



TAILORED TO HER

*Tracing Female
Patronage in Fifteenth
and Sixteenth Century
Books of Hours*



Lucie Morton

LES ENLUMINURES

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INTRODUCTION

Books of Hours have been called the medieval best-sellers, due to their pervasiveness and wild popularity. Yet, their value currency, and social cachet has no one-to-one equivalent today. Looking at a modern bookshelf, one can surmise little more than the owner's preferred genre, but even those might be reflective of a bygone New Year's Resolution or an attempt at a non-offensive present from a well-intending family member. Yet, just as taste and personal style influence what consumers buy today, whether it be fine art, fashion, real estate, or even food, Books of Hours reflected the personalities of those who bought them. While some Books of Hours, were "off the shelf," many were "tailored" to their owners who owned them. In today's world, they have more in common with haute couture than they do with a Barnes and Noble collectible edition.



Books of Hours also carry a strong association with female ownership. Of course, men too possessed and commissioned these objects. Some of the most iconic hours like *The Belles Heures* of Jean de France, duc de Berry or the unfinished *Hours* of Charles of France were originally commissioned by men. Nonetheless, in a society where female literacy was not emphasized, women were encouraged to possess and read these prayerbooks, which lead them to become gendered symbols, but

also a means for women to assert power. As Susan Groag Bell stated in her seminal 1982 article on the topic through Books of Hours, women became arbiters not only of taste, but also culture or, as she called them, "arbiters of lay piety and ambassadors of culture." Female book owners and patrons set cultural standards through these custom-made works of art. They made their influence through the wide use of these books, such as their frequent use in the education of their children, their status as heirlooms, and their role as marriage gifts, across borders. These profoundly personal books were tailored to the realities of their patrons, or at the very least, the realities they wished to project. They were meant to be a perfect fit.



Books of Hours were modular. Patrons could pick and choose various components, such as prayers, calendars, and illuminations to adjust the book to their liking. The *Hours* of Virgin

serves as the nucleus around which the rest of the Book of Hours was structured. Common additions include a calendar, Litanies, the Seven Penitential Psalms, the Office of the Dead, other "Hours" such as the Hours of the Cross, the "Obsecro Te" and "O Intemerata" (The Marian Prayers), and the Suffrages. Another important variation is a Book of Hours is its "use." This terminology refers to the liturgical variations from standard texts which emerged locally. "Use of Paris" might use a particular word order or sentence in a prayer that "Use of Breton" does not, allowing manuscripts to be tracked via their "use." Use, alone, does not indicate place of creation, for example, "Use of Rome" was popular across late medieval Books of Hours, no matter the location. However, "use" does offer insight into where their owners lived and which prayers they held dear. Beyond Use, a database of variant reading of late medieval French and Dutch Books of Hours, tracks the different variations of texts that most commonly appear in Books of Hours, such as the Litanies and the Marian Prayers. The database, compiled by Gregory Clark from his research with John Plummer, is aimed at recognizing how variant prayers can tackle issues of localization, beyond just "use."



Virginia Reinburg has tracked similar patterns, or practices of prayer, but in French Books of Hours, creating what she refers to as ethnography of prayer. Variant components and prayers in Books of Hours suggest particular conditions of either family, community, church, and custom, which result in specialized prayers. For example, in times of endemic plague, prayers to Saint Sebastian and Saint Roch, himself a late fifteenth-century invention for intercession against plague, increase. One of the key social conditions under which Book of Hours developed was that of gender. Early Books of Hours were largely commissioned and popularized by laywomen, who shaped the genre through their persistent patronage and personal preferences. As time passed, however, the influence of these women



resulted in the widespread use of Books of Hours. By the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the influence these laywomen exercised on the development of the genre had diminished, and Books of Hours were acquired and commissioned by men and women alike. Gendered influence, however, may not have fully ceased with the rise of popularity of the Book of Hours. In later printed book catalogues, some books are marked as “Heures à l’usage de femme,” and less commonly “Heures à l’usage d’homme” or “d’enfant,” implying that something, although yet undetermined, sets apart Books of Hours that were “for the use of women.”

