

Pendleton son returns from valley with band in tow

Christopher Ward simultaneously exists in three Oregon locales, musically speaking. He was born and raised in Pendleton where his musical interests were incubated. He currently lives in Salem where he started to explore those interests, leading him to found the band Yaquina Bay. The significance of the coastal town namesake will be touched upon shortly. With an annual homecoming concert held at the Great Pacific on Friday, Oct. 21, Ward and Yaquina Bay will bring all three places together.



Yaquina Bay has been described by many as “orchestral rock” due to two violins being part of the lineup (in addition to the standard rock band instrumentation of guitar, bass, drums, and keyboards). Ward sheepishly accepts the description though he thinks post rock might be more fitting.

In any case, genre labels means nothing to Ward next to an audience’s reaction.

“Wherever we go people seem to like us. When we show up and there’s two violinists. We have this big sound. When they hear us people’s eyes kinda widen. People tell us, ‘Man, I’ve never heard anything like that. That’s so cool!’”

Ward was raised in a musical brotherhood. Both he and his two younger brothers played in a series of garage bands during high school and performed DIY shows around Pendleton at sites like Floyd’s Truck Ranch and Brownfield Park. When his parents could afford it he



Contributed photo

Salem-based band Yaquina Bay, founded by Pendleton native Christopher Ward (third from right) will play at the Great Pacific Friday, Oct. 21.

took piano lessons and participated in the Pendleton High School choir program.

Following high school Christopher found work at Pendleton Music House as a salesman and guitar technician. He eventually started performing bookkeeping duties for the Salvation Army before relocating to Salem to do more of the same. The Willamette Valley provided Ward the psychological space necessary in order to develop a musical identity.

“When I was in Pendleton I shied away from music mostly,” he said. “I don’t think I was very confident in what I was doing.

When I moved over [to Salem] it gave me a chance to start over from scratch musically. I had never really sat down and taken the time to write much music at all. Before I moved here I could count all the songs I had written on one hand.”

In addition to songwriting, Ward also started collecting instruments — an accordion, odd percussion pieces, a ukulele — anything veering from traditional “rock” instruments, and started to explore the possibilities of using non-traditional instruments to drive indie rock music. With his arsenal of instruments and under the moniker Tent City, Christopher self-recorded and released an

album inspired by a trip to Spain. As Ward gradually met musicians around Salem, Tent City evolved into a full blown band. In 2012 he and the musicians he assembled rechristened themselves Yaquina Bay due to all the members having fond memories associated with the coastal Oregon town. Yaquina Bay was and is the bonding agent of the band, who have since recorded and released two albums

The recording, production, marketing and distribution of their two albums, “The Eastern Desert” (2012) and “Past Lives” (2015), were self-funded by an ambitious tour schedule that geographically expands each year. Although

their homecoming stop is part of a weekend warrior excursion due east towards Idaho, Yaquina Bay has planted their flag over a vast swath of territory through their semi-annual, multi-week tours of the western United States.

“The farthest east we’ve gone so far is Las Vegas,” Ward said. “We typically make a big loop around the West Coast. Down to LA and cutting over to Vegas and coming up through Utah and Idaho before we come back into Oregon.”

Ward lights up when discussing Las Vegas. Unlike most folks who visit Sin City, Ward seems to leave with a little extra change in his pocket.

“It’s kinda weird but Las Vegas has been awesome every single time we play there. A lot of people think it’s just the ‘Vegas show tunes’ style of doing shows where it’s glitzy and glamorous but there’s a whole city of people who live there that don’t do the whole Strip thing. The last time we played there was over a hundred people that showed up. It was cool because our van broke down that day. The venue was super understanding even though we were a little late and still tons of people came out.

“I think a lot of bands write off Las Vegas — they don’t think of it as a viable place to stop. That’s why so many people come out to a show there because they don’t get shows there that often.”

Though a far cry from Las Vegas, Ward and Yaquina Bay’s appearance in Pendleton will surely make for a packed house.

■

James Dean Kindle is a Pendleton musician and executive director of the Oregon East Symphony. Contact him at jamesdeankindle@gmail.com.

BRIEFLY

First Draft features Portland poet

PENDLETON — A writer with some of the nation’s most prestigious poetry awards under her belt is the featured presenter during the upcoming First Draft Writers’ Series.

