ELECTRONIC PRESS KIT

2026 EDITION

A COMMUNITY SERVES TIME



MILWAUKEE 53206

A FILM BY KEITH MCQUIRTER

URBANWORLD FILM FESTIVAL 2017
BEST DOCUMENTARY
WINNER

DECODER MEDIA

LOGLINE

In Milwaukee's 53206 ZIP code, long defined by staggering imprisonment rates, a wife fights to bring home a husband repeatedly denied release, a father discovers that freedom does not guarantee a second chance, and a community leader returns behind bars to help fathers stay connected to their children.

DIRECTOR	Keith McQuirter
RUNTIME · YEAR	54 minutes · 2016
FORMAT	Feature documentary · HD · 16:9
LANGUAGE	English · English captions available
SUBJECTS	Criminal justice · Mass incarceration · Family & fatherhood · Reentry
BROADCAST	*America ReFramed*, WORLD Channel / PBS, 2018
DISTRIBUTION	Decoder Media, LLC · decoder@decodermedia.com

WHY NOW

A decade after the film's release, the story it began has continued. Baron Walker came home in 2018. Beverly Walker's advocacy helped push Wisconsin to restore its commutation process in 2026. See page 10.



DENNIS WALTON LEADS A FATHERHOOD CLASS FOR INCARCERATED MEN AT THE MILWAUKEE COUNTY HOUSE OF CORRECTION.

THREE LIVES.
ONE ZIP CODE.

A PRISON SENTENCE IS CARRIED FAR BEYOND THE PERSON SERVING IT.

The film does not argue about mass incarceration. It stays with three people long enough for the argument to become unnecessary.

SHORT SYNOPSIS

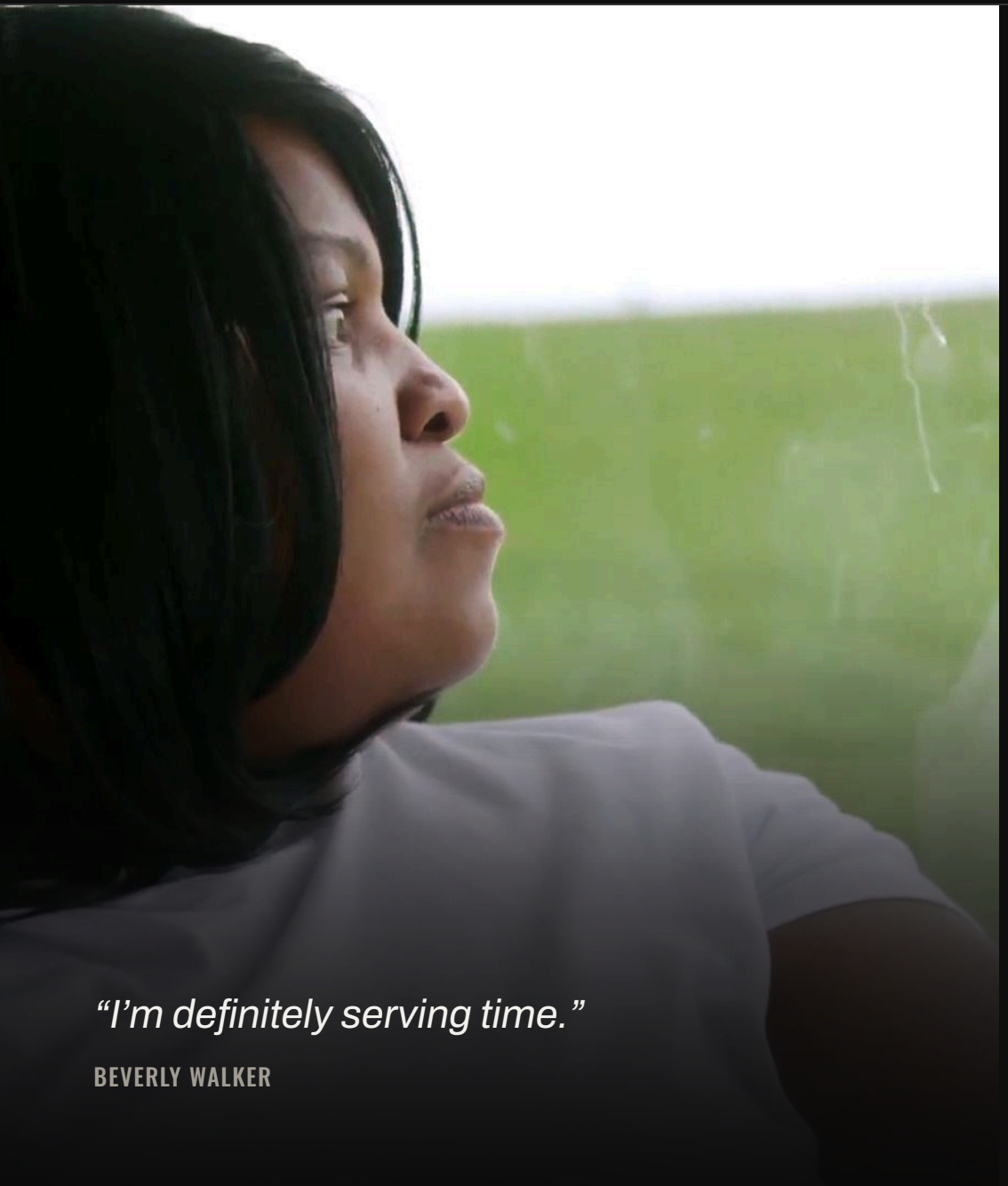
Set in a Milwaukee ZIP code with staggering rates of Black male incarceration, three lives reveal what incarceration leaves behind. Beverly Walker waits for her husband to come home after more than two decades, his release repeatedly deferred within a changing parole system. Chad Wilson tries to build a life after ten years cycling through prison and reentry. Dennis Walton walks back inside the Milwaukee County House of Correction to help fathers stay connected to their children.

