

WINTERLIGHTS

AT THE PURCELL-CUTTS HOUSE



Living room, Purcell-Cutts House

As part of "Winterlights: Festivities around the World," the MIA presents holiday tours of the Purcell-Cutts House, located a mile and a half west of the museum. This home, built in the Prairie School style, was designed in 1913 by William Purcell and George Elmslie for Purcell and his family and now forms part of the MIA's collection. The Purcell-Cutts House is decorated for the holidays to reflect the upper-middle-class, "progressive" lifestyle of the Purcells around 1915.

Forty-five-minute tours led by costumed docents highlight the period gifts, toys, food, and social traditions that the Purcells might have enjoyed. For example, by 1915 many people had begun to prefer useful gifts in line with the modern aesthetic of simplicity and function, rather than Victorian knickknacks. The Christmas tree is decorated mainly with handmade paper ornaments, some in the Japanese style. Tours of the house are given on weekends from November 24 through December 30; reservations can be made online and through Visitor and Member Services on the museum's first floor.