



## THE KING OF BEASTS

An Exceptional Renaissance Gem from the Marlborough Collection

*Les Enluminures New York*

23 East 73rd Street,  
7th floor Penthouse  
New York, NY 10021

March 30 to May 9, 2023

*Tuesday to Saturday, 10am to 5pm, on appointment*

**This exhibition focuses on a single gem. But what a gem! It is a large cameo of a lion's head skilfully carved in semi-transparent cat's eye in pale green to yellow.**

The honey-colored tone evokes the fur of the lion. The frontally faced head is cut in high relief, showing off the flowing mane, the teeth, and the indentations of the pupils. Cameos of such superb sculptural quality and craftsmanship, like that of the lion's head, were mostly carved in Milan in northern Italy and exported to the Courts of Europe in Florence, Paris, Prague, and Madrid. This one compares with masks of the important Miseroni workshops.

**Provenance is second only to artistic quality, and this gem has it in spades.** We can trace it all the way back to the most important gem collectors of the seventeenth century. It is documented in a drawing now in Princes Czartoryski Museum in Kraków that was commissioned by Baron Philipp von Stosch (1691-1757) an eminent collector and antiquarian who lived in Italy and accrued a collection of 3500 gems. **It was subsequently acquired by the great gem collector George Spencer, the 4th Duke of Marlborough (1739-1817).** His collection of 800 gems, considered the most important and finest of its time, was housed at Blenheim Palace, Oxfordshire. It was finally disbursed in 1899. Marlborough gems are now found in museum collections throughout the world – the Getty Museum, the Musée du Louvre, the British Museum, among others.

Lions are King of the Beasts, and images of them are often frightening, but this lion is anything but scary. Rather he resembles the Cowardly Lion in the fictional Land of Oz. **In this exhibition our Marlborough Lion keeps company with felines from various artistic media of all epochs, from antiquity to pop art, from literature to modern and contemporary jewelry, including David Webb, William Burgess, and Cocteau.**

Founded by Dr. Sandra Hindman over thirty years ago and with locations in Paris, Chicago, and New York, *Les Enluminures* has forged long-standing relationships with major museums and prestigious private collections throughout the world. It exhibits at TEFAF Maastricht, Frieze Masters London and Seoul, and the Winter Show, and organizes three to four exhibitions in its gallery spaces annually. The gallery is well-known for the level of its scholarship but also for the diversity, high quality, and provenance of the works it offers for sale.

**Please contact us for high resolution images and descriptions of the featured work of art.**

**PRESS CONTACT:** [newyork@lesenluminures.com](mailto:newyork@lesenluminures.com)

## CAMEO WITH THE HEAD OF A LION

Italy (probably Milan), c. 1600, modern gold mount

Gold, tiger's eye (cat's eye)

*Weight 17.8 gr.; Width 25.2 mm; Length 31.5 mm; Depth 15.4 mm*



### PARIS

1, rue Jean-Jacques Rousseau  
75001 Paris  
France

### CHICAGO

980 North Michigan Ave.,  
Suite 1330  
Chicago IL 60611

### NEW YORK

23 East 73rd Street  
7th Floor, Penthouse  
New York, NY 10021

## CAMEO WITH THE HEAD OF A LION

Italy (probably Milan), c. 1600, modern gold mount

Gold, tiger's eye (cat's eye)

*Weight 17.8 gr.; Width 25.2 mm; Length 31.5 mm; Depth 15.4 mm*



### PARIS

1, rue Jean-Jacques Rousseau  
75001 Paris  
France

### CHICAGO

980 North Michigan Ave.,  
Suite 1330  
Chicago IL 60611

### NEW YORK

23 East 73rd Street  
7th Floor, Penthouse  
New York, NY 10021



## CAMEO WITH THE HEAD OF A LION

Italy (probably Milan), c. 1600, modern gold mount

Gold, tiger's eye (cat's eye)

*Weight 17.8 gr.; Width 25.2 mm; Length 31.5 mm; Depth 15.4 mm*



### PARIS

1, rue Jean-Jacques Rousseau  
75001 Paris  
France

### CHICAGO

980 North Michigan Ave.,  
Suite 1330  
Chicago IL 60611

### NEW YORK

23 East 73rd Street  
7th Floor, Penthouse  
New York, NY 10021