

# SOO FILM FESTIVAL

CELEBRATING 10 YEARS OF  
GREAT LAKES, GREAT MOVIES

SEPTEMBER 13-17, 2023  
SAULT STE. MARIE, MICHIGAN

DATES AND VENUES SUBJECT TO CHANGE

# FESTIVAL GUIDE



**Congratulations  
on 10 Years of  
Great Lakes,  
Great Movies!**

## 2023 Soo Film Festival Film Schedule

Sep 13 to 17

Block	Block Title	Venue	Day	Time
1	Foreign Shorts (FREE)	Bayliss Library	Wed 13	6:30p
2	Cranedance (FREE)	Bayliss Library	Thu 14	6:30p
3	Date Night	Soo Theatre	Fri 15	3p
	BREAK		Fri 15	4:35p
4	Welcome HOMES	Soo Theatre	Fri 15	5:30p
5	Acting Like Nothing Is Wrong	Soo Theatre	Fri 15	7:30p
6	The Marshmallow Mystery Tour	Soo Theatre	Fri 15	9:30p
7	Student Films	Soo Theatre	Sat 16	10:30a
8	Made in Michigan	Soo Theatre	Sat 16	1p
	BREAK		Sat 16	3p
9	Healing Waters Q&A	Soo Theatre	Sat 16	4p
10	A Michigan Left Q&A	Soo Theatre	Sat 16	6:30p
	MEET & GREET		Sat 16	8:20p
11	Drawn Out	Soo Theatre	Sun 17	11a
12	HOMES Documented	Soo Theatre	Sun 17	1p
	BREAK		Sun 17	2:30p
13	Earlybird	Soo Theatre	Sun 17	3:30p
14	Being Satori Circus Q&A	Soo Theatre	Sun 17	5:30p

Bayliss Public Library, a Superior District Library, is located at 541 Library Drive, Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan. Admission to all films at this venue is free. For more information, call the Festival office at (906) 440-6086 or the library at (906) 632-9331. Program is subject to change.

The Soo Theatre is located at 534 Ashmun St., Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan. Tickets go on sale Aug 22.

Festival Pass \$50; Festival Super Saver \$80; Daily Pass \$20; Single Tickets \$7/\$5 per block  
Buy tickets online at [SooFilmFestival.org](http://SooFilmFestival.org) or call (906) 440-6086. Program is subject to change.

# Thank You to Our Amazing Sponsors!



Supported by  
the Michigan Arts and Culture Council  
and administered by  
Eastern Upper Peninsula Planning Commission.

## Film List

### Block 1-Foreign Shorts

Aimé  
The Forbidden Fruit  
Little Loneliness  
Oysters  
Myosotis  
Collecting  
Call It Whatever  
The Bottle Opener

### Block 2-Cranedance

Cranedance

### Block 3-Date Night

Bulletin  
Something Fishy  
Nightcap  
Franklin Loves Sophie  
Liv & Adam  
The Blind Date  
Lover Boy's Little Dream  
The Pink Elephant  
Paper Planes

### Block 4-Welcome HOMES

Dark Follower  
Personalized Futures  
Movie Night  
Feeling the Apocalypse  
The Black Mr. Rodgers  
Party's Over  
The Carpenter  
The Carpenter II  
Disgruntled  
SMRT Services  
Assassino Americano Amnésico

### Block 5-Acting Like...

Acting Like Nothing Is Wrong

### Block 6-The Marshmallow ...

The Marshmallow Mystery Tour

### Block 7-Student Films

Grandpa Cherry Blossom  
The More We Get Together  
Ivory Tulle  
LINT  
Time to Leave  
Waves Apart  
Sisyphus Unbound  
Incoherence

### Block 8-Made in Michigan

Salamander  
Storage  
Rosetta  
GRBBR  
Saving Our Theatre  
Not as We Do  
Lake Effect

### Block 9-Healing Waters

Win(d) Over Cancer  
When Hope Breaks Through

### Block 10-A Michigan Left

The Bad Trip Home  
Quicksand

# Film List

## Block 11-Drawn Out

The Lost Courier  
Pyramid of Despair  
Hide and Beep  
Woodpecker  
Daisy's Final Goodbye  
Pig  
A Guerra Finita  
I'm Not Afraid!  
The Old Hag and the Crow  
Switcho  
Night  
Not as Straight as This Line  
Chick-a-Duck  
Life Decision

## Block 12-HOMES Documented

Friday Night Blind  
Sustenance  
The *A.A. Parker*: One Ship, Twice Sunk  
The Great Storm of 1872  
Mystic Michigan: The Rocks Cry Out  
Born in the Barn: Part 1

## Block 13-Earlybird

Earlybird

## Block 14-Being Satori Circus

Being Satori Circus ~ A Performance  
Documentary in Five Acts

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# Welcome!

Welcome to the 2023 Soo Film Festival!

We are celebrating ten years of Great Lakes, Great Movies and are happy you're here with us. That a phone call from Taylor Brugman, our founding president, asking, "What do you think about doing a film festival?" would turn into ten years of wonderful films, new friends, and great memories is just astonishing. It has been a tremendous mix of rewarding and exhausting to put on this festival but we love it and thank you for coming along on this ride.

The challenge is always in selecting the programming, and 2023 was no exception, but we feel we were quite able to execute our mission. The Great Lakes region is well represented by the films and filmmakers and, in fact, this may be the most films we've ever had from Michigan. To sample the wide variety of films across several genres be sure to check out the shorts programs dedicated to the Great Lakes on Friday (Welcome HOMES), Saturday (Made in Michigan), and Sunday (HOMES Documented).

Please, do not miss the student films on Saturday. We particularly encourage student submissions and this could be your first look at your favorite filmmakers of tomorrow. Your support could be instrumental in ensuring they continue to make films in the Great Lakes for years to come.

Our Saturday feature film, Quicksand, is a perfect example of our mission: it was made in and around Traverse City and the Upper Peninsula. It is exactly what we aim to showcase and promote. It's also very funny. Come see what you can make in Michigan with a script, a camera, and your friends. Join us afterward for a Q&A session with director JohnPaul Morris and find out exactly how they did it.

Our documentary features this year all have filmmakers from Michigan and cover a wide variety of topics from wildlife to a rock star performance artist. As varied as they are, they display the resilience that comes from living in the Great Lakes.

The festival begins with two evening programs at Bayliss Public Library, just a block away from the Soo Theatre. Admission to the films at the library is free. The festival continues Friday through Sunday at the Soo Theatre.

Soo Film Festival places an emphasis on Great Lakes films and filmmakers but entry is open worldwide.

All films in every category are eligible for an Audience Award. Festival attendees are encouraged to vote for their favorites.

Thank you for coming out and supporting the festival. We are thrilled to once again welcome you to downtown Sault Ste. Marie for five fantastic days of cinema. We begin this year with a selection of films from around the world and close out with a documentary that could possibly only come from Detroit. We encourage you to explore everything in between, adventure awaits!

# Tickets and Passes

A Festival Pass is \$50 and gives you admission to all blocks on all days of the festival. The Festival Super Saver Pass is \$80 and gives you TWO festival passes for one low price! A Daily Pass is \$20 and gives you admission to all blocks on a single day (Friday, Saturday, or Sunday). Tickets to a single block are \$7 for general admission and \$5 for students and seniors.

Tickets and passes for the 2023 Soo Film Festival go on sale August 22. You may purchase all tickets and passes online at the Soo Film Festival ticket page at FilmFreeway. If you purchase tickets or passes online, please bring your receipt (printed or viewable on your phone).

No tickets are required for films shown at Bayliss Public Library. Admission is free to all films at that venue.

Starting September 15, you may purchase tickets and passes at the door. We accept cash, credit cards, and debit cards.

Tickets to individual films will be available at the Soo Theatre 30 minutes before the film start time. You may pick up festival passes at the Soo Theatre 30 minutes before the first screening you wish to attend. If you purchase tickets or passes online, please bring your receipt (printed or viewable on your phone).

## TICKET FAQ

*If I purchase a single film ticket, do I have a reserved seat?*

Single film tickets are reserved for a screening of a specific film with a specific screening time and date; however, having a ticket does not guarantee you a seat. You must arrive at the Soo Theatre at least 15 minutes before the scheduled screening start time.

*Are festival passes good for any screening?*

Yes; however, please arrive at least 15 minutes prior to the screening you wish to attend to assure yourself the opportunity to secure a seat.

*Can ticket purchases be refunded or exchanged?*

We regret that tickets cannot be refunded except in the case of a cancelled screening. Exchanges, when possible, will be subject to a \$1.00 processing fee per order.

*I lost my tickets. What should I do?*

If you have misplaced your Soo Film Festival tickets, please arrive 30 minutes before the screening begins and ask for assistance.

## Block 1-Foreign Shorts

Shorts, 115 min, Not rated

Wednesday, Sept. 13, 6:30pm - Bayliss Library      Free admission



*Still photo from Collecting*

A selection of short films from around the world.

### Aimé

**Directors:** Gillie Cinneri, Anouk Ferreira da Silva

Narrative Short, Belgium, 2022, 16 min, Color, Student Project - Institut des Arts de Diffusion (IAD), Ottignies-Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium

Aimé, a young drug dealer, comes to demand his due from one of his customers. She leaves him alone with her nine-year-old daughter who is having trouble with a math problem.

### The Forbidden Fruit

**Directors:** Vlad F. Dumea, Sebastian Andro

Narrative Short, Romania, 2022, 19 min, Color

A devoted family man uncovers the truth about Original Sin.

