

Detroit: THE CITY OF *Faith*

A Film By
Keith Famie



VISIONALIST
ENTERTAINMENT PRODUCTIONS





June 27, 2023

Keith Famie
Visionalist Entertainment
28354 Beck Road
Wixom, MI 48393

Dear Keith,

Thanks for the update on “Detroit: The City of Churches” and the potential for a sequel for 2024. Based on the success of last year’s film premiere, we are already laying plans to for your upcoming work, “Detroit: The City of Faith,” as a central feature of our programming upon its anticipated release in March 2024.

By way of reminder, last year’s initial broadcast was the among the highest grossing programs of our fundraising campaign; and while PBS isn’t traditionally a “ratings-driven” service, our viewership for the prime-time broadcast was double the average viewership for the timeslot.

Further, as in our previous works together – In addition to a Detroit release – I would also recommend we look at creating and funding a distribution plan to release the film to PBS affiliates through a state- or nationwide station relations campaign.

I know you have many more stories to tell about Detroit’s houses of worship and the varied and diverse congregations who fill them. With that in mind, here’s looking forward to the next installment of your film series in 2024 on Detroit PBS.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Fred'.

Fred Nahhat
Sr. VP, Production
Detroit Public TV



Faith is the anchor that holds families together, through tragedy and triumph, and in no other city is this more obvious than in the Motor City. As an automotive boomtown, Detroit drew immigrants from nearly every country on earth, and along with their brains and brawn, they brought their religion.

In our second installment into Detroit's religious history, *Detroit: The City of Faith*, we will explore the many ways that religion laid the bedrock of Detroit's unique cultural diversity and how belief has shaped us as a people and linked us as a city. Our 2022 PBS / Detroit Public TV documentary, *Detroit: The City of Churches*, was awarded four Michigan Emmys.

Virtually every Christianity faith is represented here. We find evidence on every corner, in enclaves and organizations, in neighborhoods and in houses of worship. *Detroit: The City of Faith* will shine the light on the Christian community and those early immigrants who made their way to the Motor City in search of the American dream.

Most importantly, we will focus on the bridging and bonding that faith brings to our communities. We will hear from current-day spiritual leaders to better understand the journey their congregations took. They will teach us about our similarities and our differences so that, in a spirit of partnership, we can unlock the potential for positive change.

This will be the focus of the 2023/2024 Detroit Public TV documentary by Producer/Director Keith Famie and the team at Visionalist Entertainment Productions as they take an in-depth look behind the pulpit.



Detroit:
THE CITY
OF
Faith

Featured Churches



Basilica of Ste. Anne de Detroit

1000 Sainte Anne Street
Detroit, MI 48216
313-496-1701

Spiritual Leader: Msgr. Charles Kosanke



Kirk in the Hills

1340 W. Long Lake Rd.
Bloomfield Township, MI 48302
248-626-2515

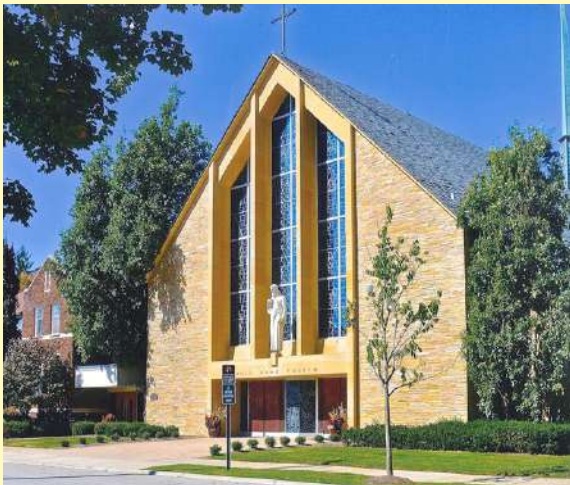
Spiritual Leader: Rev. Dr. Andrew McDonald



