

THE REEL WORLD

Astoria's Columbian Theater screens Wandering Reel Traveling Film Festival on Nov. 12

By LAURA CHERAU
FOR COAST WEEKEND

The Wandering Reel Traveling Film Festival makes its first pit-stop in Astoria at the Columbian Theater during a matinee screening Sunday, Nov. 12. Doors open at 2:30 p.m.; the films begin at 3 p.m.

Six independent short films will be shown, followed by a community discussion and Q-and-A with festival director Michael Harrington, a Lincoln City native. Tickets are \$5.

The festival's program, "You. Me. We.," features films from France, Syria, Spain, Iran, the U.S. and Canada that explore the complex relationships among people and ask: "What tears us apart? What brings us together?"

Harrington said these films explore topics such as "racial justice and identity, the refugee crisis, the importance of community and friends at the end of life" in a way that mainstream media



"The Sugering Off"

COURTESY MICHAEL HARRINGTON

and cinema often fail to do.

"These films have a humanity," he said. "They're all great films and great pieces of art that you won't see elsewhere."

Effect change, inspire conversation

The festival has rolled through Manzanita every year since its 2015 inception, but this is the first year a

venue could be found in Astoria.

The mission of Wandering Reel — which tours cities throughout the western U.S., including in Washington, Colorado and California — is to bring quality short films to "communities with limited or no access to compassionate, thought-provoking cinema."

The six films screening in Astoria come from a roster of 22 total films, chosen from about 200 considered by the festival jury, that will screen at various locations.

Sid Ganis, former president of the Academy of Motion Pictures and Sciences, is one of the jurors, as is Rosa Tran, the award-winning producer of "Anomalisa," and Kate Purdy, the television writer of "BoJack Horseman" and "Cougar Town."

The film festival's only requirement is that the films "demonstrate the power of the medium to effect change and inspire conversation," Harrington said.

This allows the festival to accept international submissions or short films



COURTESY MICHAEL HARRINGTON
"White Face"