

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Images: High resolution available upon request.

Award-Winning PBS-Bound Documentary 'Saving Walden's World' Comes to Middlebury for a Special Community Screening at Town Hall Theater

MIDDLEBURY, Vermont - October 2026 - Town Hall Theater, Middlebury's historic cultural landmark and Vermont's voted Best Performing Arts Venue of 2025, will host a special community screening of *Saving Walden's World* on Wednesday, October 28, 2026 at 6:00 PM.

The screening comes on the heels of the film's official acceptance for national distribution on PBS via NETA, a major milestone for this Maine-based independent production that has screened at 23 international film festivals and won 14 awards.

The film follows Jim Merkel, a former military engineer turned sustainability activist, as he raises his son, Walden, on an off-grid homestead in Maine and travels to Kerala (India), Cuba, and Slovenia to document women-led solutions that have successfully bypassed the growth trap of the West. By prioritizing literacy, healthcare, and reproductive freedom, these societies have built stability and equity without sacrificing quality of life.

The Middlebury screening is organized with the support of local community partners including Ross Conrad of Dancing Bee Gardens, the Metta Earth Institute, and the Acorn Food Hub. A sustainability social will take place at the theater entrance before and after the screening, offering partner organizations a space to connect, share their work, and engage with attendees.

"Vermont embodies so many of the values this film is about cooperative economics, land stewardship, community resilience," says Director Jim Merkel. "Middlebury is exactly the kind of community that understands what's at stake, and Town Hall Theater is exactly the right room for this conversation."

A Q&A session with director Jim Merkel will follow the screening, offering the audience a direct conversation with the filmmaker about the practical alternatives being built by communities around the world and what Addison County can learn from them.

Event Details:

- **WHO:** *Saving Walden's World* - Directed by Jim Merkel
- **WHEN:** Wednesday, October 28, 2026 | 6:00 PM
- **WHERE:** Town Hall Theater, 72 Merchants Row, Middlebury, VT 05753

- **TICKETS:**
- **LOCAL CONTACT:** Ross Conrad | dancingbhoney@gmail.com
- **MEDIA CONTACT:** Jim Merkel | jimimerkel@gmail.com | (207) 323-1474
- **WEBSITE:** savingwaldensworld.org
- **TRAILER:** <https://youtu.be/an4LqG9mLIM?si=fnkHeqFoT03B9dKJ>

Note to editors: This release is ready to run as submitted. High-resolution images and additional background materials available upon request. Please send coverage queries to the contacts above.

Saving Walden's World has screened at 23 international film festivals and won 14 awards. It has been accepted for national distribution on PBS via NETA.

Town Hall Theater is a historic performing arts center at the heart of downtown Middlebury, Vermont, presenting over 165 events annually and voted Vermont's Best Performing Arts Venue of 2025.