

POTAWATOMI CASINO HOTEL PRESENTS

# IALOGUES DOCUMENTARY FESTIVAL



MILWAUKEE  
FILM



9.18-21.2025 [MKEFILM.ORG/DDF](http://MKEFILM.ORG/DDF)



Potawatomi Casino Hotel  
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**2025  
DIALOGUES  
DOCUMENTARY  
FESTIVAL**



# HOW'S IT GOING?

## Dear Milwaukee Film Community,

Welcome to the Dialogues Documentary Festival year two! These four days are all about coming together as a community to celebrate nonfiction filmmaking in its many forms and the revelations that come from experiencing other's stories.

This year, we have an unforgettable lineup of over 30 features and short film programs set to reveal personal stories, take you places you have never been before (and definitely are not supposed to go!), explore historical truths, foster empathy, showcase art and artists, or just make you laugh. The joy of watching documentaries together stems from their fascinating blend of cinematic discovery and real-life intrigue, often revealing surprises or challenging what we think we know.

Engagement beyond the films themselves form the core of this festival - they are the "dialogues" part. A variety of talkbacks, panel discussions, performances, and the like have been specifically crafted to complement many films. Seeing the films with these paired experiences creates space for a range of perspectives to emerge, encouraging discussion that can challenge assumptions, broaden awareness, and foster collective reflection. In an era of rapid media consumption, and as storytelling continues shaping public perception, authentic documentary filmmaking has never been more important.

We are so grateful you are joining us and that you share our belief in the power of cinema to transform.

Yours in Cinema,



Susan Santha Kerns, Ph.D.  
Executive **Director**

Cara Ogburn, Ph.D.  
Artistic Director



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# HOW TO FEST

**All-access festival passes, 6 and 10 packs, and individual tickets can be purchased at [mkefilm.org/ddf-tickets](http://mkefilm.org/ddf-tickets) or in person at Oriental and Downer box offices.**

## Film & Ticket Information

### Film Tickets

\$15.00	.....	General Admission
\$14.00	.....	Senior (60 & over)
\$14.00	.....	Student/Educator Military Member*
\$13.00	.....	MKE Film Member
\$8.00	.....	Child (12 & under)

*(Sales tax not included ) \*ID required*

### Important Note

*To guarantee a seat, ticket and pass holders must arrive at least 15 minutes before showtime. Late arrivals may be seated only if space allows, at the discretion of Festival staff. No refunds or exchanges for late entry.*

### Film Accessibility

Our **cinemas lobby, restrooms, and concession stand** are all wheelchair-accessible, and all auditoriums have reserved seating for guests who use wheelchairs. In **addition**, all films for the Festival will have hearing-impaired device **capability**.

### Options

#### Hearing Impaired (HI)

For guests with hearing impairments, we offer HI (Hearing Impaired) devices. These enhance the clarity of Left, Center, and Right audio channels. At the Oriental Theatre,

HI audio is transmitted via hearing loops, compatible with T-Coil-enabled hearing aids or our in-house devices with headsets. At all other venues, we provide Fidelio devices and headsets, programmed by staff to receive the HI track from our projection system.

#### Closed Captioning (CCAP)

Are available when provided by the filmmaker or distributor. Captions are shown on personal Captiview devices, which can be mounted on a seat or cup holder. Staff will program devices for each film. Captions apply to the main feature only, not trailers. Ask box office staff to confirm CC availability for specific films.

#### Visual Impaired (VI)

For those with visual impairments, we will be providing devices for VI tracks whenever they have been provided by the filmmaker or distributor. These audio **tracks** **a narrated** description of what is happening on the screen. These audio tracks are delivered to the user via a Fidelio receiver and headset which staff will program to receive the appropriate audio track. Attendees should inquire with box office staff if a film will be offering VI.

# FAQS

## When should I buy tickets?

You already know the answer to this one: as soon as possible! Many of our screenings sell out, leaving sad, ticket-less people. Don't be one of those. Buy your tickets early!

## When should I arrive for a screening?

If you have a ticket or a pass, we highly recommend you arrive a minimum of 30 minutes prior to showtime to secure your seat. All ticket and pass holders must arrive no later than 15 minutes prior to the scheduled showtime to guarantee a seat. Beginning 15 minutes before the show, any empty seats will be sold to patrons in the Standby line.

## What if a screening is sold out?

If a film is listed online as "Standby Only," there's still hope! You can join the Standby line at the venue to buy an unclaimed seat. Standby tickets

are sold on a first-come, first-served basis, so get in line early. Check your program guide for dates, times, and locations

## Where should I park & how can I get to the theatre?

The Oriental and Downer Theatres are located in the heart of the East Side with metered street parking and a limited number of off-street lots. We recommend arriving early enough to find a parking spot or utilizing public transportation, such as the MCTS bus system. For a full list of parking locations and addresses, please visit [mkofilm.org/ddfhelp](http://mkofilm.org/ddfhelp).

## Can I purchase same-day tickets?

Absolutely! Same-day tickets are available at the box office and online up until each film's showtime or until a film goes to standby.

### THE FINE PRINT

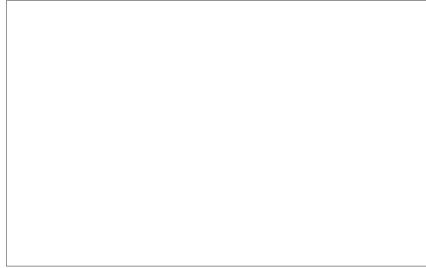
NO REFUNDS. NO RESALES. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. IMPORTANT - PLEASE NOTE: Tickets cannot be redeemed for attendees who are not present. To guarantee a seat for a film, ticket and pass holders must arrive no later than 15 minutes prior to scheduled showtime. Ticket and pass holders arriving after this time will be seated only as capacity allows and at the discretion of festival staff. No refunds or exchanges are available to ticket and pass holders who are refused entry after this time. Tickets and passes, and their associated privileges, may be revoked at any time, for any reason, without liability to Milwaukee Film. Film programs, special guests, events, venues, dates, and times are subject to change without notice. Unless noted, films are not rated; viewer discretion is advised. Patrons grant Milwaukee Film and its partners permission to use their images or likenesses in any reproduction of events. Patrons voluntarily assume all risks and dangers incidental to Festival events, whether occurring prior to, during, or after the event. Patrons voluntarily agree that Milwaukee Film and its facilities, sponsors, directors, officers, employees, volunteers, and respective agents are expressly released from any injuries or claims arising from any Festival event. By entering any Milwaukee Film-operated event or venue, all parties agree to adhere to our Code of Conduct to ensure Milwaukee Film spaces are spaces of community-building: [mkofilm.org/conduct](http://mkofilm.org/conduct).

