

Film Descriptions

***Scheduled Q & A or Panel Discussion. Filmmakers may be available to answer questions at other sets or at the Filmmakers' Reception.** A list of Filmmakers who will be on hand for Q & A at screenings will be found at Headquarters in the Hotel Winneshiek lobby. CC—Closed Captioning. Times are approximate.

LOCATIONS:

T-Bock's Upstairs—206 W Water St

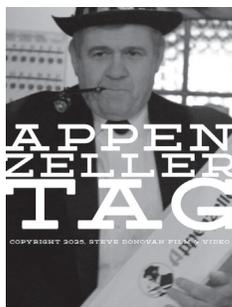
Drift: Strength and Yoga Center - 101 W Water St
(3rd Floor of Impact Coffee)

Hotel Winneshiek Steyer Opera House and Ballroom—104 E Water St

Pulpit Rock Brewery—207 College Dr

ArtHaus—107 W Broadway St

Vesterheim Commons—208 W Water St



APPENZELLERTAG

Matt brings home a 4 liter bottle of a rare Swiss liqueur that he splits with the whole village of New Glarus, Wisconsin.

DOCUMENTARY SHORT Run Time 6:07

Directed by Steve Donovan

Pulpit Rock Brewery, Saturday 1:00pm, Followed by Q&A with director

ArtHaus, Saturday 4:00pm, Followed by Q&A with director



ART IS WORK

Summer 2025 commemorates 25 years of the Quad Cities' Metro Arts Apprenticeship Program, which has hired over 1500 young artists over the years to create public art projects under the mentorship of professional lead artists. This year, three murals were created. This documentary film explores the history, artwork, and artists produced.

DOCUMENTARY SHORT Run Time 23:00

Directed by Stacy Barton

Vesterheim, Friday 1:00pm

Ballroom, Hotel Winneshiek, Sunday 11:00am



BEAU IDEAL

In the stillness of a remote town, a troubled writer intervenes in a neighbor's abusive household—testing the limits of truth, heroism and his own fractured sense of self. CC *Includes profanity and violence

NARRATIVE FEATURE Run Time 01:49:16

Directed by Patrick D. Green and Edd Blott

Drift: Strength and Yoga Center, Friday 4:00pm



BETTER SO (PAREMPI NIIN)

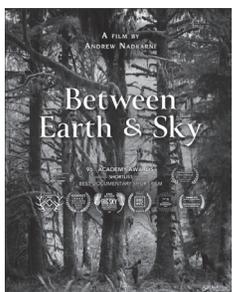
Juho, an amnesiac, finds himself lost in the middle of the night. To find his way, Juho follows his own memories through a voice journal while simultaneously reliving the progression of his condition. As Juho gets closer to his destination, the past and the present begin to intertwine, revealing the true meaning of his journey. CC *Includes self harm references

STUDENT NARRATIVE Run Time 15:00

Directed by Jaakko Antero Ylitalo

Ballroom, Hotel Winneshiek, Friday 4:15pm

Pulpit Rock Brewery, Saturday 10:15am



BETWEEN EARTH AND SKY

Nalini Nadkarni is a world-renowned forest ecologist and science communicator. She pioneered the study of rainforest canopies as well as the means of reaching them by adapting the techniques of mountain climbing. Five years after surviving a life-changing fall from a tree, Nalini confronts echoes of trauma across three generations of her family tree, unearths her own tangled roots, and plants new seeds with her children.

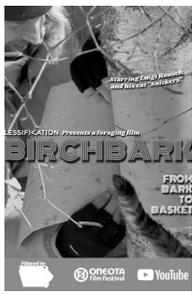
DOCUMENTARY SHORT Run Time 26:00

Directed by Andrew Nadkarni

T-Bock's Upstairs, Saturday 10:15am

Ballroom, Hotel Winneshiek, Saturday 2:00pm

Underwritten by NE Iowa Citizen's Climate Lobby



BIRCHBARK: FROM BARK TO BASKET

The waterproof bark of the Birch is used to carry water, build a canoe, and even boil water!