LONG SYNOPSIS

Beverly is a wife, mother and grandmother raising five children while her husband Baron serves a sentence handed down before Wisconsin replaced parole with truth-in-sentencing. As his release is deferred again and again, she becomes an advocate, learning how to navigate a parole system that can keep a family in limbo for decades. Dennis Walton, a lifelong 53206 resident who once faced prison himself, now goes inside the Milwaukee County House of Correction to work with incarcerated fathers trying to remain connected to their children and prepare for life beyond the walls. Chad Wilson comes home after years cycling through incarceration, determined to provide for his children, only to discover that a felony record can turn release into another form of confinement, closing off work, stability and a genuine second chance. *MILWAUKEE 53206* moves beyond the statistics that made the ZIP code infamous to reveal what mass incarceration demands of the families and communities left to carry its consequences.

62% of Black men ages 30–34 in Milwaukee's 53206 ZIP code had been incarcerated at least once, according to a 2013 UWM study.

Source: John Pawasarat and Lois M. Quinn, *Wisconsin's Mass Incarceration of African American Males*, UWM Employment and Training Institute.



“I’m definitely serving time.”

BEVERLY WALKER

FROM ONE FAMILY TO A STATEWIDE FIGHT

BEVERLY WALKER

In *MILWAUKEE 53206*, Beverly Walker is the emotional center of a family separated by incarceration: primary breadwinner, caretaker, and the person carrying her husband Baron’s case forward while raising their five children. Baron was sentenced in 1996, before Wisconsin adopted truth-in-sentencing, with the expectation that he would be considered for parole. He was denied six times.

She spent more than two decades fighting for him to receive a fair opportunity for release, and became a public voice for the roughly three thousand people in Wisconsin sentenced under the old law.

Baron came home in August 2018. Beverly did not stop. She co-founded The Integrity Center, where she is executive director, and broadened her advocacy to people serving long sentences across Wisconsin. As administrator of WISDOM’s commutations committee, she worked with Governor Tony Evers’s office for three years on reviving the state’s commutation process. In April 2026, Wisconsin restored commutations after 25 years.