Historic Trinity Lutheran Church

1345 Gratiot Ave.
Detroit, MI 48207
313-567-3100

Spiritual Leader: Rev. Darryl Lee Andrzejewski



Holy Name Catholic Church

630 Harmon St.
Birmingham, MI 48009
248-646-2244

Spiritual Leader: Msgr. John Zenz



Jefferson Avenue Presbyterian Church

8625 E. Jefferson Ave.
Detroit, MI 48214
313-822-3456

Spiritual Leader: Pastor Dr. Tim Beal



Holy Family Novi

24505 Meadowbrook Rd.
Novi, MI 48375
248-349-8847

Spiritual Leader: Fr. Bob Lacroix



Sweetest Heart of Mary Church

4440 Russell St.
Detroit, MI 48207
313-831-6659

Spiritual Leader: Rev. Fr. Grzegorz (Greg) Tokarski



The Basilica of St. Mary

18100 Merriman Rd.
Livonia, MI 48152
734-422-0010

Spiritual Leader: Fr. George Shalhoub



Second Baptist Church of Detroit

441 Monroe St.
Detroit, MI 48226
313-961-0920

Spiritual Leader: Rev. Lawrence W. Rodgers



St. Thomas Chaldean Catholic Church

6900 Maple Rd.
West Bloomfield, MI 48322
248-788-2460

Spiritual Leader: Rev. Pierre Konja



Cathedral of the Most Blessed Sacrament

9844 Woodward Ave.
Detroit, MI 48202
313-865-6300

Spiritual Leader: Very Rev. JJ Mech



Immaculate Conception Ukrainian Catholic Church

11700 McDougall
Hamtramck, MI 48212
313-893-1710

Spiritual Leader: Fr. Daniel Schaicoski



St. John Armenian Church

22001 Northwestern Hwy.
Southfield, MI 48075
248-569-3405

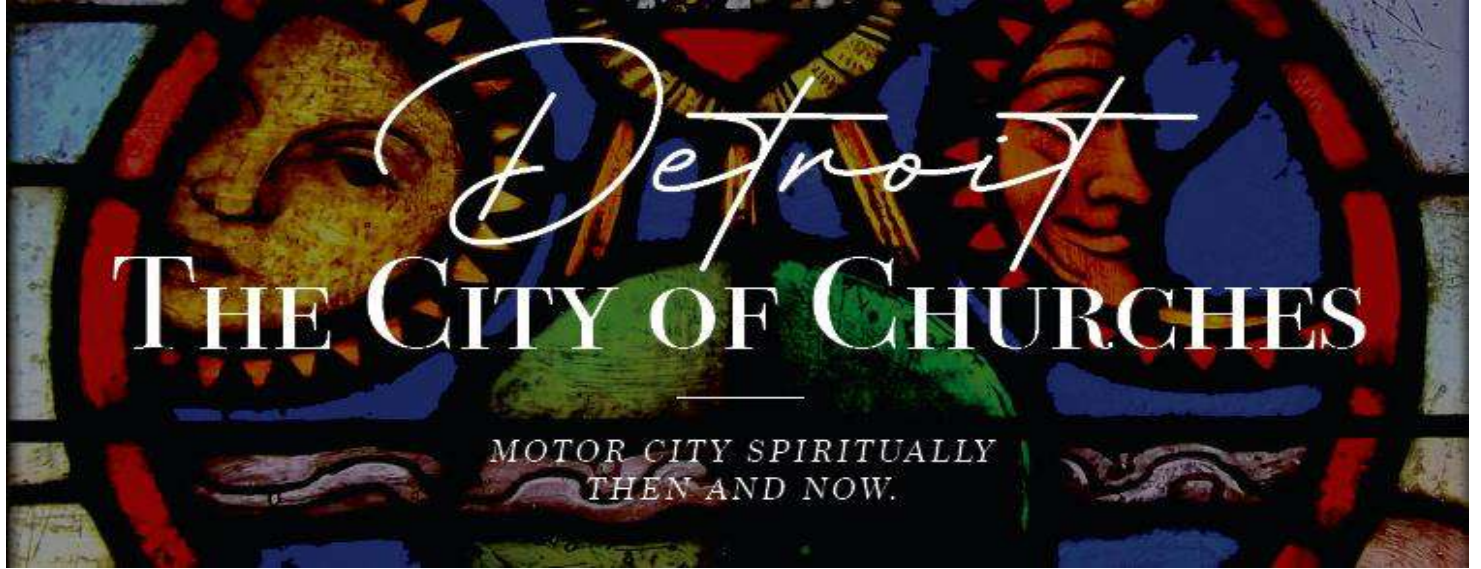
Spiritual Leader: Very Rev. Fr. Aren Jebejian



