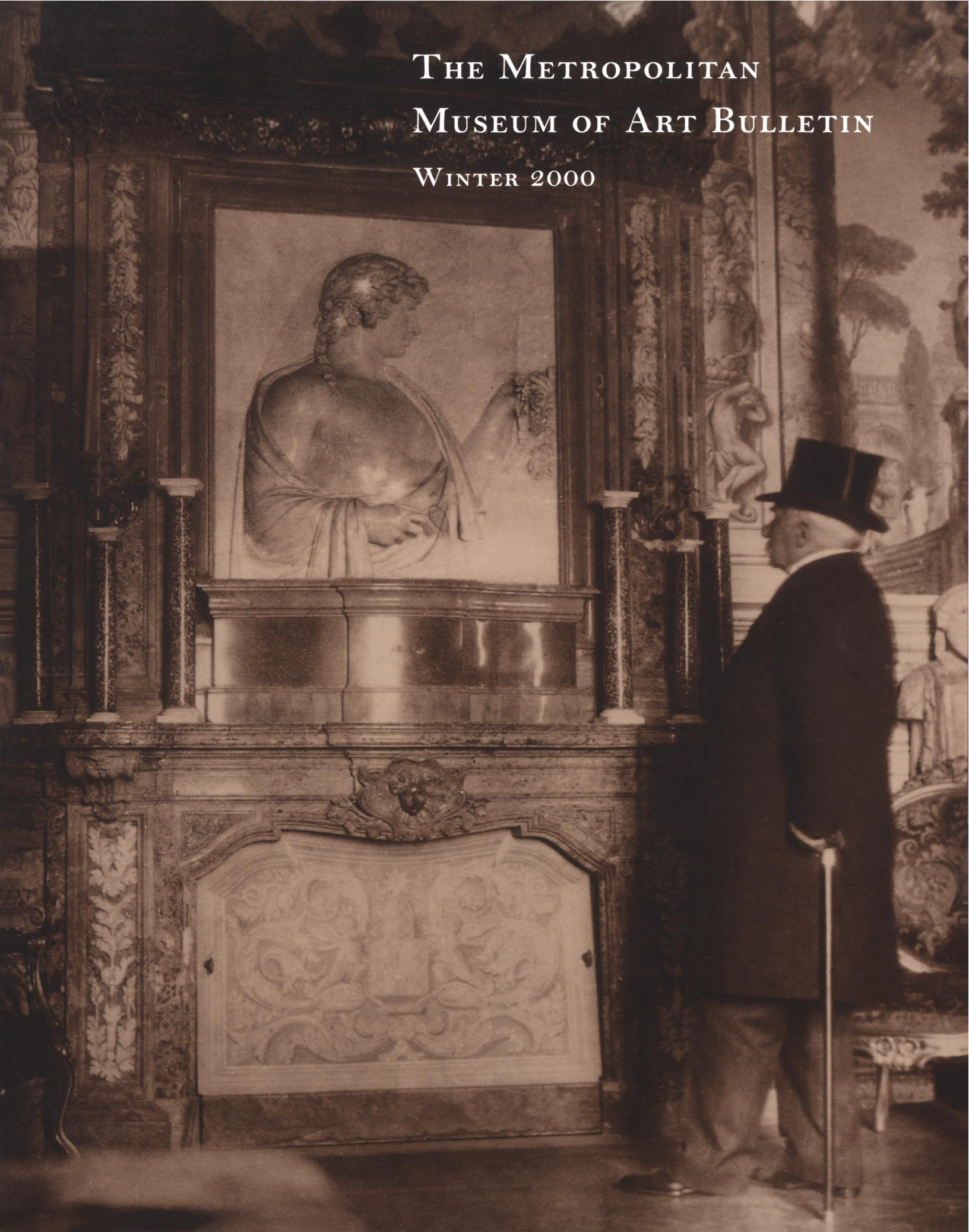


THE METROPOLITAN
MUSEUM OF ART BULLETIN
WINTER 2000





J. PIERPONT MORGAN FINANCIER AND COLLECTOR

Jean Strouse

THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

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List of contributors of captions by department appears on page 62.

On the cover: J. Pierpont Morgan (1837–1913) viewing the Antinous at the Villa Albani, Rome, April 12, 1907. Archives of The Pierpont Morgan Library, New York. Inside front cover: Detail of Hubert Robert's *The Swing* (fig. 28). P. 3: Detail of Gerard Ter Borch's *The Toilette* (fig. 33)

The first *Bulletin* of the new century is devoted to one of the great Museum benefactors of the last, J. Pierpont Morgan. A dominating figure in the world of American finance for over fifty years, Morgan pursued a second career as a collector of art with equal energy. His association with the Museum spanned four decades. It began when he became a patron in 1871, then a trustee in 1888, continued with gifts of works of art (the first in 1897), and reached its high point when he became president in 1904, an office he held until his death in 1913. The final chapter in this association was written in 1917, when his son, J. P. Morgan Jr., gave the Metropolitan a large part of his father's collection, including works that had been on loan to almost every department at the time of his death. The 1917 gift of some 7,000 objects was among the largest and most varied ever accepted by this institution.

At the time of his death Pierpont Morgan had made no definitive plans for his collection, other than to stress in his will that it was intended for the art education and pleasure of the public. In the years that followed some of the major pieces were dispersed, but Morgan's son had reserved for the Museum objects that he felt would be difficult to obtain from other sources, such as the Byzantine and medieval ivories and enamels that had formed an important part of his father's collection and are among the glories of our medieval holdings. Morgan objects are also represented in our Ancient Near

Eastern, Egyptian, Greek and Roman, Asian, and Arms and Armor galleries, as well as in the American Wing. "Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan" appears on labels for many objects in our European Sculpture and Decorative Arts galleries. The gift included a unique group of "Saint-Porchaire" pottery of the mid-sixteenth century, continental goldsmiths' work, and a large collection of watches, evidence of Morgan's taste for opulence. The Department of European Paintings records forty-one pictures from the Morgan collection, among which are the Raphael altarpiece, the panel from the workshop of Rogier van der Weyden, the Ter Borch (illustrated in detail on the opposite page), and the Hubert Roberts reproduced in this publication.

To tell the story of J. Pierpont Morgan—his life, his rise to become a powerful force in the world of finance, and his collecting acumen—we are honored to have as author of this *Bulletin* Jean Strouse, whose well-reviewed, full-scale biography *Morgan: American Financier* was published by Random House in spring of 1999. No one is better qualified to describe this complicated and sometimes enigmatic man, who enriched the Metropolitan with his generosity and with his grasp of its possibilities as a great institution.

Philippe de Montebello
Director

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J. PIERPONT MORGAN

FINANCIER AND COLLECTOR

The inscription on a limestone tablet memorial to John Pierpont Morgan, set into the south wall of the entrance vestibule at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, ends with the words *Vita Plena Laboris*—"a life full of work." That work served as the hallmark of Morgan's life is in some ways surprising. Born in 1837 into the American patriciate, he did not have to earn a living. Many of his Gilded Age contemporaries held sinecure jobs or spent their time and their families' fortunes in pursuit of pleasure. Morgan devoted most of his career to financing America's railroads and industrial corporations (including U. S. Steel, General Electric, International Harvester, and AT&T) and to monitoring the country's emerging capital markets. One of his British partners, visiting New York in 1901, told a friend: "[I]t is extremely interesting to find oneself in the very heart of Wall Street excitement and combinations, and to note the prodigious amount of nervous excitement and energy the Americans throw into their work... Few of them live through it to advanced years except physical and intellectual giants like Morgan, who has something Titanic about him when he really gets to work."

In his time away from Wall Street and in unofficial semiretirement after 1901, Morgan turned his formidable energies to work of other kinds—collecting art and supporting a wide range of institutions that included The Metropolitan Museum of Art, the American Museum of Natural History, the Metropolitan Opera, the American Academy in Rome, and the Wadsworth Atheneum in Hartford, Connecticut. He became a patron of the Metropolitan Museum in 1871, a year after it was founded, and joined the board of

trustees in 1888. He was elected first vice president at the beginning of 1904 and president that fall—a position he retained until his death in 1913.

Acquiring art on an imperial scale in the early twentieth century, both for himself and for the Metropolitan Museum, Morgan seemed to want all the beautiful things in the world. There was what the French cultural critic Jean Baudrillard has called "a strong whiff of the harem" about this kind of collecting—a sense of intimacy "bounded by seriality," a wish to stand alone surrounded by exquisite objects like the "sultan of a secret seraglio." Morgan built a private library beside his brownstone on East Thirty-sixth Street to house his collections of rare books, illuminated manuscripts, and drawings (see figs. 2, 39). When he bought the manuscripts of *Pudd'nhead Wilson* and *Life on the Mississippi* from Mark Twain in 1909, the ordinarily acerbic author told him, "One of my highest ambitions is gratified—which was, to have something of mine placed elbow to elbow with that august company which you have gathered together to remain indestructible in a perishable world." The London *Times*, reporting on the treasures at Morgan's library, said of wealthy contemporary collectors: "One out of ten has taste; one out of a hundred has genius. Mr. Frick, Mr. Altman, Mr. Widener in America, and the late Rodolphe Kann in Paris, come under the former category; but the man of genius is Mr. Pierpont Morgan."

Morgan rarely commented on what he acquired or why, but he was buying far more than his houses and library could hold. (By the late 1890s he owned seven houses: a brownstone at 219 Madison Avenue in New



1. *The Magnet*. From *Puck* magazine

Cartoonists often satirized Morgan's voracious collecting habits. The scope of his 1901 acquisitions prompted one of his British partners to wire a New York colleague (referring to Morgan by his code name): "I hope, though we cannot hint it, that Fitch will not buy the National Gallery at the end of the year."

Archives of The Pierpont Morgan Library, New York

2. Francesco Colonna (Italian, ca. 1433–1527). *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*. Published by Aldus Manutius, Venice, 1499. 11 $\frac{1}{4}$ x 17 $\frac{1}{16}$ in. (29.5 x 45.4 cm)

The fully perfected Roman typeface, elegantly simple woodcuts (perhaps by the illuminator Benedetto Bordon [d. 1530]), and balanced, graceful page layout made this volume the most influential Venetian book of the 15th

century. It is one of the few that Morgan did not deposit in his library. The title (two invented words) can be translated as "Strife of Love in a Dream of Poliphilo"; the hero is the "lover of Polia." Polia symbolizes antiquity in both its civilized and Arcadian aspects.

Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1923 (23.73.1)





3. 219 Madison Avenue, on the corner of 36th Street, built in 1852 and purchased by Morgan in 1880

Renovated for Morgan by the leading New York decorating firm of Herter Brothers, it was the first private residence in the world to be entirely illuminated by Edison's lightbulbs. Morgan built his library, shown at right in this picture, between 1902 and 1906. After the house was torn down in 1925, an annex extended the library all the way to Madison Avenue.

Archives of The Pierpont Morgan Library, New York



4. 13–14 Princes Gate, London

Morgan inherited a town house at No. 13 Princes Gate from his father in 1890. To accommodate his growing collections in England, he bought No. 14 in 1904 and opened the walls between the two buildings, converting the first two floors into galleries.

Archives of The Pierpont Morgan Library, New York

York [fig. 3], a large country estate in the Hudson River valley, a rustic camp in the Adirondacks, a “fishing box” at Newport, a resort apartment on Jekyll Island in Georgia, a London town house facing Hyde Park—13 Princes Gate [fig. 4]—and a Regency villa with extensive gardens and grounds just outside London in Roehampton.) In a little over twenty years he spent about \$60 million (roughly \$900 million in 1990s dollars) on art. Except for the books, manuscripts, and drawings that remain at the Pierpont Morgan Library, the collections are now dispersed—most of them at the Metropolitan Museum and the Frick Collection in New York, and at the Wadsworth Atheneum in Hartford.

Pierpont Morgan grew up in Hartford and Boston. He moved with his family to London in 1854 when his father, Junius Spencer

Morgan, joined an Anglo-American merchant bank. Junius hoped to build an international financial dynasty similar to those of the Rothschilds and the Barings, and he based his plans for the future on his son. He prescribed every aspect of the boy's moral, practical, and professional education, sending Pierpont to school in Switzerland (see fig. 5), to the German university in Göttingen, and, in 1857, to work as an apprentice banker in New York.