# FILM INFORMATION

Milwaukee Film's programming team worked tirelessly to curate a lineup of documentary films with the intention of starting discussions amongst our local audiences about issues and topics that are timely and relevant to the Milwaukee community.

Then, taking those conversation starters a step further, many of the screenings will be immediately followed by talkbacks, Q&As, and panel discussions.

**To find out what's happening after your screening, check out the individual film descriptions at: [mkefilm.org/ddf](http://mkefilm.org/ddf)**



## A Photographic Memory

**United States / 2024 / 87 Min / English**

Award-winning journalist Sheila Turner Seed spent the 1970s interviewing such photography luminaries as Henri Cartier-Bresson, Gordon Parks, Cecil Beaton, and Lisette Model. When she passed away suddenly and tragically, she left behind an infant daughter, Rachel. More than 30 years later, Rachel has become a filmmaker, photographer, and writer herself. A PHOTOGRAPHIC MEMORY marks a moving attempt to construct a personal story of love, loss, and finding someone in the work they leave behind. **This program will be followed by a filmmaker Q&A.**

**DIR** Rachel Elizabeth Seed • **PROD** Rachel Elizabeth Seed, Michael Sherman, Beth Levison



**Friday, Sep. 19 | 07:00 PM | Oriental Theatre (Herzfeld Cinema)**



## All God's Children

**United States / 2024 / 100 Min / English**

In the latest from MFF alum Ondi Timoner (LAST FLIGHT HOME, MFF23), the leaders of Congregation Beth Elohim in Park Slope and Antioch Baptist Church in Bed-Stuy embark on a radical experiment. Tackling their complex histories head on, these two Brooklyn institutions find communal traction, fighting side-by-side for justice and compassion, revealing the potential of interfaith coalitions and that they have much more in common than may at first appear. **This program will be followed by a virtual Q&A and talkback.**

**DIR** Ondi Timoner • **PROD** Ondi Timoner, David Turner, Anthony Ervolino

**Sunday, Sep. 21 | 06:30 PM | Oriental Theatre (Herzfeld Cinema)**



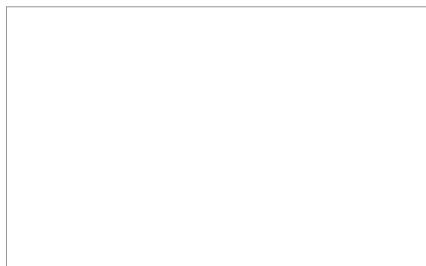
## **An Unquiet Mind**

**United States / 2024 / 75 Min / English**

Few people truly understand obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD), despite the condition affecting nearly 3 million people in the U.S. Silence and stereotypes have created a culture of shame that keeps people with OCD from getting support. AN UNQUIET MIND is a portrait documentary following three individuals living with the condition. Through honest, personal storytelling, director Rachel Immaraj shares her own journey along with these others to give a voice to experiences many are too afraid to share. **This program will be followed by a filmmaker Q&A.**

**DIR** Rachel Immaraj • **PROD** Kovid Gupta, Natasha Paradeshi

**Sunday, Sep. 21 | 03:30 PM | Oriental Theatre (Herzfeld Cinema)**



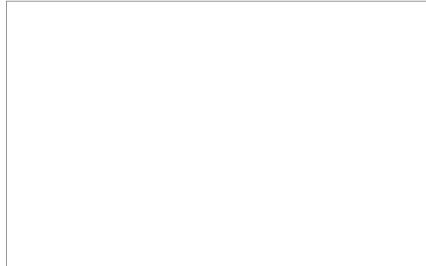
## **Any Problem Is No Problem**

**United States / 2025 / 91 Min / English**

In ANY PROBLEM IS NO PROBLEM, five young entrepreneurs embark on personal journeys to reshape the future of technology at Crypto Startup School. With only three months to refine their businesses, perfect their pitches, and sharpen their innovations before laying it on the line for investors at Demo Day, this intimate portrayal reveals the grit, creativity, and passion required to make it as a startup founder in crypto, no matter the headwinds.

**DIR** Alyssa Fedele, Zachary Fink • **PROD** Robyn Kopp, Kate McLean

**Sunday, Sep. 21 | 05:00 PM | Oriental Theatre (Abele Cinema)**



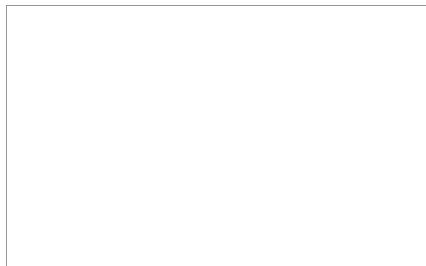
## Arrest the Midwife

**United States / 2025 / 80 Min / English**

With rare access to an intensely private community, ARREST THE MIDWIFE exposes the rural healthcare desert created by New York state's approach to maternal health regulation, sharing the story of criminalized midwives, and the Amish and Mennonite women who break from their traditions to stand up, speak out, and join the fight for women's bodily autonomy and reproductive justice. Relevant across cultures, this documentary inspires coalitions that advocate for healthcare choice and access for all. This program will be followed by a talkback.

**DIR** Elaine Epstein • **PROD** Robin Hessman, Elaine Epstein

**Friday, Sep. 19 | 05:30 PM | Downer Theatre (North Cinema)**



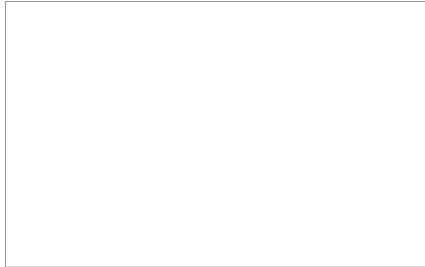
## Between Goodbyes

**Republic of Korea (South Korea), United States / 2024 / 96 Min / English, Dutch, KoreanEnglish**

An adoptee raised in the Netherlands, Mieke's life is very different from the one she might have led if her Korean family had not been pressured to give her up as a baby. When Mieke's birth parents track her down in adulthood, their reunion unleashes a whirlwind of guilt, joy, regret, and ambivalence. Through non-linear storytelling, we witness the family's journey towards reconnection in this unique tale of home, acceptance, and the power of forgiveness.

