

**THE MORGAN'S LANDMARK McKIM BUILDING,
THE OLDEST STRUCTURE IN THE MUSEUM COMPLEX,
REOPENS SATURDAY, OCTOBER 30
AFTER FIRST MAJOR INTERIOR RESTORATION
SINCE ITS CONSTRUCTION IN 1906**

*INAUGURAL EXHIBITION OF HUNDREDS OF TREASURES
SPANNING MORE THAN 5,000 YEARS
SURVEYS THE BROAD RANGE OF THE MORGAN'S
WORLD-REOWNED COLLECTIONS*

**Musical Performances and Public Lecture
Celebrate Opening Day**

Media Preview: Thursday, October 21, 2010, 10 am to noon



Mr. Morgan's Library (East Room). After restoration. The Morgan Library & Museum.
Photography by Graham Haber, 2010.

New York, NY, October 21, 2010—On October 30, the historic center of The Morgan Library & Museum—its landmark McKim building—reopens to the public following the completion of the most extensive restoration of its interior spaces since its construction more than one hundred years ago. Designed by the firm of McKim, Mead and White, this portion of the Morgan was once the private study and library of financier Pierpont Morgan. The Italianate marble villa, designed in the spirit of the High Renaissance, is considered one of New York's

great architectural treasures, and its interiors are regarded as some of the most beautiful in America. The \$4.5 million restoration, which began in June, revitalizes this core area of the Morgan, in many ways completing the institution's dynamic transformation that began in 2006 with Pritzker Prize-winning architect Renzo Piano's successful expansion and renovation of the campus. All other areas of the Morgan remained fully operational during the course of the project, including the museum's ongoing schedule of exhibitions, public programs, and performances.

The project provides enhanced exhibition space for the institution and enables the Morgan to share with the public more treasures from its world-renowned permanent collection. The inaugural installation demonstrates the extraordinary quality and scope of Pierpont Morgan's interests as a collector and cultural steward. Nearly 300 objects dating from 3500 BC to the twentieth century will be displayed throughout the building's majestic rooms in a series of rotating exhibitions. Previously, only about thirty objects were regularly on view in the McKim.

The Morgan celebrates the restoration project with a series of special activities, culminating with the October 30 public opening. Beginning with a media preview on October 21, the week-long festivities include a special gala for Morgan patrons and a members' open house. The public opening includes performances by student musicians from the Mannes College The New School of Music, and the New-Trad Octet, as well as a special lecture by Morgan director William M. Griswold.

"The reopening of the McKim building is a special moment in the history of the institution," said Morgan director William M. Griswold, who is guiding the first major capital project since he assumed his position in 2008. "The building is the heart and soul of The Morgan Library & Museum. Not only does it embody the taste and vision of the museum's founder and patron, Pierpont Morgan, but over the years its beautiful rooms have become synonymous with all that makes the Morgan special. No visit to the museum is complete without a tour of the McKim building, and now, with this ambitious project and the installation of some of the Morgan's outstanding treasures, that experience will be greatly enhanced."

Room-by-Room Summary

The restoration project encompasses all of the McKim's rooms and exhibition spaces. Key components include new lighting throughout the building to better illuminate its extraordinary murals and decor, the opening of the North Room to visitors for the first time, installation of new exhibition cases to house rotating displays of masterpieces from the Morgan's collections, restoration of period furniture and fixtures, and cleaning of the walls and applied ornamentation.

Library (East Room)

Pierpont Morgan's stunning library, also known as the East Room, is defined by its majestic thirty-foot walls, lined floor to ceiling with triple tiers of bookcases made of inlaid Circassian walnut and featuring volumes of European literature from the sixteenth through twentieth centuries. The library now is equipped with a new state-of-the-art, yet subtle lighting system; a newly installed late-nineteenth-century Persian rug of the type originally in the room; and newly designed display cases exhibiting some of the Morgan's most valued objects.

