

Pendleton gets a starring role in ‘The Last Hot Lick’

Indie film features pivotal scene at 2015 Pendleton Round-Up

By **TIM TRAINOR**
East Oregonian

The Oregon summer of 2015 was hot and dry. Eastern Oregon’s grasses had turned brown and wilted, forest fires scorched the state and smoke filled its skies. It was also the summer that director Mahalia Cohen traipsed around the state filming “The Last Hot Lick.”

The movie follows a late-career folk singer taking a second try at stardom while navigating a seemingly never-ending tour through rural and suburban Oregon. A crucial, defining scene takes place in Pendleton, and Eastern Oregon landscapes and themes figure prominently throughout. It stars Jamie Leopold and Jennifer Smeija, two Portland musicians who are not trained actors.

The film has premiered at film festivals in Chicago, France, and earlier this month at the Northwest Film Center in Portland. That screening was sold out, and the film has thus far been well-received by audiences and critics alike.

Cohen grew up in Portland, and she said she spent a lot of time in the Columbia Gorge and with family in Bend and on the coast. Though she now lives in New York City, each of her previous movies have been set in her home state.



Jamie Leopold and Jennifer Smeija in a scene from “The Last Hot Lick” near Rufus.



Jamie Leopold in a scene from “The Last Hot Lick” at the Painted Hills near John Day.

Photo courtesy NW Film Center

Photo courtesy Mahalia Cohen

She said that Oregon is just “where her brain lives.”

But “The Last Hot Lick” doesn’t take place in the green, rainy Willamette Valley. Scenes are filmed in places like Rufus and Wasco, the Painted Hills and a Detroit Lake so low that the characters walk out onto what is usually lake bottom.

“The look of that landscape, that dryness, was something that really worked,” said Cohen.

Two scenes were filmed in Pendleton. In the first, the main characters buy a hat at the Community Thrift Shop and empty onto the Court Street sidewalk.

Signage for Master Printers and Prodigal Son can be seen clearly in the background as they converse.

A second, longer scene takes place at the Pendleton Round-Up, which progresses into a musical performance inside the Let ‘Er Buck Room. The bucking horse logo takes up a majority of the screen as Leopold sings and strums. You’ll recognize some Pendleton faces in the backing band: guitarists Alan Feves and Jared Pennington. Carl Culham, Round-Up publicity director in 2015, is noticeable in a shot of the crowd inside the Round-Up Grounds. Locals and rodeo-goers dance in front of the camera.

Cohen said she filmed the scenes during slack at the 2015 rodeo.

For Cohen, the “Last Hot Lick” is “a portrait of all these different aspects of Oregon” and its “diverse landscape and places and people.” Leopold’s character and his songs are at the heart of it.

“Jamie’s music is really like small town American life, and (the film) is kind of homage to that,” Cohen told *The East Oregonian*.

It is not yet known if Pendleton audiences will be able to see the film. Cohen is working to find a distributor, and Culham said he is working to hopefully screen the film in conjunction with some Round-Up events — but currently nothing is set in stone.

Tim Trainor can be reached at 541-966-0835.

WHAT TO DO

Super Bowl

- Sunday, Feb. 4; kickoff at 3:30 p.m.
- Midway Bar & Grill**
 - 1750 N. First St., Hermiston
 - No cover. Door prizes, food/drink specials and party packs while they last. (541-567-5180).
- Riverside Sports Bar & Lounge**
 - 1501 Sixth St., Umatilla
 - No cover. Party and annual TV giveaway. Free buffet during game.
- Rivers Event Center**
 - Wildhorse Resort & Casino, off I-84 Exit 216, Mission.
 - No cover. Light refreshments and no-host bar. Raffle tickets available for big prizes, with proceeds benefiting veterans services.
- 40 Taps**
 - 337 S.W. Emigrant Ave., Pendleton
 - No cover.
- Mac’s Bar & Grill**
 - 1400 S.W. Dorion Ave., Pendleton
 - No cover. Happy hour prices all day, food and drink specials.
- Nookie’s/Hermiston Brewing Co.**
 - 125 N. First St., Hermiston
 - No cover. Food and drink specials.
- The Pheasant**
 - 149 E. Main St., Hermiston
 - No cover. Retro Party lasts into the night with old school football with old commercials, halftime show flashbacks, trivia and more. Wear a jersey of a former player and get a discount — pre-1980s jerseys get VIP treatment.
- Sub Zero Restaurant & Lounge**
 - 100 W. Highway 730, Irrigon
 - No cover. Specials and Super Bowl boards.

