

# GO! watch

MOVIES &amp; SHOWTIMES

bendbulletin.com/gowatch

## Set in Portland, 'Pig' spotlights Cage's talent

BY MAKENZIE WHITTLE

The Bulletin

If you had any doubts as to Nicolas Cage's acting abilities and don't think that this man is a true national treasure (sorry), let "Pig" lead you to the truth.

Beyond the wide-eyed, manic characters found on pillow cases, shower curtains and in memes, Cage showcases in this latest film that he really does have the chops to pull in some powerfully understated performances — he just always understands the assignment.

Directed by Michael Sarnoski and filmed and set in Portland, "Pig" sees the mountain-man-bearded and sturdy-framed Cage as Rob, a former big-time Portland chef who gave it all up after the death of his wife 15 years before for an off-the-grid life in the

woods. His quiet life of solitude is as meandering and slow as the river that flows near his rustic cabin.

Joining him in this adventure as a hermit is his only companion, an auburn-colored and adorable truffle pig. Together, they forage for the black gold of the forest floor and sell them to dealer Amir (Alex Wolff), who in turn sells them to Portland restaurants.

Amir is cocky, drives an outlandishly colored Camaro, blaring classical music. He is overly polished in a trendy suit with a designer belt ready to prove everything to anyone. Rob makes clear when Amir trades supplies for his truffles that he is not interested in visitors into the world he's created for himself.

But the quiet life is uprooted when one night when Rob is awakened by two intrud-



David Reamer/Neon

Nicolas Cage performs in a scene from "Pig" (2021).

ers who steal his pig and leave him for dead.

When morning comes, Rob peels his bloodied head off the floorboards and determines to go to the city and, with Amir's begrudging help, find his beloved pig.

It may look at first glance that this is simply "John Wick" with a pig. After all, with Cage's modus operandi, the correlation wouldn't be much of a stretch. But instead, we are given a story not driven by revenge but by grief and loss. That's not to say there isn't any violence, Rob gets his head kicked in a couple of times, once he even volunteers to be pummeled in exchange for information.

Both he and Amir push aside their own personal losses and grief and come together to try and make this one thing right. And their journey is touching.

That's not to say that the movie is trying to be super realistic. There are some big and odd plot points that go against the more subdued performances. Granted, there may be a whole other side to Portland's fine restaurant scene than I know about, but I have a good feeling that there's no underground restaurateur Fight Club happening underneath Pioneer Square, and that the truffle ring isn't as cutthroat as the film

### More Information

"Pig"

92 minutes

Rated R for language and some violence



makes it out to be.

The story by Vanessa Block and Michael Sarnoski is pretty tight for a slow-burning film, but it still feels like some important information was left on the cutting room floor.

It's pretty to look at, though, with some glorious shots of Portland in the fall and the rain-soaked forests around it.

And there are solid performances all around, including Adam Arkin (who's always wonderful to see) as the uber-wealthy restaurant dealer and Amir's father, Darius, but Cage's quietly gruff and somberly gentle Rob seals it.

Without Cage's performance, the rest of the film is lost to the woods.

■ Reporter: 541-383-0304, mwhittle@bendbulletin.com

**POUR OVER** all the latest  
Brew news at

[WWW.BENDBULLETIN.COM/LIFESTYLE/FOODANDDRINKS](http://WWW.BENDBULLETIN.COM/LIFESTYLE/FOODANDDRINKS)

Celebrating a Decade  
on the Deschutes

**greg's grill**  
ON THE DESCHUTES

[www.gregsgill.com](http://www.gregsgill.com)  
395 SW Powerhouse Drive  
541-382-2200

**THE**  
*Hideaway*  
TAVERN

*Come find us!*

Better Food, Better Sports, Better Times...  
541.312.9898 | 939 SE 2nd St, Bend

Advertise on this page for as little as \$25 A WEEK • 541-383-0303