

Pete the Cat, a Sensory-Friendly Guide

Center for Puppetry Arts, ATLANTA

Pete the Cat, based on James Dean's adorable book series of the same name, and adapted by Jon Ludwig and Jason Hines, is a lively, music-filled series of vignettes (short episodes within the larger show) all starring Pete the Cat and his animal friends.

Using stories adapted from Pete the Cat titles like "Rock On, Mom and Dad," "Scuba-Cat," and "Bedtime Blues," Ludwig and Hines create a day in the life of our favorite feline fellow, full of adventure, songs, and optimism.

Runtime: [55 minutes]

CONTENT

The show is hosted by **performer Dolph Amick**, who sings and plays guitar and helps Pete and his pals transition through the vignettes to tell the story of Pete's day. This constant re-incorporation of a fully-visible human performer may do well to reassure those puzzled or overwhelmed.

The puppets in *Pete the Cat* are rod puppets, and the puppet performers (puppeteers) control the puppets from behind a short wall -- you won't see the puppeteers during the show, but you'll hear them talk and sing! But don't worry, they'll all come out front and introduce themselves and show you how the puppets work. Pete, his Mom and Dad, and his friends Squirrel, Frog, Gator, Platypus, and Grumpy Toad, are all modeled after James Dean's characters-- they're colorful, bright, and friendly.

There are nine vignettes in the play, not including the introduction and closing songs performed by **Dolph**. There is some adventure-based excitement (Pete goes scuba diving, builds a cat-like robot companion, and makes a very impressive sandwich), but there is no peril or menace in the show. The tone is high-energy and musical, and the messages are positive and encouraging throughout.

A note to the patrons sitting in the first **third of the audience**: during the "Scuba-Cat" vignette, bubbles will fall from special bubble-machines mounted on the ceiling. This experience lasts for about ten seconds all together. If this sounds like fun, find a seat in those rows! Otherwise, you are welcome to sit further back and avoid any bubble-based hurly-burly.

LIGHT AND DARK

The entire play is well-lit with the exception of one vignette about half-way in called "Scuba-Cat" -- in this short piece, Pete goes diving and meets all kinds of neat sea-life, like a seahorse, stingray, swordfish, and a very lively crab. When Pete meets the glowing light-up jellyfish, the lights lower so you can enjoy the bright, neon-colored lights in the jellyfish. This darkness only lasts ten or fifteen seconds, and it is not designed to be scary or even mysterious.

SOUND

Pete the Cat is a musical play, and a lot of the music is played live by the host Dolph. The puppets sing along as well. There is a general "rock-and-roll" quality to the songs, with an emphasis on vocal clarity to get the lyrics across effectively. It is lively and energetic, but there are no jarring transitions or startling hard-starts to the music.

We have noise-cancelling headphones if you'd like them -- just ask a Center staff member before or during the show!

ABOUT THE VENUE

Pete the Cat is showing on our Mainstage Theater, which you can find from the ticket office by simply walking through the Atrium and heading up the staircase. Also accessible from the Atrium is our Worlds of Puppetry Museum, the Special Exhibits room, restrooms, water fountains, and stair/elevator access to the third floor (where you can build a Pete the Cat Hand Puppet in the Create-a-Puppet Workshop!).

The Mainstage Theatre has bench-style seating -- if you're likely to need a break during the show, just sit on the end closest to the aisle. There are stairs on either side of the theater, and exiting the theater is super simple: just walk up to the top and head out the door you came in! From the top of the stairs, the restrooms are across the atrium to the right.

The theater will open about a half-hour before showtime, at which point you're welcome to come find a seat. The overhead "house lights" will be on at about half-brightness, and there may be some pre-show music playing softly from the speakers. Once the show starts, those lights will be off and sound will be live from the stage and speakers. If you arrive after the show has started, Center staff members will help you to find a seat!

We have fidget toys to keep hands busy and noise-reducing headphones for anyone who needs the show to be a bit quieter -- just ask a Center staff member!