Saint Maron Church

11466 Kercheval St.
Detroit, MI 48215
313-824-0196

Spiritual Leader: Abouna (Father) Roby Zibara



MEDIA SUPPORT



Detroit: The City of Churches
Premiered on Detroit Public TV/PBS on December 12th, 2022

Detroit: The City of Churches takes the audience on an in-depth look at the history of our beloved Motor City from the perspective of 17 of Detroit's most historic and iconic houses of worship as told by their spiritual leaders, congregation members and local historians.

We organized a special community premiere at The Fillmore theatre in Detroit to accommodate 1,200 of Metro Detroit's diverse faith-based community members and spiritual leaders.

We are honored to have been awarded four 2022 Michigan Emmys for ***Detroit: The City of Churches***:

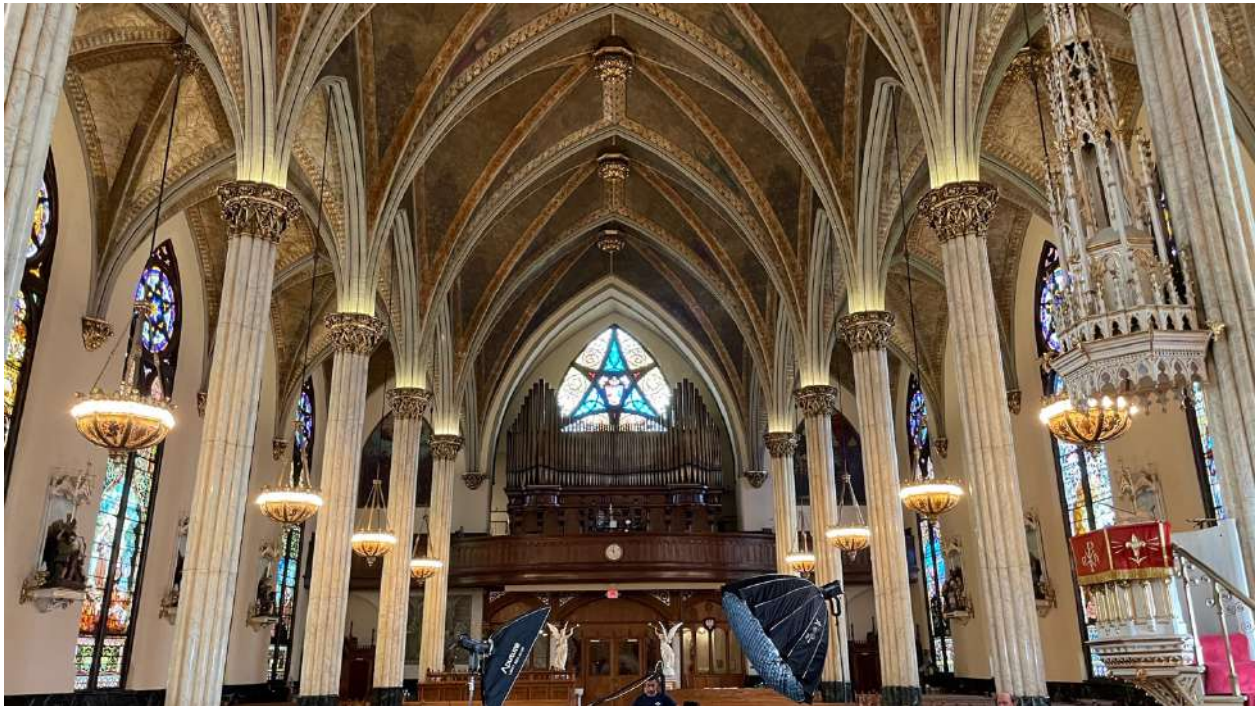
- Director - Long Form Content
- Editor - Long Form Content
- Photographer - Long Form Content
- Lighting - Long Form Content



www.detroitcityofchurches.com

Highly anticipated documentary 'Detroit: The City of Churches' to debut this week

