

Arts & Entertainment

Library

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St. Johns Library

Visit St. Johns Library for their first ever film festival. Every Sunday in February from 2-4 p. m. enjoy a movie that highlights and uplifts the Black experience in America.

February 11: Afro-Punk

February 18: Red Tails

February 25: Tupac Vs

Central Library

Sunday, Feb. 25, 2:30 – 4 p.m.: Oregon Humanities presents After Obama: Talking Race in America Today

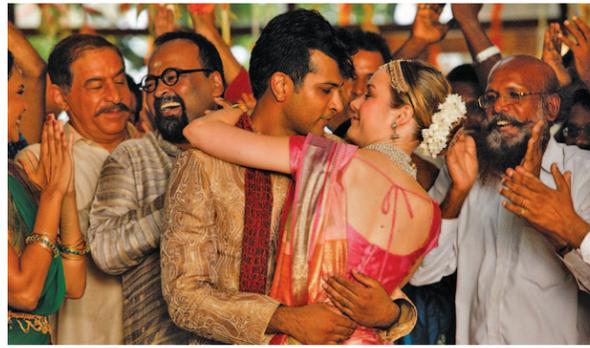
Central Library hosts Oregon Humanities and writer and professor Kim Singleton for a conversation that explores the challenges and benefits of discussing race openly with our family, friends and strangers. The conversation will also touch on best practices for encouraging constructive “race talks” within participants’ communities.

Albina Library

Tuesday, Feb. 27, 5:30 - 7:30 p.m.: Launch Your Own Podcast Today!

Have you ever wanted to have your own radio show? Josh Boykin will take you from an idea to a real-life podcast, using anchor.fm directly from your phone!

Film Review: Cross-Cultural Love Triangle at Heart of Bollywood-Style ‘Basmati Blues’



Most of ‘Basmati Blues’ was filmed in 2013, when a monsoon shut it down, before Oscar-winner Brie Larson, had appeared on anyone’s radar

By Kam Williams
For The Skanner News

Dr. Linda Watt (Brie Larson) is a scientist doing research for Mogil, a leading agri-chemical company based in New York. The young doctor is so thrilled about genetically engineering a strain of Basmati rice that yields 22 percent more grains per acre that she spontaneously breaks into song on Fifth Avenue, right in front of the iconic Flatiron building.

Mogil’s CEO (Donald Sutherland) is just as excited by her groundbreaking discovery, but all he sees are dollar signs. He decides to launch the new product over in India, where about a billion and a half people eat rice every day.

But first, the farmers have to be talked into switching to Rice 9 from the reliable strain

they’ve used for generations. So, he sends Linda over to the subcontinent to market her invention herself.

Trouble is, she’s a nerd who’s far more comfortable working long hours in a lab than addressing big crowds. Worse, she has no idea that the small print in the “Rice 9” contract will force the signers to buy their seeds from Mogil year after year forever. The question is whether Dr. Watt will wise up to the fact that she’s being used to by her greedy boss to ruin millions of farmers financially.

Besides business, Linda finds time for a little romance during her stay. First, sparks fly with William (Saahil Sehgal), the local yodel serving as her tour guide. Then, she develops a little chemistry with Rajit (Utkarsh Ambudkar), a rebellious college student suspi-

cious of Mogil’s intentions.

Thus unfolds “Basmati Blues,” a musical dramedy reminiscent of “La La Land.” Unfortunately, this relatively-amateurish production fails to measure up in terms of plot, acting, cinematography or soundtrack. The movie marks the ambitious directorial debut of Dan Baron, previously best known for writing the screenplay for a kiddie comedy, “See Spot Run.”

Baron ostensibly bit off more than he could chew here, frustrating his A-list ensemble by rarely allowing them to play to their strengths. For instance, why make the audience suffer through Donald Sutherland’s woefully-strained warbling? Equally miscast are six-time Emmy-winner Tyne Daly and Golden Globe-winner Scott Bakula.

A shaky, Bollywood-style musical worth a watch only to see Oscar-winner Brie Larson give it her all.

Good ★★
Unrated
Running time: 106 min.
Production Studios: Red Baron Films / Considered Entertainment / Zas Film AG

To see a trailer, visit TheSkanner.com.

FILM REVIEW: ‘The Final Year’ Chronicles the Last Days Inside the Obama White House



Deputy National Security Adviser Ben Rhodes, U.N. Ambassador Samantha Power, Secretary of State John Kerry, and President Barack Obama in ‘The Final Year’

By Kam Williams
For The Skanner News

Besides granting a record number of pardons to non-violent felons convicted of drug offenses, Barack Obama didn’t accomplish very much during his last days in office. That’s not unusual for a lame-duck president, particularly when the opposing party is in control of both houses of Congress.

Remember how the Republicans refused to allow Obama to fill Justice Antonin Scalia’s seat on the Supreme Court, even though he still had another 11 months to go in his second term? Well, that was par for the course in 2016, a year marked by GOP obstruction of the White House agenda

at every turn, including its only override of a presidential veto. Consequently, all the Obama administration’s highlights, from saving the economy, to passing the Affordable Care Act, to the gay marriage initiative, came prior to 2016.

That didn’t discourage director Greg Barker from making “The Final Year.” After all, he had been afforded unusual access at that time to President Obama and such confidantes as Secretary of State John Kerry, National Security Advisor Susan Rice and U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Samantha Power.

The film focuses mostly on foreign policy issues, although not much of consequence or of inter-

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FEB 24 2018
6:30PM - 10PM

DoubleTree by Hilton • 1000 NE Multnomah St., Portland, OR
TICKETS: \$100/individual, \$190/couple, \$720/table of 8
Attire is semi-formal to formal (no jeans please).
A portion of the ticket price is deductible.

Celebrate accomplished local artists with fine dining, live music and dancing. Enjoy performances from visual and theatrical artists, and musicians.

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