

# Visit Bantam Cinema and Arts Center, a Small Town Movie Theater

It is the oldest continuously operated movie theater in Connecticut.

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(source: *Patch.com*; by Nancy Sasso Janis, Patch Mayor)



The Bantam Cinema and Arts Center is a non-profit film and arts center located in the Northwest Corner of Connecticut. It is the oldest continuously operated movie theater in Connecticut, for they refuse to let COVID take this designation away from them. The Cinema offers two tiny, clean and inviting theaters.

According to the center's website, the hometown theater first opened in 1929 as the Rivoli Theater, constructed by a local grocer, Domenico Evangelisti, after his son David purchased a projector from The Bantam Ball Bearing

Company and began showing silent movies and vaudeville acts. Since then, subsequent owners continued the legacy of the theater and it has become a beloved cultural center for residents and visitors of Northwest Connecticut.

In 2020, like all cinemas around the world, the cinema was forced to close its doors due to COVID-19 and the owners could no longer maintain the cinema. To preserve this important cultural and historic landmark, a group of local movie lovers acquired the property and established the non-profit cinema and arts center so that the theater's legacy can continue.



In addition to continuing what the Bantam Cinema was well-known for -- independent films, high-quality mainstream films, and National Theater Live --the Center intends to expand its programming with a focus on creating exciting experiences that will foster a sense of community. Programming will include guest speakers, discussion panels, theme-nights, film festivals, special film series, and other special events. It also offers live events such as music, poetry and play readings, and hopes to add comedy nights and cabarets. The Executive Director is Robert Kwalick.

In addition, there will be family and school opportunities to encourage a love for film and the arts in the younger generations. The theater aspires to promote Connecticut food and drink and offer local products that appeal to the palettes of its patrons, supporting local businesses, such as the Litchfield Distillery and local breweries.

Movie times are available at [bantamcinema.org](http://bantamcinema.org). The small, historic movie theater is located at 115 Bantam Lake Rd., Bantam