Gabriella Patti / Dec 8, 2022 / Arts



Award-winning filmmaker Keith Famie and his team set out to tell the story of Detroit through his new documentary, "Detroit: The City of Churches." The film will feature 17 different churches in Detroit, including Sweetest Heart of Mary Catholic Church, pictured above. (Photos courtesy of Keith Famie)

Veteran filmmaker Keith Famie's look at Detroit's spiritual heritage will air at 8 p.m. Dec. 12 on Detroit Public Television

DETROIT — Since its inception in 1701, Detroit has been home to hundreds of churches and spiritual congregations. Throughout Detroit's history, these churches have remained stalwart reminders and players in the Motor City's strength and long, rich history.

Veteran filmmaker Keith Famie set out to tell the story of Detroit's history through 17 different churches in a 90-minute documentary special, "Detroit: The City of Churches." After months of

production, the film will debut during a special event Dec. 10 at the Filmore Theatre in Detroit (which is currently sold out) and Monday, Dec. 12, at 8 p.m. on Detroit Public Television (PBS).

“I think the magic of this film, which was always our intention, is it brings together a whole wide range of various spiritual leaders, different churches, faiths and believers all under one umbrella in harmony to sing praise to the Motor City that we all love and we have grown up in for generations,” Famie told *Detroit Catholic*.

Since 2004, Famie, along with his team at Visionalist Entertainment Productions, has mostly focused his lens on Detroit, creating multiple Emmy-winning primetime programs. While stories about Detroit's churches have been told before, Famie said he felt inspired to take a closer look at the city from the perspective of Detroit's faith communities, spiritual leaders and congregations.

The film, introduced by longtime Detroit news personality and recent Catholic revert Chuck Gaidica, will feature many of Detroit's iconic Catholic churches, including the Basilica of Ste. Anne, Sweetest Heart of Mary, Sacred Heart and the Cathedral of the Most Blessed Sacrament.

Viewers will also hear from spiritual leaders across Detroit, including Catholic leaders such as Archbishop Allen H. Vigneron, Msgr. Chuck Kosanke, Fr. Norman Thomas and others.



