The Morgan Announces Winter 2020 Exhibition Program

Featuring Works by Al Taylor, Alfred Jarry, Jean-Jacques Lequeu, and a Presentation of the Book of Ruth

New York, NY (November 12, 2019) – The Morgan Library & Museum announces its 2020 winter program of exhibitions, celebrating innovative works by a range of visionary artists. In January and February, the Morgan will open four exhibitions, spanning time periods from the Middle Ages to the 1990s. The season begins on January 24 with Alfred Jarry: The Carnival of Being, focusing on the French writer’s experimental approach to the art of the book in celebration of the important gift to the Morgan of the Robert J. and Linda Klieger Stillman Pataphysics Collection. January 31 marks the opening of Jean-Jacques Lequeu: Visionary Architect, which brings the artist’s drawings from the Bibliothèque nationale de France to New York City for the first time. Opening on February 14, The Book of Ruth: Medieval to Modern places the Joanna S. Rose Illuminated Book of Ruth, completed by the artist Barbara Wolff in 2017 and presented to the Morgan in 2018, in conversation with medieval illuminated manuscripts. Rounding out the season, The Drawings of Al Taylor, opening on February 21, takes a closer look at the artist's original contribution to drawing at the end of the twentieth-century.

Alfred Jarry: The Carnival of Being
January 24 through May 10, 2020

The subversive works and personality of the French writer Alfred Jarry (1873–1907) were touchstones for
Dada, Surrealism, and the Theatre of the Absurd; yet the breadth of his career is largely unknown. Jarry is most renowned for his play *Ubu Roi*, and the legend of its sensational premiere in 1896. To his contemporaries—figures such as Paul Gauguin, Henri Rousseau, Oscar Wilde, and Apollinaire—Jarry’s prestige extended beyond theater. He applied his genius and wit to poetry, the novel, and operettas; he was a graphic artist, actor, puppeteer, and critic, and the inventor of a science of “imaginary solutions” called pataphysics. Jarry’s works suggested that engagement with technology, popular imagery, and the performance of everyday life can constitute art. He also showed innovation in book design: one of the first writers to experiment with visual typography, Jarry forged relationships between image and text that employed anachronism, collage, and appropriation as bellwethers of modern and contemporary artists’ publications. By exploring his enterprises in print, this exhibition contributes to an ever-broadening appreciation that positions Jarry as a crucial hinge connecting the nineteenth century to the twentieth-century avant-garde.

*Alfred Jarry: The Carnival of Being* is organized by The Morgan Library & Museum and curated by Sheelagh Bevan, Andrew W. Mellon Associate Curator of Printed Books and Bindings.

The exhibition is made possible by major support from Beatrice Stern, the Sherman Fairchild Fund for Exhibitions, Robert J. and Linda Kliger Stillman, and the Franklin Jasper Walls Lecture Fund.

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**Jean-Jacques Lequeu: Visionary Architect.**

**Drawings from the Bibliothèque nationale de France**

*January 31 through May 10, 2020*

Six months before he died in poverty and obscurity, architect and draftsman Jean-Jacques Lequeu (1757–1826) donated one of the most singular and fascinating graphic oeuvres of his time to the Bibliothèque nationale de France (BnF). The Morgan Library & Museum is proud to be the first institution in New York City to present a selection of these works. Some sixty of Lequeu’s several hundred drawings will be on view in *Jean-Jacques Lequeu: Visionary Architect*, the first museum retrospective to bring significant public and scholarly attention to one of the most imaginative architects of the Enlightenment.
Lequeu’s meticulous drawings in pen and wash include highly detailed renderings of buildings and imaginary monuments populating invented landscapes. His mission was to see and describe everything systematically—from the animal to the organic, from erotic fantasy to his own visage. Solitary and obsessive, he created the fantastic worlds shown in his drawings without ever leaving his studio, and enriched them with characters and stories drawn from his library.

Jean-Jacques Lequeu: Visionary Architect is organized by the Morgan Library & Museum and the Bibliothèque nationale de France with the cooperation of Paris Musées.