Art, Museums & Authors

- Wilderness & Sublimity: Photography and the Conservation of Hells Canyon**
 - Tuesday-Fridays, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.; Saturdays, noon-4 p.m.
 - Pendleton Center for the Arts, 214 N. Main St.
 - www.pendletonarts.org
 - Free. Photographer Kendrick Moholt organized two collections of photos (late 1960s to early 1970s, and 2016) for a the exhibit that showcases the beauty of Hells Canyon. Runs through Feb. 24.
- 2018 ArtWORKz Junior Art Show & Competition**
 - Jan. 27-March 17; exhibit displayed
 - Saturday, Feb. 10; 1 p.m., artists’ reception
 - Tamástsiik Cultural Institute, near Wildhorse Resort & Casino.
 - www.tamastsiik.org
 - Free. Features artwork of regional artists who are 18 and under. Runs through March 17.

- Photography Club Exhibit**
 - Monday-Thursday; 11 a.m.-7 p.m.
 - Friday-Saturday; 10 a.m.-5 p.m.
 - Hermiston Public Library, 235 E. Gladys Ave.
 - www.hermistonlibrary.us
 - Free. The work of Photography Club members is on display. Runs through Feb. 28.
- Sweet Exhibit**
 - Tuesday-Sundays, 10 a.m.-6 p.m.
 - Peterson’s Gallery and Chocolatier, 1925 Main St., Baker City
 - www.petersonsgallery.net
 - Free. Features the work of regional artists. Also, check out the artisan chocolates just in time for Valentine’s Day. Runs through Feb. 28.
- Watercolor Society of Oregon**
 - Monday-Thursday, 9:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.
 - Betty Feves Memorial Gallery, Blue Mountain Community College, 2411 N.W. Carden Ave., Pendleton.
 - Free. The traveling show features 20 award-winning paintings from the society’s bi-annual juried exhibition by noted artist/juror Paul Jackson. Gallery also open by appointment by calling 541-278-5952. Runs through Feb. 15.
- Kids + Art = Fun!**
 - Saturday, Feb. 24; 1-4 p.m.
 - Tamástsiik Cultural Institute, near Wildhorse Resort & Casino.
 - www.tamastsiik.org
 - Free. Pepsi Primetime @ the Museum offers a family art project. The event is held in conjunction with the current exhibit, 2018 ArtWORKz Junior Art Show & Competition.

Festivals

- IF: Gathering Hermiston**
 - Friday, Feb. 9; 5-9 p.m.
 - New Hope Community Church, 1350 S. Highway 395, Hermiston
 - Saturday, Feb. 10; 9 a.m.-5 p.m.
 - Held in 30 smaller venues around the community
 - <https://register.iftgathering.com/event/iftgathering>
 - \$1/suggested donation. A worldwide women’s faith-based conference with a livestream from Austin, Texas. Based on What If we followed God with perseverance instead of insecurity? Childcare available by donation.(Heather Beal, if-hermiston@gmail.com)
- A Wee Bit O’Ireland**
 - March 16-18
 - Heppner
 - No admission fee. The celebration includes lots of food, fun events, great entertainment and a chance to win a pot o’gold.

Music

- Oldies Night in Milton-Freewater**
 - Saturday, Feb. 3; 7 p.m.
 - Wesley Methodist Church,

Misty Mouth celebrates debut album release

PENDLETON — Referring to themselves as classically and garage band-trained, Misty Mouth is set to celebrate the release of its self-titled debut album.

All with Pendleton roots, Misty Mouth is Rian Beach (lead vocals, rhythm guitar), Adam Lange (bass, vocals), Addison Schulberg (lead guitar) and Greg Schulberg (percussion).

The all-ages event is Saturday, Feb. 10 from 8-10 p.m. at Great Pacific Wine & Coffee Co., 403 S. Main St., Pendleton. There is no cover charge.

For the 21-and-older crowd, be sure and partake in a special signature Misty Mouth cocktail. In addition, CDs, digital downloads and “other fun band stuff” will be available.

For more information, visit www.mistymouth.com or call 541-276-1350.

