



Everywhere you look in **New York City**, the **holiday spirit** abounds with shop windows lushly dressed in extravagant splendor, chestnut vendors selling their wares on street corners, holiday markets brimming with colorful gifts, skaters swirling on the ice rinks, and holiday shows to spark the imagination and fill the spirit with joy. We visited [The Morgan Library & Museum](#) to see their **Charles Dickens and the Spirit of Christmas exhibition that runs through January 14, 2018** to get a jump start on the holiday season, and fell in love (again) with Charles Dickens and the most beloved of Christmas stories.



A Christmas Carol

Charles Dickens

Growing up, Charles Dickens's Christmas Carol was a holiday tradition (in Debra's family), an eagerly anticipated annual celebration that included reading the book, *A Christmas Carol*, which Charles Dickens (1812 - 1870) wrote in 1843, as well as seeing the play, which Victoria (Debra's mother) performed in yearly. (In Debra's family), Charles Dickens was a close, personal, and treasured literary "friend."

On Friday, November 3, 2017, we decided it was time to get into the spirit of Christmas by visiting The Morgan Library & Museum located on Madison Avenue at 36th Street in New York City to experience their holiday exhibition: **Charles Dickens and the Spirit of Christmas** and recapture the magic of childhood. The exhibition provided us with an insightful glimpse into the world of Charles Dickens and how his book not only changed the lives of others, but his own life as well. Published at a time in his life when he had financial difficulties, the book was an immediate and enormous success. He later went on to write 4 more Christmas books: *The Chimes* (1844), *The Cricket on the Hearth* (1845), *The Battle of Life* (1846), and *The Haunted Man* (1848). The success of the books provided Charles Dickens with the opportunity to do dramatic readings beginning in 1853, which were so well received that they launched a new career for him, traveling internationally and giving readings until his death in 1870.



Charles Dickens

For Dickens' fans, the opportunity to see his original manuscripts, letters, illustrations, photographs, his writing desk, and even his travel podium that he took around the world for his readings, was an exciting discovery. Almost 175 years since the debut of Charles Dickens's book, *A Christmas Carol*, his legacy lives on whenever anyone reads his books, sees a stage adaptation, or watches a film based on his original book. We left the Dickens exhibition with a twinkle in our eyes, and the holiday spirit flowing in our veins.



A Christmas Carol Poster

In addition to the Charles Dickens and the Spirit of Christmas exhibition, there are wonderful companion programs in the form of films, gallery talks, concerts, family programs, adult workshops, a lecture and discussion, and a dramatic performance.



The Haunted Man

Charles Dickens

Holiday Exhibition: Charles Dickens and the Spirit of Christmas - Runs through January 14, 2018

Holiday Programs: Concerts

November 17, 2017

Chamber Orchestra of New York

Holiday Programs: Dramatic Performances

December 15, 2017

Everyone's Carol

Holiday Programs: Films

November 14, 2017

The Man Who Invented Christmas

December 3, 2017

The Muppet Christmas Carol

December 8, 2017

A Christmas Carol

Holiday Programs: Films

November 17, 2017

Charles Dickens and the Spirit of Christmas

December 8, 2017

Charles Dickens and the Spirit of Christmas

Holiday Programs: Adult Workshops

December 5, 2017

Reading Dickens's Christmas Books

Holiday Programs: Tours

Til January 14, 2018

Charles Dickens and the Spirit of Christmas

During our visit, we also experienced The Morgan Library & Museum's other exhibitions including: **Drawn to Greatness: Master Drawings from the Thaw Collection**, with important works by Mantegna, Rubens, Rembrandt, Canaletto, Goya, Turner, Degas, Gauguin, van Gogh, Picasso, and Pollock, and many more. Also interesting was their exhibit **Magnificent Gems: Medieval Treasure Bindings**, and **Views of Rome and Naples: Oil Sketches from the Thaw Collection**.

Another highlight of our visit was seeing **Pierpont Morgan's 1906 Library**, which was a study in opulence with three levels of books, rich architectural details and intricate appointments including arched, hand-painted ceiling, a stunning tapestry, stained glass window, and intricately carved fireplace large enough to stand in.