Born in Berlin, Germany, and raised in Colorado, Texas, New York and New Jersey, Andrea Hollander spent 30 years in the Ozark Mountains near Mountain View, Arkansas. Now living in Portland, Hollander is the author of four full-length poetry collections, most recently “Landscape with Female Figure: New and Selected Poems, 1982-2012,” a finalist for the 2014 Oregon Book Award in Poetry. She also is the editor of “When She Named Fire: An Anthology of Contemporary Poetry by American Women.” Her first poetry collection, “House without a Dreamer,” won the Nicholas Roerich Poetry Prize.

Hollander will take the stage Thursday, Oct. 20 at 7 p.m. at Pendleton Center for the Arts, 214 N. Main St. The event is free and open to the public.

After her presentation, an open mic provides an opportunity for local authors to read their own works. No experience is necessary and everyone is welcome.

For more information about First Draft, call 541-278-9201. For more about the author, visit www.andreahollander.net.



Contributed photo

Film festival screens for seventh year

LA GRANDE — More than 30 independent works will be screened during the seventh annual Eastern Oregon Film Festival.

The event also includes music programming and after parties. The event runs Oct. 20-22 with screenings held at The Granada 3 Cinemas, Stage Door Theatre in The Liberty Theatre and a special screening at Eastern Oregon University’s Huber Auditorium, all in La Grande. Festival headquarters is located at 112 Depot Street.

Festival passes are \$60, which provide access to all screenings and after parties. If seats are available, people can purchase tickets at the door for individual events. Those prices are \$11.50 for adults, \$9.50 for seniors and matinee showings at the Granada; \$10 for all ages at the Stage Door, \$10 for general admission and \$5 for EOU students at Huber Auditorium and \$10 for after parties and music.

For more information, including film synopses and schedules, music lineups and band information, and to purchase festival passes, visit www.eofilmfest.com.

Kindle and the playboys to perform

James Dean Kindle & the Eastern Oregon Playboys are the featured entertainers during an upcoming benefit in Mission.

The local performers will play during the Crab Feed Benefit, which is Friday, Oct. 21 at 5 p.m. at the Mission Longhouse, located on Confederated Way. The cost is \$25. Money raised from the event will benefit the new Yellowhawk Tribal Health Center.

For more information about the fundraiser, contact Lisa at 541-278-7542, lisafusselman@yellowhawk.org or find the event on Facebook.

In addition, Kindle will perform solo Friday, Oct. 28 at 7 p.m. at Echo Ridge Cellars, 551 N. Thielsen St., Echo. No cover charge.

For more about the band, visit www.facebook.com/jamesdeankindle.EO.



Contributed photo

‘Fantastic Beasts’ franchise grows to 5 films

NEW YORK (AP) — J.K. Rowling’s “Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them” isn’t going to be a trilogy, it’s going to be a pentalogy.

At a fan event for the upcoming film in London on Thursday, the author revealed that the budding franchise will now stretch to five films. The first, starring Eddie Redmayne, opens November 18.

The announcement, which Warner Bros. confirmed, immediately fueled conjecture that the “Harry Potter” prequel, set decades before Potter’s birth, could lead right up to the young wizard.

Festivals

Oktoberfest Pendleton

- Saturday, Oct. 15; noon-9 p.m.
- Pendleton Round-Up Grounds
- www.facebook.com/oktoberfestpendleton

\$12/includes mug and drink token, \$5/ non-drinkers. Beer, food and fun fills the Round-Up Grounds as the community trades its Wranglers for lederhosen. Includes live music and activities for kids and adults.

Leavenworth Oktoberfest

- Oct. 15
- Leavenworth, Washington
- www.leavenworthoktoberfest.com

\$20. Food, beverages, family activities and live entertainment in the Old World Bavarian theme in Leavenworth, Washington.

First Ever Echo Oktoberfest

- Saturday, Oct. 22: 2-10 p.m.
- Echo Ridge Cellars, 551 N. Thielsen St., and other Echo venues

Free/many children’s activities, \$15/3 coupons for activities (4, if purchased in advance). Coupons can be used for food, brew, haunted house, corn maze and other activities. \$5/additional coupons. Live entertainment.

Halloween Parties

Comic Book Halloween Party

- Saturday, Oct. 29; 8 p.m.
- Wildhorse Sports Bar, off I-84 Exit 216, Mission.

www.wildhorseresort.com

No cover. A wildly ghoulish night, including killer drink specials and prize giveaways. Show up in a comic book character costume to be eligible for cash prizes. No masks. And, live music from Rock Bot will shake things up.

Monster’s Ball

- Saturday, Oct. 29; 9 p.m. No cover.
- Mac’s Bar & Grill, 1400 S.W. Dorion Ave., Pendleton

No cover. 21 and older. Prizes for costumes, including a luxury cruise for two. Live DJ mixing party songs, drink specials and dancing. No masks.

