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**THE MORGAN TO EXHIBIT SUPERB SELECTION
OF RECENT ACQUISITIONS BEGINNING APRIL 17**

Works Range from Drawings by Rembrandt and Matisse to Contemporary Masters, such as Helen Frankenthaler and Red Grooms; from Letters by van Gogh and Oscar Wilde to a Beethoven Manuscript and an Exquisite Renaissance Prayer Book

*On View Through October 18, Exhibition Includes Many Works
Receiving Their First-Ever Showing at the Morgan*

**** Press Preview: Thursday, April 16, 2009, 10 a.m. until noon **
RSVP: (212) 590-0393, media@themorgan.org**

New York, NY, February 25, 2009—Spurred by its highly successful 2006 expansion and renovation, The Morgan Library & Museum simultaneously continued to build its renowned collections. The results of this effort are unveiled in the exhibition *New at the Morgan: Acquisitions Since 2004*, on view April 17 through October 18, 2009.

The press preview for this exhibition is Thursday, April 16, 2009, from 10 a.m. to noon. Please RSVP by calling (212) 590-0393 or e-mail media@themorgan.org.



John Singer Sargent, *Portrait of Paul-César Helleu*, ca. 1882–85, watercolor in tones of brown, tan, cream, gray, rose, and violet over pencil. Gift of Rose Pitman Hughes and J. Lawrence Hughes in memory of Junius and Louise Morgan; 2005.5.

The approximately one hundred works in the show demonstrate the great scope of the Morgan's collecting interests and include old master and modern drawings, literary and music manuscripts, illuminated texts, and one of the earliest examples of the printed book. Such seminal figures as Rembrandt, Matisse, van Gogh, Wilde, Joyce, Beethoven, and Wagner are represented. The earliest work is a treatise in praise of poetry, dating to ca. 1300, and the most recent, a drawing by Alexander Ross (b. 1960), dates to 2007.

The selections in *New at the Morgan* were chosen from more than 1,200 works acquired since 2004 as well as a large group of printed music and related items that came to the Morgan as part of the James Fuld Collection.

The exhibition is notable for the prominence of works by contemporary artists, an area of recent interest to the Morgan. In addition to the work by Alexander Ross, the show includes drawings by Helen Frankenthaler (b. 1928), Red Grooms (b. 1937), Robert Morris (b. 1931), and Bruce Nauman (b. 1941), among others. Modern photography is also represented, with works by Irving Penn (b. 1917) and Diane Arbus (1923–1971).

“A hallmark of the Morgan is the breadth and quality of its collections,” said William M. Griswold, the institution’s director. “With the Morgan’s dual identity as a great research library and a museum, its holdings speak to the broad range of Western artistic achievement and the creative process. There are few places in the world where one can encounter in a single visit—much less a single exhibition—the work of Rembrandt, Matisse, Joyce, Wilde, Beethoven, and Wagner.

“We are deeply grateful to all those who have so generously given works to the Morgan or supported the purchase of important books, manuscripts, drawings, and music.”

ORGANIZATION OF THE EXHIBITION



Vincent van Gogh, autograph letter, dated 17 October 1888, to Paul Gauguin. Gift of Eugene V. Thaw in honor of Charles E. Pierce, Jr., 2007; MA 6447.

The organization of *New at the Morgan* focuses on relationships among various objects according to broad thematic categories. For example, a section entitled “Sketches and Drafts” brings together a drawing for a sculpture by Bruce Nauman with a sketch for the Seventh Symphony by Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827), a draft for a poem by Dylan Thomas (1914–1953), a preparatory drawing for an unfinished medieval manuscript, and a sketchbook by Edgar Degas (1834–1917). As a group the works underscore an important aspect of the Morgan’s

collections: an emphasis on items related to the artist at work.

A section called “Nature” presents traditional landscape drawings next to a Turner-like painting on paper by Helen Frankenthaler, a seventeenth-century detailed study of insects, a manuscript by Charles Darwin (1809–1882) defending his groundbreaking theory, and an edition of Ted Hughes’s (1930–1998) *Animal Poems* with a handwritten copy of “The Jaguar.” In a closer parallel, a late-nineteenth-century watercolor of

a cherry-picking scene by Impressionist Berthe Morisot (1841–1895) echoes a depiction of the same subject in the margins of a fifteenth-century illuminated manuscript.