Go ‘Back to the Future’ with ‘80s trivia night

PENDLETON — If you know the name of the U.S. diver that hit his head

- 816 S. Main St., Milton-Freewater.
- Free. BJ the DJ spins Fats Domino tunes. Snacks available.
- The Mix**
 - Saturday, Feb. 3; 8 p.m. No cover
 - Wildhorse Sports Bar, Wildhorse Resort & Casino, off I-84 Exit 216, Mission.
- Reggaetón Party!**
 - Saturday, Feb. 3; 9 p.m.
 - The Pheasant, 149 E. Main St., Hermiston
 - No cover. A night of music and dancing featuring reggae, rap and hip-hop.
- Hymnspiration**
 - Sunday, Feb. 4; 4:30 p.m.
 - Victory Baptist Church, 103 E. Main St., Hermiston
 - Free. An evening of singing old-fashioned hymns, featuring food, fun and fellowship.
- Cory Peterson**
 - Thursday, Feb. 8; 7 p.m.
 - 40 Taps, 337 S.W. Emigrant Ave., Pendleton
 - No cover during Live Music Thursday.
- Jam Night with Josiah**
 - Friday, Feb. 9; 6:30-9 p.m.
 - Historic Balch Hotel, 40 S. Heimrich St., Dufur
 - No cover. Bring your favorite instrument and share the tunes. Extra percussion available for musicians to play.
- Time Machine Radio**
 - Friday, Feb. 9; Saturday, Feb. 10; 8 p.m. No cover
 - Wildhorse Sports Bar, Wildhorse Resort & Casino, off I-84 Exit 216, Mission.
- Winter Chamber Music Festival**
 - Saturday, Feb. 10; 6:30

- Saturday, Feb. 10; 6:30 p.m.
- Vert Clubroom, 345 S.W. Fourth St., Pendleton
- www.oregoneastsymphony.org
- \$20/adults, \$15/students, seniors, \$45/family. Event is sold out, but people can be added to a wait list (541-276-0320 or oesofficeinfo@gmail.com) or seats may be released at the door.
- Misty Mouth CD Release Party**
 - Saturday, Feb. 10; 8-10 p.m.
 - Great Pacific Wine & Coffee Co., 403 S. Main St., Pendleton
 - No cover. All ages. Classically and garage band trained, the Pendleton-based band features Adam Lange on bass and vocals, Addison Schulberg on lead guitar, Greg Schulberg on percussion and Rian Beach on lead vocals/rhythm guitar.
- Ben Walden**
 - Tuesday, Feb. 13; 7-9 p.m.
 - Great Pacific Wine & Coffee Co., 403 S. Main St., Pendleton
 - No cover. All ages. After graduating from Moscow High School in Idaho, the singer-songwriter attended Berklee College of Music in Boston. Returning the Pacific Northwest, he released three albums in 2016.
- Wasteland Kings**
 - Thursday, Feb. 15; 7 p.m.
 - 40 Taps, 337 S.W. Emigrant Ave., Pendleton
 - No cover during Live Music Thursday.
- Groove City**
 - Friday, Feb. 16; Saturday, Feb. 17; 8 p.m. No cover
 - Wildhorse Sports Bar, Wildhorse Resort & Casino, off I-84 Exit 216, Mission.

- Friday, Feb. 16; Saturday, Feb. 17; 8 p.m. No cover
- Wildhorse Sports Bar, Wildhorse Resort & Casino, off I-84 Exit 216, Mission.
- Stompin’ Ground**
 - Saturday, Feb. 17, 9 p.m. No cover
 - Riverside Sports Bar, 1501 Sixth St., Umatilla
- Night life**
- Love Keeps Us Warm**
 - Saturday, Feb. 10; 7-11 p.m.
 - Hamley Slickfork Saloon, 8 S.E. Court Ave., Pendleton
 - www.facebook.com/altrusaofpendleton
 - \$25. Benefit event sponsored by Altrusa International of Pendleton features dancing to the 6-piece group Blue Wave Band from Seattle. Includes desserts, door prizes and no-host bar. Proceeds go to the KARE Project, which provides for homeless students in Pendleton. Tickets available at the Pendleton chamber and Dave’s Chevron.
- Karaoke w/DJ David**
 - Saturdays; 8 p.m.
 - Riverside Sports Bar, 1501 Sixth St., Umatilla
- DJ & Trivia**
 - Saturdays; 9 p.m.
 - Midway Tavern, 1750 N. First St., Hermiston
- Thirsty Thursdays**
 - Third Thursday; 6 p.m.
 - Midway Bar & Grill, 1750 N. First St., Hermiston
 - No cover. Hosts a local brewery offering tastings. Feb. 15: Iron House Brewery.