### Little Loneliness

**Director:** María José García Garrido

Narrative Short, Spain, 2022, 8 min, Color

After the death of a baby, the baby's sister takes refuge in dreams of memories of happier moments with her mother, who has grown distant in her grief since the tragedy.

## Oysters

**Director:** Maïa Descamps

Narrative Short, Belgium, 2022, 23 min, Color

Mouths stay shut like the oysters these women are busy opening. But as shells shatter and hands are torn, truth rises to the surface.

## Myosotis

**Director:** Michael Schwendinger

Narrative Short, Switzerland, 2022, 15 min, Color

A mountain farmer experiences the drastic consequences of a forced farewell firsthand. He is powerless in the face of a system that swallows you up faster than you think.

## Collecting

**Director:** Marcos Gualda

Narrative Short, Spain, 2022, 14 min, Color

Marita Carbone, an old aristocratic lady in decay, relieves her loneliness by collecting absurd things. One day, two Mormons disturb the peace of her home.

Link: [lineupshorts.com/coleccionismo](https://lineupshorts.com/coleccionismo)

## Call It Whatever

**Director:** Jesús Agudo

Narrative Short, Spain, 2022, 5 min, Color, Student Project - Linterna Producciones, Madrid, Spain

Juan and Julia have been together for several years and have a comfortable life. He works in a laboratory and she is a successful executive. Their lives are about to change.

Link: [mms-distribuciondecortometrajes.es/catalogo/llx.asp](https://mms-distribuciondecortometrajes.es/catalogo/llx.asp)

## The Bottle Opener

**Director:** Julien Dewitte

Narrative Short, Belgium, 2022, 15 min, Color

Eric, an introverted bachelor, has been working at the same Belgian brewery for twenty years. While he wants to quit in order to break his routine, he realizes that he is the only one who can save the brewery by participating in a beer uncapping contest.

## Block 2-Cranedance

Feature, 93 min, Not rated

Thursday, Sep 14, 6:30pm - Bayliss Library

Free admission



Still photo from *Cranedance*

### Cranedance

**Director:** Mindy Denninger

Documentary Feature, United States, 2023, 93 min, Color

Sandhill cranes are noticeable for their tall height, unique loud calls, and prehistoric appearance. In this film you will get an extraordinary glimpse into the fascinating lives of the cranes that frequent a shallow lake in Oxford, Michigan.

Join Mindy as she observes their intriguing behavior and then goes on a journey of discovery about the intersection of this species and the people around them. Learn about their recovery from near extinction and what could be next for these incredible birds.

**Great Lakes Connection:** This film is about the sandhill cranes of Michigan! It was filmed in Michigan and the director is a lifelong Michigander.

**Director:** Mindy Denninger

**Writer:** Mindy Denninger

### DIRECTOR BIOGRAPHY

Mindy started Unreasonable Productions in 2014 to enter the first annual Wildwood Film Festival sponsored by ONTV in Lake Orion, Michigan.

Her short film *The Orb* took Second Place overall, followed by *Flycatcher* (First Place 2015), *Help Me Tech Support* (First Place 2016), *Runner 13* (Third Place

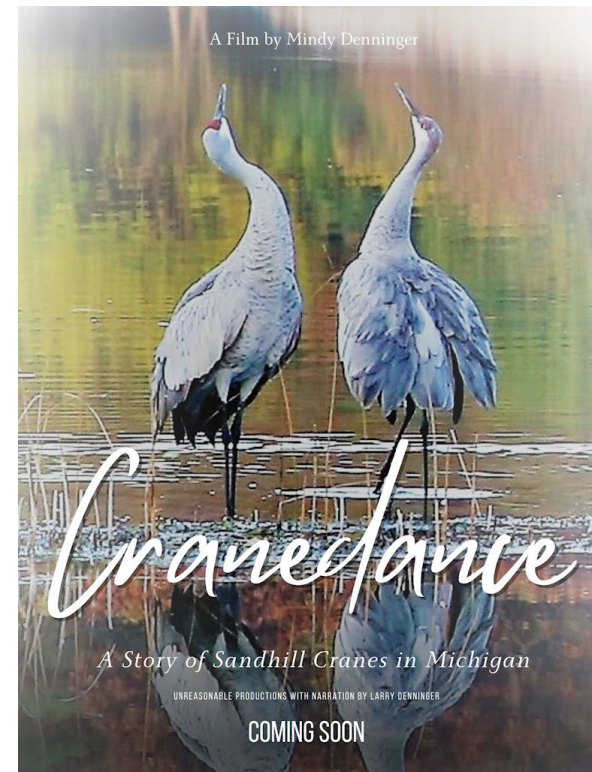


2017), *Witched* (First Place 2019), and *A Kind of Time* (2020).

Her films have also been shown in the NXMW North by Midwest Micro-Budget Film Festival in Kalamazoo and the Short, Sweet, Film Fest in Cleveland, Ohio.

Mindy's latest project is a full-length feature documentary *Cranedance* which is a story of Michigan sandhill cranes.

Links: [cranedancemovie.wixsite.com/cranedance-movie](https://cranedancemovie.wixsite.com/cranedance-movie)  
[tinyurl.com/mta6kdyt](https://tinyurl.com/mta6kdyt)  
[facebook.com/WINGSPANMOVIE](https://facebook.com/WINGSPANMOVIE)



## Block 3-Date Night

Shorts, 93 min, Not rated

Friday, Sep 15, 3pm - Soo Theatre



Still photo from *Bulletin*

A selection of short films that use different techniques to look at modern relationships.

### Bulletin

**Director:** Rachel Weber

Narrative Short, United States, 2023, 8 min, Color

Maren is just trying to make friends; Lucas keeps getting in the way. This accidental love story set in the 1990s features beer, wood, and bean bag toss.

Great Lakes Connection: The film was shot in Minnesota.

### Something Fishy

**Director:** Christina Woo

Animation, United States, 2022, 4 min, Color, Student Project - California Institute of the Arts, Santa Clarita

Sara is getting ready to go on a date with her new boyfriend, but Jessica, Sara's pet goldfish, notices something not quite right about him.

Great Lakes Connection: The composer is from Michigan.

Links: [christinawoo.art/](http://christinawoo.art/)  
[instagram.com/christinawoowoo](https://www.instagram.com/christinawoowoo)

## Nightcap

**Director:** Corey Benson Powers

Narrative Short, United States, 2023, 8 min, Color

After they meet on a dating app, Jeffrey and Kira end their first date by going to his place for one last drink. Jeffrey claims that he has to keep his aggressive dog locked up in his office. But as the night goes on, Kira begins to wonder what exactly is on the other side of the door.

Great Lakes Connection: The filmmaker is from Chicago, Illinois. The film was shot in Chicago with a local cast and crew.

Links: [instagram.com/nightcapfilm](https://www.instagram.com/nightcapfilm)

## Franklin Loves Sophie

**Directors:** Tyler Holme, Tali Rabinowitz, Chase Shurtz

Narrative Short, United States, 2023, 7 min, Color

Franklin loves Sophie. Sophie does not love Franklin. Now they are on their way to a double date with their best friends, Wren and Matt. What could go wrong?

Great Lakes Connection: The film was shot entirely in Illinois with a cast of talented young Illinois actors. Also the directors were all born in the Great Lakes region.

## Liv & Adam

**Director:** Emma L.R. Hogg

Narrative Short, Canada, 2022, 11 min, Color

There is no correlation between love and rightness. Love is much more complicated than that. For Liv and Adam, just because their relationship didn't work out doesn't mean that it didn't matter.

Great Lakes Connection: The writer/director is from Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario.

## The Blind Date

**Director:** Kai Hayakawa

Narrative Short, United States, 2022, 17 min, Color, Student Project - Arizona State University, Tempe

Ryan, a college student who struggles with dating, agrees to be set up on a blind date by his friend Adam. However, after he arrives at the restaurant, he soon comes to realize that his date is actually blind.

Links: [linktr.ee/MJ\\_Canyon](https://linktr.ee/MJ_Canyon)  
[instagram.com/mj\\_canyon](https://www.instagram.com/mj_canyon)

## Lover Boy's Little Dream

**Director:** Ritvick Mehra

Animation, Canada, 2022, 15 min, Color

A quirky love story between Lover Boy and his high school crush, Mimi. When Lover Boy finds out Mimi is interning at the same office, he must overcome his self-doubt to have a chance with her.

## The Pink Elephant

**Director:** Rene Smaal

Narrative Short, Netherlands, 2021, 6 min, Color

The powers of love are always at work. But in an ancient southern Italian town at sunset, they seem just a little more magical.

## Paper Planes

**Directors:** Michael Glover Smith, Alyssa Thordarson

Narrative Short, United States, 2023, 17 min, Color

A woman with agoraphobia and the Airbnb guest across the hall strike up a correspondence that becomes something more for the holidays.

Great Lakes Connection: The film was shot in Chicago with a 100% local cast and crew.