Halloween Party

- Saturday, Oct. 29; 9 p.m.
- Midway Tavern, 1750 N. First St., Hermiston

No cover. 21 and older. A ghoulish good time, including costume contest

Halloween Party/Coyote Ugly dancing

- Saturday, Oct. 29; 8 p.m.
- Sub Zero Restaurant & Lounge, 100 W. Highway 730, Irigoin

Free if arriving by 8 p.m.; otherwise \$4 cover. Costume contest, dancing, raffles, including a flat screen TV.

Art & Museums

First Draft Writers’ Series

- Thursday, Oct. 20; 7 p.m.
- Pendleton Center for the Arts, 214 N. Main St.

www.pendletonarts.org

Free. Features Andrea Hollander, author of four full-length poetry collections, including “Landscape with Female Figure: New and Selected Poems, 1982-2012,” a finalist for the 2014 Oregon Book Award in Poetry. Also, short open mic readings from the audience.

“Asunder: a reconstruction of space and place”

- Monday-Thursdays, 9:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.
- Betty Feves Memorial Gallery, BMCC, 2411 N.W. Carden Ave., Pendleton.

Free. Features Portland artist Katie Steinberg, who creates small architectural structures that reference familiar environments while creating entirely new and fictional worlds. Gallery also open by appointment by calling 541-278-5952. Runs through Oct. 27.

Jean Ann Mitchell

- Monday-Saturdays; 9 a.m.-6 p.m.
- Wenaha Gallery, 219 E. Main St., Dayton, Wash.

www.wenaha.com

Free. Features the work of wildflower artist Jean Ann Mitchell of Milton-Freewater. Runs through Oct. 22.

“New Paintings and Small Works”

- Tuesday-Fridays, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.; Saturdays, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

WHAT TO DO

•Pendleton Center for the Arts, 214 N. Main St.

www.pendletonarts.org

Free. Exhibit features artwork of Hermiston painter Arlen Clark. Runs through Oct. 29.

Jackson Sundown and Happy Canyon: A Century Later

- Monday-Saturdays; 10 a.m.-5 p.m.
- Tamastslikt Cultural Institute, near Wildhorse Resort & Casino.

www.tamastslikt.org

Regular admission, \$10/adults, \$9/senior citizens, \$6/youths, free/5 and under or \$25/family of four. The exhibit highlights Jackson Sundown’s championship run in saddle bronc and the history of Happy Canyon Indian Pageant and Wild West Show. Runs through Oct. 29.

Sandra Spencer

- Monday-Thursdays; 11 a.m-7 p.m.,
- Friday-Saturdays; 10 a.m.-5 p.m.
- Hermiston Public Library, 235 E. Gladys Ave.

www.hermistonlibrary.us

Free. Artwork of Sandra Spencer, who won the grand prize at the 2016 Eastern Oregon Arts Festival, is on display in October.

Arts Portal Exhibit

- Saturday & Sundays; noon-5 p.m.
- Arts Portal Gallery, 508 N. Main St., Milton-Freewater

www.facebook.com/ArtsPortalGallery

Free. Exhibit features the photography of Fran Walker.

“Circuit Chautauquas: Educating Dayton and America”

- Wednesday-Saturdays; 10 a.m.-5 p.m.
- Dayton Historic Depot, 222 E. Commercial St., Dayton, WA

www.daytonhistoricedepot.org

Admission by donation. Exhibit explores the history of traveling shows and assemblies popular in the late 19th and early 20th century. Runs through early November.

Music

Aaron Crawford

- Saturday, Oct. 15; 8 p.m. No cover
- Wildhorse Sports Bar, Wildhorse Resort & Casino, off I-84 Exit 216, Mission.

Inland Northwest Orchestra

- Sunday, Oct. 16; 4 p.m.
- Hermiston High School, 600 S. First St.

www.inlandnorthwestmusicians.com

Donations accepted. Features winners of the Young Artist Competition.

James Dean Kindle & the Eastern Oregon Playboys

- Friday, Oct. 21; 5 p.m.
- Mission Longhouse, Confederated Way in Mission

www.facebook.com/events/196592340751944

\$25/includes dinner. The band performs during a crab feed benefit for the new Yellowhawk Tribal Health Center.

Cowboy Poetry Dinner & Dance

- Friday, Oct. 21, 7 p.m.; Saturday, Oct. 22, 3 p.m.
- Elgin Opera House, 104 N. Eighth St.

