

Movie from director with Union County roots to stream on Shudder

By DICK MASON
The Observer

LONDON — A 15-year journey and a single word.

Each have helped create what might be a Halloween hit this autumn for Chris Hatton, a successful movie director and writer with deep Union County roots. Hatton is the director and cowriter of “Raven’s Hollow,” a fictionalized story of legendary writer Edgar Allan Poe that is receiving positive reviews. The film is about Poe’s days as a cadet at at United States Military Academy in West Point, New York, which he attended in the 1830s before mysteriously dropping out.



Hatton

The streaming service Shudder is carrying “Raven’s Hollow” starting in late September. This week, the film is debuting in London at FrightFest, an annual film festival at Cineworld Leicester Square, where moviegoers view dozens of the world’s latest horror films. TimeOut, a London-based digital magazine, rates Hatton’s work as one of five “must-see” films at FrightFest, which ruins though Monday, Aug. 29.



Chris Hatton/Contributed Photo

William Mosley and Melanie Zanetti are two of the stars in the new movie “Raven’s Hollow,” which starts streaming in September 2022 on Shudder. Chris Hatton, the movie’s director and cowriter, is a 1986 graduate of Imbler High School.

“If you like your chills to come clad in period garb and with a gothic vibes this Shudder-produced reimagining of the life of Edgar Allan Poe will be for you,” writes Time Out’s global film editor Phil de Semlyen.

Hatton’s film opens with Poe and four other cadets on a training exercise in upstate New York when they are drawn by a gruesome discov-

ery — the sight of a young man who has been beaten and tied to an upright board. Poe, played by William Moseley, approaches the dying man and asks what happened. He responds with one barely audible word — “Raven” and then dies.

The utterance sparks a search by Poe and the four cadets that takes them into a forgotten community where

they find a township guarding a frightening secret, Hatton said.

A 1986 graduate of Imbler High School and 1991 graduate of Eastern Oregon University, La Grande, Hatton said he believes viewers will be mystified by “Raven’s Hollow” until the end.

“I would be surprised if anyone gets ahead of

the story,” he said.

Hatton, who now lives in Singapore, said he began working on the script of “Raven’s Hollow” 15 years ago. In this span he also directed and wrote scripts for “Battle of the Damned,” which stars Dolph Lundgren and was released in 2013, and “Robotropolis,” released in 2011. One of Hatton’s earliest movies was “Sammyville,” whose fictitious story is based in the small community near Elgin, which the movie is named for.

“Raven’s Hollow” was filmed in 2020 Latvia, a country on the Baltic Sea, during a 30-day period in autumn at the height of the pandemic. The cast had to stay in a confined area near the movie set throughout the film’s shooting due to the coronavirus. This meant the cast spent much more time together.

“It drew us closer together,” he said. “It felt like family.”

Hatton made “Raven’s Hollow” after becoming intrigued with Poe’s story and his time at West Point, which he attended after serving in the Army. He was at West Point for only seven months before he left following a court martial when he was tried on charges of gross neglect of duty and disobeying orders.

Hatton said what Poe experiences in “Raven’s Hollow” is totally fiction and is not meant to suggest what really happened to him.

Hatton said he sees Poe as a fascinating historical figure. He said Poe, best known for his 1845 poem “The Raven,” one of the most popular ever written, is a tragic figure.

Poe received little money for his works, including “The Raven,” because laws that fully protected artists’ rights to money from their works were not fully in place in the United States.

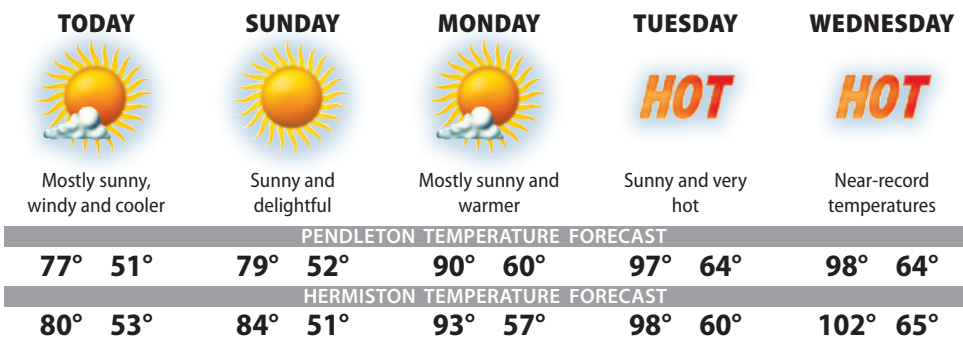
“At one point, he may have been the best known writer in the world but he had holes in his shoes,” Hatton said. “He always struggled to pay his bills.”