Link: [alyssathordarson.com/filmmaking/#paper-planes](https://alyssathordarson.com/filmmaking/#paper-planes)

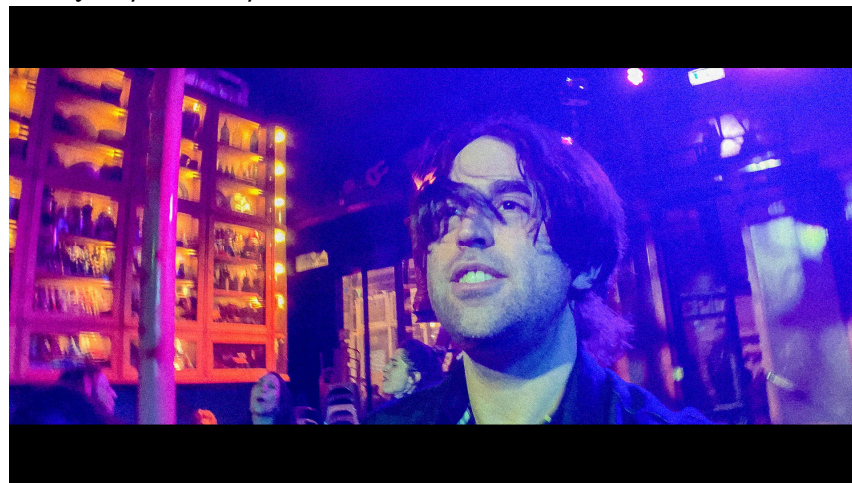


*Still photo from Something Fishy*

## Block 4-Welcome HOMES

Shorts, 104 min, Not rated

Friday, Sep 15, 5:30pm - Soo Theatre



*Still photo from Assassino Americano Amnésico*

Shorts program presenting films from around the Great Lakes region.

## Dark Follower

**Director:** Ellison Winterstein

Narrative Short, United States, 2022, 4 min, Color

A young man makes a record of how a mysterious stranger has been following his family for generations.

Great Lakes Connection: The film was produced in East Lansing, Michigan by an all-Michigan-native cast and crew.

Links: [eviltwindigital.com](https://eviltwindigital.com)  
[twitter.com/EvilTwinDigital](https://twitter.com/EvilTwinDigital)  
[facebook.com/EvilTwinDigital](https://facebook.com/EvilTwinDigital)  
[instagram.com/eviltwindigital](https://instagram.com/eviltwindigital)

## Personalized Futures

**Director:** Max Delfino

Narrative Short, United States, 2023, 10 min, Color, Student Project - University of Southern California, Los Angeles

In a future in which a personalized algorithm decides the major for each student, Kate, an economics major with an artistic calling, is faced with the choice of trusting the system or trying to subvert it from within.

Great Lakes Connection: The writer/director/producer teaches at Northwestern

University in Evanston, Illinois. The character of Kate was inspired by his students and their dreams.

Links: [personalizedfutures.com](https://personalizedfutures.com)  
[instagram.com/personalizedfuturesfilm](https://instagram.com/personalizedfuturesfilm)

## Movie Night

**Director:** Devin O'Rourke

Narrative Short, United States, 2023, 5 min, Color

A husband prepares for a night in with his wife by making something special in the garage.

Great Lakes Connection: The film was shot in Michigan. The filmmakers are from Holland and Saugatuck, Michigan. They are also the creators of the Saugatuck Film Fest.

## Feeling the Apocalypse

**Director:** Chen Sing Yap

Animation, Canada, 2022, 7 min, Color, Student Project - Sheridan College, Oakville, Ontario

A psychotherapist struggling with climate anxiety explores what it means to live in a dying world.

Great Lakes Connection: The film was made in Oakville, a city in southern Ontario. It briefly discusses the narrator's childhood in Owen Sound, another city in southern Ontario.

Links: [bftvsites.sheridanc.on.ca/apocalypse](https://bftvsites.sheridanc.on.ca/apocalypse)  
[instagram.com/feelingtheapocalypse/](https://instagram.com/feelingtheapocalypse/)

## The Black Mr. Rodgers

**Director:** Gerald Hamilton

Documentary Short, United States, 2023, 25 min, Color

Joseph Williams is the founder and executive director of a Chicago-based organization called Mr. Dad's Father's Club. The organization aims to keep fathers active in their children's lives by having fathers from the community go into classrooms and read to the kids.

Often seen wearing a red cardigan while reading books to the children, Williams was given the nickname "The Black Mr. Rodgers."

This film documents Williams's journey to enrich his community and highlights his rough upbringing and current struggle to keep his program alive.

Great Lakes Connection: The film was shot in Chicago and centers around a Chicago native.

Links: [instagram.com/tbmrilm/](https://instagram.com/tbmrilm/)

## Party's Over

**Director:** Neil Willoughby

Narrative Short, United States, 2022, 6 min, Color

The night turns to terror when uninvited guests crash a Halloween party.

Great Lakes Connection: The film was shot in St. Clair Shores, Michigan. The cast and crew are all Michiganders!

Links: [hiraethfilms.com](https://hiraethfilms.com)  
[facebook.com/hiraethfilmsdetroit](https://facebook.com/hiraethfilmsdetroit)  
[instagram.com/hiraethfilms](https://instagram.com/hiraethfilms)

## The Carpenter

**Director:** Frank DeMarco

Narrative Short, Canada, 2022, 2 min, Color

A string of murders has taken place and the bodies are found in handmade wooden boxes. Who is the man behind these killings? Who is "The Carpenter?"

Great Lakes Connection: The film was shot in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario. The writer/director and actors are from Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario.

Links: [facebook.com/509894634/videos/599797378167839/](https://facebook.com/509894634/videos/599797378167839/)  
[instagram.com/tv/CeXX40HgiDA](https://instagram.com/tv/CeXX40HgiDA)



*Still photo from The Black Mr. Rodgers*

## The Carpenter II

**Director:** Frank DeMarco

Narrative Short, Canada, 2022, 5 min, Color

The night is going badly for a young teen when he runs into car trouble. It's about to get a whole lot worse...

Great Lakes Connection: The film was shot in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario. The writer/director and actors are from Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario.

## Disgruntled

**Director:** Bryanna Vachon

Narrative Short, Canada, 2020, 10 min, Color, Student Project - Sault College, Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario

A hotel handyman gets fired and decides to seek revenge on his former boss and coworkers.

Great Lakes Connection: This film was shot in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario. The writer/director and cast are from Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario.

## SMRT Services

**Director:** Jeff Vande Zande

Narrative Short, United States, 2023, 2 min, Color

It was the strangest ride share service he'd ever experienced.

Great Lakes Connection: All Michigan-made!

Links: [twitter.com/jcvandez](https://twitter.com/jcvandez)

## Assassino Americano Amnésico

**Director:** Mark Blane

Narrative Short, Portugal, 2023, 28 min, Black and White and Color

This deadly serious lo-fi thriller, shot in Portugal with an iPhone on a tiny budget, follows a queer forgetful killer and the (b)romance between him and his handler.

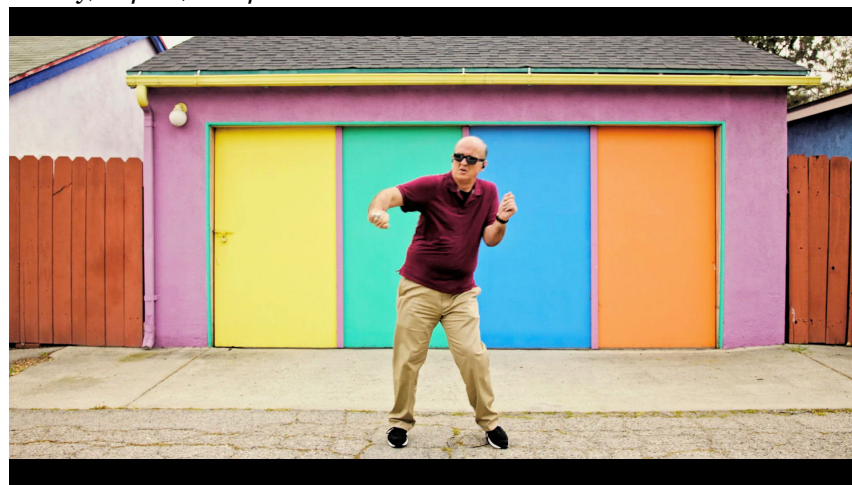
Great Lakes Connection: The writer/director is originally from Valparaiso, Indiana.

Links: [imdb.com/title/tt21335250](https://www.imdb.com/title/tt21335250)  
[instagram.com/americanassassinamnesiac](https://www.instagram.com/americanassassinamnesiac)

## Block 5-Acting Like Nothing Is Wrong

Documentary Feature, 88 min, Not rated

*Friday, Sep 15, 7:30pm - Soo Theatre*



*Still photo from Acting Like Nothing Is Wrong*

## Acting Like Nothing Is Wrong

**Director:** Jane Rosemont

Documentary Feature, United States, 2022, 88 min, Color

Despite what would seem to be a flourishing career, most recently playing Kermit on Showtime's Shameless, Hollywood character actor Jim Hoffmaster struggles both professionally and personally.

Acting Like Nothing is Wrong explores how he navigates life without a stable upbringing. Foster care and abuse lead Jim to acting, where he could finally be seen and appreciated.

The film poses universal questions and illuminates mental health issues we experience on a daily basis. Do we ever completely overcome our traumas? What are our coping mechanisms?

Glimmers of hope and healthy doses of comedy are vital elements in the film.

Great Lakes Connection: The director grew up in Detroit.

Director: Jane Rosemont

Writer: Jane Rosemont

Producer: Jane Rosemont

Co-Producer: Kimberley Browning

Key Cast: Jim Hoffmaster, Wes Studi

Editors: David Aubrey, Dillon Brown  
Director of Photography: Seth Fuller

## DIRECTOR BIOGRAPHY



Jane Rosemont is an award-winning filmmaker and photographer. Her debut film *Pie Lady of Pie Town*, narrated by Academy Award winner Wes Studi, premiered in Hollywood in June 2014. It has been an official selection in over 45 festivals, winning 18 awards including Best Short Documentary, Best Music, and Best Director.

