

Learning Places Fall 2016

# **SITE REPORT #2**

## **Morgan Library and Museum**



**Noorul Ain**

09/28/2016

## INTRODUCTION

The Morgan Library and Museum is a research Library and Museum located at 225 Madison Avenue at East 36th street in the Murray Hill neighborhood of Manhattan city in New York. J.P. Morgan in 1906. The library founded the library and museum includes manuscript and printed books. Some of them in rare bindings, as well as his collection of prints and drawings. Charles Mckim designed the library.

Library was made public institution in 1924 by J. P. Morgan's son John Pierpont Morgan, Jr. We start our visit by looking at exterior of the library. The Morgan campus consists of 4 different buildings, the main entrance building the Annex to the right of the main entrance, the brown stone building, to the left of the main entrance and the original Library on the right to the main entrance. The Annex replaced J.P. Morgan's original residence. The brownstone building was J.P. Morgan's son residence. The main entrance building or Lobby was built with the same idea of what was originally there. Before the Lobby, there was a garden court that connected the different buildings

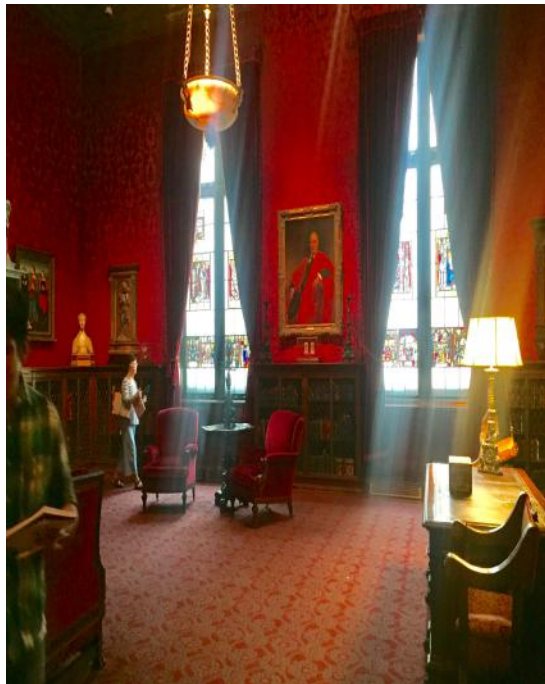
## SITE DOCUMENTATION (photos)



These four

photo was taken inside the main entrance of the Morgan library which was designed by Renzo Piano and completed in year 2006. when you first enter into the Gilbert Court you will feel like you are in modern architect world because everything in the lobby consists of glass, glass walls,

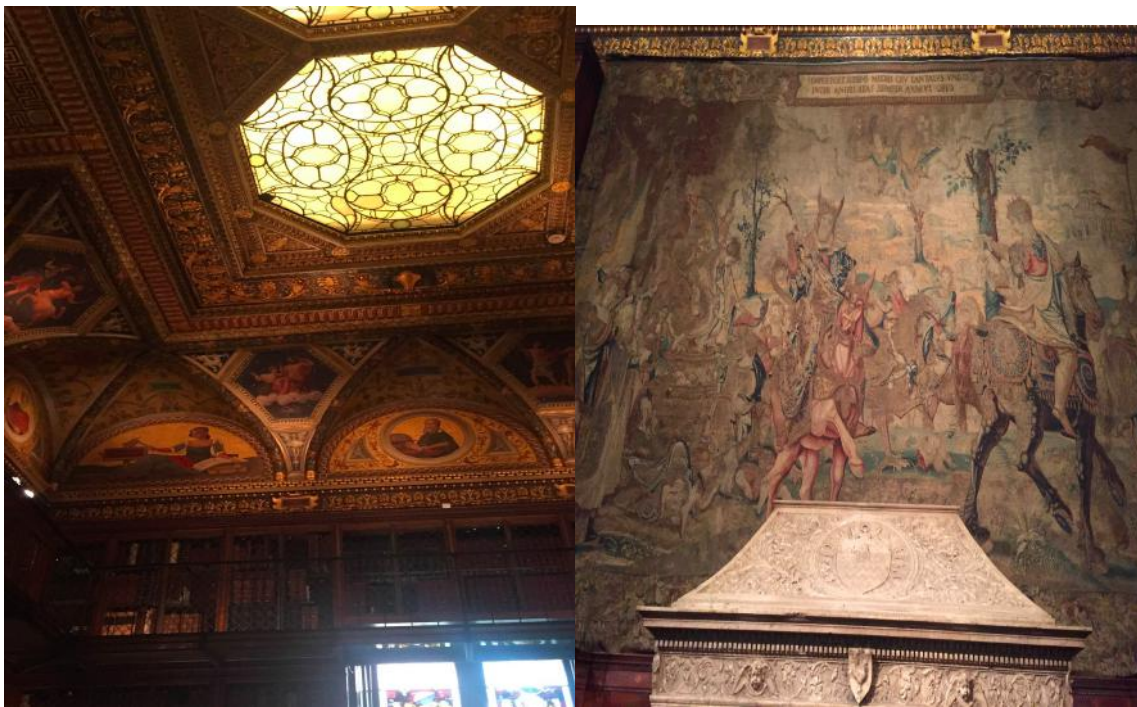
glass elevator everything looks so modernized and up to date. Because walls made from the glass, all natural lights come into the Gilbert Court.

