

**CHARLES E. PIERCE, JR., LONGTIME DIRECTOR OF
THE MORGAN LIBRARY & MUSEUM, TO RETIRE**

New York, NY, January 25, 2007—S. Parker Gilbert, president of the Board of Trustees of The Morgan Library & Museum, announced today that Morgan Director Charles E. Pierce, Jr., is retiring at the end of this year, after two decades as head of the institution.

“Charlie Pierce was director for some of the most dynamic and creative years in the Morgan’s long history,” said Mr. Gilbert, in making the announcement of Mr. Pierce’s retirement. “Not only did he guide the institution’s largest expansion, but during his tenure the Morgan significantly built its collections, organized celebrated exhibitions, and expanded its public programs, including its highly regarded concert series.”

“And he led all of this while assuring that the institution’s finances were sound. During this period, the Morgan’s endowment rose from \$30 million to \$150 million.”

Mr. Gilbert said a committee comprising trustees of the Morgan will be formed to lead the search for Mr. Pierce’s successor. Richard L. Menschel, vice president of the board, will chair the committee.

In the spring of 2006, Mr. Pierce oversaw the reopening of the Morgan after the largest expansion in its more than eighty-year history as a public institution. The critically acclaimed \$106 million building project, designed by architect Renzo Piano, doubled gallery space, created new and expanded collections storage, added a state-of-the-art performance hall, a reading room for scholars, a new entrance on Madison Avenue, and new curatorial offices, as well as a variety of amenities for the public, including a renovated dining room, café, and expanded museum shop.

“I have tried in my years here not only to enlarge the Morgan’s facilities and to increase its extraordinary collections,” said Mr. Pierce, who joined the Morgan in May 1987, “but also to make the Morgan better known and to reach out to its many constituencies, from the scholar to the casual museumgoer, to win new and wider audiences for this splendid institution.

“Now is the right time to step down. With the expansion project complete, the stage has been set for continued growth of the institution in the twenty-first century.

“The Morgan Library & Museum is a very, very special place,” he added. “I don’t think I exaggerate when I say there is no other institution like it anywhere in the United States.”

“I am indebted to Parker Gilbert and the Board of Trustees for supporting me in my work here and am deeply grateful to the outstanding staff for helping me fulfill my vision for the institution.”

Mr. Gilbert said no date has yet been established to name a new director of the Morgan. Mr. Pierce has agreed to remain in his post throughout 2007 or until his successor assumes the directorship.

“Charlie built a strong management team that will serve the institution well during this transition,” Mr. Gilbert added.

Mr. Pierce joined the Morgan after serving as chairman of the English Department at Vassar College. He received his Ph.D. from Harvard University in 1970 with a focus on British literature of the Renaissance and eighteenth century, with a special interest in Samuel Johnson.

One of his first challenges occurred in April 1988, when the Lutheran Church decided to sell the former Morgan house on the corner of 37th Street and Madison Avenue, along with two adjacent sites that were part of the property. Mr. Pierce has said that on an early tour of the Morgan he quickly made the observation that the institution needed additional space for the storage of rare materials and for the implementation of various public programs. He thus encouraged the Board of Trustees to purchase the Morgan house property for \$15 million. The house had once been the residence of J. P. Morgan, Jr., the son of Pierpont Morgan, who assembled the collections that became the foundation of the institution.

A capital campaign of \$40 million paid for the house and its renovation, as well as the cost to build a glass enclosed court, designed by Bartholomew Voorsanger, to connect the Morgan’s three major buildings, including its landmark 1906 neo-classical building designed by Charles McKim.

“When we selected Charlie Pierce to become the fourth director of the Morgan, we knew we were getting someone who had the vision and leadership to build on the institution’s extraordinary legacy,” said Robert M. Pennoyer, secretary of the Morgan’s Board of Trustees and great grandson of its founder, Pierpont Morgan. “His years here were book ended by two remarkable expansions. In between, he transformed every aspect of the institution, from its collections to its finances to its public programs.”

During the period of Mr. Pierce's directorship, there were a number of noteworthy additions and acquisitions to the collections. This past fall, the Morgan was given fourteen master drawings by the well-known collector and Morgan trustee, Eugene V. Thaw and his wife, Clare. Included in the gift were works by Rembrandt, Turner, Delacroix, van Gogh, Matisse, Picasso, and Pollock. The drawings are part of a larger collection of almost four hundred works on paper formed by the Thaws since the 1960s and promised to the Morgan.

In 1989, the Morgan agreed to purchase the James Fuld Collection of printed music, by all accounts the finest private collection in the world, with first editions of works by American and European composers in the classical, popular, and folk traditions.

The Carter Burden Collection of American Literature, the finest collection of first editions of American writers from 1870 to the end of the twentieth century, is being given to the Morgan by the Burden family over time, with the first gift made in 1998. Between 1999 and 2005, the Morgan acquired the archives of *The Paris Review*, one of the most influential literary journals of the post-war period. The Pierre Matisse Gallery Archives were given by the Pierre Matisse Foundation in 1997. They include artists' correspondence, drawings, exhibition catalogues, and other material related to Giacometti, Miró, and other important artists who were shown at the famous New York art gallery owned by the son of the French artist, Henri Matisse.

Mr. Pierce oversaw the organization of a number of acclaimed exhibitions that drew significant audiences to the Morgan, including *The Art of the Brontës: Drawings and Manuscripts* (1996), *a.k.a. Lewis Carroll* (1998), *New York Collects: Drawings and Watercolors, 1900–1950* (1999), and *Pierre Matisse and His Artists* (2002). He also sent traveling shows of Morgan drawings and other masterworks to U.S. cities such as San Francisco, Atlanta, and Houston and abroad to Paris, London, and St. Petersburg.

During Mr. Pierce's tenure, attendance at the Morgan reached new highs. This year, visitation is expected to approach 250,000, the largest total in the institution's history.

Mr. Pierce also sought to reach out to scholars and specialists in innovative ways. A project that was particularly important to him as a way to engage and serve the academic community was the creation of an on-line catalogue of the Morgan's collections called CORSAIR, after the famous yachts owned by Pierpont and his son J. P. Morgan, Jr.

In 2002, Mr. Pierce saw the unveiling of The Thaw Conservation Center on the top floor of the Morgan house. This facility, a gift of Trustee Eugene V. Thaw, houses state-of-the-art technology for the conservation of drawings and other works on paper that are the Morgan's specialty.

“The Morgan has a history of outstanding leadership in the post of director, and Charlie Pierce greatly enhanced this tradition,” said James R. Houghton, vice president of the Board of Trustees. “His influence and deft touch have been felt in every aspect of the institution. Under an easy, friendly, cultured manner lies a leader determined to make things happen. We have been very fortunate to have had him at the helm for the last two decades. He will be very hard to replace.”

General Information

The Morgan Library & Museum
225 Madison Avenue, at 36th Street, New York, NY 10016-3405
212.685.0008
www.themorgan.org

Hours

Tuesday–Thursday, 10:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.; extended Friday hours, 10:30 a.m. to 9 p.m.; Saturday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Sunday, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.; closed Mondays, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, and New Year's Day.

Admission

\$12 for adults; \$8 for students, seniors (65 and over) and children (under 16); free to Members and children 12 and under accompanied by an adult. Admission is free on Fridays from 7 to 9 p.m. Admission to the McKim rooms is without charge during the following times: Tuesday, 3 to 5 p.m.; Friday, 7 to 9 p.m.; Sunday, 4 to 6 p.m. Admission is not required to visit the Morgan Shop.

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