**DIR** Jota Mun • **PROD** Jota Mun, Zoe Sua Cho, Barb Lee

**Saturday, Sep. 20 | 11:00 AM | Oriental Theatre (Herzfeld Cinema)**



## Boy George & Culture Club

**United States, United Kingdom / 2025 / 96 Min / English**

With humor, heart, and a lot of glitz and glam, this endlessly charming documentary dives into the chaos, charisma, and enduring bond of one of the most iconic bands of the '80s. Straight from the mouths of its four legendary members, MFF alum Alison Ellwood (LET THE CANARY SING, MFF24) weaves a love story about the undeniable fondness that flowed beneath the surface of these musical legends—and the drama and heartbreak in between.

**DIR** Alison Ellwood • **PROD** Trevor Birney, Andrew Tully, Ben Silverman

**Thursday, Sep. 18 | 07:00 PM | Oriental Theatre (Abele Cinema)**



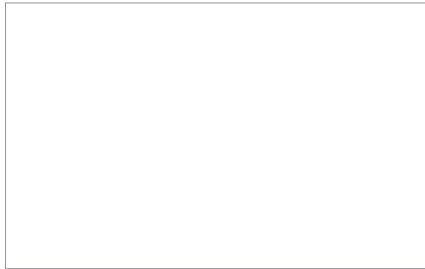
## Cat Town, USA

**United States / 2025 / 73 Min / English**

Meet Terry and Bruce Jenkins, founders of Cats Cradle Foundation, a sanctuary and hospice for senior cats with nowhere else to go, but still a lot of love, if not life, left in them. In this feel-good doc, director Jonathan Napolitano captures the emotional bonds between the couple and their feline residents, highlighting the joys, challenges, and inevitable goodbyes that come with caring for cats in their final chapter. This program will be followed by a talkback.

**DIR** Jonathan Napolitano • **PROD** James P. Gannon, Stéphane Laporte, Jonathan Napolitano

**Saturday, Sep. 20 | 05:30 PM | Downer Theatre (North Cinema)**



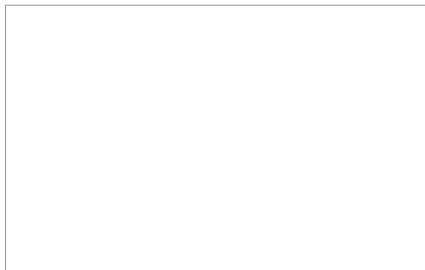
## Comparsa

**United States / 2025 / 79 Min / SpanishEnglish**

COMPARSA is an intense, urgent exploration of the power of art to heal a community, overcoming the traumas of violence and corruption. Sisters Lesli and Lupe are visionary young artists who are spurred to action after a horrific act of violence strikes their community in Guatemala City. When 41 teenage girls are killed and the perpetrators go unpunished, the lionhearted sisters use exuberant public performance to fight back. This program will be followed by a virtual filmmaker Q&A.

**DIR** Vickie Curtis, Doug Anderson • **PROD** Anna Hadingham, Vickie Curtis, Doug Anderson, Olivia Ahnemann **Vickie Curtis**

**Saturday, Sep. 20 | 07:45 PM | Oriental Theatre (Herzfeld Cinema)**



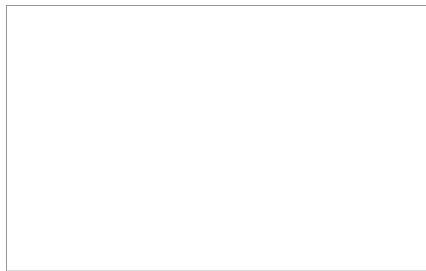
## Farming While Black

**United States / 2023 / 77 Min / English**

In 1910, Black farmers owned 14 percent of all American farmland. Over the intervening decades, that number fell below two percent, as a result of racism, discrimination, and dispossession. This visually eloquent film chronicles **Penniman** and two other Black farmers' efforts to reclaim their agricultural heritage. Collectively, their work has a major impact as leaders in the sustainable agriculture and food justice movements.

**DIR** Mark Decena • **PROD** Liz Decena

**Saturday, Sep. 20 | 11:30 AM | Oriental Theatre (Abele Cinema)**



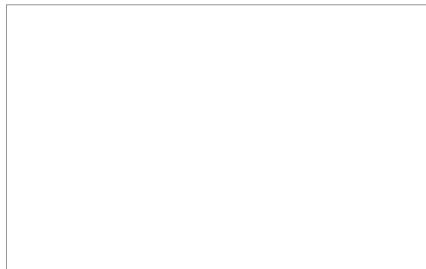
## **Fire in the Heartland: The Kent State Story**

**United States / 2023 / 60 Min / English**

Looking back on the student activism of the turbulent and transformative 1960s and 1970s, when students across the U.S. were compelled to fight against racism, violence, and the war in Vietnam, FIRE IN THE HEARTLAND recalls the tragedy at Kent State on May 4, 1970. This moving documentary honors the fallen through interviews that resonate loudly with activism on campuses in the 21st century, and invites viewers to discover the larger truth of a generation. This program will be followed by a talkback.

**DIR** Daniel L. Miller • **PROD** Chic Canfora, William T. Whitaker, Sam Allen

**Saturday, Sep. 20 | 12:00 PM | Downer Theatre (North Cinema)**



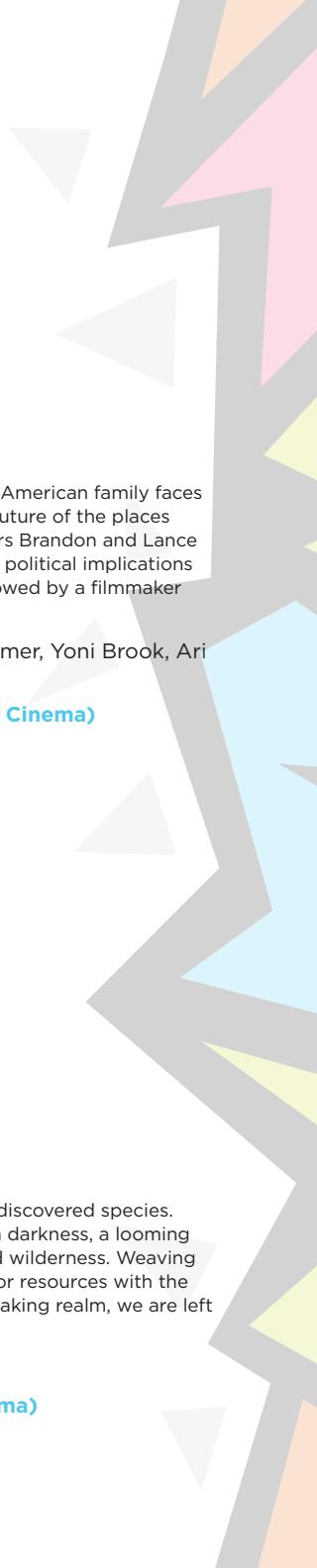
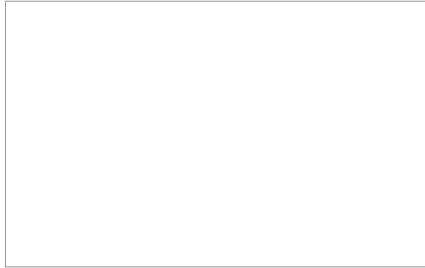
## **Folktales**