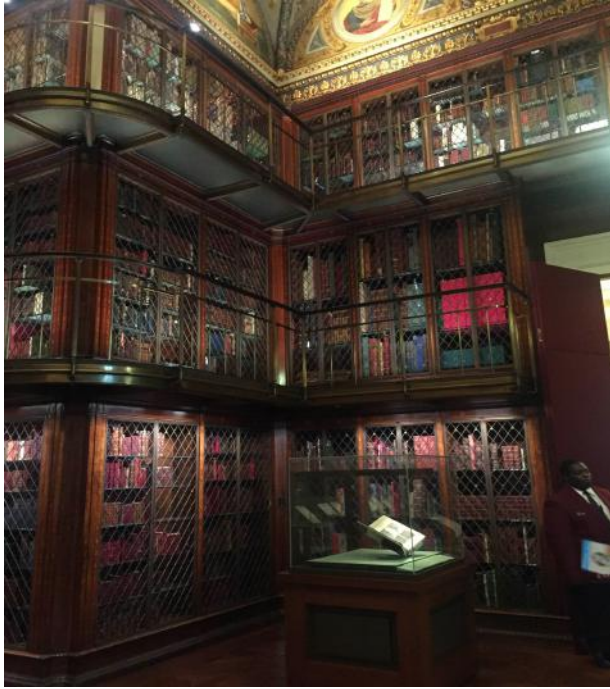


These photos were taken inside the Morgan's Study, which is the most luxurious and yet personal of the library rooms and reflects the personal tastes

of its origin. In this study Mr. Morgan met with art dealers, scholars, business colleagues, and friends. One of the most remarkable features of the room is the antique wooden ceiling. McKim purchased it in Florence and had it reassembled to fit this room. The stained-glass panels' set into the windows date from the fifteenth to the late seventeenth centuries; they are from memorial windows formerly in churches and monasteries in Switzerland.

The red silk covering walls of the study were imported from Italy, where it had decorated the palace of the great banking family. The settee, the desk, the desk chair, and the end table were custom made in 1906 by Cowtan & Sons of London, in England in the style of the Renaissance.