LOL Comedy Jam

- Thursdays; 8 p.m.
- Wildhorse Sports Bar, Wildhorse Resort & Casino, off I-84 Exit 216, Mission.
- No cover. Feb. 8: PJ McGuire, Todd Johnson; Feb. 15: Jeremiah Coughlin, Amanda Arnold
- Wine tasting**
 - Fridays, 4-8 p.m.
 - Sno Road Winery, 111 W. Main St., Echo.
- Karaoke w/DJ David**
 - Fridays; 8 p.m.
 - Riverside Sports Bar, 1501 Sixth St., Umatilla
- DJ and dancing**
 - Fridays, 8 p.m.
 - The Pheasant, 149 E. Main St., Hermiston
- Karaoke**
 - Fridays; 9 p.m.
 - Midway Tavern, 1750 N. First St., Hermiston
- Cimmi’s Late Night Martini Lounge**
 - Fridays; 9 p.m.-midnight
 - Virgil’s at Cimmiyotti’s, 137 S. Main St., Pendleton
 - No cover. Features martinis, mixology and music.

Theater, stage, film & lectures

- “Seussical: The Musical”**
 - Feb. 9-10 & 16-17, 7 p.m.
 - Sunday, Feb. 18, 2 p.m.
 - Hermiston High School auditorium, 600 S. First St.
 - \$10/adults, \$8/senior citizens, \$5/students. Hermiston High School drama and music students present the Dr. Seuss musical.
- “Totally 80s Totally Murder” Dinner Show**
 - Saturday, Feb. 10; 5 p.m.
 - Sub Zero Restaurant & Lounge, 100 W. Highway 730, Irrigon
 - \$40/if purchased by Jan. 20, then \$49, \$59.95/VIP (\$50 if purchased by Jan. 20). Includes dinner and interactive murder mystery event. Costume contest with ‘80s style, awards, drawings and raffles. Lucky Coyote show follows. 541-922-4374.

Hot tickets

- Blue Oyster Cult (April 20) and Hal Ketchum (May 26)**, at Wildhorse Resort & Casino. Tickets for the 21-and-older (price to be announced) go on sale Feb. 8 via the Wildhorse Gift Shop or www.wildhorsere-sort.com
- Buddy-the Buddy Holly Story**. Feb. 25, Toyota Center, Kennewick. Tickets (\$27-\$67) via www.ticketmaster.com
- Eagles**. May 5, Moda Center, Portland. Tickets (\$59-\$400) via www.ticketmaster.com
- Want to get your event listed in our calendar? Send information to community@east-oregonian.com, or c/o Tammy Malgesini, 333 E. Main Street, Hermiston, OR, 97838.*

Helen Mirren talks ‘Winchester’ film, psychological impact of gun deaths

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Helen Mirren says her new film “Winchester” isn’t a horror flick, but rather a ghost story with foreign roots and a distinct American element — the psychological impact of gun deaths.

Mirren plays the real-life Sarah Winchester, a 19th-century heiress who inherited a massive fortune from her husband’s creation of the Winchester repeating

rifle shortly after the Civil War. In the film, Winchester believes she is haunted by those killed by the firearm, which allowed for more rapid firing than previous rifles.

“It’s a ghost story, hopefully in the tradition, the very grand tradition, of Japanese ghost stories, ghost films,” Mirren said in a recent interview. “You know, the Japanese love ghost stories and have great belief in the

power of the ancestor spirits, of the ancestors, as many cultures do.”

Part of the film was shot at Winchester’s mansion in San Jose, California, where she moved after the death of her husband in 1881. Now known as the “Winchester Mystery House,” it is a popular tourist attraction and has more than 160 rooms, 10,000 windows, 2,000 doors and 40 staircases.

According the lore

around Winchester’s life, she ordered constant construction on the home to try to confuse the ghosts she believed were haunting her.

“There are many theories why she did this,” Mirren said. “And one of the theories that we explore in the film. She was trying to placate the ghosts of the people who’d been killed by the Winchester rifle. She felt their deaths very strongly. She felt responsible. She felt

the weight of their deaths upon them. And she was trying, in her own way, to placate their spirits.”

Despite “Winchester’s” themes, Mirren, 72, said the film isn’t trying to make any broad statements about gun ownership in America.

“What I like about it and I think ... about America is that it doesn’t deal with whether you can carry guns or not. That’s kind of not the issue,” she said. “The issue

is more putting the question mark or the weight of moral decision upon the people who make a fortune from making arms — whether they’re guns, bombs, grenades ... or whatever it is. It puts a moral decision upon the people who make huge fortunes from making and then I would say the armaments dealers in the world I would like to see it... I see it personally in a much more global way.”