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## **Milwaukee Film Previews First Film Titles in 2025 Dialogues Documentary Festival Lineup**

*The 2025 Dialogues Documentary Festival Friends & Family Preview event will take place at the Oriental Theatre on Wednesday, September 10th, doors at 5:30, program at 6:00 PM*



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**MILWAUKEE – Tuesday, August 19th** – Milwaukee Film is gearing up for the 2025 [Dialogues Documentary Festival](#), presented by Potawatomi Casino Hotel, and is thrilled to unveil the first batch of films in this year's lineup. Dialogues Documentary Festival is set to take place September 18-21, and will consist of over 30 documentary programs screening at Milwaukee Film's historic cinemas, the Downer and Oriental Theatres. Each of the six film programs previewed below will be followed by in-cinema talkbacks with special guests including visiting filmmakers and local experts.

"Our programming team has spent the last few months carefully selecting documentaries that will matter to our engaged, excited audiences, and this preview of six film selections represents the depth and breadth of the stories and issues that can be explored at this year's Dialogues

Documentary Festival—from personal health care journeys to accidental animal sanctuaries to celebrations of cultural icons you may already (or will soon) love!” expressed Cara Ogburn, Milwaukee Film’s Artistic Director. “And, like many of the programs in Dialogues, we expect that each of these programs announced today will have special guests in attendance and be extended by talkbacks and such, taking the dialogues one step further without leaving your cinema seat,” she concluded.

The complete lineup of films for the 2025 Dialogues Documentary Festival, presented by Potawatomi Casino Hotel, will be revealed on September 3, with tickets on sale that date for Milwaukee Film Members and on sale for the general public on September 4. Audiences should mark their calendars and plan to join Milwaukee Film’s programming team, staff, and partners for a Friends & Family Preview event on Wednesday, September 10th at the Oriental Theatre, doors at 5:30 PM, program at 6:00 PM.

[Passes and ticket packages for the 2025 Dialogues Documentary Festival](#) are available now, with an option to purchase a Festival All-Access Pass at an incredible value; passes grant the passholder entry into all in-person festival film screenings for only \$65 for general audiences, or \$50 for [Milwaukee Film Members](#).

#### **First film selections announced:**

*Arrest the Midwife* (dir. Elaine Epstein, 2025, USA)

With rare access to an intensely private community, ARREST THE MIDWIFE exposes the rural healthcare desert created by New York state’s approach to maternal health regulation, sharing the story of criminalized midwives, and the Amish and Mennonite women who break from their traditions to stand up, speak out, and join the fight for women’s bodily autonomy and reproductive justice. Relevant across cultures, this documentary inspires coalitions that advocate for healthcare choice and access for all. This screening is part of Milwaukee Film’s [Cinematic Sisterhood](#), a monthly series funded by a special grant from the [Women’s Fund of Greater Milwaukee](#), and will feature a post-film discussion exploring women’s health access, as well as a masterclass on ethics in documentary storytelling with special guests.

*Cat Town, USA* (dir. Jonathan Napolitano, 2025, USA)

Meet Terry and Bruce Jenkins, founders of Cats Cradle Foundation, a sanctuary and hospice for senior cats with nowhere else to go, but still a lot of love, if not life, left in them. In this feel-good doc, director Jonathan Napolitano captures the emotional bonds between the couple and their feline residents, highlighting the joys, challenges, and inevitable goodbyes that come with caring for cats in their final chapter. A panel is expected following this screening to explore cat rescue in Milwaukee in more depth.

*It’s Dorothy!* (dir. Jeffrey McHale, 2025, USA)

IT’S DOROTHY! fabulously pulls back the emerald curtain on 125 years of Dorothy Gale, from L. Frank Baum’s original literary Kansas dreamer to queer icon across stage and screen adaptations like WICKED, THE WIZ, and the beloved 1939 film. Director Jeffrey McHale (YOU

DON'T NOMI, MFF19) assembles a twister of interviews, archival gems, and glittering pop culture moments to explore how Dorothy clicked her heels into the heart of LGBTQ+ identity and an undeniable cultural touchstone.

*Malignant Practice* (dir. Kristin E. Catalano, 2025, USA)

MALIGNANT PRACTICE is an animated short film based on the medical misfortune of a young woman whose breast cancer was missed by a doctor and a mammogram. This Milwaukee-made, deeply personal yet true story from MFF alum Kristin Catalano (CLARENCE, MFF15) emphasizes the flaws within our healthcare system and the importance of being one's own healthcare advocate. A panel will follow the screening and include the filmmakers, the participants whose stories are featured in the film, and local breast cancer patient advocacy practitioners.

*Shorts: Silver Linings*

Wrinkles? We call that wisdom. Slower pace? We say better storytelling. These short films celebrate the people who are living proof that life doesn't stop at 60, 70, or 90—it just gets more interesting. From typewriting legends to late-in-life reinventions, this shorts program reminds us that growing older might just be the best-kept secret to living well.

*Wicket* (dir. Lily Plotkin, 2025, USA)

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

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### **About Milwaukee Film**

Milwaukee Film is a nonprofit arts organization dedicated to entertaining, educating, and engaging our community through cinematic experiences, with a vision to make Milwaukee a center for film culture. Milwaukee Film is committed to high-quality and accessible film programming through their operation of the magnificent Oriental Theatre, a historic cinema palace, and the iconic Downer Theatre, Milwaukee's oldest running cinema. The second [Dialogues Documentary Festival](#) presented by Potawatomi Casino Hotel will take place September 18-21, 2025. The 18th annual [Milwaukee Film Festival](#) will take place April 16-30, 2026. For more information or to become a Member, visit [mkefilm.org](http://mkefilm.org).

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