This exhibition will focus on these later female book owners through the women they prayed to everyday—those depicted in the Suffrages. The Suffrages, traditionally the final section of a Book of Hours, honors the canon of saints according to their hierarchy. This hierarchy is canonically set and typically as follows: God or the Holy Trinity, the Virgin Mary, the Archangel Michael, John the Baptist, the apostles, male martyrs and confessors, female saints, and finally virgin martyrs. Just as one today, however, might take an inch off their dress to fit them just right, a medieval patron might take one saint out of the Suffrages. As books prone to and primed for customization, the inclusion, exclusion, or rank of saints in the Suffrages often reflects the preferences of the patron, whether it be a regional, personal, or even gendered slant.

Personal taste is broad, and in accord, modifications to Books of Hours, specifically the Suffrages, are as well. Each book featured in this exhibition contains suffrages to a unique combination of saints, but further, a unique combination of female saints. Female saints occur at the bottom of the hierarchical pyramid, and thus an increased interest in their appearance, order, and even disappearance shows a conscious effort in curation on the part of a patron. It is the “*de sancta*” that marks the identities of these patrons, not only as women, but as people, whose unique tastes and preferences stared back at them in the books they commissioned.





What Makes Something You?

Sometimes we buy things to which we are drawn. We look at it and tell ourselves we must get it because, "it's so me." Other times, something might not scream at us, but with a little tweaking, it becomes "ours." And sometimes, nothing "just right" exists, and so we must create what is "ours" in the world. Whether something is "you," fit to "you," or just for "you," ownership, in part, is a matter of personal taste. Books of Hours were no different. The books in this exhibition are tailored one way or another: Bespoke Books, One-Size-Fits-All, Marks of Personalization, and Refashioned.

agnum uator qui
 stolos primus mea
 atus obtines prima
 gulare presidium tu
 is exaudi uota scilicet
 credas pro nra omnia
 Ora pro nobis bte
 Et digni. **Oratio.**
 O dñe plebi tue sanc
 tificator et custos ut
 stoh tu iacobi munim
 tidis et conuersione tibi
 orat et secula deservat.



O sancti aurostole
 gloriosi pontificis ren
 diu impartitur rabi

BESPOKE BOOKS

A suffrage itself is made up of four key parts: the antiphon, the versicle, the response, and the oratio. These sections are typically titled and rubricated (i.e. written in red.) The first section, the antiphon, is frequently taken from hymns, which identify and call upon that saint. The versicle and response are often two halves of a psalm, related to the saint, or a call-and-response directed at the saint. Finally, the oratio, meaning “prayer,” is a longer prayer for the intercession of that saint based on an aspect of their patronage, for example, Saint Apollonia for toothaches. Then, each prayer is organized according to hierarchical order: the Holy Trinity, the Virgin, Archangel Michael, John the Baptist, the Apostles, Male Martyrs, Male Confessors, and finally, all female saints.

Due to the long and widespread vogue of Books of Hours, it is no wonder that not all suffrages match the above formula. Some suffrages are without rubrication, some use different titles, some leave off the section titles, and others skip sections of the prayers all together. The following books, however, are not merely variations, but display extraordinary exceptions to the standard. Yet, while these books do stray from the rest of the pack, their suffrages are not cut from the same cloth. Instead, they present two extremes, both ultra-tailored but to two different fashions: one to the male, the other female. Together they represent the bespoke, the ultimate custom luxury -- fit to you, and only you.



The "Signed Hours" (Use of Rome)

In Latin and French, Illuminated manuscript on parchment. 5 large and 17 small miniatures by "Jean of Tours" of the Workshop of Jean Poyer and another illuminator
 France, Tours, c. 1490-1500
 Price on request.

