

Film

Whether you're shooting the film or simply sitting and watching, these days Boston is movie-central.

Over the past couple of years, Boston has suddenly found itself dazzled by the bright lights of Hollywood. Although it has long been known for its art-house theatres and academic film-making, the city has recently become a mainstream filming hotspot, which it doesn't mind at all. Never one to shrink from opportunity, Boston has embraced the film industry wholeheartedly.

LEARN TO FILM

Film programmes at Boston's arts-oriented universities – Emerson College, Boston University and the Mass College of Art – have always been popular, but now post-graduates, adults and even teenagers are attending film classes. Film, it seems is a cottage industry in these parts. The **Boston Film and Video Foundation** (1126 Boylston Street, Suite 201; 536 1540/www.bfvf.org), for example, which has been serving the local film community for 25 years, offers challenging classes to adults and high-school students, taught by professional film-makers. It also rents editing suites, camera equipment and everything else needed to shoot a film. Would-be directors and cinematographers can also take classes at **CityScape** (Film Shack Studio, 227 Roxbury Street, Roxbury; 989 0588). CityScape's laudable mission is to 'engage students in real-world projects with real-world deadlines.'

WHERE TO WATCH

With all the filming taking place in and around Boston, there are a wide variety of screening venues where movie lovers can catch a flick, whether that's a mainstream feature, a local short or a foreign film. The city's arthouses are among the country's best. The oldest of these is the **Coolidge Corner Theater**, a double-screen art deco venue in Brookline. Built originally as a church, the Coolidge was renovated into a movie palace in 1933, and has served as both a film theatre and stage for music performers ever since.

Another Boston film landmark is the **Brattle Theatre** in Cambridge. The oldest of the city's alternative screening theatres, the Brattle features a large single screen and a balcony. Like the Coolidge, it's decidedly no frills, and sightlines can be challenging, but the incredible programming organised by the Beacon Cinema Group make the Brattle a reliable choice.

For newer independent releases, Boston cinephiles usually go to the (relatively) newly built **Kendall Square Cinema** in Cambridge. Also very popular is the **Nickelodeon**, the only theatre in Boston proper showcasing newly released independent feature films.

For the location of the nearest cinema, or for information on films currently showing, check local listings or call the free MovieFone Line at 333 FILM.

Art-house screens

Brattle Theatre

40 Brattle Street, Harvard Square, Cambridge (876 6837/www.beaconcinema.com/brattle). Harvard T. Tickets \$7; \$4 concessions. No credit cards. Map p311 B2.

Built in 1890 for theatrical use by the Cambridge Social Union, the Brattle serves only as a movie house now. The Queen Anne-style building with a gambrel roof has seen many famous folks pass through its doors, especially during the 1940s, when it served as a resident theatre company and hosted the likes of TS Eliot, Paul Robeson and, later, Zero Mostel and Jessica Tandy. Moviegoers enjoy second-run independent features, classic foreign film series and classic revivals and restorations.

Coolidge Corner Cinema

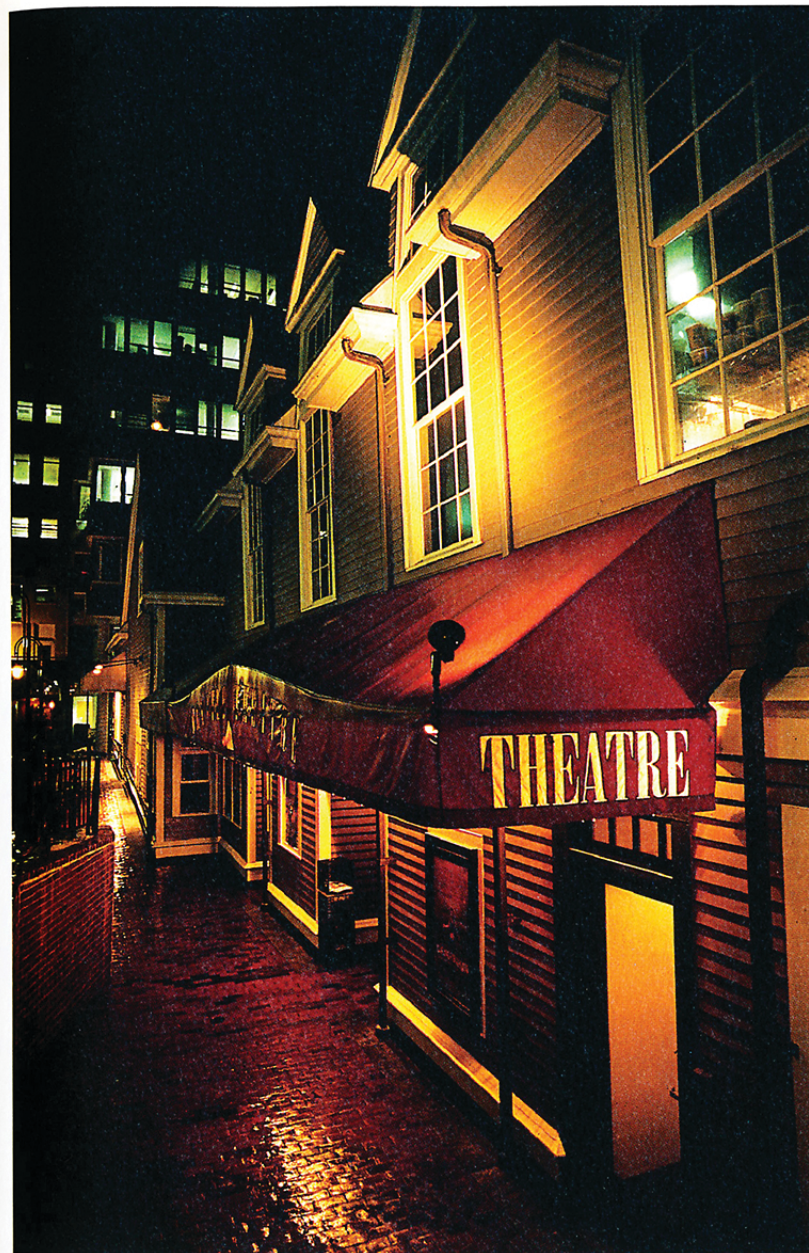
290 Harvard Street, at Beacon Street, Brookline (734 2501/www.coolidge.org). Coolidge Corner T. Tickets \$8; \$4 concessions. No credit cards.

This non-profit theatre might be looking a little shabby – it could use some newer seats with better sightlines – but it still feels like a grand theatre. The Coolidge screens an eclectic mix of foreign films and underground features, and sponsors Video Balagan, a screening series devoted to showing work by local film-makers. Best of all, tickets are cheap and it's easily accessible by public transport.

Harvard Film Archive

Carpenter Center for the Visual Arts, 24 Quincy Street, at Broadway, Cambridge (495 4700/www.harvardfilmarchive.org). Harvard T. Tickets \$7; \$5 concessions. No credit cards. Map p311 B2.

The Archive sponsors series by directors like Fassbinder and Truffaut, as well as classic film revivals. Like the Museum of Fine Arts (see p114), serious film-watching is encouraged, which means food and drink are forbidden. No giggling, please.



Brattle Theatre – Cambridge's century-old cinematic landmark. See p206.