

Learning Places Fall 2016

SITE REPORT #2

The Morgan Library & Museum



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INTRODUCTION

Last week, we went to visit the The Morgan Library & Museum which was founded by J. P. Morgan in 1906 as a class. I for one, felt like I stepped into a old Sherlock Holmes movie while inside his study and the immense library with the hidden doors, and secret passageways. While our

guide talked about the our buildings, I found myself in awe of the clean design and wondering what the other spaces looked like, thus I will be going back with my family to explore more of it.

SITE DOCUMENTATION (photos*)

***3 photos minimum required per site visit**



This part of the of the space shows the brownstone building that was left intact and build around. You can still see the windows that faced outside.



Here we have an image of a Madam Tussauds wax figure posing as a tour guide with a tablet in hand... Ohhhhh, that's our actual tour guide for the day and behind her is an awesome sculpture of the outside of the study and library as seen on 36th Street between Madison Avenue and Park Avenue.



This shot shows the ceiling in Morgan's study. It was brought in from Europe and looked hand carved with pictures in the flat spaces. Also of note was the walls that were of a velvet material.



These shots show The extensive book collection that's housed inside the Morgan Library as well as the vault in his study. The library is pretty amazing and even has access to a hidden spiral staircase in each corner used to access the upper levels as well as the lower passages.

GENERAL NOTES:

- Morgan spent a lot of time in his study towards the end of his life. He had vault that he used to house his favorite objects.
- In the Library, I found at least 3 hidden doorways that were for accessing the upper floors and also the secret tunnel below.
- The Library was designed by Charles McKim and built in between 1902 and 1906 next door to Morgan's home on 36th and Madison Avenue.
- In 1928, the annex building was built on the corner of Madison Avenue and 36th Street, replacing Morgan's residence.

INSIGHTS/DISCOVERIES

While in the Morgan space, I discovered that it was put together with some mystery to it. Why did

the study have a echo proof ceiling and a floor that didn't produce sound when you walked on it? The library also had the hidden staircases but there was another hidden door that didn't open outwards but rather inwards that the staff didn't talk about and kinda ignored when I asked about it. Overall, that space is interesting to me and I can't wait to see the other levels and maybe get a private tour using my veteran status. I was very intrigued by the construction of the site that housed the study and the library, but not really that much impressed by the "cube" that made the indoor section between the 3 buildings. To me, it goes to show how much power money has, because I've seen other really great places in nyc get utterly ruined due to lack of upkeep and maintenance.

KEYWORDS/VOCABULARY & DEFINITIONS

***5 keywords minimum required per site visit**

Piazza: A public square or marketplace, especially in an Italian town

Studiolo: A private study decorated with paintings and other works of art, popular in Italy from the 14th to the 16th centuries

Anathyrosis: Smooth dressing of the margin of ashlar stone or of the drums comprising the shaft of a Classical column to ensure an accurate masonry joint

Oculus: A round or eye-like opening or design, in particular; A circular window; The central boss of a volute; An opening at the apex of a dome.

Schist: A coarse-grained metamorphic rock which consists of layers of different minerals and can be split into thin irregular plates

QUESTIONS for Further RESEARCH

1. What is actually written on the tablet in that room, and how did the people actually know what it said?
2. How did the librarian get to the second level of books in the room with the rock tablet in it?
3. What is the significance of the library and why did it need to be preserved? What kind of labor went into building that building that housed the study (These questions might not mean anything to you and cost me points, but they are questions that I had regardless)?