

# MILWAUKEE FILM

2023 Annual Report



MILWAUKEE  
FILM





# CHANGE FOR THE BETTER

The cinema industry in 2023 made signs of a rebound from the impacts of the pandemic, though that recovery is not yet complete and dual strikes in the latter half of the year created new headwinds. Summer saw the vibrant “Barbenheimer” phenomenon, proving that audiences will come back to cinemas (and to see film on celluloid at the Oriental Theatre). Our spring hybrid festival felt some of the energy of pre-pandemic years and our audiences returned across our programs in numbers not seen since prior to the pandemic.

The 2023 Milwaukee Film Festival kicked off the summer festival season, welcoming **29,618** in-cinema attendees, growth more than **10,000** attendees over 2022. Cultures & Communities Festival in the fall brought the summer festivities to an end and welcomed over **3,000** attendees to films and events throughout the city.

But it was the cinema that really shined - exceeding our projections and meeting 2019’s high water mark for our operation of the Oriental Theatre year-round. While the recovery of our industry may be on-going, 2023 showed that cinema-going is not dead.



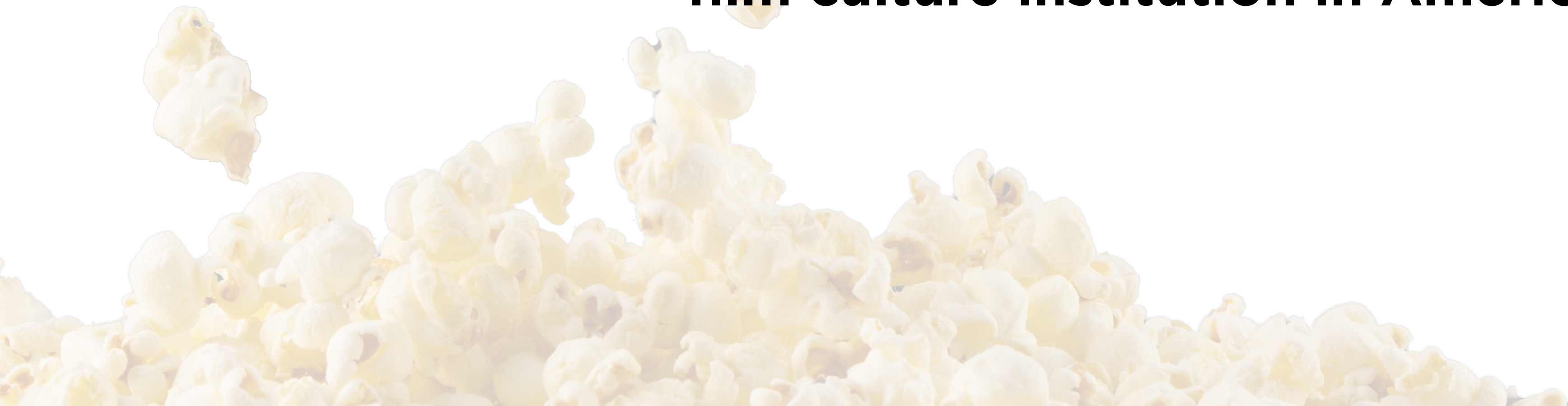


## Milwaukee Film Mission

**Create world-class cinematic experiences that convene our diverse communities and catalyze positive change in Milwaukee.**

## Milwaukee Film Vision

**Become the most dynamic, well rounded film culture institution in America.**



# BUILDING BACK AUDIENCES

## Oriental Theatre

With the pandemic further behind us, work worked to strength our year-round cinema operations. In addition to a successful film festival, we also:

- Completed installation of a 1925 Wurlitzer Pipe Organ, which had its premiere performance in November
- Completed a successful theatrical run of *OPPENHEIMER* on 70mm
- Produced two large-scale events in partnership with Boswell Books, bringing Stacey Abrams and Ann Patchett to our audiences
- With audience growth, new offerings, and improved efficiencies, we increased our concessions sales by 67% over the previous year

With news that the Downer Theatre closed its doors in the fall, we began exploring the potential of bringing it on as a venue, while continuously working to improve the cinema-going experience for our patrons and foster stronger community connections in East Side Milwaukee.



