

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 28, 2023

MEDIA CONTACT:

Karen Durham, kadurham@wisc.edu

WEBSITE:

www.wifilmfest.org

TWO NEW SCREENINGS ADDED TO 2023 WISCONSIN FILM FESTIVAL LINEUP

Tickets are on sale and going fast;
Film Guide is available around town and online



Madison, WI – Ticket sales for the **2023 Wisconsin Film Festival** have been going at a brisk pace, with several films already selling out of advance tickets, leading programmers to add a few more screenings to this year’s lineup. With **Closing Night Films** [The Last Picture Show](#) and [How To Blow Up A Pipeline](#) now sold out, an empty closing night slot at WFF Hilldale Cinema 5 has been filled to present the area premiere of [BlackBerry](#). Meanwhile, the Wisconsin’s Own shorts program [Real People, Real Places](#)—another early sell-out—has had a second screening added due to popular demand on [Friday, April 14, 11:15 am](#) at WFF Hilldale Cinema 6.

Fresh from its debuts at the Berlin and SXSW Film Festivals, **BlackBerry** is a rollicking ride that tracks the steep rise and even steeper fall of the original smart phone and stars the nearly unrecognizable Glenn Howerton (*It’s Always Sunny in Philadelphia*) as ruthless corporate shark Jim Balsillie. The documentary shorts program **Real People, Real Places** includes Golden Badger Award-winning short [Friday Night Blind](#), as well as *Mondale Courting* (filmed right here in Madison on Mondale Ct.), *Expiration Dates*, *Full Circle*, and *Junkin’*.

The [Wisconsin Film Festival 2023 Film Guide](#) hit the streets in *Isthmus* on March 9 and is also available online. Tickets went on sale to the general public on March 11 and will continue to be available through the end of the Festival (April 20).

Presented over eight days, from Thursday, April 13 through Thursday, April 20, at four University of Wisconsin-Madison venues and three screens at WFF Hilldale, this year's Festival celebrates 25 years of cinematic indulgence. More than 160 films will be shown, including shorts, narrative features, documentaries, repertory films, restorations and rediscoveries, the best new films from around the world and nearby, including **Wisconsin's Own**, as well as family friendly fare in the **Big Screens, Little Folks** section of the festival.

Opening weekend highlights

The Festival's **Opening Night Film** is the new Ukrainian comedy-drama [Luxembourg, Luxembourg](#), the second feature from director Antonio Lukich. *Luxembourg* tells the story of two brothers on the opposite sides of the law: Vasya, a cop, struggles to move up the ranks while low-level drug dealer Kolya still lives at home with their eccentric mom. When the brothers learn that their father—who hasn't been in their lives since they were kids—is on his deathbed in a Luxembourg hospital, their lives are turned upside down as they embark on a journey to reunite with him in his final hours. *Luxembourg, Luxembourg* will be presented on Thursday, April 13 at 7 pm in [Shannon Hall](#) located inside the Memorial Union.

Preceding the screening will be a reception in the Union's [Sunset Lounge](#) from 5 to 7 pm. In addition to food and drink and opening remarks, the [Golden Badger Awards](#) will be presented to the Wisconsin's Own filmmakers behind *Of Wood*, *Friday Night Blind*, and *Carol and Janet*.

On Friday, April 14, [Manohla Dargis](#), Co-Chief Film Critic of *The New York Times*, will present [The Connection](#), (5:30 pm; Chazen Museum of Art), the provocative first feature by pioneering director Shirley Clarke (1919-1997), which challenges the boundary between documentary and fiction as 1960s jazz musicians await a heroin delivery in this trailblazing portrayal of drug addiction. Presented in 35mm, the screening will be followed by a discussion between Dargis and Wisconsin Film Festival Director and UW-Madison Professor of Film [Kelley Conway](#). This screening is presented with support from the [Wisconsin Center for Film and Theater Research](#).

