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Rare Chopin manuscript discovered at Morgan Museum and Library

Lost work by the Polish composer was found at the Morgan Museum and Library in New York. It will join the cultural institutions already rich collection of rare manuscripts, finding home among other literary and musical greats.

A previously unknown waltz, believed to be composed by the Polish musician Frédéric Chopin, has been uncovered nearly 200 years after its creation in a New York library vault.

The discovery was made by curator Robinson McClellan, who was sorting through a trove of cultural artefacts in the vault of the Morgan Library and Museum in Manhattan. Among the items, he stumbled upon a small, weathered manuscript bearing a name that caught his eye: Chopin.

“I thought, ‘What could this be? I don’t recognize this music,” McClellan [recounted](#).

To authenticate the discovery, he reached out to [Jeffrey Kallberg](#), a prominent Chopin expert at the University of Pennsylvania. After testing the ink and paper, the Morgan confirmed the authenticity of the discovery.

“My jaw dropped,” Kallberg [said](#). “I knew I’d never seen this piece before.”

The handwriting was also found to align with Chopin’s, featuring a stylized bass clef symbol and doodles typical of his style.

After meticulous analysis of the paper, ink, handwriting, and musical structure—including Chopin’s distinctive penmanship and signature doodles—the Morgan Museum has confirmed that the manuscript is an authentic, previously unknown waltz by the iconic Polish composer.

Although detailed descriptions of the exact techniques may not have been publicly disclosed, McClellan said, “We have total confidence in our conclusion,”

The [Morgan Museum and library](#) is famous for its Collection of Rare Manuscripts. The Morgan houses an extensive collection of manuscripts, including 19th and 20th literary works by famous authors such as Charles Dickens, Mark Twain, and James Joyce. It also includes significant musical manuscripts by composers.

Amidst the treasures of the existing collection, the recent discovery of a previously unknown Chopin waltz not only adds a remarkable piece to the puzzle of classical music history but also underscores the scrutiny that classical manuscripts face as scholars strive to authenticate each new gem.

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