The booming U. S. economy of the 1850s needed more capital than it could generate on its own, but the risks involved in America's emerging markets were as great as the potential rewards, and European investors who had been burned by reckless profiteers in the 1830s and 40s were not about to send more money across the Atlantic without some guarantee that it would be safe. Junius and Pierpont Morgan, working together in London and New York, tried to provide that



5. Daguerreotype of Morgan as a student at Vevey,
Switzerland, ca. 1854

Archives of The Pierpont Morgan Library, New York

6. J. Pierpont Morgan,
ca. 1910

The Metropolitan Museum
of Art



guarantee, and over the next three decades investors on both sides of the Atlantic learned to trust the Morgan name on an issue of stocks or bonds. The bankers certified which U. S. properties were sound, then backed up their choices by taking personal responsibility for the financial health of companies they represented. If a “Morgan” railroad went bankrupt, Pierpont would fire the managers, hire new ones, restructure the finances, and appoint a board of trustees to supervise the company’s affairs until it recovered. (The process came to be known as *Morganization*.) From the 1850s to the 1890s, the Morgans worked primarily with railroads and largely with foreign investors. By the time Junius died in 1890, the center of

world finance had shifted from London to New York, and the massive rail network that consolidated the United States into one economic and geographical unit had been built. Between 1890 and 1913 Pierpont Morgan organized giant industrial corporations, primarily with American capital.

Moreover, at a time when the United States had no central bank, he served as the country’s unofficial lender of last resort. When the federal government was running out of gold in 1895, Morgan raised \$65 million and made sure it stayed in the Treasury’s coffers. And in 1907 he stopped a major panic in New York by leading teams of financiers to supply liquidity to desperate markets. For a moment in 1907 he was a national hero.

Crowds cheered as he made his way down Wall Street, and world political leaders saluted his statesmanship with awe. The next moment, however, the exercise of so much power by one private citizen appalled a nation of democrats and revived America's long-standing distrust of bankers and concentrated wealth. Morgan's critics charged that he had made huge profits on the rescue operation—even that he had engineered the crisis in order to scoop up assets at fire-sale prices. The 1907 panic convinced the country that its financial welfare could no longer be left in private hands. This series of events led to the setting up of a national monetary commission and eventually to the founding of the Federal Reserve.

Morgan's authority came not from the size of his bank accounts but from a record that led the world's foremost bankers, statesmen, and industrialists to trust him. After he died in 1913, the newspapers announced that his net worth was under \$100 million. John D. Rockefeller—already worth almost a

billion 1913 dollars—reportedly shook his head and said, “And to think he wasn’t even a rich man.”

By the time Pierpont Morgan started his banking career in New York in 1857, he was twenty years old, six feet tall, fluent in French and German, and intimately familiar with European culture. He had conducted tours of London's art museums, galleries, and chief historical sights for visiting American friends. On the Continent he had noted in his student diaries the entrance fees at Versailles, Napoléon's tomb, the Gobelins tapestry factory, the École Nationale des Beaux-Arts, and the Louvre. In Rome early one winter he had spent a month wandering alone through churches, galleries, and ruins, buying mosaics, perfumes, bronze vases, and reproductions of *The Dying Gladiator* and Antonio Canova's *Hebe*.

Not long after he settled in New York, he fell in love with a young woman named

7. Maurice Ketten. *Exhibiting His Treasures*. From *World Daily Magazine*, March 10, 1908

By 1908 Morgan had consolidated a number of U.S. railroads into large regional systems, organized giant industrial “trusts,” and taken effective control of several banks in addition to his own. Ketten's cartoon played up the popular image of Morgan as capitalist pirate: Queen Alexandra, wife of Edward VII, examines Morgan's “treasures”—trunks full of railroads, trusts, and banks. Another “treasure,” his yacht, is shown on the wall.

Archives of The Pierpont Morgan Library, New York



Amelia Sturges (called “Memie”; fig. 9). Her father was a prominent New York merchant and patron of the arts, Jonathan Sturges, who had started out in the wholesale-grocery business as a partner to Luman Reed, one of the city’s leading early art collectors. In the 1830s, after a brief flirtation with European old masters, Reed had turned his attention to contemporary American artists—particularly Thomas Cole, the country’s first popular landscape painter, often called the father of the Hudson River School.

Unlike the well-traveled Morgans, the Sturges family had never been to Europe. When Memie and her parents decided to take the grand tour in the spring of 1859,

Pierpont drew up an itinerary for them. They would, he wrote, see some of Rubens’s greatest paintings in Antwerp, pay dearly in Brussels for lace, find the Berlin Museum “very fine,” and need two weeks for Paris—“tell all the milliners, dressmakers, &c that you must positively have your purchases at least a week before you really do.”

Pierpont met Memie in London when she returned from the Continent in November 1859 and escorted her family back across the Atlantic. By May of 1860 they were engaged. Early the following winter, however, she came down with such a severe cough and series of colds that she thought they should call off the wedding. He promised to restore

8. J. Pierpont Morgan in 1860, the year before his marriage to Amelia Sturges

Archives of The Pierpont Morgan Library, New York





9. Amelia Sturges. Photograph from Herbert L. Satterlee, *J. Pierpont Morgan, An Intimate Portrait* (New York, 1939)

Archives of The Pierpont Morgan Library, New York

her health on a honeymoon trip to the Mediterranean. They were married on October 7, 1861—with Memie so frail that Pierpont had to hold her up at the altar. In Paris lung specialists diagnosed her illness as tuberculosis. Pierpont took her to Algiers and then Nice, carried her up and down stairs, fed her medicines and her favorite foods, and bought birds to keep her company. “I wish you could see his loving devoted care of me,” she wrote to her mother, “he spares nothing for my comfort & improvement.” She died in February 1862, four months after her wedding.

A widower at twenty-four, Pierpont returned to New York and threw himself into work. All that spring, as the Civil War entered its second year, he traded government bonds and foreign exchange and reported to Junius on American prices and politics. In midsummer, however, he came down with severe “nervous” headaches and went off on doctors’ orders to take the water cure at Saratoga Springs. Blaming these

troubles on his hyperactive conscience, he explained to his father: “I am never satisfied until I either do everything myself or personally supervise every thing down even to an entry in the books. This I cannot help—my habit since I have been in business has been so & I cannot learn to do otherwise.” Moderation did not figure in his character. He would from this point on drive himself to exhaustion, then try to restore his equilibrium with transatlantic voyages, foreign travel, and spa cures.

The dark side of his “Titanic” physical and intellectual energy may have been a genetic predisposition to depression. The maternal (Pierpont) line of his family had a sad history of emotional instability, alcoholism, and vague nervous disorders. Twice in his thirties Pierpont reported himself feeling so “down” and useless that he longed to retire. Instead, he took yearlong sabbaticals, traveling to Egypt for the first time in the winter of 1871–72 and then again in 1876–77. He was drawn to many things besides banking, and the problem for the rest of his life would be that he wanted both the



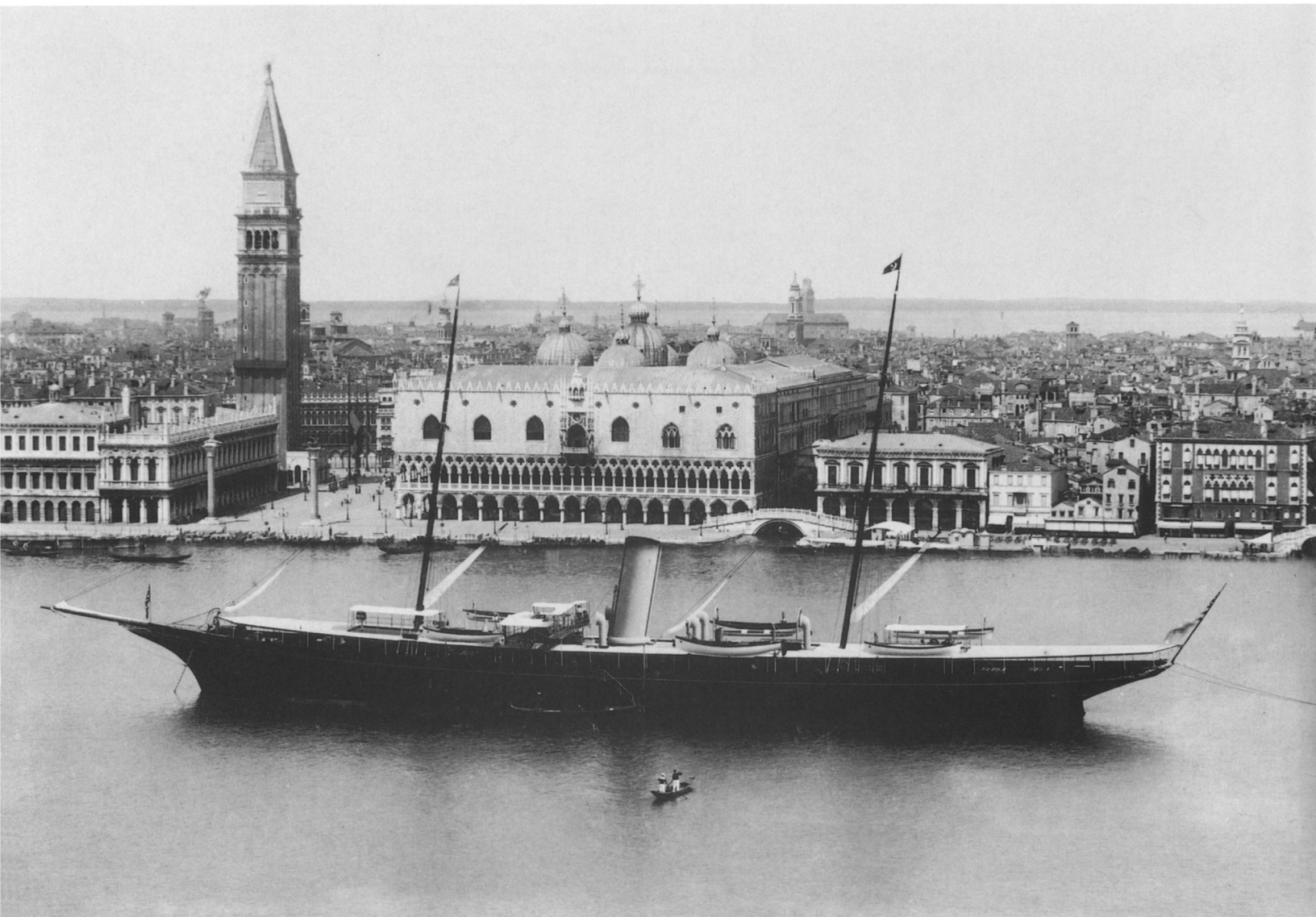
10. Morgan on a Nile boat, ca. 1912

Department of Egyptian Art

11. *Corsair* at Venice, 1902

Over 300 feet long, Morgan's yacht was as well equipped as any Gilded Age town house, with a maple-paneled engine room, large library, and lace curtains in the staterooms.

Archives of The Pierpont Morgan Library, New York



12. Frances Tracy Morgan
Archives of The Pierpont
Morgan Library, New York



large responsibilities of his job *and* freedom to explore foreign cultures, collect art, cruise on his yacht, *Corsair*, tend his country gardens, entertain scores of friends, and help establish New York as one of the world's leading metropolitan capitals. Restless, driven, impatient, and exacting, he lived as if there were not enough time to accomplish all he had in mind.

He married for the second time in 1865. He and the former Frances Louisa Tracy (called "Fanny") had three daughters and a son, but quickly discovered sharp divergences in their characters and inclinations. His frenetic pace and glittering social world were hard on her "nerves," and she disapproved of

his extravagant tastes. Moreover, she did not share his interest in art. She once said that he would buy anything from a pyramid to Mary Magdalene's tooth. He *did* acquire a reliquary monstrosity, probably made in late-fifteenth-century Florence, containing a molar allegedly from the Magdalene's jaw. This ornate object is now in the Medieval Galleries at the Metropolitan (figs. 13, 14).