**Downer Theatre**  
*Coming Soon...*



## Restored Wurlitzer Pipe Organ

Played live scores to accompany various silent films such as *Safety Last!*



## Oppenheimer On 70mm

Oppenheimer ranks #1 for a MKE Film opening weekend box office performance.

## Stacey Abrams Book Tour

Oriental Theatre crowd listens to Abrams discuss her novel, *Rogue Justice: A Thriller*

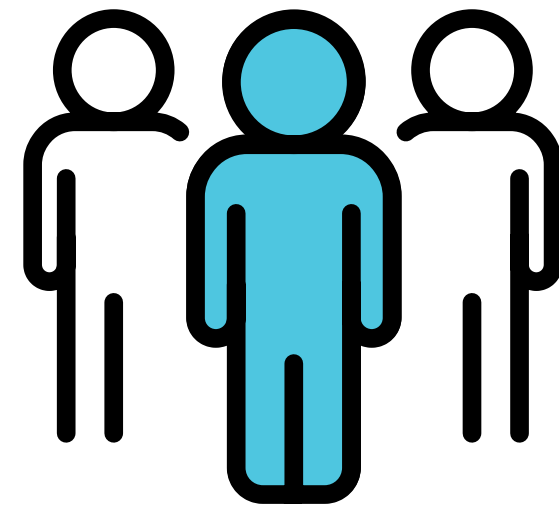




# COMMUNITY VIBRANCY AROUND OUR FESTIVAL

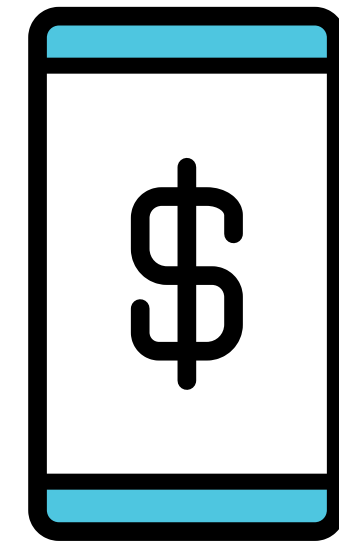
## 2023 Milwaukee Film Festival

After 2023's return to the cinema with our hybrid 2022 Festival, we again, offered a 15-day hybrid event in spring of 2023 that had palpable energy from the community around our in-cinema events. Our world premiere Opening Night Film, *Mom & Dad's Nipple Factory*, took home the Allan H. (Bud) and Suzanne L. Selig Audience Award for Best Feature Film.



# 31,657

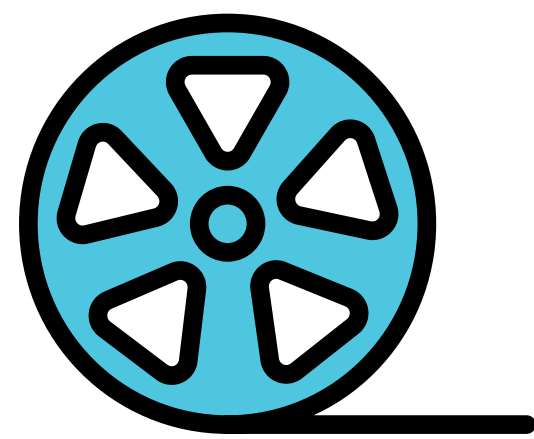
**Attendees** at virtual and  
in-person Festival films and events



# \$ 113,893

**Reel Impact Campaign**  
Total amount raised





**283**

**Feature-length & short film titles**  
screened during the Festival



**75**

**Filmmakers and industry guests**  
in attendance from outside Milwaukee





## FOREGROUNDING DIVERSITY

### 2023 Cultures & Communities Festival

Guided by principles of cultural inclusivity, the 2023 Cultures & Communities Festival (October 5 - 12), generously presented by the Brewers, was an eight-day convergence of films, speakers, and events designed to convene multicultural, intergenerational audiences across southeastern Wisconsin in a celebration of culture in all forms.

