



"Drives home the fragile identity of the city's signature locales and the alarming cultural myopia of redevelopment" -The New York Times

"Nostalgia matches anti-fat-cat zeal in this entertaining NY-centric doc" -Hollywood Reporter

"Uniquely accessing an endless flow of rampant hypocrisy, this cinematic lament to Coney Island should amuse audiences even as it horrifies" -Variety

> "An important film. Fascinating, informative, and enlightening" -WBAI, Pacifica Network

"An excellent document of how wrenching change can be" -Architectural Record

"Brilliantly told"

-The New York Post

PRESS CONTACT Weiman Seid FAT DOT 212.691.4224 weimanseid@fatdot.net

www.zipperfilm.com @zipperfilm www.facebook.com/zipperfilm

TRT: 77minutes **UNRATED** Production format: 16mm Produced & Directed by Amy Nicholson 917.693.0171 zipperfilm@gmail.com





Logline: (20 words)

A small-time ride operator and his beloved carnival contraption become casualties in the battle over the future of Coney Island.

Capsule Synopsis: (48 words)

A small-time ride operator and his beloved carnival contraption are driven out of Coney Island when the City of New York and an opportunistic developer lock horns over the future of the world-famous amusement park. ZIPPER examines the high cost of economic development on an American cultural icon.

Short Synopsis: (130 words)

A story about greed, politics and the land grab of the century, ZIPPER chronicles the battle over an American cultural icon. Small-time ride operator, Eddie Miranda, proudly operates a 38-year-old carnival contraption called the Zipper in the heart of Coney Island's gritty amusement district. When his rented lot is snatched up by an opportunistic real estate mogul, Eddie and his ride become casualties of a power struggle between the developer and the City of New York over the future of the world-famous destination. Be it an affront to history or simply the path of progress, the spirit of Coney Island is at stake. In an increasingly corporate landscape, where authenticity is often sacrificed in the interest of economic growth, the Zipper may be just the beginning of what is lost.

Long Synopsis: (226 words)

A story about greed, politics and the land grab of the century, ZIPPER chronicles the battle over an American cultural icon. On a small rented lot in the heart of Coney Island's gritty amusement district, Eddie Miranda proudly operates a 38-year-old carnival contraption called the Zipper. When an opportunistic real estate mogul sets his sights on the property, Eddie and his ride - along with many of Coney Island's eclectic small businesses - are forced to leave.

Behind the scenes, a high-stakes power struggle brews between the developer and the City of New York. Both see the redevelopment of Coney Island's waterfront real estate as a lucrative opportunity. They lock horns when the City denounces the developer's glitzy vision of condos and shopping, and ironically, hatches its own grand scheme to transform the area with the promise of housing and retail. The resulting standoff is a scary ride that leaves the future of the world-famous amusement park up in the air.

Can a reinvented Coney Island remain the "People's Playground?" Will the zeal to capitalize on Coney Island as a brand ultimately sanitize its unfettered spirit? Be it an affront to history or simply the path of progress, ZIPPER examines the high cost of economic development. In an increasingly corporate landscape where authenticity is often sacrificed in the interest of economic growth, the Zipper may be just the beginning of what is lost.



CONEY ISLAND'S LAST WILD RIDE

Credits

Produced & Directed by Amy Nicholson

Edited by Jonah Moran John Young

Additional Editing Jenny Golden

Director of Photography Jerry Risius

Cinematographers Ruben O'Malley

Mark Schwartzbard

Sound Recordists Felix Andrew

Jose Araujo Judy Karp Francisco La Torre Brenda Ray JT Tatagi

Associate Producer Katy Jacobs
Story Editor Fernanda Rossi
Supervising Editor Laura Israel

Additional Cinematography John D'Aquino

Jordan Levie

Camera Assistants Sung Rae Cho "Sho"

Jordan Levie Nate McCallister Rick Savarese

Production Assistants Jason M. Hanrahan

Tim Schadt Laura Smith

Assistant Editor Tameeka Ballance Editing Interns Quincey Chapman

Joseph Santangelo

Researcher Carole Ryavec Still photographer Amy Nicholson

Translators Brant Hadzima

Grecia Levie Salvador Zepeda





Office Production Assistant

Transcriber Equipment rental Trevor Williams Cat Gulascy AbelCine Hotlights Inc. Hand Held Films

Professional Sound Services

Film dailies Lab supervisor Additional dailies DuArt Steve Blakely Mind's Eye Media

Liman Video Rental

Film to tape transfer Colorist On-line editor Service Manager DuArt Bill Stokes Daniel Edelman Dennis DeJesus

