Spotlight on Arts

PITTARTS Holiday Spotlight

Do you love those fabulous ballet dancers in *The Nutcracker*? Skating around a giant bedecked Christmas Tree? *The Musical Christmas Carol*? Pitt’s Nationality Rooms decorated for the holidays? Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra’s *Holiday Pops*? And so much more! Check out PITT ARTS’ Holiday Spotlight to plan your celebrations for the winter season! Click [HERE](#) to view the 2015-2016 Holiday Spotlight!

Sunset Baby by Dominique Morisseau

City Theatre, Now through December 13
$15 Student, $27 Faculty/Staff/Osher

Students click [HERE](#) to purchase tickets. Faculty/Staff/Osher click [HERE](#) to purchase tickets.

For Nina, it’s easy to be hard. She’s a smart and sexy hustler who has rejected everything her parents fought for in the black liberation movement. When her estranged father wants to reconcile, negotiating her past and present becomes a revolutionary act. From one of the most exciting young voices in the American theatre, Dominique Morisseau.

Oliver Twist

PICT Classic Theatre

The Charity Randall Theatre in the Stephen Foster Memorial (Oakland)
December 3-19
$18 Student; $38 Faculty/Staff/Osher

In-office ticket order deadline: by noon the Tuesday prior to the show date.

Set against the backdrop of dark and grimy London neighborhoods during the Victorian era, Oliver Twist is orphaned and lost in a world of criminals and tarts and held in the clutches of an avaricious old man. In one of the most famous stories of all time, the young and innocent are brought face to face with some of the worst sinners in London, but the result is an understanding of salvation and happiness.

What Does it Mean to be Curious? (FREE EVENT!)

University of Pittsburgh Frick Fine Arts Library, December 10, 2015, 8-9:30 PM

RSVP required. Event location will be announced to those who RSVP. For event details & locations, RSVP at [library.pitt.edu/curiosity](http://library.pitt.edu/curiosity). The second in a series of 4 discussions about what it means to formulate questions, conduct research, build narratives, discover and explore. The shared history of artists and scientists as they strive to change the way we see and understand the world is examined.
Are You Registered for Full Time Enrollment in the Spring?

WHAT IS FULL TIME ENROLLMENT:

IF YOU ARE A(n) …

→ Undergraduate Student — you MUST be registered for at least 12 credits.

→ Graduate Student — you MUST be registered for at least 9 credits.

These are the minimum number of credits that you have to SUSTAIN in order to maintain your visa status. If you drop below this number of credits, whether it is the 9th day of classes or the 9th week, your visa status will be in jeopardy. If you need to take less than a full time course load, because of a medical condition or if you only need a few credits to graduate, you need to apply for a Reduced Course Load (RCL).

If you drop below a full course load without OIS approval, you will receive several emails from OIS reminding you to resolve the issue as soon as possible. Remember to check your Pitt email account so that you don’t fall out of status and have your SEVIS record terminated or invalidated!!!

STEPS TO A REDUCED COURSE LOAD:

1. Meet with your Academic Advisor to discuss taking less than full time credits. Explain that they will receive an email from OIS asking them to complete an online form recommending a RCL.

2. Log-in to My OIS and complete the Reduced Course Load e-form.

3. Your Academic Advisor will complete their e-form. (You may want to confirm they have completed this e-form 3-5 days after you submit the Reduced Course Load form.)

4. You will be notified when your RCL Request has been approved!

Remember: Other than your first and last term, you can only have ONE term with a Reduced Course Load during your time at Pitt! Use this option wisely and discuss all possible solutions with your Academic Advisor.
Travel Tips

As the winter break nears, many people will want to travel home to be with their friends and family. Here are some important steps to take before getting on that plane!

- **Make sure your passport is valid.**

- **Make sure your I-20 or DS-2019 has a valid travel signature.** If you are an F-1 student, your travel signature will be on the bottom of page 3 of your I-20. If you are currently enrolled as a student, the signature cannot be more than 12 months old. If you are on post-completion OPT, the signature cannot be more than 6 months old. If you are a J-1 student, your travel signature will be on page 1 of your DS-2019. If you are currently enrolled as a student, the signature must not be more than 12 months old. If you are on post-completion Academic Training, the signature must not be more than 6 months old.