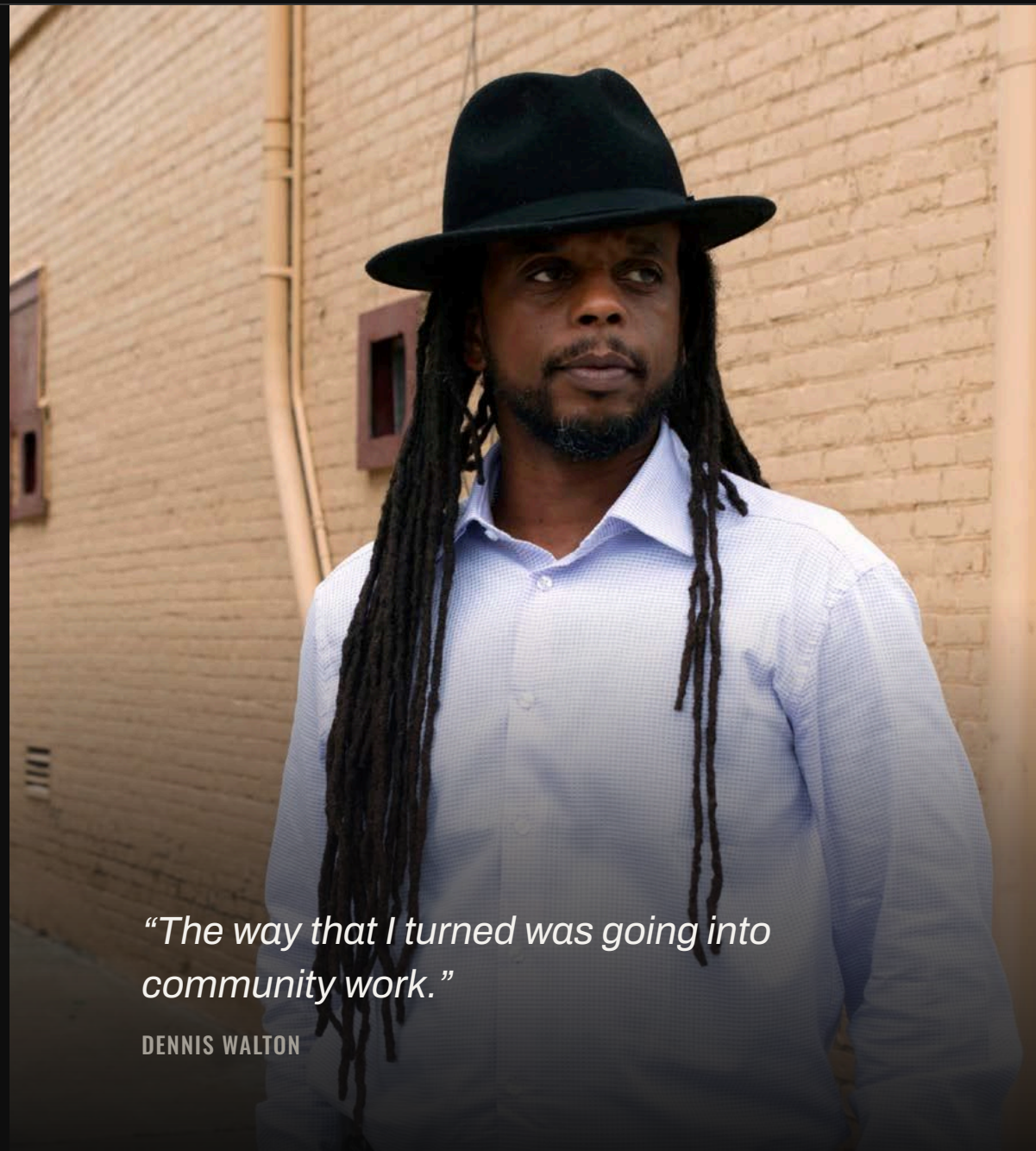
ONE MAN WALKING BACK INTO PRISON — BY CHOICE

DENNIS WALTON

Dennis Walton was born and raised on Milwaukee's North Side and has lived most of his life inside 53206. As a young man he faced decades in prison; when his case was dismissed he turned toward education and organizing, and he has spent the years since building institutions in the neighborhood he never left.

He served as co-director of the Milwaukee Fatherhood Initiative and founded Made Men Worldwide, a nonprofit built around family restoration and responsible fatherhood. His work spans neighborhood capacity-building, reentry, employment and family support, and he goes into the Milwaukee County House of Correction to help incarcerated men prepare to father from a distance and to come home.

In the film, Dennis is the counterweight to the two stories on either side of him: the person who stayed, and who kept working.



"The way that I turned was going into community work."

DENNIS WALTON



“I owe it to the community. I owe it to myself. I owe it to my children.”

CHAD S.A. WILSON

IN MEMORY

CHAD S.A. WILSON

DIED DECEMBER 13, 2021

Chad Wilson was born on Milwaukee’s North Side and spent ten years cycling in and out of the criminal justice system before coming home determined to build a different life. He completed the Milwaukee Fatherhood Initiative’s program while incarcerated and became an advocate for education, training and reentry support for men inside.