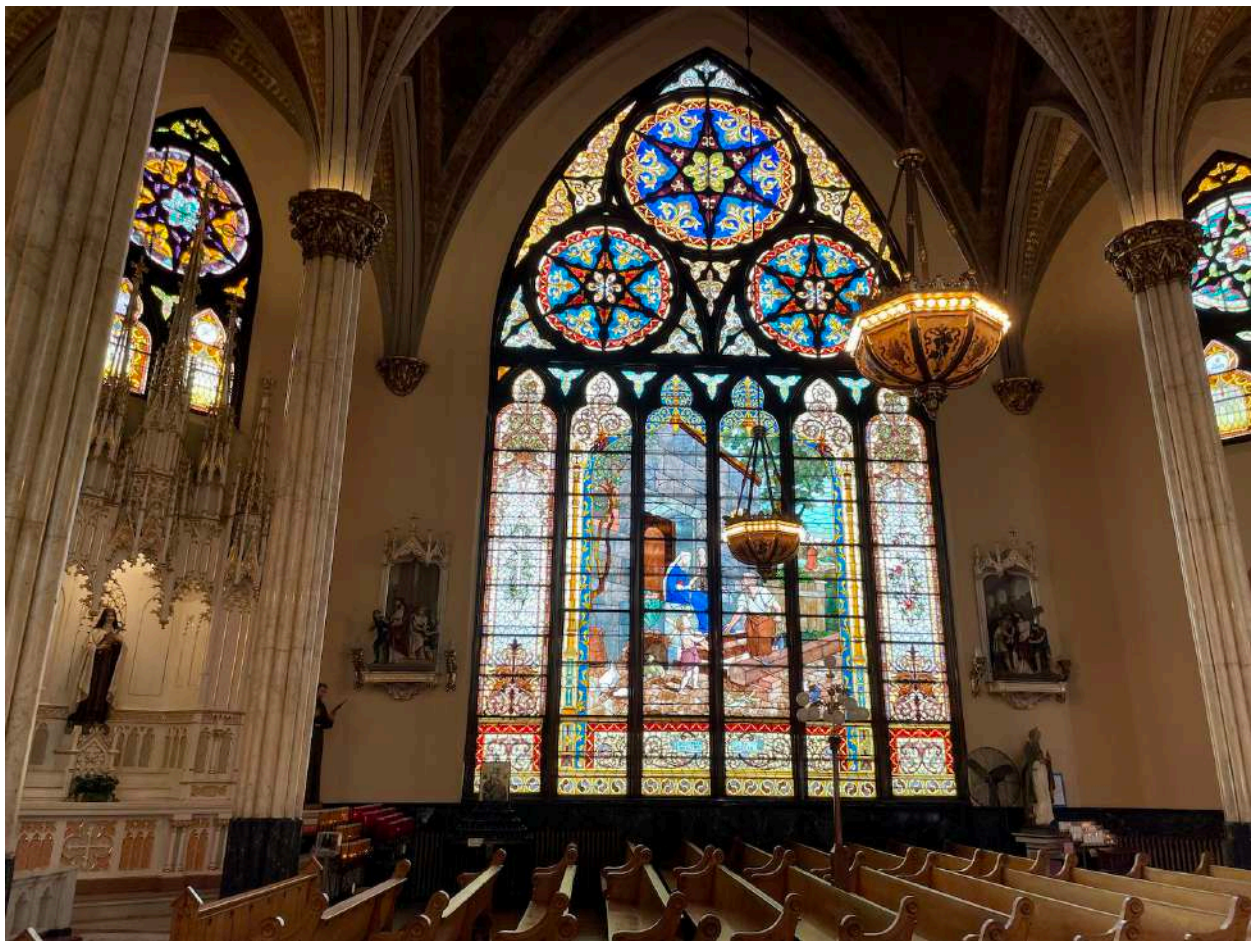
When he begins a film, Famie said he always enters in with the philosophy that “the story we’re going to tell is never the story we’re going to tell.” The story changes as one unravels its layers, Famie explained.

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“When I set out to do this film, it was really (about), ‘How were the churches affected by the history of Detroit and how did they affect the history of Detroit?’” Faimie said. “But once you step behind the walls of the churches and speak to the various spiritual leaders and start talking, various other stories start popping up. The film was unscripted, and we went in with the intention of, ‘Let’s just see where the story takes us.’”

The film took on a whole new direction and found its momentum as Faimie and his team explored each church and discovered stories they hadn’t anticipated.

One example is the film’s exploration of stained glass.



The story took on a whole new direction and found its momentum as Faimie, and his team explored each church and discovered stories that they had not anticipated. One example is the film’s exploration of stained glass.

“We walk into churches, and so often we take stained glass for granted, but the origin of stained glass and the significance of stained glass is to tell a story to those that couldn’t read,” Famie said. “That is a powerful insight to understand. So then we peeled back the layers: ‘Where does stained glass come from?’ and ‘How did it get to Detroit?’ and ‘How did they repair it?’”

Through this journey, Famie also learned and told the history of Pewabic pottery, which is featured in many Detroit churches, as well as the history of church bells and organs.

“We learned that organs are nothing but a big box of whistles, and so we did a whole thing on organs at several of the churches,” Famie said. “At Sweetest Heart of Mary, they took us behind the organ, where there is a small room. Before there was electricity, before there was power, it was all hand-cranked. We went back there with the organist, and he showed us how two guys used to hand-crank (the organ) through the entire church service in a room that became sealed shut because of pressure.”

The film also looks at the significant role Detroit’s churches played in the Underground Railroad; Detroit’s Second Baptist Church, for instance, moved approximately 5,000 people to freedom.