**United States, Norway / 2025 / 105 Min / English, NorwegianEnglish**

In Oscar® nominees Heidi Ewing and Rachel Grady's life-affirming film, teenagers converge at a traditional folk high school in Arctic Norway where they must rely only on themselves, one another, and a loyal pack of sled dogs as they all grow in unexpected directions. Through intimate verité storytelling and exhilarating cinematography, Ewing and Grady examine humans on the cusp of adulthood, finding themselves at the edge of the world.

**DIR** Heidi Ewing, Rachel Grady • **PROD** Heidi Ewing, Rachel Grady

**Friday, Sep. 19 | 02:30 PM | Downer Theatre (North Cinema)**



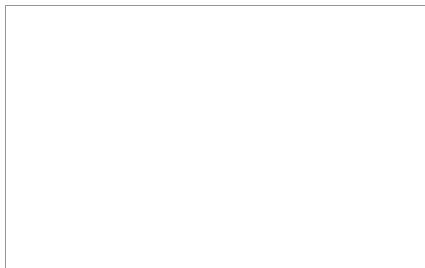
## Holding Liat

**United States / 2025 / 97 Min / English, HebrewEnglish**

After Liat Beinin Atzili is kidnapped on October 7, 2023, her Israeli-American family faces their own conflicting perspectives to fight for her release and the future of the places they call home. With raw, intimate access to Liat's family, filmmakers Brandon and Lance Kramer bring viewers up close to both the conflict in Gaza and the political implications for Israeli and American Jews in its wake. **This program will be followed by a filmmaker Q&A.**

**DIR** Brandon Kramer • **PROD** Darren Aronofsky, Lance Kramer, Yoni Brook, Ari Handel, Justin A. Gonçalves

**Thursday, Sep. 18 | 06:30 PM | Oriental Theatre (Herzfeld Cinema)**



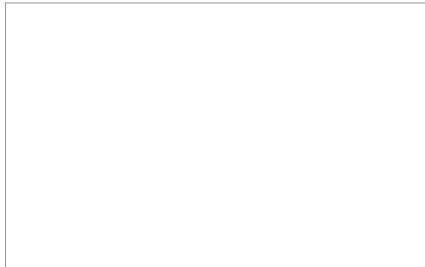
## How Deep Is Your Love

**United Kingdom / 2025 / 100 Min / English**

Scientists explore the mysterious deep sea to collect and name undiscovered species. As they uncover mesmerizing creatures and ecosystems thriving in darkness, a looming threat emerges: the prospect of deep-sea mining in this untouched wilderness. Weaving wonder with urgency, this film challenges us to balance the drive for resources with the intrinsic value of an ecosystem. As we journey through this breathtaking realm, we are left to ponder—how deep is our love?

**DIR** Eleanor Mortimer • **PROD** Jacob Thomas

**Sunday, Sep. 21 | 12:00 PM | Downer Theatre (North Cinema)**



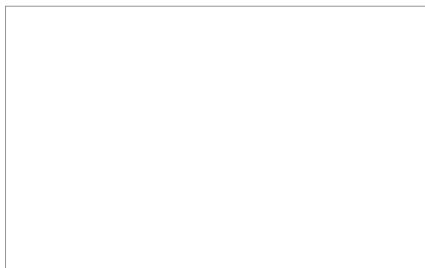
## **It's Dorothy!**

**United States / 2025 / 97 Min / English**

IT'S DOROTHY! fabulously pulls back the emerald curtain on 125 years of Dorothy Gale, from L. Frank Baum's original literary Kansas dreamer to queer icon across stage and screen adaptations like WICKED, THE WIZ, and the beloved 1939 **film**. Director Jeffrey McHale (YOU DON'T NOMI, MFF19) assembles a twister of interviews, archival gems, and glittering pop culture moments to explore how Dorothy clicked her heels into the heart of LGBTQ+ identity and an undeniable cultural touchstone.

**DIR** Jeffrey McHale • **PROD** Ariana Garfinkel, Zel McCarthy, Suzanne Zions

**Friday, Sep. 19 | 05:30 PM | Oriental Theatre (Abele Cinema)**



## **Just Kids**

**United States / 2025 / 93 Min / English**

Over a tumultuous year, director Gianna Toboni's powerful documentary follows three families living in states where gender-affirming care is banned, as they demonstrate extraordinary strength in their fight to save their children's lives. Through intimate access to their daily struggles, we witness the human cost of politically motivated bans that contradict the medical consensus of America's leading healthcare associations, coming away with hope for our nation's youth and the strength of family to persevere.

**DIR** Gianna Toboni • **PROD** Jacqueline Toboni, Samantha Wender, Gianna Toboni

**Saturday, Sep. 20 | 02:30 PM | Oriental Theatre (Abele Cinema)**



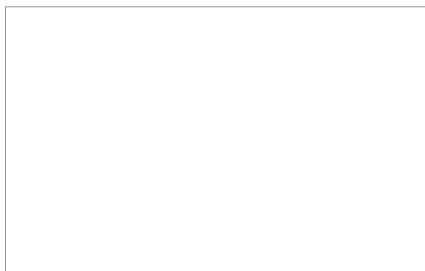
## Just Sing

**United Kingdom / 2025 / 93 Min / English**

Angelique Molina and Abraham Troen's JUST SING takes us behind the curtain as USC's co-ed intercollegiate competitive a cappella group, the SoCal VoCals, prepares for their 2023 season and a hopeful, unprecedented, sixth national title. Like any sports or competition film, this doc is filled with adrenaline and heart, and will have you cheering (and perhaps even harmonizing) along until the credits roll. This program will be followed by an a cappella performance and talkback.

