

Press Contacts

Michelle Perlin
212.590.0311, mperlin@themorgan.org

Patrick Milliman
212.590.0310, pmilliman@themorgan.org

**NEW PUBLICATION, *BRIGHT LIGHTS IN THE DARK AGES*,
OFFERS FASCINATING LOOK AT THE ART
AND CULTURE OF THE EARLY MEDIEVAL PERIOD**

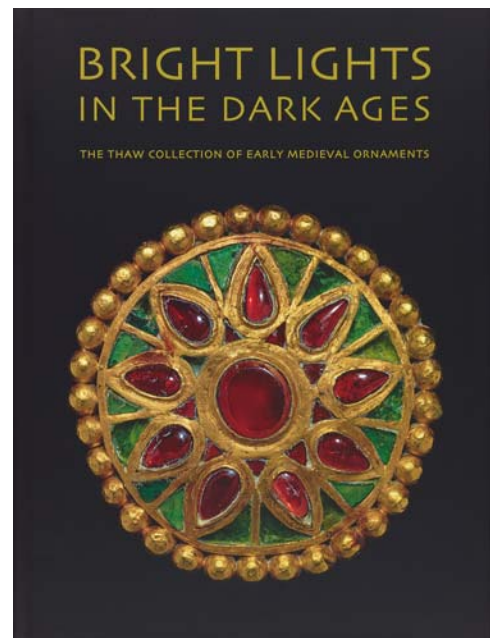
New York, NY, October 3, 2014—The Early Medieval period, often referred to as the Dark Ages and beginning in Europe around the year 400, has been popularly portrayed as a time when the refined aesthetics of the classical world fell prey to hosts of migrating peoples on the fringes of the Roman Empire.

However, a major new volume on Early Medieval art, *Bright Lights in the Dark Ages: The Thaw Collection of Early Medieval Ornaments*, written by Noël Adams and featuring photography by John Bigelow Taylor, challenges accepted orthodoxy about the art and culture of the era.

The more than one hundred magnificent objects in *Bright Lights in the Dark Ages* were created over a millennium, and often crafted in gold and silver inlaid with rare gems and stones. The volume presents them singly and together in hundreds of beautiful color photographs, with revealing commentary about the people who made them and their meaning and symbolism.

The objects were drawn from the Thaw Collection of Early Medieval Ornaments at the Morgan Library & Museum in New York City. Eugene V. Thaw is a Life Trustee and major benefactor of the Morgan, and an internationally renowned collector of drawings. His medieval ornaments collection is on exhibit in a specially designed gallery in the Morgan's McKim building.

Among the everyday items represented in *Bright Lights in the Dark Ages* are brooches, buckles,



Cover of "Bright Lights in the Dark Ages: The Thaw Collection of Early Medieval Ornaments," by Noël Adams. Brooch, sixth–early seventh century. Photography by John Bigelow Taylor, 2009.



Left: Pair of earrings. Parthian period, first–second century. Photography by John Bigelow Taylor, 2009. Middle: Radiate-head bow brooch, ca. 480–510. Photography by John Bigelow Taylor, 2009. Right: Eagle-head strap end. Visigothic or Early Byzantine, second half of fifth–sixth century. Photography by John Bigelow Taylor, 2009

pendants, and earrings. The volume demonstrates how the migrating peoples brought sophisticated metalworking traditions to the creation of these objects with clear influences from their interactions over the centuries with the Roman and Byzantine empires.

Among the highlights of the volume are exceptional examples of brooches from the Black Sea region, rare examples of Hunnic and Gothic garnet cloisonné from Germany, and superb Early Byzantine gold belt fittings.

Bright Lights in the Dark Ages is published by D Giles Limited, London, in association with the Morgan Library & Museum. Author Noël Adams publishes widely on material culture of the first millennium A.D. She has also organized exhibitions at the Morgan, the British Museum, and the National Trust Visitor Centre at Sutton Hoo. Photographer John Bigelow Taylor is noted for his work in fine art photography, and has produced more than 150 books ranging from the art and landscape of prehistoric Greece to the jewelry collection of famed Hollywood actress Elizabeth Taylor.

Bright Lights in the Dark Ages is available for purchase online at www.themorgan.org.

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, music 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, photography, and ancient Near Eastern seals and tablets.



The programs of the Morgan Library & Museum are made possible with public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council, and by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew Cuomo and the New York State Legislature.

General Information

The Morgan Library & Museum
225 Madison Avenue, at 36th Street, New York, NY 10016-3405
212.685.0008
www.themorgan.org

Just a short walk from Grand Central and Penn Station

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

\$18 for adults; \$12 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, Café, or Dining Room.