With the help of Fr. Norman Thomas, the 92-year-old leader of Sacred Heart Catholic Church, the film explores Detroit’s impact on civil rights, including the 1967 riots.

Famie also included a section about Detroit’s sisters and nuns, an exploration that has actually inspired his next film.

“Having personally grown up Catholic and having gone to an all-Catholic school when I was younger and having sisters and nuns as teachers, I wanted to shed a light on who I felt and believe wholeheartedly are really the unsung heroes in the Catholic world, and that is sisters and nuns,” Famie explained.

Famie said he “stepped back in time” to understand their history and role in education, medical services and social services in the city of Detroit, as well as their ongoing role in the city today.

“We are working on a film for next year, which will be called: 'The Calling' — those who choose the habit and the many life lessons they taught us,” Famie said.

Famie added the film will focus on the history of sisters and nuns, “but also the relevance of the work they are doing globally now, which is different than what we would have grown up with in the mid-20th century.”

Famie is excited at the prospect of his current film, “Detroit: The City of Churches,” creating renewed interest and support for the city's spiritual congregations and their leaders, many of whom have seen a steady exodus of congregants moving from the city to the suburbs.

“Whether it is faith, spirituality or just curiosity, I think viewers will find a renewed interest to stop by and go in these churches, walk around and listen to the walls talk to you,” Famie said. “Hopefully, through that, individuals will find a new passion of support for these spiritual leaders and these custodians of these amazing historical architectural designs that you couldn’t recreate today.

“My goal and my hope is that this new excitement of passion may spur a whole new 200-year future for these old buildings and churches as people understand the significance they've had on Detroit's history and Michigan's history.”

Home > Daily News

Daily News

DBusiness Daily Update: Two New Keith Famie Detroit Documentaries Are in Production, and More

Our roundup of the latest news from metro Detroit and Michigan businesses as well as announcements from government agencies, including updates about the COVID-19 pandemic. To share a business or nonprofit story, please send us a message.

By **Tim Keenan** and **R.J. King** - January 11, 2022

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Rev. Lawrence Rodgers of the Second Baptist Church in Detroit discusses the Underground Railroad for "Detroit: City of Churches." // Courtesy of Keith Famie



Historic Trinity Featured in Upcoming Film on Detroit's Churches

By Newsroom Michigan District • December 8, 2022

Historic Trinity Lutheran Church will be one of the Detroit churches featured in a brand-new film that debuts in December. Rev. Lee Andrzejewski, Head Pastor at Historic Trinity, was excited to be included and featured in the project. *"It is going to be amazing to see an artist and storyteller like Keith Famie pull it all together,"* Andrzejewski said.

Rev. Andrzejewski and Historic Trinity played a crucial role in making this work. Rev. Andrzejewski describes how it started: *"Detroit: The City of Churches' began as a brainchild of Historic Trinity, in cooperation with Keith Famie who'd been thinking about this idea as well. The first meeting was held in May 2021 when a priest, a minister, and a rabbi walked into our church. No joke. From that moment, we have been on an incredible journey of learning the history and beauty of the people of faith that have called Detroit their home for centuries."*

Detroit, at one time, had more churches per square mile than any other city in the country, serving a population from many nationalities and many faiths.

The two-hour film is hosted by long-time Detroit Television personality Chuck Gaidica and produced by Visionalist Entertainment Productions. *Detroit: The City of Churches* takes an in-depth look at Detroit's history from the perspective of 17 of the city's houses of worship.

In celebration of the upcoming Christmas season, ***Detroit: The City of Churches*** will premiere at a private showing on December 10, 2022 at The Fillmore Theater in Detroit. A special closing of

“Detroit: The City of Churches” to Premiere on DPTV – PBS Dec. 12th

By Greek News - December 11, 2022



DETROIT, MI – The historic Annunciation Greek Orthodox Cathedral in Detroit’s Greektown - home of the oldest Greek Orthodox parish [1910] in Michigan, Ohio, Indiana and Kentucky- is one of the city’s 17 iconic houses of worship featured in the 90-minute documentary “Detroit: The City of Churches” that will debut on Detroit Public TV (PBS) at 8 p.m. Dec. 12.

