

Celebrating 100 years of the Right to Vote for Women

CONVERSATIONS WITH A SUFFRAGIST (Featuring Megan Burnett)



A Live Performance

2019 marks the 100th anniversary (in Michigan) of the 19th Amendment, which gave women the right to vote in the U.S. The Vickers Theatre, Three Oaks and the Box Factory for the Arts, St. Joseph present “Conversations with a Suffragist”, a one-woman show starring Megan Burnett, actress, author and Bellarmine University Theatre Program Director. Professor Burnett brings to life Mattie Griffith Browne, a Kentucky abolitionist and leader of the women’s suffragist movement whose name has largely been forgotten in history.

Two performances of “Conversations with a Suffragist” will take place Wednesday, September 18 at 3:00 pm at the Vickers Theatre and Thursday, September 19 at 7:30 pm at the Box Factory for the Arts, followed by “conversations” with the artist. Tickets for the performances at both venues are:

- \$10.00 Adults**
- \$5.00 Students (limited seating)**
- \$15.00 for limited seating at the Box Factory**
- \$12.00 at the door**

Tickets go on sale June 12 and can be purchased on line at:

vickerstheatre.com and boxfactoryforthearts.org

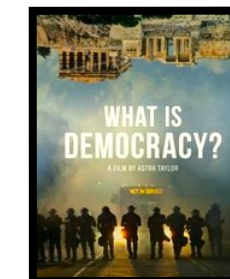
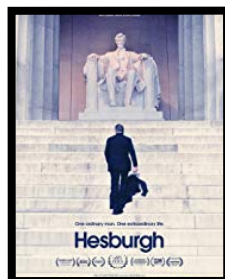
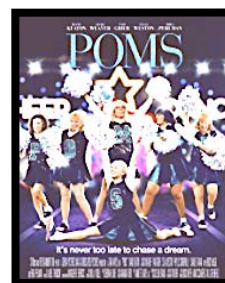
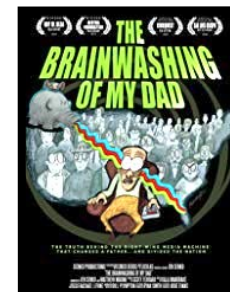
Tickets may also be purchased at the box office of the Vickers and Box Factory for the Arts during regular working hours.

VICKERS THEATRE

A Century of Fine Cinema

JUNE 2019

All Movies and Events are Eastern Time Zone



Summer Hours:

Beginning Memorial Day, Open 7 days a week

6 North Elm Street, Three Oaks, MI 49128

www.vickerstheatre.com 269-756-3522

AMAZING GRACE

1hr 29min Rated G



05/29	Tuesday	7:00 pm
05/29	Wednesday	7:00 pm
05/30	Thursday	7:00 pm
05/31	Friday	9:00 pm
06/01	Saturday	3:30 & 9 pm
06/02	Sunday	3:30 pm

Surely the first and most overwhelming emotion that ought to be felt by anyone with ears in working order-ears, and a heart-is gratitude. Stuart Klawans, The Nation

STOCKHOLM

1hr 32min Rated R

05/31	Friday	6:00 pm	06/05	Wednesday	7:00 pm
06/01	Saturday	6:00 pm	06/06	Thursday	7:00 pm
06/02	Sunday	6:00 pm	06/07	Friday	9:15 pm
06/03	Monday	6:00 pm	06/08	Saturday	3:15 & 9:15 pm
			06/09	Sunday	3:15 pm

Ethan Hawke gives a barking mad-dog performance as a potential bank robber in *Stockholm*, which is loosely based on the real 1973 incident that gave rise to the term "Stockholm Syndrome." The robber, who initially calls himself The Outlaw, and dresses in leather pants and a wig and talks like an American cowboy, marches into the bank, takes three hostages, and demands the release of prisoner Gunnar Sorensson (Mark Strong). During the ordeal, which lasts several days, the outlaw — actually Lars Nystrom — makes a connection with hostage Bianca Lind (Noomi Rapace), with her oversized glasses and long, blonde hair. Her husband is shown to be somewhat weak and inept (she gives him instructions for feeding their children that he fails to follow), although he does volunteer to take her place. The kidnappers make their demands, including a Mustang, just like the one Steve McQueen drove in *Bullitt*. But the chief of police (Christopher Heyerdahl) and the prime minster (Shanti Roney) are portrayed as pigheaded meanies, willing to harm both the hostages and their captors in order to preserve their own positions. Directed by Robert Budreau — who previously worked with Hawke on the Chet Baker