- **Check your visa expiration date.** If your visa stamp has expired, you will have to apply for a new one before you return to the United States. Be sure to visit your consulate’s website for application requirements and to schedule a visa appointment.

- **Check to see if you need a visa for your destination.** If you are visiting a country that isn’t home, make sure to check with that country’s embassy or consulate in the United States to see if you require a visa.

- **Make sure you have all your travel documents.** You will need your passport, visa, I-94 card, I-20/DS-2019 form with valid travel signature, and documentation of your finances. As an extra precaution, students may also bring an enrollment verification letter or an official transcript as proof they are maintaining their status. F-1 students on OPT should also carry their EAD card and employment offer letter. J-1 students on post-completion AT should carry their employment offer letter.

- **Pack your travel documents in your carry-on.** You will want to keep your documents close to you and have easy access to them at all times.

**Don’t Forget! Travel Signature Week is December 7 — 11!**

Every afternoon from 1 - 4pm, you can come in and have your I-20 or DS-2019 quickly signed for any holiday travel you may have planned. **If you have not yet received a new version of the Form I-20, please submit your Travel Signature Request in My OIS.** Please remember that you need to have your document signed every year or every 6 months if you are on OPT. OIS also has some holiday cookies for you while you wait!
Pittsburgh Events in December

These are found in the Next Pittsburgh article TOP 8 EVENTS NOT TO MISS IN DECEMBER.

PICT Classic Theatre’s Great Expectations: December 3 – 20, Stephen Foster Memorial

Kick off the holidays with a timeless moral tale that begins on Christmas morning. Follow along with young Pip in this classic coming-of-age adventure story, as the kindhearted orphan unexpectedly receives a sizable fortune from a wealthy benefactor. Setting off for bustling London to begin his new life as a gentleman, Pip encounters a cast of quintessential Dickensian characters, some with questionable motives, such as Miss Havisham, Estella, Herbert Pocket and Mr. Jaggers. A masterpiece of Victorian literature, Great Expectations takes theater-goers on a timeless journey of self exploration, love, revenge and social commentary—all brought to life via Dickens’ vivid storytelling, scenery and characters.

Adapted by the celebrated Irish dramatist Hugh Leonard and directed by Alan Stanford, PICT’s production of this holiday-time favorite features a large and versatile cast of young, emerging and seasoned actors alike. The conclusion of Pip’s journey has been debated for more than a century, and you’ll just have to wait and see which ending PICT chooses, as Dickens famously re-wrote the final pages of Great Expectations to make it more pleasing to readers.

Lawrenceville Joy of Cookies Tour: December 4 – 7

What are the holidays without homemade sugar cookies, gingerbread men and snickerdoodles? Baking from scratch and shopping local join forces to craft an unbeatable recipe for fun during the 15th annual Joy of Cookies Cookie Tour. Equal parts cookie crawl and buy local movement, the free, family-friendly event showcases Lawrenceville’s thriving Butler Street business district with 35 participating stops (look for the gingerbread cookie signs!).

Cookie Tourists will sample each shopkeeper’s favorite holiday treat, pick up recipes and explore the many diverse businesses that line Lawrenceville, from art galleries and gift emporiums, to coffeehouses and salons. Shops will also offer special discounts, prizes and gift cards. Looking for a lift? Hop on the Molly’s Trolley, which will circulate on Dec. 6th. Most participating shops are open from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. during the tour. Download an event map.
**Pittsburgh Events in December**

**2015 Highmark First Night Pittsburgh in The Cultural District**

If one of your resolutions is to make more time for art, then we suggest you kick off 2015 at Highmark First Night Pittsburgh. Hop on the bus or T before or after making the rounds—or make an entire night of it—from 6 p.m. to midnight. The region’s largest single-day celebration showcases the magic of the holiday season via an arts-focused, alcohol-free and family-friendly New Year’s Eve celebration activating all corners of Pittsburgh’s Cultural District. The 21st annual edition boasts some 150 events at 50 indoor and outdoor locations within a 14-block area, making it the Burgh’s biggest New Year’s Eve bash.