Jane was born in Detroit, Michigan, the youngest of eight happy children. After dragging her feet through college and holding jobs without passion, she met an Olympus

OM2 that gave her the focus she lacked and desperately craved. Her photography has been exhibited and published across the USA for four decades. A book of black and white portraits entitled *Saving Faces* was published in 1996.

Proud and grateful to be a two-time cancer survivor, she lives in Santa Fe, New Mexico with her husband Dick. Dick Rosemont produced *Pie Lady of Pie Town* and is the subject of Jane's short-short film *Shirts!* He is executive producer of *Acting Like Nothing is Wrong*. Dick buys and sells vinyl records as "The Guy in the Groove," is a music researcher, writer, presenter, and archivist.

## DIRECTOR STATEMENT

*Acting Like Nothing is Wrong*, an intimate portrait of actor Jim Hoffmaster, is about survival and reinvention in a world that did not offer love or stability. Complex and compelling, Jim's story incorporates humor and hope despite his difficult upbringing.

For years, Jim and I both lived in Michigan but knew each other only casually. Fifteen years ago, during one of my trips to Los Angeles where he had moved to pursue an acting career, we reconnected. As we got to know each other, I became increasingly captivated by the convoluted chain of events in his life. I was raised in a stable, loving home, the youngest of eight spirited children. Hearing Jim relay childhood abandonment, abuse, and loneliness was akin to reading Charles Dickens.

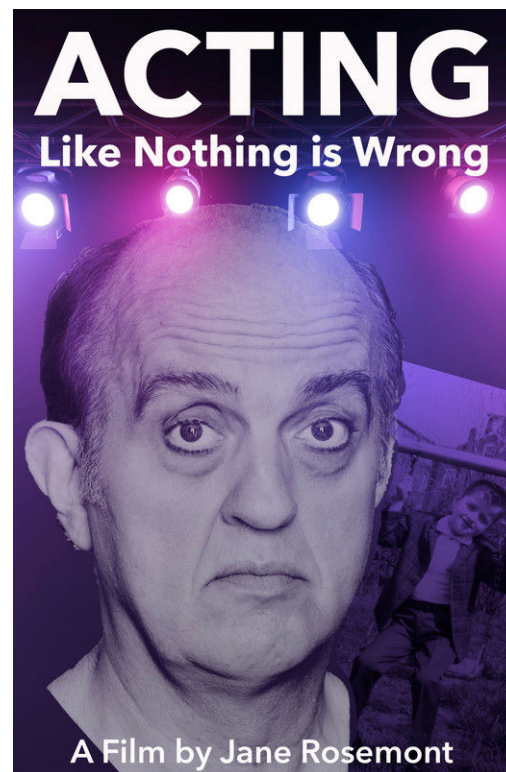
My decision to make the film came quickly while I was at a film festival, viewing a documentary that focused on a foster child. I vowed to offer another voice to the widespread failure of the 1960s foster care system. I was determined to craft a film that respectfully exposed the details of this particular foster child, as well as present unexpected humor to balance the story.

During the process of filming, I would often take advantage of making photos of Jim. As a photographer for over three decades, how could I not take advantage of his malleable face? At the time, I did not realize that they would become vital elements in the film itself.

While Jim presents strength and confidence to the public, he continues to struggle with anxiety and destructive patterns learned from childhood. To help overcome low self-esteem, he mastered acting skills and a wry sense of humor. "The reason acting worked for me is because I was noticed. I was being seen. I hadn't felt that before."

Jim's lighthearted dancing and comedic timing play throughout this film of survival. I am eager to share his narrative and feel hopeful the film will be an inspiration to anyone who has, or knows someone who has, dealt with any level of mental health issues.

Links: [actinglikenothingiswrong.com](http://actinglikenothingiswrong.com)  
[vimeo.com/753909850](https://vimeo.com/753909850)  
[facebook.com/actinglikenothingiswrong](https://facebook.com/actinglikenothingiswrong)  
[instagram.com/actinglikenothingiswrong](https://instagram.com/actinglikenothingiswrong)



## Block 6-The Marshmallow Mystery Tour

Feature, 84 min, Not rated

Friday, Sep 15, 9:30pm - Soo Theatre



Still photo from *The Marshmallow Mystery Tour*

### The Marshmallow Mystery Tour

**Directors:** Jeff Beals, Matthew Beals

Narrative Feature, United States, 2021, 84 min, Color

After landing a gig at a marshmallow theme park, a cameraman uncovers the shocking truth about America's candy industry and his own sugar-coated childhood.

Great Lakes Connection: The film tells the history of marshmallows in America and the first major marshmallow company in America that was located in Ligonier, Indiana. The film sets key scenes there and the plot emerges from it.

**Directors:** Jeff Beals, Matthew Beals

**Writers:** Jeff Beals, Matthew Beals

**Producer:** Jeff Beals

**Key Cast:** Jeremy Rische, Julius Callahan, Mark Beltzman

**Editor:** Matthew Beals

**Director of Photography:** Matthew Beals

#### DIRECTOR BIOGRAPHY

The Beals Brothers grew up in New York snorting Fun Dip and building titanic Oreo sandwiches and have never stopped.

Matthew is an award-winning director of photography whose work has appeared in Steven Spielberg's *The Rising* and in his own documentary *The Power of the Peep*.

Jeff is a teacher and activist who was featured on *This American Life* as a congressional candidate and decorated for his service as a US diplomat in Iraq.

Today they write and shoot film together while plying their trades across the continent.

#### DIRECTOR STATEMENT

The Marshmallow Mystery Tour was written, shot and directed by two brothers who went undercover at candy landmarks across America. It breaks down the boundary between feature film and documentary to offer the first ever docu-fairytale. Blessed by Willy Wonka himself, Gene Wilder, who caught a glimpse of the project as it began, this is a new kind of comedy for a new era.

#### SCREENINGS/AWARDS:

Kevin Smith's Smodcastle Film Festival (Atlantic Highlands, New Jersey), Best Comedy Feature

Warped Dimension Film Festival (online), Audience Award Top Feature Film

Galactic Imaginarium Film Festival (Dumbrăvița, Romania), Best Comedy/Parody Feature Film

Poor Life Choices Film Festival (online), Best Dark Comedy Feature Film

Project-Nerd Film Festival (Westminster, Colorado), Craft Cinema Feature Film Award

Buffalo (New York) Dreams Fantastic Film Festival, Feature Film Visionary Award

Official Selection at Santa Cruz (California) Film Festival, Annapolis (Maryland) Film Festival, The Valley Film Festival (Los Angeles, California), Sleepy Hollow (New York) International Film Festival, Green Jack international Film Festival (Big Bear Lake, California), Proteus Film Festival (Virginia Beach, Virginia), Canadian International Comedy Film Festival (Winnipeg, Manitoba), PopCon Film Festival (Indianapolis, Indiana), Hobnobben Film Festival (Fort Wayne, Indiana), Vox Popular Media Arts Festival (Thunder Bay, Ontario), Flickers' Vortex Fantasy Sci-Fi & Horror Film Festival (Providence, Rhode Island), Mystic Film Festival (Groton, Connecticut), PRPL Fork Food Film Festival (Vancouver, British Columbia), Orlando (Florida) Film Festival, SOMA Film Festival (Maplewood, New Jersey), Route 66 Film Festival (Springfield, Illinois)

Links: [marshmallowmysterytour.com](http://marshmallowmysterytour.com)  
[youtube.com/watch?v=qmjUHUCwzlg](https://youtube.com/watch?v=qmjUHUCwzlg)  
[facebook.com/marshmallowmovie](https://facebook.com/marshmallowmovie)  
[twitter.com/thecandymovie](https://twitter.com/thecandymovie)



## Block 7-Student Films

Shorts, 107 min, Not rated

*Saturday, Sep 16, 10:30am - Soo Theatre*



*Still photo from Ivory Tulle*

A short films program of student work.

### Grandpa Cherry Blossom

**Director:** Maddox Chuen Won Chen

Documentary Short, United States, 2022, 8 min, Black and White and Color, Student Project - Mira Costa High School, Manhattan Beach, California

The life of Francis Uyematsu, a Japanese immigrant, is told through the words of Mary Uyematsu Kao, his granddaughter, and Chuck Currier, a local historian and former teacher.

Francis Uyematsu created a successful flower nursery, owning over 130 acres of land, until the Japanese Internment during World War II, when he was forced to sell his land. Entire neighborhoods now sit on his former land, filled with hundreds of homes and high schools, and the flowers he created are no longer his.

Link: [maddoxchen.net/grandpa-cherry-blossom.html](http://maddoxchen.net/grandpa-cherry-blossom.html)

### The More We Get Together

**Director:** Daniel Roberts

Narrative Short, United States, 2021, 12 min, Color, Student Project - University of Southern California, Los Angeles

Delia, 25, panics when she finds out her dad is in the hospital with COVID symptoms. That is, until she hears strange noises coming from the closet, and out

tumbles Gracie, Delia's adorable childhood therapy puppet.

Link: [instagram.com/the.more.we.get.together.film/](https://www.instagram.com/the.more.we.get.together.film/)

Link: [instagram.com/anapososhok/](https://www.instagram.com/anapososhok/)

### Ivory Tulle

**Director:** Jax Guillen

Narrative Short, Canada, 2023, 9 min, Color, Student Project - Toronto Film School, Ontario

It's Teresa's wedding day and everything is as beautiful as can be: the outdoor garden is in full bloom on a bright, sunny day in the summer, the decorations are tastefully designed and composed, the bride and groom look the best they ever have, and the mother and father of the bride are present and happy to witness this event. But are things as happy as they seem?

