

Learning Places Fall 2016

SITE REPORT #1

Morgan Library

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INTRODUCTION

The Morgan Library consists of several buildings: Annex, Mr. Morgan's Library, the brownstone building (Morgan's son's house), the original library and the main entrance on Madison Avenue (lobby). We met with the tour guide and discussed the differences we saw in the entrances on the Madison Avenue side versus the 36th street side.

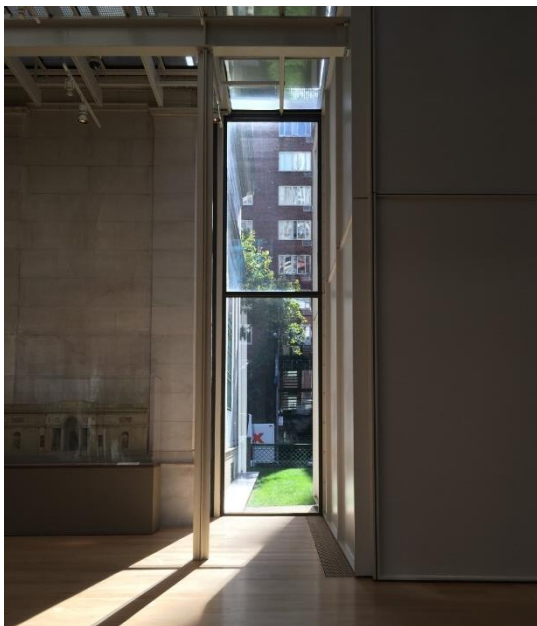
SITE DOCUMENTATION (photos*)



We walked into the center of all the connected buildings but it felt like a very public space. I can compare this to the underground park which they are building called the Low Line because even though the park is underground, there will still be a lot of natural elements such as wooden planks for the floors, trees, real sunlight provided by light collectors. Even though it's interior, it will still feel like a public space. When we looked around, we started describing how we can see different side of the streets, buildings, and even a patch of green. The buildings connected shows how transparent or closed off they are. We can see the physical layout and where we are or not welcome in the area. We were then told that this was known as a piazza. A piazza is defined as a central gathering place in Italian cities or towns. Renzo Piano was Italian and he wanted to integrate his views into this building. He did so by buying the brownstone between the dad and son's building, tore it down and created green space.



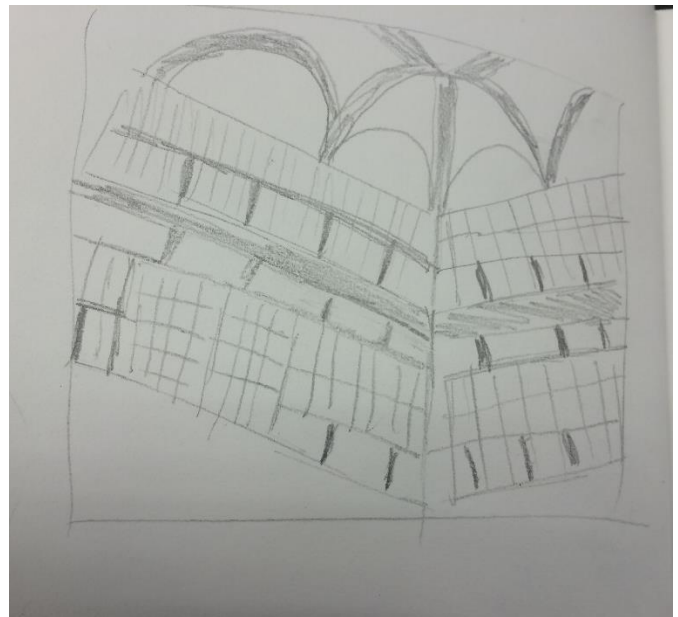
I put the picture and the drawing here to further emphasize on the exposed walls of the separate buildings such as Morgan's son's, Jack, brownstone home.



This was a good example of the light being able to come through the windows of the piazza. The space feels very transparent and we can even see the patch of green grass. This is next to the cubical structure which is called a studiolo. This studiolo is used as a gallery and the main purpose of a studiolo in Italy is for the space to be a private room in houses or palaces in early modern Europe served as a study or a place to retreat.