The film line-up, featuring films such as the festival's Opening Night presentation of *The League*, directed by Milwaukee Film multi-alum Sam Pollard, *Fancy Dance* (dir. Erica Tremblay), presented, fittingly, on Indigenous People's Day, and the documentary *Lady Buds* (dir. Chris Russo) offered a tightly curated range of thirteen conversation-starting film programs selected collaboratively by Milwaukee Film's programming staff that explore various identities and cultural practices as well as issues which matter to intersectional communities in Milwaukee and beyond.





## 13 FILMS

Screened at the  
Oriental Theatre

## 40 EVENTS

And other cultural  
programs

## DONATIONS

A total of **\$100,976**  
raised during the 2023  
Cultures & Communities  
Match Campaign with  
**\$50,000** of those funds  
being generously  
matched by Laurie and  
Byron Vielehr. Thank  
you for the community  
support!



**MILWAUKEE**  
**FILM**





# BROADENING HORIZONS

## Education & Artist Services Programs

At Milwaukee Film, our mission extends far beyond just screening movies; we strive to cultivate a deeper connection with our audience and enrich our community. Our education programs are at the heart of this effort. We engage with a diverse range of participants, from curious 8-year-olds to passionate 80-year-olds, encompassing film professionals, dedicated fans, educators, and students alike. Through these initiatives, we aim to create a lasting and meaningful impact on the community we serve.

**“Participating in Milwaukee Film’s Teen Programs has actually been life changing, I’ve met new friends and people, which helped me get out of my shell a bit hehe. I’m 100% going again my senior year”**

**- Melissa Sanchez-Perez**

Take 1 and Teen Screen  
2023 Student





**7,453 Students** engaged in free Education Screenings and Reel Talks

**7 Participants** in the 2023 Melinda Krei Educator Fellowship to foster media literacy in the classroom

**15 Teens** in our Teen Screen Selection Committee

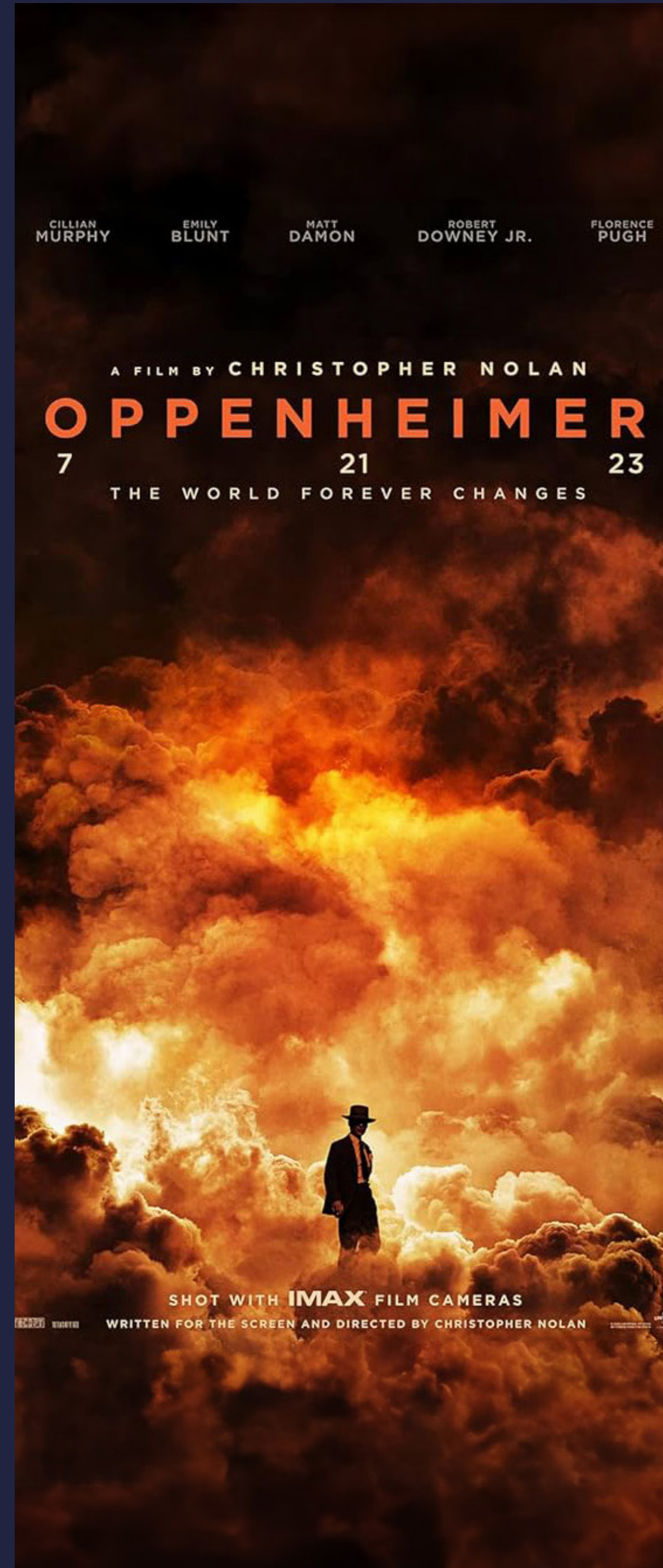
**\$100,000 cash** awarded to 11 projects as part of the 2023 Brico Forward Fund

