

The Rainbow

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The Rainbow in Finsbury Park N4. Large venue that was originally part of the Astoria chain of cinemas in the 1930's that like so many became a rock venue.

In its time it had seen just about every major act play there from Jimi Hendrix to the Who. Closed in 1975 it lost some ground to Camden's Roundhouse but its reopening and refurbishment in 1977 set it back on course as a prominent North London venue.

In punky times it was infamous for the Clash riot where seats were torn up. The Stranglers regularly played here and the Ramones had their 1977 New year Eve concert immortalised on vinyl with the double classic 'It's Alive'. In 1977/1978 Jock McDonald would rent out the top and put on gigs, meaning you could have Thin Lizzy playing below while the Meat cranked it out upstairs.

Set on an island between two one way systems that went to and from the West End you could reach it by exiting the labyrinthine Finsbury Park Tube station tunnels and it was always worth getting a quick drinkie in the George Robey pub opposite.

Sadly residents complaints about noise and people shut it down in the Eighties. Now some god-awful gospel revival bollocks occur there. Fantastic ceiling of star and palm trees....but no Rainbow.



PUNKS OVER THE RAINBOW

THE RAINBOW Theatre in Finsbury Park, London, is to be turned over to punk music every Friday night from October 21.

The bands will appear on a temporary stage erected in the upstairs foyer. Admission will be £1 and organisers are hoping for audiences in the region of 1,200.

The first night (October 21) will

feature Sham 69, The Outsiders, Meat and The Suspects.

The main theatre will be closed on Friday nights. A spokesman for the Rainbow said: "It's starting off as an experiment but we hope to hold punk night every Friday from 8 pm to whenever it finishes. It could be four in the morning."



Right - The Ramones. Left - Joe Strummer (1952 - 2002), lead singer of punk rock band The Clash, exchanges shirts with a fan at The Rainbow Theatre, London at a concert on the group's 'White Riot' tour, 14th May 1977. Note ripped up seat onstage!
Photo: Chris Moorhouse/Getty Images

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