

DICKENS'S *A CHRISTMAS CAROL* TO GO ON VIEW
NOVEMBER 20 AT THE MORGAN LIBRARY & MUSEUM

ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPT OF BELOVED STORY
ONE OF THE MUSEUM'S GREAT TREASURES

BOOK IS CENTERPIECE OF THE MORGAN'S HOLIDAY PROGRAMMING

New York, NY, November 16, 2007—Ebenezer Scrooge, Tiny Tim, Mr. Fezziwig, Bob Cratchit, the Ghost of Christmas Past—in the age of film and television these characters from Charles Dickens's *A Christmas Carol* are universally familiar. The story has been told as a stage musical, a serious dramatic film, and a modern comedy.

But, in the end, it all comes back to a magical book written by Dickens in a six-week flurry of activity in late 1843. Greeted with universal acclaim at the time of publication, *A Christmas Carol* might rightfully be called an “instant masterpiece.” William Makepeace Thackeray called it a “national benefit” and an American factory owner gave his workers an extra day's holiday when he had finished reading it.

When the manuscript was returned after printing Dickens arranged for it to be finely bound in red morocco leather and presented it as a gift to his solicitor. It was purchased by Pierpont Morgan in the 1890s.

Beginning on November 20, visitors to The Morgan Library & Museum can view the original manuscript by Dickens in a special presentation in the rotunda of the museum's famed McKim Building.



John Leech, *Third Visitor or the Ghost of Christmas Present*, (detail) original watercolor illustration for Charles Dickens's, *Christmas Carol* (detail), first edition, 1843, The Pierpont Morgan Library, purchased by Pierpont Morgan; MA 97.

The manuscript reveals the author's method of composition: the pace of writing and revision, apparently contiguous, is rapid and boldly confident. Revisions are inserted for vividness and immediacy of effect. Deleted text is struck out with a cursive and continuous looping movement of the pen, and replaced with more active verbs and fewer words to achieve greater concision. Dickens's manuscript shows vividly his efforts to create the highest-quality literary work in the shortest possible time.

The Morgan's holiday programming will also include the presentation of traditional and popular holiday music by singers from the Mannes College of Music of Friday, December 7, and Friday, December 14, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. The museum is free during these hours.

On Sunday, December 9, from 2 to 5 p.m., the Morgan will hold its annual holiday family celebration. The event will include art workshops, costumed characters, and special performances.

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. 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 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 Monday, 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 to the period 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.

Patrick Milliman
Sandra Ho

212-590-0310
212-590-0311

PRESS CONTACTS
pmilliman@themorgan.org
sho@themorgan.org