**DIR** Abraham Troen, Angelique Molina • **PROD** Sarah Thomson, John Battsek

**Sunday, Sep. 21 | 07:30 PM | Oriental Theatre (Abele Cinema)**



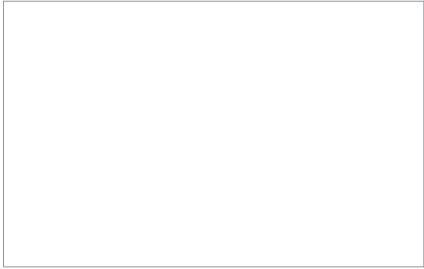
## Make Peace or Die

**United States / 2024 / 99 Min / English**

Marine Corps veteran Anthony Marquez (and brother of director, MFF alum Manny Marquez, PSYCHOPATH, OPERATION ALLIE) returned from Afghanistan riddled with survivor's guilt. His unit, 1st Battalion 5th Marine Regiment, lost 17 men on their 2011 deployment to Sangin. Upon returning home, Anthony made it his mission to help the Gold Star families of the fallen find healing, and in doing so, attempt to heal himself. This program will be followed by a filmmaker Q&A.

**DIR** Manny Marquez • **PROD** Benjamin Leiser, Anthony Marquez

**Friday, Sep. 19 | 08:00 PM | Oriental Theatre (Herzfeld Cinema)**



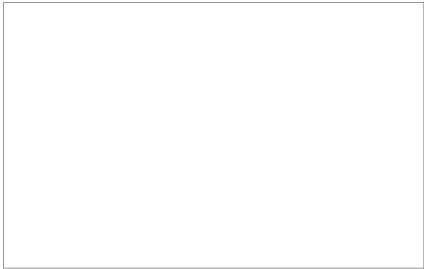
## Malignant Practice

**United States / 2025 / 34 Min / English**

MALIGNANT PRACTICE is an animated short film based on the medical misfortune of a young woman whose breast cancer was missed by a doctor and a mammogram. This Milwaukee-made, deeply personal yet true story from MFF alum Kristin Catalano (CLARENCE,  X) emphasizes the flaws within our healthcare system and the importance of being one's own healthcare advocate. This program will be followed by a talkback.

**DIR** Kristin Catalano • **PROD** Kristin Catalano 

**Sunday, Sep. 21 | 02:30 PM | Oriental Theatre (Abele Cinema)**



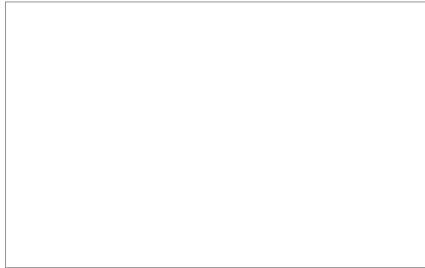
## Natchez

**United States / 2025 / 86 Min / English**

Winner of Best Documentary Feature at Tribeca '25, NATCHEZ unravels the complex layers of a town in Mississippi sustained by antebellum tourism yet divided by the narrative of its own history. As hoop skirts and mansion tours clash with hard truths, NATCHEZ becomes a riveting meditation on the stories America chooses to tell—and forget. Milwaukee Film alum Suzannah Herbert (WRESTLE, MFF '18) asks the question: Who gets to tell America's story?

**DIR** Suzannah Herbert • **PROD** Darcy McKinnon, Suzannah Herbert

**Sunday, Sep. 21 | 06:00 PM | Downer Theatre (North Cinema)**



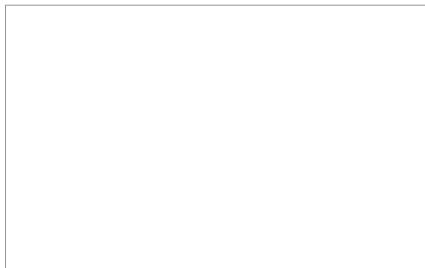
## **She Runs the World**

**United States / 2025 / 85 Min / English**

Allyson Felix is the most decorated track and field athlete of all time. At the peak of her career, Felix happily discovers she is pregnant with her first child. But the pinnacle of Felix's life turns into a public fight for maternal protections in sports, as a life-threatening complication triggers a high-stakes showdown with the most powerful brand in athletics. Delve into the cataclysmic movement that changed the game for countless women athletes across the country.

**DIR** Perri Peltz, Matthew O'Neill • **PROD** Lisa Binns

**Saturday, Sep. 20 | 08:30 PM | Downer Theatre (North Cinema)**



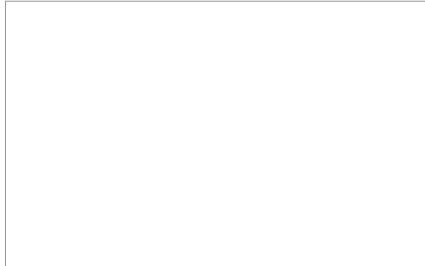
## **Shuffle**

**United States / 2025 / 82 Min / English**

Through the lens of his own recovery, director Benjamin Flaherty offers an intimate look inside the billion dollar substance abuse treatment industry in this eye-opening winner of SXSW's 2025 **documentary competition**. Shot over the course of three years, SHUFFLE follows three individuals whose lives depend not on getting into treatment for their addictions, but on getting out alive, and in the process, shines a light on the insurance-fueled cycle of addiction treatment fraud spreading across the country.

**DIR** Benjamin Flaherty • **PROD** Carra Greenberg, Harris Fishman, Scott Paskoff

**Friday, Sep. 19 | 02:30 PM | Oriental Theatre (Abele Cinema)**



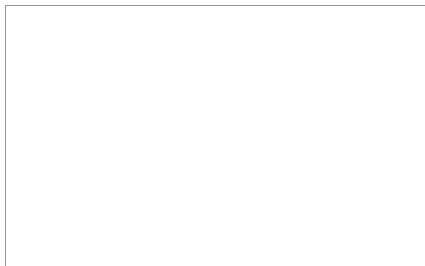
## **Singing Back the Buffalo**

**Canada / 2024 / 98 Min / English**

After a dark recent history, the buffalo herds of North America are awaiting their return, aided by dedicated Indigenous activists, leaders, and communities, including award-winning Cree filmmaker Tasha Hubbard. Together with Blackfoot Elder Leroy Little Bear, Hubbard weaves an intimate story of humanity's connections to buffalo and eloquently reveals how their return to the Great Plains can indeed usher in a new era of sustainability and balance.