**5 New cohort members** joining our 2022-24 Focus Finder Accelerator

**30 Youth-made films** shown in two Take 1: Teen Filmmaking Lab Showcases at the Oriental Theatre and our MFF2023 Milwaukee Youth Show







# OUR FILMS, OUR FUTURE

## 2023 Highlights

With 2022 being our first full year of operation after the pandemic, we screened films that included Oscar winners, the Rocky Horror Picture Show, and everything in between. We loved showing them all, but as we reflect on the year, here are a few that stand out.

- *Oppenheimer (on 70mm film)*
- *Barbie*
- *Anatomy of a Fall*
- *Spider-Man: Across the Spider-Verse*
- *The newly restored Stop Making Sense*
- *Killers of the Flower Moon*



# LOOKING FORWARD

## 2024 Preview

For 2024, we'll continue to feature the best in film, including a few that we already know are coming our way.

- *Poor Things*
- *Hundred of Beavers*
- *Dune: Part Two* (on 70mm film)
- *Challengers*
- *Wildcat* with Ethan Hawke in attendance
- *Furiosa: A Mad Max Saga*





# MILWAUKEE FILM BOARD OF DIRECTORS

## OFFICERS

Susan F. Mikulay  
*Board Chair*

Ken Krei  
*Past Board Chair*

Joseph A. Rock  
*Treasurer*

Lacey Sadoff  
*Secretary*

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

John P. Bania

Alexander P. Fraser

Patti Keating Kahn

Tracey L. Klein

Ken Krei

Marianne Lubar

Susan F. Mikulay

Joseph A. Rock

Lacey Sadoff

Kimberly R. Walker

## MEMBERS

Chris Abele

Donna Baumgartner

Jeff Fitzsimmons

Carmen Haberman

Katie Heil

Jasmine M. Johnson

Grant Killoran

Michael J. Koss Jr.

Jeffrey Kurz

Alexander Lasry

Steve Laughlin

Emilia Layden

Michael R. Lovell

Joan Lubar

Steve Mech

Mark Mone

Heidi Evita Moore

John Ridley

James E. Stoll

Julia Taylor

Marilka Vélez

Gail Yabuki





# **THANK YOU** to our members & philanthropic partners who have gone above and beyond to support Milwaukee Film's mission.

