like what you were saying about almost being like creative doppelgangers or, like, you know, internal doppelgangers, I feel like so much of my draw to you as a filmmaker is this ability to handle very complex situations in an unbiased way. And so I think, for me, you mentioning the national anthem—like, if anybody else brought me a project about the national anthem, I probably would've said no from the jump.

Pete Nicks: Oh, man.

Kris Bowers: And I think that for you to say it, I was like, okay, well, I know—especially after seeing *The Force* and seeing how you handled such a—a hot topic of the Oakland Police Department in such an elegant way, I was like, okay, well, I feel safe as a collaborator exploring this. And also just, for me, like we've been talking about, I'm so fascinated by the gray area of life. Like, I really get frustrated when people present things in black-and-white ways. And so, to explore that, I really wanted to do that in this kind of gray area. And I think, early on, we just kind of talked about the idea of reimagining a new anthem for today's time based on—

Pete Nicks: I think it was the reimagining the anthem, but in the beginning, there was a little bit more of, like, telling the story of *The Star-Spangled Banner*.

Kris Bowers: Right.

Pete Nicks: I think the initial pitch, if I'm remembering right, is that we were going to delve into the history of *The Star-Spangled Banner*. And then we found this, like—I don't know at what point we found out this little factoid that the tune was not an—it was a British tune. Like, the melody on which *The Star-Spangled Banner* was built was a British—not pub song. There's been some debate about this.

Kris Bowers: Sure.

Pete Nicks: Parlor song or a gentleman's club tune—it was not an American tune, which led me to be thinking about, well, what is—what is an American melody? What is the American voice? And then, if we could both tell the story of the history of that song in an engaging way and then, along the—the journey of doing that, compose a new anthem, how cool would that be? And I was just imagining you creating this new anthem.

Kris Bowers: Yeah.

Pete Nicks: And that, just that was like, I'm sold. Can we come up with a new anthem, and how do we do that?

Kris Bowers: Yeah, for sure. And now that you say that, I definitely remember you almost, like, breaking it down into these, like, three sections. It was, like, archival and then, like, interviews with people talking about, you know, performing the anthem, and then the third part being about the exploration of this new piece of music.

Pete Nicks: That's it. And then you were always going to create a new anthem.

Kris Bowers: Yeah.

Pete Nicks: And the idea was that we were going to pair you with, like, a producer.

Kris Bowers: Right.

Pete Nicks: But it—we were imagining, like, the third act was going to be you in the studio creating this song.

Kris Bowers: Right, right.

Pete Nicks: And then, at some point, and I honestly do not know when this emerged, we started rewinding that a little bit to say you can't just jump into the studio and do that. You need to do some research. You need to sort of absorb your own version of the American music story. How do you do that? Well, you go—you're a musician. Like—

Kris Bowers: Play.

Pete Nicks: Let's go play with some musicians.

Kris Bowers: Exactly, yeah.

Pete Nicks: And that led to, like, "Oh, okay. Well, we could film here, here, here, Detroit. You know, we could film in New Orleans. We could film in Nashville." And then I started having a vision of a Winnebago and, like, a road trip.

Kris Bowers: Right. That's right.

[LAUGHTER]

Pete Nicks: I love road trips. I've done two of them. But not necessarily you as, like, a central character in the film.

Kris Bowers: Right, sure.

Pete Nicks: And I think that that's really the change that was most significant, you and eventually Dahi kind of as central characters. And I know that, at some point, the reality of that must've presented itself to you. And I'm just curious, what's that like from your perspective? Because I felt like—I always talk about the responsibility of being a documentary filmmaker, and what you have to do is you have to get people's trust. And you have to say, "Hey, you know, will you be in my documentary? And if so, you have to sign this waiver."

But just because you sign the waiver doesn't mean you can run roughshod over people. Like you have to recognize and always have your antenna tuned to if someone's uncomfortable. And if you shoot an incredible scene that would win you an Academy Award, what's your responsibility to that. If that person's uncomfortable with that scene, would you pull that scene from the movie? Would you change the movie if someone was uncomfortable? And I kind of had this uneasy sense that, man, this isn't necessarily what you signed up for but that the train was—had left the station and that it was, like, really hard for you to stop the train and say, "Hey, whoa, whoa, like, what's going on here?" Did you ever have that—

Kris Bowers: Yeah, definitely.

Pete Nicks:—feeling? Because you never really came to me. I mean, you did in some subtle ways. I picked up on it. But you never came to me and said, "Hey, Pete, we need to stop this film. This isn't what I signed up for." Or, at the very least, "We need to have a serious conversation." Did you have that conversation with other people?

Kris Bowers: Yeah. I—I think a form of that conversation because I think what I always came back to, like I mentioned before, was my trust in you as a filmmaker. And I think that, like, I tend to—I think the older I get, the more I try not to do this, but most of my life, I've, like, jumped first and made the calculations later, essentially. You know, even going back to my film, *A Concerto Is a Conversation*, I was like, "Yeah, I'll write a violin concerto." And then, after I said yes, I was like, "Oh, man, I have no idea how to do this, and, like, what do I do?"