Great Lakes Connection: The director is a student in Toronto.

### LINT

**Director:** Jack Horrigan

Narrative Short, United States, 2023, 9 min, Color, Student Project - Saginaw Valley State University, University Center, Michigan

A man embarks on a surreal journey to save a sock and ultimately finds the connection that he's been searching for.

Great Lakes Connection: The film was shot in Saginaw, Michigan and features several Saginaw icons such as White's Bar, Olde Towne Laundry, and Wub's Saginaw Brick shirt. All of the talent and crew are Saginaw residents and Michigan natives.

### Time to Leave

**Director:** Ethan Gough

Narrative Short, United States, 2023, 7 min, Color, Student Project - Motion Picture Institute, Troy, Michigan

A young couple take their love on the run after doing away with the woman who wronged them.

Great Lakes Connection: The film was written and shot in Michigan with an all-Michigan cast and crew.

### Waves Apart

**Director:** Josh Greene

Documentary Short, United States, 2022, 25 min, Color, Student Project - University of Southern California, Los Angeles

After moving from a Jewish community in Chicago to a small California surf town, Josh Greene faced bullying and antisemitism as a middle schooler. He found an escape in surfing.

Years later, as a college film student and avid surfer, he investigates the anti-Semitic history of surfing that includes swastikas carved into the first commercially produced surfboards, the German-American bund, and Hollywood's first surf film.

Great Lakes Connection: The director was born in Chicago and his entire family is from there. This is a theme in the film as Josh deals with antisemitism after moving from Chicago to California.

Link: [instagram.com/wavesapartdoc/](https://www.instagram.com/wavesapartdoc/)

## Sisyphus Unbound

**Director:** Ryan Fleming

Narrative Short, United States, 2023, 8 min, Color, Student Project - Miami University, Oxford, Ohio

A college writing student hopes to have his latest story published, but he must first get over one major hurdle: his mercurial writing professor.

Great Lakes Connection: The film was shot in and has an entire cast and crew from Ohio.

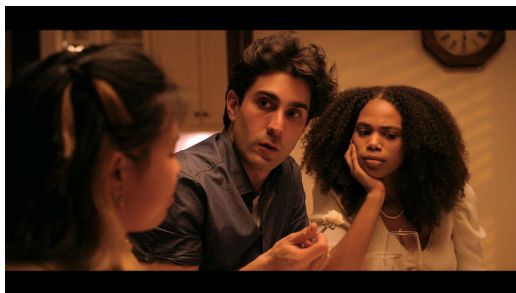
## Incoherence

**Director:** Emily Rodriguez

Narrative Short, United States, 2023, 20 min, Color, Student Project - Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut

A birthday dinner reunion devolves into madness when a young painter realizes her closest relationships have changed beyond recognition.

Great Lakes Connection: The director was born and raised in Illinois. The film is about returning to the Midwest/Great Lakes region after a few years abroad and attempting to reconnect with childhood friends.



*Still photo from Incoherence*

## Block 8-Made in Michigan

Shorts, 117 min, Not rated

*Saturday, Sep 16, 1pm - Soo Theatre*



*Still photo from GRBBR*

A selection of mixed shorts made either in Michigan or by a Michigan filmmaker.

## Salamander

**Director:** Paul Rothman

Narrative Short, United States, 2023, 14 min, Color

A guy walks into a bar before closing time and overstays his welcome.

Great Lakes Connection: The film was shot on location at the Mayfair Bar in Haslett, Michigan. The cast and crew all live in the area.

Link: [instagram.com/\\_elevator\\_pictures\\_](https://www.instagram.com/_elevator_pictures_)

## Storage

**Director:** Christopher Watkins

Narrative Short, United States, 2023, 6 min, Color

A man who accidentally killed his friend tries to move on.

Link: [vimeo.com/797607419](https://www.vimeo.com/797607419)

## Rosetta

**Director:** Ellison Winterstein

Narrative Short, United States, 2022, 18 min, Black and White

Four Cold War spies who are trying to obtain vital intelligence find themselves suspects in a dangerous mystery.

Great Lakes Connection: The film was produced in East Lansing, Michigan by an all-Michigan-native cast and crew.

Links: [eviltwindigital.com](https://eviltwindigital.com)  
[twitter.com/EvilTwinDigital](https://twitter.com/EvilTwinDigital)  
[facebook.com/EvilTwinDigital](https://facebook.com/EvilTwinDigital)  
[instagram.com/eviltwindigital](https://instagram.com/eviltwindigital)

## GRBBR

**Director:** Pete Johnston

Narrative Short, United States, 2023, 12 min, Color

After being laid off from her tech job, a young woman fights her way through the increasingly terrifying world of gig work.

Great Lakes Connection: This film was shot in Okemos and East Lansing, Michigan! All filmmakers and cast are from the mid-Michigan area.

## Saving Our Theatre

**Director:** Dan J. Korhonen

Documentary Short, United States, 2023, 21 min, Color

This film explores the challenges facing three Upper Michigan theatre groups and how they plan to survive and provide value to their communities as cultural hubs.

Great Lakes Connection: Three Upper Peninsula theater groups in Negaunee, Marquette, and Calumet are the subject of the documentary.

Link: [facebook.com/DanKorhonenFilmmaker](https://facebook.com/DanKorhonenFilmmaker)

## Not as We Do

**Director:** Carolyn Klarecki

Narrative Short, United States, 2022, 10 min, Color

When a struggling new mother takes on the project of digitizing her family's home videos, she gets a troubling new perspective on her own upbringing.

Great Lakes Connection: The writer/director was born, raised, and attended film school in Michigan.

## Lake Effect

**Directors:** Mike King, John O'callaghan

Documentary Short, United States, 2023, 36 min, Color

For a decade professional skier Mike King sought adventure only from the peaks of mountain tops in the far reaches of the west. In 2020 when COVID encouraged lockdowns and travel restrictions, King's life on the road came to a screeching halt.

This abrupt change inspired him to reconnect with the unique terrain, ski culture, and people who were thriving right here in his home state of Michigan. Over the course of making the film King realized that you don't need to travel far to have an epic adventure.

Great Lakes Connection: This is a film about a professional skier returning home to Michigan and rediscovering the amazing winter community here. Also the film includes some winter surfing in the Great Lakes.

Links: [lakeeffectskifilm.com](https://lakeeffectskifilm.com)  
[instagram.com/kingxpinn](https://instagram.com/kingxpinn)



*Still photo from Rosetta*

## Block 9-Healing Waters

Short and feature, 117 min, Not rated

*Saturday, Sep 16, 4pm - Soo Theatre*



*Still photo from Win(d) Over Cancer*

A short and a feature documentary about people overcoming adversity and raising awareness for their cause on the Great Lakes.

### Win(d) Over Cancer

**Director:** Andrew Jowett

Documentary Short, United States, 2021, 9 min, Color

In the summer of 2020 the world was closed, but our waters were open. The More Kids On Sailboats nonprofit organization took the opportunity to make a difference.

“You don’t want to compare something you love to something you hate. You learn on a boat that goals change, unexpected things happen and you need to have a change of plans. Same thing with cancer.”

Follow our crew of kids as they compete in an offshore sailboat race to raise awareness and money for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. A race against all adults, professionals, and Mother Nature herself.

Great Lakes Connection: The filmmakers grew up on Lake Huron and the entire film takes place on Lake Erie.

### When Hope Breaks Through

**Director:** Matthew Wagner

Documentary Feature, Canada, 2023, 108 min, Color

A disabled professional paddleboarder with a passion for mental health sets out to raise awareness and funding for the youth mental health crisis in Canada by paddleboarding across all five Great Lakes.

When Hope Breaks Through is the inspiring story of Mike Shoreman, who was diagnosed with Ramsay Hunt Syndrome. This neurological condition left him paralyzed, with vertigo, hearing loss, and vision loss, ultimately leading to depression and a mental health breakdown.

The film immerses the audience in Mike’s epic five crossings, encompassing over 300 kilometers of open water paddling with his dedicated crossings team. Together these strangers come together and form an inseparable bond as they face and conquer obstacles that include boats breaking down, medical emergencies, hallucinations, and everything in between.

Come aboard as Mike Shoreman makes history, becoming the first disabled person to cross all five Great Lakes!

Great Lakes Connection: The subject of the film paddleboarded across all five Great Lakes to raise money for mental health awareness.

**Director:** Matthew Wagner

**Producers:** Matthew Wagner, Liana Neumann, Mike Shoreman

**Key Cast:** Mike Shoreman, Liana Neumann, Jim Peever, Keith Fisher, Michael Landsberg, Allison Crawford



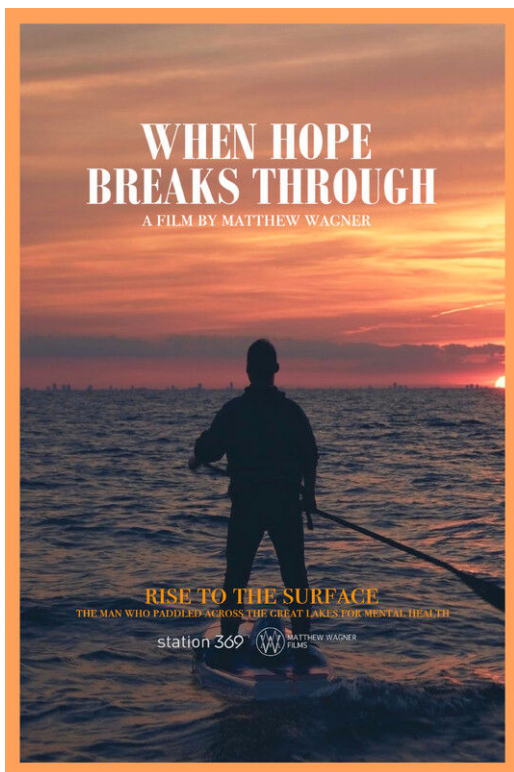
### DIRECTOR BIOGRAPHY

Matthew Wagner is a documentary filmmaker based in Michigan who has a passion for documenting unique sub-cultures, outdoor adventures, and stories of impact.

