

DICKENS'S ORIGINAL *A CHRISTMAS CAROL* ON VIEW BEGINNING NOVEMBER 30 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 29, 2010— 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.



John Leech, *Mr. Fezziwig's Ball* (detail), original watercolor illustration for Charles Dickens's *Christmas Carol*, first edition, 1843. Purchased by J.P. Morgan Jr., 1934; PML 30615.

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 30, visitors to The Morgan Library & Museum can view the original manuscript by Dickens in a special presentation in the museum's newly restored McKim Building.

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.

Also on view is the first edition *A Christmas Carol* (1843), which will be open to the title page printed in red and blue, along with the engraved frontispiece of Mr. Fezziwig's ball, which was colored by hand.

PUBLIC PROGRAMS

Winter Family Day Celebration

Join us for our annual Family Day Celebration. This year the program will include activities related to the exhibitions *Charles Dickens's Christmas Carol* and *Mark Twain: A Skeptic's Progress*. The Grand Falloons Company will transport you back to Victorian London as you mingle with Dickens's characters and enjoy a spirited dramatic reading of short excerpts from Dickens's masterpiece. Watch Mark Twain's America come alive with Cecilia Rubino's *Mark Twain: Timeless Humor*, a kid-friendly show featuring Tom and Huck, and dance the Two Step and the Cake Walk to live ragtime performed by pianist Roy Eaton. In one of our craft workshops you will make puppets in the likeness of Scrooge, Cratchit, and the Ghosts of Christmas Present and Past. In another workshop discover the toys children enjoyed in Mark Twain's time, and build your own flip book, color spinning top, or wonder turner. All events are included with admission to the Morgan. Appropriate for ages 6–12.

Sunday, December 5, 2010, 2–5 p.m.*

*The performance of *Mark Twain: Timeless Humor* will begin at 2:15 pm Tickets will be distributed on a first-come, first-served basis on the day of the program.

Chuck Fischer Book Signing

Renowned pop-up book artist Chuck Fischer will be signing copies of *A Christmas Carol: A Pop-Up Book* at the Morgan Shop on Sunday, December 5 from 1:30–4 pm, as part of the Morgan's Winter Family Day Celebration. This beautiful re-imagining of Charles Dickens's timeless fable features Fischer's richly painted depictions of the tale of Ebenezer Scrooge and the Ghosts of Christmas Past, Present, and Future, brought to life in intricate pop-up scenes by paper engineer Bruce Foster.

Sunday, December 5, 2010, 1:30–4 p.m.

Caroling at the Morgan

Come hear traditional and popular holiday music performed throughout the Morgan by singers from Mannes College The New School for Music. Tickets are not required for this event. Free with museum

admission.

Fridays, December 10 and 17, 2010, 6:30–8:30 p.m.

A Chamber Christmas Carol

Music by Ray Leslee

Text by Charles Dickens

Directed by Casey Biggs

Starring Dominic Chianese (*The Sopranos*) as Scrooge

To coincide with the exhibition *Charles Dickens's Christmas Carol*, the Morgan presents a special preview of a new concert version of Dickens's beloved classic, featuring a rich and melodic original score by award-winning composer Ray Leslee. A virtuoso cast of five actors and five musicians brings Ebenezer Scrooge's transformative journey through the past, present, and future to life on stage. With actors Nicholas Barasch, Mark Cajigao, Eleanor Handley, John Jellison and musicians Jack Bashkow, Marshall Coid, Dave Dunaway, Marc Irwin, Richard Marriott.

Friday, December 17, 2010, 7:30 p.m.

Preconcert Members-Only talk at 7 p.m.

For tickets, please visit www.themorgan.org, or call 212-685-0008, ext. 560

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, musical 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, and ancient Near Eastern seals and tablets.

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.