

Celebrate Winter Through Sights and Sounds

By **Dan Aubrey** - January 8, 2020

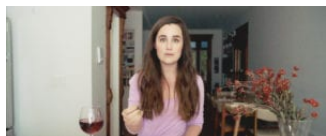
Recent news stories have been touting the health benefits of the arts, promising to reduce chronic pain, mitigate the symptoms of mental impairment, stimulate brain development, and even help people live longer and richer lives.

Yet the arts also promote social interaction — something important during the winter months when people can feel isolated and yearn for engagement.

And fortunately for all of us, our region's cultural organizations are alive with activity with something for everyone's taste — or every health need.

Let's start with opera, voice, and the region's world-class choir college:

Westminster Choir College, 101 Walnut Lane, Princeton. 609-921-2663. www.rider.edu/events



"Marie Begins" with performer Lauren Worsham.

Westminster is celebrating its 100th anniversary with two significant events. The first is its homecoming concert at Richardson Auditorium. The last stop of a national tour, the concert conducted by Joe Miller and broadcast live over WWFM radio

features a program of sacred and secular music mainly by 20th and 21st century composers. Monday, January 27, 7:30 p.m.

Then look for the Westminster Opera Theater's premiere of "Marie Begins." Written by Philadelphia-based composer Ellen Fishman and librettist Julia Curcio, the work follows a young woman who awakes on her 30th birthday to face the endless possibilities before her and start "getting her life together" with the interactive help of the audience. It runs Friday and Saturday, April 17 and 18.

Boheme Opera New Jersey. www.bohemeopera.com

The region's only professional opera company — and one of New Jersey's oldest — mounts a fully staged production of Verdi's "Rigoletto" at the College of New Jersey, 2000 Pennington Road, Ewing, Friday and Sunday, April 17 and 19.

Princeton Pro Musica, Richardson Auditorium and Princeton University Chapel. www.princetonpromusica.org.

The company will present two more concerts this year. The first is "Annelies," British composer James Whitbourn's orchestral and vocal

arrangement to the words Anne Frank left in her diary, Richardson Auditorium, Sunday, March 15.

The second is “Power and Peace – Maurice Durufle’s Requiem and the Te Deum,” featuring the Eric Plutz on the Mander-Skinner organ, Princeton Chapel, Saturday, May 9.

McCarter Theater, 91 University Place, Princeton. 609-258-2787.
www.mccarter.org.

New York Gilbert & Sullivan Players and Orchestra’s new production of “The Mikado” mixes the real-life characters of Victorian London’s D’Oyly Carte Opera Company with the imagined setting of the operetta’s Japanese inspired city. Saturday, January 25.



New York Gilbert & Sullivan Players and Orchestra’s new production of ‘The Mikado.’

Museum and Galleries

With top-notch collections ranging from the ancient to the cutting edge, the region’s visual arts organizations provide residents with an ongoing – and affordable – opportunity to explore the world of visual arts.

Princeton University Art Museum, Princeton campus. 609-258-3788.
artmuseum.princeton.edu. Free admission.

“States of Health: Visualizing Illness and Healing,” a cross-cultural exploration of the artistic response and depiction of physical conditions ranging from plague to anxiety, and “The Eternal Feast: Banqueting in Chinese Art from the 10th to the 14th Century,” examining the social uses of feasts in ancient China and its impact on contemporary behavior, are on view through early February.

Then look for two new exhibitions. “LIFE Magazine and the Power of Photography” examines how the popular magazine shaped the idea of photography from 1936 to 1972 and features images by Margaret Bourke-White, Henri Cartier-Bresson, Gordon Parks, W. Eugene Smith, and others. It opens on February 22 and remains on view through June 21. And “Cezanne: The Rock and Quarry Paintings,” touted as the first major exhibition to examine the influential 19th-century French painter’s “profound interest in rock and geological formations,” will be on view March 7 through June 14.

Zimmerli Art Museum, 71 Hamilton Street, New Brunswick, 848-932-7237. zimmerlimuseum.rutgers.edu. Free admission.