Color Correction Colorist Project Manager DI Editor VP, Sales PostWorks Scot Olive Matt Medeiros George Bunce Jeremiah Hawkins

Post Production Services Online Editor

Post Production Assistant

Homestead Editorial Paul Fernandez Kelly Imbrett

Additional transfers

Voltage Video

Audio Post Production

Sound Designer & Re-recording Mixer

Dialogue Editor

& Assistant Re-recording Mixer Vocal Recording Engineer EP, Managing Director Yessian NYC Weston Fonger

Philippe LeSaux Hugh Wilson Marlene Bartos

Graphics Queen Animators

Laura Smith Deen Modino George Sepulveda

Illustrators

Nicholas D'Auria Justin Green Gwen Kaczor Dane Lachuisa

Web Gurus

Sean Moroney Matthew Schrack

Retoucher Ben Woolsey

Amazing 1970s footage provided by the amazing Bob Richmond Additional footage provided by JL Aronson and John D'Aquino Selected images from The Dreamland Artist Club,

a Creative Time production, images courtesy Creative Time, © 2004 Fish mural by Daze Ellis

Thunderbolt photo courtesy of Joe Schwartz

Archival footage & stills courtesy of Getty Images/Archive Films

Satellite imagery provided by TerraServer

Zipper blueprints & manual courtesy of Chance Morgan



To Tell the Truth courtesy of FremantleMedia North America Press conference footage courtesy of Mayor's Press Office Grind tape courtesy of Coney Island USA Coney Island mural by Daze Ellis Backdrop for Joey and Don by Marie Roberts provided by Coney Island USA Sculpture in Joe Sitt's office by Edwin Bogucki

News footage courtesy of CNN, NY1 News & BRIC Arts Media

"Jaw Dropping" article courtesy of New York Magazine
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Additional articles courtesy of The New York Post
Radio broadcasts courtesy of WNYC
Podcast of CoasterBuzz courtesy of Coasterbuzz.zom
with Jeff Putz, Pat Walters & Mike Jandes

Music Supervisors
Original Music by
Mick Rossi
Joel Shelton

"Don't Fear the Reaper"
Performed by James O'Connell
Vocals by Colin Warren and Ramon Ponce
Courtesy of Sony
By Arrangement with Sony Music Licensing

"Dusic"
Performed by Brick
Courtesy of Epic Records
By Arrangement with Sony Music Licensing

"Enchanted Kingdom" Courtesy of APM Music

"Far From Refuge"
Written and performed by God is An Astronaut
Courtesy of Rumblefish Music Licensing Store

"Welcome to the Theatron Anamatronique" Composed by Trey Spruance Performed by Secret Chiefs 3 Courtesy of Web of Mimicry

"Swinging By" Courtesy of APM Music

"You Really Got Me"
Written by Ray Davies
Performed by James O'Connell and Mike Dragovic
Courtesy of Sony/ATV Songs, LLC

"Wake Up Get Dressed We're Sinking" Written and performed by Foxhole Courtesy of Burnt Toast Vinyl



"Tundra" Courtesy of APM Music

"The End of Times"
Composed by Trey Spruance
Performed by Secret Chiefs 3
Courtesy of Web of Mimicry

"The Blue Danube" by Johann Strauss II Courtesy of APM Music

"Etude No. 2 by Philip Glass"
©1999 Dunvagen Music Publishers, Inc.
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Courtesy of Orange Mountain Music

"Symphony No. 5 in Minor, Op. 64" by P.I. Tchaikovsky Courtesy of APM

"Clair de lune" by Claude Debussy Performed and recorded by L. Goedhart

"Neopolitan Dreams"
Performed by Lisa Mitchell
Courtesy of Sony Music Entertainment (UK) Ltd
By Arrangement with Sony Music Licensing

Legal Services Ashima Dayal, Davis & Gilbert LLP

Production insurance Film Emporium

Taylor & Taylor Associates

Transportation A New Day Radio Dispatch

Bessie the Subaru

Shoulder to cry on Tim Schadt

Filmed on location in New York, NY, Wichita, KS and Tela, Honduras





Production Notes

Zipper was filmed over a four-year period on Super 16mm. From the beginning, shooting on film was deemed essential in capturing the analogue feeling of a place like Coney Island. In early production meetings, the opening of *Dog Day Afternoon* served as our inspiration. Cinematographer Jerry Risius (DP and field producer for Anthony Bourdain) shot the majority of the footage on his trusty Aaton, with Mark Schwartzbard and Ruben O'Malley covering the intense two-camera City Hall day and a couple of key interviews. To complete Coney's full assault on the senses, the sound department went to great lengths, meticulously recording every barker, BB gun, squealing child and seagull.

