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## **JONATHAN JACKSON LEAVES MILWAUKEE FILM AFTER 16 YEARS**

*Anne Reed selected to serve as Interim CEO*

MILWAUKEE – TUESDAY, JANUARY 9: Jonathan Jackson, President & CEO of Milwaukee Film, today announced he has resigned from the organization he has led for nearly sixteen years.

“It’s a bittersweet decision” Jackson said. “Milwaukee Film has been a huge part of my life and I’m extremely grateful to have had the opportunity to catalyze the power of film and help build this vital Milwaukee institution from scratch. It’s been an incredible journey and I couldn’t be more thankful to the many mentors, supporters, and colleagues that have worked tirelessly by my side to bring this dream to fruition. However, it is now time for me to begin a new chapter.”

Anne Reed, former President & CEO of the Wisconsin Humane Society, has been hired as Milwaukee Film’s Interim CEO and will lead the organization and navigate day-to-day elements of a leadership transition, while a national search for a new President & CEO begins.

Milwaukee Film Board Chair, Susan F. Mikulay, stated, “We, too, are bittersweet with Jonathan’s decision to move on, but we are incredibly grateful for everything he has done to take Milwaukee Film from its infancy to one of the most recognized and well-respected film organizations in the country.”

Jackson, who will now be recognized as Founding Artistic Director, began his tenure with Milwaukee Film as Artistic Director when the organization was founded in 2008 by Chris Abele along with Bill and Carmen Haberman of the Richard and Ethel Herzfeld Foundation. In 2009 Jackson was appointed Executive Director. In 2023, Milwaukee Film celebrated its 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Film Festival, fully returning in-person to large audiences, visiting guests, and sell-out screenings.

The organization is also known for its year-round educational offerings for teachers and students as well as a widely respected professional development curriculum, awards programming, and funding opportunities for Milwaukee Filmmakers.

Included among Jackson’s many accomplishments is the landmark acquisition and restoration of the Oriental Theatre. Additionally, he demonstrated extraordinary leadership during the COVID-19 crisis, when the organization was forced to shut down in person activities for 17 months and pivoted to all-virtual cinema offerings and a virtual film festival.

“He’s been with us since the start and he deserves a lot of credit for getting us to where we are today,” said Founder, Chris Abele. “We wish him well in his new adventures and thank him for his service and hard work.”

Jackson indicates he and his family intend to stay in the Milwaukee area. “Milwaukee is home,” he said. “We have no intention of leaving this terrific community, and I look forward to soon sharing the plans for what is next.”

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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, a historic cinema palace 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 [mkefilm.org](https://mkefilm.org).

### **About Jonathan Jackson**

Jonathan Jackson is a cat lover and die-hard Cleveland Browns fan who emigrated from Cleveland to Milwaukee to study film at the internationally renowned UWM Film Department. Art is life for Jonathan and he loves sharing his passion for film, music, photography, and literature with others in hope of facilitating human connection and sparking inspiration. Jonathan lives in the village of Shorewood with his wife, daughter, son, and cat. The entire family is anxiously awaiting the arrival of two betta fish.

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