biopic *Born to Be Blue* — keeps things tight, and draws sympathy for the criminals with their bumbling and their small expressions of kindness. Many will balk that the facts of the case are so radically changed for this movie, but its emotional purpose, showing how Bianca could possibly form a connection with Lars, is effectively achieved. *Jeffrey Anderson, Combustible Celluloid*



LATE NIGHT

1hr 40min Rated R

07/05	Friday	6:00 pm	07/10	Wednesday	7:00 pm
07/06	Saturday	6:00 pm	07/11	Thursday	7:00 pm
07/07	Sunday	6:00 pm	07/12	Friday	TBA
07/08	Monday	6:00 pm	07/13	Saturday	TBA
07/09	Tuesday	7:00 pm	07/14	Sunday	TBA

Mindy's latest project is her best so far. That Mindy Kaling, the actress known for her work on "The Office, and "Oceans 8," and the creator of the TV shows "Champions" and "The Mindy Project." Her first feature film as both a writer and leading actress, "Late Night" has already made bank here at Sundance where it premiered Friday. Amazon has purchased the US distribution rights for \$13 million — a new record for the festival. The streaming platform, which also picked up The Big Sick from Sundance in 2017, will make a good home for Kaling's comedy. It's a charming, intelligent movie with a lot of heart and, naturally, some killer jokes. "Late Night" joins the ranks of fictional depictions of network TV productions — "The Larry Sanders Show," "30 Rock," "Studio 60 on the Sunset Strip" — but Kaling shrewdly crumples up that old formula and starts fresh. This time, the host is not only a longstanding TV vet, but a woman: Catherine Newberry, acidically played by Emma Thompson. Newberry bears no resemblance to any real-life major woman talk show host, such as Joan Rivers or Chelsea Handler, but is a uniquely prickly creation. The stiff Brit is obsessed with hifalutin content on her decades-old show called "Tonight," preferring to have Dianne Feinstein sit on her couch than some ditzzy YouTuber. She doesn't do sex or political jokes and abhors social media. Suffice it to say, 2019 is not her year. When one of her male employees insists to her, "you hate women," she becomes determined to prove him wrong. Her solution: Hire a woman to join her all-male writing staff. "Find me one that's worth keeping," she barks. "Would a gay guy work?" her coworker, played by Denis O'Hare, replies. That "diversity hire" turns out to be Molly (Kaling), an Indian-American who has no TV experience and whose last job was at a chemical plant. She's bubbly, awkward and aggressively earnest, which is cloying to the room full of men she works with. "It can be a very masculine environment," O'Hare's character warns her. "Oh, well, I saw most of the writers. I'm not worried about masculinity," Molly shoots back. The funniest of those not-traditionally-manly men is John Early, whose social bluntness and wild inflections deserve their own movie. Initially marginalized, Molly becomes a vital member of the "Tonight" team when Catherine discovers she's going to be replaced as host with a younger, Tucker Max gross-out comic. Molly's fresh perspective — and a few viral videos — could save the show. Early word on the film was that it would be the "Devil Wears Prada" of late night TV. Well, it's not. Kaling's script is much more complex, addressing tricky issues such as sexism, ageism and racial prejudice in her disarmingly light and sneaky way. The writer also has a special ability to write about these topics from multiple, sympathetic perspectives. It's always a