By the 1890s Morgan was keeping the Atlantic between himself and his wife. He went abroad for several months every spring with parties of friends, and each fall sent Fanny to Europe with a daughter, a driver, and a paid companion. There were other women in his life, but not as many as people

13. Reliquary with Tooth
(supposed to be that of Mary
Magdalene). Italian. Mon-
strance: Probably Florentine,
late 15th century. Medallion:
Tuscan, mid-14th century.
Copper gilt, champlevé
enamel, rock crystal, and
verre églomisé, 22 x 9½ in.
(55.8 x 24 cm)

Of the four objects incorpo-
rating the reverse-glass
painting technique *verre
églomisé* that Morgan gave
the Metropolitan, this
reliquary is the most spec-
tacular. The presence of
Saints Francis and Clare in
the Crucifixion scene and the
garb of the standing figures
indicate that it was made for
Franciscan use. Morgan
acquired the reliquary from
the collection of Sir Charles
Robinson, who played a piv-
otal role in the formation of
the Victoria and Albert
Museum, London.

Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan,
1917 (17.190.504)



suspected. He had two principal mistresses, one in the early 1890s, the other from about 1895 to 1908. In the manner of European aristocrats, he traveled openly with these companions, trusted his friends not to talk, and kept the doors to his private life firmly shut.

Although Morgan had been quite an attractive young man, an inherited disease called rhinophyma (excess growth of sebaceous tissue) turned his nose into a hideous purple bulb when he was in his early fifties. This

deformity increased his desire for privacy and accounted for the defiant glare with which he often greeted strangers. The photographer Edward Steichen said that looking into Morgan's eyes was like staring into the lights of an oncoming express train.

Steichen produced his famous 1903 image of the banker, which captures that sensation, because Morgan was unwilling to sit still for a portrait painter named Fedor Encke. The artist's friend Alfred Stieglitz, leader of the Photo-Secession group, suggested that the young Steichen take a photograph for Encke to work from. Steichen agreed, on condition that he be allowed to make a second exposure for himself.

On the appointed day Steichen snapped the studio picture, then asked the sitter to alter his position slightly. Morgan complied but complained of discomfort, and in the ensuing seconds Steichen observed that "his expression had sharpened and his body posture became tense, possibly a reflex of his irritation at the suggestion I had made. I saw that a dynamic self-assertion had taken place, whatever its cause, and I quickly made the second exposure." Steichen claimed that in the studio he saw only Morgan's riveting eyes and did not notice the "huge, more or less deformed, sick bulbous nose" until he developed the negatives. He retouched the official portrait. On the second shot, his own, he made the nose just "a little more vague."

The Museum owns a print of this second exposure, in which Morgan stares at the viewer with terrifying intensity (fig. 15). As his body disappears in the blackness, the light catches only his head, gold pocket watch and chain, and one hand grasping the gleaming arm of a chair—the image of a ruthless capitalist pirate about to stride out of the frame with a dagger in his hand. According to Steichen, the banker took one look at this picture, pronounced it "Terrible," and tore it up. The photographer, understandably furious, eventually gave a print of the portrait to Stieglitz, who published it in *Camera Work* in 1906.



14. *The Nativity*, reverse of the medallion of figure 13



15. Edward Steichen
(American, b. Luxembourg, 1879–1973).
J. Pierpont Morgan, 1903.
Platinum or gelatin silver
print, 20 ⁷/₁₆ x 16 ³/₁₆ in.
(51.6 x 41.1 cm)

Steichen had garnered fame in Europe in 1902 with his stylish portraits of modern artists such as Rodin, but in America his breakthrough came with his iconic image of Morgan. A magnet for attention in the first touring exhibition of New York's Photo-Secession group in 1904, the portrait instantly raised Steichen to the status of the century's first great celebrity photographer.

Alfred Stieglitz Collection,
1949 (49.55.167)

16. Opening reception
of The Metropolitan
Museum of Art, February
20, 1872, in the picture
gallery at 681 Fifth
Avenue. Wood engraving
from *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, March 9,
1872

The Metropolitan
Museum of Art

In the decades after the Civil War, wealthy Americans began to go abroad in record numbers, and came home full of excitement about the visual arts. The United States had no great public repositories such as the Louvre, the British Museum, or the Vatican Museums, and nothing like the major private collections of pictures, sculpture, decorative arts, manuscripts, and books that had been assembled by European dukes and merchant princes. In a mood of ebullient aesthetic nationalism, affluent Gilded Age travelers took it upon themselves to build public museums and bring culture home.

Bostonians obtained a charter from the Massachusetts legislature in February 1870, and opened the Museum of Fine Arts on the Fenway six years later. The Philadelphia Museum of Art was conceived in 1875–76, and the Art Institute of Chicago was founded a few years later. The banker William W. Corcoran created the Corcoran Gallery of Art in Washington, D. C., in 1870, for his private collection of American paintings. In 1869 Jonathan Sturges and several other

prominent men on the Art Committee of Manhattan's liberal Republican Union League Club decided to build a major art museum in New York. While the architectural firm of Calvert Vaux and Jacob Wrey Mould designed the building that would house the Metropolitan Museum at Eightieth Street and Fifth Avenue, the institution exhibited its first collections in temporary quarters (fig. 16). Directly across Central Park from the nascent art museum, at Seventy-seventh Street and Central Park West, President Ulysses S. Grant laid the cornerstone for the American Museum of Natural History, also designed by Vaux and Mould, in 1874.

The Morgans played supporting roles in the early lives of both New York institutions—Pierpont was a founding trustee of the Museum of Natural History, and he began to support the Metropolitan with a contribution of \$1,000 in 1871. Junius helped finance one of the Metropolitan's major early acquisitions, a collection of Cypriot antiquities unearthed by the American consul



NEW YORK CITY.—OPENING RECEPTION OF THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART, AT THE TEMPORARY HALL, N.O. 681 FIFTH AVENUE, FEBRUARY 20TH.

17. The Cesnola collection of Cypriot antiquities, as shown at the Metropolitan in 1907

The Metropolitan Museum of Art



in Cyprus, the Italian-born General Luigi Palma di Cesnola. The Museum's president, John Taylor Johnston, paid \$60,000 for the Cesnola collection through London's J. S. Morgan and Company in 1872–73, and another \$60,000 for a second shipment three years later. Cesnola was excavating in Cyprus at the same time that Heinrich Schliemann, a self-made German-American millionaire, was looking for the sites and objects described by Homer in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. Schliemann claimed to have found the legendary cities of Mycenae and Troy in 1873, to great public fanfare, although the materials he discovered actually antedated the Trojan War by almost a thousand years. Cesnola made no comparably dramatic discovery but ultimately sent about thirty-five thousand objects to New York—sculptures, vases, bronzes, jewelry, and seal stones—dating from prehistoric to Roman times, roughly 3000 B.C. to A.D. 200. With this purchase, the Metropolitan Museum secured a wide-ranging collection that remains the finest body of Cypriot antiquities outside Cyprus (see fig. 17). Cesnola, who knew more about the objects than anyone else, was appointed the Museum's first director in 1879.

Most of the Americans who began to collect European art in the aftermath of the Civil War bought contemporary paintings of the Barbizon and Düsseldorf schools.

18. Elihu Vedder (American, 1836–1923). *Greek Girls Bathing (Nausicaa and Her Companions)*, 1877. Oil on canvas, 18¾ x 58¾ in. (46.4 x 149.2 cm)

Early in his collecting career Morgan acquired a few works by American artists. Among them were Durand's "*Thanatopsis*" (fig. 19) and this canvas by Vedder.

Putting aside a painting entitled *Carnival of Colors*, which Morgan had commissioned, Vedder instead proposed to him the subject of this picture. Morgan approved the change. The final canvas depicts the female type that would appear in Vedder's work for the rest of his career: idealized women who express a classical sense of dignity and grace.

Arthur Hoppock Hearn Fund, 1958 (58.28)

19. Asher B. Durand (American, 1796–1886). *Landscape—Scene from "Thanatopsis,"* 1850. Oil on canvas, 39½ x 61 in. (100.3 x 154.9 cm)

Durand's painting, which includes a funeral scene in the middle ground, refers to William Cullen Bryant's poem "*Thanatopsis*" (1811–17), a meditation on the cycles of life. Perhaps in response to the recent death of Thomas Cole (1801–1848), the leader of the Hudson River School, Durand incorporated a gnarled, leafless tree as a reminder of Cole's frequent portrayals of storm-blasted trees.

Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1911 (11.156)



(A notable exception was James Jackson Jarves, who, guided by John Ruskin and the Brownings, purchased Italian paintings of the thirteenth, fourteenth, and early fifteenth centuries.) A three-volume catalogue, *Art Treasures of America, Being the Choicest Works of Art in the Public and Private Collections of North America*, published in 1879 by the art critic Earl Shinn under the pseudonym Edward Strahan, included the collections of the Drexels, the Vanderbilts, August Belmont, A. T. Stewart, Christian Herter, Pierpont Morgan, W. T. Walters, Leland Stanford, Charles Crocker, and Darius Ogden Mills—and also of the Corcoran Gallery, the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, the New-York Historical Society, and the Metropolitan Museum.

Shinn devoted four pages to “the small but precious collection got together by Mr. J. Pierpont Morgan of New York.” Virtually all of Morgan’s early paintings were landscapes or narrative genre scenes depicting worlds far removed from modern industrial America: an open-air Arab *Court of Justice* by T. Moragas, a flirtation on the Grand Canal by Luis Alvarez, a Spanish promenade by the popular Barbizon School painter Narcisse Diaz de la Peña. There was a canvas attributed to Camille Corot called *Le Gallais* that eventually disappeared from Morgan’s walls. (Someone said Corot painted six hundred works, six thousand of which were in America.) Shinn considered Morgan’s *Laundress of the Cupids* by J. L. Hamon “one of the most audacious and original of the fancies of that poet of the palette.”

Tastes in art change, and connoisseurship was in its infancy during the early 1880s. Still, Shinn’s raptures over works that now seem at best banal, his uncritical endorsement of Victorian sentimentality, his silence on the formal properties and aesthetic values of these works, and his disregard of superior artists (in the collection of Morgan’s partner Joseph Drexel, for instance, he does not mention paintings attributed to Caravaggio and Canaletto), render the catalogue useful chiefly as a window on the tastes and aspirations of the Gilded Age.

Morgan’s early choices were not entirely Eurocentric. Probably owing to his Sturges connection, he acquired several works by Americans—Frederic E. Church (*Near*

Damascus), Asher B. Durand (*Landscape—Scene from “Thanatopsis”*), John F. Kensett (*Sunrise in the Adirondacks*), Sanford R. Gifford (*October in the Catskills*), and a subject from the *Odyssey* by Elihu Vedder called *Nausicaa and Her Companions*, which Shinn found “quaint and interesting.” The Vedder and the Durand are now at the Metropolitan (see figs. 18, 19).

While Americans collected academic genre scenes, the nineteenth century’s great innovative artists—Manet, Monet, Degas, Renoir, Cézanne—were rejecting conventional subjects and forms to portray the life immediately around them, experimenting with light, color, texture, and composition. The first Impressionist exhibition in Paris in 1874 announced one of the most radical artistic developments of the century (the other was photography). Contemporary critics and collectors, with some significant exceptions, dismissed the new movement as insane. When Morgan and other wealthy Americans of his generation who were interested in art, such as Isabella Stewart Gardner, Peter Widener, Benjamin Altman, and Henry Clay Frick, turned away from Salon paintings in the late 1890s, they looked not to the modernist future of Van Gogh, Picasso, and Matisse but to the hallowed authority of the past.

The Metropolitan Museum of Art moved into its permanent home—Vaux and Mould’s Ruskinian Gothic red-brick pavilion—in 1880. Seven years later the first Morgan gift to the Museum came not from Pierpont but from his father: Junius donated Joshua Reynolds’s large group portrait *The Honorable Henry Fane with His Guardians, Inigo Jones and Charles Blair*, which he had bought from the twelfth earl of Westmorland for £13,500 (about \$66,000). Henry Fane was the second son of the eighth earl, who may have commissioned the painting. With this transatlantic gift, Junius joined a few other Americans who were beginning in the late 1880s to give major works of art to public institutions. Two of the most famous paintings in America at the time—Jean-Louis Ernest Meissonnier’s *Friedland, 1807*, and Rosa Bonheur’s *The Horse Fair*—were also presented to the Metropolitan in 1887.

20. West Room of 219 Madison Avenue

On the easel is Domenico Ghirlandaio's *Giovanna Tornabuoni*, and on the wall at the left is Fra Filippo Lippi's *Saint Lawrence Enthroned with Saints and Donors* (see fig. 64).

Archives of The Pierpont Morgan Library, New York



Henry G. Marquand, appointed president of the Museum in 1889, donated thirty-seven old-master paintings, including works by Vermeer, Van Dyck, and Frans Hals.