Following her formal installment as the 30th chancellor of UW-Madison, Chancellor [Jennifer Mnookin](#) will introduce [We Are Not Ghouls](#), (Saturday, April 15, 3:30 pm; Shannon Hall - Memorial Union), a compelling look at justice through the eyes of United States Air Force Lt. Col. Yvonne Bradley, who volunteered to defend Binyam Mohamed, held at Guantanamo Bay in the wake of the 9/11 terror attacks. Director [Chris James Thompson](#), Lt. Col. Bradley, and her sister Pam Bradley will appear in person for a Q&A following the screening which will be moderated by Professor Tyrell Haberkorn of UW-Madison's Department of Asian Languages and Cultures.

Sold-out and near-capacity screenings

To-date, the following screenings have sold out of advance tickets (as per tradition, rush lines will form at these screenings and any available seats at showtime will be filled): [Geographies of Solitude](#) (Friday, April 14, 1:15 pm; Chazen Museum of Art); [Polite Society](#) (Friday, April 14, 6 pm; The Marquee at Union South); ["Secret Screening"](#) (Friday, April 14, 8:15 pm; The Marquee at Union South); [Greener Pastures](#) (Sunday, April 16, 11 am; Chazen Museum of Art); [Army of Darkness](#) (Sunday, April 16, 6:30 pm; Chazen Museum of Art); [I Like It Here](#) (Monday, April 17, 12:30 pm; Wisconsin Film Festival Hilldale 5); and [Viking](#) (Wednesday, April 19, 6 pm; Hilldale 1).

Tickets are going fast for [The Cameraman](#) (Saturday, April 15, 1 pm; UW Cinematheque) and [Chop & Steele](#) (Tuesday, April 18, 6:15 pm; Hilldale 6).

Not-to-be missed films recommended by Festival staff

Bob Murawski, Academy Award-winning editor and Grindhouse Releasing co-founder, will present the previously mentioned *Army of Darkness*, as well as [The Tough Ones](#) (Saturday, April 15, 8:45 pm; UW Cinematheque), and [Hollywood 90028](#) (Monday, April 17, 7:30 pm; Hilldale 5). Presented as a new 4K restoration, *Hollywood 90028* was the only feature by filmmaker Christina Hornisher; but Murawski has unearthed three shorts directed by Hornisher and those will precede the feature. Finally, Murawski will present a brand new 4K restoration from rare archival 35mm film elements, [Impulse](#) (Tuesday, April 18, 8:15 pm; Hilldale 5) directed by cult exploitation filmmaker William Grefé and starring William Shatner as a deranged gigolo who preys on rich women and is unable to control his murderous psychosexual urges.

[Chop & Steele](#) (Tuesday, April 18, 6:15 pm & 8:30 pm; Hilldale 6) is an irresistible documentary about Joe Pickett and Nick Prueher, the Wisconsin-born pranksters who created the [Found Footage Festival](#). They'll attend the screening and present a mini-Found Footage Fest after the feature.

Paranoid swinging sixties thriller [Bunny Lake is Missing](#) (Wednesday, April 19, 7:45; Hilldale 6) is presented in a new 4K restoration. Making an appearance in this classic by Otto Preminger are The Zombies who are the subject of another Festival selection, the new documentary [Hung Up on A Dream](#) (Wednesday, April 19, 5:30 pm; Hilldale 6). This portrait of one of the greatest of all British invasion bands is having its Wisconsin Premiere at the Festival.

[Confessions of a Good Samaritan](#) (Saturday, April 15, 1 pm & Sunday, April 16, 1:45 pm; Hilldale 6) is a chronicle of director [Penny Lane](#)'s personal journey about her decision to donate one her kidneys to a stranger in need. Her wildly entertaining and eccentric documentaries include *Hail Satan?* and *Listening to Kenny G*.