conversation and never a lecture. There are a couple characters here who are overly large: A flirty writer named Charlie who Molly has a misguided fling with, and an abrasive new female network executive, who openly loathes Catherine. Their scenes strain credulity and undermine the nuance of this otherwise lovely comedy, directed by Nisha Ganatra. Kaling and Thompson, for the most part, embody the personas you know and love them for. Kaling is perfectly imperfect, lovably fumbling around and shooting off jokes so fast you almost miss them. And Thompson, at this stage in her career, tends to be an unforgiving boss type. But there was one, transcendent scene of her's that comes as a total surprise. In the middle of the film, Catherine finds herself on the stage of Theatre 80 St. Mark's off-Broadway, doing her first stand-up set in years in front of a young audience that's more accustomed to alternative comedy and extreme openness than Johnny Carson's joke book. Crickets. And then, in a lightbulb moment, she starts candidly talking about the absurdity of her life and the pain of being fired. And it kills. Catherine doesn't have to pretend to be young, she just needs to be genuinely herself. From our seats, that set is legitimately hilarious, like real stand-up. For Thompson of "Much Ado About Nothing" and "Sense and Sensibility" to make us believe that she's a bona fide New York stand-up comedian is a true feat. *Johnny Oleksinski, NY Post*



Harbor Country Progress & the Vickers Theatre
presents the Community Movie:

WHAT IS DEMOCRACY?

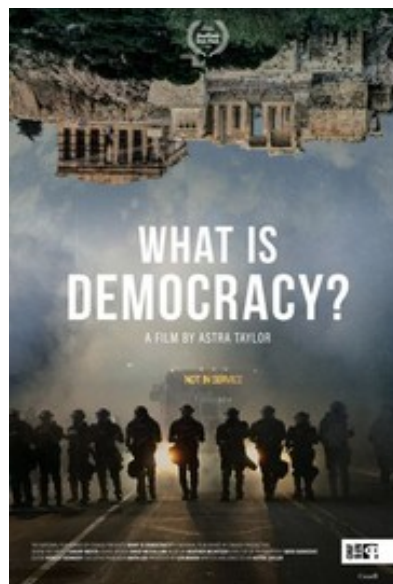
1hr 47min Not Rated

Tuesday, July 2 7:00 pm

Free Admission
Group discussion following the movie

What is Democracy? asks a seemingly simple, fundamental question about democracy that leads to a complex array of answers that lead to even more provocative questions. If you think that democracy is working well in America, think again. Philosopher/political activist Cornel West has plenty of insights to wake you up and shake you up to the realities and deceptions of American democracy---we're supposed to be a country of the people, for the people and by the people, but American democracy doesn't quite work that way if a small group of powerful people make decisions as though they're speaking for the majority. Is there such a thing as a full democracy? How can full democracy ever exist in a country if its citizens aren't democratic? Those are among the other interesting questions that this documentary explores. Director Astra Taylor travels around the world interviewing scholars and some members of the public who talk about how they feel about democracy in their country and what would be their ideal form of democracy. One interviewee says that democracy means freedom; another one goes even further and says that it means *justice*. Italian-American scholar/activist Silvia Federici also adds kernels of wisdom as well as she explains democracy via a mural in Italy. Eleni Perdikouri and Angela Davis are among the many other very illuminating subjects interviewed. Astra Taylor should be commended for presenting a wealth of information to audiences in a way that's not heavy-handed or preachy. History, philosophy and political science professors or teachers could easily show this doc to their students without any of them

losing their attention or falling asleep. It should be mandatory viewing for all high school students and for anyone who cares about the future of America. Someone I once knew shockingly claimed, in all seriousness, that it's harder to lose democracy than it is to gain democracy, and when I replied to him that it's actually the other way around, he strongly disagreed. If only he were still alive today to watch this film and to realize how wrong he was. *What is Democracy?* is far more provocative, fair and balanced than any films that Michael Moore and Dinesh D'Souza have ever made. It's a vital, profound and eye-opening documentary. *Avi Offer, NYC Movie Guru*



Harbor Country Progress & the Vickers Theatre
presents the Community Movie:

