

## DVDS

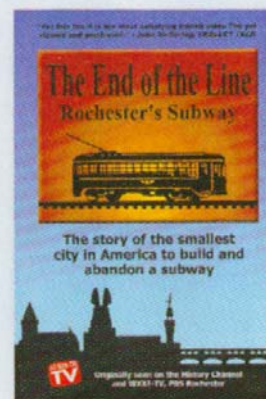
### The End of the Line: Rochester's Subway

Produced by Fredrick Armstrong. Animatus Studio, 34 Winthrop Street, Rochester, NY 14607; (585) 232-1740; Fax: (585) 232-3949; [www.animatusstudio.com/subway](http://www.animatusstudio.com/subway); 90 minutes, including extras; NTSC/Color/Stereo; \$29.95.

Available for the first time on DVD, *The End of the Line* documents the building, operation, and abandonment of this rail line that ran through a section of the former Erie Canal from 1927 until 1956. Period film clips combined with interviews and a wealth of photos bring the story to life, while bonus features, including a ride on the subway filmed in 1956, a look at the subway as it exists today, and more than 150 archival photos, round out the project into a truly impressive story to be enjoyed again and again.

**The construction** and short life of the Rochester, N.Y., subway is the subject of this professionally done program. Produced in 1994, it has aired on PBS and the History Channel. Construction began in the early 1920's using portions of the former Erie Canal route, with the goal of reducing streetcar and interurban traffic on Main Street by rerouting the interurbans under the city's downtown. But by 1931, the Depression had begun, the interurbans were gone, and Rochester was left with a 9.5-mile line with no connections. Ridership peaked about 1945, then declined. Service ended in 1956. The video includes historical footage (some in color), along with many still photos of the canal and rail lines. Also included is a modern look at the remains of the system that lurk below downtown.—J.W.

• *The End of the Line: Rochester's Subway*. Animatus Studio, Rochester, N.Y.; [www.animatusstudio.com](http://www.animatusstudio.com); (585) 232-1740; DVD; 45 min.; \$29.95.





# Wanna keep it short? Then check this out

Written by **Tim Karan**

Oliver Stone's *Alexander* clocks in with a hefty running time of 175 minutes, and nobody liked and/or knew what the hell was going on in it.

Sometimes you don't need those 145 or even those 170 extra minutes to tell a story well. Better than *Alexander*, at least.

And the Rochester International Film Festival — taking place Thursday through Saturday, May 4 through 6, at the Dryden Theatre and Little Theatre — is a testament to the idea that size in cinema doesn't matter.

The festival is one of the oldest exhibitions in the country, showcasing short films with running times ranging from 4 to 30 minutes.

Movies on a Shoestring Inc., a local group of amateur filmmakers, has been conducting the festival since 1959, back when the event featured 16 films from auteurs in and around the city and was held in the Rochester Public Library.

This year, 32 movies from filmmakers around the globe were selected to be screened. While there are no prizes or awards, the audience favorites will be added to "The Best of the Fest," a traveling compilation of films available for loan throughout the state.

Here are some of the highlights from this year's four showings (all of which are free to attend):

**Thursday**

8 p.m. at the Dryden  
■ *Motherless Child: Remnants of the Subway* — Directed by Rochesterians Fredrick Armstrong and James P. Harte, it's a trip through the abandoned Rochester subway system. (9 minutes)

■ *La Belle dame sans merci*  
— An adaptation of a John Keats poem about a knight who becomes entranced by a woman only to be horrified when she reveals her true form. Directed by first-time short-film director Hidetoshi Oneda of Tokyo. (15 minutes)

## The 48th Annual Rochester International Film Festival

When: 8 p.m. Thursday, May 4; 8 p.m. Friday, May 5; 4 p.m. and 8 p.m. Saturday, May 6

Where: Dryden Theatre, George Eastman House, 900 East Ave.; The Little Theatre, 240 East Ave.

Cost: Free (donations accepted)

# Rochester's short-film festival returns

## JACK GARNER

STAFF FILM CRITIC

Has it really been 48 years since Rochester began to play host to beginning filmmakers who were learning how to make "movies on a shoestring"?

It's astonishing but true; one of the oldest film festivals in the world, now called the Rochester International Film Festival, launches its 48th edition Thursday at the Eastman House Dryden Theatre and the Little Theatre. The festival was founded in 1959 and called Movies on a Shoestring until recent years. It's the oldest, continuously operating short-film festival in the world.

Each of the four programs offers different titles, and admission is free (though donations are welcomed).

This year's fest includes 32 short films — live action and animated — from all over the United States, and from such diverse locales as Jerusalem, Rome, Tokyo, Paris, and Balboa, Spain.



Provided photo

**Betsy Palmer and Bryan Norton**  
teamed up for *Penny Dreadful*.

Rochester will be represented by Fredrick Armstrong and James P. Harte, whose film, *Motherless Child — Remnants of the Subway*, takes viewers on a nine-minute phantom ride along the city's now vacant subway bed. David Puls, also from Rochester, will present *Sharks in the Water*, a four-minute look at corporate corruption.

The *Subway* short screens Thursday, *Sharks* at a matinee May 6.

Though most films feature unknown actors, *Penny Dreadful* by New Yorker Bryan Norton stars veteran actress Betsy Palmer in a tale about a haunted West Village townhouse.

Palmer has more than 50 films to her credit, including *Mister Roberts* and *The Long Gray Line*, and worked as a news reporter for *The Today Show* in the '50s, but her main claim to fame is playing Jason Voorhees' mother in *Friday the 13th*.

Another celebrity making an appearance, at least by voice, is Jake Gyllenhaal (of *Brokeback Mountain*). Gyllenhaal narrates *The Man Who Walked Between the Towers*, a 10-minute animated account of Philippe Petit's famous tightrope walk between the twin towers of the World Trade Center.

For schedules, call (585) 234-7411 or go to [rochesterfilmfest.org](http://rochesterfilmfest.org).

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