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## Les Enluminures at Masterpiece London

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*Histoire Ancienne jusqu'à César and Fait des Romains; In French, illuminated manuscript on parchment; With 78 miniatures by the Master of the Coronation of Charles VI and a collaborator; France, Paris, c. 1370-80; \$4,500,000.*

Taking place in the beautiful grounds of the Royal Chelsea Hospital at the height of London's busy summer art season, [Masterpiece London](#) will take place from June 29 to July 5. For this prestigious event, [Les Enluminures](#) will be presenting an array of important acquisitions. Notable highlights include a royal manuscript commissioned within the court of Charles V, a pristine 13th-century missal from Soissons and a Roman ring bearing the inscription "Utere Felix".

Of the utmost importance, the *Histoire Ancienne jusqu'à César and Fait des Romains* is a historical chronicle of immense size, and one of the greatest historical compilations of the later Middle Ages. Our copy was written by King Charles V's scribe, Raoulet d'Orléans, and illuminated by two artists who worked almost exclusively for the King. The 78 illuminations sparkling with gold leaf and in near-perfect condition dazzle the eye. The provenance is nearly unbroken - from the fourteenth century Valois court up to and including major modern bibliophiles (Chester Beatty, William Hearst, James and Elizabeth Ferrell). The manuscript is well-known but has not been for public sale for more than a quarter century. It was exhibited at and published by the J. Paul Getty Museum.

Another highlight to be exhibited at Masterpiece London is one of the nest thirteenth-century Missals still in private hands. This splendid Missal with its majestic full-page Crucifixion and numerous large historiated initials represents the very peak of Gothic illumination at its apogee in France, which was itself the home of the Gothic style. The present manuscript stands out for its certain localization to the diocese of Soissons and for its exceptionally full cycle of illustrations. Impressive in size, and in faultless condition, it is one of the greatest testimonies of thirteenth-century illumination in private hands.

The third highlight comes in the form of a Roman open-work ring inscribed with the Latin inscription "Utere Felix" meaning "Use (this) happily" or "Use it with luck". This inscription, framed with scrolls, ivy

and pelta motifs, seems to have been popular in various parts of the Roman Empire with examples found on Roman rings of the 2nd to 4th centuries AD and other jewels such as bracelets, belts, buckles and bulae. In superb condition and of considerable weight, this ring is an important example of Roman jewelry evidently made for a high-ranking individual.

**STAND A12**

**June 29 to July 5, 2017**

**Preview: Tuesday, June 28, 11 am - 9 pm**