It seems like it would be a blast making a film in Coney Island, but standing in the blistering sun all day and eating your dinner on a dumpster is not everyone's idea of filmmaking glamour. (Producer's secret: there are clean bathrooms under the Wonder Wheel - take quarters.) We also had to earn the trust of the Zipper crew before we were fully embedded in their culture. After 3,482 trips on the D train, and many colorful late-night history lessons, it is safe to say we won them over.

And somehow we managed to talk our way into the offices of the major players in the New York City Council, the Economic Development Corp., and the Department of City Planning, along with one of the biggest real estate developers in the world. Not knowing how else to break the ice, we baked chocolate chip cookies. It worked.

We went everywhere, from City Hall to Wichita, waiting three years for an opportunity to shoot at the Zipper factory. Chance Manufacturing doesn't make the Zipper anymore, but it's still one of the most popular carnival rides ever, and their owners send them in to be rebuilt. Chance is a family-owned business, and Harold Chance is an amusement ride legend. It was an honor to be able to interview him before he passed away in the summer of 2010.

We even went to Honduras to find the Zipper. We just had to. The family that came to pick up the ride when it left Coney Island had moved by the time we decided to go find it. But being that the kids were teenagers, we thought, "maybe Facebook?" Sure enough, we found the son of the truck driver, who put us in touch with his Dad, who knew exactly where the Zipper was. Three years and 3,460 miles from our first shoot on Easter weekend 2007, we were standing in front of Zipper #34 filming the same wide-eyed reactions on the faces of the locals.

The only thing we didn't do was take the camera inside the Zipper. That was left to all the crazy riders who willingly entered into a locked, spinning cage and somehow managed to film themselves while holding on for dear life. Thanks, Youtube.







Director's Statement

I blame The Jumble. It's that syndicated puzzle in the newspaper where you unscramble the words and figure out the terrible pun. I was flipping through the Daily News one day looking for it when an article caught my eye. There was a photo of a sad-faced guy named Eddie Miranda standing in front of a carnival ride called the Zipper. The photo was taken in Coney Island. The quote read, "We were all hoping for one more season."

The Zipper was my favorite ride as a kid, so I set out to make a quirky homage to its unique brand of terror. When I started just before the summer of 2007, the media was predicting the death of the famous amusement area. Headlines and news broadcasts as far away as Australia talked of condominiums and Disneyfication. There was a lot of confusion. Knowing I was filming in Coney, friends would ask, "Is it still there?" "Didn't it close?" "What's going to be there?" Everyone was heartbroken about what was happening, but hardly anybody – including me – really understood what was really happening.

Driven by a desire for context, but mostly by my own need to make sense of Eddie Miranda's eviction, I kept filming after the Zipper left Coney Island. I wasn't interested in nostalgia. I continued to research and shoot because I felt like Coney Island's soul was being stripped away. I started to miss it, even though it was still there.

Suddenly, I was making a much bigger film about the politics of land use. And through the process of uncovering the truth, I found a more complex narrative than I could have ever imagined. I felt fortunate to finally understand how the spirit of the "People's Playground" could be crushed under the pressure of economic development, and a deep responsibility to share what I had learned.

I have two ambitions for ZIPPER. First, to expose how and why the "poor people's Riviera" became the prize in a fight between a billionaire developer and a billionaire mayor. Second, to remind the world of Coney Island's true character, so that other great cultural icons might be valued more for their sense of place than for their real estate. That character was alive and well and embodied in guys like Eddie and his Zipper before anyone decided Coney Island needed "saving."

It's clear from the footage in ZIPPER that Coney Island was no longer the glorious place you see in post World War II photos. No one who's spent an afternoon navigating the broken boardwalk or some of Coney Island's scarier neighborhood streets would ever argue it was perfect. But the notion of its redevelopment was motivated by many factors, the least of which was preservation.

My hope is to share this story with anyone who appreciates the noisy, unfettered, chaotic, all-welcoming, anything goes atmosphere of a place like Coney Island; the one place in the world where you wouldn't find an Applebee's.



Crew Bio's



Producer/Director Amy Nicholson directed her first non-fiction film in the fall of 2002. BEAUTY SCHOOL, a wry portrait of the New York School of Dog Grooming, premiered at Hot Docs and aired on PBS and the Documentary Channel. It also appeared on Virgin Atlantic's in-flight entertainment. Amy's first feature-length documentary, MUSKRAT LOVELY, premiered at The Hamptons and went on to screen at SilverDocs, the Florida Film Festival, and Brooklyn International among others. MUSKRAT LOVELY was broadcast nationally on the 2007 season of Independent Lens. Amy has also directed several commercial projects and consults as an advertising creative director. ZIPPER is her third film.