The latest work of Emmy Award-winning director/producer Keith Famie and his Visionalist Entertainment Productions team, introduced by longtime Detroit news personality Chuck Gaidica takes the audience on an in-depth look at Detroit’s history, one that is interestingly connected to iron and steel, from the perspective of its many churches.

At one time, Detroit had more churches per square mile than any other city in the country, serving a population of multiple nationalities and many faiths. “Detroit: The City of Churches” captures the city’s early settlers, as well as the Underground Railroad, automotive boom, and civil rights movement to frame how Detroit’s spiritual leaders, their places of worship, and their congregations helped guide the city as it is known today.

EMMY AWARD-WINNING VISIONALIST ENTERTAINMENT PRODUCTIONS

WAS ESTABLISHED IN 1997 BY PRODUCER / DIRECTOR KEITH FAMIE. SINCE THESE EARLY YEARS, FAMIE AND HIS TEAM HAVE PRODUCED A WIDE RANGE OF PRIMETIME PROGRAMS.

DOCUMENTARIES

- Ice Warriors (2005)** An action-packed journey with the Detroit Red Wings' Alumni team through Russia.
- Our Italian Story (2006)** Progress, passion and promise – Detroit's Italian heritage.
- Our Arab American Story (2007)** Reverence, resourcefulness and respect- Detroit's Arab American Heritage.
- Our Greek Story (2007)** Antiquity, modernity, and destiny- Detroit's Greek Heritage.
- Our Polish Story (2007)** Family, faith and fortitude- Detroit's Polish Heritage.
- Our India Story (2008)** Amity, diversity and sovereignty- Detroit's Indian Heritage.
- Detroit: Our Greatest Generation (2009)** A tribute to our Michigan WWII veterans, both men and women, who fought for the freedom of our families and our country.
- Our Vietnam Generation (2011)** A long overdue welcome home to the men and women who served during Vietnam.
- Can You See How I See? (2011)** An inspiring look into the life of those who are without sight.
- One Soldier's Story (2011)** the profound story of Sgt. Michael Ingram, Jr. and his legacy.
- The Embrace of Aging: Men's Series (2012)** 13-part series on men and 7-part series on women.
- The Embrace of Aging: Women's Series (2014)** 13-part series on women and 7-part series on men.
- The Embrace of Dying (2015)** 8-part series on how we deal with the end of life.
- Maire's Journey (2016)** Follow Maire Kent as she sets sail on an epic journey to fulfill her dying wish.
- Death is NOT the Answer (2016)** A deep look into the complex world of depression and suicide.
- Enlisted (2017)** Choice. Adventure. Growth. Why would one enlist in the military?
- Those on the Front Lines of Alzheimer's & Dementia (2018)** What can be done to stop this truly devastating disease?
- Those on the Front Lines of Cancer (2019)** Can the uncommon journey that cancer patients undergo result in anything positive?
- Blessed Solanus Casey's Journey to Sainthood (2019)** How does a humble boy from Irish immigrant parents rise to the rare and distinguished honor of beautification?
- Shoah Ambassadors (2021)** Bridging the chasm of the younger generation of today with that of the Holocaust generation through the exploration journey that two young non-Jewish individuals go on.
- Hospice Care in America Today (2022)** Where did Hospice originate? Why is this service so important for end of life care?
- Chromosomally Enhanced: What's Your Superpower? (2022)**
A story of those living and thriving with Down Syndrome.
- Detroit: The City of Churches (2022)** The significance the many Detroit churches played on some of the most iconic moments in Detroit's history.
- Detroit: The City of Hot Rods & Muscle Cars (2023)** A celebration of the unique Detroit hot rod & muscle car community & how Motor City iron has circumnavigated the globe & shaped world culture.

