

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

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

Book is Centerpiece of the Morgan's Winter Family Day Celebration

New York, NY, October 20, 2009—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, and this November will be adapted once again in a new Disney movie starring Jim Carrey.

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 museum's famed McKim Building.



John Leech, *Third Visitor or the Ghost of Christmas Present*, original water color illustration for Charles Dickens's, *Christmas Carol*, first edition, 1843. 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 The New School for Music on Fridays, December 11 and 18, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. The museum is free during these hours.

On Sunday, December 6, 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.

PUBLIC PROGRAMS

Winter Family Day Celebration

Join us for our annual family day celebrating the exhibitions *A Woman's Wit: Jane Austen's Life and Legacy* and Charles Dickens's *Christmas Carol*. Travel back to the days of English Regency with art workshops that will bring Jane Austen's fashion sense to life. Then move on to Victorian London to meet Charles Dickens and his famous characters through the original play *Goblins, Ghosts, and Geezers: The Making of Scrooge*, improvisational skits, and other activities.

For a complete schedule, visit themorgan.org.

Sunday, December 6, 2009, 2 to 5 p.m.

All events are included with admission to the Morgan.

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. More than 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.