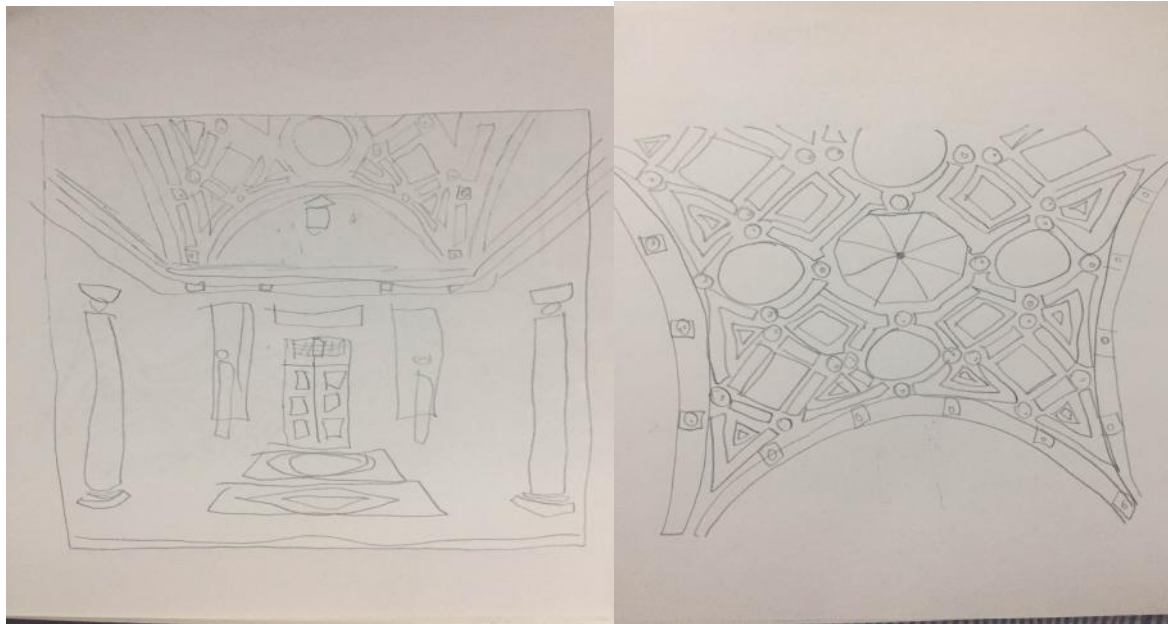


The Library is the largest and grandest of the rooms in the McKim building. The walls, reaching to a height of thirty feet, are lined floor to ceiling with triple tiers of bookcases. Two staircases, behind bookcases at the corners of the room, provide access to the balconies above. A pair of windows, featuring fragments of stained glass, provides lighting from the north.

The mantelpiece on the east wall of the Library is carved of Istrian marble in the Renaissance style. Above is a tapestry, *The Triumph of Avarice*, with a moralizing Latin inscription that translates, "As Tantalus is ever thirsty in the midst of water, and so is the miser always desirous of riches." The tapestry belongs to a series depicting the *Seven Deadly Sins*, designed by Pieter Coecke van Aelst.

There the pictures of the constellations relate to the horoscope of Agostino Chigi, the renowned banker for whom the villa was built. Similarly, the zodiacal signs on the Library's ceiling have been arranged in ways that were meaningful to Morgan. The two signs above the doorway, isolated from the rest, are those of Aries and Gemini. These correspond, respectively, to Morgan's birth date (April 17, 1837) and to the date of his second marriage to Frances Louisa Tracy (May 31, 1865). Thus Morgan would walk under his two "lucky stars" each time he entered the room.

## SITE DOCUMENTATION (sketches)



The interior of the McKim building consists of three rooms the east, north, and west sides of the Rotunda, and an entrance. The largest of the three served as Morgan's library, the room to the west was Morgan's private study, and the smallest of the three, to the north, was an office for Pierpont Morgan's librarian. The three paintings over the Rotunda's main entrance and the doors to the Library They are a tribute to the great literary epochs of the past and to the authors whose work defined them.

**Antiquity** (on the east, above the door to Mr. Morgan's Library): Epic Poetry represents the literature of antiquity.

**The Middle Ages** (on the south, above the original entrance): Arthurian romance and Dante's Divine Comedy characterize The Middle Ages.

**The Renaissance** (on the west, leading to Mr. Morgan's Study): Torquato Tasso and Francesco Petrarch, their loves and literary creations flank Erato, the Muse of Lyric and Amorous Poetry.

The decoration of the Rotunda shows the origin of the art and ideas of the past, from antiquity to the Renaissance.

### GENERAL NOTES:

- Morgan library also known as Morgan campus because many building are joint together.
- The Morgan library was built on the theme of neoclassic you can see classic and modern architecture together under one roof.

- Morgan library was in 1906 but in 2016 Renzo Piano added the main entrance.
- J.P. Morgan (Pierpont Morgan's son) made library public after his father died.

## **INSIGHTS/DISCOVERIES**

There are hidden staircases inside the bookshelves in the library. You can't see unless some one tells you. I was able to see it because our tour guide showed us otherwise you couldn't find out by yourself. Every thing in the Morgan Library has meaning to it. It's not only for decoration, from paintings in rotunda, to ceiling and red silk on the wall of Morgan study, everything has meaning.

In the Morgan library and museum you can see the combination of modern and classic architecture. When you enter you will see everything made of glass and when you step into the study and library you will feel like you are in old era.

## **KEYWORDS/VOCABULARY & DEFINITIONS**

**Annex:** To add as an additional part to existing possessions.

**Schist:** A crystalline rock whose component minerals are arranged in a more or less parallel manner.

**Piazza:** A public square or marketplace.

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

**Façade:** The front of a building, especially an imposing or decorative one.

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