## **LUMINARY (\$100,000+)**

Donna and Donald Baumgartner  
Herzfeld Foundation  
Marianne and Sheldon Lubar  
Susan and Robert Mikulay  
Cory and Michelle Nettles  
Allan H. (Bud) & Suzanne L. Selig

## **VISIONARY (\$50,000+)**

Argosy Foundation  
Bader Philanthropies, Inc  
The Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation  
Kathryn Murphy Burke  
Heil Family Foundation  
Herb Kohl Philanthropies  
National Endowment for the Arts  
Ruth Foundation for the Arts  
Lacey Sadoff Foundation  
David and Julia Uihlein  
The Yabuki Family Foundation

## **INNOVATOR (\$20,000+)**

Anonymous  
Brewers Community Foundation, Inc.  
Greater Milwaukee Foundation, Mary L. Nohl Fund  
Kelben Foundation, Inc.  
Joan Lubar and John Crouch  
Madeleine and David Lubar  
Susan A. Lubar  
Nicholas Family Foundation  
Christine Symchych and Jim McNulty  
We Energies Foundation

## **LEGEND (\$10,000+)**

Ken Krei  
Chris and Rick Lane  
Tracy Luber and Gil Southwell  
Judith McGregor and Richard Gallun  
Bert L. and Patricia S. Steigleder  
Charitable Trust  
Zilber Family Foundation

## **ICON (\$5,000+)**

Linda and Dan Bader  
Mark Blumenberg and Beth Jaworski  
Jean and John DiMotto  
Karen Ellenbecker and Julie Ellenbecker Lipsky  
Ralph Evinrude Foundation  
Cheryl and Charles Harvey Family Foundation  
Tim Hoelter  
Ben Jackson  
Patti Keating Kahn and Chuck Kahn  
Mary Ann and Charles LaBahn  
Lauren and Alex Lasry  
Marge and Steve Laughlin  
Milwaukee Arts Board  
Cheryl and Blake Moret  
Kate and Ken Muth  
Gene & Ruth Posner Foundation, Inc.  
Stephen and Susan Ragatz  
Sadoff Family Foundation  
Victoria Teerlink and Jeff Drope  
Shannon and John Utz  
Laurie and Byron Vielehr



# **THANK YOU** to our members & philanthropic partners who have gone above and beyond to support Milwaukee Film's mission.

## **MOVIE MOGUL (\$2,000+)**

Josh Adams and Sandi Anderson Adams  
Ericka and Mike Burzynski  
Caralyn Court  
Kelly and Jeff Fitzsimmons  
Kristin and Alexander P. Fraser  
The Gardner Foundation  
Eileen Gorman  
Greater Milwaukee Foundation's Richard M.  
Kaul LGBT Arts Endowment Fund  
Lisa Groskopf-Gleason  
Susan Haise  
Amy and Peter Hellman  
Maja Jurisic and Don Fraker  
Deborah Kern  
Carrie and Grant Killoran  
Tracey and Rick Klein  
Christina and Michael Koss Jr.  
Christie and Bill Krugler

Jeff Kurz and Jim Mortell  
Emilia and Chris Layden  
Danielle Mantyh and Jude Kizenkavich  
Joviann and Steve Mech  
Daniel and Susie Minahan  
Heidi Evita Moore  
Anne and Christopher Noyes  
Peck Foundation, Milwaukee LTD  
Christine Prevetti  
Tom and Susan Quadracci  
Sarah and Joseph A. Rock  
Jan Serr and John Shannon  
Dave Stamm  
Cynthia and James Stoll  
Olive I. & Eunice J. Toussaint Foundation  
Ruthie and Kyle Weatherly  
Maxine Wishner

## **FILM DIRECTOR (\$1,000+)**

Joan Aguado Ware and Bruce Ware  
Carmen Aguilar and Russell Cuhel  
Tracy Anello  
Peggy Ann and Justin Vannieuwenhoven  
Mary and Tom Avery  
Brittany and John P. Bania  
Natalie Beckwith  
James Bryce Jr. and Amy Williams  
Dara Chappie and Robert Stockinger  
Brian and Rita Clark  
Sarah and Daniel Cohen  
James Cook and Roula Villis  
Catherine and Mario Costantini  
Bill Curley  
Amy Daniels  
Michael Drescher  
Julie Edell-Berlin  
Mark Filla