Hatton said his film is meant to recognize Poe in many ways, including elements of horror and detective fiction. Poe wrote many works of horror and was among the first to write detective fiction. His 1841 short story, “The Murders in the Rue Morgue,” is considered to be one of the first pieces of detective fiction.

Hatton said that as a writer himself, he has long been inspired artistically by Eastern Oregon’s landscape.

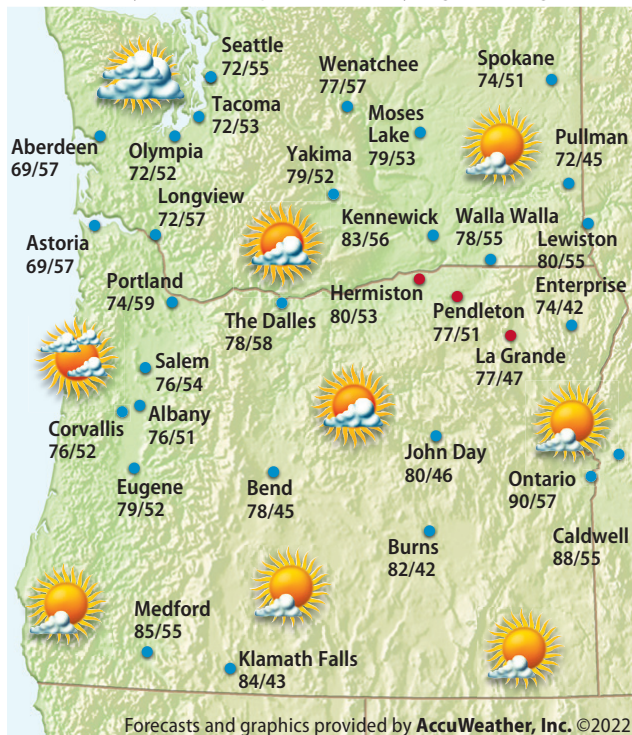
“The vastness and the scale of the beauty,” he said. “I love it there.”

Forecast for Pendleton Area



OREGON FORECAST

Shown is today’s weather. Temperatures are today’s highs and tonight’s lows.



ALMANAC

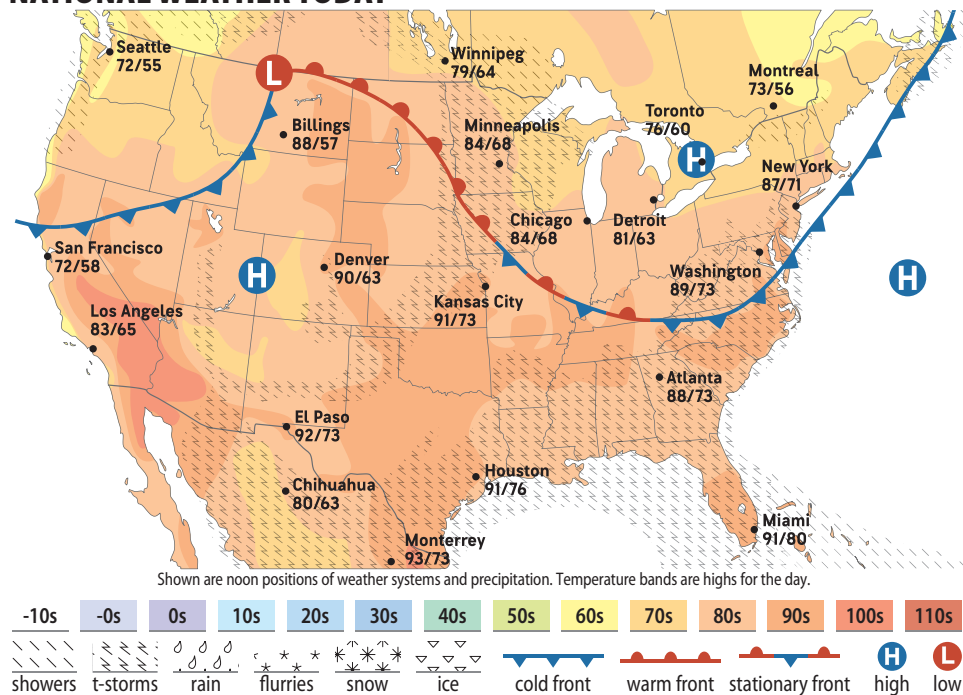
PENDLETON through 3 p.m. Fri.		
TEMP.	HIGH	LOW
24 hours ending 3 p.m.	93°	69°
Month to date	93°	69°
Normal month to date	86°	56°
Records	105° (1934)	36° (1910)
PRECIPITATION		
24 hours ending 3 p.m.	0.00"	
Month to date	0.04"	
Normal month to date	0.27"	
Year to date	11.17"	
Last year to date	4.35"	
Normal year to date	8.58"	
HERMISTON through 3 p.m. Fri.		
TEMP.	HIGH	LOW
24 hours ending 3 p.m.	96°	70°
Month to date	96°	70°
Normal month to date	88°	54°
Records	103° (1958)	41° (1993)
PRECIPITATION		
24 hours ending 3 p.m.	0.00"	
Month to date	0.04"	
Normal month to date	0.14"	
Year to date	7.52"	
Last year to date	2.46"	
Normal year to date	5.28"	
WINDS (in mph)		
Today	Sun.	
Boardman	WSW 12-25	SW 6-12
Pendleton	WSW 12-25	W 7-14
SUN AND MOON		
Sunrise today	6:10 a.m.	
Sunset tonight	7:43 p.m.	
Moonrise today	6:16 a.m.	
Moonset today	8:20 p.m.	