## DIRECTOR STATEMENT

The most powerful way for people to connect to someone is to emotionally engage in another person's story. In my work I focus primarily on individual subjects or sub-cultures that tell a deep story of impact.

Links: [whenhopebreaksthrough.com](https://whenhopebreaksthrough.com)  
[vimeo.com/775355097](https://vimeo.com/775355097)  
[instagram.com/whenhopebreaksthrough](https://instagram.com/whenhopebreaksthrough)



## Block 10-A Michigan Left

Short and feature, 108 min, Not rated

*Saturday, Sep 16, 6:30pm - Soo Theatre*



*Still photo from Quicksand*

A short and a feature film made in Michigan about a car ride gone terribly wrong.

## The Bad Trip Home

**Director:** Cody J. LaRue

Narrative Short, United States, 2022, 14 min, Color

Elliot's plan was simple: take an edible, get some snacks, and get home before the drugs kick in. However, when his car breaks down and leaves him stranded, Elliot must navigate his way home before he is too high to function. Will he find his way home safely?

Great Lakes Connection: The director was born and raised in Michigan and the film was shot in Flint, Michigan.

## Quicksand

**Director:** JohnPaul Morris

Narrative Feature, United States, 2022, 94 min, Color

After losing their best friend's ring days before the wedding, co-best-men Ray and Paul embark on a secret do-or-die adventure to reclaim it as they are forced to navigate questions about life, love, and how to escape a gang of murderers.

**Great Lakes Connection:** The entire production team and a majority of the post-production team are Michigan filmmakers. The film was shot and produced in Traverse City, Grand Rapids, and the Upper Peninsula.

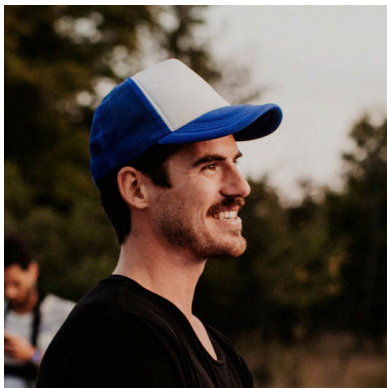
**Director:** JohnPaul Morris

**Writers:** JohnPaul Morris, Jake Burgess, Broderick Steele

**Producers:** Chris Loud, Nick Loud

**Key Cast:** Tanner Presswood, Simon Eliás

## DIRECTOR BIOGRAPHY



JohnPaul Morris is a 33-year-old cinematographer turned director who produces concept, commercial (Ford, Facebook, NBA), and feature films (Quicksand, 2023). He started a production company in rural Northern Michigan in 2009, which has since grown into a multifaceted creative effort and hub for feature film efforts.

## DIRECTOR STATEMENT

I wasn't sure my first feature should be a comedy, but Quicksand was the film that we had

to make. It would have haunted us not to do it. We wanted to make a movie about surviving your 20s, a feat that half our team had just accomplished and the other half was still undertaking. And just like your 20s, we wanted the film to be fun and unceasingly surprising.

## SCREENINGS/AWARDS:

Hell's Half Mile Film & Music Festival (Bay City, Michigan), September 22, 2023, WINNER Audience Choice, Best Narrative Feature

Grand Rapids Film Festival (Grand Rapids, Michigan), October 23, 2022, WINNER Best Screenplay

Austin (Texas) Film Festival, October 29, 2023, Official Selection

Eau Claire (Wisconsin) International Film Festival, November 4, 2022, WINNER Best Narrative Feature

Traverse City (Michigan) Film Festival, July 28, 2022, Michigan Premiere, Official Selection (4 sold out screenings)

Links: [quicksandmovie.com](https://quicksandmovie.com)  
[youtu.be/LYSITk6BH5o](https://youtu.be/LYSITk6BH5o)  
[facebook.com/quicksandthemovie](https://facebook.com/quicksandthemovie)  
[instagram.com/quicksandthemovie](https://instagram.com/quicksandthemovie)

## Block 11-Drawn Out

Shorts, 73 min, Not rated

*Sunday, Sep 17, 11am - Soo Theatre*



*Still photo from A Guerra Finita*

A mix of animated short films from around the world.

## The Lost Courier

**Director:** 子东 马 (Zidong Ma)

Animation, China, 2022, 3 min, Color, Student Project - Beijing Film Academy, China

It may have gone through some incredible things before the courier reached us. This stop-motion animation was inspired by the filmmaker's real experience of losing a courier.

Link: [bilibili.com/video/BV1zg411k7sa](https://bilibili.com/video/BV1zg411k7sa)

## Pyramid of Despair

**Director:** Matt Bissett-Johnson

Animation, Australia, 2023, 1 min, Color

Two creatures chase each other on a space station.

Links: [twitter.com/mbjcartoonist](https://twitter.com/mbjcartoonist)  
[instagram.com/mbj.checkitout](https://instagram.com/mbj.checkitout)

## Hide and Beep

**Director:** Jackson Roth

Animation, United States, 2023, 7 min, Color, Student Project - University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan

In a distant but recognizable time after humans, three separated robot friends embark on a path to being reunited.

Great Lakes Connection: The film was made in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

## Woodpecker

**Director:** Fatemeh Askarpour

Animation, Iran, Islamic Republic of, 2022, 2 min, Color

Humans who drown in social networks feed on each other's ruminants but never experience satiety.

Links: [facebook.com/agastfilms](https://facebook.com/agastfilms)  
[instagram.com/agastfilms](https://instagram.com/agastfilms)

## Daisy's Final Goodbye

**Director:** Steven Long

Animation, United States, 2023, 5 min, Color

This is the animated true story of Steven, a veteran with PTSD, who must say goodbye to his faithful service dog Daisy. It is almost too much for him to bear. Filmmaker Steven Long made this short five years after Daisy passed as a tribute to her and all of the other dogs who have loved us like family.

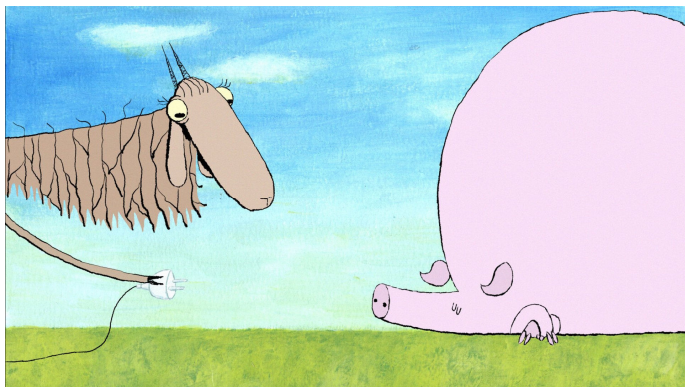
Links: [hobbyanimations.com](https://hobbyanimations.com)  
[twitter.com/hobbyanimations](https://twitter.com/hobbyanimations)

## Pig

**Director:** Jorn Leeuwerink

Animation, Netherlands, 2022, 8 min, Color

A big group of animals makes itself dependent on a power grid, hooked onto the socket-shaped snout of a single sleeping pig. How long will that last?



*Still photo from Pig*

## A Guerra Finita

**Director:** Simone Massi

Animation, Italy, 2022, 5 min, Color

A world without war is another utopia that we cannot wait for any longer.

Link: [promofest.org/films/a-guerra-finita](https://promofest.org/films/a-guerra-finita)

## I'm Not Afraid!

**Director:** Marita Mayer

Animation, Norway, 2022, 7 min, Color

During a game of hide-and-seek Vanja leaves a bright living room and enters a dimly lit courtyard, which has far too many dark corners, weird shadows, and strange noises. To overcome his fear, Vanja turns into a dangerous tiger!

Links: [fabianfred.com/im-not-afraid](https://fabianfred.com/im-not-afraid)  
[twitter.com/fabianandfred](https://twitter.com/fabianandfred)  
[facebook.com/FabianAndFred](https://facebook.com/FabianAndFred)  
[instagram.com/fabianfred](https://instagram.com/fabianfred)

## The Old Hag and the Crow

**Director:** María Lucía Bayardo

Animation, Mexico, 2023, 6 min, Black and White and Color

Not imagining the consequences of her decision, Larisa, a curious girl, enters the house of an old hag, who has a crow as her familiar.

Links: [imdb.com/title/tt27108039](https://imdb.com/title/tt27108039)  
[facebook.com/lucia.bayardo](https://facebook.com/lucia.bayardo)  
[instagram.com/luciabayardo](https://instagram.com/luciabayardo)

## Switcho

**Director:** Alison Vega

Animation, United States, 2021, 3 min, Black and White and Color, Student Project  
- College of DuPage, Glen Ellyn, Illinois

Two curious cats stumble into a forbidden room where they find a mysterious potion that will change their lives forever.