Director [Ken Kwapis](#) joins us to present two films. First, Buster Keaton stars as a street corner tintype photographer whose ambitions grow after meeting the girl of his dreams in [The Cameraman](#) (Saturday, April 15, 1 pm; UW Cinematheque), with piano accompaniment by the incomparable David Drazin. Kwapis drew inspiration from that classic to make the orangutan comedy [Dunston Checks In](#) (Saturday, April 15, 3 pm; UW Cinematheque), which the Festival is thrilled to present in 35mm. Kwapis' appearances at these screenings mark the opening of the Ken Kwapis Collection at the [Wisconsin Center for Film & Theater Research](#).

Keanu Reeves and Ana de Armas star in [Daughter of God](#) (Saturday, April 15, 5:30 pm; UW Cinematheque), a surreal, bilingual drama that explores faith, guilt, and repressed memory. The audience is in for a real treat as the WFF presents the official theatrical premiere of the film which, originally released in 2016 with 40 minutes of footage removed and retitled *Exposed*. Appearing in person will be director [Gee Malik Linton](#) as well as City University of New York lecturer and film historian James Kenney, who has worked to bring attention to this unique director's cut.

Rita Belda, Sony Pictures Entertainment's Vice President of Asset Management, Film Restoration, and Digital Mastering will appear with a new 4K restoration of [Dead Reckoning](#) (Thursday, April 20, 3:15 pm; Hilldale 6) starring Humphrey Bogart and Lizabeth Scott in an essential thriller from the heyday of Hollywood film noir. Belda will also present [Real Genius](#) (Thursday, April 30, 5:45 pm; Hilldale 5), one of the several science-fueled comedies with brainy heroes to be released in the wake of 1984's *Revenge of the Nerds*.

[Ralph Arlyck](#) appears in person with [Following Sean](#) (Sunday, April 16, 1:30 pm; Chazen Museum of Art), presented in 35mm, which started as a short about an opinionated, pot-smoking four-year-old in San Francisco and morphed into a multilayered and deeply introspective portrait of a revisited subject while also being a revealing look at the filmmaker. Presented in conjunction with [Following Sean](#) is Arlyck's new documentary [I Like it Here](#) (Sunday, April 16, 4 pm; UW Cinematheque & Monday, April 17, 12:30 pm; Hilldale 5) which approaches the subject of aging in both serious and humorous ways. Arlyck will appear in person at both screenings of [I Like It Here](#).

Legendary comedy duo Abbott & Costello's first foray into the world of color ([Cinecolor](#), that is) was with the fractured 1952 fairytale [Jack and the Beanstalk](#) (Sunday, April 16, 11 am; UW Cinematheque). The film will be presented in a new 4K restoration, and Jack Theakston of 3-D Film Archive will give a short talk about the budget-saving Cinecolor before the film and will also show a special 35mm reel of trailers of other features filmed in the same process.

[Judy Blume Forever](#) (Saturday, April 15, 11 am; Shannon Hall – Memorial Union) is a delightful and moving portrait of the young adult author who was—and remains—a lifeline to readers of all ages. The film delves into Blume's correspondence with her young readers and interviews the adults they became.

[Showing Up](#) (Saturday, April 15, 6:45 pm; The Marquee at Union South) by independent cinema icon [Kelly Reichardt](#) features Lizzy (Michelle Williams in her fourth collaboration with Reichardt), a sculptor struggling to finish her pieces in time for a gallery show while working her day job as an arts administrator.

In [Robot Monster 3-D](#) (Saturday, April 15, 11 am; UW Cinematheque), Alien visitor Ro-Man wipes out most of the Earth's population with his "awesome calcinatory death ray" in this cheapie camp classic. Part of the first wave of 3-D releases in early 1953, [Robot Monster 3-D](#)'s excellent stereoscopic effects have been lovingly restored by 3-D Film Archive in honor of the movie's 70th anniversary. This special premiere of the restoration will be followed by a Q&A with 3-D Film Archive's Bob Furmanek.