MICHIGAN EMMY AWARD WINNERS

- Taste of Taiwan (2006)**
On-Camera Talent – Keith Famie
- Our Italian Story (2006)**
Best Human Interest Special, Best Director
- Our Polish Story (2007)**
Best Director: Post-Production
- Our Greek Story (2007)**
Best Cultural Documentary,
Best Human Interest Program Special
- Our Arab American Story (2007)**
Societal Concerns Program Special
- Our India Story (2008)**
Best Documentary Cultural
- Detroit: Our Greatest Generation (2009)**
Best Editor
- Our Vietnam Generation (2011)**
Best Documentary Historical
- The Embrace of Aging: The Female Perspective of Growing Old (2014)**
Best Director: Post-Production
- Shoah Ambassadors (2021)**
Best Director, Best Lighting, Best Editing
- Chromosomally Enhanced: What's Your Superpower? (2022)**
Best Human Interest - Long Form Content
- Detroit: The City of Churches (2022)**
Best Director, Best Editing, Best Photography, Best Lighting

PRODUCTIONS IN 2023 / 2024

- Detroit: The City by The River:** A journey up and down our beloved Detroit River, to uncover the richness of the past and gain a better understanding of where the river's meandering course will take us in the future.
- Fork in the Road:** Step into the lives of children who are thrust into the world of foster care through a series of life circumstances they had nothing to do with.
- The Razor's Edge:** A day in the lives of those that live on the razor's edge of society who face poverty and survival every day with many calling the streets their home.
- Detroit: The City of Faith:** Shining the light on the Christian community and those early immigrants who made their way to the Motor City in search of the American dream.
- Detroit: The City of Chefs:** The unfiltered story of Detroit's culinary heritage.

AWARDS & HONORS

2016 - **Maire's Journey**- DOCUTAH 2016 – International Documentary Film Festival–Winner

2021 - Shoah Ambassadors-

- Toronto Indie Filmmakers Festival - Best Feature Documentary - Winner
- SR Socially Relevant Film Festival NY– Honorable Mention
- Tokyo International Short Film Festival– Honorable Mention
- Austin Lift-Off Film Festival– Official Selection
- LA Documentary Film Festival– Official Selection
- Miami Jewish Festival–Official Selection
- Santa Monica Film Festival– Official Selection
- Malibu Film Festival– Official Selection

2022 - Chromosomally Enhanced: What's Your Superpower?-

- Grand Rapids Film Festival - Award Winner





Keith Famie **Director/Producer/Author**

Director/Producer Keith Famie was, for many years, known as a celebrity chef and a metro Detroit restaurateur. He was selected as one of America's "Best New Chefs" in 1989 by Food and Wine magazine; Esquire Magazine chose his restaurants as "Best New Restaurant" in America on two separate occasions. Famie was also a finalist on the 2001 reality television series, "Survivor, the Australian Outback."

Keith hosted his own Food Network series, "Keith Famie's Adventures," traveling the world documenting cooking styles from the plains of Africa to monk monasteries of Taiwan, to the lifestyle of Key West. In 2004, the Adventure Chef embarked on a new journey - documentary filmmaking. "I didn't want to be the 'Adventure Chef' guy anymore. I wanted to help people tell their stories."

Since that life-changing decision, Famie has been awarded twelve Michigan Emmys and been nominated several other times for his rich, human-interest storytelling, from ethnic documentaries to military tribute films. He and his team at Visionalist Entertainment Productions create informative, entertaining films that touch a wide audience.

Along with documentary filmmaking, Famie has released several books throughout his career, *Famie's Adventures in Cooking* (2001), *You Really Haven't Been There Until You've Eaten the Food* (2003), *Living Through the Lens* (2019), and *Papa's Rules for Life* (2021).

Outside of documentary production, Keith is involved in charitable projects. In 2003, Keith finished the 25th anniversary Ironman Triathlon World Championship in Kona with Team In Training for the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society. In 2015, he was awarded the 2015 Diamond Award by the Association for Women in Communications Detroit Chapter. In 2017, Keith was presented the Media Award by the Gilda's Club of Metro Detroit, and in 2023, Keith was awarded a Dove Award from The Arc of Oakland County for Media Distinction. Over the years, Keith has been actively involved in several well-respected, Michigan-based 501(c)(3) organizations that support everything from children with cancer and hunger relief to veterans' issues.

Visionalist Entertainment Productions | www.v-prod.com

