

ARTSHOUND

Sniffing out what you shouldn't miss in the arts this week



Grammy-winning L.A. band Quetzel comes to the UO

Local jazz songbird **Halie Loren** joins Torrey Newhart on piano, Mark Schneider on bass and Brian West on drum for "I'll Be Seeing You: Reflecting the women of jazz," an event featuring songs by Ella Fitzgerald, Peggy Lee, Billie Holiday, Nina Simone and Joni Mitchell 7:30 to 10 pm Thursday, Feb. 25, at The Jazz Station downtown.

UO Fandangeros, a group of students and community members who play and dance to Son Jarocho music, welcomes the Grammy-winning **Quetzel**, a bilingual activist Chicano rock group from L.A., to host a workshop and jam kicking off at 6 pm Friday, Feb. 26, at The Blair House, 975 W. 5th Ave. Find the "Fandango in Eugene!" Facebook page for more info. Quetzel will also play a concert at 7:30 pm Thursday, Feb. 25, at the UO's Beall Concert Hall; \$12 general, \$8 students and seniors. The band will be giving a guest lecture on dance in traditional cultures 2 pm Thursday, Feb. 25, in studio 354 in the UO Gerlinger Annex as well as a public lecture — "Collective Songwriting: Testimonio, Theory and Knowledge Production" — 2 pm Friday, Feb. 26, at the Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art; both lectures are free.

Ballet Fantastique performs its ballet **Dragon and The Night Queen: Celtic Stories** Feb. 26-28 at the Hult Center with live music from Eliot Grasso and the Gerry Rempel Ensemble. Visit hultcenter.org for tickets.

The UO School of Architecture and Allied Arts announced that professor John Fenn is a new "U.S. Cultural Agent" for the U.S. Department of Arts and Culture (USDAC). Fenn recently hosted USDAC's People's State of the Union series at the UO Many Nations Longhouse to gather people's stories for a national broadcast that aired Feb. 20. The USDAC encourages Cultural Agents to curate "Imaginations," or "vibrant, art-infused gatherings in which a community envisions its ideal future and identifies creative tactics to get there."

Shoryuken League wants you to come "play test" some local and yet-to-be-released video games for "Indie Game Play Test Night" kicking off at 8 pm Friday, Feb. 26: FREE. Local game developers and artist will be at the event to discuss their work.

Feb. 27 is the last Saturday of the month, which means it's time for **Bleepin' Funny**, the monthly stand-up comedy and improv night at Sam Bond's Garage. The FREE event runs 5 to 7 pm and features some of the best comics in town.

In other campus news, the UO is hosting the "Art + Feminism Wikipedia Edit-A-Thon" noon to 5 pm Saturday, March 5, in 200 Lawrence Hall; FREE. The event page states "Wikimedia's gender trouble is well-documented. In a 2011 survey, the Wikimedia Foundation found that less than 10% of its contributors identify as female. The reasons for the gender gap are up for debate; suggestions include leisure inequality, how gender socialization shapes public comportment and the sometimes-contentious nature of Wikipedia's talk pages ... Content is skewed by the lack of female participation." The event will be a "communal updating of Wikipedia entries on subjects related to art and feminism."

The UO LGBTQA3 group is back with its ever-popular annual drag show. "**Queerpocalypse**" kicks off at 5:30 pm Sunday, Feb. 21, in the UO EMU Ballroom; \$4-\$6.

Local "Old Blues" master **Walker T. Ryan** has announced a series of "master classes" in blues guitar work with remaining dates of March 2 and March 9. "My approach is more like a martial arts class than a western school room," Ryan writes. "We'll play a lot." Contact

MOVIES BY RICK LEVIN



TOIL AND TROUBLE

Puritans meet their maker in masterful new horror film *The Witch*

Lush, brooding and contagiously creepy, *The Witch* is just the sort of spooky gem that fans of horror clamor for but rarely get. The film neither shocks nor bludgeons you. It does not beg indulgence, nor does it paint its grotesqueries in broad strokes.

Instead, this movie worms its way into your brain with insidious intent as it follows the awful disintegration of a family of Puritans who abandon their colony for the virginal thickets of the 17th-century American wilderness, just years after the landing at Plymouth Rock. Seeking some newfound Eden, the family discovers hell instead.

Written and directed by first-time filmmaker Robert

Eggers, *The Witch* begins with a dubious act of liberation, as William (Ralph Ineson) declares his family's exile from its New England settlement on religious grounds; the colonists, you see, are not godly enough for William, and so he packs up a rickety wagon with his wife, Katherine (Kate Dickie), and their brood, which includes newborn Samuel, a pair of adolescent twins named Mercy (Ellie Grainger) and Jonas (Lucas Dawson), the prepubescent Caleb (Harvey Scrimshaw) and Thomassin (Anya Taylor-Joy), the teenaged daughter whose blossoming sexuality mirrors the protean surge of the surrounding landscape, innocent and abysmal.

But pride goeth before the fall, and the descent into madness begins all too quickly. The family stakes its claim amid the buzzing forests, a little patch of light in the primordial jungle. The baby disappears without a trace, and the twins start whispering with a goat named Black Phillip. Their crop of corn rots. Caleb and his father, off to hunt in the woods, get separated, and the boy happens upon a mossy shack puffing wood smoke into the dank sky.

The Witch is an unsanitized and unreconstructed fairy tale that plumbs the depths of religious fanaticism, bloated pride and human isolation. Yes, it is a horror film, and a damn fine one, but it is also more than that. Eggers is a smart, sly director; he keeps a tight rein on his material by focusing down close on this doomed family swept with relentless speed into a nightmare that may or may not be of their own creation. As with any fable well told, the truth is a matter of interpretation.

In this sense, it's irrelevant whether you believe witches are real or whether you believe, instead, that they're a collective delusion of patriarchal oppression or, perhaps, simply hallucinations caused by pathogenic corn or whack-a-mole eruptions of our subjugation and destruction of the natural world; all views are valid, because *The Witch* focuses not on causes but effects. Like Hawthorne and Poe, the movie takes a stark look at the mythical beginnings of this damned country and asks: When was this ever a dream that wasn't a nightmare? And when does the trial end? Who is judge, and who is executioner?

I'm putting my money on Black Phillip. He's a beast. ■

The Witch is playing at Regal Cinemas and Cinemark 17