Other parts of the exhibition are devoted to such themes as religion and politics. To highlight the Morgan's recent interest in modern and contemporary art, a section entitled "Modernism and Beyond" pairs a self-portrait by Egon Schiele (1890–1918) alongside a "subway drawing" by William Anastasi (b. 1931), and a drawing by Erwin Pfrang (b. 1951), a German artist whose style is influenced by James Joyce's stream-of-consciousness narrative, is displayed adjacent to the first appearance in print of Joyce's *Ulysses* in the famous periodical *Little Review*.

EXHIBITION HIGHLIGHTS

Drawings

From the first half of the twentieth century, the exhibition includes an early still life by Henri Matisse (1869–1954), a lively street scene by Ernst Ludwig Kirchner (1880–1938), and the Schiele self-portrait. The last two works were part of the 2005 bequest of Broadway lyricist Fred Ebb.

Drawings from the last fifty years include the Frankenthaler abstraction which was painted on a brown paper bag, a large and impressive watercolor portrait of photographer Rudy Burckhardt by Red Grooms, a sketch by Robert Morris for an outdoor project, and the drawing by Bruce Nauman, in which dry calculation and poetry combine to reveal the artist's creative process. The works by Nauman and Morris were purchased as gifts of the Morgan's newly formed Modern and Contemporary Collectors' Committee.

The selection of old master drawings includes a rare sheet by Rembrandt (1606–1669) depicting four black musicians with wind instruments, unusual in its technique of combining chalk with pen and ink. Also on view are drawings by Anthony van Dyck (1599–1641) and Claude Lorrain (1600–1682). From the nineteenth century are a spectacular watercolor-and-gouache study of trees by Samuel Palmer (1805–1881) and the Degas sketchbook, which contains twenty-one drawings and sketches made during regular Thursday-evening sessions with friends at the house of playwright Ludovic Halévy. The Rembrandt, Palmer, and Degas were gifts of Eugene V. Thaw, one of the Morgan's greatest benefactors.

Literary and Historical Manuscripts



Oscar Wilde, autograph letter signed, ca. 1892, to Lord Alfred Douglas. Gift of Lucia Moreira Salles, 2008.

The department of Literary and Historical Manuscripts is represented by a highly important selection of material by Oscar Wilde (1854–1900), the whereabouts of which had been unknown to scholars for over a half century, a draft poem by Dylan Thomas, and letters written by Vincent van Gogh (1853–1890), Henry James (1843–1916), and Robert Frost (1874–1963). The Wilde collection is on view for

the first time at the Morgan and includes Wilde’s first letter to his lover Lord Alfred Douglas (“Bosie”) as well as several manuscript drafts and a letter written shortly after the publication of *The Picture of Dorian Gray* that addresses the purpose of art—always a critical topic for Wilde. The collection is the recent gift of the late Lucia Moreira Salles. A letter from van Gogh to Paul Gauguin, dated October 17, 1888, includes a sketch of van Gogh’s famous painting *Bedroom at Arles*. It is one of a group of twenty letters given to the Morgan by Eugene V. Thaw. The Thomas poem is an early draft of “In the White Giant’s Thigh,” which appeared in the 1952 collection *In Country Sleep*.

Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts



Annunciation, with coat of arms of Queen Claude de France in the lower border, illuminated by the Master of Claude de France, Prayer Book of Queen Claude de France; France, Tours, ca. 1517. The Morgan Library & Museum; MS M.1166 (fol. 18v). Gift of Mrs. Alexandre P. Rosenberg, in memory of her husband Alexandre Paul Rosenberg. Photography by Schechter Lee.