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Robb and MP Fischer  
Joshua and Julia Gimbel  
Peter Goldberg  
Jill Griffie Ross  
Dennis Grzezinski and Jane Porath  
Nate Gubin  
Jill Haas  
Carmen Haberman  
Leslie Hayes  
Bob and Jenny Hillis  
Julia Ihlenfeldt  
Adel and Bishara Korkor  
Sue and Tony Krausen  
Margaret and Andrew Krei  
Amy and Michael Lovell  
Sue and Mark Lyday  
Heidi Marcelle and Robert Barnard  
Deborah McKeithan-Gebhardt and John Gebhardt  
Mark Mone and Sara Swanson  
Rosie Neufeld

Jess and Sheldon Oppermann  
Suzanne Osetek  
Debra Paschke and Joanne Williams  
Clare M. Peters Charitable Trust  
Catherine Reeves  
David Roberts and Gary Kampe  
Chuck Rozewicz and Maureen Fitzgerald  
Janet and Gregory Schmeling  
Jane Somers and Richard Cayo  
Mark and Wanda Staples  
Eric Steele and Kathryn Bach  
Richard Stone  
Julia Taylor and Stig Ostling  
Connie Tresch  
Marilka Vélez  
Bernadette Vitola  
Kimberly R Walker  
David Wiener and Jessica Swearingen