But I feel like I keep doing that because it—every time I—I make it through those situations, I grow so much as an artist. And also, I feel like it doesn't give me a chance to be—to deal with the fear until I'm in a situation where I have to really grapple with that fear in a real way. You know, I think if I had made the calculation early on when you first came to me, that fear maybe would've come up in a way that would've made me said—you know, say no. And I think that, like, being in this, like, you know, slowly boiling water, essentially, as far as, like, the shifting aspect of the story had that fear continue to come up and had—I didn't have to, like, confront it. And I'm also the type of person that's not going to immediately come to you and be like, "You know what, this is not what we talked about, and, like, I can't do this anymore."

Pete Nicks: Right. Right.

Kris Bowers: Especially because, you know, I feel like we're—I really feel like, as collaborators, we're teammates, right?

Pete Nicks: Yeah.

Kris Bowers: So, like, I want to do whatever I can to make sure that we're all feeling as comfortable as possible. And I also feel like to walk away from something just based on fear is not a great way to live. And so, for me, I always was just like, okay I feel—I did have my conversations with my manager that were just like, "I'm feeling this feeling of discomfort. Can you help me, like, talk through it, essentially?" And I think what I always came back to was, like, "I trust Pete." And I also really appreciate the fact that, like—you know, the type of filmmaker you are, I didn't feel like I was going to be put in some sort of situation where I was going to regret how I was presented or regret how you decided to frame the conversation, and now my voice is being lent toward this, like—this version of the story that I don't agree with in terms of, like, how you're presenting, you know, how I feel about the anthem or how one should feel about

the anthem, you know? And then, also, like you mentioned, I feel like—I'm glad you felt it was subtle because I felt like I was, like, almost, like, on a weekly basis, like, "Man, you know what, Pete, actually, I'm having these other feelings and these other fears that are coming up, and, like, you know, what can we do about this? What are we going to do about this?" And I really appreciated that every conversation—you, as the filmmaker, are dealing with opinions from producers and your own vision and, like—and this story that's developing and coming into its own over time. And so to also allow me that voice to articulate, like—or that space to articulate any sort of nervousness I was feeling or any sort of, like, reasoning why I felt that way, you know, I think was also another thing that contributed to me feeling like it was worth continuing.

Pete Nicks: I'm not going to lie. Like, there was a lot of pressure, and there were a lot of people who did say no that we went to, producers that we wanted to pair you with who were afraid of the reaction that might occur in the wake of a film calling into question the national anthem or a film experimenting with creating a new anthem. Like, what's the reaction going to be for that?

Kris Bowers: Right.

Pete Nicks: And so I'm deeply grateful for your trust and for your ability to navigate that. And obviously we found a producer, Dahi, to pair with you that really, truly created something magical. And then we brought on some artists, Ruby Amanfu, Charity Bowden, Joy Harjo, who's the first Native American poet laureate, and Cecilia Peña-Govea. And I was being asked by each of them, I think beyond just you as a collaborator, to—they were putting their trust in me. They were stepping into and expressing perspectives that didn't always align with each other.

If we're going to talk about the American story and we're going to talk about the idea of an anthem, like, how do you frame that conversation? And in what ways do we frame it? It was challenging and difficult, and I hope some of that comes out in the film, that these are not easy conversations but that we have to sort of put each other in these rooms with each other to have these conversations in a way that's authentic to the complexity and difficulty of it but also, in some way, honoring the power of an expressive voice even if it involves people expressing that voice in—in different ways or contradictory ways.

Kris Bowers: Yeah. Do you feel like you ever had a moment where you felt like, especially before there was so much support, where you were like, "Man, maybe this is not a good idea. Maybe this is something I should just let go of?"

Pete Nicks: You know, I was frustrated by some of the people who said no. You know, we were talking to a lot of some A-list artists, and there was an idea in the beginning that, oh, maybe we—it's kind of like a "We Are the World" kind of situation. And so we did do some outreach to some bigger names. And at times, it felt either transactional the response that we got—we knew it was going to be difficult in that sense,—or that there was a concern over the sort of political nature of the project and that people—do people really want to be part of a project that's going to potentially be divisive or get attacked?

I personally love that. I love the urgency of it. I love the messiness. I love—and it sort of goes back to sort of me making my own personal story, which I—I—you know, I made *The Wolf*, that was my first film. I figured if I'm going to spend a career pointing the camera and the microphone at other people, I may as well start with myself. And sort of asking my father

point-blank, "Are you an alcoholic?" really is the essence of that. It's a difficult question. The answer may not be what I want or need, but there's something healing about that, just in the asking of the question.

And I felt that this project kind of represented that for me. Like, there are questions that we need to be asking about our history, about our story, about our voice. And I also just deeply respect the creation of beauty, of music, of film, of art. I just love it. I think it takes us to an emotional place and it allows us to see ourselves and our communities and our country in new ways. And that's what I felt that this project could do. And that's why I felt it was worth pushing and trying to continue to ask people to trust and step into difficult spaces. And I'm grateful that everybody was able to do that to the end.