The revamped lighting allows visitors to fully appreciate the splendor of the lunettes and spandrels of the library's decorative ceiling, the work of noted muralist Henry Siddons Mowbray (1858–1928), which features cultural luminaries of the past such as Socrates, Galileo, Botticelli, and Michelangelo, as well as signs of the zodiac. The improved illumination also significantly enhances the focal point of the room—the grand fireplace and sixteenth-century tapestry depicting the triumph of Avarice, from a series depicting the Seven Deadly Sins.

The inlaid walnut bookshelves that contain the Morgan's collection of rare books have been enhanced with nonreflective Plexiglas, allowing visitors to identify individual titles and to appreciate the beauty of the exquisite bindings more fully.

An original pendant chandelier, preserved since its removal about seventy years ago and designed by twentieth-century New York designer Edward F. Caldwell, has been restored and rehung at the library's entrance. Seating also has been installed to enable visitors to spend more time contemplating this extraordinary room.

Prior to the restoration, only a handful of objects were regularly on view in the library. Highlights of the approximately one hundred rotating works that will be on display each year in this room include examples of some of the Morgan's finest literary and historical manuscripts, medieval and Renaissance illuminated texts, music manuscripts, and printed books and bindings. Visitors will encounter a letter from fifteen-year-old Queen Elizabeth I purchased by Pierpont Morgan in 1900; the manuscript for Balzac's *Eugenie Grandet* (1833) with a torturous mass of revisions, corrections, and additions demonstrating the writer's complex creative process; illustrated notes by Alexander Calder regarding the installation of his "stables" from 1941; the Reims Gospel Book, the Morgan's finest Carolingian manuscript, written in gold at the Abbey of St. Remi (ca. 860); the manuscript of Mozart's famed "Haffner" Symphony No. 35 (1782); a newly discovered manuscript for Robert Schumann's "Des Knaben Berglied" (1849) acquired by the Morgan in 2009 and displayed for the first time; one of the earliest editions of Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales* (1483); the first edition of Lewis Carroll's *Through the Looking Glass* (1872) with proofs of Tenniel's illustrations; Mary Shelley's annotated copy of her masterpiece *Frankenstein* (1818); and one of the Morgan's three original Gutenberg Bibles (ca. 1455), the first book printed with moveable type.

Study (West Room)

The Renaissance-inspired furnishings of the Study, or West Room, and the paintings, sculpture, and decorative arts displayed reveal the breadth of Morgan's interests and activity as a collector, and reflect his reputation as a "modern day Medici." The room is defined by its sixteenth-century Florentine coffered

wooden ceiling, red silk damask wall coverings patterned after the wall in the Roman palace of famed Renaissance banker Agostino Chigi, and fifteenth- to seventeenth-century stained glass fragments embedded into the windows.

The Study has been enriched by a more substantive display of works from the collection that surrounded Pierpont Morgan in the early 1900s, when he used the room for personal business, as well as with objects that have been acquired since. More than double the number of objects are on view, including works never shown before, such as the 1530 Verrazano globe, one of the earliest known dated globes, and a bronze St. John the Baptist after Michelozzo. Other works include paintings by Hans Memling, Francesco Francia, Perugino, and Jacopo Tintoretto, among others.



Mr. Morgan's Study (West Room). After restoration. The Morgan Library & Museum.
Photography by Graham Haber, 2010.

The steel-lined vault in the southeast corner of the room, equipped with a bank vault door and combination lock, is where Pierpont Morgan housed his most valued acquisitions, particularly his collection of more than 600 medieval and Renaissance manuscripts. The vault remained in use until 2003, housing by then the more than 1,300 medieval and Renaissance manuscripts in the institution's collection. As part of the McKim restoration project, another modification to the Study makes the vault more accessible to visitors. The curtain which shrouded the vault's entrance has been removed, new lighting fixtures have been installed, and the vault shelves filled with sumptuous leather boxes that housed the Morgan's manuscripts and rare books. Several small bronze objects and tomes in which many of Pierpont Morgan's collections were published also are on display. The vault's original runner was conserved and has been installed in its original location.