This Book of Hours shows off the preeminence of Tours in early Renaissance France. Around 1500, when this book was commissioned, Tours emerged as the center of the French Renaissance, flourishing largely due to the influence of Paris, royal patronage, and the presence of Italian artists. This work, "The Signed Hours," was produced by a



collaborator of Jean Poyer. Poyer, previously considered a lesser follower of Jean Bourdichon and Jean Fouquet, was a well-respected artist in his own right. At court, he was popular among the nobility, receiving commissions from patrons such as Anne of Brittany, Queen of France, for a "Petites Heures." He is known for his bold and experimental style with vibrant colors, dynamic figures, and spatial effects, characteristic of the influence of the Italian Renaissance on sixteenth century France. Previously, this manuscript was thought to be "the" autograph work of Jean Poyer, due to the signature that appears on collar of Job, which reads IOAN



TIURO[NEN]S[IS], or Jean of Tours, for which this book is named. Now, the consensus is that the miniature is the work of Poyer's main collaborator, and was likely named Jean too, a common name in Tours at the time. Another hand is present in the illuminations, identified as "Bourdichonesque," likely a of the workshop, responsible for the many of the miniatures on the text folios, includes those in the Suffrages.

The Suffrages continue from folios 170 to 183, featuring Archangel Michael, John the Baptist, John the Evangelist, James, Christopher, Sebastian, Cosmos and Damian, Matin,

Nicholas, Anthony, Fiacre, Claude, Francis, Aignen, Anne, Mary Magdalene, Katherine, Margaret, Apollonia, Barbara, Opportune, Genevieve, Avoye, and Sacred Virgins. While these Suffrages at first seem traditional and unremarkable in order and cast, they hold a telling peculiarity—the only saints illuminated are female. While only five out of the ten female saints are depicted a miniature, it is highly unusual that no male saint is afforded a miniature, especially in a rich bespoke such as this one. The saints do not, however, offer a clue to why they are singled out. Anne, Mary Magdalene, Katherine, Margaret, and Apollonia share no one common dominator, aside from their gender. They are not all biblical figures, nor all martyrs, nor are they saints venerated in a particular locale. Anne and Mary Magdalene are biblical. Katherine, Margaret, and Apollonia are virgin martyrs, but so are those who were not depicted, namely are Barbara, Opportuna, Genevieve, and Saint Avoye. No specific regional distinction is clear—both Genevieve and Avoye, the only female saints with regional importance for Northeastern France, are unilluminated.



Furthermore, the miniatures of the female saints all appear back-to-back, unlike examples from many other Books of Hours, including some in this exhibition, which either illustrate all saints or disperse miniatures throughout. This may show a preference of the patron towards the five female saints highlighted or even, perhaps, suggest that the owner was in fact a woman. It is important to note that



the "Obsecro Te" and "O Intemerata" appear to be in the masculine, although Books of Hours with female owners do not automatically modify the standard masculine form of the prayers.

Like many manuscripts from this period, it is missing pages, making it unclear whether this "spotlight" on these female saints is a byproduct of this book's rich life. Furthermore, the Suffrages have been partially bound out of order. Upon first glance, Saint Fiacre's prayer appears to be an added text leaf, with the back



of the folio being blank. The missing end to Anthony's prayer, however, occurs above the suffrage to Saint Fiacre, establishing that the missing leaves originally occurred between Saint Fiacre and Saint Francis. This blank page in the center of the Suffrages could suggest that the facing page once held a full-page miniature, perhaps to Claude, whose prayer is incomplete, although this would not match mode of illumination, (half-page miniatures for suffrages and no blank folios), preferred throughout the rest of the book.

It is impossible to know exactly what was lost from missing page(s). Yet, even if the missing page(s) of the Suffrages did contain portraits to male saints, it would have been small handful of successive martyrs, not the the higher-ranking Archangel Michael, John the Baptist, John the Evangelist, or Apostles, which are present and unilluminated. This further reinforces the likelihood that the female saints alone





The Hours of Clavel (use of Rome)

In Latin, Illuminated manuscript on parchment. 5 large miniatures by the Master of Robert Gaguin, and 1 large miniature by the Master of Bénigne Serre

France, Paris, c. 1480-1490; Dijon, c. 1520-1530

\$60,000.00

This book packs a petite punch. Only 77 folios in total (and originally only 69), the shortest of all those included, this pint-size Book of Hours is a stark comparison to the previously discussed "Signed Hours," which contains 183 folios. It follows a tight and efficient program, including a shortened version of the Hours of the Cross and of the Holy Ghost. It is the Suffrages, however, that take "abridged" to the extreme. Succinct, but unique, these suffrages only span four pages and feature just four saints—Saint Michael, Saint John the Baptist, Saint James, and Saint Sebastian. This all-male cast represents all four "aspects" of male saints traditionally represented in Hours: Archangel Michael, John the Baptist, an apostle, and a martyr or confessor, listed in the expected hierarchy. In this streamlined book, it is clear that a significant section of the Suffrages, and of the canon itself, has been tailored away—the women.

