

"It was built as a cinema and I'm glad it remains a cinema. It has real presence."

Michael Palin, actor, writer, presenter and Phoenix Patron



The Picturedrome, 1912.

ONE OF THE OLDEST CINEMAS IN BRITAIN...

This cinema was built in 1910 and opened in 1912. At this time, films were black and white with hints of colour and no sound, so an orchestra played live music and audiences made lots of noise. Tickets were different prices depending on where you sat and people could smoke in the auditorium. But in 1929, the cinema experience changed when this became the first cinema in the area to show sound films or 'talkies'. It's hard to imagine going to the cinema then when today we have widescreen, full colour, surround sound and digital projection.



The Coliseum, 1929.

BEAUTIFUL ARCHITECTURE...

You may have noticed how different our cinema is to modern cinemas. This cinema is a Grade II listed building because our auditorium is so special. The ceiling is the original ceiling from 1910 and the Art Deco details, including the gold panels, are from 1938 when the cinema was redesigned. The exterior was also remodelled in 1938. The turrets and domes from 1910 were replaced with the sleek, modernist façade we have today.

Image courtesy of London Borough of Barnet - Local Studies.

"...it's such a beautiful building and it reminds you that, actually, the cinema itself should be part of the experience."

Mark Kermode, film critic and Phoenix Patron.



The Rex, 1974.

NOT LIKE ALL THE OTHERS...

In 1970, this became an art-house cinema, showing foreign, independent and classic films. From the 1950s to the 1980s, many cinemas had to shut because people were staying at home to watch TV. However, this cinema offered something different so it managed to survive. In the early 1980s, it was nearly knocked down but the local community campaigned to save it. So in 1985, it was taken over by Phoenix Cinema Trust who have owned it ever since.

PHOENIX TODAY...

Welcome to The Phoenix, one of London's leading independent cinemas and one of the oldest cinemas in Britain. The cinema has seen a lot of changes but today it has a much-loved film programme of new releases, independent, foreign-language and specialist films, plus old and new classics. It also offers a kids club, regular events, festivals, one-off talks and screenings, workshops for schools, film classes and a popular membership scheme.



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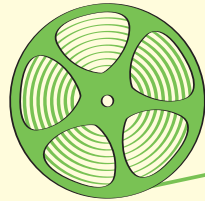
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PHOENIX CINEMA TRUST...

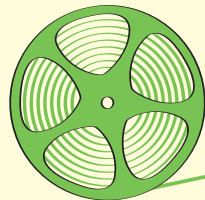
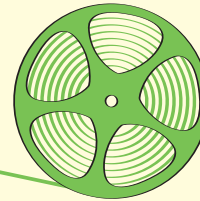
Today, the cinema is owned and managed by Phoenix Cinema Trust, a charity run by and for the community. This makes The Phoenix a truly independent cinema. It does not receive any public grants or subsidies to cover operating costs and relies completely on its own income to sustain the business.

FUN ACTIVITY:

If you were in charge of The Phoenix for a day, what three films would you show?



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Go to our website and enter your three films for a chance to win two free tickets:
www.phoenixcinema.co.uk/education/heritage/threefilms

Contact details:

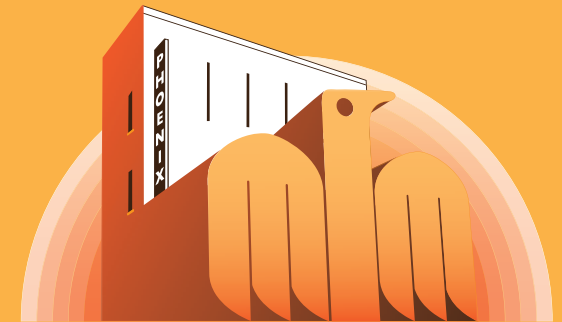
✉ Phoenix Cinema, 52 High Road, London N2 9PJ

☎ 020 8444 6789

🖱 www.phoenixcinema.co.uk



Written in partnership with pupils of



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EXPLORE ONE OF BRITAIN'S OLDEST CINEMAS