

**CONTEMPORARY ART WORLD MEETS THE OLD IN NEW EXHIBITION
AT THE MORGAN LIBRARY & MUSEUM**

**Georg Baselitz, Ellsworth Kelly, Giuseppe Penone, and Dorothea Rockburne
Connect Their Work to that of the Morgan's Old Masters**

****Press Preview: Thursday, October 11, 2007, 10 a.m. until noon****

New York, NY, August 31, 2007—In an exhibition that links the old and new in unique and unexpected ways, four renowned contemporary artists have chosen works from The Morgan Library & Museum's superb collection of old master drawings to compare and contrast with works from their own hand. The show, featuring the artists Georg Baselitz (b. 1938), Ellsworth Kelly (b. 1923), Giuseppe Penone (b. 1947), and Dorothea Rockburne (b. 1932), demonstrates not only what contemporary art owes to the art of the past but also how our interpretation of earlier art is indebted to contemporary practices.

Entitled *Drawing Connections: Baselitz, Kelly, Penone, Rockburne, and the Old Masters*, the exhibition is on view at the Morgan from October 12, 2007, through January 6, 2008.



“We are delighted that these outstanding artists are participating in an exhibition unlike any other the Morgan has mounted,” said Charles E. Pierce, Jr., director of The Morgan Library & Museum. “This show offers a fresh look at the intersection between contemporary art and the work of old masters from the perspective of great artists working today. It is truly a remarkable exhibition.”

The artists invited to take part in this project responded enthusiastically to the opportunity to present their work alongside works by some of the greatest masters of the past. The international selection of contemporary artists is intended to reflect radically different approaches to drawing today. A common point among these artists is the centrality of drawing to their work and a profound interest in the art of the past.

Drawing Connections differs from other artist-curated shows in that it focuses on drawing. This medium presents a greater continuity through the ages than painting or sculpture, especially when considered from the point of view of the artists themselves. The exhibition includes about fifty works, half from the Morgan's collection, and the other half on loan from the artists and New York private collections. Each artist was given carte blanche to select seven or eight sheets from the Morgan's collection of more than twelve thousand drawings, ranging from Mantegna, Leonardo, and Rembrandt, to Degas, Cézanne, and Picasso. The contemporary works (six by each artist) were selected by the artists in collaboration with Isabelle Dervaux, curator of modern and contemporary drawings at the Morgan and the curator of the exhibition.

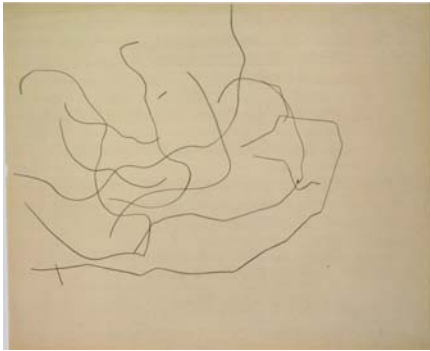
THE ARTISTS

One of the most fascinating aspects of the exhibition is that artists as different as Baselitz and Rockburne have both chosen to focus on sixteenth-century Italian mannerism. Baselitz, who has been collecting mannerist prints for many years, selected drawings by Parmigianino (1503–1540), an artist well represented in the Morgan collection. The elongated proportions and odd poses of Parmigianino's figures, as in *The Virgin Seated with Yam Winder, and the Infant Christ Embracing St. John*, echo Baselitz's own expressive deformations of the body, notably in his "fracture" drawings of the mid-1960s, such as *Divided Hero*. Because mannerism played an important role in Baselitz's development in the 1960s, the exhibition includes several of his drawings from that decade.

Dorothea Rockburne's choice of sixteenth-century Italian art relates to her interest in perspective and complex spatial structures. In the exhibition she pairs a contorted figure by Tintoretto (1518–1594) with a work from her 1970s *Conservation Class* series, generated by folding paper according to a mathematical rule. Crediting mannerism as a source for her recent work based on astronomy, she also proposes parallels between powerful heads by Domenico Beccafumi (1486–1551) and her colorful and luminous evocations of the cosmos.



Tintoretto, *Man Climbing into a Boat*, ca. 1579, The Morgan Library & Museum, Gift of J. P. Morgan, Jr., 1924; IV, 7. Dorothea Rockburne, *Conservation Class #9*, 1973, Collection of Christine Williams; © 2007 Dorothea Rockburne/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York.4



Ellsworth Kelly, *Pine Branches II*, 1950. Private collection. © Ellsworth Kelly. Jean-Antoine Watteau, *Study of a Young Man Seen from the Back and Another Study of His Right Arm*, ca. 1717, The Morgan Library & Museum, gift of Mr. and Mrs. Eugene V. Thaw; 2000.56. Photography by Joseph Zehavi.

In keeping with his own graphic production dominated by line drawing, Ellsworth Kelly selected old master drawings that present a clear linear emphasis and great economy of means. He favored preparatory sketches, which expose the artist's methods and processes, over finished drawings. His section of the exhibition proposes fascinating pairings of some of

Kelly's most deceptively simple drawings with works by Rubens (1577–1640), Watteau (1684–1721), van Gogh (1853–1890), and Matisse (1869–1954).

Attracted to the act of drawing as the expression of a singular vision of the world, Penone organized his selections of drawings from the Morgan into three groups corresponding to three concepts relevant to his own work. Bridging geographical and chronological boundaries, his groups bring together, for instance, works by Mantegna (1431–1506), Dürer (1471–1528), and Perugino (1450–1523) with



After Andrea Mantegna, *Bacchanal with a Wine Vat*, ca. 1500. The Morgan Library & Museum. Gift of Mr. Janos Scholz; 1981.86. Photography by Joseph Zehavi. Giuseppe Penone, *The Imprint of Drawing, Right Ring Finger* (L'impronta del disegno, *Anulare destro*), 2002–3. The Morgan Library & Museum, Gift of the Modern and Contemporary Collectors' Committee; 2007.78. ©2007 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York/ADAGP, Paris.

Penone's own *The Imprint of Drawing, Right Ring Finger*. In all of them the artist's highly controlled technique is put to the service of an objective rendering of the world. By contrast, in a group of drawings by Bernini (1598–1680), Klimt (1862–1918), and Cézanne (1839–1906), displayed together with Penone's *Skin of Graphite "Reflection of Jade I,"* the artist abandons himself to his material to suggest the sensuality of nature.



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CATALOGUE

The exhibition is accompanied by a fully illustrated catalogue with an introduction by Isabelle Dervaux, statements by the participating artists, biographical entries emphasizing the role of drawing in each artist's career, and images of all the works in the exhibition. The forty-eight-page catalogue is published by The Morgan Library & Museum and is available at the Morgan Shop for \$12.95.

PUBLIC PROGRAMS

The Morgan offers a number of special programs held in conjunction with the exhibition. For more information, please contact the Education department at (212) 590-0333.

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.