Hotspots will be concerts on the Dollar Bank Stage and a national headlining act ringing in the New Year on the Highmark Stage. The signature countdown to midnight will feature the raising of the 1,000-pound Future of Pittsburgh ball 150 feet in the air above Penn Avenue Place, and the glorious glow of the Zambelli Fireworks finale display.

Additional highlights include the vibrant FedEx Ground Parade, a cherished tradition featuring dazzling larger-than-life puppets created by Pittsburgh-based artist Cheryl Capezzuti. Based on this year’s theme of “Imagination: Delivered,” Capezzuti and her talented crew will create clever humorous puppets popping out of giant envelopes. Want to help? Sign up for one of Capezzuti’s community-based workshops on December 11th and 13th, and get your hands dirty as you help design, build and decorate parade-sized puppets. Then, show up at 7:30 p.m. on New Year’s Eve to get your completed puppet and dance in the parade!

Legendary singer, songwriter and entrepreneur Smokey Robinson will serve as the judge for First Night's annual Sing-Off competition. Chosen by Robinson, the lucky young winner will perform live as an opening act during First Night 2015, and will receive cash prizes. Area students in grades 6 through 12 are eligible to enter now through Friday, December 12th.

Just announced on December 3rd are the latest updates about new venues, new attractions and a new look all on tap for First Night. Featured musical acts providing the night’s entertainment will be local brass and electronic music ensemble Beauty Slap—which boast five horns, a guitar and a DJ. Headliners are the Arista Nashville recording duo, The Swon Brothers (aka Zach and Colton), who are fresh on the heels of releasing their new single, “Pray For You.” Nominated as “Vocal Duo of the Year” at the 48th Annual CMA Awards, The Swon Brothers’ debut single, “Later On,” shot to No. 1 on iTunes’ Country Top Songs chart within 24 hours of its release. Hailing from Oklahoma, the young duo first gained national attention as finalists during Season 4 of NBC’s The Voice.

New attractions not to miss include special performances by Cello Fury, Texture Contemporary Ballet, Lee Terbasci Magic, one-man variety show Chris Ruggiero, Pittsburgh Playwrights Theatre Company, FJ Hartland’s Postcards from a Dead Dog, Arcade Comedy Theater, Player One, Aaron Kleiber and T-Robe. And if dance is your thing, check out the night’s Roland Ford line dancing, belly dancing by Cattywhomp Tribal, Indian Dance with Aparna Nigam and even Japanese sword dancing.

What’s that sound you hear? Pop into the Pittsburgh Cultural Trust’s galleries to experience the premiere of Toby Atticus Fraley’s The Lost Search Sound Machine in Pittsburgh, which invites visitors to discover, listen to and play old and forgotten sounds.

Those who don’t like the chill will be happy to learn that 90% of all First Night events are held indoors. Be sure to check NEXTpittsburgh’s events section for more details about 2015 Highmark First Night Pittsburgh. For all the fun, purchase a 2015 Highmark First Night Pittsburgh button.
## CALENDAR OF EVENTS — December

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<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<td>4—7</td>
<td>Lawrenceville Joy of Cookie Tour</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Nationality Rooms Annual Open House (12pm—4pm, Cathedral of Learning)</td>
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<tr>
<td>7—11</td>
<td>Travel Signature Week (1pm—4pm)</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Pittsburgh: No Limits for Women (7pm)</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>What Does it Mean to be Curious? (8-9:30 PM, <a href="#">RSVP here</a>)</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Last Day of Classes</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Men’s Glee Club Holiday Concert (4pm), Women’s Choral Ensemble Holiday Concert (7:30pm)</td>
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<td>14—20</td>
<td>Finals Week</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>No walk-ins in OIS</td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>Star Wars: The Force Awakens Premieres!!!</td>
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<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Christmas Concert by Marco Fiorante &amp; Choir (3pm, Heinz Memorial Chapel)</td>
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<td>21</td>
<td>Last day of walk-ins before winter break</td>
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<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Last Day for the People’s Holiday Market (Downtown in Market Square)</td>
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<td>24—January 3</td>
<td>Official University Winter Break, all university offices closed including OIS</td>
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<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>First Night Pittsburgh (multiple locations Downtown)</td>
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<td>January 6</td>
<td>Spring Term Classes Begin</td>
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