“Women Artists on the Leading Edge: Celebrating Douglass College at 100,” commemorating the artists who emerged from the college’s

innovative arts program that involved some of the era's most prominent avant-garde artists, remains on view through February 29.

Other exhibitions are also on view for the next few months. "Home is Where . . ." uses the museum's collection to display a "wide array of interpretations of home," on view through March 26. And "Intimate Details: Prints by James Tissot" emphasizes the museum's print collection by showcasing the artist's "etching technique in the service of his intensely observed subjects that frequently feature sophisticated men and women, and intricate landscape elements," through March 28.

Artworks Trenton, 19 Everett Alley, Trenton. 609-394-9436.
www.artworkstrenton.org. Free admission.

The nonprofit Trenton arts center starts its new season with two February exhibitions: "When Titans Return" is New Jersey-born and New York-based architect and artist Raphael Ogoe's exploration of "African history, culture, gender, masculinity, folktale, and discovery" and a retrofitting of "past events for an epic retelling and re-imagination of some key moments in history in a modern futuristic setting," inspired by the 400th anniversary of the slave trade.

Accompanying it is Princeton artist Vincent Bush, also known as VCAB, whose "The Power of Your Heart" is a graphic and print exploration of the heart as "the universal sign for love and no matter what culture, religion, color, or walk of life you belong to." February 1 through 29.

BSB Gallery, 143 East State Street, Trenton. 609-599-3268.
www.bsbgallery.com. Free.

"Badlands," featuring works made from "everyday" materials by sculptor Domenic Sansone, runs through February 8. It is followed by "Collective Expeditions," an exhibition blending ancient and contemporary art by the International Society of Antiquaries, a group of artists connected to New York State and Connecticut, opening with a reception February 22 and on view through March 14.

Arts Council of Princeton, 102 Witherspoon Street, Princeton. 609-924-8777. www.artscouncilofprinceton.org. Free.

"Inside Out ... When Worlds Collide," an exhibition of works by three individuals who became artists by chance: Jennifer Levine, Montclair; Kenneth Lewis Sr., Trenton; and Jon Sarkin, Rockport, Massachusetts, is on view through February 22.

Morven Museum, 55 Stockton Street, Princeton, 609-924-8144.
www.morven.org.

"Dreaming of Utopia: Roosevelt, New Jersey" continues and highlights the famed New Jersey arts community with more than 100 objects and artworks by noted artists Ben Shahn, Bernarda Bryson Shahn, Jonathan Shahn, Abby Shahn, Jacob Landau, Gregorio Prestopino, Liz Dauber, Rex Goreleigh, Louise and Edwin Roskam, Sol Libsohn, David Stone Martin, Stefan Martin, Louis Kahn, and others.

Several live Roosevelt-related events are also part of the project, including the January 22 talk, "The Prophetic Quest: Stained Glass Art of Jacob Landau"; a February 20 appearance by the Roosevelt String Band; the March 18 talk "Utopia, New Jersey: Travels in the Nearest Eden," by "Utopia, New Jersey" author Perdita Buchan; the April 5 "Walking Roosevelt: Architecture, Murals, and More" tour led by Roosevelt resident and urban planner Alan Mallach; and the April 1 talk "The Houses of Louis Kahn" presented by George H. Marcus and William Whitaker, authors of the book with the same title. "Dreaming of Utopia" is on view through May 10.

New Jersey State Museum, 205 West State Street, Trenton. 609-292-5420. www.statemuseumnj.gov. Free admission.



Work by Boehm Porcelain at the State Museum as part of 'Fine Feathered Friends.'

"Preserving the Pinelands," New Jersey photographer Albert Horner's photo portraits of one the state's natural national treasures, remains on view through June 28.

Then look for "Fine Feathered Friends: Birds as Mainstay and Muse." Also emphasizing New Jersey nature and history, it features nearly 200 rarely seen museum objects and examines the importance of birds to both ecology and the artistic imagination. That includes ceramic sculptures by

Trenton's internationally known Boehm porcelain, hand-colored etchings by John James Audubon, and decoys following New Jersey regional traditions. It's on view through September 13.

Trenton City Museum, Cadwalader Park, Trenton. 609-989-1191. www.ellarslie.org. Free admission.

