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of films that speaks to the complexity of the Black experience in America," festival curator David F. Walker told *The Skanner*. "We have always worked to include films from the past and the present, to make sure people understand the rich history of African American cinema."

and his band during a live show at the Rotterdam Music Hall; "Soul on Ice," a new documentary that chronicles the virtually unknown contributions of Black athletes in ice hockey; "Maya Angelou: And Still I Rise," an intimate rendering of the prolific life of the storyteller and activist;

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Walker, a comic book writer, filmmaker, journalist and educator, will be presenting "Black Images Matter," an informative and entertaining free lecture that explores how the perception of Blacks in America has been shaped by images in mass media.

As 2017 breaches new political territory, Walker commented on the immediacy of having an audience for Black issues.

"The Trump presidency and the current polit-



Pam Grier in Jack Hill's 1973 classic, COFFY

ical climate have merely reinforced the need for Black people to assert their humanity in a nation that has historically dehumanized us," Walker said.

Among the line-up is "Sign o' the Times," a 1987 concert film directed by Prince that brings to life the fervor of the artist

the digital restoration of Spencer Williams' 1941 masterpiece "The Blood of Jesus," a tale of an atheist who accidentally shoots his Baptist wife; "The New Black," which tells the story of gay marriage, homophobia and civil rights in the African American community; and the Samuel L. Jackson-narrated "I Am Not Your Negro." Director Raoul Peck's new documentary envisions the book that writer James Baldwin never finished, about the lives and successive assassinations of three of his close friends — Malcom X, Medgar Evers, and Martin Luther King Jr.

Yet perhaps the most anticipated event of the fest is a Q&A with 1970s Blaxploitation star, Pam Grier. Grier herself will be in attendance on Feb. 11 to present a 35mm screening of Jack Hill's 1973 classic "Coffy," the story of an unassuming nurse who moonlights as a one-woman avenger by night.

Tickets for the festival will go on sale Jan. 6. Hollywood Theatre members will receive exclusive pre-sale ticket access to the Pam Grier event beginning on Jan. 4.

The 2017 Portland Black Film Festival is made possible through the support of the Fred W. Fields Fund of the Oregon Community Foundation.

Wheeler Announces Bureau Assignments

Portland Mayor Ted Wheeler announced temporary bureau assignments Tuesday. Under Portland's commission form of government, the mayor has the responsibility of assigning bureaus to commissioners to manage. Wheeler will manage the Portland Police Bureau; Portland Housing Bureau; Bureau of Planning and Sustainability; Office of Equity and Human Rights; Portland Bureau of Emergency Management; City Budget Office; City Attorney; Government Relations; Office of Management & Finance; Portland Development Commission; Liaison Responsibilities; Travel Portland; Regional Emergency Management Group (REMG); Home Forward; A Home for Everyone (with Commissioner Eudaly); Local Public Safety Coordinating Council; Mt. Hood Cable Regulatory Commission and Portland Community Media. Commissioner Chloe Eudaly will run the Office of Neighborhood Involvement; Bureau of Development Services and A Home for Everyone (with Mayor Wheeler). Commissioner Nick Fish will run the Bureau of Environmental Services; Portland Water Bureau; Regional Arts & Culture Council; Rose Festival Foundation and the Portland Utility Review Board. Commissioner Amanda Fritz was assigned Portland Parks & Recreation; Bureau of Emergency Communications; League of Cities (with Mayor Wheeler); Metro Policy Advisory Committee (MPAC); Portland Parks Foundation and Urban Forestry Commission. Commissioner Dan Saltzman was assigned Portland Fire & Rescue; Portland Bureau of Transportation; Fire & Police Disability & Retirement; Liaison Responsibilities; Portland Children's Levy; Multnomah Youth Commission; Portland Streetcar, Inc.; Portland Mall Management, Inc.; Portland Aerial Tram Board and Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation (JPACT).



PHOTO COURTESY OF STATE OF OREGON

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although everyone sort of says that with an understanding that everyone is upset about the election," said Constance Van Flandern, one of the state administrators coordinating organizing efforts in Oregon. She said she is aware of at least 800 people in Oregon who are planning to travel to Washington, D.C. for the march.

"It's a lot. Airlines booked up fast. We've been doing every-

“It's important to bring attention back to women's rights and empower women and let people know that we're still here”

thing that we can find spaces in churches and public buildings," Van Flandern told *The Skanner*.

Van Flandern has also been in contact with organizers in Portland and Eugene who will host solidarity marches in those cities, but also with women in smaller, more conservative Oregon towns who want to demonstrate in support of women's rights.

Once the national march — which was initially called the Million Woman March, and then changed after concerns the name appropriated the name of an earlier Civil Rights demonstration — was announced, concerned citizens in other states began work-

ing to put together solidarity demonstrations. Each state has a team of volunteer administrators coordinating local efforts and distributing information about travel to the nation's capital.

Portland's march, which will take place at Tom McCall Waterfront Park on the afternoon of Jan. 21, was organized by Dara Glass, who told *The Skanner* she resides in eastern Oregon. She

and her friends are "dots of blue in a sea of red," she said.

"The important thing is to make a showing worldwide because that's what it's turning out to be," Glass told *The Skanner*. "We have 125 marches going on worldwide. It's important to bring attention back to women's rights and empower women and let people know that we're still here and we're not going to stand down and that women's rights are human rights. We need to bring it back to the forefront because it got lost somewhere along the way."

Organizers in Seattle are fundraising for the event, to obtain permits (though permits aren't required for free speech demonstrations) as well as portable toi-

lets and audio-visual materials to make sure speeches and presentations are visible.

Funds for the Seattle demonstration go to a social justice nonprofit called Media Island, which has acted as its fiscal sponsor.

"The response we've gotten from people has been incredibly varied but the one thing has been this strong, almost guttural desire to do something to help," said Joy Gerhard, a spokesperson for the Seattle march. "For about a week after the election, I just sat around thinking, What do I do now? I needed to channel that desire into something, taking action."

For more information about the national march, visit: www.womensmarch.com.

For more information about the Oregon group traveling to D.C., visit: www.facebook.com/WMWOregon.

For more information about the Portland demonstration, visit: www.facebook.com/WomensMarchPDX.

For more information about the Seattle demonstration, visit: www.facebook.com/events/905054526294975 or www.eventbrite.com/e/womens-march-on-seattle-tickets-30595393646.

Board cont'd from pg 1

prove to be the strength of the board. Hailing from the typically male-dominated technology sector, Pederson said entering politics marked a transition into working alongside empowered women.

"I think it's fantastic that Oregon is really leading the way in progressive government that has women in leadership positions, and is especially supportive of people of color in office," she said.

Looking towards a new year, the board is united in its efforts to make mental health care a top priority. Ac-

ording to Commissioner Sharon Meieran, an emergency physician, addressing the widely cast net of mental health

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issues means fixing holes in homelessness, addiction and the criminal justice system.

"We have great people providing ex-

cellent services, but our system isn't working for those who need it the most, those who are most vulnerable," said

Commissioner Meieran, who noted that working with all women presents a new opportunity for her. "We need to look at the system holistically and see

where we can create a meaningful impact."

But moving beyond the board's individual members, Commissioner Pederson is relying on their collective values to serve the people best.

"We are progressive and we know Multnomah County can be a positive solution to tackle the big problems that we have, like homelessness, affordable housing, and better access to mental health services," said Pederson. "I think those things reflect what all the people of Multnomah County want, regardless of ethnicity and gender."