Sixty years after Luman Reed shied away from old masters as too risky and expensive, the rise of scholarly connoisseurship and new techniques for authentication encouraged American collectors to venture into more rarefied realms. Yet there remained wide margins of error in the rudimentary “science” of attribution, with fine shades of distinction between what was genuine and what should have been called *workshop*, *school of*, *copy*, or *fake*. Even experts with the best of intentions could not avoid honest mistakes; and as the American demand for European art drove prices up, the risk of fraud rapidly increased.

Skillful forgers made works that passed as genuine for decades. Collectors with more ambition than knowledge wanted big names—among the biggest in late-Victorian America were Raphael and the Florentine goldsmith and sculptor Benvenuto Cellini. Unscrupulous dealers assigned hundreds of works to those artists, and reputable experts occasionally opted for a prestigious attribution in the face of doubt, especially when they stood to earn commissions from the dealers.

Morgan had a “good eye” and a lifelong, sensuous appreciation of the visual arts. He was not, however, a scholarly connoisseur who studied and fell in love with each object he acquired. One day at the end of 1909, he came across a receipt for a bust of the infant Hercules by Michelangelo, for which he had paid £10,000 (about \$50,000). He sent the bill to his librarian, Belle da Costa Greene,

with a note asking where the sculpture was. “This bronze Bust is in your library,” she wrote across the receipt, “and faces you when sitting in your chair. It has been there about a year.”

That Morgan did not recognize an object he saw every day (it turned out not to be by Michelangelo and is now on display at the Pierpont Morgan Library as probably seventeenth-century Flemish) had to do with the pace, style, and nature of his collecting. Like Catherine the Great of Russia, who allegedly said, “I am not a lover of art. It is voracity. I am a glutton,” Morgan aimed to acquire as much as he could in a relatively short time, often by buying collections en bloc. He once told a business colleague that his strength lay more in the consolidation of existing projects than in the promotion of new ones—an observation that also held true in the arts.

A firm believer in professional expertise, Morgan was constantly on the lookout for qualified people who possessed specialized knowledge. In risky financial markets *he* was the connoisseur of quality and value. In the art markets he was an avid amateur, but he commissioned experts to search out and offer him the best works of art and literature in the world. Partly for simplicity in accounting and partly to guard against fraud, he deferred paying for his purchases until the end of the year and put them on display at his London

house, where visiting scholars could pass judgment. He sent back objects that turned out not to be “right,” and wise dealers realized that securing him as a steady client was far more profitable than cheating him once. He never confined himself to a single scholarly adviser, a specific period, an artistic genre, or a uniform aesthetic. He was, however, particularly drawn to sumptuous materials, ancient Egyptian culture, the medieval period, eighteenth-century French decorative arts, and objects that reflected what Belle Greene called “the luxury and gorgeous barbaric beauty of the Church in the early days.” (See figs. 21–24, 75.)



21, 22. The Fieschi Morgan True Cross Reliquary. Byzantine, Constantinople, early 9th century. Silver gilt, gold, cloisonné enamel, and niello, 4 x 2½ in. (10.2 x 7.4 cm)

This box, with a Crucifixion on the cover and a cruciform interior, was made for a relic of the True Cross. When purchased by Morgan, it was said to have belonged to Pope Innocent IV (r. 1243–54), who gave it to the church he founded at San Salvatore di Lavagna. In the early 20th century the relic was still in the church, while the container reverted to the pope’s indirect descendants after 1798.

Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.715a,b)



23. *The Journey to Emmaus and Noli Me Tangere*. Northern Spanish, ca. 1115–20. Ivory, 10 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 5 $\frac{1}{4}$ in. (27 x 13.2 cm). Inscribed: D[OMI]N[VS] LOQVITVR MARIE (The Lord Speaks to Mary)

This plaque, from the Hoentschel collection bought by Morgan, exemplifies the dynamism of Romanesque art. Above, the risen Christ encounters two disciples on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13–27), a scene masterfully rendered with lively gestures and postures. Below, Mary reaches toward the risen Christ, who exclaims: “Noli me tangere [Do not touch me] for I have not yet ascended to the Father” (John 20:11–17).

Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.47)



24. *Saint Christopher Carrying the Christ Child*. French, Toulouse, mid-15th century. Silver, parcel gilt, h. 25 $\frac{3}{8}$ in. (65.1 cm)

This exquisite statuette, bearing the hallmark of a Toulouse goldsmith on its base, depicts Saint Christopher (literally, “Christ bearer”) striding through water carrying the Christ Child. The child holds an orb, referring to his dominion, in his left hand and raises his right hand in blessing. The small cavity in the base would have originally contained a relic of the saint, probably beneath a rock crystal.

Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.361)



25. Jean Clouet (French, act. by 1515, d. 1540/41). *Charles de Cossé* (1506–1563), *Comte de Brissac*. Vellum, diam. 1½ in. (37 mm)

Francis I's court painter Jean Clouet, a gifted, prolific portrait draftsman, is credited with the origination of the portrait miniature. The sitter, the so-called *beau Brissac*, was a soldier descended from one of the most illustrious noble families of France. It is thought that he was about thirty when he sat for this image, acquired by the Museum at the 1935 sale of Morgan's miniature collection.

Fletcher Fund, 1935 (35.89.1)



At the galleries of Duveen Brothers in London and New York, Morgan worked primarily with Henry Duveen, uncle of the more famous Joseph. In a probably apocryphal but not unlikely story, Joseph Duveen one day decided that Henry was not taking full advantage of the Morgan millions, and asked permission to try his own hand. He made up a tray of thirty portrait miniatures—six masterpieces, the rest mediocre—and offered them to Morgan. The banker looked them over quickly, then asked, “How much for the lot?” Joseph shot Henry a look of triumph and named a sum. Morgan selected the six good items off the velvet tray and slipped them into his pocket. He divided the figure Joseph had named by thirty, multiplied by six, said he would pay that price, and left. Uncle Henry smiled. “Joe,” he said, “you’re only a boy. It takes a man to deal with Morgan.”

Morgan in fact knew a great deal about portrait miniatures, and assembled one of the finest private collections of the modern era.

26. Jean Baptiste Isabey (French, 1767–1855). *The Empress Marie Louise* (1791–1847). Ivory, 2¼ x 1⅞ in. (58 x 41 mm); signed and dated (right edge): Isabey 1812

Isabey made this luminous portrait of Napoléon's second wife in 1812, the year after she gave birth to his heir, who was briefly recognized as Napoléon II upon his father's second abdication in 1815. This miniature lifts out to reveal a portrait dated 1815 of her son. The two are framed back-to-back and fitted into the lid of a contemporaneous gold box by Gabriel Raoul Morel.

Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.1114)



First popularized in France at the court of Francis I (r. 1515–47), these tiny paintings served as pledges of loyalty and love centuries before the invention of photography. Usually painted on vellum or ivory and set in gold frames or in ravishingly beautiful gold, enamel, glass, and ivory boxes, they were worn in lockets and pendants, kept on mantels and bedside tables and in secret drawers. Morgan acquired about eight hundred portrait miniatures, dating from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century, by most of the important artists in the field—among them Nicholas Hilliard, Hans Holbein the Younger, Jean Baptiste Isabey (fig. 26), and the leading sixteenth-century French painter on a large or small scale, Jean Clouet (fig. 25). Their illustrious subjects included Mary, Queen of Scots; Henry VIII; Sir Thomas More; Queen Elizabeth I; Napoléon; Sir Walter Scott; Emma Hamilton; and dozens of French courtesans.



27, 28. Hubert Robert
(French, 1733–1808).
*The Bathing Pool and
The Swing*. Oil on canvas,
68 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 48 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. (174.6 x
123.8 cm); 68 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 34 $\frac{3}{8}$ in.
(173.4 x 87.9 cm). *Swing*
signed (on base of statue):
H. ROBERT

These Italianate landscapes belong to a set of six (acc. nos. 17.190.25–30) commissioned for Louis XVI's brother the count of Artois, later Charles X of France. Completed in 1779, they formed part of the late-18th-century decoration at Bagatelle, a pavilion built for the count near Paris in 1777. Morgan purchased the pictures in 1911 and in 1912 shipped them to the Museum, where they were exhibited on loan.

Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan,
1917 (17.190.29,27)





29. Celestial Globe with Clockwork. Austrian, Viennese, 1579. Case: silver, partly gilt, and brass. Movement: brass and steel. H. 10 3/4 in. (27.3 cm)

Described in an early-17th-century inventory of the Prague Kunstkammer of the Holy Roman Emperor Rudolf II (1552–1612), this globe houses a movement made by Gerhard Emmoser, imperial clockmaker from 1566 until his death in 1584. The silver globe, with its exquisitely engraved constellations and its Pegasus support, is the work of an anonymous goldsmith probably employed in the imperial workshops in Vienna or possibly in Prague.

Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.636)

The late 1890s marked for Morgan the beginning of a love affair with the hedonism, delicacy, and artifice of ancien régime France that lasted for the rest of his life (see figs. 27, 28, 30). Perhaps to complement his collection of miniatures, he bought autograph letters by several of the figures whose likenesses he owned and marriage contracts for the French kings from Louis XIII to XVIII. He commissioned Duveen Brothers, in 1898, to furnish an entire Louis XVI drawing room at Princes Gate with tables, andirons, tapestry screens, chairs, stools, and a Sèvres bust of the king himself. The following year he bought a commode and secrétaire en suite made in 1790 for Marie-Antoinette by Jean-Henri Riesener, the finest French cabinetmaker of the period, and later a superb *bleu turquin* marble side table with Neoclassical mounts made by Pierre Gouthière in 1781 for the duchesse de Mazarin. (All three are now in the Frick Collection.)

Morgan's strength as a collector lay more in the decorative arts than in the field of painting. Not what art historians irreverently refer to as a "flatware man," he had far greater appreciation of craftsmanship,

30. Jean-Joseph Barrière (French, 1763–ca.1793). Snuff-box, Paris, 1769–70. Gold and enamel, w. 3 3/8 in. (8.4 cm)

Barrière was a prolific box maker and is represented by five examples in the Morgan gift. His work, always in the Neoclassical idiom, is graced with subtle balances of color and texture. This box, made for a foreign customer, is unusual for the interplay of gold and enamel and the vibrancy of its color scheme.

Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.1211)



exquisite materials, historical associations, and three-dimensional objects than he did of painting's more conceptual pleasures. Joseph Duveen *was* a flatware man: in advising buyers such as Benjamin Altman, Jules Bache, and Henry Clay Frick in the early twentieth century, he helped establish major collections of European paintings in the United States. The young, Harvard-educated scholar Bernard Berenson worked closely with Isabella Stewart Gardner, who built a Venetian Gothic palazzo on Boston's Fenway between 1899 and 1903 to house her collection of European paintings. Going his own autocratic way, Morgan relied not at all on Berenson, and on Duveen chiefly for decorative objects. However, he acquired several important pictures through other dealers.

As American collectors turned to the work of great masters, Otto Gutekunst at the Colnaghi Gallery in London divided paintings into two categories: "angel food and big, Big, *BIG* game." Morgan was now out for "*BIG* game." He reportedly once said that the three most expensive words in any language were *unique au monde*. He never bargained for



31. Matthias Walbaum (German, b. Kiel, ca. 1554, d. Augsburg, 1632) and Anton Mozart (act. 1595–1600). Shrine, Augsburg, ca. 1598–1600. Silver, partly gilt, on ebony and gouache on parchment, h. 17 in. (43.2 cm)

Walbaum was one of the best goldsmiths in 16th-century Augsburg, and miniature shrines such as this one were a specialty of his workshop. Two doors open to a painted triptych of the Nativity, with the Presentation at right and the Circumcision at left. Tiny silver reliefs depicting other New Testament subjects, as well as figures of saints and angels, are incorporated into the shrine's silver tracery.

Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.823)

things he wanted, and his acquisitions helped drive the art market to new heights.

