

## Starting With the Arts: Morristown Hosts New Year's Eve Extravaganza

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Morris Arts invites all and sundry to transition into the new year with an artistic feast. The 22nd "First Night Morris County" celebration overflows with headliner performances, events and exhibits in a family-friendly, alcohol-free extravaganza.

"This year's First Night Morris County continues the tradition of bringing topflight talents to Morristown on New Year's Eve--including Grammy winners, musicians and dancers who've performed for Presidents, and a huge variety of truly gifted performers in every genre," said Lynn Siebert, director of arts participation and communications at Morris Arts.

A full schedule of musical acts features artists who have performed at Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, the White House, Madison Square Garden, in major motion pictures and on TV. The night features something for every musical taste, and includes jazz clarinetist Dan Levinson, who has played with Wynton Marsalis and can be heard on HBO's Grammy award-winning "Boardwalk Empire" television program. Other highlights include rock tunes by the John Ginty Band, classical pieces by Harmonium, and recreations of 16th and 17th century court compositions on replica instruments by the costumed Early Music Players.

The Chinese Theatre Works' Shadow Puppet Show will perform "Tiger Tales" designed by Stephen Kaplin, blending English narratives with traditional Chinese music. BALAM will stage lavish, exotic and elaborately costumed dances from Bali, Spain and the French Baroque court, while Maurice Chestnut and Jeffrey Foots will dazzle audiences with dynamic tap routines.

The Atrium Gallery at the Administration and Records Building in Morristown devotes three of its five floors to showcasing Karen Lundquist's vibrant oil paintings, the moody color-field explorations of Marsha Solomon, and abstract architectural photographs by Rebecca Zagoory. The Art Upstairs Gallery in the Mayo Performing Arts Center highlights paintings, pastels, photos, collages and sculptures by artists from the Millburn-Short Hills Arts Center.

Family-oriented programs include the life-sized inflatable dinosaurs of "Dinoman" Bob Lisaius, knife-throwing and whip-cracking by "Mr. Fish"--John James Lepiarz--and comedy juggling by The Gizmo Guys. Offbeat entertainments include Benjamin Lipman's comedic illusions, Phydeaux's Flying Flea Circus and Wahoo Medicine Show, mentalist Marshal Manlove, and Kip Rosser playing an esoteric musical instrument called the theremin--without touching it. Rizzo's Reptiles introduces audiences to scaly, slippery and fuzzy friends.

"This particular First Night, one of the last remaining in our state, offers an incredible bargain," noted Siebert. "For one affordable fee you can see and hear some of the best talents from throughout the world and share the experience with friends and family."

A free shuttle operates the entire evening, which culminates with a fireworks display. A full schedule of events and venues can be found online, where tickets are available for purchase.

What: 22nd First Night Morris County  
Where: Venues throughout Morristown  
When: 5 p.m.-midnight on Tue., Dec. 31  
Tickets are \$25  
Info: (973)455-0708, [www.firstnightmorris.com](http://www.firstnightmorris.com)