This complete exclusion of female saints suggests that the owner was probably a man from Paris. The original gender of the patron is further substantiated by the saints featured in the calendar, as well as the masculine form used in the "Obsecro Te." The book was



commissioned in the 1480s in Paris and featured five full page miniatures by the Master of Robert Gaguin, active 1480-1500.

However, a major alteration took place in the 1520s, when a noble woman, likely from the House of Clavel, acquired and refashioned it. She added a quire at the front of the manuscript, including the Hours of the Conception as well as a miniature of Saint Anna and Joachim Meeting at the Golden Gate, completed by the Master of Bénigne Serre, active in Dijon in the 1520s. This miniature is framed by a decorative border containing a coat of arms divided in two parts—the left half is the arms of an unknown family, but the right is that of the Clavel family.

Although the female patron's identity is unknown, the Clavel family is documented in Lyon from the second half of the fifteenth century onward. She could have been related to Jeanne Clavel, born in 1450 as the daughter of Hugues Clavel, alderman of Lyon in 1442, and Antoinette de Saconay. In 1465, she married Jean Faye (c. 1440-1528), Lord of Espeisses, alderman of Lyon in 1507, 1512, 1518, and 1524, although his arms do not match those seen on the left side of the present shield.



ONE SIZE FITS ALL

Something that fits everyone might not seem all that “you.” Yet, combined with another garment made special for you, and voila, a personalized outfit. The following books could be seen as the “pret-a-porter” counterpart to the “haute hours” previously discussed. The bespoke books set themselves apart from this “standard sizing.” Indeed, in this book, the Suffrages are “one-size-fits-all,” following the standard hierarchy, texts, and illumination in a Book of Hours. No reader is alienated by the inclusion or exclusion of a particular saint. That does not mean these books were not custom-made—the following book was clearly a stand-alone order, but the personalization appears elsewhere.



Book of Hours (Use of Rome)

In Latin, illuminated manuscript on parchment. 6 full-page miniatures by a follower of Loyset Liédet and the Master of Edward IV, 41 small miniatures by a follower of Willem Vrelant.

Southern Netherlands, Bruges, c. 1480

Price on request.

This Book of Hours showcases two distinct eras of illumination in fifteenth-century Bruges. It was commissioned in 1480 by a noble family, who is possibly depicted on folio 141. The 41 small miniatures, including those in the Suffrages, were painted by a follower of William Vrelant, the leading illuminator of Bruges in the third quarter of the fifteenth century. These miniatures represent the traditional style popular in the decades leading



up to this book's making. In contrast, the six full-page miniatures and their borders, painted by a follower of Loyset Liédet and the Master of Edward IV, are much more experimental, representing the new and in-vogue style of the 1480s.

Multiple components suggest a customized order. The Monday Hours of the Dead replace the traditional and longer Office of the Dead. An unusual burial miniature accompanies them in which a closed coffin is interred, an uncommon practice. In both the Penitential Psalms

and the Hours of the Cross, a series of the more conservative small miniatures complement the customary larger opening miniatures in the newer, avant-garde style. The new and the old work in tandem, with six miniatures of David accompanying David in Prayer and four extra small Passion miniatures following the Crucifixion, respectively.

Yet, the Suffrages do not seem to show signs of this customization. They follow a standard order beginning with the Holy Trinity and the Holy Cross, John the Baptist, and then transitioning into apostles with Peter and Paul and James, then martyrs and confessors with Christopher, Sebastian, Adrian, Anthony, Francisco, Nicholaus, then virgin martyrs with Anne, Katherine, Barbara, Mary Magdalene, Margaret, Appollonia, and finishing with a prayer to all saints. Each suffrage is accompanied by a small



miniature of the saint, none grander than the other, and is framed by the same floral border. The structure and text of the Suffrages remain consistent, the only two variations being the lack of a rubricated response in any suffrage and the lack of a rubricated oratio in five prayers. Both variations, however, were incredibly common exclusions throughout Books of Hours. Furthermore, each suffrage is one typical of the saint, with no clear irregularities. These Suffrages could be recited by anyone.

