

## “Holy Hoaxes: A Beautiful Deception. Celebrating William Voelkle’s Collection” at Les Enluminures, New York

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Les Enluminures, New York, will be exhibiting “Holy Hoaxes: A Beautiful Deception. Celebrating William Voelkle’s Collection.”

**The exhibition will be held from January 17 through February 2, 2019.**

The exhibition comes with a detailed PDF catalogue of the collection with entries by William Voelkle, an introduction by Christopher de Hamel, edited by Sandra Hindman.

Sandra Hindman, Founder and CEO of Les Enluminures, states “It’s with much pleasure that we mount this exhibition to celebrate William Voelkle’s collection. I myself have long worked on fakes, forgeries, and copyists of medieval manuscripts, and this occasion helps me acknowledge my debt to Bill’s ground-breaking work.”

William Voelkle, Curator Emeritus of Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts at the Morgan Library and Museum, retired in September after 50 years at this illustrious institution. The current

exhibition celebrates one of Voelkle's lifelong passions — the collection of fakes and forgeries he assembled over nearly five decades.

“His role in establishing the fame of the Spanish Forger is well-known from the 1978 exhibition (and monograph) on this artist at the Morgan, making the Spanish Forger one of the only forgers in history to benefit from a one-man show at a major museum. A dozen of this artist's work now form the core of Voelkle's collection of well over 60 items, among which are a remarkable panel painting by the Forger, the first work he acquired in 1972, followed by another ‘core’ work in 1974. Many other works complement the collection of Spanish Forger illuminated manuscripts and paintings: Ethiopian codices by the so-called ‘Synkessar Miniature Forger’ stand side by side a work by the modern-day nuns at the ‘Abbey of Maredret’ in Belgium, who specialized in the art of illumination, among others. Included are a few miniatures from [Voelkle's] parallel collection of ‘real’ illuminated manuscript leaves, because they help round out the story of his fascination in fakes and forgeries,” the gallery adds.

Voelkle adds, “The Spanish Forger was born at the Morgan Library. I subsequently learned, in fact, that keeping track of his works was a library tradition inaugurated by Belle da Costa Greene herself [the first Director of the Morgan who originally unmasked the Spanish Forger and gave him his name].”

Works exhibited are widely diverse. In addition to the Spanish Forger, they include illuminations sold as ‘real’ but unmasked as fakes by Voelkle or other of his art-historian colleagues.

“One such is a majestic ‘Romanesque leaf of Christ in Majesty.’ There are German panel paintings, Coptic leaves once regarded as the earliest Coptic manuscript with notation (now known to be fake); Italian, French, and Flemish forgeries; Indian (by the Erotica Master), Islamic, and Mexican forgeries. The exhibition will consider the sometimes fine line between copies and forgeries, the latter made with conscious intent to deceive and usually for financial gain,” the gallery says.

*The exhibition will be on view from January 17 through February 2, 2019, at Les Enluminures, New York 23 East 73rd Street 7th floor. For details, visit: <http://www.lesenluminures.com>*