DOCUMENTARY SHORT Run Time 3:53

Directed by Luigi Rausch

T-Bock's Upstairs, Saturday 10:05am, Followed by Q&A with director

Ballroom, Hotel Winneshiek, Saturday 1:05pm, Followed by Q&A with director

BUDAPEST DIARIES

Personal diaries, written by "ordinary people" during WWII in Budapest, document the everyday horrors and persecution of the Jews. CC

DOCUMENTARY FEATURE Run Time 01:01:08

Directed by Shay Fogelman

Pulpit Rock Brewery, Friday 1:05pm

ArtHaus, Saturday 10:15am



BY THE STARS OF SAINT MATTHEW

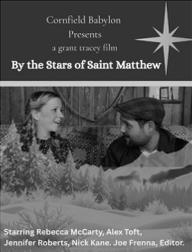
By the Stars of Saint Matthew is a love story set in a farmhouse against a backdrop of 1930s Depression-era gangland. Kip Haley, a veteran of WWI and a member of Red Foley's gang, seeks refuge from himself and his wounds. Iris Wellman, a small-town veterinarian, seeks to heal him and herself. The two are on parallel paths of redemption and journeys to discover their authentic selves. *Includes profanity and violence

NARRATIVE FEATURE Run Time 55:00

Directed by Grant Tracey

Vesterheim, Saturday 10:00am, Followed by a Q&A with director

Ballroom, Hotel Winneshiek, Sunday 2:35pm



CASTLE CRISIS

A princess and her wounded knight take refuge in an abandoned castle and are attacked by a hooded assassin.

STUDENT ANIMATION Run Time 04:15

Directed by Gavin Richard Geffros and Chandler Garland

Pulpit Rock Brewery, Saturday 4:00pm

Vesterheim, Sunday 11:00am



CAT-TASTROPHE

A cat, through its catastrophic antics, inspires a villainous inventor to devise her most evil plan yet. 3D animated slapstick comedy.

STUDENT ANIMATION Run Time 03:13

Directed by Morgan Seigler

Steyer Opera House, Hotel Winneshiek, Friday 4:00pm

Pulpit Rock Brewery, Saturday 4:05pm



CHANTING OF THE DUNES

The film takes viewers on a dazzling journey through multiple countries during momentous world events that extend from the Levant in the 1920s to the U.S. and China in the 1990s. *Chanting of the Dunes* recounts the life of Wahbi Al-Hariri-Rifai who was an accomplished international artist, architect, archeologist, and author. The fascinating storyline, with his wife's narration, is full of unexpected turns and is accompanied by a superb award-winning soundtrack.

DOCUMENTARY FEATURE Run Time 01:26:00

Directed by Mokhless Al-Hariri

Vesterheim, Friday 4:05pm

Steyer Opera House, Hotel Winneshiek, Saturday 1:30pm



CHOICE

A young mother and her toddler in Macedonia face a devastating reality when a new law bans her scheduled abortion. As she delves into the underground world, the story underscores the harsh consequences of restrictive legislation on women's reproductive rights. CC

NARRATIVE SHORT Run Time 17:00

Directed by Marko Crnogorski

Pulpit Rock Brewery, Friday 4:20pm

Drift: Strength and Yoga Center, Saturday 1:20pm





DODGEBALL

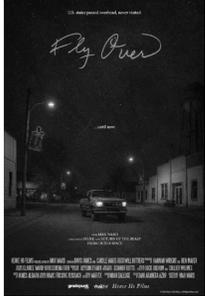
When a tiny robot decides to play a friendly game of dodgeball with a heavily-armed military robot, things don't quite go as planned. CC

STUDENT ANIMATION Run Time 4:01

Directed by Jesse Van Norman

Vesterheim, Friday 4:00pm

Pulpit Rock Brewery, Saturday 4:10pm



FLY OVER

On a cold winter night in rural Iowa, Tom's life changes with a single impact on an empty, star-lit road. As he seeks refuge at his Grandma's house during a seemingly cheerful Christmas gathering, an unsettling silence hangs over the small town.

Missing persons, power cuts, and strange movements in the woods hint that something unnatural is drawing closer. When a terrifying presence breaches the safety of Grandma's home, Tom must confront forces far darker than his own guilt. *Includes violence

NARRATIVE SHORT Run Time 16:27

Directed by Max Ward

Ballroom, Hotel Winneshiek, Friday 4:30pm

Pulpit Rock Brewery, Saturday 10:30am



FOLLOWER

A livestream and random chat take a disturbing turn when a prank goes too far. As the line between audience and participant blurs, playful interaction slips into something unsettling in a world where everyone is both follower and followed. CC *Includes profanity and sexual violence

NARRATIVE SHORT Run Time 14:27

Directed by Ryan Park

Ballroom, Hotel Winneshiek, Friday 4:00pm

Pulpit Rock Brewery, Saturday 10:00am



FROM CHICLAYO TO THE VATICAN: THE PATH OF POPE LEO XIV (DE CHICLAYO AL VATICANO: EL CAMINO DEL PAPA LEON XIV)

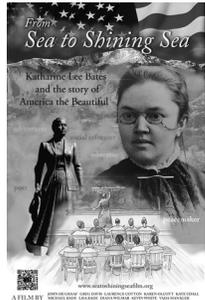
The documentary seeks to reflect how, for the people of Chiclayo, Pope Leo XIV has become a symbol of divine blessing. From the perspective of the most humble to the highest spheres of ecclesiastical and political power, the work demonstrates that the divine can also be born in a city in northern Peru called "Chiclayo." CC

DOCUMENTARY FEATURE Run Time 1:03:00

Directed by Horacio Vergara Arancibia

T-Bock's Upstairs, Friday 4:20pm

T-Bock's Upstairs, Sunday 11:15am



FROM SEA TO SHINING SEA: KATHARINE LEE BATES AND THE STORY OF AMERICA THE BEAUTIFUL

This film examines the remarkable life of Katharine Lee Bates, poet, professor, and social reformer; best known for authoring "America the Beautiful." She was an unsung hero, deeply committed to the beauty and principles of our country.