THE BRAINWASHING OF MY DAD

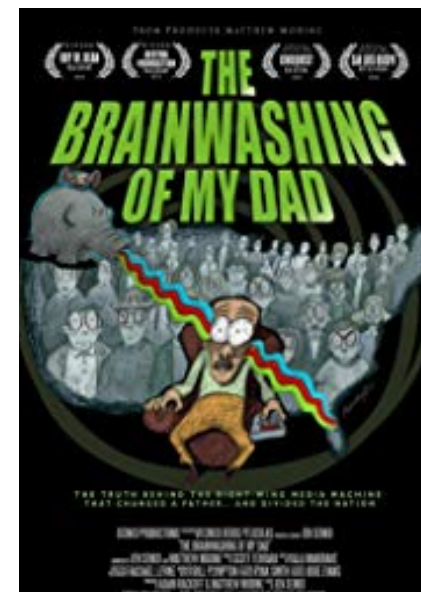
1hr 30 min Not Rated

Tuesday, June 4 7:00 pm

Free Admission
Group discussion following the movie

The political talk in the 2016 race for the U.S. Presidency has reached a new low in lack of civility, disrespect for diversity, smear campaigns, racist slurs, mischaracterization of an opponent's views, alarmist language, misinformation, and a refusal to deal with the most pressing and important issues of the day. Jen Senko's timely and thought-provoking documentary addresses some of the reasons why political discourse in America is so rude, crude, and unappealing. Whereas there has been much talk about the conservatives' characterization of "the liberal bias in the media," Senko takes a hard look at the "vast right-wing conspiracy" that has been successfully launched and incarnated in Rush Limbaugh and the personalities at Fox News. In this fascinating documentary, the filmmaker maps the brainwashing of her father who, in his younger years, was once a Kennedy Democrat, family man, and open-hearted soul. When he took a new job, he started listening to right-wing talk shows and then became addicted to Rush Limbaugh and Rupert Murdoch's Fox News Channel. Senko's dad even went so far as to move into another room in the house so he could watch Fox News all night. Family members were shocked by his rants against feminazis, liberals, the poor, blacks, and Mexicans who he blamed for everything wrong in America. To illustrate that the brainwashing of many elderly men is not an isolated phenomenon, Senko includes interviews with other family members who have watched the zombification of mostly male relatives. (Limbaugh's audience is 72 % white men over the age of 65 years). What they all have in common is rage fed by conservative media mavens. Senko does more than paint a personal portrait of her father's fall into political extremism; she also shows how right-wing strategists successfully carried out a take-over of the media through the concerted creation of think tanks, advocacy groups, and media outlets. The wheeler-dealers here are Roger Ailes, Rupert Murdoch, and

Rush Limbaugh, who are the proud and self-acknowledged patriotic purveyors of conservative propaganda. Senko covers this turf with an impressive group of media critics including Noam Chomsky, Reese Schonfeld, Thom Hartmann, Jeff Cohen, David Brock, and others. *The Brainwashing of My Dad* is right in sync with the times — especially the increasing polarization of the American public. Right-wingers have launched a massive campaign against everybody else based upon anger, fear, and disgust. In the pioneering feature film *Talk Radio*, directed by Oliver Stone, a "shock jock" star says: "Marvelous technology is at our disposal and instead of reaching for new heights, we try to see how far down we can go . . . how deep in the muck we can immerse ourselves." *Frederic & MaryAnn Bussert, Spirituality & Practice*



THE WHITE CROW

2hr 07 min Rated R

06/07	Friday	6:00 pm	06/12	Wednesday	7:00 pm
06/08	Saturday	6:00 pm	06/13	Thursday	7:00 pm
06/09	Sunday	6:00 pm	06/14	Friday	9:15 pm
06/10	Monday	6:00 pm	06/15	Saturday	3:15 & 9:15 pm
06/11	Tuesday	7:00 pm	06/16	Sunday	3:15 pm

Although born into a poverty-stricken family, his hard-working mother somehow found the funds for Nureyev's dancing lessons while his father appears to have been largely absent during his childhood. Fiennes touches on Nureyev's past (in a series of monochrome flashbacks), in order to illustrate what made him special – we learn early on that a “white crow” is someone who stands out from the norm. Nureyev's defining trait is his single-minded determination to dance himself into the history books. It is only during his Paris trip, befriended by French dancers and a Chilean heiress, Clara Saint (Adèle Exarchopoulos), that Nureyev (Oleg Ivenko) learns what it means to have choice. Between performances, he visits all the cultural sights and decadent night spots Paris has to offer. His apparatchik minders watch his every move and attempt to curtail his new-found freedom. There are more than a few parallels with Paweł Pawlikowski's *Cold War* (2018). In both films, the communists wanted their leading lights to be feted on their terms, denying them the opportunity to develop their talents. Interspersed with Nureyev's formative trip are scenes of his training with leading ballet master Alexander Pushkin (Fiennes). Nureyev respected his teacher, and even moved into his apartment, only to begin a claustrophobic affair with Xenia (Chulpan Khamatova), Pushkin's young wife. Fiennes utilises a good balance of biography and ballet; emphasising how much Nureyev loved to dance and why, when forced, he chose artistic freedom over love of country. He skilfully ratchets up the tension in the film's terrific denouement. Despite knowing the outcome, the scene in Le Bourget airport, where Nureyev's KGB minders try to bundle him on a plane and he makes the historic choice to defect, is nail-biting stuff. Ivenko vividly conveys Nureyev's