The exhibition was presented at the Petit Palais, Musée des Beaux-Arts de la Ville de Paris, from 11 December 2018 to 31 March 2019. Exhibition curators were Corinne Le Bitouzé and Christophe Leribault and scientific collaborators were Laurent Baridon, Jean-Philippe Garric, and Martial Guédron. The curator of the exhibition at the Morgan is Jennifer Tonkovich, Eugene and Clare Thaw Curator of Drawings and Prints.

The exhibition is made possible by generous support from the Pierre and Tana Matisse Foundation, an anonymous donor, the Alex Gordon Fund for Exhibitions, and Aso O. Tavitian, with assistance from Robert Dance and Hubert and Mireille Goldschmidt.

The Book of Ruth: Medieval to Modern
February 14 through June 14, 2020

Famine and flight, emigration and immigration, foreignness: these are some of the societal issues touched upon by the anonymous author of the Bible’s Book of Ruth, whose titular character was a great-grandmother of King David and, in the Christian tradition, an ancestor of Jesus Christ. This exhibition celebrates the 2018 gift by Joanna S. Rose of the Joanna S. Rose Illuminated Book of Ruth to the Morgan. The accordion-fold vellum manuscript, measuring nine inches tall and an amazing eighteen feet long, was designed and illuminated by New York artist Barbara Wolff, who worked on the project for two years (2015–17). The complete biblical text of the Book of Ruth is written in Hebrew on one side and in English on the other, the work of calligrapher Izzy Pludwinski. The Hebrew side features twenty colored illustrations and a continuous landscape, with accents and lettering in silver, gold, and platinum; the English side has forty images executed in black ink.
The Rose Book of Ruth is presented in conversation with twelve manuscripts, drawn from the Morgan’s holdings, that unfold the Christian traditions for illustrating the story of Ruth during the Middle Ages. Through the juxtaposition of the modern manuscript with these ancient works, which date from the twelfth to the fifteenth century and include three leaves from the Morgan’s famed Crusader Bible, the exhibition brings into focus the techniques of medieval illumination that inspired Wolff, as well as her inventive approach to iconography.

*The Book of Ruth: Medieval to Modern* is organized by the Morgan Library & Museum and curated by Roger S. Wieck, Melvin R. Seiden Curator and Department Head of Medieval and Renaissance Manuscript.

The exhibition is made possible by the David Berg Foundation, Daniel and Joanna S. Rose, Joshua W. Sommer, and the David Klein Jr. Foundation.

**The Drawings of Al Taylor**

*February 21 through May 24, 2020*

Active in New York in the 1980s and 1990s as a sculptor and draftsman, Al Taylor (1948–1999) found inspiration for his lyrical and witty compositions in banal objects and everyday situations. Driven by curiosity and a sense of humor, he drew maps of pet stains, imagined puddles hanging out to dry, and created elegant still-lifes out of assemblages of tin cans balanced on wires. During his short career, he produced more than five thousand drawings, in which he combined technical skills and Old Master virtuosity with conceptual strategies based on chance and graphic systems such as charts and diagrams. The exhibition and accompanying catalogue will bring to light new research based on the drawings, sketchbooks, and abundant documentation in the artist’s estate.

*The Drawings of Al Taylor* is organized by the Morgan Library & Museum, New York and curated by Isabelle Dervaux, Acquavella Curator and Department Head of Modern & Contemporary Drawings.

The exhibition is made possible with generous support from the Sherman Fairchild Fund for Exhibitions, the Ricciardi Family Exhibition Fund, and the Robert Lehman Foundation.
About the Morgan Library & Museum
A complex of buildings in the heart of New York City, the Morgan Library & Museum began as the private library of financier Pierpont Morgan, one of the preeminent collectors and cultural benefactors in the United States. Today it is a museum, independent research library, music venue, architectural landmark, and historic site. A century after its founding, the Morgan maintains a unique position in the cultural life of New York City and is considered one of its greatest treasures. With the 2006 reopening of its newly renovated campus, designed by renowned architect Renzo Piano, and the 2010 refurbishment of the original library, the Morgan reaffirmed its role as an important repository for the history, art, and literature of Western civilization from 4000 B.C. to the twenty-first century.

The Morgan Library & Museum | 225 Madison Avenue | 212.685.0008 | themorgan.org

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