The irresistible documentary [Time Bomb Y2K](#) (Tuesday, April 18, 6 pm & Wednesday, April 19, 3:30 pm; Hilldale 1) is a non-stop parade of fascinating artifacts encompassing everything from celebrity pontification to the survivalist how-to videos as the year was turning from 1999 to 2000. Directors Brian Becker and Marley McDonald are scheduled to appear in person at both screenings for post-film Q&As.

Big Screens, Little Folks

[Chocolate and Butter Sculpture](#) (Friday, April 14, 4 pm; The Marquee at Union South) follows two 12-year-old boys who run away from their respective homes and embark on a journey that takes them through the breathtakingly beautiful landscapes of Tibet. Recommended ages: 10+.

Studio Ghibli fans will adore [Dragon Princess](#) (Monday, April 17, 4 pm; Hilldale 6), which follows the friendship between two strong and very different girls who team up to thwart an evil king in a beautifully lush fairytale-inspired landscape. Recommended for ages 8+.

[How I Learned to Fly](#) (Saturday, April 15, 5:30 pm; Hilldale 1) is a terrific coming-of-age story that was nominated for Best Film in 2023 by the European Children's Film Association. Recommended ages: 10+.

In the shorts program [*Short and Sweet*](#) (Sunday, April 15, 12:45 pm; The Marquee at Union South), life is full of bumps and unexpected turns. Resourcefulness is celebrated in these stories of resilience and resolve from all around the world. Recommended ages: 8-12.

[*Shorter and Sweeter*](#) (Sunday, April 15, 11 am; The Marquee at Union South) takes viewers on travels to new worlds inspired by art, food, adventure, and wonder. Recommended ages: 4-8.

[*Yung Punx: A Punk Parable*](#) (Friday, April 14, 3:30 pm; Chazen Museum of Art) is the story of punk rock dreams as this fast-paced, irresistible documentary follows the band Color Killer which ended up being the youngest act ever in the history of the Warped Tour. Recommended ages 8+.

Screenings honoring diversity and showcasing global cinema

[*Addicted to Life*](#) (Sunday, April 16, 6:30 pm; Hilldale 1) is a riveting documentary about an elite athlete, Paralympian Marieke Vervoort, and her decisions on how to live and how to die.

The dazzling animated film [*Blind Willow, Sleeping Woman*](#) (Friday, April 14, 6 pm & Saturday, April 15, 8:15 pm; Hilldale 6) is based on several short stories by [Haruki Murakami](#) and will immerse the viewer in a parallel-universe Japan.

[*Blue Jean*](#) (Friday, April 14, 6:15 pm & Saturday, April 15, 1:15 pm; Hilldale 1), set in 1988 Newcastle, concerns Jean, a schoolteacher who hits the local lesbian bar at night with her partner as she navigates a double life living in Thatcher's England.

[*Bob Wine: The People's President*](#) (Friday, April 14, 8:15 pm & Sunday, April 16, 11:15 am; Hilldale 6) is an extraordinary portrait of the former Ugandan parliament member, activist, and superstar musician as he and his wife risk their lives to liberate their country.

The elite worlds of higher education, religion, and government collide in Cannes Best Screenplay award-winner [*Cairo Conspiracy*](#) (Sunday, April 16, 1:30 pm; Shannon Hall – Memorial Union), by Swedish-Egyptian director Tark Saleh.

Presented in 35mm, [Jafar Panahi](#)'s award-winning [*The Circle*](#) (Friday, April 14, 3:15 pm; UW Cinematheque) is a suspenseful glimpse into the world of Iranian women. Panahi, one of the world's finest filmmakers, has been largely confined to his apartment for years by the Iranian government. And yet he persists.

[*Ever Deadly*](#) (Saturday, April 15, 11:15 am & Tuesday, April 18, 3:15 pm; Hilldale 1 & 5) is a portrait of the stunningly innovative Inuk throat singer Tanya Tagaq who has collaborated with Björk and the Kronos Quartet.