internal struggle, his fear of never being allowed to dance again and his dawning realisation of what it means to exile himself from his home and family. The *White Crow* is beautifully shot; there is an epic quality to Mike Eley's cinematography, the lavish dance sequences and attention to period detail. Giving a stunning debut performance, Ivenko is mesmerising as Nureyev, conveying his star quality, charm, irascibility and flamboyance in equal measure. The supporting cast is also spot on. The actor playing young Nureyev bears more than a passing resemblance to Ivenko and the actresses portraying his mother and sisters could be part of the same family. Fiennes' cameo turn, delivered in fluent Russian, proves as elegant as his direction. *Lucy Popescu, CineVue*



THE BIGGEST LITTLE FARM

1hr 31 min Rated PG

06/28	Friday	6:15 pm	07/03	Wednesday	7:00 pm
06/29	Saturday	6:15 pm	07/04	Thursday	7:00 pm
06/30	Sunday	6:15 pm	07/05	Friday	9:00 pm
07/01	Monday	6:15 pm	07/06	Saturday	3:00 & 9:00 pm
			07/07	Sunday	3:00 pm

Climate change is never explicitly mentioned in the documentary “The Biggest Little Farm,” one of the year's best films, but it hangs all over the deep, rich story of the Chesters, a pair of hardscrabble idealists who move from the concrete jungle of Santa Monica to start a 200-acre, sustainable farm from scratch. Eventually including some 10,000 orchard trees and more than 200 different kinds of crops, with a wide variety of animals, Apricot Lane Farms can be seen as a microcosm of planet Earth. But even within the confines of their spread are the seeds of an epic movie that was nearly a decade in the making and boasts a cast of thousands (most of them non-human). John and Molly are a young married couple who want to live a meaningful life. He is a wildlife photographer — and also the director of this film — and she is a chef and foodie blogger. When they are evicted from their apartment (their rescue dog won't stop barking), they decide to turn a hazy dream of working a farm into immediate action. They find investors — many of them friends and family — and buy an abandoned farm about 40 miles north of Los Angeles. The place is virtually dead, but for the weeds. The topsoil is unsuited for growing crops, thanks to previous owners' monofarming or monocropping, a widely accepted agricultural method of planting the same crop each year that can lead to higher yields but eventually strips the soil of its nutrients. What existing structures remain are dilapidated. The Chesters can't even start from scratch; to do that, they must destroy what is there first. As newbies, they need guidance and are led to a farm whisperer, Alan York, whose hiring proves to be their most important decision. His vision, which will take years of hard, complex work to implement, is to create an internal ecosystem. It will be painstaking at first, but will (Alan says) become easy to run, “like surfing.” The Chesters blow through their first-year budget in six months. Among their first purchases are a pregnant pig, Emma, some cattle and goats. They begin producing manure crucial to reloading the soil with nutrients. Chickens producing organic eggs are some of their first best-sellers. But problems abound. Snails and gophers threaten

their fruit yields; coyotes terrorize the chickens, killing many. Periods of drought prove formidable challenges. Solutions become “eureka” moments. “Observation followed by creativity is becoming our greatest ally,” John says. As John and Molly learn, we learn. Benefiting from exceptional wildlife photography and cinematography, “The Biggest Little Farm” is a layered and rich experience, full of life and renewal — and death. “Our farm is energized by the impermanence of life,” John realizes. Earlier this month, the United Nations released a sweeping scientific report concluding that human civilization is speeding the extinction of a million species, altering the natural world in a way that will drastically impact humanity. We already know that modern farming practices are a significant contributor to climate change. In its modest way, “The Biggest Little Farm” offers hope, and even suggests a way forward. It is hard to survive in a world devoid of biodiversity. Why not work with nature, instead of against it? *C. Alan Johnson, San Francisco Chronicle*