DOCUMENTARY SHORT Run Time 37:05

Directed by John E de Graaf

Ballroom, Hotel Winneshiek, Saturday 1:15pm

Vesterheim, Saturday 11:00am



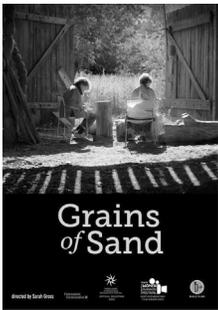
GO THROUGH THE DARK

Guanglin is a blind boy in China who displays great skill at the ancient board game called Go, in which two players place black and white pieces on a grid in an attempt to dominate their opponent. Raised by a single father with limited means, Guanglin faces deep societal prejudice against the blind. CC

DOCUMENTARY FEATURE Run Time 1:18:00

Directed by Yunhong Pu

Drift: Strength and Yoga Center, Friday 1:05pm



GRAINS OF SAND

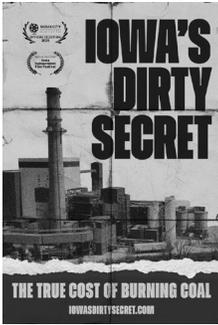
Filmed over 8 years, *Grains of Sand* accompanies the filmmaker's mother and mother-in-law, artists and close friends, as they enter their ninth decade. Through conversation, memories and artwork, along with reflections by the filmmaker herself, they create together in a personal essayistic style, this positive coming-of-age story. CC

DOCUMENTARY FEATURE Run Time 1:25:00

Directed by Sarah Anne Gross

Vesterheim, Friday 1:30pm, Followed by Q&A with director

Pulpit Rock Brewery, Saturday 4:25, Followed by a Q&A with director



IOWA'S DIRTY SECRET: THE TRUE COST OF BURNING COAL

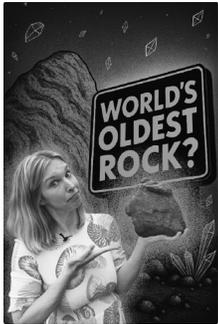
Iowans have been led to believe that their energy is clean. But in reality, MidAmerican Energy operates five coal plants across the state, part of the dirtiest coal fleet in the country. This short film examines the cost of coal through first-hand accounts shared by families who live near the coal plants, doctors who have seen the health impacts of coal pollution, and the advocates fighting for something better. CC

DOCUMENTARY SHORT Run Time 29:56

Directed by Trevor Tejada-Gervais

Ballroom, Hotel Winneshiek, 1:30pm

Drift: Strength and Yoga Center, Saturday 4:30pm



IS THE WORLD'S OLDEST ROCK HIDING IN PLAIN SIGHT?

Traveling along a highway in southwestern Minnesota, cars pass a large boulder believed to be more than 3.5 billion years old. Is it truly the "world's oldest rock" and if so, what does that reveal about early geology? CC

DOCUMENTARY SHORT Run Time 6:15

Directed by Emily Driscoll

Drift: Strength and Yoga Center, Friday 1:00pm

ArtHaus, Saturday 10:05am



KEEPERS OF THE CANYON

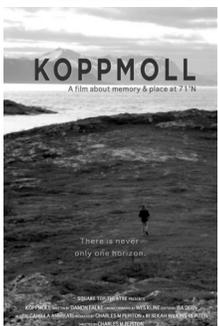
This film follows the decade-long battle between the residents of Orange County and one of California's most powerful developers over a controversial construction project threatening the fragile foothills of Santiago Canyon. Barefoot Joel, a passionate naturalist and leader, rallies the community to protect the land from a massive development. Will the community's efforts be enough to halt construction? CC

STUDENT DOCUMENTARY Run Time 14:41

Directed by Ashley Kuckler

Ballroom, Hotel Winneshiek, 1:00pm

Drift: Strength and Yoga Center, Saturday 4:00pm



KOPPMOLL

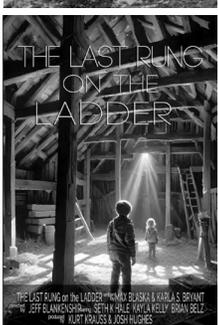
Filmed in the far north of Norway, we follow the writer Damon Falke as he visits a family whose lives have been touched by change and memories of World War II. While considering his own need for place, Falke is introduced to places and stories that speak of home, family, loss, and a nearly forgotten war. *Koppmoll* is about the act of turning over one stone and finding a world where lives and landscapes are inseparable, where history is present.