In the film, his search for steady work is the clearest evidence of the documentary’s central idea: that a sentence does not end at the gate. He was candid on camera about fatherhood, shame, second chances, and the daily arithmetic of providing for his children with a felony record that began at eighteen.

MILWAUKEE 53206 preserves his voice.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

When does punishment stop addressing harm and begin creating more of it?

KEITH MCQUIRTER
DIRECTOR & PRODUCER

In 2008, while working on the documentary series *Brick City*, I entered a correctional facility for the first time. Sitting in a room filled largely with young Black men around my own age, I was struck by the distance between the way mass incarceration is measured and the way it is lived. Statistics could describe its scale. They could not describe what it meant for a family, a relationship, or a community.

That question eventually led me to Milwaukee's ZIP code 53206. When I began *MILWAUKEE 53206*, I wanted to move beyond the numbers—to understand what incarceration looked like from inside a marriage, a household, and a neighborhood. Beverly Walker, Dennis Walton, and Chad Wilson allowed us into deeply personal parts of their lives. Their stories revealed that a prison sentence does not belong solely to the person behind bars. It travels. It alters childhoods, employment, intimacy, opportunity, and time.

I had always believed in the power of storytelling. What astonished me was seeing that power take on a life beyond the film itself. In Milwaukee, attention surrounding *MILWAUKEE 53206* led defense attorney Craig Mastantuono to learn about Baron Walker's case and represent him pro bono. In August 2018, after more than twenty-two years in prison, Baron came home.

The story did not end there. Beverly kept going, extending the fight she had once waged for her own family to others serving long sentences. And I kept returning to Wisconsin.



Over time, the question I was following became less about incarceration alone and more about harm: how it travels from an act to a sentence, from a sentence into a family, and from families into communities. I became increasingly interested in the ways systems created to respond to harm can also perpetuate it—sometimes for decades, long after the original act.

That is where questions of accountability, mercy, change, and second chances began to converge for me. Not simply: does a person deserve another chance? But something larger: What does accountability look like if it does not perpetuate the damage it is meant to answer? And, at some point, how do we end the cycle of harm?

Those are the questions that have kept me returning to Wisconsin. They are not questions with easy answers.

But increasingly, I believe the measure of justice cannot only be how we respond to harm. It must also be whether what we do next allows that harm to end.



FROM SCREENINGS TO ACTION

A multi-year impact campaign carried *MILWAUKEE 53206* into schools, faith communities, corporations, advocacy organizations and government institutions across the country, including Google Creative Lab and the Wisconsin Department of Corrections, as well as a congressional screening on Capitol Hill. The Center for Media & Social Impact at American University documented the campaign and measured audience response.

CMSI documented that media attention surrounding the film led a Milwaukee defense attorney to learn about Baron Walker's case and represent him pro bono, while screenings and a letter-writing campaign generated additional advocacy. In August 2018, a Milwaukee County judge modified Walker's sentence to time served.

235
COMMUNITY SCREENINGS

21
STATES REACHED

18K+
PEOPLE REACHED

96%
RATED IT GOOD OR EXCELLENT

Source: Center for Media & Social Impact (CMSI), American University, impact report. Audience response based on 1,346 post-screening survey respondents.

Read the Full Impact Report →



2018 · AFTER BARON'S RELEASE

2016 · FROM THE FILM

TEN YEARS LATER

HER HUSBAND CAME HOME. SHE KEPT GOING.

A decade after audiences first met Beverly Walker in *MILWAUKEE 53206*, her fight to bring her husband Baron home grew into a broader campaign for second chances. She went on to lead a grassroots effort to restore commutations, helping develop a proposed process, identify potential candidates and work with advocates and the governor's office to restore a form of executive clemency that had gone unused in Wisconsin for 25 years.

In April 2026, Gov. Tony Evers reestablished Wisconsin's commutation process.