Between 1894 and 1898 he bought John Constable's *The White Horse, a Scene on the River Stour*; Rembrandt's portrait of Nicolaes Ruts, a wealthy Dutch merchant in a white ruff and fur-trimmed cloak, for £6,000 (about \$30,000); and a series of decorative panels called *The Progress of Love* by Jean-Honoré Fragonard, commissioned in 1771 by Madame du Barry for the new dining pavilion in her château at Louveciennes. Morgan bought the Fragonard panels in 1898 for £62,000, roughly \$300,000, and eventually had an entire room designed for them at Princes Gate. (The Constable, the Rembrandt, and the Fragonards are now in the Frick Collection.) Junius Morgan had been about to buy Thomas Gainsborough's *Duchess of Devonshire* from the London dealer William Agnew when the canvas was stolen in 1876; the Agnew firm recovered the painting in 1901, and Pierpont acquired it a few weeks later for \$150,000.

In the summer of 1907, through Duveen Brothers, Morgan purchased a selection of paintings from the estate of the French collector Rodolphe Kann. He had put up half of



32. Workshop of Rogier van der Weyden (possibly by Hans Memling), Netherlandish. *The Annunciation*, 1465–75. Oil on wood, 73 x 45¼ in. (186.1 x 114.9 cm)

Acquired by Morgan as a Rogier van der Weyden, this imposing Annunciation is now thought to be by Rogier's eminent pupil, Hans Memling. The two linked keys on the coat of arms in the window and on the rug indicate that it was commissioned by a member of the Clugny family of Autun, several of whom held prominent positions at the Burgundian court.

Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.7)

33. Gerard Ter Borch (Dutch, 1617–1681). *The Toilette*, ca. 1651. Oil on canvas, 18¾ x 13¾ in. (47.5 x 34.5 cm)

Ter Borch was one of the most refined painters of modern manners in the Netherlands. His sister, Gesina, also an artist, served as model for this early work, in which the themes of vanity (underscored by the mirror) and fashionable luxury are explored. The sheer quality and sensitive observation of Ter Borch's pictures clearly impressed the young Johannes Vermeer (1632–1675), whom the artist met in 1653.

Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.10)



the \$4.5 million Duveen paid the Kann estate, on condition that he have first choice of about thirty pictures. The paintings he chose included Domenico Ghirlandaio's *Giovanna Tornabuoni*, Andrea del Castagno's *Portrait of a Young Man*, a Rogier van der Weyden *Annunciation* (see fig. 32), two panels by Memling, and works by Gerard David, van Ruysdael, Metsu (fig. 34), and Ter Borch (fig. 33)—but not, surprisingly, Rembrandt's *Aristotle Contemplating the Bust of Homer*, now one of the Metropolitan's masterpieces (acquired in 1961). Also in 1907 he bought for \$100,000 Johannes Vermeer's portrait of a young woman in a yellow jacket with white fur trim looking up from a table, *A Lady Writing*. (The Ghirlandaio is now in the Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum, Madrid; the Castagno and the Vermeer are in the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.)

34. Gabriel Metsu (Dutch, 1629–1667). *The Visit to the Nursery*, 1661. Oil on canvas, 30½ x 32 in. (77.5 x 81.3 cm)

Metsu painted this famous picture in Amsterdam, where very few of the latest mansions had rooms as grand as this one. Its main features were adopted from the council chamber of the new Town Hall (now Royal Palace). The subject, a lying-in visit, was a social ritual at which lavish furnishings were often more conspicuous than the newborn child.

Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.20)





35. Pietro Longhi (Pietro Falca). Italian, Venetian, 1702–1785. *The Temptation*, 1746. Oil on canvas, 24 x 19½ in. (61 x 49.5 cm)

The Museum owns four of some twenty paintings by Longhi depicting Venetian society and its foibles that were executed in 1746 for the Gambardi family of Florence. This picture was the only Longhi in Morgan's collection. Here a young manservant announces to a gentleman the arrival of a courtesan accompanied by her bawd. The extra place set at the breakfast table shows that they were expected.

Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.12)

36. Sir Thomas Lawrence (British, 1769–1830). *Elizabeth Farren* (ca. 1759–1829), *Later Countess of Derby*. Oil on canvas, 94 x 57½ in. (238.8 x 146.1 cm)

Lawrence's likeness of the future countess of Derby—the most famous British picture in the Morgan collection—was sold by Morgan's son, J. P. Morgan Jr., to M. Knoedler and Company, and by Knoedler to Mr. and Mrs. Edward Harkness in 1935. Harkness, son of a silent partner in Standard Oil, had been appointed to the Museum's board by Pierpont Morgan in 1912.

Bequest of Edward S. Harkness, 1940 (50.135.5)





37. Interior of No. 13
Princes Gate, 1902

On the left is a portrait traditionally thought to represent María Teresa, infanta of Spain, painted by Juan Bautista Martínez del Mazo in 1644–45 and purchased by the Museum in 1943 (acc. no. 43.101). When Morgan acquired the picture, it was attributed to Velázquez. On the right is Frans Hals's portrait of Andries van der Horn, which is dated 1638 and is now in the Museu de Arte, São Paulo, Brazil. From the Dover House/Princes Gate album

Archives of The Pierpont Morgan Library, New York

In the early 1900s Morgan kept most of his art collections at his house in London, partly because of a U.S. Government Revenue Act passed in 1897 that imposed a twenty-percent tariff on imported works of art. One July day in 1906 he gave Edward VII a private tour of the collections at Princes Gate, then served his guest coffee in the library. On one wall hung Thomas Lawrence's full-length portrait of the beautiful British actress Elizabeth Farren, dressed in white silk and furs, for which he had paid \$200,000 (fig. 36). The king, looking across the room at Miss Farren, said, "The ceiling is too low in this room for that picture. Why do you hang it there?" Morgan studied the portrait for a long time, then answered: "Because I like it there, sir."

He made one of his most spectacular purchases on a quick visit to the Paris gallery of

Charles Sedelmeyer in 1901, when he bought an early altarpiece by Raphael known as the Colonna Madonna, painted about 1504–5 for the Convent of Sant' Antonio di Padua in Perugia (fig. 38). According to David Alan Brown, the curator of the exhibition "Raphael and America" at the National Gallery of Art in 1983, Raphael was "the only artist whose prestige had endured all the changes of taste and fashion up to the end of the nineteenth century," and was "referred to by Berenson without exaggeration as the 'most famous and most beloved name in modern art.' Indeed, his name was synonymous with Art." There was not a single painting by Raphael in the United States in 1897, and the scarcity of the artist's work in a rising market had driven its prices beyond the reach of most collectors. In 1898, at the urging of Berenson, Isabella Stewart Gardner



38. Raphael (Raffaello Sanzio or Santi). Italian, Marchigian, 1483–1520. *Madonna and Child Enthroned with Saints*, possibly after 1504. Tempera and gold on wood; main panel overall, 67 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 67 $\frac{7}{8}$ in. (172.4 x 172.4 cm)

An important early work, the picture was probably begun in Perugia in 1504 and completed following a trip to Florence. This would explain the shift between the lyricism of the lunette and the monumental, boldly modeled male saints below, inspired perhaps by Fra Bartolomeo (1472–1517). It hung originally in the Convent of Sant'Antonio, Perugia, which may account for its conservatism. It was purchased by the Colonna family of Rome in 1678.

Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1916 (16.30a,b)

bought Raphael's portrait of Tomasso Inghirami, a fat, walleyed Roman prelate in a red robe and cap, shown writing at his desk. Two years later, also through Berenson, she purchased for £5,000 a Lamentation by Raphael, part of an altarpiece predella. These works did not satisfy her, however. Like other major collectors at the time, she wanted the supreme trophy—"a heavenly Raphael *Madonna*"—and to Berenson's dismay, she refused for a time to buy anything else: "My remaining pennies must go to the greatest Raphael," she wrote. "Nothing short of that. I have tasted blood you see."

Mrs. Gardner never acquired a Raphael Madonna, but Morgan did. Vasari had described the Colonna altarpiece as a "truly marvellous and devout" work, "much extolled by all painters." Ruskin, who did not especially admire Raphael, had urged Liverpool's merchants to buy the painting in 1874. French critics had commended it to the Louvre as a "work of the highest order, which every European gallery should be eager to secure." A brochure printed by Sedelmeyer, quoting some of these assessments, traced the work's provenance and called it the "richest and most important composition of all the various Madonna pictures of Raphael." The brochure also compared the painting favorably with the Ansidei Madonna, which London's National Gallery had bought from the duke of Marlborough in 1885 for £70,000 (\$350,000), then the highest price ever paid for a painting.

Not all the experts agreed. The Louvre and the National Gallery had declined the painting—known as the "Madonna of a million" in the 1870s because of its million-franc price tag—and it had been on display

at the South Kensington Museum (now the Victoria and Albert), where Morgan had probably seen it, from 1886 to 1896 without finding a buyer. The dealer Martin Colnaghi finally bought it in 1896 for \$200,000, less than half the price then asked, and sold it to Sedelmeyer, who had it restored and cleaned. Art historians ever since have found the Colonna Madonna puzzling, lacking the elegance, lucidity, and aesthetic coherence of Raphael's great work. It was, however, "*BIG* game"—a grand, costly prize by an incontrovertibly great artist—and because Morgan had set out to furnish America with outstanding cultural treasures of the past, this one was irresistible. He paid 2 million francs (\$400,000) for it at the end of 1901. In January 1902 the New York *Herald* announced, "Mr. J. Pierpont Morgan gives Record Sum for Raphael!" Morgan lent his Raphael to London's National Gallery, had it featured in a sumptuous hand-printed catalogue, and grew steadily prouder of it as the years went by. When he died in 1913, it was considered the most important painting in his collection. Now at the Metropolitan, the altarpiece is described in the collection catalogue as "more primitive" than Raphael's other works of the period—the Ansidei Madonna and a fresco in San Severo, Perugia—and is valued more highly for its place in the artist's development than for its aesthetic caliber.

Morgan began early in the new century to play an active role in the affairs of the Metropolitan. As first vice president of the Museum in 1904, he helped secure an excellent armor collection that belonged to the French duc de Dino. That spring Morgan's



39. The Pierpont Morgan Library. Watercolor rendering by McKim, Mead and White

In 1902 Morgan commissioned the architect Charles Follen McKim to design a private library for his rare books, manuscripts, and drawings. McKim's Italianate marble villa, paying tribute to the High Renaissance, was completed in 1906.

Archives of The Pierpont Morgan Library, New York

English partners shipped forty-three cases of Dino's armor to the Museum at freight rates, labeled "hardware." After Morgan was elected president of the Metropolitan in the fall of 1904, he hired a brilliant young scholar named Bashford Dean to install and catalogue the collection. Dean, a vertebrate paleontologist who specialized in the armored fishes of the early and middle Paleozoic age, became the Museum's first curator of arms and armor in 1906. For the next several years Morgan supported Dean's courtship of William H. Riggs, an eccentric expatriate whose armor collection was even more spectacular than Dino's. Riggs had gone to school with Morgan, and finally gave his armor to the Museum in 1913, largely, he said, out of admiration for his former schoolmate. In 1907 Morgan himself acquired for £13,200 (about \$66,000) a black steel helmet made in 1543 by the Milanese Filippo Negroli, called the "Michelangelo of armorers." On its crest a mermaid stretched out in a sinuous curve holds the head of Medusa in her hands (fig. 40). Given to the Metropolitan by J. P. Morgan Jr. after his father died, this burgonet ranks among the

Department of Arms and Armor's finest single pieces.

The Museum's operating budget, not including art purchases, rose under Morgan from \$185,000 in 1904—mostly covered by a \$150,000 appropriation from the city—to \$363,000 in 1913, which, even with larger city contributions, regularly ran the Museum into the red. Morgan led the trustees in making up the annual deficit. By packing the board with friends and colleagues, he assured himself general cooperation, sage advice, and ample resources. He oversaw the professionalization of the Museum's administrative and curatorial staffs, the creation of new departments, the funding of archaeological excavations, the development and improvement of existing collections, and a major architectural expansion designed by McKim, Mead and White. His own gifts substantially added to the Metropolitan's holdings, and he encouraged other donors to follow suit.

Several of Morgan's gifts to the Museum reflected his personal tastes. In 1906 he bought two exceptional collections assembled by the Parisian architect and designer Georges Hoentschel for \$1.5 million.



40. Filippo Negroli (Italian, Milanese, ca. 1510–1579).
Burgonet, dated 1543. Steel, gold, textile, wt. 3 lb. 12 oz.
(1,698 g)

A Renaissance masterpiece, the burgonet was the only armor Morgan owned. Negroli is credited with a new style of classically inspired parade armor in the 1530s, and this helmet demonstrates his technical virtuosity and mastery of design. It was first auctioned in London in 1834 and acquired by the eighth duc de Luynes, whose collection was dispersed after 1900. Morgan purchased it through the dealer Jacques Seligmann in 1907.

Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.1720)



41. The Wing of Decorative Arts, Wing F, 1910. Now the John Pierpont Morgan Wing

Morgan's purchase of the Hoentschel collection in 1906 necessitated the construction of an addition to the Museum to house it and other holdings of European decorative arts. Today the central hall and

adjoining first-floor galleries are devoted to arms and armor.

The Metropolitan Museum of Art

42. *The Entombment*, from the château de Biron, Périgord, as installed in Wing F, 1910

The Metropolitan Museum of Art



43. *Pietà with Donors*. French, Bourbonnais, ca. 1515. Limestone, h. 43 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. (110.1 cm)

Morgan bought this group and *The Entombment*, both from the château de Biron, Périgord, in 1907 from Jacques Seligmann.

Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1916 (16.31.1)

44. *Virgin and Child in Majesty*. French, Auvergne, late 12th century. Linen, gesso, and polychromy on walnut, h. 31 in. (78.7 cm)

This beautifully carved and delicately painted image depicts the so-called Throne of Wisdom. The child would have held a scroll or book symbolizing knowledge of the word of God. Judging from other examples preserved in Auvergne, it would have been venerated on an altar as well as in processions. A small cavity in the back most likely contained a relic. The sculpture was part of the Hoentschel collection, which Morgan purchased en bloc.

Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1916 (16.32.194)



Morgan immediately gave Hoentschel's group of eighteenth-century French decorative arts to the Metropolitan. It included ornately carved woodwork, furniture, porcelains, ormolu, and faïence, as well as dozens of paintings. The Museum set up a department of decorative arts to accommodate this gift, and McKim designed a new north-central wing for it (fig. 41). The second Hoentschel collection consisted of superb medieval objects—Gothic figures, choir stalls, tapestries, church columns, ivories, Limoges enamels, and a bronze angel of 1475 by Jean Barbet from the château du Lud. Morgan had these works installed at the Museum as a loan. Morgan Jr., called Jack, eventually converted the loan to a gift, although he kept Barbet's angel. It was

purchased in 1943 by the Trustees of the Frick Collection.

Looking for a qualified scholar to organize and install the Hoentschel collections, Morgan consulted his occasional adviser Wilhelm von Bode, director of the Kaiser Friedrich Museum in Berlin. Bode nominated "the most gifted and best equipped young student of art that I have ever had," William R. Valentiner, saying that he hated to lose this promising scholar—an authority on Rembrandt and the early Dutch and Flemish schools—but liked giving him the opportunity to go to the Metropolitan, "where works of art are now coming together more than anywhere else." Early in 1908 Valentiner became the Museum's first curator of decorative arts. He got along well with Morgan,

Christus fregt sein creuß auß Jerusalem, an berg
Saluarie zu creußigen außgeführt. Matth. xxv.



OPPOSITE

45. *Christ Carrying the Cross* from a set of *The Passion*. German, Alsace, perhaps Strasbourg, dated 1598. Wool, silk, metal thread, 40½ x 31 in. (103 x 79 cm); 20 warps per in. (8 per cm)

Although Morgan's sizable collection of historic European tapestries was dispersed after his death, he gave several important pieces to the Museum during his lifetime, including the set from which this panel derives. Largely based on Albrecht Dürer's woodcuts known as the *Small Passion* (1511), the set and a number of related pieces provide rare evidence of the activity of tapestry workshops in Alsace at the end of the 16th century.

Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1911 (11.148.5)



46. Andrea Bregno (Italian, Roman, 1418–1503). *Saint Andrew*. Marble, 47½ x 31¾ in. (119.7 x 80.6 cm), including separately carved pilasters

The apostle in his niche adorned an altar commissioned by a wealthy French prelate, Guillaume Perrier, in the old Basilica of Saint Peter's, Rome. It was among the architectural sculptures removed from the inner wall in the early 17th century to make room for the new, expanded basilica. *Saint Andrew* exemplifies the purity of Bregno's style, obtained through close scrutiny of ancient Roman reliefs.

Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.173a–c)

whose wide-ranging interests he appreciated and whom he called “the most important art collector I ever met.” Morgan’s “urge for collecting came naturally to him,” wrote Valentinier in an unpublished memoir, “and had nothing to do with a concern to improve his social standing, as was the case with Frick, since Morgan already belonged to the elite. He was really interested in all kinds of arts . . . especially those not readily accessible to the general public, such as early manuscripts, medieval jewelry, enamels, Chinese porcelains, etc. Paintings, usually the most obvious field for a collector, interested him least, although in his library he was surrounded by masterpieces of the early Renaissance.”

General di Cesnola, who had been director of the Museum since 1879, died just before

Morgan assumed the presidency. To replace Cesnola, the board hired Sir Caspar Purdon Clarke, head of London’s South Kensington Museum, and brought in Edward Robinson from the Museum, of Fine Arts in Boston to serve as assistant director and curator of classical art. Purdon Clarke proved to be largely a figurehead. Robinson quietly did most of the director’s work for five years, then took over the position after Purdon Clarke retired in 1910, and ran the Museum brilliantly until 1931.

One of Morgan’s most significant and least conspicuous art advisers was his friend William M. Laffan, an editor and independent scholar whose fields of expertise included engravings and oriental ceramics. Morgan helped Laffan buy the *New York Evening Sun* in 1902 and appointed him to the Metropolitan Museum’s board in 1905.

47. Plaque with Two Women. Greek, ca. 650–600 B.C.
Ivory, h. $5\frac{3}{8}$ in. (13.7 cm)

Greek ivory carvings, particularly those of the early Archaic period, are exceedingly rare. This one probably embellished a casket or piece of furniture. Although the subject has not been identified, it certainly depicts a myth concerning the transgressions and punishment of two women, perhaps the daughters of Proitos, who were stricken with madness for not honoring the wine god Dionysos.

Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.73)



48. Man and Centaur. Greek, mid-8th century B.C. Said to be from Olympia. Bronze, h. $4\frac{7}{16}$ in. (11.3 cm)

Thanks to his classical education, Morgan surely knew the major Greek myths, such as the battle of centaurs and Greeks represented by this statuette. During his lifetime, however, art of the Geometric period (ca. 1000–700 B.C.) was just becoming known, especially through excavations at Olympia. Morgan's reasons for its purchase are undetermined; perhaps he associated the figures with the grotesques in the margins of medieval manuscripts, which he collected avidly.

Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.2072)



49. Necklace. Roman, late 3rd century A.D. Gold, l. 14½ in. (36.9 cm)

Morgan's interest in currency, old and new, and his taste for opulence are manifest in this necklace, possibly made in Egypt. It preserves two pendants, elaborate settings for aurei (gold coins) of Emperor Severus Alexander, dated A.D. 222–24 and A.D. 222–28, and there would have been a third. Intended as statements of the wearer's wealth and status, such necklaces were worn by both men and women.

Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.1655)



A year later Laffan encouraged Morgan to set up a department of Egyptian art at the Museum.

Western interest in the ancient Near East had grown steadily after Napoléon's invasion of Egypt in 1798 opened the country to modern European study. Between 1809 and 1828 the French produced an encyclopedic, nineteen-volume *Description de l'Égypte*, and the English "Orientalists" John Gardner Wilkinson and Edward W. Lane followed with detailed studies of their own. The archaeological findings of Schliemann and Cesnola, along with discoveries of cuneiform tablets, buried Sumerian cities, mummies,

papyri, and Early Christian texts, captured the late-nineteenth-century imagination. Arguments about the theory of evolution, between biblical fundamentalists and the intellectual heirs of Darwin, added to public interest in the literary and material evidence that lay buried in the soil of the eastern Mediterranean (see figs. 47–51). American academic journals devoted to biblical archaeology, classical studies, oriental studies, and Semitic languages and literature started to appear in the 1880s. And a number of universities began to fund archaeological expeditions, often with the help of wealthy individuals.



50. Buckle. Iranian, Parthian, 2nd–1st century B.C. Gold with turquoise inlay, l. 3 $\frac{3}{16}$ in. (8.4 cm)

This buckle is one of a pair allegedly found in a hoard in the Nihavend area of central Iran. Such buckles were used to fasten belts or cloaks. While other objects in the hoard showed the influence of Hellenistic Greek art, the heraldic animal and raptor motif and rich use of colored stone and glass inlays follow Iranian and steppe traditions of Parthian Iran.

Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.2055)

51. Winged Figures. Neo-Assyrian. Mesopotamia, Nimrud, Palace of Assurnasirpal II (883–859 B.C.). Gypseous alabaster, approx. h. 64 in. (162.5 cm)

These two fragments of relief sculpture, originally brightly painted, adorned a doorway in the palace of the Assyrian king Assurnasirpal II at Nimrud (ancient Kalhu). Winged genies like these served as guardians. Both panels are carved with the “standard” inscription of the king that details his building projects and military feats.

Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.2080, 2081)



52. Picnic at Karnak,
Egypt, January 1877

Morgan and his family traveled up the Nile in style with a dragoman (interpreter-guide), a French physician, Egyptian servants, a nurse, a maid, a French waiter, and their regular courier. Photograph from Herbert L. Satterlee, *J. Pierpont Morgan, An Intimate Portrait* (New York, 1939)

Archives of The Pierpont Morgan Library, New York



Phoebe Apperson Hearst, the mother of William Randolph Hearst, supported an expedition in Egypt for the University of California at Berkeley in the 1890s. John D. Rockefeller financed the Oriental Exploration Fund for the University of Chicago in 1903, and later endowed the Oriental Institute there. Jacob Schiff helped pay for Harvard's Semitic Museum, dedicated in 1903. The Boston banker Gardiner Martin Lane assisted archaeological work in Egypt for Boston's Museum of Fine Arts.

Early in 1906 Laffan visited the site of a prolific excavation at the Giza pyramids, sponsored jointly by the Museum of Fine Arts and Harvard University. That April in Paris he had no trouble persuading Morgan that the Metropolitan Museum ought to fund Egyptian expeditions of its own. They hired the Boston project's chief field officer, Harvard professor Albert M. Lythgoe, to come to New York as curator of Egyptian art. From Paris in April Laffan wrote to the editor of the *Evening Sun*, Edward Page Mitchell, "I see Morgan daily and have spent a million or more of his money since I

arrived. . . . What a whale of a man! . . . the Egyptian business is all due to his big way of looking at things and doing them."

Lythgoe urged his New York patrons to hurry because the combination of other excavators clearing ancient sites and raids by local thieves meant that the best material would be gone in fifteen years. The Metropolitan's expedition in Egypt, headed by Lythgoe and operating under a fund set up by Morgan, began work early in 1907. Morgan visited the project two years later. In March 1909 he rented a large houseboat called a *dehabiyeh*—the word means "thing of gold"—and took a party of friends thirty-five miles up the Nile to see the Museum's excavations at Lisht. Lythgoe showed Morgan the site of the pyramid of Senwosret I, where three hundred men, clearing away mounds of debris and sand, were gradually exposing remains of walls and scattered, brilliantly painted temple relief blocks dating back to almost 2000 B.C. The following day, at the pyramid complex of Senwosret's predecessor Amenemhat I, Morgan watched the work for some time (Lythgoe reported) and

53. Cosmetic Vessel in the Shape of a Dwarf. Dynasty 18, probably reigns of Amenhotep III–Akhenaten, ca. 1391–36 B.C. Egyptian alabaster, h. 7 $\frac{7}{8}$ in. (19.5 cm)

Elaborate alabaster vessels seem to have been a specialty of the late 18th Dynasty. Vessels with servant bearers were a traditional subject, but this example shows a masterfully dynamic composition. The progression from the sturdily planted legs to the pointed head and upraised arms of the dwarf both echoes the drop shape of the vessel he raises and conveys the thrust of his effort.

Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.1963)



listened intently to explanations about digging methods, equipment, and the recording of scientific findings. That night Morgan said, “It was perfectly magnificent. I don’t think I ever enjoyed anything so much before in my life.”