Director of Photography Jerry Risius has photographed and produced films for HBO, PBS (Frontline, Independent Lens, POV, Nature, NOVA, POV), Showtime, National Geographic, Discovery, Canal Plus, BBC, among others. Jerry recently completed THE LAST MOUNTAIN, which premiered at Sundance 2011. He also shot and field produced THE DEVIL CAME ON HORSEBACK, an official selection of Sundance, SXSW and Tribeca that was nominated for Best Documentary Emmy. Jerry photographed THE PRICE OF SUGAR, which was shortlisted for an Oscar, and A WALK TO BEAUTIFUL for NOVA, which won an Emmy in 2009, and the IDA's Documentary of the Year for 2007.

Supervising Editor Laura Israel has cut music videos for Lou Reed, Keith Richards, and David Byrne. Laura has also worked as photographer and filmmaker Robert Frank's editor for nearly two decades. Her feature documentary credits include AFRICA UNITE, LIFE FOR A CHILD directed by Academy Award-nominated DP Ed Lachman, and MUSIC OF REGRET by Laurie Simmons. In 2010, Laura directed her first feature documentary. WINDFALL is the NYC DOC 2010 grand prizewinner and is currently on a festival tour that includes Toronto, Woodstock, IDFA and Full Frame. Laura is currently working on her next film, a documentary about Robert Frank.

Editor Jonah Moran has edited a wide array of film and television projects. He cut the award-winning Sundance Channel series ICONOCLASTS with acclaimed director Joe Berlinger, the ambitious Discovery Channel series SAN QUENTIN FILM SCHOOL with Bruce Synofsky, and the Bravo series BEING BOBBY BROWN. He also edited IN THE HEIGHTS: CHASING BROADWAY DREAMS for the PBS series Great Performances. His feature film work includes the theatrically released JAY-Z: FADE TO BLACK and several documentary projects for MTV including BRITNEY: FOR THE RECORD and the critically lauded DEMI LOVATO: STAY STRONG. His commercial work includes international ads for TOMMY HILFIGER and has taken him inside the recovery of Ford Motor Company with the award-winning web series Bold Moves: Documenting the Future of Ford. Jonah has also worked on numerous entertainment and sports programs for MTV, ESPN and ABC, including Battlegrounds, Gamekillers, and Fast Cars And Superstars.



Crew Bio's cont.

Editor John Young is a commercial editor at Homestead Editorial. A graduate of the University of Georgia, and New York City transplant by way of NYU graduate school, he cuts television commercials and content for major multinational advertising clients like MTV, ESPN, Chevrolet, Verizon Wireless, and the NHL. His recent work includes campaigns for New Era Baseball caps, Macy's, Sobieski Vodka, and Red Lobster. He also collaborated on a series of short films for the Marines, featuring embedded UFC fighters, and short comedy projects with Jerry Seinfeld and Jim Gaffigan. John's feature film credits include the Parker Cross comedy FORTUNES, and the documentary feature MUSKRAT LOVELY.

Associate Producer Katy Jacobs graduated from New York University's Maurice Kanbar Institute of Film and Television. Katy is Associate Producer for Academy Award-nominated filmmaker Alice Elliott, director of THE COLLECTOR OF BEDFORD STREET. She is also the Outreach Coordinator for the Emmy Award-nominated documentary, WAR DON DON. Katy has served as a Project Coordinator for the boutique grassroots and community distribution company Film Sprout, and has assisted with programming and operations for a variety of prestigious festivals and screening series including Hamptons International, Brooklyn International, Filmwax, DOC NYC and Rural Route.





Photo Captions

Beach protest Reverend Billy

A protest on the boardwalk following the announcement of the city's compromised plans for Coney Island.

Eddie Miranda in Zipper Lot

Eddie Miranda stares down at what's left of his Coney Island lot following eviction.

Eddie Miranda packs the Zipper

Eddie and Jerry ready the Zipper for transport from Coney Island to its new home in Honduras.

Keep Coney Amusing

A scene from one of several heated meetings during the public review process for the rezoning of Coney Island.

Save Coney Mermaid

The rezoning of Coney Island was contentious enough to affect the annual Mermaid parade.

Zipper During Destruction

The Zipper stands tall against a landscape of bulldozed amusements in Coney Island.

All photos credit: Amy Nicholson

Production photos labeled with crew names All production photos credit: Jordan Levie