DOCUMENTARY SHORT Run Time 30:00

Directed by Charles M Pepiton

Vesterheim, Saturday 4:30pm

ArtHaus, Saturday 1:30pm



LAST RUNG ON THE LADDER

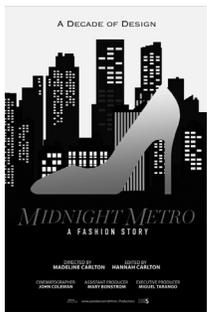
When celebrity psychologist Larry Gatlin returns to his home state of Wisconsin to receive an award for his work fighting the stigma of mental illness, all is not well. An unexpected turn with his estranged sister and personal demons collide, creating a narrative that goes beyond the surface of celebration.

NARRATIVE SHORT Run Time 24:25

Directed by Jeff Blankenship

Ballroom, Hotel Winneshiek, 4:45pm

Pulpit Rock Brewery, Saturday 10:45am



MIDNIGHT METRO: A FASHION STORY

In a place better known for cornfields than catwalks, a determined group of students redefines what fashion looks like in the heart of the Midwest. *Midnight Metro: A Fashion Story* goes behind the scenes of the tenth annual fashion show at Des Moines Area Community College in Ankeny, Iowa, spotlighting the passion, pressure, and purpose that drive the students and faculty of the DMACC Fashion Institute (DFI).

DOCUMENTARY FEATURE Run Time 1:08:28

Directed by Madeline Carlton

Vesterheim, Saturday 1:25pm

Ballroom, Hotel Winneshiek, Sunday 11:25am



MISSISSIPPI SPEED RECORD: AN EPIC ADVENTURE

Mississippi Speed Record: An Epic Adventure follows an incredible quest to paddle the entire 2,340 miles of the Mississippi River in a single 23-foot canoe, aiming to set a new Guinness World Record.

Paddling 24/7 for over 2 weeks, the team is supported by a dedicated crew of over 20 people and two trailing support boats. This exhilarating and inspiring documentary shows it's not about conquering the river—it's about moving in harmony with its flow. CC *Includes profanity

DOCUMENTARY FEATURE Run Time 1:26:51

Directed by Alex Maier and Amy Maier

Pulpit Rock Brewery, Friday 7:30pm

Steyer Opera House, Hotel Winneshiek, Saturday 4:00pm



MS. ROSSI 3: MS. ROSSI MEETS THE MOB

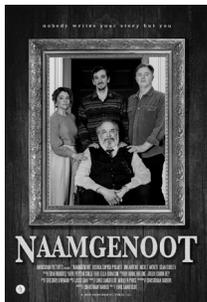
While traveling for work, Ms. Rossi gets picked up by the wrong driver at the airport. This mix-up creates a comedic adventure of chaotic misunderstandings with the mob. CC

NARRATIVE SHORT Run Time 19:50

Directed by Pat Battistini

Steyer Opera House, Hotel Winneshiek, Friday 1:00pm

Ballroom, Hotel Winneshiek, Sunday 2:10pm



NAAMGENOOT

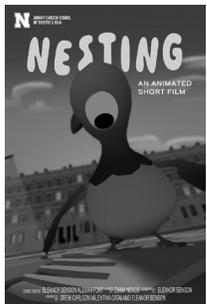
Fearing he's wasting his life, an aspiring playwright helps prepare his iconoclast great-uncle for a transition into assisted living, unaware they share more in common than just a name. CC *contains profanity

NARRATIVE SHORT Run Time 18:58

Directed by Luke Langfeldt

T-Bock's Upstairs, Saturday 10:45am

Ballroom, Hotel Winneshiek, Saturday 10:15am



NESTING

Nesting is a heartwarming 3D animated short that follows a curious pigeon on a journey to find a place to rest in a fast-paced urban setting. Through perseverance and quiet charm, it discovers that even in the most unwelcoming places, connection and kindness can still be found.