NATIONAL EXTREMES

Yesterday’s National Extremes: (for the 48 contiguous states)

High 111° in Palm Springs, Calif. Low 36° in Boca Reservoir, Calif.

NATIONAL WEATHER TODAY



Second suspect pleads not guilty in connection with Island City car chase

By ISABELLA CROWLEY
The Observer

LA GRANDE — The second suspect arrested in connection with a burglary and high-speed car chase in July out of Island City pleaded not guilty on Tuesday, Aug. 23, in Union County Circuit Court to all charges against her.

Jessica Spalinger, 31, of Walla Walla, was arrested on charges of first-degree assault, hit-and-run with injury, recklessly endangering and misdemeanor fleeing from police. The court appointed La Grande attorney James Schaeffer as her counsel.

A Union County grand jury indicted Spalinger and the charges against her changed to first-degree attempted burglary, third-degree assault, recklessly endangering another person, reckless driving and hit-and-run to an injured person.

Under Oregon law, a county’s grand jury decides whether to bring criminal charges or an indictment against a potential defendant in cases of serious felonies.

Spalinger, Demus Montez, 36, of Hermiston, and Ashtin Romine, 26, of Clarkston, Washington, were arrested during July in connection to a burglary at Muzzleloader’s and More and subsequent car chase out of Island City. According to law enforcement, the trio fled from the parking lot in a car driven by Spalinger, injuring the business owner’s daughter, Randi Shafer. They were pursued in a high-speed chase where shots were fired at Oregon State Police. The chase ended in Elgin with all three suspects fleeing on foot into the underbrush near Indian Creek.

Earlier this month Montez also pleaded not guilty on all charges against him. He has been charged with attempted murder, first-degree attempted

robbery, unlawful use of a weapon, possession of a firearm as a felon, criminal mischief, reckless endangering and misdemeanor fleeing.

The court appointed La Grande attorney J. Logan Joseph to represent Montez, who will be back in court on Sept. 14 for a status check.

Romine, who is represented by court appointed counsel Kathleen Dunn of Canyon City, has waived his right to have his case brought to trial within 60 days of arrest. The court moved his plea hearing from Aug. 24 to Sept. 7.

Romine was arrested for reckless endangering and for misdemeanor and felony fleeing. He was also indicted by the grand jury. His new charges are first-degree attempted burglary, reckless driving, and misdemeanor and felony fleeing.

Spalinger will be back in court for a pretrial conference hearing on Sept. 6 and her trial is set to begin on Sept. 14.

IN BRIEF

Idaho Power to pay \$1.5M for fires in Baker County

PORTLAND — The U.S. Attorney’s Office for the District of Oregon announced Thursday, Aug. 25, that Idaho Power Company, a Boise utility that provides electricity to several states, including Oregon, has agreed to pay \$1.5 million to settle allegations by the United States relating to the May 2014 Powerline and August 2015 Lime Hill fires in Baker County.

The Powerline Fire ignited on May 31, 2014, and burned approximately 5 acres of federal land managed by the Bureau of Land Management. The Lime Hill Fire ignited on Aug. 5, 2015, and burned approximately 2,592 acres of federal land managed by BLM and 9,337 acres of privately-owned land.

Idaho Power Company has a utility right-of-way on BLM land in Baker County on which it owns and operates its 138kV Ontario-to-Quartz transmission line. The United States contended in the civil action that the Powerline and Lime Hill fires were caused by the failure of structures on the Ontario-to-Quartz transmission line. The settlement reached is not an admission of liability by Idaho Power Company and the company denies the United States’ contentions.



Bureau of Land Management, File
Aerial view of the Lime Hill fire burning near Huntington in August 2015.

This case was investigated by BLM with assistance from the U.S. Forest Service. The United States was represented in this matter by Carla McClurg and Alexis Lien, assistant attorney’s for the U.S. Attorney’s Office in the District of Oregon.

—EO Media Group

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