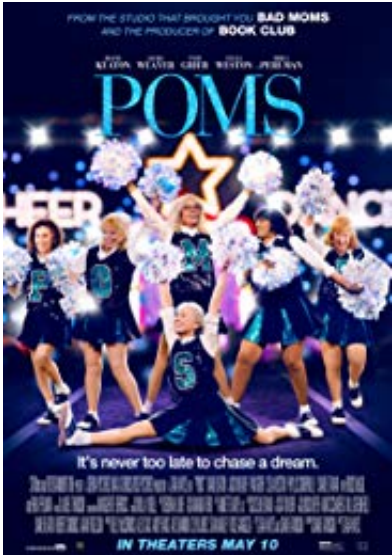
POMS

1hr 31 min Rated PG-13

06/21	Friday	6:15 pm	06/26	Wednesday	7:00 pm
06/22	Saturday	6:15 pm	06/27	Thursday	7:00 pm
06/23	Sunday	6:15 pm	06/28	Friday	9:00 pm
06/24	Monday	6:15 pm	06/29	Saturday	3:15 pm & 9:00 pm
06/25	Tuesday	7:00 pm	06/30	Sunday	3:15 pm

Each year, usually sometime around Mother’s Day weekend, Hollywood churns out a well-meaning if bland offering specifically designed for older audiences. Rising above the comfortable charm of the basic retiree fare, director Zara Hayes’s Poms uses feel-good clichés as a jumping off point, but reaches past them to something a bit more sincere. This cozy underdog comedy extends an invitation to viewers who are up in years without simply and thoughtlessly pandering to them. After selling off nearly all of her personal belongings and leaving New York City in the dust, former schoolteacher Martha (Diane Keaton, who has been getting her groove back in movies for roughly 30 years now) makes her way to a retirement community in the Georgia heat. There, she meets wild and carefree Sheryl (Jacki Weaver, proving once again that we don’t even remotely deserve her), who promptly encourages her to pick up her teenage dream of cheerleading. Soon, Martha forms a senior citizen pep squad, featuring the likes of Pam Grier, Phyllis Somerville, and Rhea Perlman, much to the dismay of the uptight welcoming committee chair (Celia Weston). At its best, Zara Hayes (making the shift from documentary to narrative feature) and Shane Atkinson’s script feels honest. Filled with dry, sarcastic humor, Poms boasts characters who have outgrown giving a damn, and so they speak their mind, although rarely in a forced, raunchy way, as in lesser films. For the most part, we stay away from the lazy Golden Years gags (there are no Viagra mishaps and no one fumbles with simple technology). Instead, the script gives into its morbid instincts, showing off cheesy ads for sending your loved ones off in a blaze of funeral fireworks and having its characters turn up at a stranger’s wake just for the hors d’oeuvres. By doing so, it constantly advocates laughter as being the unofficial sixth step in the grieving process. Poms rises and falls by its character beats. Diane Keaton’s Martha is given the opportunity to display an emotional range we haven’t seen from the actress in quite a while as she struggles to keep her cheeky composure while slowing

succumbing to terminal cancer. And Jacki Weaver, naturally, brings her signature joie de vivre and piercing smile to Sheryl, making her leap off the page. Other characters, however, are given little more than a name. It’s a shame to cast heavyweights like Rhea Perlman and Pam Grier in a film together and give them nearly nothing to do. Still, the principle players manage to form a palpable friendship, obviously having a ball in moments that were almost surely unscripted. It’s a delight to see these priceless women building each other up while playing to each other’s varied comic sensibilities in a dysfunctional yet endearing sisterhood. Even when the film stumbles over tonal imbalance and pacing issues, it isn’t long before Poms finds another way to dig its hooks into you. The target audience for the film will spend almost the entire runtime with big, stupid grins on their face. It’s difficult not to allow yourself to be tickled by this refreshing tale of senior citizens gleefully refusing to act their age, and reclaiming their autonomy in the process. *Brian Thompson, The Young Folks*