Of the 18 suffrages, one to the Holy Cross, could hold a small clue. Although consistent in style and text, four figures kneel before the cross, perhaps the patron and his family. Overall, while the patron clearly custom-ordered this, with the stylistic preference and an inclusion of their family portrait, it reveals little about the identity of said patron and family. Unfortunately, not an uncommon occurrence and with no clarity provided by the Suffrages, this book leaves us guessing about the history of its ownership.



MARKS OF PERSONALIZATION

Everyone who has had to grab their luggage from baggage claim carousel knows the value of a good luggage tag, and perhaps a neon suitcase. While conveyor belts and baggage claim woes were not concerns in the Middle Ages, there is still something to be said about labeling your belongings. Whether it be a special color, brand, or embroidery in large letters, marks of personalization let the world know this is yours. These books each possess a "mark" of sorts -- a particular emphasis placed on Saint Katherine, which may hint at the name of these patrons. Each book "elevates" Saint Katherine, in one way or another, not only above the other female saints, but above all saints. This preference does not per se be an indication of female owner, or the owner's name. After all, Saint Katherine had one of the largest cults in the Middle Ages. Nevertheless, Saint Katherine has a strong association with female virtue and intelligence and prioritizing this saint over others suggest the patrons that need her intercession the most and felt a strong kinship to her.



Book of Hours (unidentified Breton use)

In Latin and French, Illuminated manuscript on parchment. 9 full-page miniatures by a follower of Jean Colombe

Central France, Loire Valley, c. 1490-1500

\$60,000.00

This Book of Hours stands out not only for its fine and luxurious parchment folios, but also for what is written on them. It was commissioned in the Loire Valley in the 1490s, and originally included 201 leaves, with 19 miniatures. Only 9 miniatures remain, all full-page and illuminated by a follower of Jean Colombe. They depict a variety of scenes from the bible and saints, bordered by floral motifs intertwined with grotesques and animals, including birds, monkeys, and dogs. The most unique miniature is that which accompanies the Office of Dead. It depicts death as it rises out of a marble tomb— a memento mori. It, with its skin taut and gold, holds two arrows in one hand and points with the other at the open grave while staring down the viewer, inviting them to join.

A later binding error has shuffled the order of the Suffrages and split it in two, the first part between Lauds and the beginning of Prime, and the second in the middle of Prime itself. In this



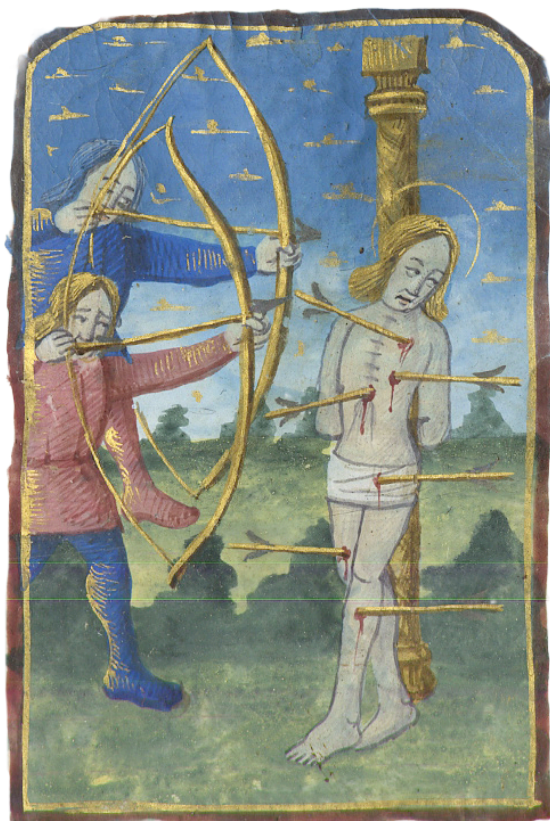


manuscript, the Suffrages did originally occur after Lauds indicated by the announcement of the beginning of Prime at the end of Barbara's prayer. This placement of the Suffrages is not an uncommon occurrence, made to imitate monastic practice, although more often seen in manuscripts from the Southern Netherlands. The correct order of the saints is as follows: Katherine, Archangel Michael, John the Baptist, Paul, Christopher, Sebastain, George, Anthony, Maur, Martin, Nicholas, Stephan, Anne, Mary Magdalene, Margaret, Barbara, and Appollonia. Christopher and Sebastian both have miniatures, while miniatures (and part of the suffrages) of Archangel Michael and Saint Anne were both excised.