From Lisht his party went on another 120 miles south, then west to the Great Oasis at Khargeh. The Americans rode donkeys up to the expedition camp built on the slope of a ridge with a wide view of palm trees, villages, and cultivated fields. Museum archaeologists were finding remnants of the great temple at Hibis, thought to have been built by the Persian emperor Darius in the fifth century B.C. They also found evidence of Egypt’s Early Christian era at Khargeh: domed tomb-chapels decorated with frescoes of biblical scenes, and houses datable to the period of the Roman emperor Constantine

the Great, who adopted Christianity in the early fourth century A.D. Morgan said to Lythgoe as they boarded the train the next day, “I don’t like to leave all this. I never imagined I would see so many interesting things in my life.” Lythgoe told Robinson that the trip had been “perfect from beginning to end,” and Morgan’s “interest” in the Metropolitan’s work was “so vigorous that it has put things on the best possible basis.”

Two years later, when Lythgoe could not escort Morgan on another tour of Egypt, the job fell to his assistant, Herbert Winlock. An unusually gifted young archaeologist who had been Lythgoe’s student at Harvard, Winlock would succeed his mentor as the Museum’s curator of Egyptian art in 1928 and become director of the Museum in 1932. His confidential letters to Lythgoe are frank, self-assured, and witty—Winlock



54. Morgan on his way to Beni Hasan, ca. 1912

Department of Egyptian Art



55. *Khargeh*, Morgan's private Nile boat, ca. 1912

Department of Egyptian Art

shuddered when he learned of his assignment to Morgan's 1911 tour and hoped that a financial crisis would forestall it. He had been digging for a year in the ruins of the palace of Amenhotep III at Thebes, and Lythgoe had warned him that Morgan was "not interested the least little bit" in that site. The twenty-six-year-old Winlock wanted to concentrate on his work, not play factotum to a visiting tycoon.

The first few days on the Nile went "splendidly," Winlock reported to Lythgoe. Morgan, traveling with several friends, was "in very good health & spirits" and "sometimes quite jolly—the other night at dinner he recited reams of French poetry—and he usually has a joke on hand about something." Still, the archaeologist objected to the financier's extravagance. When Morgan bought two Persian walking sticks for

\$2,500, Winlock said nothing, though he thought them not worth nearly that much. At Assiut a few days later, Morgan fell in love with two model funerary boats, each about four feet long, for which a dealer was asking £2,500 (figs. 56, 57). Winlock pronounced them unique but the price ridiculous. Morgan offered £1,000, which Winlock also thought ridiculous. The dealer understood enough English, however, to reject Winlock's offer of £750. Winlock took Morgan back to their boat, returned to the shop, and argued for two hours but could not get the price down to £1,000. He refused to pay more. At dinner that night, Morgan told his friends, "I know Mr. Winlock thinks I am a fool but I want the boats & I don't want the £1,000."

He had a point—a few hundred pounds meant nothing to him—but Winlock had his way. He *did* think Morgan foolish and also



56, 57. Model Boats.
Dynasty 12 (ca. 1991–
1783 B.C.). Painted wood,
limestone, and linen,
l. 45 1/4 in. (115 cm), 48 7/8 in.
(124 cm)

Model funerary boats were often included in Middle Kingdom tombs. These examples, purchased by Morgan in Egypt in 1912, seem to be modern composites of ancient elements.

Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1912 (12.183.3,4)



inept, having “spoiled it all by blurting out his price.” Winlock’s professional pride and his concern to keep the antiquities market in reasonable line with value led him to hold out against the dealer’s demands. The party sailed without the boats “and everybody has suffered,” Winlock told Lythgoe.

At the end of the tour, reporting that Morgan had ordered a *dehabiyeh* of his own because “he liked it all so much he wants a boat” permanently on the Nile, Winlock groaned to Lythgoe, “You may accept this letter of mine as a tentative resignation from the M.M.A. if he is going to continue to come out & if I have got to [be] going through Cairo” doing his errands. Despite Winlock’s complaints, the Metropolitan benefited significantly from its president’s travels. Morgan donated to the Museum a group of extraordinarily important Nineteenth

Dynasty reliefs, the greater part of a chapel from Abydos dating back to the time of Seti I. (See figs. 60, 61.) Winlock thought them among the best reliefs the Museum had and wanted them put on prominent display.

In the winter of 1912 Morgan took another party of friends up the Nile in his own *dehabiyeh*, which he named *Khargeh* (fig. 55). He managed, after all, to buy for £1,000 the model boats that Winlock had held out against in 1911. Morgan refused to let them out of his sight during the cruise but afterward gave them to the Metropolitan, along with a complete Twelfth Dynasty burial that Lythgoe praised as “the most superb thing of its kind in any museum.” And in 1912 Morgan commissioned an expedition house for Winlock’s work at Deir el-Bahri and in the Asasif Valley on the western bank of the river at Luxor—ancient Thebes—an



58. Kneeling Man. Dynasty 26 (664–525 B.C.). Ivory, h. 2¼ in. (5.7 cm)

Originally this small figure's arms hung downward from the shoulders and would have bent forward at the elbows, his hands perhaps touching an element fitted to his lap. The overly large, pointed face with its sharp features, the lined body, and the unusual striping on the back of his kilt indicate the man is a foreigner, and the pose alludes to his subservient role in Egypt.

Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.63)

59. Apis Bull. Dynasty 26–29 (664–380 B.C.). Ivory, h. 2⅞ in. (6.1 cm)

The sacred Apis bull, one of the most important animal deities of ancient Egypt and the focus of great ceremony, here delicately turns its head as if in gentle acknowledgment of its worshipers. Special markings that identify an Apis bull—a white triangle on the forehead and black patches resembling winged birds on the body—are indicated, along with an elaborate starred blanket, by incised decoration.

Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.62)



60, 61. Details from the scene of the aged King Ramesses I receiving offerings as Osiris on the north wall of the Temple of Ramesses I at Abydos. Dynasty 19, reign of Seti I (1294–79 B.C.). Limestone

This small temple was built after Ramesses' demise as a pious duty by his son and successor, Seti I. Situated at Abydos, the sacred city of Osiris, the god of resurrection,

the temple allowed the deceased king to participate in rituals dedicated to Osiris and underscored the king's assimilation to the god. Serenity and beauty distinguish the relief, resulting largely from its fluid, controlled line and firm, rounded surface quality.

Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1911 (11.155.3a)



area that proved enormously productive over the next twenty years.

Morgan also fostered the study of ancient civilizations at his own library, Princeton, and Yale. He gave \$25,000 on the Metropolitan's behalf to a Princeton expedition at Sardis. For the Metropolitan in 1908 he bought 1,157 Mesopotamian cylinder seals that had been assembled, probably on his account, by the American collector William Hayes Ward. These tiny, potent artifacts record a history that dates from about 5000 to 300 B.C. When the Metropolitan's trustees rejected the seals as beyond the

Museum's scope, Morgan purchased them for his library. In 1910 he endowed a chair and a purchase fund at Yale, with \$100,000 of U. S. Steel stock, in memory of his friend William M. Laffan, who had died in 1909. Albert T. Clay, the first Laffan Professor of Assyriology and Babylonian Literature, built Yale's Babylonian Collection into one of the finest in the world—and also prepared a catalogue of Morgan's cuneiform inscriptions.



In 1909, partly at the instigation of Morgan's friends in the Senate, Congress passed a bill eliminating the twenty-percent import duty on works of art more than one hundred years old. A year later England's Liberal chancellor of the Exchequer, David Lloyd George, put through a budget that sharply increased Britain's inheritance, land, and income taxes. The combination of these measures, along with Morgan's sense of mortality (he turned seventy-four in 1911), prompted him finally to begin transferring his collections to the United States. They would be stored at the Metropolitan until

space could be found for their display. Along with Edward Robinson (by now director of the Museum) and Robert W. de Forest, assistant director, Morgan hoped that the prospect of exhibiting his collections would induce city officials to fund a new wing for them.

He commissioned the French art dealer Jacques Seligmann to supervise the packing and shipping of his artwork and hired a U.S. customs officer to live in London and inspect the crates as they were packed, to avoid having them reopened and possibly damaged once they reached New York. The process of sending hundreds of cases to New York took

62. C. R. Macauley.
Homeless. From the New
 York *Evening World*,
 November 26, 1912

In 1912 Morgan began shipping his collections from England to the United States, where they were stored in crates at the Museum, pending financing of a new wing to house them. The cartoon refers to the fact that New York City failed to furnish the requisite money, making the artworks, in effect, "homeless."

Archives of The Pierpont
 Morgan Library, New York



nearly a year. By the end of 1912, 351 crates were stored, unopened, in the Museum's basement. The city still had not provided funding for an additional wing. In late November Morgan told Edward Robinson that he had no intention of leaving his art to the Metropolitan. "He said that the value of these collections at the present time was about \$50 million," Robinson reported in a memorandum, "and he regarded this as much too large an asset to take out of his estate in case it might ever be needed." The director added, "This is the first indication Mr. Morgan has ever made to me of his ultimate intentions with regard to his collections." A month later, shortly before he left for Egypt, Morgan brought up the subject again. Although the Metropolitan was mounting an exhibition, due to open in January, of twenty-nine of his paintings, he asked

Robinson not to have any of the other collections unpacked because if the city found out they were already on display, it might not pay for a new wing. When Robinson assured him that the Board of Estimate promised to appropriate funding soon, Morgan replied "with some vehemence" that whether or not the money was granted, nothing was to be done with any of his art until he issued further instructions. The exhibition opened in January 1913. It included the Raphael and the Rembrandt, the Ghirlandaio and the Castagno, Gainsborough's *Duchess of Devonshire*, Lawrence's *Elizabeth Farren*, and Vermeer's *A Lady Writing*.

Also on exhibition were three panels from a Fra Filippo Lippi altarpiece, *Saint Lawrence Enthroned with Saints and Donors*, that Morgan had just bought in December from Duveen, with an endorsement from Bernard Berenson

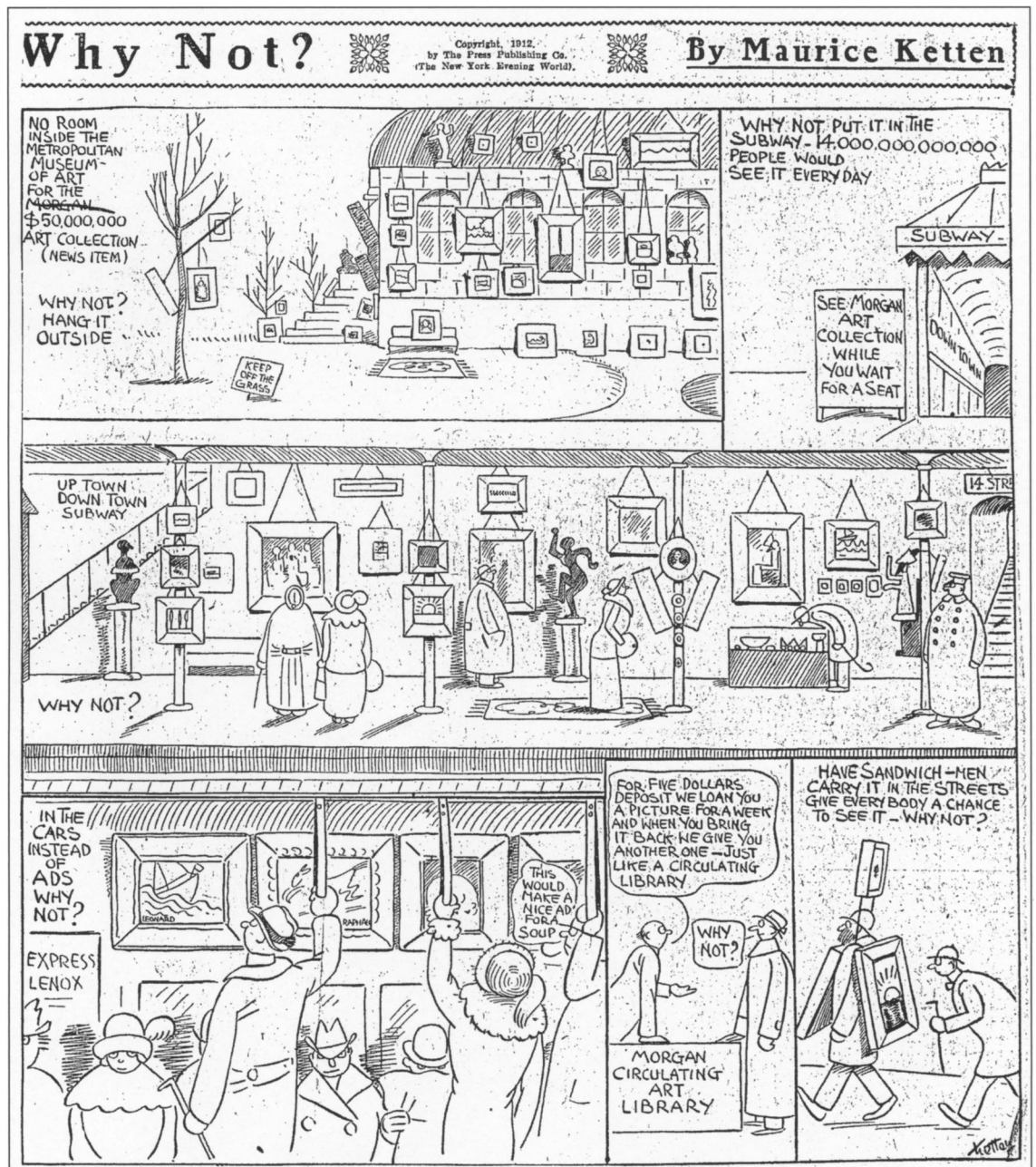
(see fig. 64). The altarpiece was, Berenson wrote to Morgan, one of Lippi's "suavest, sanest, completest, and most characteristic works." It ranked with "the hundred best pictures painted in Florence during its gloriously creative fifteenth century." Described by Vasari, it had been painted about 1440 for the chapel of the Alessandri family villa near Fiesole. Berenson, who had a contract with Duveen for twenty-five percent of the profit on works he authenticated for sale, urged Morgan to "conceive how startlingly rare it is to get hold of a work of art" that in the