I took a panoramic view of the street side view of the Morgan Library and Museum. Originally, the idea of this building had sculptures such as lions but it was never made. I thought it was interesting that they have a tripartite with an arch on the street side. It reminds me of the other buildings such as Grand Central with the grand pillars. I remember we learned about different types of pillars, such as ionic, doric and carithian. Would these pillars be considered ionic?



The picture above shows a library with the manuscripts in it. We learned about manu (hand) script (written) and saw the illuminated manuscripts gilded with gold and hand cloned.



One of the last places we went to was Mr. Morgan's study room. When I walked in, I thought that the place was very grand and religious. There were many small details about the room that made it overwhelming to just casually stroll by without examining what's in the room. The crimson colored silk decorated on his wall spoke of privacy and when we were talking, there was no echo in the room. I learned that there were two types of spaces: profane and sacred. Even the ceiling was brought and fitted from Italy and stained glass was from Switzerland. The ceiling was brought up again in class and we learned the terminology for it, which was coffered.



I thought the study was interesting because he had a tapestry which showed Mithras. It also shows the 7 deadly sins and we learned about what a miser is who is someone very greedy. He constantly reminds himself not to be this way, and was well known for being a philanthropist. He was a man who loved the written word and has a vast collection of arts, books, and manuscripts. I thought it was interesting that he had a hidden staircase in his study. He was also a very wealthy

man and his study was one of the first to be electrified and had illuminated lights.

GENERAL NOTES:

- The Morgan Library space is known as a campus because it's joined together by several buildings of the same common spirit. I think it was interesting that we compared it to our school campus because it's a much smaller space but still considered a campus.
- It was noted that it was a successful building because even though we see one modern building next to a neoclassical building, Renzo Piano was still able to display symmetry and proportions with the rectangular plates compared to the windows on the Annex of the other buildings.
- We also see the tripartite in the three buildings, the son's brownstone home, main entrance (lobby) on Madison Avenue, and Mr. Morgan's studies. On the street side view, there is also a tripartite but with arch for the doorway.

INSIGHTS/DISCOVERIES

Before this tour, I would not have thought about the main entrance as anything special. But once I learned about symmetry and proportions, I started seeing it as an architectural building especially when we got inside to the piazza. We were able to see lots of natural light coming into the building, but it was able to function and designed to include different materials and texture such as the brownstone, marble and glass all into one space. It was a very significant shift in point of view as someone who doesn't understand what they are looking at to a small glimpse of what an architect sees.

KEYWORDS/VOCABULARY & DEFINITIONS

*5 keywords minimum required per site visit

Piazza - as a central gathering place in Italian cities or towns

Symmetry - **Symmetry** is a mathematical operation, or transformation, that results in the same figure as the original figure (or its mirror image). It is everywhere, in the sciences, in the arts, in **architecture**, in nature, and in our everyday life

Morganization - Monopolization techniques used by J.P. Morgan in the nineteenth century. J.P. Morgan used his reputation to lure European financiers into America by taking over an industry and stabilizing it through monopoly.

Studiolo - A '**studiolo**' (from the Italian, **meaning** little studio) is a small room, often lavishly decorated, dedicated to reading, studying and writing. It is generally of a relatively private character.

Schist - a coarse-grained metamorphic rock that consists of layers of different minerals and can be split into thin irregular plates.

Anathyrosis - **Anathyrosis** is the technical term for how the ancients frequently dressed the joints of stone blocks. Since the blocks were set directly against each other without the use of mortar, the joint had to be exact. ... Thyra (θύρα) is a Greek word for “door”, and so “door framing” is **anathyrosis**.

Lunette - something crescent-shaped, in particular. An arched aperture or window, especially one in a domed ceiling. A crescent-shaped or semicircular alcove containing something such as a painting or statue.

Renaissance – The humanistic revival of classical art, architecture, literature, and learning that originated in Italy in the 14th century and later spread throughout Europe

Coffers - a recessed panel in a ceiling

QUESTIONS for Further RESEARCH

1. The railings that surrounded the libraries, what are they called? (Mezzanine/tiers?)
2. Why did he choose certain historical figures to represent biology, history, etc in his ceiling? Were they more significant than other figures at the time?
3. Why is there a hidden staircase in his studies?
4. Where does the entrance come from on street side view?