STUDENT ANIMATION Run Time 4:10

Directed by Alexah Fort and Eleanor Benson

Pulpit Rock Brewery, Saturday 4:15pm

Vesterheim, Saturday 4:00pm



NIGHT TRAIN LAST STOP

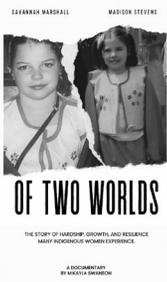
Eighty-two year old mensch, Ted Grossman, has been wooing Miami audiences with his velvet voice, on Sunday evenings on his WLRN radio program, "Night Train," for 47 years. Now at the end of his reign, Ted reveals the secrets to contentment, if you can get a word in. He and his boisterous gang defy stereotypes and exemplify true community at any age. CC

DOCUMENTARY SHORT Run Time 15:17

Directed by Gina Margillo

T-Bock's Upstairs, Saturday 1:00pm

Steyer Opera House, Hotel Winneshiek, Sunday 2:00pm



OF TWO WORLDS

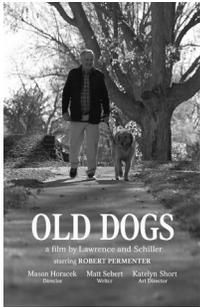
This film explores the stories about hardship, growth, and resilience of Indigenous women. CC

DOCUMENTARY SHORT Run Time 13:37

Directed by Mikayla Swanson

Pulpit Rock Brewery, Friday 4:05pm

Drift: Strength and Yoga Center, Saturday 1:05pm



OLD DOGS

A solitary old man's routine is disrupted when an unexpected visitor is dropped off at his home. At first, the change is unwelcome; but over time, it leads him on a journey to better his mental and physical health.

DOCUMENTARY SHORT Run Time 5:08

Directed by Mason Horacek

Ballroom, Hotel Winneshiek, Saturday 10:05am

Ballroom, Hotel Winneshiek, Sunday 2:05pm



ORIGIN

Origin is a short montage film about a Norwegian farmer who immigrated to the U.S. near the turn of the twentieth century. Near the end of his life, he reaches out to his dead wife to confess his dalliance as a young man with a huldra (a feminine spirit of the forest who lures men away from their betrothed.) Based on a script by Liz Bucheit. CC *Includes nudity

EXPERIMENTAL Run Time 23:53

Directed by Catherine Glynn

T-Bock's Upstairs, Friday 1:00pm

Vesterheim, Saturday 4:05pm



OUTRO

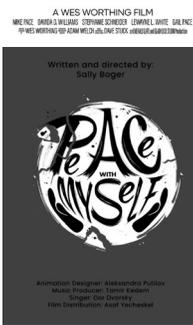
Just minutes before going on-air, a retiring radio DJ has an unexpected conversation that will inspire the tone of his last show. (There is a final scene during the end credits, so please stay through the end.) *includes profanity

NARRATIVE SHORT Run Time 16:50

Directed by Wes Worthing

T-Bock's Upstairs, Saturday 1:15pm

Steyer Opera House, Hotel Winneshiek, Sunday 2:15pm



PEACE WITH MYSELF

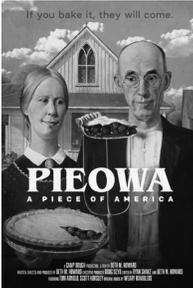
Through animation, music and voice-overs, the creator looks back into her past and deals with the sexual abuse that she experienced when she was 9 years old. She realizes that self-hatred, depression and anxiety are not her path. CC *Includes violence and sexual abuse

ANIMATION Run Time 3:50

Directed by Sally Boger

Pulpit Rock Brewery, Friday 4:00pm

Drift: Strength and Yoga Center, Saturday 1:00pm



PIEOWA

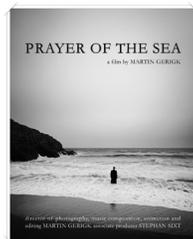
Pieowa: A Piece of America celebrates the myriad ways pie is baked into Iowa's culture, the lengths people will go to for a slice, and how this humble pastry can make the world a better place.

DOCUMENTARY FEATURE Run Time 01:16:00

Directed by Beth M. Howard

Opening Night Film - Thursday, March 5 at 6:30pm in the Steyer Opera House

T-Bock's Upstairs, Sunday 2:00pm



PRAYER OF THE SEA

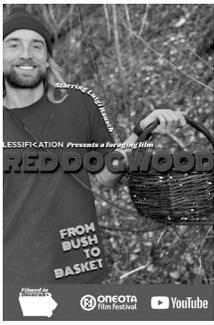
A composer recounts a dream from his youth that inspired the slow movement of his first string quartet, *Prayer of the Sea*. Now older, he reflects on the dream's message: a serene acceptance of life's inevitable end.

EXPERIMENTAL Run Time 6:30

Directed by Martin Gerigk

T-Bock's Upstairs, Friday 4:00pm

T-Bock's Upstairs, Sunday 11:00am



RED DOGWOOD: FROM BUSH TO BASKET

From foraging vibrant red branches of Red Osier Dogwood to weaving them into a functional, handcrafted basket, this process is a hands-on way to connect with nature and create something both beautiful and useful.