Most interestingly, these Suffrages open with a hymn to Katherine followed by a suffrage, elevating her above all of the other saints, and most importantly all of the male saints. She is also the only saint in the Suffrages accompanied by an additional hymn. Lauds, which precedes this page, ends imperfectly, suggesting that a folio has been removed that contained the end of the prayer and a miniature of Saint Katherine.

This elevation of Katherine not only suggests a female owner, but perhaps even one named Katherine. The liturgical elements and illuminations, such as the Breton saints in the Litanies or the inclusion of blue ink in the calendar, suggest a Breton patron, despite the books' origin in the Loire Valley. This discrepancy could be accounted for by someone from Brittany summoned to the Loire Valley in the 1490s, such as a relative of Anne of Brittany. For example, from 1491-1498 and 1499-1514, Anne of Brittany reigned as the Queen of France, and the seat of her court with Charles VIII was Amboise in the Loire Valley (diocese of Tours); this could explain both the Loire origin and the Breton use.





The Haraucourt Hours (Use of Toul)

Illuminated manuscript on parchment. 4 full-page miniatures, 3 small miniatures, and 12 historiated initials by artists from the Circle of Willem Vrelant (active Flanders, Bruges, 1454-1481)
Flanders, Bruges, c. 1480-1485
\$90,000.00

This Book of Hours is a significant testament to female readership and ownership in the Middle Ages. It was commissioned from 1480-1485 in Bruges from the circle William Vrelant. Vrelant was a leading illuminator in Bruges from 1452 until his death in 1482 and enjoyed the patronage of the Dukes of Burgundy. His illuminations, and that of his workshop, tend to be feature a vivid color palate, narrative-based scenes, and elongated figures, with stiff gestures, large heads, pointed chins, and pink flesh-tones. The historiated initials and small miniatures broadly mirror this style, while the full-page miniatures have a flair of the own—with more sketchily modeled faces, shaded with thin brushstrokes.

In this Book of Hours, Suffrages occur between folios 23 and 28, including those to Saint James, Saint Sebastian, Saint Nicholas, Saint Bernard (Margrave) of Baden-Baden (died in 1458 and was beatified in 1481),



Saint Mary Magdalene, Saint Katherine, Saint Barbara, and All Saints. Each saint is accompanied by either a historiated initial or a small miniature, that is, all except Saint Katherine. She stands tall, spanning a full page and balancing upon a man, likely a depiction of the Emperor Maxentius, cowering at her feet. She is dressed in a bright yellow dress and blue cape, wearing a golden crown and brandishing the sword by which she was martyred. She stands in a contemporary space, with blue groin vaults, and a bucolic rolling landscape seen through the window behind her.



Maxentius is not Saint Katherine's only witness. A woman, before her prie-Dieu, appears flanking Saint Katherine in the borders of this miniature and adjoining prayers. This same woman is depicted four times in the book— twice in these borders and twice facing the annunciation. This suggests not only that she was the patron of this book, but that she too was named Katherine. Her depiction alongside the female saints' places her in direct conversation with them as she prays. She models virtue and piety, and yet, she places herself in proximity with the women with whom she felt most kinship, both spatially and temporally, with contemporaneous settings in her miniatures and Saint Katherine

and Mary in matching rooms. Her placement draws her into the story, almost as if these illuminations are her visions, or projections of the illumination from the book she prays, perhaps in fact, this book here. It is most likely that this woman was a member of the family of Haraucourt, whose arms appear in the border along with this woman on folio 26v. While she elevates Saint Katherine through the large illumination, it is worth noting that the patron did not break the traditional order of Suffrages, retaining the female saints at the end, which might provide some in sight onto her personality as well.



