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MILWAUKEE FILM TO TAKE OVER OPERATIONS OF HISTORIC DOWNER THEATRE THIS SPRING

Milwaukee, WI - March 5, 2024 - In a landmark move for the local film and cultural community, Milwaukee Film announced today that it will officially take over operations of the iconic Downer Theatre, starting with the 2024 Milwaukee Film Festival on April 12, followed by regular cinema operations resuming on April 26.

This strategic expansion is a testament to Milwaukee Film's commitment to enriching the community's cultural landscape and preserving the legacy of one of the city's oldest and most beloved cinemas. "The Downer Theatre, with its storied past and charm, has been a cornerstone of Milwaukee's cinematic and cultural scene since its opening in 1915. Milwaukee Film and its board are thrilled to bring life back to the theater and cinema back to the neighborhood. Our mission has always been to make cinematic experiences possible for as many people as possible, and expanding our footprint in this way is a key next step in doing that," said Susan Mikulay, chair of Milwaukee Film's board of directors.

"This is a story of what dedicated supporters can do," said Anne Reed, Milwaukee Film's Interim CEO. "By stepping forward to support Milwaukee Film, our community is saving another historic cinema, and all the moments of story and connection that can happen there again."

The 2024 Milwaukee Film Festival presented by Associated Bank, April 11-25, will include screenings at the Downer Theatre, Milwaukee Film's Oriental Theatre, and two other local theaters, the Avalon Theater and the Times Cinema. It promises to be a celebration of cinematic excellence, featuring a diverse lineup of local, national, and international films. Following the Festival, the Downer Theatre will reopen to the public on April 26, offering a year-round program of first-run independent, foreign, and documentary films, curated by Milwaukee Film's expert programming team.

"Our being able to reopen the Downer this spring is a significant occasion for our organization as well as for the neighborhood," noted Cara Ogburn, Artistic Director at Milwaukee Film. "When the Downer closed last year it meant that many films could not show on screens in our city. Adding these two screens

to our footprint will allow us to better serve our community with high quality films year-round,” she concluded.

The organization extends its gratitude to the community, its members, and supporters for their ongoing support, which has made this exciting new venture possible. For those continuing to look for ways to help please visit www.savethedowner.com Milwaukee Film looks forward to welcoming audiences back to the Downer Theatre for the festival and many years of outstanding film programming to come.

For more information about the 2024 Milwaukee Film Festival and upcoming cinema operations at the Downer Theatre, please visit www.mkefilm.org

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About Milwaukee Film

Milwaukee Film is a nonprofit arts organization dedicated to entertaining, educating, and engaging our community through cinematic experiences, with a vision to make Milwaukee a center for film culture. Milwaukee Film operates the magnificent Oriental Theatre, and the iconic Downer Theatre, two historic cinemas committed to high-quality and accessible film and education programming. The 16th annual Milwaukee Film Festival will be held April 11 - April 25, 2024. For more information or to become a member visit www.mkefilm.org