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The Auteur

A Tigard Film Society presentation of a Byrd McDonald/Amber Geiger production. Produced by McDonald, Geiger. Co-producer, David Priestley. Directed, written by James Westby.

With: Melik Malkasian, Katherine Flynn, John Breen, Cara Seymour, Victor Morris, Michael Fetters, Katie O'Grady, Ritah Parrish, Casey McFeron, Ron Jeremy.

Narrator: Jacob Pander.

(English, Italian dialogue)

By [ROBERT KOEHLER](#)

It's not easy being "the Kubrick of porn," a label that burdens fame-obsessed, jealousy-wracked Arturo Domingo at the center of James Westby's erratic mockumentary, "The Auteur." Like his "Film Geek," new pic is about movie culture in Westby's base of Portland, Ore. Half of the laughs stem from X-rated spins on famous movie titles, but a gentle, less ironic humor also occasionally pokes through. Nifty indie-fest entry should sidestep theatrical altogether and go straight to vid, where the porn action is these days anyway.

Clever opening passage drops the viewer into a retrospective reel that introduces Domingo's career and life story to an audience attending Pornfest Northwest, which is being held at the venerable (and actual) independent Portland cinema, the Clinton Street Theater. Looking like a cross between Francis Ford Coppola and Alejandro Gonzalez Inarritu, Domingo is portrayed as a porn artist a la Gerard Damiano ("the man shoots on 35!" exclaims an admirer). The running joke is that Domingo's demanding, alright -- demanding the money shot.

The legendary figure built up in the film reel is amusingly brought to earth by Domingo in the present, a has-been who's growing a paunch and misses the love of his life, Fiona (Katherine Flynn). Chauffeured around Portland -- which looks wonderfully enticing in Alan Jacobsen's lensing -- by driver Joseph (Victor Morris), and so lonely that he hooks up with a hippie pot dealer named Friend (Michael Fetters), who lives on a nudist commune, Domingo is a study in both failure and self-denial of that failure.

Pressing on his mind most of all are memories of his jealousy-fueled rages against Fiona and the recent pay-per-view success of former USC film-school classmate Frank E. Nomo (a terrific John Breen), with whom Domingo made the hit porno "Five Easy Nieces." From there, the two were like the Ford and Wayne