The intensely visual [*Joyland*](#) (Sunday, April 16, 5 pm; The Marquee at Union South & Monday, April 17, 6 pm; Hilldale 1) from Pakistani director Saim Sadiq tells the story of a man who, after a stretch of unemployment, finds work as a backup dancer in a cabaret, where he's drawn to a trans woman.

Four Black trans sex workers tell it like it is in [*Kokomo City*](#) (Saturday, April 15, 8:30 pm; Hilldale 5 & Monday, April 17, 8:45 pm; Hilldale 1), D. Smith's riotously funny, searingly candid documentary that is the politically incorrect, real-talk antidote to the stream of cautious, sanitized trans stories that have recently dominated the media.

Seven years in the making and stunningly etched in chiaroscuro black-and-white, [*Mami Wata*](#) (Saturday, April 15, 11:30 am; Monday, April 17, 3 pm; Hilldale 5) is folklore for the modern age in

which Mama Efe serves as the intermediary between her community and a goddess who resides in the ocean off the coast of West Africa.

Spanning a 20-year period, [Mother and Son](#) (Friday, April 14, 3:30 pm & Tuesday, April 18, 12:30 pm; Hilldale 6) offers slice-of-life scenes that chart the joys and tribulations of a mother and her two sons, emigres from the Ivory Coast, living in France.

In the extraordinary film [The Tuba Thieves](#) (Friday, April 14, 3:45 pm & Saturday, April 15, 4:15 pm; Hilldale 5), director Alison O’Daniel, who is deaf, provocatively restructures the role of sound and music in cinema. For these screening, viewers will be offered balloons to hold during the film so they can feel the soundtrack.

The delightfully offbeat musical fantasia [Will-o'-the-Wisp](#) (Friday, April 14, 1:30 pm & Sunday, April 16, 2 pm; UW Cinematheque) begins in the year 2069, as King Alfredo of Portugal reminisces on his youthful dalliances as a firefighter in training. Shirking his royal responsibilities, the wide-eyed prince enlists in an absurdly homoerotic firehouse where every aspect of life among the beefcake firemen is charged with desire.

The sophomore feature by Peruvian director Rossana Díaz Costa, [A World for Julius](#) (Tuesday, April 18, 5:15 pm; Hilldale 5) at first conveys a happy and peaceful childhood for Julius. But, as time goes on, anxieties and tragedies slowly chip away at the idyllic splendor of the child’s fledgling life as his father passes away and his mother remarries a cold, bullying man. [Rossana Díaz Costa](#) is scheduled to appear at the screening.

Wisconsin’s Own

Wisconsin’s Own programs include the aforementioned *We Are Not Ghouls* and **Golden Badger Award** winners *Of Wood*, *Friday Night Blind*, and *Carol & Janet*. *Of Wood*, which enlivens the history of human ingenuity and invention with some dazzling stop-cut animation, will be presented in the Wisconsin’s Own program [“Experiments”](#) (Saturday, April 15, 5:30 pm; Chazen Museum of Art). *Carol & Janet*’s sharply written and confidently acted absurdist comedy cherishes an enduring bond between the titular coworkers and best friends and will be presented in [“Wisconsin’s Own Gone Wild”](#) (Saturday, April 15, 9:00 pm; The Marquee at Union South); and *Friday Night Blind*, which attests to the resilience of spirit in its profiles of three women among the Milwaukee Beer Barrels Blind Bowling League is showcased in [“Real People/Real Places”](#).

Also presented as part of **Wisconsin’s Own** is [Hundreds of Beavers](#) (Sunday, April 16, 4:15 pm; Shannon Hall – Memorial Union). This spectacularly oddball feature, which combines Looney Tunes, Benny Hill, *Cannibal: The Musical*, *Blazing Saddles*, and Adult Swim, concerns a drunken applejack salesman who battles—as the title states—hundreds of beavers. This wild and wacky film will leave heads spinning and jaws gaping in amazement. Director Mike Cheslik and actor Ryland Brickson Cole Tews will be on hand to answer questions, of which there will be many.