Additional works of sculpture such as the *Bust of the Christ Child* by Antonio Rossellino and *Saint John the Baptist* by Giovanni Francesco Rustici are exhibited on the low bookshelves lining the perimeter of the room, and the lush, velvet-covered furnishings have been reupholstered to evoke the atmosphere of the study as it was in Pierpont Morgan's day.

North Room

The North Room, the intimate office of the Morgan's first director, Belle da Costa Greene, is now open to the public for the first time, and has been transformed to feature the earliest works in the Morgan's collection, including objects from the Ancient Near East, Egypt, Greece, and Rome, as well as artifacts from the early medieval period. More than 200 objects are on permanent view in this new exhibition space. The two-tiered room, lined with walnut bookshelves, features a ceiling of Renaissance-inspired paintings and a bronze bust of Giovanni Boccaccio on the mantle of the fireplace.

Bookshelves along the perimeter of the room have been converted to exquisitely lit cases to display these items, notably a selection of Ancient Near Eastern cylinder seals collected by Pierpont Morgan. Dating from around 3500 BC, these miniature engraved stones were in use for about 3,000 years in the region referred to as Mesopotamia. These seals were the earliest known objects to use pictorial symbols to communicate ideas. Also on view is a selection of clay tablets, including a seventeenth-century BC fragment inscribed with the Babylonian flood epic predating the story of Noah's Ark in the Old Testament.



The North Room. After restoration. The Morgan Library & Museum.
Photography by Graham Haber, 2010.

The room accommodates freestanding cases for Near Eastern as well as ancient Greek and Roman objects, including a pair of intricately decorated first-century Roman silver cups and a rare thirteenth-century BC stone tablet featuring cuneiform inscriptions.

The installation also includes jeweled and metalwork objects such as buckles, brooches, and other personal ornaments dating from the second to the tenth centuries, from the collection of Morgan trustee Eugene V. Thaw and his wife, Clare, as well as an eleventh-century jeweled book binding. The Migration-era objects from the Thaw collection document the medieval period in Europe.

The original chandeliers, removed two generations ago, have been refinished and reinstalled, allowing for optimal appreciation of the recently cleaned ceiling and upper-tier bookcases. In addition, two Egyptian basalt votive figures flank the room's fireplace on new pedestals.

Rotunda

The Rotunda, originally entered through the grand doors facing 36th Street, is the dramatic center of the McKim building. Its intricate and elaborately decorated ceiling, also painted by Mowbray, refers thematically to the great treasures contained within this remarkable structure, depicting figures from classical antiquity and the great literary epochs of the past, including Homer, Dante, and Petrarch. The splendor of color and texture is supplied by variegated marble surfaces and columns, mosaic panels and columns of lapis lazuli.



The Rotunda. After restoration. The Morgan Library & Museum.
*photography by Graham Haber, 2010.

The marble surfaces and mosaic panels that are signature features of the McKim Rotunda have been cleaned and restored to their original grandeur for the first time in a century. New lighting simulates the natural light that originally came through the oculus and enhances the richly illustrated apse, ceiling, and lunettes.

Prior to the restoration, the Rotunda was not used as an exhibition space. Now, new display cases have been installed, housing the first substantive display of the Morgan's outstanding collection of

Americana, including such great works as autograph letters by Thomas Jefferson and Abraham Lincoln, the Morgan's life mask of George Washington, copies of the first Bible printed in America, and the Declaration of Independence.

McKim Re-Opening Public Programs *Saturday, October 30, 2010*

All events are included with admission to The Morgan Library & Museum. Tickets to the lecture and concert are distributed on a first-come, first-served basis on the day of the program. Advance reservations for Morgan members only: 212.685.0008 x560 or tickets@themorgan.org.