course of its 472 years had "changed hands only on falling into yours." Morgan paid \$215,000 for the panels. (Twenty years later Berenson demoted them, claiming that they had been painted only in part by Fra Filippo Lippi. When Morgan's librarian, Belle Greene, read of Berenson's revision in his 1932 *Italian Pictures of the Renaissance*, she wrote to the author: "To me-ow and scratch, I must say that the 'G.P.' [in great part] after our Fra Filippo Lippi would have saved us much money had it been contained in your original letter to [Morgan through] Duveen."

63. Maurice Ketten. *Why Not?*, 1912. From the *New York Evening World*

Because the Museum did not build a new wing, Ketten proposed various possibilities for the Morgan paintings, including hanging them on the outside of the building and in the subway.

Archives of The Pierpont Morgan Library, New York



64. Fra Filippo Lippi (Italian, Florentine, b. ca. 1406, d. 1469). *Saint Lawrence Enthroned with Saints and Donors*, probably late 1440s. Tempera on wood, gold ground; central panel overall 47 3/4 x 45 1/2 in. (121.3 x 115.6 cm)

Morgan purchased this altarpiece from heirs of its original patron, Alessandro Alessandri (1391–1460). It was described in the 16th century as being in the Alessandri villa at Vincigliata. Alessandri is shown kneeling at the right, and his sons kneel at the left. The altarpiece, especially the side panels of Saints Benedict and Anthony Abbot (not shown), is rather damaged, which may have led to Bernard Berenson's somewhat harsh revision of his initial enthusiasm for the work.

Rogers Fund, 1935 (35.31.1a–c)



(The Metropolitan Museum bought the altarpiece in 1935 and attributes it to Lippi.)

On the Nile in early February 1913, Morgan suffered the worst depression of his life and probably had a series of silent strokes. His traveling companions took him to Cairo and then to Rome. The stock market

slumped on rumors about his health. He was driven up the Janiculum to see the buildings he had paid for at the American Academy and attended Easter services at Saint Paul's American Church on March 23. Eight days later he died in his sleep.

65. Morgan in a garden at Algeciras, Spain, 1913

Archives of The Pierpont Morgan Library, New York





66. Vase, Jug, and Cup. Roman, 1st century A.D. Signed by Ennion as maker. Colored glass, h. of jug 7¼ in. (18.4 cm)

Although the Cesnola Cypriot antiquities, purchased in the 1870s, included glass, the Museum's prominence in this area began with the gift of the Charvet collection from Henry G. Marquand in 1881 and the acquisition of the Gréau collection as part of the Morgan gift. Particularly important in both groups are works by Ennion, active in the Levant during the 1st century A.D. and often credited with introducing mold-blown glass.

Gift of Henry G. Marquand, 1881 (81.10.224); Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.194.225, 226)

67. Ewer. Italian, Florentine, ca. 1575–87. Soft-paste porcelain, h. 8 in. (20.3 cm)

This ewer is one of only sixty-three pieces of so-called Medici porcelain known to survive, and one of two examples acquired by Morgan. The influences that formed the factory's style are all present: the shape transposed from Renaissance goldsmithing, the blue and white Chinese color scheme, and the Iznik-derived floral pattern.

Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.2045)



68. *David and Goliath*. From a group of silver plates representing scenes from the early life of David. Early Byzantine, Constantinople, 628–30. Diam. 19½ in. (49.4 cm)

This plate with David battling Goliath (1 Samuel 17:40–54) is one of nine discovered on Cyprus in 1902 with other

silver and gold objects. Six plates are in the Museum. At the top Goliath curses David in the Valley of Elah; in the center Goliath attacks him with a spear as David prepares to sling a rock; at the bottom David beheads his fallen adversary.

Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.396)



Pierpont Morgan's collections, which were eventually valued for estate purposes at \$20 million, were in fact worth far more, possibly three or four times more. Morgan had estimated their value in November 1912 at \$50 million—roughly equivalent to \$750 million in the 1990s, although the increase in the value of art cannot be gauged by any conventional measure. Many of the objects that he bought for thousands of dollars would now be worth millions. The \$50-million figure probably did not include the objects at his library, and he had already given away millions of dollars' worth of art. He left the

ultimate disposition of his collections entirely to his son. His will stated only that he intended to render the objects "permanently available for the instruction and pleasure of the American people" and that—in a life full of work—"lack of the necessary time to devote to it has as yet prevented my carrying this purpose into effect."

He had assumed full responsibility for everything that interested him all his life, yet when it came to the works of art that he had accumulated with a consuming passion over the course of two decades, he simply opened his hands and let them go. Two days after he



69. Loan Exhibition of the J. Pierpont Morgan Collection, February 1914. Gothic room.

The altarpiece beneath the tapestry was part of the Morgan gift (acc. no. 17.190.489). The *Virgin* from Auvergne (fig. 44) is at the right, and *Saint Christopher* (fig. 24) is in the case at the left.

The Metropolitan Museum of Art

died the newspapers announced that the New York Board of Estimate would appropriate \$750,000 to build a new wing for the Morgan collections at The Metropolitan Museum of Art. It was too late.

Jack Morgan put his father's art collections, with the exception of the materials at the library, on exhibition at the Metropolitan in 1914. It was the only time they were all on view together. Pierpont Morgan himself had never seen them assembled in one place. The Metropolitan drew a record number of visitors that year. Jack also had the collections quietly appraised. He hoped to raise \$10 million to \$15 million to fulfill his father's cash bequests and cover the state inheritance tax (there was no federal estate tax in 1913). As word of potential sales leaked out, the *New York Times* reported that experts in Paris, London, and New York

considered Morgan's "the finest private collection" in existence.

Early in 1915 Jack sold the Chinese porcelains, the Fragonard panels, and much of the eighteenth-century French furniture to Duveen Brothers. Henry Clay Frick promptly bought the Fragonards. Also leaving the exhibition at the Museum in 1915–16 were Morgan's tapestries (sold to P. W. French and Company), and his Renaissance bronzes and Limoges enamels (both collections were bought by Duveen and sold to Frick). Then at the beginning of 1916 Jack gave the Metropolitan Raphael's Colonna altarpiece and the medieval portion of the Hoentschel collection. A year later he donated approximately seven thousand additional objects—among them Assyrian, Egyptian, and classical antiquities; collections of Byzantine, Romanesque, and Gothic enamels and ivories; medieval and



70. Loan Exhibition of the J. Pierpont Morgan Collection, February 1914. 18th-century room.

At the right is Lawrence's portrait of Elizabeth Farren (fig. 36).

The Metropolitan Museum of Art

Renaissance metalwork, sculpture, jewelry, crystals, and amber; French pottery of the sixteenth to the eighteenth century; the Negroli helmet; a collection of snuffboxes and other small jeweled and ornamented caskets; several paintings and oriental works of art; and his father's watch collection. Most of these objects were exhibited in the Decorative Arts Wing (the John Pierpont Morgan Wing) until 1943, when they were dispersed throughout the Museum.

Of the Morgan paintings, Lawrence's portrait of Miss Farren aroused the greatest popular interest. John D. Rockefeller Jr. asked Jack in April 1915 to sell him the picture directly or, if the paintings were to be sold as a group, to give him "first call" on the Lawrence. Frick also offered to buy *Elizabeth Farren* and Reynolds's *Lady Betty Delmé*. "I would like very much to have two full

lengths for my dining room, and would be willing to pay you \$500,000 prompt cash for these two pictures." In the Morgan estate the Lawrence was valued at \$125,000, the Reynolds at \$175,000.

Jack decided to keep *Elizabeth Farren* himself. He and his sisters each chose several paintings once the estate was settled. Jack later sold many of his through M. Knoedler and Company, from whom the Metropolitan bought the Lippi in 1935. The Museum received *Elizabeth Farren* with the bequest of Edward S. Harkness in 1940. The Trustees of the Frick Collection bought Rembrandt's *Nicolaes Ruts* through Knoedler in 1943. Vermeer's *A Lady Writing* was eventually given by the Havemeyer family to the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., in 1966.

71. Carpet with Pattern of Scrolling Vines and Blossoms. Northern Indian, Lahore, ca. 1620–30. Wool pile on cotton foundation, 30 ft. 3 in. x 11 ft. 1 in. (9.22 x 3.38 m)

This well-preserved carpet represents the final stage of a period when the patterns of northern Indian examples were based on Persian prototypes that featured formal, symmetrical arrangements of scrolling vines and blossoms. In spite of this dependence, certain motifs, color combinations, and technical features prove this carpet's unmistakably Indian origins.

Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917
(17.190.985)



NOTES

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72. Ritual Wine Vessel (*pou*) with Cover. Chinese, late Shang dynasty (ca. 1300–1050 B.C.). Bronze, h.21 1/4 in. (54 cm)

The *pou*, for storing wine, appeared in the 15th century B.C. among ritual vessels. This one, with a rare cover, bears a *taotie* mask, the ubiquitous Shang motif, on either side of the central flange on the lower register. Dragons and buffalo heads are above. “Thundercloud” motifs provide the background for these images, often thought to illustrate Shang rulers’ power and ability to communicate with ancestors and other spirits.

Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.524)

73. Wine Cup. Chinese, Qing dynasty (1644–1911), 18th century. Rhinoceros horn, h. 10 in. (25.4 cm)

Once native to China, rhinoceroses became rare by the Han dynasty (221 B.C.–A.D. 220), and their horns were imported for use in later decorative arts. Horn cups were

thought to enhance the fragrance of wine and were favored by clients, such as scholars, who avoided ostentation.

Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1908 (08.212.12)



74. Mosque Lamp. Egypt or Syria, Mamluk period, ca. 1285. Free-blown, brownish colorless glass with applied loop handles and foot, enameled and gilded, h. 10½ in. (26.7 cm)

Two bows against a red shield and the inscription indicate this lamp was made for the mausoleum of "A lā al-Dīn's Keeper of

the Crossbow," who can be identified as Aydakīn ibn 'Abd-Allāh (d. 1285 in Cairo). In the Qur'an God's light is likened to "a wickholder wherein is a light, the light is in a glass, and the glass is as it were a glittering star."

Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.985)



75. Tabernacle of Cherves. French, Limoges, ca. 1220–30. Copper plaques, engraved, scraped, stippled, and gilt; copper appliqué, repoussé, chased, engraved, scraped, and gilt; champlevé enamel; w. (closed) 30¾ in. (78 cm)

The tabernacle held the host between celebrations of the Mass. The gilt-copper figures dramatize the sacrifice of Jesus and his resurrection. Created in Limoges, renowned for enamels, it is one of two of this type to survive. (The other is in the treasury at Chartres.) Imposing in size and from a remarkable chance archaeological find near Cognac, it was a perfect addition to Morgan's distinguished collection of Limoges enamels.

Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.735)

Inside back cover: Detail of Pietro Longhi's *The Temptation* (fig. 35). Back cover: Detail of *David and Goliath* (fig. 68)