General admission tickets are \$12 each to all screenings in the Wisconsin Film Festival. Festival passes are \$325. To purchase, visit www.wifilmfest.eventive.org/welcome. Subject to availability, UW-Madison students are eligible for one free ticket to every screening all Festival long with a current WisCard. If a seat is available upon arriving at the screening, the student will be admitted at no cost.

This year’s Wisconsin Film Festival venues on the campus of the University of Wisconsin-Madison campus include Shannon Hall, 800 Langdon St.; Chazen Museum of Art, 750 University Ave.; UW

Cinematheque, 821 University Ave.; and The Marquee, 2nd Floor, Union South, 1308 Dayton St. Films will also be screened at Wisconsin Film Festival Hilldale in Cinemas 1, 5, and 6 (the former AMC Hilldale theaters), located at 430 N. Midvale Blvd.

Sponsors and Partners for the 2023 Wisconsin Film Festival, presented by the University of Wisconsin-Madison's Department of Communication Arts, are: **Leadership Sponsors** Hilldale Madison, Great Dane Pub & Brewing Co., and The Madison Concourse Hotel and Governor's Club; **Sustaining + Additional Support** from American Family Insurance, Café Hollander, The Livingston Inn, Merchant, Park Hotel, UW Credit Union, and Springhill Suites; **Campus Partners** African Cultural Studies, Asian American Studies Program, Center for East Asian Studies, Center for the Humanities, Center for Russia, East Europe, and Central Asia, Center for South Asia, Department of English, Department of French and Italian, Department of Spanish and Portuguese, Division of the Arts, Gender & Sexuality Campus Center, Institute for Regional and International Studies National Resource Center, Latin American, Caribbean and Iberian Studies, Middle Eastern Studies Program, Mosse/Weinstein Center for Jewish Studies, Wisconsin Center for Film and Theater Research, Wisconsin Institute for Discovery, 4Women and Well Being Initiative, UW Cinematheque, Wisconsin Union Theater, and Film Committee – Wisconsin Union Directorate; **Community Partners** Leopold's, ARTS for ALL Wisconsin, Madison Public Library, Madison Children's Museum, Middleton Public Library, Monona Public Library, Sister Cities Madison – Freiburg Committee, Communication, Adesys, Kaleidoscope Event Design, Metcalfe's, Just Coffee, Nutcrack, Steve's University Ave., Willy Street Coop, Wisconsin Distributors, Wildwood Productions, and Hill Farms; **Individual and Foundation Support** from Anonymous Fund, Brittingham Trust, The Real Butter Fund, Madison Gas and Electric Foundation, Dane Arts, and George and Pamela Hamel and Kelley and Kim Kahl of the Cinema Circle; and **Promotional Support** from City Cast Madison, NBC15, Destination Madison, Isthmus, PBS Wisconsin, Tone Madison, and Wisconsin Public Radio.

Since 1999, the Wisconsin Film Festival has curated, promoted, and exhibited programs showcasing the art and the history of world cinema. Currently presented under the auspices of the University of Wisconsin-Madison's Department of Communication Arts, the Festival is one of the largest campus-based film festivals in United States, supporting UW's teaching, research, and public service mission by exposing the campus and the greater Madison community to films and filmmakers from Wisconsin and beyond. As cinema is an essential art form that enriches the human experience and enhances one's knowledge of a variety of cultures, the Festival seeks to create a strong sense of community through curating a vast body of films and through the creation of gatherings before and after screenings that welcome diverse communities. With the ever-evolving technology of the film industry, the Festival strives to screen movies using state-of-the-art projection and sound while creating opportunities for younger students to experience cinema from around the world through field trips, special presentations, and community outreach.

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