

**THE MORGAN LIBRARY & MUSEUM PURCHASES
EXCEPTIONAL PRINT OF ADAM AND EVE BY ALBRECHT DÜRER**

New York, NY, September 12, 2006—The Morgan Library & Museum announced today the acquisition of an exceptionally fine impression of the engraving *Adam and Eve* by German master Albrecht Dürer (1471–1528). The print is one of the most celebrated of Dürer’s career and was purchased through the generosity of private donors.

The print was acquired to complement the Morgan’s Dürer drawing of *Adam and Eve*, which is among the institution’s most important works on paper. Dürer produced the drawing while trying to resolve the composition, which he then translated into the engraving. *Adam and Eve* represents the culmination of the artist’s lifelong exploration of human proportions.



Albrecht Dürer, *Adam and Eve*, 1504, pen and brown ink, brown wash, corrections in white. Purchased by Pierpont Morgan, 1910. The Pierpont Morgan Library, I, 257d.



Albrecht Dürer, *Adam and Eve*, 1504, engraving, second state, purchased as the gift of Eugene V. Thaw, S. Parker Gilbert, Rodney Berens, Mrs. Charles Wrightsman, Mrs. Oscar de la Renta, Elaine Rosenberg, T. Kimball Brooker, George L. K. Frelinghuysen, and on the Ryskamp Fund, the Edwin H. Herzog Fund, and the Lois and Walter C. Baker Fund, The Pierpont Morgan Library, acc. no. 2006.80.

The new Morgan work is a very early impression of the second state of the print (a second printing after the original plate was reworked by the artist) and is remarkable for its superlative quality and condition, making it exceedingly rare. It is distinguished by its subtle range of tone and overall brilliance attributable to the great variety of line work not seen in later impressions, in which the fine lines have become worn and nearly invisible.

“We had to buy this print of *Adam and Eve* because we had the original drawing and because it was unlikely that such a pristine impression would appear on the art market again anytime soon,” remarked Charles E. Pierce, Jr., Director of The Morgan Library & Museum. “Together, they make an extraordinary statement about Dürer’s creative genius. We consider ourselves extremely fortunate to have private donors whose generosity and commitment to the Morgan make such an important acquisition possible.”

The print is of signal importance in relation to Dürer’s preparatory drawing of the composition in the Morgan. The drawing, executed in rich brown wash and delicately hatched pen and brown ink, is the only study for the print containing the figures of both Adam and Eve and is the last and most significant of all known preparatory studies for the engraving.

The print was formerly in the collection of the Prince of Liechtenstein, Vienna, and Vaduz, whose print collection was noted for high quality impressions. Both the print and the preparatory study were executed in 1504, the year before the artist’s sojourn in Venice. Pierpont Morgan purchased the drawing in 1910; it had originally belonged to the wife of the artist, Agnes Dürer, and passed through the collections of the humanist Willibald Pirckheimer and later Emperor Rudolph II of Prague. With eight additional drawings by Dürer in the collection, the Morgan’s holdings remain unrivaled in America. The museum also has one of Dürer’s original copperplates, a woodblock, and an autograph letter by the artist.

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 and performing arts venue, architectural landmark, and historic site. Nearly 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 reaffirms 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.

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 to the McKim rooms is without charge during the following times: Tuesday, 3 to 5 p.m.; Friday, 7 to 9 p.m.; Sunday, 4 to 6 p.m. Admission is not required to visit the Morgan Shop.

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