**DIR** Tasha Hubbard • **PROD** Tasha Hubbard, Jason Ryle, George Hupka, Bonnie Thompson

**Saturday, Sep. 20 | 04:45 PM | Oriental Theatre (Herzfeld Cinema)**



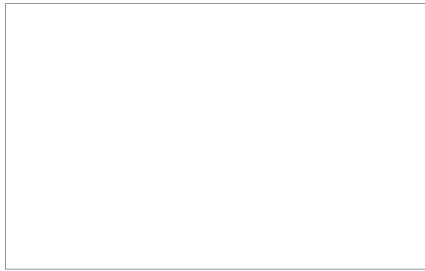
## **Space Cowboy**

**United States / 2024 / 98 Min / English**

If FREE SOLO had a skydiving cousin, it would be SPACE COWBOY. Hold onto your harness for this heart expanding documentary that follows legendary skydiving cinematographer Joe Jennings as he prepares for one final, outrageous stunt: filming a convertible dropped from the sky. Blending daredevil visuals with deep emotional currents, the film soars through Jennings' decades-long career while reckoning with loss, mental health, and the question of what comes after a lifetime of chasing the next big leap.

**DIR** Marah Strauch, Bryce Leavitt • **PROD** Tyler Measom, Bryce Leavitt, Marah Strauch

**Friday, Sep. 19 | 08:30 PM | Oriental Theatre (Abele Cinema)**



## **Standing Above the Clouds**

**United States / 2024 / 85 Min / English**

Jalena Keane-Lee's debut feature bears witness to history, poised at the center of the global movement to protect Mauna Kea, the famed Hawaiian mountain, as it faces the proposal of having another telescope built on it. Told through vérité footage and archival material, STANDING ABOVE THE CLOUDS is an inspiring adventure delivered with passion and integrity, connecting to the detrimental environmental and cultural impact telescopes have had on the sacred mountain and on Native Hawaiians.

**DIR** Jalena Keane-Lee • **PROD** Erin Lau, Amber Espinosa-Jones, Jalena Keane-Lee

**Sunday, Sep. 21 | 01:00 PM | Oriental Theatre (Herzfeld Cinema)**



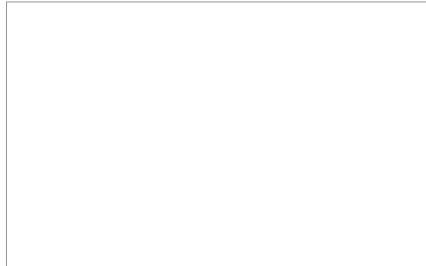
## **Stolen Kingdom**

**United States / 2025 / 74 Min / English**

STOLEN KINGDOM uncovers the history of mischief, scandal and crime at Walt Disney World, ultimately leading to the theft of one of the world's most famous animatronics. Key figures from the park's underground community each share their unique stories of thrilling adventures and pranks. Their antics are shown to have inspired more recent crimes, culminating in a true crime mystery. What begins as a tale of friendship and passion ends with one lingering question: Who stole Buzzy?

**DIR** Joshua Bailey • **PROD** Brandon Pickering, Joshua Bailey, Colin Alexander, Sam Fraser, Joshua Bailey, Matthew Serrano

**Saturday, Sep. 20 | 08:30 PM | Oriental Theatre (Abele Cinema)**



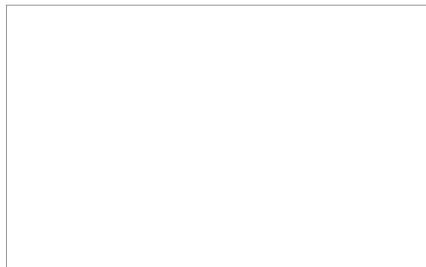
## The Secret of Me

**United Kingdom / 2025 / 80 Min / English**

Part personal quest, part historical exposé, THE SECRET OF ME is a quietly furious documentary reckoning with truth, identity, and power. During a feminist studies class in 1995, college student Kristi opens a textbook and discovers a secret that would change everything: Kristi was born **intersex and never told**. Through intimate storytelling and powerful archival footage, this stunning documentary follows a worldwide reckoning with flawed medical systems.

**DIR** Grace Hughes-Hallett • **PROD** James Rogan, Flora Stewart

**Friday, Sep. 19 | 02:00 PM | Oriental Theatre (Herzfeld Cinema)**



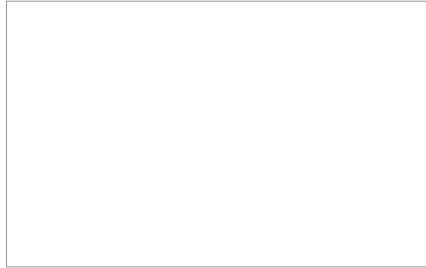
## The Tallest Dwarf

**United States / 2025 / 90 Min / English**

Filmmaker Julie Wyman embarks on a quest to find her place within the little people (LP) community at a moment when dwarf identity is on the brink of radical transformation. As  **unpacks rumors of "partial dwarfism" in her family, Julie discovers that hers is the last body type she has inherited. As** Julie discovers her place in dwarf culture, the film asks whether it's possible to see and be seen differently. This program will be followed by a talkback.

**DIR** Julie Forrest Wyman • **PROD** Lindsey Dryden, Jonna McKone, Shaleece Haas

**Saturday, Sep. 20 | 01:30 PM | Oriental Theatre (Herzfeld Cinema)**



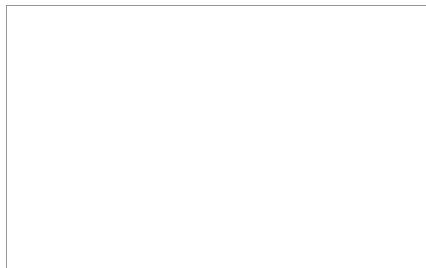
## We Are Pat

**United States / 2025 / 92 Min / English**

Back in the 1990s, Pat was one of Saturday Night Live's most infamous recurring characters: awkward, ambiguous, and the punchline of every joke. This sharp and funny documentary is part pop culture excavation, part identity reckoning. Revisiting SNL clips, a film spin-off, and the trans and nonbinary voices who grew up under Pat's shadow, the film unpacks how visibility without understanding can do real harm and how our culture has (and hasn't) changed.

**DIR** Rowan Haber • **PROD** Caryn Capotosto, Rowan Haber

**Saturday, Sep. 20 | 05:30 PM | Oriental Theatre (Abele Cinema)**



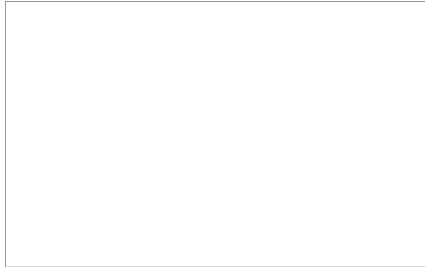
## Wicket

**United States / 2025 / 75 Min / English**

After 41 years in the closet, breakdancing legend Bboy Wicket navigates the clash between his offstage persona and his public self. This **high\_energy** coming of age again documentary follows Wicket's reconciliation of his Filipino, queer, and hiphop identities into a hip-hop icon finally living in his truth. Winner of Frameline's Audience Award for Best Documentary Feature, WICKET reveals how falling in love with an artistic pursuit, a person, and yourself can change your life forever. This program will be followed by a talkback.