Never before shown is a rare unfinished Book of Hours (ca. 1450) from Besançon. It is open to a miniature that was only sketched in. The drawing reveals the high degree of attention medieval illuminators paid in laying out both their miniatures and borders. One of the exhibition’s most spectacular works [the subject of a “virtual lecture” at themorgan.org] is also the smallest: the jewel-like Prayer Book of Queen Claude de France (1499–1524), created around the time of her coronation in 1517. Measuring only 2 ¾ x 2 inches, this exceptional Renaissance manuscript, richly illustrated with 132 scenes in vibrant colors, was a gift to the Morgan from Mrs. Alexandre P. Rosenberg, in memory of her husband Alexandre Paul Rosenberg, a prominent art dealer in New York.

Also included is the Book of Hours of the scribe Guillaume Lambert, containing fourteen full-page miniatures, each with a gold architectural frame. This manuscript, dated 1484, was made in Lyons by its leading illuminator, named the Master of Guillaume Lambert after this book. Another work, the largest in the exhibition, is a rare, fifty-five-foot-long vellum scroll, ca. 1470–75, tracing the genealogy of King Louis XI of France back to Adam and Eve. The scroll contains sixty-nine miniatures combining religious and historical scenes intended to legitimize the king’s right to rule and to emphasize his authority. The Bensaçon and Lambert works, as well as the scroll, are from the collection of Melvin R. Seiden.

Printed Books and Bindings

Representing the modern period is the first publication of James Joyce’s (1882–1941) masterpiece *Ulysses*, which was printed in installments in the legendary literary magazine *Little Review*. The publication remained incomplete, however, owing to the intervention of censors who stopped the series before the last four episodes could be published. Also on view from half a millennium earlier is a Book of Hours dating to 1485, believed to be the sole surviving copy of the earliest known attempt at printing an illustrated book in France. With its tentative typography and archaic woodcuts, it bears all the marks of a pioneering effort, an

experimental version of an immensely popular publication that would soon become a staple of the Paris book trade.

Music Manuscripts and Printed Music

The 2008 acquisition of the James Fuld Collection considerably expanded the depth and breadth of the Morgan's collection of music. Several rarely seen works from the collection are on display in the exhibition, notably Beethoven's sketch for the Seventh Symphony and a set of proofs of Richard Wagner's (1813–1883) opera *Die Meistersinger von*



Ludwig van Beethoven, sketch for the second movement of the Symphony no. 7, op. 92, autograph manuscript, 1812. James Fuld Collection.

Nürnberg annotated by the composer. Both are unique for the insights they give into the working process of these major creators. Other items from the Fuld Collection include two autograph documents signed by Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750) and a letter from George Frideric Handel (1685–1759) to Charles Jennens (1700–1773), who compiled the text for *The Messiah*.

New at the Morgan: Acquisitions Since 2004 is installed in the Morgan's Engelhard Gallery with additional objects in the museum's historic McKim building and the 1928 Annex. The exhibition is coordinated by Isabelle Dervaux, the Morgan's curator of modern and contemporary drawings.

This exhibition is made possible through the generosity of the Council of Fellows, with a lead gift from Karen and Mo Zukerman.



This program is supported, in part, by public funds from the New York State Council on the Arts and the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs.

PUBLIC PROGRAMS

On Friday, May 29 at 7 PM, Morgan curators provide a behind-the-scenes look at the exhibition *New at the Morgan: Acquisitions Since 2004* and discuss the importance of these works to the collections. Participants include Frances Barulich, Music Manuscripts and Printed Music; John Bidwell, Printed Books and Bindings; Isabelle Dervaux and Rhoda Eitel-Porter, Drawings and Prints; Clara Drummond, Literary and Historical Manuscripts; and Roger S. Wieck, Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts.

The Morgan offers a number of special programs held in conjunction with its exhibitions. For more information, please contact the Education department at (212) 590-0333.

THE MORGAN LIBRARY & MUSEUM

A complex of buildings in the heart of New York City, 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 it is a museum, independent research library, musical venue, architectural landmark, and historic site. A century after its founding, the Morgan maintains a unique position in the cultural life of New York City and is considered one of its greatest treasures. With the 2006 reopening of its newly renovated campus, designed by renowned architect Renzo Piano, the Morgan reaffirmed its role as an important repository for the history, art, and literature of Western civilization from 4000 B.C. to the twenty-first century.

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

\$12 for adults; \$8 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.