

Exhibit A+



Hello again An old friend, the Morgan, has a new look.

Prepare to be dazzled by the grandly renovated Morgan Library. **By Carolyn Juris**

Ever since it opened to the public in 1924, the Morgan Library & Museum has been one of the city's preeminent cultural gems. And parents have long appreciated it as a bite-size antidote to megagallery fatigue. The space—a manageable 151,000 square feet, compared with MoMA's 630,000 and the Met's whopping 2 million—reopened on April 29 after celebrated architect Renzo Piano's three-year, \$106 million renovation. The new Madison Avenue entrance leads to a soaring, four-story glass-enclosed central court that connects older buildings to the north and south and is meant to evoke an Italian piazza. The inaugural exhibition, "Masterworks of the Morgan," featuring 15th-century manuscripts and other historical treasures, is a good introduction to the sweeping collection begun by tycoon J. Pierpont Morgan, and it has plenty to interest younger visitors.

Start in the quaintly monikered Mr. Morgan's Library, which, according to gallery programs manager Marie

Trope-Podell, often reminds Disney fans of *Beauty and the Beast*. "It gives kids the feeling that this isn't just a museum with things hanging on the walls," she says of the 1906 building. "It's a space with a strong character." Portraits of great men of the arts and sciences (and they're all men here, unfortunately but not surprisingly), and female figures representing Poetry, History and Music, gaze down from the Renaissance-style ceiling on three levels of bronze-and-walnut bookcases. A peek at the children's manuscript collection on the ground level yields the familiar—*The Wind in the Willows*, *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*—as well as the delightfully obscure (*Strange Adventures of the Goofoo Simple*). The upper galleries appear inaccessible, with no stairs or ladders in sight, and curious young minds may wonder how Mr. Morgan reached those balcony shelves. (Hint: Look for the brass handles.)

A more obvious conveyance in the museum's atrium—the glass elevator—leads upstairs to the new Engelhard Gallery and the exhibition "Literary and Historical Manuscripts" (through September 3). On view for the first time are drafts and watercolor studies from Jean de Brunhoff's *The Story of Babar*, showing the beloved

elephant's transformation from rough pencil sketch to green-suited, charming pachyderm. "It's a nice way to teach kids about the creative process," Trope-Podell says, adding that the museum plans to mount a larger Babar exhibition soon.

If the artistic process proves too subtle a concept, head back downstairs and wow them with some bling. "Kids absolutely love gold," Trope-Podell says, and the Morgan has plenty of it. The literal jewel of "Pierpont Morgan's Medieval Treasury," on view in the new, somewhat claustrophobic Clare Eddy Thaw Galley (ongoing), is the 12th-century, gem-encrusted *Stavelot Triptych*, whose scenes from the lives of Emperor Constantine and St. Helena resemble a gilded medieval comic strip. In the Morgan Stanley Gallery West, the sumptuously painted, brightly illuminated display, "Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts" (through September 10), depicts everything from hunting dogs being groomed and fed (*Livre de la chasse*) to David slaying Goliath.

If young appetites become roused, then take a break at the piazza's casual café with a delicious afternoon tea—

"This isn't just a museum with things hanging on the walls."

sandwiches, a scone, fruit tart and cookies (\$15.50). Skip the more formal, stuffy dining room—the Morgan family's original dining area—although you might point out the double portraits of Pierpont Morgan, age six, and his sister Sarah Spencer Morgan, age four, visible through a glass wall.

A museum gift shop has been created out of two rooms, one of which is entirely devoted to books, such as a quirky selection of reprints, including the 1903 tongue-in-cheek rhyming etiquette manual, *More Goops and How Not to Be Them* (\$3.95), and a lovely edition of Munro Leaf's classic *Ferdinand the Bull* (\$17.95, translated into Latin). Kids looking to emulate Pierpont Morgan could do worse than to start their own collections with an acquisition or two here.

"*Masterworks from the Morgan*" is at the Morgan Library & Museum until November 12 (morganlibrary.org).