**DIR** Lily Plotkin • **PROD** Gabriela Cavanagh, Ryland Hormel, Janis Vogel

**Friday, Sep. 19 | 08:30 PM | Downer Theatre (North Cinema)**



## Zurawski v Texas

**United States, United Kingdom / 2024 / 98 Min / English**

After being denied abortion access, even with a non-viable pregnancy, Amanda Zurawski nearly died from septic shock. This **real\_time** portrait of what happens when legal ambiguity forces life and death decisions is one of the most searing documentaries of the year. Featuring both urgent courtroom moments and intimate family scenes, the film balances grief and community-driven fight that navigates the murky intersection of state power and personal autonomy.

**DIR** Maisie Crow, Abbie Perrault • **PROD** Maisie Crow, Blye Pagon Faust, Amy Flanagan, Abbie Perrault

**Sunday, Sep. 21 | 11:30 AM | Oriental Theatre (Abele Cinema)**

# SHORTS



# SMALLER MEMBERSHIP AD?



MILWAUKEE  
FILM

ORIENTAL

SAVE THE DATE  
MILWAUKEE FILM FESTIVAL  
APRIL 16-30, 2026





# SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 28

10:00 AM	11:00 AM	NOON	1:00 PM	2:00 PM	3:00 PM	4:00 PM	5:00 PM	6:00 PM	7:00 PM	8:00 PM	9:00 PM	10:00 PM
					<b>EMERGENT CITY</b> 2:00 PM   99 MIN					<b>WE CAN BE HEROES</b> 8:15 PM   86 MIN		
						<b>THE STRIKE</b> 11:30 AM   86 MIN				<b>MISSING FROM FIRE TRAIL ROAD</b> 6:00 PM   90 MIN		
										<b>NEW WAVE</b> 8:15 PM   88 MIN		
										<b>SHORTS - RESILIENT PATHS</b> 11:00 AM		
										<b>SHORTS - MAKING A SPLASH</b> 2:00 PM   35 MIN		
										<b>FAMILY TREE</b> 2:00 PM   35 MIN		

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 29

SCAN TO  
JOIN  
JOSHING AROUND  
TO LISTEN



Join Milwaukee's two  
Josh Albrechts as they embark  
on an adventure to celebrate  
the captivating coast.

Listen live Saturdays at 1:30  
p.m. on **620WTMJ** or online at  
[VISITMILWAUKEE.ORG/JAM](http://VISITMILWAUKEE.ORG/JAM).

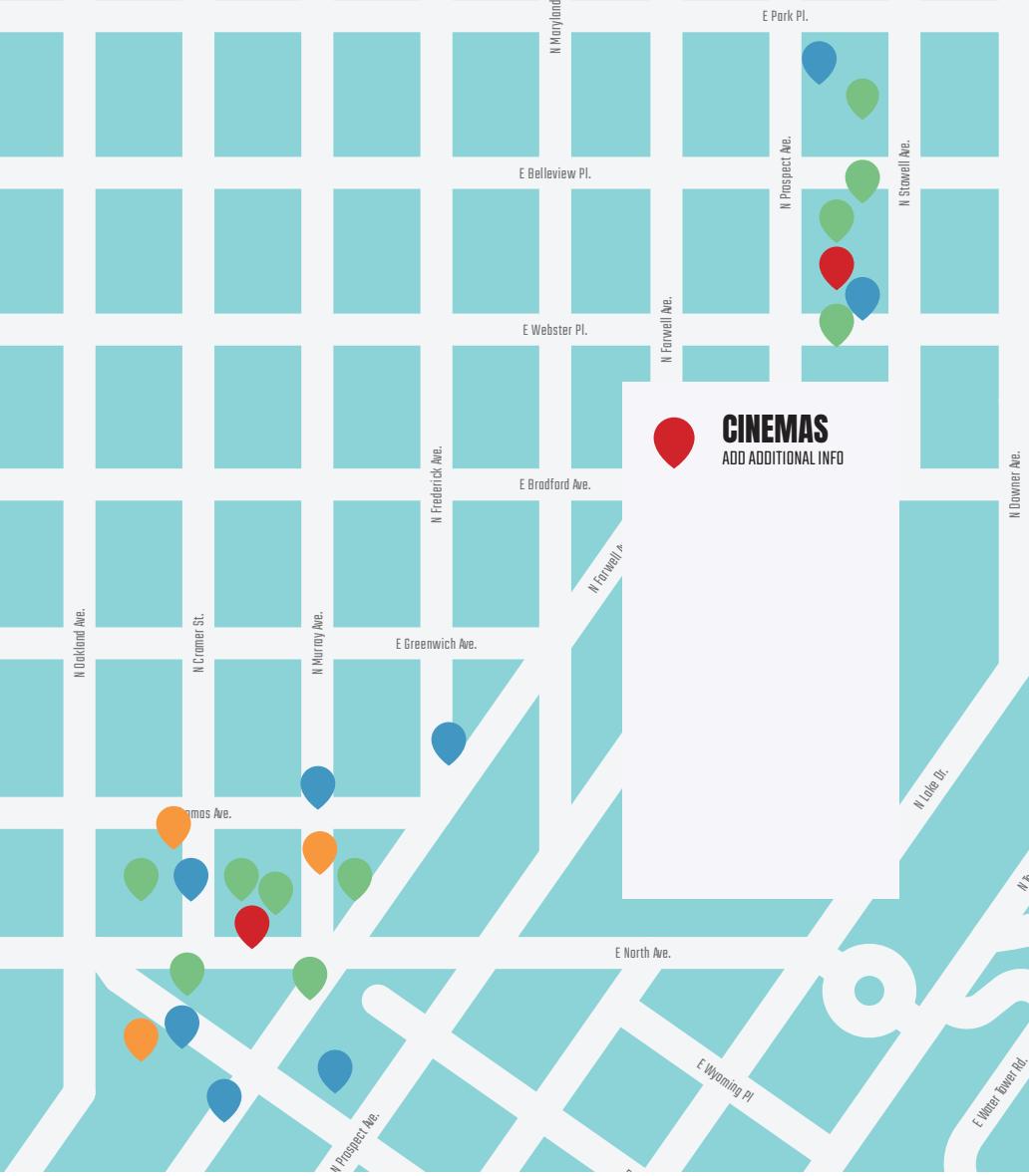


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# MAP & SIDEQUESTS

Between screenings at this year's 2025 Dialogues Documentary Festival, take some time to explore the vibrant East Side of Milwaukee! Support local businesses while enjoying everything this dynamic community has to offer.