Great Lakes Connection: The filmmaker is a life-long Chicagoan.

Links: [alisonanimation.wixsite.com/my-site](https://alisonanimation.wixsite.com/my-site)  
[twitter.com/3donuts](https://twitter.com/3donuts)

## Night

Director: Ahmad Saleh

Animation, Palestine, State of, 2021, 16 min, Color

The dust of war keeps the eyes sleepless. Night brings peace and sleep to all of the people in the broken town. Only the eyes of the mother of a missing child stay open. Night has to trick her into sleeping to save her soul.

Links: [fabianfred.com/night](https://fabianfred.com/night)  
[twitter.com/fabianandfred](https://twitter.com/fabianandfred)  
[facebook.com/FabianAndFred](https://facebook.com/FabianAndFred)  
[instagram.com/fabianfred](https://instagram.com/fabianfred)

## Not as Straight as This Line

Director: Marigny Adelman

Animation, United States, 2023, 4 min, Color, Student Project - South High School, Minneapolis, Minnesota

Based on a true story, a middle schooler scribbles down a pun about being queer that they thought was funny, later forgetting that they even wrote it. Unfortunately, this leads to them outing themselves to their mom and having to handle how to react to that.

Great Lakes Connection: The filmmaker lives in the Great Lakes region and is often near Lake Superior.

Link: [instagram.com/\\_ghost0\\_o](https://instagram.com/_ghost0_o)

## Chick-a-Duck

Director: Rebeka Herron

Animation, Canada, 2022, 3 min, Color

Chick-a-Duck changes between being a chicken and being a duck when she sneezes. This wouldn't be a huge problem except that her new best friend is Dust Bunny.

Great Lakes Connection: The filmmaker is based in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario.

## Life Decision

Director: Jiwon Yoon

Animation, Korea, Republic of, 2023, 3 min, Color, Student Project - Dong-Ah Broadcasting Arts University, Anseong, South Korea

Life is a series of decisions to be made. The decision that leads to change at the crossroads of good and evil, right and wrong, is unavoidable. Today we challenge ourselves to make choices that will lead to an infinite and colorful life.

## Block 12-HOMES Documented

Shorts, 91 min, Not rated

*Sunday, Sep 17, 1pm - Soo Theatre*



*Still photo from The Great Storm of 1872*

Documentary shorts of life around the Great Lakes region.

## Friday Night Blind

**Directors:** Scott Krahn, Robb Fischer

Documentary Short, United States, 2022, 14 min, Color

It's another Friday night at Burnham Bowl. Strikes, spares, gutter balls. With no shortage of trash-talking and victory-dancing.

But the group that's making all the noise isn't just another bowling league. The Milwaukee Beer Barrels Blind Bowling League is an eclectic mix of visually-impaired and sighted bowlers with a simple focus: making friends, having fun, taking life one frame at a time.

Friday Night Blind is the warm, quirky, inspiring story of three visually-impaired bowling friends and the way they roll.

Great Lakes Connection: The film was shot in Wisconsin. All crew and cast are from Wisconsin.

Link: [facebook.com/profile.php?id=100090650723141](https://facebook.com/profile.php?id=100090650723141)

## Sustenance

**Director:** Maya Wanner

Documentary Short, United States, 2022, 10 min, Color, Student Project - Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois (Documentary MFA Program)

A small noodle factory on the South Side of Chicago comes alive with one man's memories, family history, and pride as he meditates on the tension between cultural preservation and assimilation.

**Great Lakes Connection:** This film was produced in the Chicago area, features a subject who lives in Chicago, and is directed by someone who grew up on the shores of Lake Erie in a suburb of Cleveland, Ohio.

## **The A.A. Parker: One Ship, Twice Sunk**

**Director:** Corey Adkins

Documentary Short, United States, 2022, 13 min, Color

Who would have thought a ship could sink twice? That's exactly what happened to the wooden steamer *A.A. Parker*.

However, on September 19th, 1903, Lake Superior finally claimed the vessel. Miraculously no one lost his life. You'll learn how the crew of the *Parker* was saved in a brave rescue mission.

Then, when almost 100 years later, the steamer was discovered by the Great Lakes Shipwreck Historical Society, they were surprised by the way it sits on the bottom of Lake Superior.

The film also pays an emotional tribute to a diver who loved exploring the bottom of our Great Lakes.

**Great Lakes Connection:** The filmmaker works at the Great Lakes Shipwreck Historical Society in Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan.

Links: [shipwreckmuseum.com](http://shipwreckmuseum.com)  
[facebook.com/GLShipwreckMuseum](https://facebook.com/GLShipwreckMuseum)

## **The Great Storm of 1872**

**Director:** Corey Adkins

Documentary Short, United States, 2022, 12 min, Color

On November 27th, 1872, the schooner barges *Jupiter* and *Saturn* broke their tow lines and went aground west of Whitefish Point. Fifteen people died that day, fifteen souls who were never seen again.

This special mini-documentary looks back on that tragic day. Also, you'll meet a family who finally found out what happened to their ancestor on the day he died over 150 years ago in the Great Storm of 1872.

**Great Lakes Connection:** The filmmaker works at the Great Lakes Shipwreck Historical Society in Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan.

## **Mystic Michigan: The Rocks Cry Out**

**Directors:** Elizabeth Cherry, Sawyer Thiebaut-Near, Mariah Vongphachanh

Documentary Short, United States, 2022, 29 min, Color, Student Project - Ferris State University, Big Rapids, Michigan

Explore the riches of the rocks of the Great Lakes State with Mark Jager in the third installment of *Mystic Michigan*. Jager, the author of the *Mystic Michigan* book series, returns to host this docuseries which explores the many beautiful geological formations across the state of Michigan. Jager unravels the rich beauty, history, and spirituality surrounding the glorious geology of the Mitten State.

**Great Lakes Connection:** The film features stories about geologic formations across Michigan.

Links: [mysticmichigan.us](http://mysticmichigan.us)  
[instagram.com/mystic\\_michigan](https://instagram.com/mystic_michigan)

## **Born in the Barn: Part 1**

**Director:** Kristin Lee Ojaniemi

Documentary Short, United States, 2022, 13 min, Color

Like the landscape in much of Michigan's Upper Peninsula, the Ewen-Trout Creek School District is a quintessential rural setting, dotted with the weathered structures of once-bustling family farms. One of these buildings is anything but typical; it's where a decades-long dynasty of championship-caliber high school basketball teams began.

This western U.P. high school, with fewer than two dozen students per grade, has built a basketball tradition that has captured the eyes of sportswriters and the dreams of young ballplayers for generations. And it all began in a unique gymnasium known as The Barn.

**Great Lakes Connection:** The documentary takes place in a small community in the western Upper Peninsula.



*Still photo from Friday Night Blind*

## Block 13-Earlybird

Feature, 101 min, Not rated

Sunday, Sep 17, 3:30pm - Soo Theatre



Still photo from Earlybird

### Earlybird

**Director:** Martin Kaszubowski

Narrative Feature, United States, 2022, 101 min, Color

A desperate theater owner resuscitates his struggling business with off-the-wall productions, all the while losing sight of why he chose this life at all.

Great Lakes Connection: The film was shot in Milwaukee. Most of cast and crew live and work in Milwaukee or Chicago. The writer/director is from northern Wisconsin.

**Director:** Martin Kaszubowski

**Writer:** Martin Kaszubowski

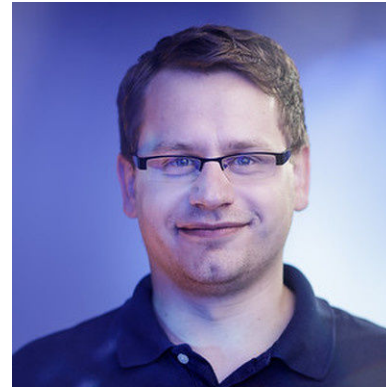
**Producer:** Kristin Peterson

**Key Cast:** Joshua Koopman, Julie Pope, Amanda Platt, Chloe Skoczen

### DIRECTOR BIOGRAPHY

Martin Kaszubowski (he/him) is a film director and video editor. His directed work has screened in film festivals across the U.S. and he has produced many short films, music videos, commercials, and feature films (including Ringolevio which premiered at Dances with Films in 2020 and Pet Names which premiered at SXSW in 2018.) Earlybird is his solo feature debut.

### DIRECTOR STATEMENT



After years of creative frustration and burnout, Earlybird flew out of my fingers, through my keyboard, and onto a screenplay. I seasoned it with my guilt, my feelings on collaboration (and “the auteur”), a series of run-on sentences, and I tried to make it funny. I hope people enjoy watching it as much as we enjoyed making it.

As is so often true about the independent filmmaker, Earlybird explores how those who work in theater define themselves by their output and the reception of their work. Each character shows they have lost their patience and now, threadbare from too many long nights and too little material success, they are at odds with each other. In this film, we explore how our culture of constant grinding (not limited to the arts) pushes people to lose their humanity. It isn’t just our protagonist Michael who forgets to consider the feelings and needs of the people around him. In this film, our goal is to show how difficult it is to live well when you’re living for the attention and approval of the ever-elusive kudo.

As an artist, I have struggled at times with the balance of commerce and art. Not just for financial gain, but within the art I make. As the term “content” becomes more prevalent in relation to art, I feel Earlybird’s focus on the balance between work, art, and life becomes more and more pertinent. The film’s theme of workplace culture within the arts is also more relevant than ever, given the seemingly daily reveal of toxic work environments in collaborative art-making.

