

The News-Gazette

Participate in 2012 Ebertfest Without Leaving Your Home or Office

By Melissa Merli

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CHAMPAIGN — Movie buffs don't have to leave home (or their office) to participate in the 14th annual Roger Ebert's Film Festival.

The festival for years has live-streamed its panel and post-screening discussions and Q-and-A's. Another source, new this year to the festival, is Fandor, a curated online service for watching hard-to-find movies and documentaries.

Fandor has teamed up with Ebertfest to present video stories about the filmmakers and industry insiders at the event. It's also offering, for free during the festival from today through Sunday the silent shorts in "Wild and Weird," a collection from the Alloy Orchestra, an annual attraction at Ebertfest.

The trio will provide live accompaniment to "Wild and Weird" at 4 p.m. Friday during Ebertfest but Fandor will not live-stream that. However, the "Wild and Weird" films on Fandor have the Alloy Orchestra accompaniment.

Fandor also is presenting a selection of Ebert's top picks from previous festivals as well as 17 of his favorite films, among them "Nosferatu," "Metropolis" and "Un Chien Andalou."

Anyone, without subscribing to Fandor, can go to the Fandor-Ebertfest page (www.fandor.com/ebertfest) to watch "Wild and Weird" during the five-day festival. To see other Ebert-related content on Fandor, you can get a free, seven-day pass by connecting to www.fandor.com/connect or by visiting Fandor's Facebook page.

The Fandor Ebertfest page also will direct viewers to Keyframe, its online film magazine. Fandor also has a YouTube channel. Those are free.

"Fandor is a great place for movie lovers to discover amazing films, especially must-see titles they can't find anywhere else," Ebert said in a news release from Fandor. "We're looking forward to having Fandor participate in this year's Ebertfest and are thrilled that they will help bring our event to people who couldn't make it in person."

Fandor, was launched in March 2011. It supports filmmakers by leveraging social-media networks so members can easily share the movies they find and love, through a distribution model that shares a portion of its subscription fees with filmmakers and distributors. While subsidizing the free viewing of Ebertfest films and complimentary memberships, Fandor will ensure that filmmaking partners are compensated.