> *"…when I was able to get him home, I couldn't stop and leave all of those people that I saw stuck in that system."*
>
> BEVERLY WALKER

2008
Begins advocating for Baron Walker's release

2016
MILWAUKEE 53206 documents the Walker family's story

2018
Baron Walker comes home after more than two decades in prison

2023
Leads a grassroots team developing a proposed commutation process

Apr 2026
Wisconsin restores commutations after 25 years

2026–27
The first applications and hearings move forward



BARON WALKER'S FAMILY IN THE GALLERY AS A MILWAUKEE COUNTY JUDGE MODIFIES HIS SENTENCE, AUGUST 2018

53206 A DECADE LATER.

MILWAUKEE 53206 captured a community at a particular moment. The decade since has been defined less by a turnaround than by the slower work of repair.

01

A DIFFERENT WAY OF SEEING THE PROBLEM

In 2019, Milwaukee County became the first jurisdiction in the country to declare racism a public health crisis — connecting incarceration to health, housing, education, employment and opportunity.

02

INVESTMENT AND ORGANIZING

New legal-aid efforts, resident-led organizations, violence-prevention programs and place-based investments have expanded in and around 53206.

03

THE CRISIS HAS NOT DISAPPEARED

Poverty and violence remain serious and Wisconsin's prisons remain over capacity. New institutional investment has not erased longstanding household-level hardship.

04

THE CONVERSATION CONTINUES

Advocacy, legal reform and continued filmmaking — including a forthcoming public television feature documentary following two people sentenced to life as children — have carried the questions forward.

PROGRAMMING & DISCUSSION THEMES

Mass incarceration and family · Fatherhood · Second chances · Parole and sentencing · Community organizing · Long-term effects of criminal records · Reentry and employment · Public health and incarceration

AWARD



GRAND JURY PRIZE
BEST FEATURE DOCUMENTARY

Urbanworld Film Festival, 2017

MEDIA FOR A JUST SOCIETY AWARD

National Council on Crime and Delinquency, 2017

NATIONAL BROADCAST PREMIERE | 2018

PBS · AMERICA REFRAMED · WORLD

America ReFramed · WORLD Channel / PBS

OFFICIAL SELECTION

2016	Milwaukee Film Festival · St. Louis International Film Festival
2017	Atlanta Film Festival · Brooklyn Film Festival · American Black Film Festival · Urbanworld Film Festival · Athens International Film + Video Festival · Social Justice Film Festival
2018	BlackStar Film Festival · Wisconsin Film Festival

BROADCAST & SCREENING HISTORY

JUN 2016	World premiere — Landmark Oriental Theatre, Milwaukee, presented by Milwaukee Film
NOV 2016	Congressional screening on Capitol Hill, hosted by the ACLU with U.S. Rep. Gwen Moore
2016–18	National impact campaign — 235 screenings across 21 states

“Highly recommended.”

VIDEO LIBRARIAN

“A powerful new documentary.”

WUWM MILWAUKEE PUBLIC RADIO

“Not just illustrations of problems, but portraits of people working towards solutions.”

MILWAUKEE RECORD

YES! MAGAZINE 2018	**WHAT IS THE REAL COST OF MASS INCARCERATION?** The film, its impact campaign and the Walker family following Baron’s release.	READ →
WUWM 2019	**MILWAUKEE COUPLE OPENS UP ABOUT THE EFFECTS OF INCARCERATION ON THEIR FAMILY** An intimate follow-up with Beverly and Baron at home after his release.	READ →
BELT MAGAZINE 2019	**THE RIPPLING EFFECT OF BARON WALKER** Filmmaker essay — Keith McQuirter on the afterlife of the documentary.	READ →
SUPER LAWYERS 2022	**BIGGER THAN THE CASES** How attorneys Craig Mastantuono and Rebecca Coffee took Baron’s case.	READ →
WISCONSIN WATCH 2026	**WISCONSIN PRISON COMMUTATIONS ARE BACK** Beverly Walker’s advocacy and Wisconsin’s restored commutation process.	READ →

Additional reporting: Wisconsin Examiner (2025) · Racine County Eye (2026) · Milwaukee Courier (2026) · Milwaukee Journal Sentinel (2018). More at milwaukee53206.com/press



FROM AN NAACP IMAGE AWARD-WINNING FILMMAKER

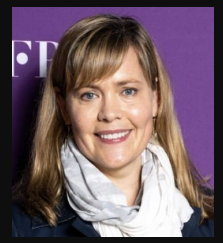
Keith McQuirter is an award-winning director, producer and showrunner known for cinematic, character-driven nonfiction storytelling. He won the 2021 NAACP Image Award for Outstanding Directing for MGM+'s *By Whatever Means Necessary: The Times of Godfather of Harlem*, which he also executive produced alongside Forest Whitaker, Nina Yang Bongiovi and Swizz Beatz. His credits include producing three episodes of Netflix's *The Innocence Files* for Academy Award-winning director Roger Ross Williams; co-producing the Peabody Award-winning and Primetime Emmy-nominated *Brick City* for Sundance TV; and directing and producing *MILWAUKEE 53206*. He served as an executive producer on Peacock's *High Horse: The Black Cowboy*, nominated for Outstanding Documentary at the 2026 NAACP Image Awards.