12–3 pm

Performance by Mannes College The New School for Music students in the Morgan's Gilbert Court, including repertoire from the Italian baroque to the American Gilded Age.

1–1:45 pm

Lecture by William Griswold in Gilder Lehrman Hall, including details of the McKim restoration project and an introduction to the Morgan's history and collections.

4–5:30 pm

Concert by New-Trad Octet in Gilder Lehrman Hall
Combining instruments and elements of a traditional New Orleans brass band with those of a modern jazz group, Jeff Newell and the New-Trad Octet explore the

early sources of America's musical heritage. To celebrate the period of American history covered in the Morgan's exhibition *Mark Twain: A Skeptic's Progress* that also parallels Mr. Morgan's Life, the program features works by Stephen Foster, Scott Joplin, John Philip Sousa, and others.

All Day

Docents and education staff are on hand throughout the day to provide visitors with historical insight into the Morgan's architecture. The Morgan's audio tour also is available.

About the Project Team

Jennifer Tonkovich, curator of Drawings and Prints at The Morgan Library & Museum, coordinated the reinstallation of collection objects in the McKim building.

Exhibition design: Stephen Saitas, Stephen Saitas Designs

Since its establishment in 1982, Stephen Saitas Designs, New York, has designed more than 175 installations and exhibitions in museums, galleries, historic houses, and libraries. Recent projects include the reinstallations of the European and American collections for The Huntington, San Marino, CA and the reinstallation of the American Wing period rooms for The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Lighting design: Richard Renfro, Renfro Design Group, Inc.

Renfro Design Group, Inc., established in 1998, is an architectural lighting design firm. Recent projects include the Bloch Building addition to The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Craig Thomas Discovery Visitor Center at Grand Teton National Park, and The American Wing Gallery at The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Architect of record: Beyer Blinder Belle Architects & Planners LLP

Beyer Blinder Belle Architects & Planners, which worked with the Morgan on its 2006 expansion, has been responsible for the restoration and revitalization of many significant buildings and sites, including Grand Central Terminal, Ellis Island Immigration Museum, Rockefeller Center, the Empire State Building, Thurgood Marshall U.S. Courthouse, and the Rubin Museum of Art.

Support

The 2010 restoration of Pierpont Morgan's 1906 library is made possible through the generous support of Gail and Parker Gilbert, Louise and Lewis Lehrman, Katharine and William Rayner, Jeannette and Jonathan Rosen, Beatrice Stern, Suzanne and Jeffrey Walker, and an anonymous donor.

The Morgan gratefully acknowledges a grant from the Booth Ferris Foundation, which supported earlier structural work on the McKim Building.

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 2006, the Morgan completed the largest expansion and renovation in its history, designed by architect Renzo Piano. This project, which integrated the Morgan's three historical buildings with three new modestly scaled steel-and-glass pavilions, in tandem with the 2010 restoration of the Morgan's McKim building, is giving the public unprecedented access to the Morgan's world-renowned collection, which encompasses manuscripts, books, drawings and artwork ranging from Rembrandt to Picasso, Mozart to Bob Dylan, Dickens to Hemingway, and Gutenberg Bibles to *The Story of Babar*. A superb repository of the history, art and literature of Western civilization from 4000 BC to the twenty-first century, the Morgan today occupies a unique position in the cultural life of New York City and is one of its greatest treasures.

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.

Current Exhibitions

<i>Anne Morgan's War: Rebuilding Devastated France, 1917–1924</i>	September 3–November 21, 2010
<i>Mark Twain: A Skeptic's Progress</i>	September 17, 2010–January 2, 2011
<i>Roy Lichtenstein: The Black-and-White Drawings, 1961–1968</i>	September 24, 2010–January 2, 2011
<i>Degas: Drawings and Sketchbooks</i>	September 24, 2010–January 23, 2011

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