DOCUMENTARY SHORT Run Time 7:23

Directed by Luigi Rausch

T-Bock's Upstairs, Saturday 10:00am

Ballroom, Hotel Winneshiek, Saturday 1:00pm



REMEMBER ME

In this documentary about a student-led service trip to the Dominican Republic, narrator and filmmaker, Lauren Tyree, tells how her new friends, Francesca and Esperanza, remind us of the power of human connection.

STUDENT DOCUMENTARY Run Time 5:59

Directed by Lauren P. Tyree

T-Bock's Upstairs, Friday 4:10pm

T-Bock's Upstairs, Sunday 11:05am



REMEMBER ME - ONE YEAR LATER

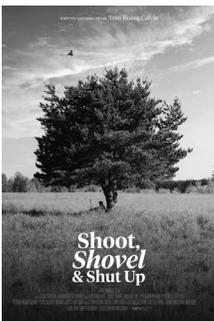
In this powerful follow-up to Lauren's first film, *Remember Me*, Lauren returns to the Dominican Republic with a mission: to let two young girls from the migrant village know that they are seen, remembered, and deeply valued. This film is a moving reminder that even in the most forgotten corners of the world, every life has meaning and every moment is a chance to say what matters most.

DOCUMENTARY SHORT Run Time 5:06

Directed by Lauren P. Tyree

T-Bock's Upstairs, Friday 4:15pm

T-Bock's Upstairs, Sunday 11:10am



SHOOT, SHOVEL AND SHUT UP

The Clifford family hopes to start a new life by selling their dilapidated, impoverished farm. The son Andy must make a decision to shoot, shovel, and shut up. CC

NARRATIVE SHORT Run Time 14:58

Directed by Trần Hoàng Calvin

Ballroom, Hotel Winneshiek, Friday 1:15pm

Drift: Strength and Yoga Center, Saturday 4:15pm



SHUFFLE

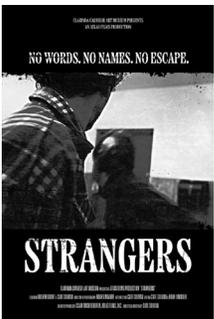
Through the lens of his own recovery, a filmmaker offers a character-driven look inside the billion dollar addiction treatment industry where young people are bought and sold for their insurance policies and ushered into a system designed to keep them sick. What begins as an investigation of a street-level scam, explodes to uncover systemic conflicts-of-interest and collusion at the highest levels of government. CC *Includes references to substance abuse

DOCUMENTARY FEATURE Run Time 1:21:56

Directed by Benjamin Flaherty

Steyer Opera House, Hotel Winneshiek, Saturday 10:05am

Pulpit Rock Brewery, Sunday 2:05pm



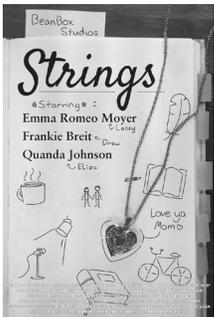
STRANGERS

In a small town, two young men settle a score in the only way they know how. Contains violence.

NARRATIVE SHORT Run Time 35:00

Directed by Cade Solivan

Drift: Strength and Yoga Center, Saturday 10:35am



STRINGS

Laney, a young cafe owner, is navigating the profound loss of her mother, whose memory lives on through shelves packed with cherished poetry books. When Drew walks into her cafe, a magical moment of connection unfolds between two people united by their deep love of poetry and shared experiences of loss and hope.

STUDENT NARRATIVE Run Time 25:00

Directed by Nettie Dellheim

Steyer Opera House, Hotel Winneshiek, Saturday 1:00pm

Vesterheim, Saturday 1:00pm



SWAN SONG

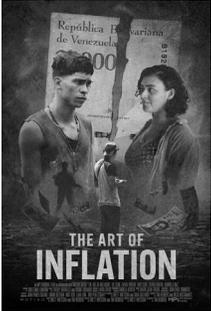
A young boy named Danya is taken by a dystopian government and turned into a cyborg, but for some reason, he retains his consciousness while his friend, Olga, does not. So, Danya must learn to survive on his own.

STUDENT ANIMATION Run Time 3:15

Directed by Skyler Ratliff

Pulpit Rock Brewery, Friday 1:00pm

Steyer Opera House, Hotel Winneshiek, Saturday 10:00am



THE ART OF INFLATION

Fleeing Venezuela's economic collapse, two brothers struggle for survival on a militia-operated coca farm. With their lives on the line, the younger brother gambles on a last ditch effort to rescue themselves and the girl he has fallen for. CC *Includes profanity and violence

NARRATIVE SHORT Run Time 22:33

Directed by Brett Wietecha

T-Bock's Upstairs, Saturday 4:00pm

Drift: Strength and Yoga Center, Saturday 10:10am



THE BRAIN BUCKET

A woman reflects on her time as a young skateboarder.