McQuirter is currently directing a forthcoming feature documentary for public television that grew out of his continued work in Wisconsin, following two people sentenced to life as children as they seek release decades later. He studied film and television production at NYU Tisch, where he received the Martin Scorsese Young Filmmaker Award, and is the founder of Decoder Media.

Full biography and selected work: keithmcquirter.com

KEITH MCQUIRTER

DIRECTOR · PRODUCER



KATIE TABER

PRODUCER

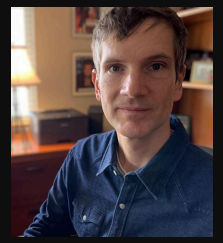
Documentary director and producer. Credits include *Black Table* and *The Homestretch*.



DEREK WIESEHAHN

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY

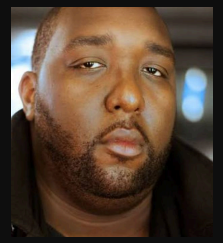
Cinematographer on *Music by Prudence* and *How to Survive a Plague*.



PAUL LOVELACE

EDITOR

Editor and producer. Credits include *Iris* and *The Last Critic*.



JASON L. POLLARD

EDITOR

Associate Arts Professor at NYU Tisch. Credits include *Slavery by Another Name*.

FULL PRODUCTION CREDITS

Transform Films presents MILWAUKEE 53206

DIRECTOR / PRODUCER
Keith McQuirter

PRODUCERS
Adam Miller, Katie Taber

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS
CarolAnne Dolan, Nick Stuart

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY
Derek Wiesehahn

EDITORS
Paul Lovelace, Jason Pollard

MUSIC BY
Tim Bright

SPOKEN WORD PERFORMANCE
Muhibb Dyer

LINE PRODUCER
Michelle Budnick-Duque

CONSULTING PRODUCER
Kirsten Kelly

ASSOCIATE PRODUCERS
Kate Gladstone, Alex Headley, Denise Meechan

ADDITIONAL CAMERA
Shaun Cloud, Justin Ervin, Keith McQuirter

ASSISTANT EDITOR
Jonathan Abreu

PRODUCTION ASSISTANTS
Sam Benyon, Ruby Roca, Mandy Stoehr

SOUND OPERATORS
Thomas Beach, Sean Egan, Jacob Fatke, Cory Kaseman, Ben Nelson

POST-PRODUCTION SERVICES
Final Frame · Digital Intermediate Colorist: Will Cox · Digital Intermediate Online Editor: Gil Litver · Digital Intermediate Producer: Caitlin Tartaro

POST-PRODUCTION AUDIO SERVICES
Final Frame · Dialogue Editors: Mike Frank, Arjun Sheth · Sound Effect Editor: Arjun Sheth · Re-Recording Mixer: Mike Frank

MUSICIANS
Tim Bright, Alan Friedman, John Deley, Eugene Osborne Smith

PHOTOGRAPHY
Noel Spirandelli

GRAPHIC DESIGN
Ellen Wagner

MOTION GRAPHICS
Jorge Morales

PHOTO RETOUCHING
Erin Sullivan, Michael Wilson

ARCHIVAL
Getty Images

LEGAL SERVICES
David Dreilinger, Esq.

FEATURED MUSIC
“Doomsday” · Performed by Webster X · Written by Sam Ahmed and Jordan Cohen · By exclusive arrangement with Danger Village Music

VERY SPECIAL THANKS
Beverly Walker, Dennis Walton, Chad Wilson

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A COMMUNITY SERVES TIME · A FILM BY KEITH MCQUIRTER

WATCH MILWAUKEE 53206

Available on select streaming and digital platforms.

plex · RELAY · FAWESOME · biblio+

For current streaming availability, visit milwaukee53206.com.

WATCH THE TRAILER →

WATCH THE FILM →

PRESS & LICENSING CONTACT

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