Links: [youtube.com/watch?v=F5f0o7oLspg](https://youtube.com/watch?v=F5f0o7oLspg)  
[facebook.com/twoscoopsprods](https://facebook.com/twoscoopsprods)  
[instagram.com/twoscoopsy](https://instagram.com/twoscoopsy)



## Block 14-Being Satori Circus

Documentary Feature, 96 min, Not rated

*Sunday, Sep 17, 5:30pm - Soo Theatre*



*Still photo from Being Satori Circus*

### Being Satori Circus ~ A Performance Documentary in Five Acts

**Director:** Mark Finnell

Documentary Feature, United States, 2022, 96 min, Black and White and Color

Detroit filmmaker M.L. Finnell explores the underground subculture and music of Satori Circus, an unsung performance artist from Detroit. This film uses performative qualities and live performances.

Great Lakes Connection: This is a 100% Michigan-made film. The subject is an artist from Detroit. The filmmaker is a Michigan native. All of the interviewees and artists are also from Michigan.

**Director:** Mark Finnell

**Writers:** Mark Finnell, K.B. Nemcosky

**Producers:** Mark Finnell, Tina Gloss-Finnell

**Key Cast:** Satori Circus, Tina Gloss-Finnell, James Kenneth Graham

**Editor:** Michael Pfeandtner

**Principal Photography:** Brett J. Lawrence

### DIRECTOR BIOGRAPHY

Mark Lawrence Finnell is a Detroit, Michigan native. After living in San Francisco for a time, Mark took the unusual route of returning to university at the age of 29

He graduated from West Virginia University with a BA/BFA in 1995. He was then awarded a full scholarship and graduated with an MFA in Performance (Acting and Directing) from the Hilberry Repertory Theatre at Wayne State University (Detroit) in 1998.

After 12 years in Los Angeles working as a professional actor, marketing professional, and corporate facilitator/trainer for automotive manufacturers, he returned to Michigan in 2010. His first foray into writing, producing, and directing for film was his own *Restoration Dogs*, “a transformative adaptation” set in 1670s London from his stage play.



He also wrote the screenplay, acted in, and directed a short film, *Dog Tag*, about a father who refuses to believe that his son died in Iraq. This short film screened at many Michigan venues.

In addition, Mark wrote, directed, and produced three silent short films with Satori Circus that have screened at various film festivals in Michigan.

He has written, directed, and produced his first feature-length independent documentary film: *Being Satori Circus ~ A Performance Documentary in Five Acts* about Detroit’s performance artist, Satori Circus.

Mark continues to work as a facilitator, actor, voice-over artist, teacher, and coach and resides just outside of Detroit in Ferndale, Michigan, with his wife of 24 years, Tina Gloss-Finnell.

### DIRECTOR STATEMENT

*Being Satori Circus ~ A Performance Documentary in Five Acts* is a Hybrid Documentary using performative aspects. Just as the character of Satori Circus is a performance artist, so I sought to give a performance quality to a nonfiction documentary on this subject. The performative nature includes live (concert) performances, as well as fictional elements to fill out the artist’s life.

*Being Satori Circus* seeks to share the subculture that has evolved around this performance artist over the last 34 years in Detroit, Michigan. I want to take my audience on an entertaining journey and show what is unique and mysterious about Satori Circus. What is performance art? How did it all begin? How does Satori Circus define who he is? What is his ‘Being’?

We explore his early years, how he has morphed into what he has become, and how others involved in this artistic community “see” him. We look at how

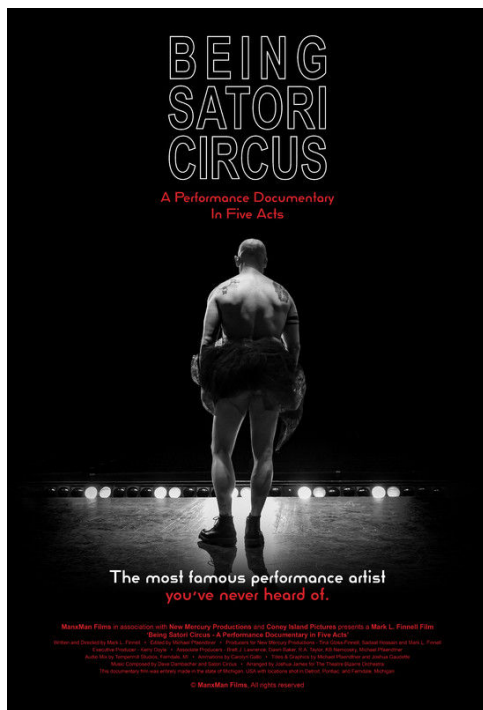
photographers see him, the meaning of his ever-changing make-up, what has influenced him, and how he is a cultural part of the city that formed him: Detroit. Also, the documentary shows and informs all the various aspects of what he does.

We also explore the continuing nature of what his art is through live performance and the diverse viewpoints of those who know him, as well as Satori Circus in his own words. This relatively unknown and certainly unsung artist's aspects and journey is told in part by the filmmaker himself as the audience is led through this experience of discovery.

### SCREENINGS/AWARDS:

Detroit Free Press Film Festival (Detroit, Michigan), April 26, 2023, North American Premiere

Links: [linktr.ee/beingsatorircircusdoc](https://linktr.ee/beingsatorircircusdoc)  
[youtube.com/watch?v=aNxa-WM7ZbQ](https://youtube.com/watch?v=aNxa-WM7ZbQ)  
[facebook.com/BeingSatoriCircusDocumentaryFilm](https://facebook.com/BeingSatoriCircusDocumentaryFilm)  
[twitter.com/BeingSatoriDoc](https://twitter.com/BeingSatoriDoc)  
[instagram.com/beingsatorircircusdocumentary](https://instagram.com/beingsatorircircusdocumentary)



## The Venues

All films will be screened at Bayliss Public Library, a Superior District Library, located at 541 Library Drive, and the Soo Theatre, located at 534 Ashmun Street, both in downtown Sault Ste. Marie.

## Parking

You may park on Ashmun Street, in the Parking Garage on Osborn Blvd., or behind the theatre in the Oaka Street lots. You may also park on Dawson Street and in the lots on Court Street. See the map of Sault Ste. Marie on the back page.

## Ratings

Many of these films have not yet been rated by the Motion Picture Association of America. Please read the full descriptions online, watch the trailers, and choose responsibly.

## How to Fest

### Where to Stay

For information about hotels and motels that are offering discounted lodging to Soo Film Festival-goers, please see the Soo Film festival website at [soofilmfestival.org](https://soofilmfestival.org).

### Where to Eat

For information about restaurants that are offering discounts to Soo Film Festival-goers, please see the Soo Film festival website at [soofilmfestival.org](https://soofilmfestival.org).

For more information about the area, visit the Sault Ste. Marie Pure Michigan website at [saultstemarie.com](https://saultstemarie.com) (operated by the Sault Ste. Marie Convention & Visitors Bureau).

## Roll the Credits!

**A huge thanks to all of the people who helped to make this year's Soo Film Festival happen!**

Our Sponsors:  
Michigan Arts and Culture Council  
Our media sponsor, Eagle 95.1 FM

The dedicated and talented filmmakers who shared their films, without whom this festival would not exist!

The filmmakers who traveled to the Soo for Q&A sessions about their films. You make it a real film festival.

Our advisory board, for sharing their time, works, expertise, and enthusiasm: Helen Cho Anthos, Rich Brauer, Nick Childs, Steve Hamilton, John Regan, and Steven Wiig. We're in awe.

Everyone at the Soo Theatre Project, especially Craig Flickinger for technical assistance at the Soo Theatre

The hotels and restaurants who provided a festival discount

Bird's Eye Outfitters, for providing a comfortable meeting space for the Festival Committee

Linda Hoath and the Sault Ste. Marie Convention & Visitors Bureau

## Roll the Credits!

The Sault Ste. Marie Downtown Development Authority and  
The City of Sault Ste. Marie

Bayliss Public Library, a Superior District Library

Ellen Benoit and the Eastern U.P. Regional Planning &  
Development Commission

Justin Knepper and Knepper Development Strategies

A special thanks to all of our film judges who spent countless hours reviewing our submissions. We could not do it without you!

Our tireless Festival Committee - Jason Markstrom, Allison Youngs, Pat Egan, Susan James, Carrie DeWeese, and Liz Brugman

Liz Brugman, webmaster and program guide

Everyone who helped after this guide went to press

Everyone who volunteered to help, came to a movie, created a buzz on social media, or wished us well. Thanks for your energy and enthusiasm!

The Soo Theatre  
We see your potential and are working as hard  
as we can to bring you back to full glory.

## Map of Sault Ste. Marie



**SOO FILM  
FESTIVAL**

### Soo Film Festival

1001 E 7th Ave, Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783

(906) 440-6086 [SooFilmFest@gmail.com](mailto:SooFilmFest@gmail.com)

[SooFilmFestival.org](http://SooFilmFestival.org) On Facebook at [SooFilmFestival](https://www.facebook.com/SooFilmFestival)

September 13-17, 2023

Soo Theatre and Bayliss Public Library  
Sault Ste. Marie, MI

### About Us

Soo Film Festival, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization whose mission is to promote and host film and allied arts festivals in the City of Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan. Soo Film Festival, Inc. seeks to showcase the work of independent and emerging filmmakers from the Great Lakes of North America while bringing movies back to downtown Sault Ste. Marie and the historic Soo Theatre.

**Our Mission: Great Lakes, Great Movies!**