# ABOUT US



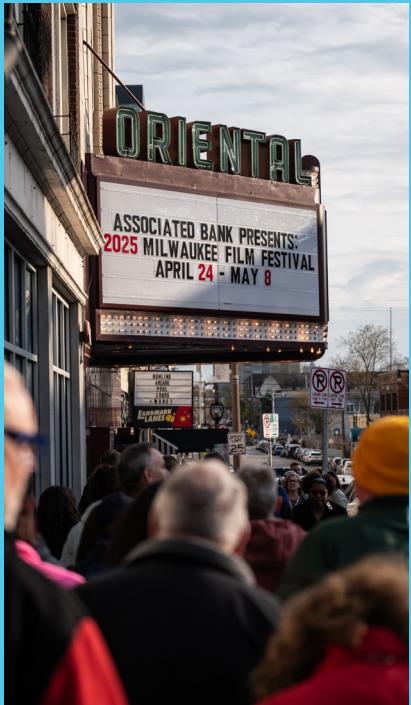
Milwaukee Film is a nonprofit arts organization dedicated to entertaining, educating, and engaging our community through cinematic experiences, with a vision to make Milwaukee a center for film culture. Milwaukee Film is committed to high-quality and accessible film programming through their operation of the magnificent Oriental Theatre, a historic cinema palace, and the iconic Downer Theatre, Milwaukee's oldest running cinema.

## MILWAUKEE FILM FESTIVAL

Since 2009, the annual Milwaukee Film Festival has brought together audiences and filmmakers in celebration of the immense power of cinema. It is one of the largest film festivals in the country and was recognized by Moviemaker Magazine as one of the "Coolest Film Festivals in the World." The 2024 Milwaukee Film Festival presented 382 screenings to an audience of over 32,000. We continue to elevate Milwaukee's growing film industry each year, and bring world-class films and filmmakers to local audiences while celebrating a shared passion for film, arts, and culture **unlike** anything else in Milwaukee.

**Join us for the 2025 Milwaukee Film Festival, April 16-30. 2026!**





## ORIENTAL THEATRE

Milwaukee Film operates the historic Oriental Theatre, a magnificent movie palace recognized on the National Register of Historic Places. Since getting the keys in 2018, Milwaukee Film has worked to revitalize this one-of-a-kind space. In 2019, we fully restored one of the three houses inside the theatre, replaced the lobby concessions stand, and showed nearly 250 film titles outside MFF. After the theatre closed in March 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we began our next phase of renovations, working to restore much of the theatre's other two houses while also incorporating hearing loops for improved accessibility. We're re-opened and proud to show off what we've accomplished in restoring this historical gem.



## DOWNER THEATRE

The Downer Theatre, a Milwaukee landmark since 1915, stands as one of the oldest cinemas in the United States, and the oldest running cinema in Milwaukee. Nestled in the heart of Milwaukee's vibrant East Side, this historic venue has been a beacon for film enthusiasts for over a century. Its intimate auditoriums offer a nostalgic glimpse into cinema's golden days, while its commitment to showcasing groundbreaking storytelling keeps it at the forefront of Milwaukee's cultural scene. Milwaukee Film officially took over operations of the iconic Downer Theatre in April 2024.

# THE DREAM TEAM

## LEADERSHIP

### **Susan Santha Kerns, Ph.D.**

Executive Director

### **Kristen C. Heller**

Managing Director

### **Cara Ogburn, Ph.D.**

Artistic Director

### **Ryan O'Desky**

Fractional CFO

## DEVELOPMENT

### **Rachel Vander Weit**

Development Director

### **Kristopher Pollard**

Membership & Giving Director

### **Dewey Miller**

Database Specialist

### **Tristan Adams**

Grants & Special Projects  
Coordinator

## FINANCE

### **Jonathan Demers**

Controller

### **Adam Mallen**

Accounting Coordinator

## MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

### **Ryan Ziegler**

Creative Services Manager

### **Robyn Ehrlich**

Communications & Public  
Relations Coordinator

### **Jolee Mallmann**

Social Media & Digital  
Coordinator

## OPERATIONS

### **Kevin Rice**

Technical Director

### **Pete y Balestrieri**

Cinema Operations Director

### **Ryan Putskey**

Facilities Manager

### **Ani Injasoulian**

Ticketing & Customer Service  
Manager

### **Connor Erickson**

Operations Manager

### **Brett Smith**

IT Technician

### **Kelsey Parks**

Technical Manager

### **Malik Riddle**

Front of House Manager

### **Aneesh Beahlen**

Assistant Front of  
House Manager

### **Vale Schroeder**

Assistant Front of  
House Manager

**Zac Higgins**  
Assistant Front of  
House Manager

**Deiva Motley**  
Assistant Cinema Manager

**Tyler Glor**  
Assistant Cinema Manager

**Ty Williams**  
Assistant Cinema Manager

**Ella Freigang**  
Assistant Cinema Manager

**Spencer Tye**  
Projectionist

**Gini Connell**  
Projectionist

## PROGRAMMING

**Kerstin Larson**  
Programming Director

**Abbie Esterline**  
Programming Coordinator

**Jack Feria**  
GenreQueer and Shorts  
Programmer

**Ty Williams**  
Black Lens Programmer

## FRONT OF HOUSE TEAM

**Allux Arellano-Metoxen**

**Alex Badtke**

**Giuseppe Balestrieri**

**Isabella Benitez**

**Lulu Braun**

**Sharon Burt**

**Rose Callahan**

**Dara Carneol**

**Zack Cowell**

**Joseph Cullen**

**Ren Gresbach**

**Ducky Griesemer**

**Harmony Henderson**

**Matthew Henderson**

**Maddie Hogue**

**Jamie Lee Jackson**

**Celia Jewell**

**Owen Killoran**

**Tyrone Lewis**

**Dara Madson**

**Phoebe Odegaard**

**Krissy Olsen**

**Ramona Peetz**

**Hannah Smith**

**Jada Wegner**

**Jake Whalen**

**Julian White**

**Harrison Willow**

**Ian Wilkinson**

**Carrie Van Gorder**

**Kami Yelk**

**Marlo Yelk**