[Prox Recs Theme by Ken Nana with Caution to the Wind by Ludwig Göransson]

Pete Nicks: Okay. So now we're at our Prox Recs segment which is where we, you know, introduce our listeners to ideas, inspirations, things that we feel have moved us or are inspirations for us in our art. What would you say? Would you keep it in the music category?

Kris Bowers: It's funny. I was just thinking about that. I feel like the first thing that actually came to mind is not music-related per se, but it's Carl Jung's "A Man and His Symbols." I feel like—I've just been reading a lot of Carl Jung, and I feel like what we've been talking about just in terms of, like, exploring these aspects of our own histories or other parts of ourselves and our psyche, and, like, representing that through art, I think for me, it's been really helpful to read more about how that's even operating in my own mind so I can then, like, see what I can pull from emotionally and artistically.

And then I'll say on the music side, just to keep it with Anthem, you know, being really inspired by the fact that the Woodstock performance of—by Jimi Hendrix of The Star-Spangled Banner is not his only version of that, that that was something he was workshopping and doing on a regular basis. And to hear more than just that version of it, I think, just shows how much he was trying to put into that rendition of the piece.

Pete Nicks: I think, you know, when you're telling your own story in music, it's not as evident because there's no—I mean, I guess sometimes there's lyrics, but for orchestral stuff or sort of jazz—

Kris Bowers: Yeah, instrumental.

Pete Nicks:—it's—it's—yeah, it's less common.

Kris Bowers: Yeah.

Pete Nicks: I think, for me, you know, my recommendations circle around the idea of memoir just because that's how I started my career. And I—I was told about this book called Art of the Memoir by Mary Carr, and that book talks about sort of that process of reflecting on your own story. And also, the process of reflecting on your own story through a process of memoir is powerful, and you don't have to be a professional filmmaker or a musician to do that. You can journal. You can write privately. You can, you know, have a conversation with your grandfather.

[LAUGHTER]

Kris Bowers: Sure.

Pete Nicks: You know, you can, you don't have to make a film about it. And I think that these engagements or these mindful explorations can do a lot towards helping us heal, helping us inspire ourselves to reach our full potential. And that's what we hope that Anthem will do, is potentially inspire people to think about—either create their own anthem or just to think about, you know, the idea of not just an anthem for the country but an anthem for self or an anthem for family or an anthem for community because these are the sort of frameworks that we use to move through difficult moments and to stay optimistic and to ultimately point toward the future.

Kris Bowers: Yeah, for sure.

Pete Nicks: Well, Kris, thanks for coming out and talking about a whole variety of things, including Anthem.

Kris Bowers: Yeah, thank you, Pete. Thanks for the conversation.

[In Proximity Theme Music by Ludwig Göransson]

[VOICEOVER]

Paola Mardo: In Proximity is a production of Proximity Media. If you like the show, be sure to follow, rate, and review it on Apple Podcasts, Spotify, or your favorite podcast app, and tell your friends and loved ones to do the same. Sharing and reviewing really helps other people find our show, so please if you have a moment, write us a review and share a link with a friend.

Anthem is directed by Pete Nicks and is produced by Ryan Coogler and executive produced by Zinzi Coogler and Sev Ohanian, with our partners at Onyx Collective and This Machine. *Anthem* streams on Hulu on June 28th.

Learn more and read transcripts of this episode and others on ProximityMedia.com. Don't forget to follow @ProximityMedia on Instagram, Twitter, and TikTok.

The show is produced by me, Paola Mardo. Executive Producers are Ryan Coogler, Zinzi Coogler, Sev Ohanian, and me. Our theme song and additional music is composed by Ludwig Göransson. Ken Nana is our Sound Designer and Mix Engineer. Polina Cherezova is our Production Assistant. Audio editing for this episode is by Cameron Kell.

Special thanks to the whole Proximity Media team, Courtney Archerd, and to you for listening to In Proximity.

We're taking next week off for the holiday, and we'll be back after that. So be sure to watch Anthem, and see you next time.

[VOICEOVER ENDS]

[MUSIC STOPS]

Kris Bowers: It's definitely my first, like, public film. I made my own short film a few years before that. It's actually how I met Ben Proudfoot, and it was kind of, like, you know, putting

myself through film school, essentially. Like, I wrote a little short script and filmed the short and saw it and never showed it to anybody.

[LAUGHTER]

Pete Nicks: Wait. Was that the project that you were working on when we met?

Kris Bowers: Yeah, exactly.

Pete Nicks: Oh, wow.

Kris Bowers: It never—never saw the light of day.

Pete Nicks: Where is this? How do we see this?

Kris Bowers: It's on my private Vimeo page.

Pete Nicks: Oh, well, you need to forward that.

Kris Bowers: Yeah.

[LAUGHTER]

Kris Bowers: I'll send you a link. Yeah.