"If These Quilts Could Talk" is an exhibition of contemporary African-American quilts created locally by Sankofa Stitchers, Princeton, and Friendly Quilters, Bucks County. The project also includes a series of weekend programs: February 2, Underground Railroad Quilts lecture by Cassandra Stancil Gunkel; February 8, Improvisational Quilting workshop led by Rose Miller; February 16, Quilt Arts and Culture lecture by Gail Mitchell; March 7, Adinkra Stamping workshop by Cassandra Stancil Gunkel; March 29, Improvisational Quilting

workshop led by Mada Coles-Galloway and Juandamaire Gikandi; and April 19, closing reception with Quilters Talk and Community Quilt unveiling. It opens with a free reception on Sunday, January at 19, 1:30 p.m., and remains on view through April 19.



Work from 'If These Quilts Could Talk.'

West Windsor Arts Council, 952 Alexander Road, West Windsor. 609-716-1931. www.westwindsorarts.org. Free admission.

"Doom and Bloom" calls attention to the emerging trash crisis and how artists can respond. Juried by artist Vernita Nemec, who also is the director of the Viridian Artist Gallery in New York City, and featuring the work of 25 artists working with recycled or reused materials, the exhibition has an opening reception on Sunday, January 12, from 4 to 6 p.m. and remains on view through February 28.

Theater

The Tony Award-winning McCarter Theater, the legendary Bucks County Playhouse, the scrappy Passage Theater, and other companies producing new works and classics prove that the region's theater is alive and kicking with its winter programming.

McCarter Theater, 91 University Place, Princeton, 609-258-2787. www.mccarter.org.

McCarter gets 2020 going with Rachel Bonds' "Goodnight Nobody," promoted by the company as a "deeply moving and funny play." Commissioned by McCarter, the work by the author of the play "Five Mile River" features two-time Emmy Award winner Dana Delany. It runs January 10 through February 9.

Director Adam Immerwahr returns to direct the acclaimed Anthony Shaffer thriller "Sleuth," March 10 through 29; and the season wraps up with another commission, Nathan Alan Davis' "The Refuge Plays," May 8 through June 7.

Passage Theater Company, Mill Hill Playhouse, 205 East Front Street, Trenton. 609-392-0766. www.passagetheatre.org.

"Mother (and Me)" is Trenton's nonprofit professional theater's next installment of its signature solo presentations, aka Solo Flights. Written and performed by New York City-based Melinda Buckley, the work deals with a daughter's relationship with her aging Hungarian mother, March 20 to 22.

Next up is Caitlin Parrish's "A Twist of Water," the story of a Chicago widow who is forced to re-examine her identity and relationship with her adopted daughter, April 30 to May 17.

George Street Playhouse, New Brunswick Performing Arts Center 9 Livingston Avenue, New Brunswick. 732-246-7717.
www.gsponline.org.

"Midwives," Chris Bohjalian's world premiere based on his bestselling novel, involves a blizzard, an isolated house, and home-delivery gone awry. January 21 through February 16.

"Conscience," playwright Joe DiPietro's dramatic Red Scare-era retelling of Senator Margaret Chase Smith's decision to stand up to Senator Joseph McCarthy, March 3 to 29.

And "A Walk on the Moon," Pamela Gray's musical romance based on a film of the same name and set during the 1969 moon landing, April 21 through May 17.

Bristol Riverside Theater, 120 Radcliffe Street, Bristol, Pennsylvania. 215-785-0100. www.brtstage.org.

"King Lear" will be performed by noted New York-based Bedlam Theater Company, bringing Shakespeare's tragic tale alive with six actors, January 28 to February 16. It's followed by "Cabaret," the hit musical based on the book and play dealing with stories of pre-Nazi Berlin, March 10 through April 21.

And then there is the world premiere of "Leg Up," an absurdist comedy of a man, a divorce, a pregnant mistress, other assorted characters, and a newly developed prosthetic leg with a mind of its own, May 12 through 31.

Bucks County Playhouse, 70 South Main Street, New Hope, Pennsylvania. 215-862-2121. www.bcptheater.org.