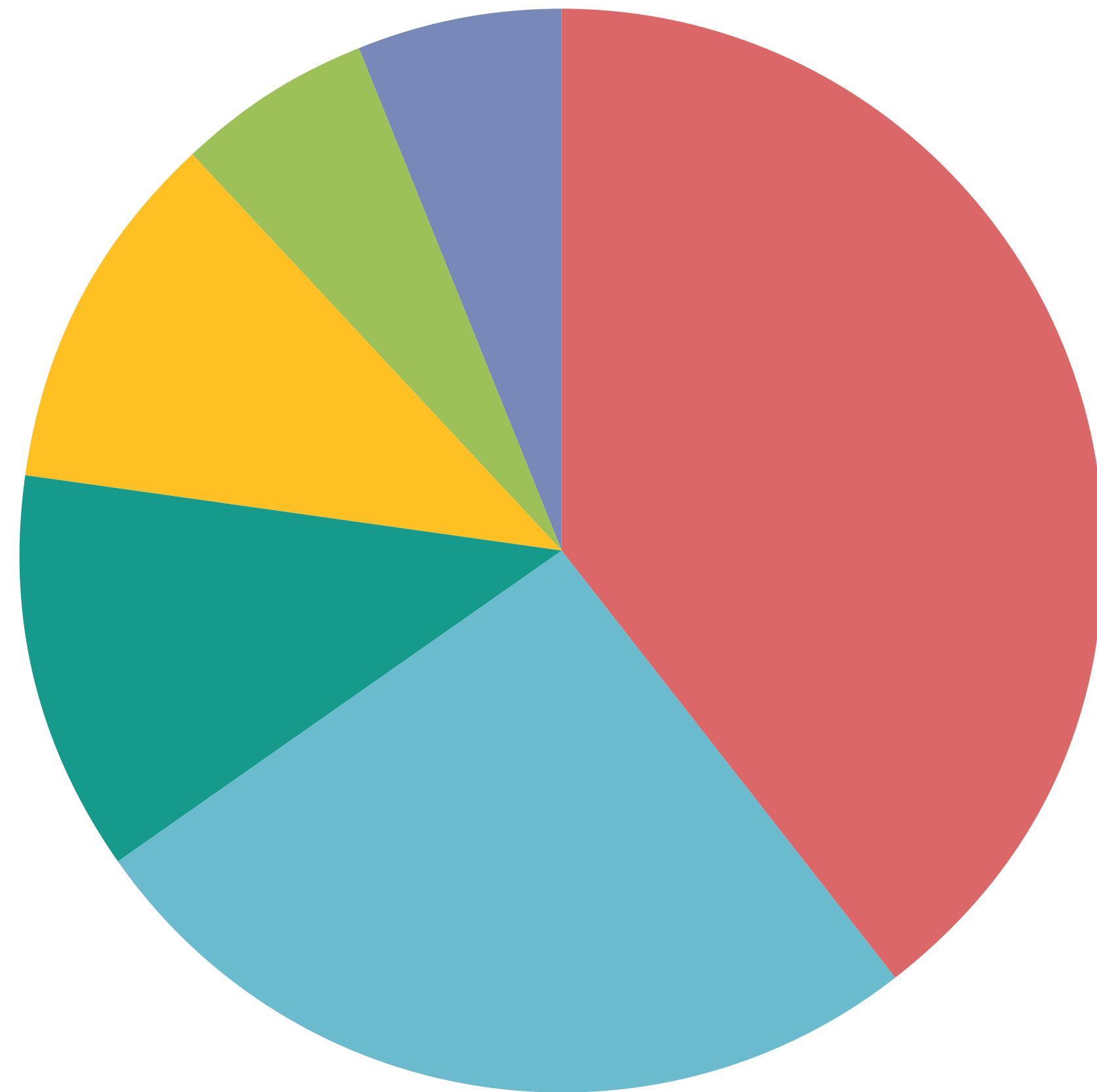
## **BAADASSSSS (\$1,000+)**

Jacqueline and Michael Barber  
Tammy Belton-Davis  
Deborah Blanks  
Danielle and Ramel Bly  
Erickajoy Daniels and John Daniels III  
Dr. Robert Davis  
Cecilia Gilbert  
Cecelia Gore and Randy Bryant  
Jeffrey Harwell and Matthew Helmerich  
Syneathia and Robert LaGrant  
Tarik Moody  
Janan and Waleed Najeeb  
Angela Pinta and Kelly Cushion  
Jerry Roberts and Shannon Reed