De sancta katherina



REFASHIONED: THE LIFE OF A BOOK

Not all tailoring is bespoke. More often, we refashion—altering what already exists to our unique measurement. The following books are no different. Throughout the genre, Books of Hours are not just reflections of the original patrons but palimpsests of their successive owners' preferences. New owners might add or subtract individual pages, miniatures, or even whole sections to adjust their religious and personal proclivities. The following books were both tailored twice—adapted to the successive owners' whims. Of course, none of these categories are perfect and some books fit into more than one type of "tailoring." For example, *The Hours of Clavel*, seen earlier in *Bespoke Books*, should be considered "refashioned" and the following book, *The Hours of Johannes Meckis*, too bears marks of personalization and thus could have easily fit into the previous section.



Hours of Johannes Meckis (Use of Utrecht)
 Illuminated manuscript on parchment. 6 full-page miniatures and
 7 half-page miniatures by a Brabantine artist
 South Netherlands, Brabant (Antwerp?), c. 1520
 \$120,000.00

This Book of Hours is a jewel box of miniatures, crafted in Brabant (Antwerp?) in the 1520s. Two main illuminators are responsible for the bulk of the illumination in the book. One is responsible for miniatures such as the Mass of Saint Gregory and the Crown of Thorns, both surrounded by a stark monochromatic lilac border and the arma christi (instruments of the Passion). The other, inspired by Antwerp Mannerists, is responsible for the most sumptuous miniatures of the book with trompe-l'oeil borders featuring flowers, insects, and even jewelry. Bathsheba Bathing is the finest miniature in the book—she delicately and seductively drapes her gossamer garments across herself, and women wait upon her in fantastic costumes with fussy necklines, elaborate sleeves, and fanciful headgear. Above her, David looks on from the balcony of a palace, it too a Mannerist architectural confection. In the facing miniature, however, David and his palace have become



repentant and conservative, with David turning his back on Bathsheba and his former self and his castle turning into older, traditional Gothic style. The background of these miniatures showcases a rolling countryside and a townscape. As was common at the time, the backdrop of these stories is less reflective of their traditional setting but rather flaunt the landscapes with which a patron would be familiar, here the bucolic Dutch countryside and impressive cityscapes. The liturgical elements also reinforce this localization, specifically to a Dutch patron from the diocese of Utrecht.

The identity of this owner is likely revealed on folio 69v, featuring Christ on the Cross, where nun kneels in prayer before Christ. This might explain the fascinating inclusion of jewelry depicted such as in some of the borders, including rings, pendants, amulets, and a part of a rosary. They potentially –



reflect the contents of a wealthy woman's jewelry box– which a nun would have had to leave behind upon taking vows. Perhaps these served as a reminder of her prized possessions. Around 50 years later, the manuscript became the property of a Dutchman, Johannes Meckis. On the final recto, he wrote "D[omi]n[u]s Johannis Meckis [or Merkis] in thabor AN[N]0 1557," recording his visit to Mont Thabor in the Holy Land in 1557, or perhaps a local abbey, the Thabor in Friesland, Canons Regular at Thabor bij Sneek.

The Suffrages have a distinctly different structure than the others in this exhibition. There is no consistent antiphon, versicle, response, and oratio structure throughout the prayers, although each possesses one component or the other. The saints featured are as follows: John the Baptist, All Patriarchs and Prophets, John the Evangelist, Bartholomew, all apostles, George, Lawrence, Erasmus, Martin, Nicolaus, Jerome, Katherine, Barbara, Margaret, Agnes, Appollonia, and Anna. A handful of sections of prayers align to those represented in the other six Books of Hours. For example, there are common responses and versicles to other included books for John the Baptist and John the Evangelist, and common antiphon and oratio between Nicholas, Katherine, Barbara, and Appollonia. Overall, however, they are mostly unique.





Here too, Saint Katherine, stands out; she has both the most standard prayer, but is the most elevated saint. A full miniature of Saint Katherine on a single leaf was inserted facing her suffrage on ff. 93, a distinction no other saint is afforded in this Hours. This miniature is the only one by a third illuminator. While this miniature could have been added by the nun on f. 69v, the fact that it is an inserted single leaf by a separate, suggests it could have been added a slightly later female owner, perhaps named Katherine, who tweaked the Suffrage to her liking and her namesake.





