

Press Contacts

Patrick Milliman
212.590.0310, pmilliman@themorgan.org

Alanna Schindewolf
212.590.0311, aschindewolf@themorgan.org

**THE MORGAN LIBRARY & MUSEUM TO HOLD MAJOR
EXHIBITION THIS FALL CELEBRATING THE 200TH
ANNIVERSARY OF THE BIRTH OF CHARLES DICKENS**

*THE MORGAN'S COLLECTION OF DICKENS MANUSCRIPTS AND LETTERS
IS THE LARGEST IN THE U.S.*

Charles Dickens at 200

September 23, 2011–February 12, 2012

★★Press Preview: Thursday, September 22, 10 a.m. until noon★★

RSVP: (212) 590-0393, media@themorgan.org

New York, New York, August 8, 2011—Charles Dickens (1812–1870) was Britain's first true literary superstar. In his time, he attracted international adulation on an unprecedented scale, and many of his books became instant classics. Today, his popularity continues unabated, and his work remains not only widely read but widely adapted to stage and screen.



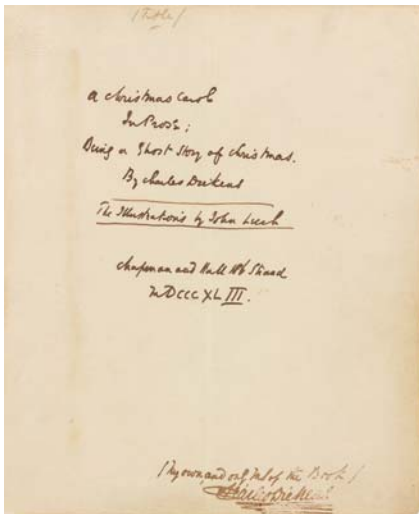
Jeremiah Gurney (1812-1895)
Charles Dickens, 1867
Purchased for The Danie and Hettie Heineman
Collection as the gift of the Heineman Foundation, 2011.

The Morgan Library & Museum's Dickens collection is the largest in the United States and is one of the two greatest in the world, along with the holdings of Britain's Victoria and Albert Museum. ***Charles Dickens at 200*** celebrates the bicentennial of the great writer's birth in 1812 with manuscripts of his novels and stories, letters, books, photographs, original illustrations, and caricatures. Sweeping in scope, the exhibition captures the art and life of a man whose literary and cultural legacy ranks among the giants of literature.

"It is difficult to imagine a novelist of greater importance in the English language than Charles Dickens," said William M. Griswold, director of The Morgan Library & Museum. "His books are touchstones of literary history and his characters—from Tiny Tim and Oliver Twist to Ebenezer Scrooge and Uriah

Heep—are some of the most vividly drawn in all of fiction. The Morgan is delighted to mark this important Dickens anniversary year with an exhibition that celebrates his extraordinary creativity and fascinating life.”

Charles Dickens at 200 will focus primarily on Dickens’s novels and their relation to his various activities and collaborations—literary, artistic, theatrical, and philanthropic—from *The Pickwick Papers* (1836), his first book, to *Our Mutual Friend* (1865), the last he completed. (*The Mystery of Edwin Drood* remained incomplete at the time of Dickens’s death in 1870).



Charles Dickens (1812-1870)
A Christmas Carol in Prose: Being a Ghost Story of Christmas
Autograph manuscript signed, December 1843
Purchased by Pierpont Morgan before 1900.

The Morgan’s collection of Dickens material notably includes the complete manuscript of *Our Mutual Friend*, the only manuscript of a Dickens novel in the United States, as well as the manuscripts of three of Dickens’s Christmas stories, including the iconic *A Christmas Carol* (1843). The Morgan has the largest collection of the author’s letters (over 1500) in the U.S. as well as more than fifty original illustrations of Dickens’s work, complete runs of Dickens’s novels published in monthly installments, first editions of his books, portrait photographs, caricatures, playbills, and ephemera.

One section of the exhibition explores the plot outlines and manuscript pages of *Our Mutual Friend*, a selection of which will be on view to allow visitors to follow Dickens’s creative process. In 1865, Dickens dramatically crawled back into the wreckage of a train crash to retrieve the manuscript of an installment of this novel, which is preserved today in the Morgan’s collection.

Also on view will be examples of the first appearance of Dickens’s novels in monthly published parts, as well as original illustrations (by such artists as Hablot K. Browne, John Leech, George Cruikshank, and Samuel Palmer). These illustrations, alongside Dickens’s letters, shed light on his working relationships with the illustrators of his novels and stories.

Another section of the show will feature letters and other documents that reveal the social context and the personal and economic circumstances in which Dickens wrote, including his family life; his travels (to the United States and Europe); and his activity as a social reformer. Dickens was

particularly concerned about poverty and prostitution, and collaborated with the philanthropist Angela Burdett-Coutts to address the plight of “fallen women.”

Dickens’s fascination with dramatic performance, which manifested itself in his participation in amateur theatricals and public readings, and the impact of this interest on his literary technique, will be examined in the exhibition. A selection of original playbills illustrate this aspect of Dickens’s work, which encompasses his collaboration with fellow novelist Wilkie Collins.



Alfred Bryan (1852-1899)
Caricature of William Makepeace Thackeray
and Charles Dickens
Charcoal and colored chalks, on blue paper
Gift of Miss Caroline Newton

The exhibition will also include Dickens’s Christmas books.

Visitors will be able to see the manuscripts of three of his five Christmas books, including *A Christmas Carol* (1843), *The Cricket on the Hearth* (1845), and *The Battle of Life* (1846). The Morgan owns the manuscript of *A Christmas Carol*, and this installation will allow visitors to see it in the context of Dickens’s other Christmas tales which have been credited by historians with significantly “redefining” the spirit and meaning of the holiday.