# REVENUE

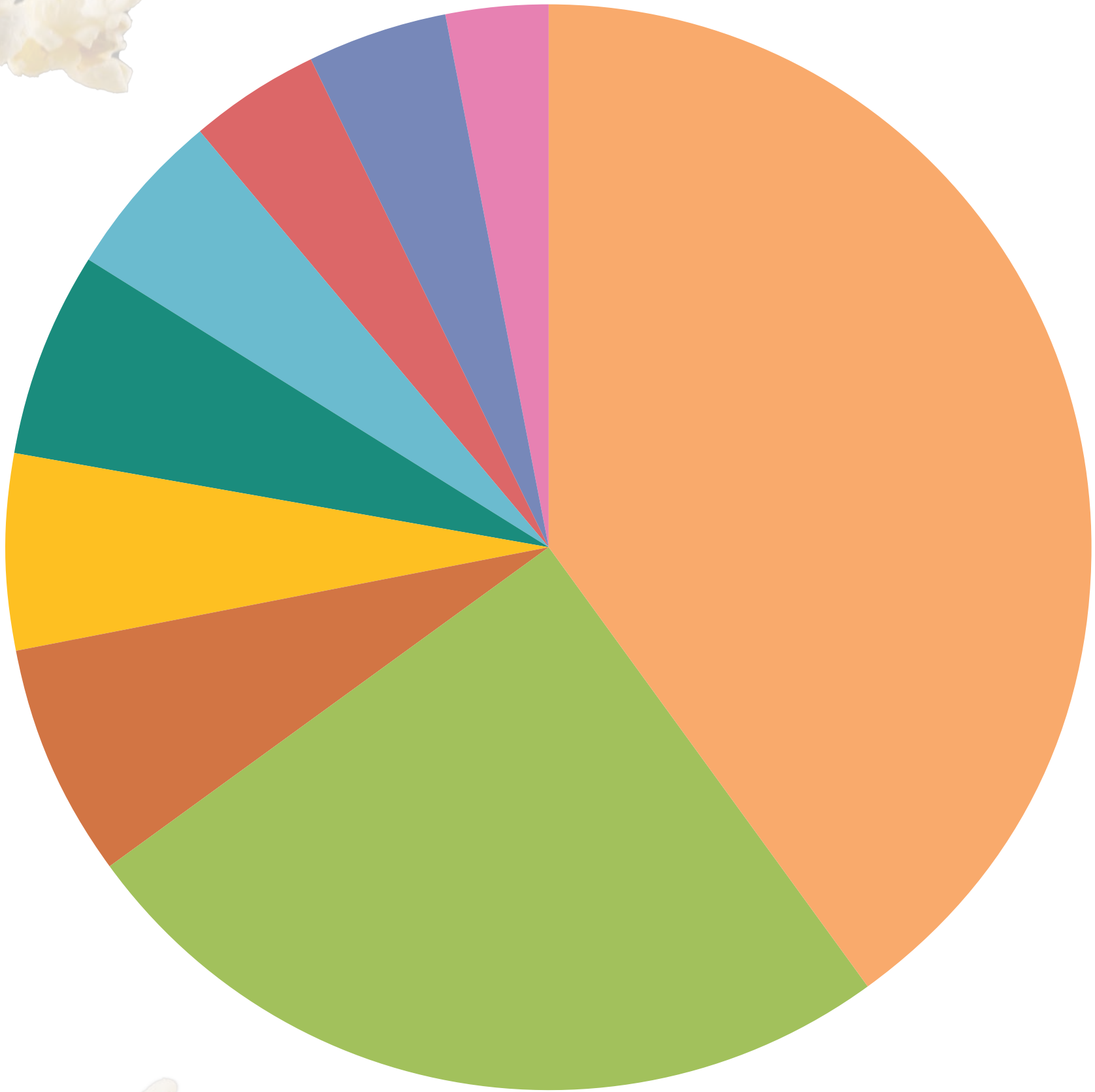


**MILWAUKEE FILM 2023 REVENUE**

- **40% Contributed Income - Annual Fund**
- **11% Sponsorships**
- **26% Cinema Revenue**
- **6% Membership**
- **6% Milwaukee Film Festival**
- **12% Other (In-Kind, Merch, Interest)**



# EXPENSES



- 40% Contributed Income - Annual Fund
- 25% Cinema & Festival
- 7% Depreciation
- 4% Hospitality
- 5% Marketing
- 6% Other
- 4% Program Expenses
- 40% Staffing
- 3% Professional Fees

MILWAUKEE FILM 2023 EXPENSES





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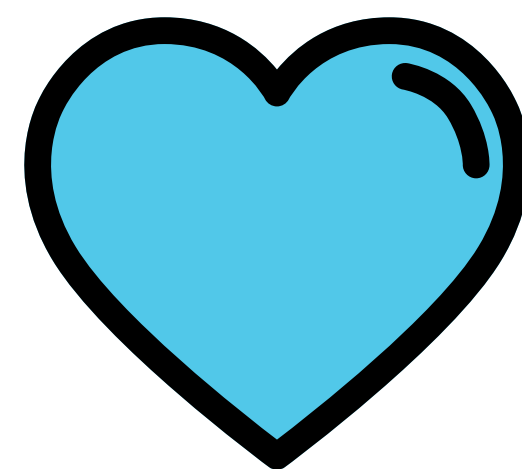
***“Thank you and your team for such a fun weekend! I had a great time all around. And I watched some other films, which was a treat. I was watching Sons of Monarchs and was inspired for my next film. Watching films big with an audience is such a different experience than at home on your couch. Thank you so much for giving me that.***

***All the best, and hope I come back sometime with another film!”***

*Yael Bridge, THE BIG SCARY S WORD (C&C Festival, 2021)*







# THANK YOU!



**MilwaukeeFilm**



**@mkefilm**



**@mkefilm**

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