The company's own season of productions is over, but its Visiting Artist series kicks off with Emmy Award-winning writer and actress Renee Taylor's solo zinger-filled show "My Life on a Diet," January 30 through February 2.

Dance

The region's professional companies and major presenters promise to keep the new year moving with new works and classic presentations.

American Repertory Ballet, McCarter Theater, 91 University Place, Princeton. www.americanrepertoryballet.org.

The company returns to McCarter Theater with a presentation of the full-length ballet "Giselle," a love story with music by 19th-century composer Adolphe Adam. Developed in partnership with the Princeton Symphony Orchestra, the production will be staged by National Ballet of Cuba and English National Ballet performer Ana Novoa. Ticket information will be announced. Saturday, May 2.

Roxey Ballet, Canal Studio Theater, 243 North Union Street, Lambertville. 609-397-7616. www.roxeyballet.org.

Roxey Ballet in Lambertville presents a stylized contemporary dance adaptation of "Carmen," based on the story of passion and jealousy by Romantic novelist Prosper Merimee and made famous by George Bizet's opera. Weekends, February 7 through 16.

Then the company follows with its young audience productions of "The Pied Piper of Hamelin," with original music by New Jersey composer Richard Jarboe and Los Angeles resident Harvey Shield. It will be performed with "The Carnival of Animals" featuring the music of Camille Saint-Saens. Performances are Saturday and Sunday, May 16 and 17, at the College of New Jersey's Kendall Theater, 2000 Pennington Road, Ewing.

Dance at McCarter Theater, 91 University Place, Princeton. 609-258-2787. www.mccarter.org.

Saturday, February 8: The Dance Theatre of Harlem comes to Princeton to celebrate 50 years of groundbreaking multiethnic ballet and dance.

Sunday, February 16: Ukraine's internationally acclaimed National Ballet Theater of Odessa presents a new production of Prokofiev's celebrated "Romeo and Juliet."

Thursday, April 9: Dorrance Dance — MacArthur Award-winning tap dancer Michelle Dorrance's New York City-based Bessie Award-winning tap dance company — makes its Princeton debut.

Dance at the State Theater, 15 Livingston Avenue, New Brunswick. 732-246-7469. www.statetheatrenj.org.



The Russian National Ballet's 'Sleeping Beauty.'

Saturday, March 14: The Russian National Ballet's production of "The Sleeping Beauty," featuring artistic director and former Bolshoi Ballet principal dancer Elena Radchenko and, of course, Tchaikovsky's familiar and lively score.

Tuesday, March 31: Complexions Contemporary Ballet, the New York City-based company created in

1994 to “reinvent dance through a groundbreaking mix of methods, styles, and culture.”

Tuesday, April 28: Diavolo, the Los Angeles-based company, blends an interest in architectural structures with boundary-pushing dance to create “eclectic, intensely physical choreography.”

Symphonic Music

With two independent regional orchestras, Princeton University and the Institute for Advanced Study musical programming, and visits by the state’s official orchestra, the region will make a joyous sound that includes newly commissioned works and presentations of important classical works.

Princeton University Concerts, Richardson Auditorium and other venues. 609-258-2800. www.princetonuniversityconcerts.org.

The Princeton University Concerts (PUC) continues its 126th season with a series of guest performers from around the nation and world: Thursday, February 6, Isabelle Faust, violin; Jean-Guihen Queyras, cello; Alexander Melnikov, piano, 8 p.m.; Tuesday, February 11, Gabriela Montero, Piano, 6 and 9 p.m.; Thursday, February 20, Calidore String Quartet, 8 p.m.

Sunday, March 8, Richardson Chamber Players: Beethoven at 250, 3 p.m.; Saturday, March 14, Orli Shaham’s Bach Yard, 1 p.m.; Thursday, March 26, Mahler Chamber Orchestra with Mitsuko Uchida, piano, 8 p.m.

Thursday, April 2, Benjamin Beilman, violin, and Andrew Tyson, piano, 8 p.m.; Tuesday, April 7, Conrad Tao, piano, and Caleb Teicher, tap dancer, 6 and 9 p.m.; Thursday, April 16, Dover String Quartet, 8 p.m.; and Thursday, April 30, Matthias Goerne, baritone, and Jan Lisiecki, piano, 8 p.m.

