

CULTURAL YORK

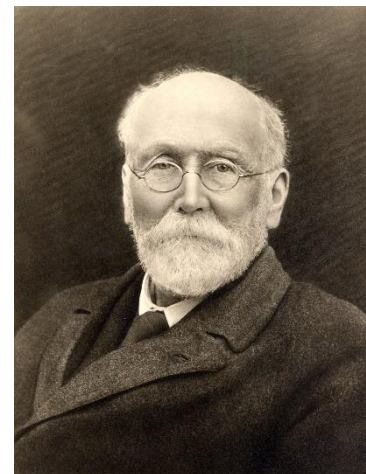


For true culture vultures – in search of intellectual and artistic development – York’s historic setting and contemporary vitality provide the riches of a truly cultural city. The streets surrounding York Minster, King’s Manor and St William’s College are steeped in an unmistakably intellectual, academic atmosphere. This has been a place of historians, of archaeological and religious study, of choristers, of book publishing, of scholarly endeavour - for hundreds of years.

Meanwhile, around the Swinegate Quarter, and along Fossgate and Walmgate, the mood turns distinctly bohemian, filled with second hand bookshops, cafes, bars and art shops. And York is full of bookshops, antique dealers and little independent art galleries. The National Centre for Early Music on Walmgate is a place of musical study, research, performance and innovation.

York’s museums and galleries (The Yorkshire Museum, York Castle Museum and City Art Gallery) display the wealth of historical and artistic treasures that belong to the city, from Roman times through Anglo-Saxon and Viking eras to the Middle Ages – the Wars of the Roses, the Civil War – and on to York’s genteel Georgian days. The Art Gallery is remarkable for its collection of important European paintings spanning seven centuries, with works by Bellotto, Reynolds, Lowry and York-born William Etty, whose statue stands outside the gallery.

The Theatre Royal and Fairfax House are symbols of York’s prominence as a cultural centre in Georgian times. And whilst Fairfax House has become one of the best preserved Georgian townhouses in Britain and a wonderful museum piece, the Theatre Royal is as busy today as it was in the days when Georgians such as the Fairfax family came from London to entertain and be entertained in fashionable York.



Intellectually, artistically and morally, Joseph Rowntree was a cultural giant in York, and one of the great philanthropists of the 19th century. Rowntree was instrumental in setting up the Mount and Bootham schools, and set up the charitable trust that still bears his name today, concerned with many social issues, in particular housing. He built the model village of New Earswick on the outskirts of York city centre, to provide decent housing and a good community for workers in his chocolate factory. To this day York boasts a school, a theatre, a park, a brass band and an athletics club all named after the Rowntree family of York.

Today, York’s cultural offerings range from medieval music in the Minster and Mystery Plays performed on the streets, to challenging drama, world music and innovative venues and showcases

for new artists of all kinds. York St Mary's church, now York's leading contemporary art space in Coppergate, displays solo exhibitions by contemporary artists and sculptures, and is a lovely place to stop by. The packed programmes at the Grand Opera House and York Theatre Royal range from grand opera and classical ballet to Stomp and Soul Explosion.

And don't be fooled by the name of the National Centre for Early Music. Concerts here may also feature folk, jazz, 20th century and world music. Early music was its creator, however, as it was established to provide a base for Britain's premier festival of early music every year. Events and festivals reflect the cultural nature of any city and York is no exception. The University of York Concert Series, York Minster services and concerts, and a thriving jazz and folk scene all make York a perfect place for music lovers.

City Screen York is one of Britain's Picture House cinemas, within an inspired re-development of the old Yorkshire Herald press works building, marrying original architectural features with very contemporary design. As well as screening arthouse, independent and quality mainstream films, the Basement Bar hosts diverse music, poetry, and comedy events plus a regular film quiz night.

City Screen

Tel: 01904 612940

[www.picturehouses.com/cinema/York Picturehouse](http://www.picturehouses.com/cinema/York_Picturehouse)

Grand Opera House

Tel: 01904 655441

www.atgtickets.com/venues/grand-opera-house-york

National Centre for Early Music

Tel: 01904 632220

www.ncem.co.uk

Riding Lights/Friargate Theatre

Tel: 01904 655317

www.ridinglights.org

The University of York- York Concerts

Tel: 01904 432439

www.york.ac.uk/concerts/

The Yorkshire Museum

Tel: 01904 687687

www.yorkshirerosemuseum.org.uk

York City Art Gallery

Tel: 01904 687687

www.yorkartgallery.org.uk

York Castle Museum

Tel: 01904 687687

www.yorkcastlemuseum.org.uk

York Theatre Royal

Tel: 01904 658162

www.yorktheatreroyal.co.uk

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