

Reel or No Reel: The Future of Cinema in York

[Emily Taylor](#) takes a look at how to be a film fan in York

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Rest in peace, Reel Cinema York, you shall be missed – a bit. So as not to speak ill of the dead, lets just describe this cinema as “characterful” or “the perfect place to watch *Trainspotting*” or “possibly haunted”. Though the old Odeon building is destined to become an Everyman cinema, it’s unlikely to be the cheap student favourite that Reel was. So now where can York movie fans go to get their cinema fix?

It’s a fairly universally accepted truth that the best cinema in York is the City Screen Picturehouse. It has an excellent selection of films – mainstream hits to indie darlings, as well as reshowing old classics. Until the Everyman complex is complete, City Screen is the only cinema located in the city centre. The screens are swanky. The seats are comfortable. It serves alcohol. What more could you want?

Well, affordability isn’t its strong point. Sadly, this luxury comes at a cost. If you’re thinking of going a fair few times then it’s probably a smart idea to get a student membership. It’s only £20 for a year and that gets you 2 free tickets and £2 off any future tickets and money off food and drink.



Image: philld

If you’re a fresher, then grab one of their first-term-free deals. Monday nights have further discounted tickets and the E4 Slackers Club runs free screenings for students. Tuesday nights are home to ‘Discover Tuesdays’, showcasing niche films rarely seen in Western cinema, and ‘Vintage Sundays’, showing some old classics. Popular and busy, for now City Screen remains top dog.

With Reel’s departure, the only other major chain cinema is the Vue, or the ‘cinema for people with cars’. An arduous journey to get there and without raised seating, it is only really a final resort. It’s also not particularly cheap, but does have a wider selection of films than the Picturehouse.

Your other option is the Student Cinema, located in the University itself – perfect for those who can’t be bothered to go to town. It has a very good selection of films usually after they have left cinemas. So, if you miss a film in cinemas, keep an eye on the Student Cinema showings. They show three films a week so there’s certainly enough variety to appease most people. Though the films are showing in lecture theatre P/X/001, it is kitted out with a decent screen and sound system so it’s not too far off a cinema experience; better than a lap top and a Bluetooth speaker at the very least. It’s cheap and convenient at so worth checking out even if you’re just bored one evening.

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The Aesthetica Short Film Festival is also coming to York in November, if anyone is at the very least curious about short films then it’s worth checking out, even just investing in a day pass since the entire five days requires a lot of dedication. But a variety of short films is perfect for our generation with our complete lack of an attention span. The films are organised into blocks of genres, each block containing around six films so chances are there’ll be something you like. There are also master classes for those who decide what they want after a day of university is even more lectures, they are great for anyone even marginally interested in filmmaking though.

The final option is to be like 90 per cent of the population and wait for it on Netflix or just illegally stream it. But the cinema still holds a certain magic despite extortionate prices and having to share air with ‘other people’. So maybe try checking one of these places out and fully immerse yourself in the cinematic experience. The phrase ‘cinematic experience’ may mark you as pretentious to many, but films are designed to be seen on the big screen and for some films it can make all the difference.



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