ANIMATION Run Time 3:07

Directed by Christopher Flippo

Pulpit Rock Brewery, Saturday 4:20pm

Vesterheim, Sunday 2:00pm



THE BULLDOGS

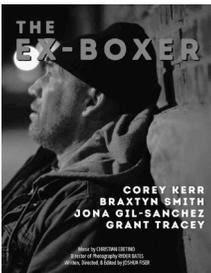
In 2023, a train derailment in East Palestine, Ohio, released and burned over a million pounds of vinyl chloride, forcing evacuations and drawing national attention. As residents returned home, many reported health symptoms and faced fears about safety and the town's future. The Bulldogs follows the community for the following year, capturing the enormous cleanup effort, as this community deals with crisis and uncertainty.

DOCUMENTARY FEATURE Run Time 1:24:00

Directed by Noah Dixon and Ori Segev

Steyer Opera House, Hotel Winneshiek, Friday 4:05pm

T-Bock's Upstairs, Saturday 4:25pm, Followed by a Q&A with director



THE EX-BOXER

Colin is a former heavyweight who, after a bad experience in the ring, lets guys punch him in the face for beer money. After a rough night, he suddenly gets confronted with his past. Includes profanity and violence.

STUDENT NARRATIVE Run Time 7:03

Directed by Joshua William Fiser

Drift: Strength and Yoga Center, Saturday 10:00am

ArtHaus, Saturday 10:00am



THE GIRL'S RACE

The Girls Race, a direct cinema documentary short, depicts the power and authenticity of cross country by joining 39 schools and 242 girls as they compete at the Johnson-Olson High School Girls Varsity 5K, a race held as part of Luther College's 50th All-American Invitational.

DOCUMENTARY SHORT Run Time 12:55

Directed by Thomas C. Johnson

Ballroom, Hotel Winneshiek, Saturday 4:00pm

Pulpit Rock Brewery, Sunday 11:00am



THE GRAVE HUNTER

The story of Meir Bulkah, known as the Grave Hunter, embarks on a battle for the remnants of Jewish memory through the location and documentation of Jewish cemeteries and burial sites across Poland. CC *Includes profanity

DOCUMENTARY FEATURE Run Time 50:21

Directed by Yochay Rosenberg

ArtHaus, Saturday 4:05pm

Vesterheim, Sunday 11:05am



THE LIBRARIANS

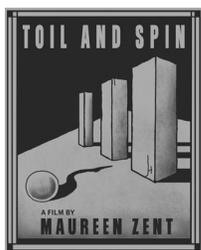
Librarians emerge as first responders in the fight for democracy and our First Amendment Rights. In Texas, the Krause List targets 850 books focused on race and LGBTQia+ stories – triggering sweeping book bans across the U.S. at an unprecedented rate. As tensions escalate, librarians connect the dots from heated school and library board meetings nationwide to lay bare the underpinnings of extremism fueling the censorship efforts.

DOCUMENTARY FEATURE Run Time 1:28:00

Directed by Kim A. Snyder

Decorah Public Library, Mezzanine, Friday 7:30pm

Steyer Opera House, Hotel Winneshiek, Sunday 11:00am



TOIL AND SPIN

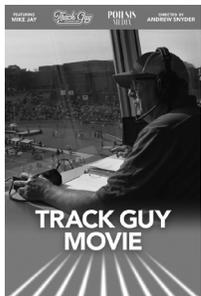
Toil and Spin uses minimalist visuals to evoke the drifting sensations of sleep and the turbulence of sleeplessness—an oarless journey through memory, regret, and restless thought. Stop motion animation.

EXPERIMENTAL Run Time 5:05

Directed by Maureen Zent

Ballroom, Hotel Winneshiek, Saturday 10:00am

Pulpit Rock Brewery, Sunday 2:00pm



TRACK GUY MOVIE

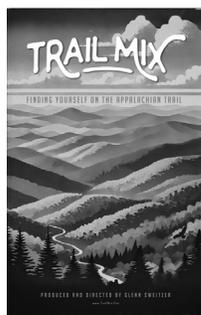
For over 30 years, Mike Jay's voice has echoed through track and field stadiums across Iowa and the United States, from the Iowa High School State Meet to the Drake Relays and beyond. But his impact goes far beyond the mic. Through the Track Guy Foundation, Mike, his family, and foundation supporters have helped advance the sports of track and field and cross country by supporting athletes and building community across the state. CC *Includes profanity

DOCUMENTARY FEATURE Run Time 1:05:25

Directed by Andrew Snyder

T-Bock's Upstairs, Saturday 1:30pm, Followed by Q&A with director

Steyer Opera House, Hotel Winneshiek, Sunday 2:30pm, Followed by Q&A with director



TRAIL MIX

Trail Mix follows a 2,000-mile journey from Georgia to Maine, uncovering the personal struggles and healing of hikers seeking solace, purpose, and transformation. The film reveals how nature becomes a powerful path back to wholeness.