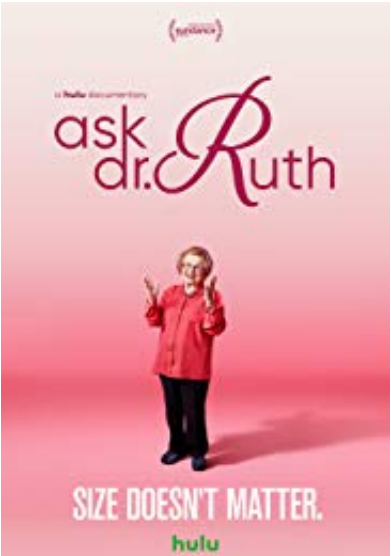
ASK DR. RUTH

1hr 40 min Not Rated

06/14	Friday	6:30 pm	06/20	Thursday	7:00 pm
06/15	Saturday	6:30 pm	06/21	Friday	9:00 pm
06/18	Tuesday	7:00 pm	06/22	Saturday	9:00 pm
			06/23	Sunday	3:00 pm

Dr. Ruth Westheimer, the travel-sized sex therapist and media superstar, has always been more than a German-accented punchline — and Ryan White’s documentary, “Ask Dr. Ruth,” shows not only how much of a pioneer Westheimer has been in expanding America’s discussions of sex, but also a person who has seen more tragedy and triumph than most. White starts with the media caricature of Dr. Ruth, the much-satirized staple of ‘80s and ‘90s talk shows, happily talking about penises and vaginas without blushing. The montage of her appearances with Arsenio Hall, David Letterman and others sets the table for the very real, very warm, and very short (47”) person behind the persona. Westheimer, who turned 90 last June, still lives in the Washington Heights apartment she shared with her third husband, engineer Fred Westheimer, from just after they married in 1961 to when he died in 1997. She is regularly visited by her two children, Miriam and Joel, and her four grandchildren; there’s a great moment where one granddaughter, Leora, tries to convince grandma that, despite her dislike of the word, is a feminist. As White digs deeper into Westheimer’s life, he introduces us to Karola Ruth Siegel, a little Jewish girl living a happy life in Frankfurt, Germany. That changes when she’s 10, in 1938, when her parents put little Karola on the kindertransport with other Jewish children, to escape the growing Nazi oppression. She lands at an orphanage in Switzerland, where (as White shows through tender animation sequences) she and the other Jewish children became servants for the Swiss kids. After World War II, Karola Siegel immigrated to British-controlled Palestine, where she used her middle name, Ruth, because Karola was considered too German. She lived on a kibbutz, and trained with the Israeli underground army as a sniper. Yes, Dr. Ruth is more badass than you ever knew, and at 90, she shows she can still field-strip a rifle, though

she hates the whole idea of guns. Her first marriage took her to Paris, and her second one to America, where she studied psychology and sexuality, and started her first practice as a sex therapist. Then came a surprisingly successful radio show, which made Dr. Ruth the nation’s expert on sex just as the AIDS crisis was beginning. Then came TV, books, and the rest. White pivots from Westheimer today, still active and writing books, with the looks into her past. Westheimer travels to Frankfurt, Switzerland and Israel to show the camera crew the stops along her life journey. (A trip to Yad Vashem, Israel’s Holocaust memorial and library, is particularly moving.) “Ask Dr. Ruth” shows Ruth Westheimer has a few faults — she’s skittishly agnostic about showing favor in electoral politics, for example — but overall presents a portrait of a feisty, fun-loving woman who survived the worst in life and came out perpetually chipper and life-affirming. *Sean P. Means, The Movie Cricket*