Princeton Symphony Orchestra, Richardson Auditorium, Princeton University. www.princetonsymphony.com

PSO’s newly commissioned clarinet concerto by Saad Haddad gets the orchestra’s new season moving with a program that also includes Rimsky-Korsakov’s colorful and lush “Scheherazade” on Saturday and Sunday, January 18 and 19.



Composer Saad Haddad.

The season continues with a program that includes violinist Stefan Jackiw performing Mendelssohn’s Violin Concerto in E Minor, Beethoven’s Symphony No.

2, and the U.S. premiere of Princeton composer Julian Grant's work known in English as "Five Generations, One House," Saturday and Sunday, March 21 and 22.

And the season concludes with Mussorgsky's "Pictures at an Exhibition," English-born contemporary composer Anna Clyne's "Masquerade," and a performance of Beethoven's Triple Concerto by violinist Daniel Rowland, cellist Maja Bogdanovic, and pianist Steve Beck. Saturday and Sunday, May 16 and 17.

The PSO will also perform a concert reading of "The Big Time," a new musical comedy by Douglas Carter Beane, author of Broadway's "Sister Act," "Cinderella," and "Xanadu." The cast features Tony Award-winning Broadway performers Santino Fontana and Debbie Gravitte. Friday, January 31.

Capital Philharmonic, Trenton War Memorial, Trenton. 609-558-2292. www.capitalphilharmonic.org



Baritone Keith Spencer performs with the Capital Philharmonic.

"Brothers on Broadway," featuring baritone Keith Spencer, is a tribute to Broadway performers of African ancestry, including Sammy Davis Jr., Cab Calloway, Ben Vereen, Paul Robeson, and Gregory Hines, and featuring music by George Gershwin, Cole Porter, Duke Ellington, Andrew Lloyd Webber, Leonard Bernstein,

and others. Saturday, February 22.

Guest violist Lorenzo Mazzamuto headlines the "The Coming of Spring" concert featuring Mozart's "Eine Kleine Nachtmusic," Vivaldi's "Four Seasons," and the string arrangement of Tchaikovsky's "Four Seasons," performed in the War Memorial Ballroom on Saturday, March 14.

And the season finale is "The Genius of John Williams" with saxophonist Jonathan Wintringham performing music from the films "Catch Me If You Can" and "E.T." and the orchestra's presentation of the "Star Wars Suite," Patriots Theater, Saturday, April 18.

Institute for Advanced Study, 1 Einstein Drive, Princeton. 609-734-8000. www.ias.edu/air.

The Edward T. Cone Concert Series of free Friday and Saturday night concerts in Wolfensohn Hall featuring international artists and groups continues with Vicki Ray and the FLUX Quartet, January 31 and February 1, and Benjamin Bagby's voice and Anglo-Saxon harp performance of "Beowulf," March 13 and 14.

New Jersey Symphony Orchestra, Richardson Auditorium, Princeton University, and State Theater, New Brunswick. www.njsymphony.org. 800-255-3476.

Conductor Xian Zhang and singers from the Metropolitan Opera's young artist development program present selections from Mozart's "Don Giovanni" and "The Marriage of Figaro," and violinist Eric Wyrick performs Mozart's Violin Concerto No. 4. at the State Theater on Sunday, January 12.

In Princeton the orchestra performs Wagner's "The Ring Without Words," the prelude to Act One of "Lohengrin," and Liszt's Piano Concerto No. 2, Friday, January 17, and the performance is repeated in New Brunswick on Saturday, January 18.

"Star Wars: Return of the Jedi' in Concert" at the State Theater, Sunday, February 9; Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto, Mozart's "The Magic Flute" overture, and Bruckner's Symphony No. 6, State Theater, Saturday, February 29; Beethoven's Birthday Bash Concert featuring Louis Lortie performing Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 1 and No. 5, the "Emperor," Richardson Auditorium, Friday, March 20; and a second Beethoven's Bash concert with Lortie performing piano concertos 2,3, and 4, State Theater, Sunday, March 22.

Facebook Comments

Dan Aubrey