According to Professor John O. Jordan, the Director of the international Dickens Project marking the 200th birthday celebration, Dickens is “unusual if not unique among canonical English-language authors in remaining at once a vital focus of academic research and a major figure in popular culture. Only Shakespeare, Mark Twain, and perhaps Jane Austen can compare with him in terms of their ability to hold the attention of both a scholarly and a general audience.... He is widely recognized as the preeminent novelist of the Victorian age and a major figure in world literature.”

Organization and Sponsorship

This exhibition is generously underwritten by Fay and Geoffrey Elliott.

Charles Dickens at 200 is organized by Declan Kiely, the Robert H. Taylor Curator and Department Head of Literary and Historical Manuscripts at The Morgan Library & Museum.

To coincide with the exhibition, a new facsimile edition of *A Christmas Carol* is being published with an introductory essay by Declan Kiely.

Public Programs

Lectures

“Endless fertility”: The Comic Art of Charles Dickens

Michael Slater

Michael Slater, Emeritus Professor, Birkbeck College, University of London, will discuss Dickens’s wide range of comic writing from broad farce to biting satire, and will illustrate his discussion with readings from Dickens’s novels, stories, journalism and other writings.

Wednesday, November 2, 6:30 pm*

Tickets: \$15 for Non-Members; \$10 for Members

* The exhibition *Charles Dickens at 200* will be open at 5:30 pm especially for program attendees.

Charles Dickens: A Life

Claire Tomalin

Join acclaimed literary biographer Claire Tomalin (*Thomas Hardy, Samuel Pepys: The Unequalled Self*) as she explores the tumultuous life of the great English novelist in her new book *Charles Dickens: A Life*.

Friday, November 18, 6:30 pm*

Tickets: \$15 for Non-Members; \$10 for Members

* The exhibition *Charles Dickens at 200* will be open until 9 pm.

Films

Great Expectations

(1946, 118 minutes)

Director: David Lean

David Lean’s remarkable adaptation captures the warm humor and richness of character that is quintessential in Charles Dickens’s writing. Anthony Wager and John Mills star, respectively, as the young and adult Pip in this classic story of a young man’s journey from orphan to gentleman. Winner of two Oscars for Best Art Direction and Best Cinematography, the film also features Valerie Hobson and Alec Guinness.

Friday, October 14, 7 pm

The Signalman

(1976, 39 minutes)

Director: Lawrence Gordon Clark

In Dickens’s chilling, supernatural tale, an unnamed traveler (Bernard Lloyd) encounters a signalman (Denholm Elliot) on a lonely stretch of railway. The screening will be held on Dickens’s 200th birthday anniversary, with an introduction by Morgan curator Declan Kiely.

Tuesday, February 7, 7 pm*

*The exhibition *Charles Dickens at 200* will be open at 6 pm especially for program attendees.

Exhibition-related films are free with museum admission. Tickets are available at the Admission Desk on the day of the screening. Advance reservations for Morgan Members only: 212.685.0008, ext. 560, or tickets@themorgan.org.

Family Programs

When Ghosts Pop Up the Pages: A 3D Christmas Carol

Celebrate Charles Dickens and the holiday season with pop-up book creator Chuck Fischer (*Charles Dickens’s A Christmas Carol: A Pop-Up Book*). After a brief tour of the exhibition *Charles Dickens at 200*, children will make their favorite characters from Dickens’s classic ghost story come

to life as they create pop-up cards to share with family and friends. All supplies included. Appropriate for ages 6–12. This workshop is limited to families with children. There is a limit of two adult tickets per family.

Saturday, November 19, 2–4 pm

Tickets: Adults: \$6 for Non-Members; \$4 for Members; children \$2

Winter Family Day Celebration

Join us for our annual family day celebrating the exhibitions *David, Delacroix, and Revolutionary France: Drawings from the Louvre* and *Charles Dickens at 200*. Travel back to the days of Dickens and Revolutionary France with art workshops, strolling characters, a costume photo shoot, festive dancing, and more. For a complete schedule, visit www.themorgan.org. All events are included with admission to the Morgan. Appropriate for ages 6–12.

Sunday, December 4, 2–5 pm

Gallery Talk

Charles Dickens at 200

Declan Kiely, Robert H. Taylor Curator and Department Head, Department of Literary and Historical Manuscripts

Friday, October 21, 7 pm

The Morgan Library & Museum

The Morgan Library & Museum began as the private library of financier Pierpont Morgan, one of the preeminent collectors and cultural benefactors in the United States. Today, more than a century after its founding in 1906, the Morgan serves as a museum, independent research library, musical venue, architectural landmark, and historic site. In October 2010, the Morgan completed the first-ever restoration of its original McKim building, Pierpont Morgan's private library, and the core of the institution. In tandem with the 2006 expansion project by architect Renzo Piano, the Morgan now provides visitors unprecedented access to its world-renowned collections of drawings, literary and historical manuscripts, musical scores, medieval and Renaissance manuscripts, printed books, and ancient Near Eastern seals and tablets.

General Information

The Morgan Library & Museum

225 Madison Avenue, at 36th Street, New York, NY 10016-3405

212.685.0008

www.themorgan.org

Hours

Tuesday–Thursday, 10:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.; extended Friday hours, 10:30 a.m. to 9 p.m.; Saturday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Sunday, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.; closed Mondays, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, and New Year's Day. The Morgan closes at 4 p.m. on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve.

Admission

\$15 for adults; \$10 for students, seniors (65 and over), and children (under 16); free to Members and children 12 and under accompanied by an adult. Admission is free on Fridays from 7 to 9 p.m. Admission is not required to visit the Morgan Shop.