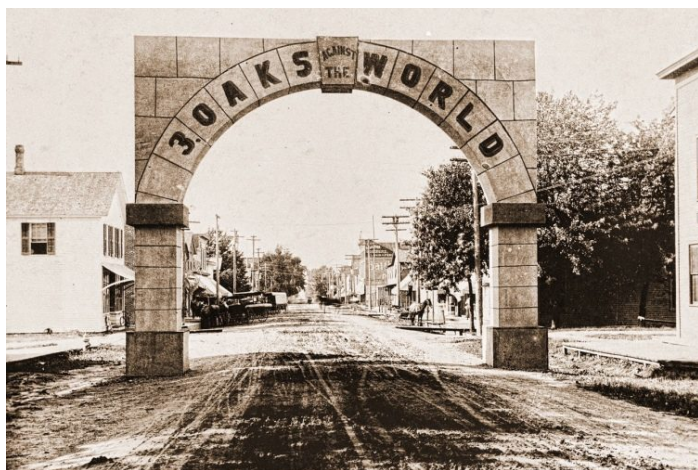


Harbor Arts & The Region of Three Oaks Museum
present a FREE showing of:

THREE OAKS AGAINST THE WORLD

1hr/followed by a 50 min presentation

Saturday, June 15th
12:00 Noon



Three Oaks Against the World was presented live at The Acorn Theater in the summer of 2017 as Three Oaks celebrated its Sesquecentennial. If you missed the event you won't want to miss the opportunity to see it presented on the big screen at the Vickers Theatre. If you did see the original play this is your chance to re-live the magic of the event.

Following the showing of the film, there will be a presentation on "The Making of Three Oaks Against the World" by director John Hancock and Playwright Allen Turner.

The event is FREE, but reservations are strongly encouraged to ensure your place at this event. Reservations are available at HarborArts.com.

HESBURGH

1 hr 44min Not Rated

06/16 Sunday 6:00 pm
06/17 Monday 6:00 pm

06/19 Wednesday 7:00 pm
06/22 Saturday 3:00 pm

In fractious and bellicose times, it's tough out there for conciliators. Which makes "Hesburgh," Patrick Creadon's lively and inspiring portrait of one of the most influential Americans of the 20th century, more welcome than ever. Father Theodore M. Hesburgh was most famous as the president of the University of Notre Dame, an institution he led for 35 years. During Father Ted's tenure, Notre Dame went from being a football school to being not just academically respected but a bastion of intellectual freedom and ideological pluralism, sometimes at the consternation of Vatican officials. "I took a vow of obedience," Father Ted says during one debate about academic freedom, "but I had to draw a line." If only as a principled educator and beloved paterfamilias, Father Ted is worthy of admiration. But as Creadon makes clear in this swiftly moving chronicle, his biggest role was that of civil rights pioneer and transcendent public figure. As one of the first members, and later chairman, of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, he helped create the underpinnings of what would become landmark civil rights legislation in the 1960s and 1970s. He did that, not through strong-arming or shouting but by bringing opposing sides together to find compromise that even they didn't know they were capable of — in one memorable case, over steaks, bourbon and fishing at a Wisconsin lake. Handsome, sensitive and open-minded, he became a friend to Popes and presidents, establishing a deep, what-might-have-been friendship with close confidante Eppie Lederer, better known as Ann Landers. (I nominate George Clooney and Sandra Bullock for the biopic.) Was Father Ted too good to be true? "Hesburgh" never suggests a dark side or even slightly troubling contradictions, although he disappointed even his most devoted young fans when he came down hard on campus protesters during the Vietnam era. Presumably he never spoke — or was never asked — about the sexual abuse scandals that rocked the church toward the end of his lifetime (The movie is narrated by an actor reading from Hesburgh's writings and tapes, and includes testimony from admirers in religion, education, politics and activism.)

Those who are willing to take "Hesburgh" at its word are left with a simple but exhilarating portrait of leadership at its most morally grounded and pragmatically effective, based on cultivating respect, mutual understanding and compassion. Father Ted, who died in 2015, doesn't just make those principles look attractive, he makes them look attainable. This moving, illuminating slice of American life and social history serves as a stirring example that we should all do much better. And we can start right now. *Ann Hornaday, The Washington Post*

A portrait of a man who can be seen as not merely blameless, but genuinely heroic. Glen Kenny, NY Times

A thoroughly engaging documentary chronicle of the life and turbulent times of longtime Notre Dame president Father Theodore M. Hesburgh, whose tenure coincided with a particularly pivotal stretch of American history. Michael Rechtshaffen, Los Angeles Times

