

**Learning Places Fall 2016**  
**Site Report #2**  
**The Morgan Library & Museum**



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**Introduction**

We first visit the Morgan Library and Museum by taking an exterior look at the original neo classical library built for Pierpont Morgan. We then move on to see the modern looking Anex and take a brief moment to talk about the different types of architecture that make up the site. After moving onto the main building, we then visit the museum itself which was divided to Morgan's study, the front room, and the library itself.



### **The West Room: Pierpont Morgan's Study**

Towards the end of Pierpont Morgan's life he spent most of his time in this study, away from his banking company. Occasionally this is where he would meet with art dealers and business colleagues. The room is surrounded by sculptures, antiques, and paintings that go all the way back to the Renaissance. Inside the shelves are rare printed volumes. The room even has its own secured vault which contained his manuscript collection before, but now it's being displayed in the library.





### **The Rotunda of Pierpont Morgan's Library**

This vivid and classical room was designed by Charles Follen McKim and built in 1906. Visitors would enter through the enormous bronze doors and see that it's full of artistic and decorative columns, floors, panels. The paintings on the ceiling were designed by American artist Henry Siddons Mowbray. They represent three different eras that come from Morgan's antique collection, the Middle Ages, and the Renaissance.



### **The East Room: The Library**

A three-story room filled with bookshelves and a beautiful ceiling, that still holds Morgan's collection of rare printed books. To reach the balconies of this room there are two secret staircases hiding behind the bookcases. Paintings by Henry Siddons Mowbray show the zodiac signs symbolizing arts and sciences. As well as individuals like Socrates and Michelangelo making it a philosophical library.

## **General Notes**

- In 1991, the garden court was built to connect the Jack Morgan's brownstone residence, the annex, and the library.
- Pierpont Morgan spent a lot of his time working and relaxing in his study which even came with his very own secured vault.
- In order to reach the upper bookshelves of the library there are two hidden staircases behind the bookcases.

## **Insights/Discoveries**

The Morgan Library & Museum is a combination of different buildings with their own styles. It first started as a private library for financier Pierpont Morgan designed by Charles Follen McKim. Built from 1902 to 1906 on Madison Avenue and 36th Street. In 1928, the Annex was added and replaced Morgan's home. In 1988, the mid-nineteenth century brownstone was also added to site, which used to be the residence of Jack Morgan, Pierpont's son. In 1991, the garden court was built to connect all three buildings. In its recent years, Renzo Piano designed what became the biggest extension and renovation of the site's history. The construction of steel and glass panels gave it a modern and friendly look. The increased space was used for a performance hall, cafe, restaurant, shop, as well as more visiting services.

## **Keywords/Vocabulary**

Morgan Library – Pierpont Morgan's library now known as a museum and a historical landmark

Annex – the modern building which was once Morgan's home that sits between the brownstone building and the library

Charles Follen McKim – designed the Morgan Library (1902-1906)

Renzo Piano – the famous architect that was responsible for the renovation of the site

Jack Morgan – Pierpont Morgan's son that lived in the brownstone building