The Morgan Library & Museum is truly a gem in the heart of New York City, located a short stroll from Grand Central and Penn Station, and should be a "must-visit" for museum and architectural lovers visiting New York.

Current Exhibitions

Drawn to Greatness: Master Drawings from the Thaw Collection

Runs through January 7, 2018

Magnificent Gems: Medieval Treasure Bindings

Runs through January 7, 2018

Pierpont Morgan's 1906 Library

Ongoing

Views of Rome and Naples: Oil Sketches from the Thaw Collection

Runs through March 18, 2018

Music Programs

In addition to the exhibits, the museum has interesting music programs on Friday evenings and Sunday afternoons. On Friday evenings, there is Jazz music in the Gilbert Courtyard from 6:30 pm until 8:30 pm, and on Sunday afternoons, there is classical music in the Gilbert Café from 1:00 pm until 3:00 pm during the Morgan Café brunch. Weekend music is free with museum admission.

There are many more concerts throughout the year, so please check their website for a full performance calendar: www.themorgan.org/programs/concerts

The museum truly offers something for everyone with their exceptional exhibitions, concerts, lectures and

Created by: Debra C. Argen and Edward F. Nesta

conversations, films, gallery and docent tours, adult workshops, sketching in the gallery, and family programs. Immerse yourself fully in the ambience and the possibilities of The Morgan Library & Museum, then take a moment for refreshment in the Morgan Café or The Morgan Dining Room, and finish your visit with a trip to the gift shop.

Some Information on The Morgan Library& Museum

"In 1924 J.P. Morgan, Jr. gave his father's extraordinary library to the public. The most influential financier in this country's history, Pierpont Morgan was also a voracious collector. He bought on an astonishing scale, collecting art objects in virtually every medium, including the rare books, manuscripts, drawings, prints, and ancient artifacts that are the core of The Morgan Library & Museum's holdings."

"Today, The Morgan Library & Museum is a complex of buildings of differing styles and periods covering half a city block. It began as an intimate palazzo-like structure designed by Charles Follen McKim to serve as the private library of financier Pierpont Morgan. "Mr. Morgan's library", as it became known, was built between 1902 and 1906 to the east of his New York residence at Madison Avenue and 36th Street."

"In the years since the Morgan's incorporation as a public institution in 1924, there have been several additions to the original library building. As the collections grew, the Annex was added in 1928, on the site of Morgan's home. In 1988, the mid-nineteenth-century brownstone on Madison Avenue and 37th Street, where J. P. Morgan, Jr., lived was also added to the complex. A garden court was built in 1991 to unite all three buildings in the complex. A century after the completion of the McKim building, The Morgan Library & Museum unveiled the largest expansion and renovation in its history. The Renzo Piano design integrates the three landmark buildings with three intimately scaled new pavilions constructed of steel-and-glass panels to create an accessible, inviting setting."



Edward F. Nesta at Morgan Library

The Morgan Library & Museum is open Tuesday through Thursday from 10:30 am until 5:00 pm, Friday from 10:30 am until 9:00 pm, Saturday from 10:00 am until 6:00 pm, and Sunday from 11:00 am until 6:00 pm.

Note: The Morgan closes at 4:00 pm on Christmas Eve and at 5:00 pm on New Year's Eve. Closed Monday, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, and New Year's Day.

Admission: Adults: \$20, Seniors (65 years and older): \$13, Students (with current ID): \$13, and free to members and children 12 and under (must be accompanied by an adult). Admission is free on Fridays from 7:00 pm until 9:00 pm.



Debra C. Argen at Morgan Library - Dickens Exhibit

Admission to the McKim rooms only (Mr. Morgan's Library, Study, Rotunda, and Librarian's Office) is free during the following time: Tuesday from 3:00 pm until 5:00 pm, Friday from 7:00 pm until 9:00 pm, and Sunday from 4:00 pm until 6:00 pm.

Admission is not required to visit the Morgan Shop, Morgan Dining Room, and Morgan Café.

Please visit their website for additional information on upcoming exhibitions and programs:
www.TheMorgan.com.



The Morgan Library & Museum

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