DOCUMENTARY FEATURE Run Time 49:55

Directed by Glenn Sweitzer

Drift: Strength and Yoga Center, Saturday 5:00pm

Ballroom, Hotel Winneshiek, Saturday 4:10pm



UNFURLED

At mid-career, queer artist Eve Wood still chases success. “The art world is a horrible business, so why do I keep doing this?” With a solo exhibition looming, she waits in anxious anticipation: “Will anyone come? Will they like my work?” Will Eve ever get the recognition she craves? CC *Includes profanity and nudity and violence in artwork

DOCUMENTARY SHORT Run Time 27:30

Directed by Gail Willumsen

Pulpit Rock Brewery, Friday 5:05pm

Drift: Strength and Yoga Center, Saturday 2:00pm



UPLIFT (G3,7)

Uplift centers on the interactions of Inés, a customer who is trying to buy a new bra, the salesperson, Marta and Marta's trainee assistant, Raul. This playful musical fable unfolds as Inés is forced to examine body image and self-acceptance. CC

NARRATIVE SHORT Run Time 17:00

Directed by David García Díaz and Rut García Díaz

Pulpit Rock Brewery, Friday 4:40pm

Drift: Strength and Yoga Center, Saturday 1:40pm



WHEN IT SNOWS

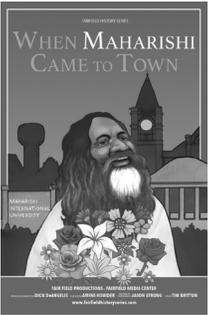
When their fiercely independent mother begins to show signs of dementia, two adult siblings must confront the painful realities of aging, memory, and obligation—testing the bonds of love, family, and the promises we make to those who raised us. CC

NARRATIVE SHORT Run Time 24:24

Directed by Stephen Folker

Ballroom, Hotel Winneshiek, Saturday 10:35am

ArtHaus, Saturday 1:00pm



WHEN MAHARISHI CAME TO TOWN

When Maharishi Came to Town tells the story of how Maharishi International University came from California to Fairfield, Iowa. Even though some local residents saw it as a novel stopgap measure, today over 50 years later, Maharishi International University, the “TM University”, is now an integral part of this traditional Iowa town. But it’s been a heck of a ride.

DOCUMENTARY FEATURE Run Time 1:15:00

Directed by Dick DeAngelis

Pulpit Rock Brewery, Saturday 1:05pm



WITHOUT A PEDAL - A BICYCLE FILM ABOUT SNOWBOARDING

This sequel to *Without a Paddle-A Canoe Trip about Snowboarding* follows four friends who set out on a 1,300-kilometer winter bike journey from Canada to Alaska, towing trailers loaded with snowboards, camping gear, and even a piano. Their goal is to reach Alaska’s legendary mountain spines, but the route tests their endurance, humor, and resilience. CC

DOCUMENTARY FEATURE Run Time 1:01:00

Directed by Nick Khattar and Johan Rosen

Steyer Opera House, Hotel Winneshiek, Friday 1:20pm

Pulpit Rock Brewery, Sunday 11:10am



WITHOUT THEM I AM LOST

Without Them I Am Lost is a meditation on landscape and the shape of home. The story follows American writer Damon Falke, as he considers the implications of migrating to the far north of Norway, above the Arctic Circle. The people he finds thrive in this place. They understand the sublime power of nature. Their lives and stories are shaped by it. CC

DOCUMENTARY FEATURE Run Time 1:13:38

Directed by Charles M Pepiton

T-Bock’s Upstairs, Friday 1:30pm

Vesterheim, Sunday 2:05pm



YER SMACKIN

In this nostalgic and heartfelt comedy, an exasperated older brother celebrates his birthday with the person he loves the most—his whiny, obnoxious little sister. CC

STUDENT NARRATIVE Run Time 6:30

Directed by John Field Brown

Ballroom, Hotel Winneshiek, Saturday 10:10am

Ballroom, Hotel Winneshiek, Sunday 2:00pm

ONEOTA FILM FESTIVAL 2026 JUDGES

Brenda Ramlo

Rebecca Wiese

Ruth Caldwell

David Anderson

Paul Gardner

Samantha Sanchez

Alan Lerstrom

Susan Cantine-Maxson

Nancy Sojka

Dennis Pottratz

Uwe Rudolph