- Saturday, Oct. 22; 5 p.m.
- Stampede Hall, Elgin

www.elginoperahouse.com

\$22/show, \$15/dinner, \$7/dance, \$40/ combo ticket. The Friday and Saturday afternoon event features cowboy poetry. Saturday night event features a social hour, dinner and dancing. Featured performers include Johnny & the Packstring, The Wild Turkey Band, Coyote & Little Joe, Duane Nelson & Carter Junction Music.

Colleen Heuser

- Friday, Oct. 21; Saturday, Oct. 22; 8 p.m. No cover
- Wildhorse Sports Bar, Wildhorse Resort & Casino, off I-84 Exit 216, Mission.

Basile & Wambeke

- Friday, Oct. 28; 6-9 p.m. No cover.
- Nookies/Hermiston Brewing Co., 125 N. First St., Hermiston

J.D. Kindle

- Friday, Oct. 28; 7 p.m. No cover
- Echo Ridge Cellars, 551 N. Thielsen St., Echo

Rock Bot

- Friday, Oct. 28; Saturday, Oct. 29; 8 p.m.
- Wildhorse Sports Bar, Wildhorse Resort & Casino, off I-84 Exit 216, Mission.

No cover. Live Karaoke-Jamaroke

Inland Northwest Chorale

- Saturday, Oct. 29; 4 p.m.
- First Church of God, 712 S.W. 27th St., Pendleton

- Sunday, Oct. 30; 4 p.m.
- Seventh-Day Adventist Church, 1244 N. Elizabeth St., Milton-Freewater

www.inlandnorthwestmusicians.com

Free, donations accepted. Features “Ain’t That Good News!” “A Gaelic Blessing” and more.

Night life

DJ music

- Saturdays, 8 p.m.
- The Pheasant, 149 E. Main St., Hermiston

Whiskey Wednesday Game Night

- Wednesdays; 3-7 p.m.
- The Pheasant, 149 E. Main St., Hermiston

No cover. Xbox 360, Nintendo Wii, PlayStation 3 and Nintendo 64.

Digital Karaoke

- Thursdays and Fridays, 8 p.m.
- The Pheasant, 149 E. Main St., Hermiston

Mac’s Trivia Night

- Thursdays, 8 p.m. No cover
- Mac’s Bar & Grill, 1400 S.W. Dorion Ave., Pendleton

21 and older. East. Drink. Think. Teams of 2-8 compete in trivia contest with other teams. Live host and prizes.

Wine tasting

- Fridays, 4-8 p.m.
- Sno Road Winery, 111 W. Main St., Echo.

Open Mic

- First/third Friday each month, 8 p.m.-midnight
- The Packard Tavern, 118 S.E. Court Ave., Pendleton

www.facebook.com/groups/pendletonopenmic

Karaoke

- Fridays 8 p.m. (9 p.m. if game on)
- Riverside Sports Bar, 1501 Sixth St., Umatilla

DJ and dancing

- Fridays, 8 p.m.
- The Pheasant, 149 E. Main St., Hermiston

Theater & film

Eastern Oregon Film Festival

- Oct. 20-22
- Various venues in La Grande

www.eofilmfest.com

\$50 if purchased by Oct. 5, then \$60. In its seventh year, features screenings of independent films and music at The Granada Theatre, Stage Door Theatre and Eastern Oregon University.

“America’s Greatest Game Shows Live on Stage”

- Saturday, Oct. 29; 3 p.m. & 6 p.m.
- Wildhorse Resort & Casino, off I-84 Exit 216, Mission.

www.wildhorseresort.com

Must play to win tickets at Wildhorse. Audience members have a chance to go on stage for a chance to win cash and free play. ChiPs star Erik Estrada is the live host.

Murder on Nov Mountain

- Saturday, Nov. 5; 7 p.m.
- Sno Road Winery, 111 W. Main St., Echo

\$35/couple. A murder mystery party. For tickets, contact info@snoroadwinery.com or 541-376-0421.

Hot tickets

- Tony Bennett: Nov. 1, Paramount Theatre, Seattle. \$71-\$363 via www.ticketmaster.com
- Amy Grant Holiday Show (with Michael W. Smith & Jordan Smith): Nov. 17, Toyota Center, Kennewick. \$30-\$130 via www.ticketmaster.com
- Trans-Siberian Orchestra: The Ghosts of Christmas Eve: Dec. 30, Moda Center, Portland; Dec. 31, Key Arena, Seattle. \$41-\$76 via www.ticketmaster.com

Want to get your event listed in our calendar? Send information to tmalgesini@eastoregonian.com, or c/o Tammy Malgesini, 333 E. Main Street, Hermiston, OR, 97838.