Hours of Jean Antoine de Mahieu and Jacqueline de Sivry (use of Mons)

In Latin and some French, Illuminated manuscript on parchment. 22 full-page miniatures by the Mildmay Master (13), the Master of Philippe de Croÿ (7), and a third Mons illuminator, follower of Simon Marmion (2) and 4 small miniatures by the Mildmay Master

Southern Netherlands, Mons, c. 1460 (original portion), c. 1480-1490 (updated)

\$140,000.00

This book is a testament to the fluid nature of the Book of Hours, due to the multiple adjustments and additions made by its various owners. It was originally commissioned in 1460 for a patron, likely a woman. The book, a complete Book of Hours, was written in and for the use of Mons, which can be ascertained through the Office of the Dead and the saints venerated in Cambrai who appear in the calendar. The book also included thirteen full-page and four smaller miniatures painted in Bruges by the Mildmay Master.

Around 1480, however, the ownership changed to Jean Antoine de Mahieu and Jacqueline de Sivry, a married couple, perhaps inheriting the book after the death of the original owner. Their modifications truly make the book unique—adding multiple miniatures, but also, uncommonly, a second set of suffrages. The two sections are separated by prayers to Seven Last Words from the Cross, the Passion Sequences from the Gospel of Saint John, and Prayers to Christ. The new owners, and their new suffrages do not only feature new saints but also repeat saints that

the original suffrages covered. Unlike the original suffrages, the second set is entirely illuminated, perhaps highlighting the new owner's predilection for visual cues during their prayers.

These repeat suffrages are not just duplications. The second suffrages Saint James, Hubert of Liege, Saint Barbara, and Saint Ursula and the 11,000 Virgins feature modified prayers, collections of choral odes or alternative prayers to them, although the Saint Ursula and the 11,000 Virgins has the same versicle as the original set. On the other hand, Archangel Michael, Paul, and Francis feature their standard suffrage and/or prayers associated with their feasts. Although two distinct sets of suffrages, this repetition of saints, might showcase a common regional and perhaps familial relation between the two owners. After Archangel Michael, the new owners included a short unilluminated prayer to all saints. The seven miniatures featured in this set are by the Master of Philippe de Croÿ. A third Mons illuminator,



a follower of Simon Marmion, illuminated the rest of the new miniatures for the couple, including a portrait of Jean Antoine de Mahieu and Jacqueline de Sivry before the Virgin and Child and the Mass of Saint Gregory, with a male suppliant kneeling in the background.



The original set of Suffrages is unillustrated and proceeds as follows: Holy Trinity, Archangel Michael, Your own angel (Guardian angel; in masculine), John the Baptist, John the Evangelist, All apostles, Christopher, Sebastian, Adrian, Hubert of Liege, Anthony, Nicholas, Joseph, Mary Magdalene, Martha, Catherine, Barbara, Agatha, Agnes, Ontcommerra, 11,000 Virgin Martyrs of Cologne/ Ursula, Bernard, and Margaret.

The most interesting inclusion is that of Saint Wilgefortis. Once a young Portuguese princess, Wilgefortis was instructed that she must denounce



her faith and marry a pagan prince (or king, depending on the tradition). She prayed to God to make her ugly to stop the engagement and awoke the next morning with a beard. She was thus martyred at the hands of her father—crucified as the Christ she revered. A popular folk saint in the latter half of the 14th century and into the 16th century, she was never canonized and in fact, was removed from the lists of saints in 1969. It is now accepted that Saint Wilgefortis emerged from a medieval misinterpretation of depictions of a crucified Christ with longer robes, or undergarments, which resembled a woman's dress. In Dutch, her name is Ontkommer, or the one without anxiety, and she is often deemed the patron saint of those who wish to die unburdened. Her name in English, however, is Uncomber, making her too the patron saint of women wishing to be "disencumbered," from their husbands. Although her inclusion could simply be a sign of her popularity in the region, it could point to the background of the Hours' original female owner. The identity of the original owner as a woman is further supported by the volume of female saints in the suffrages, and the feminine form used in the *Obsecro Te*, "miche famulae tue."



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