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1.
The de Kesel Hours (use of Rome)
In Latin, illuminated manuscript on parchment
Southern Netherlands (Bruges), c. 1485-1490
6 full-page miniatures, 10 historiated initials, 22 illuminated borders
associated with the Workshop of Gerard David (1460-1523) and the Master of Edward IV (?)

This beautiful manuscript is a near-twin to another Book of Hours dated 1486 in the Royal Monastery of El Escorial. The Escorial Hours has been connected to Bruges painter and illuminator Gerard David, who added finishing touches to many of the more important illuminations working alongside another artist. Although the hand of David does not seem to be evident in the de Kesel Hours, the two manuscripts share so many features that it is difficult to imagine David was not in some way involved. If this is the case, both Horae become important springboards to the early career of David, when he was appointed in 1488 a tweede meester (or second assistant) in the painters’ guild.

We attribute two of the illuminations in the de Kesel Hours to a Davidian illuminator. The remainder of the illuminations are probably the work of the Master of Edward IV, based on compositions by the Master of the Dresden Prayerbook. We reject attributions in either book to the Master of Janneke Bollengier. Ongoing debate about attribution of Ghent-Bruges illumination underscores the extent of collaboration between illuminators and signals how much we still must learn about this critical era and its artists. Long in a private collection and virtually unstudied, the lavish de Kesel Hours emerges as a vital link in the reconstruction of the history of Flemish illumination. [BOH 203]
Les Enluminures, BOH 203, The de Kesel Hours (use of Rome), ff.102v-103, David in Prayer.

RARE AND SPARKLING ENGLISH SURVIVAL FOR A WEALTHY SPICE MERCHANT

2.
The Spicer Hours (use of Sarum)
In Latin, illuminated manuscript on parchment
England, probably London
c. 1460 (after 1457, probably before 1469)

Unusually large and lavishly decorated Recusant English Book of Hours most likely made for a wealthy merchant in the spice trade and then owned by a knight at the English court during the era of King Henry VIII. Glittering with polished gold leaf, its colors still bright and vivid, this manuscript survives as a splendid example of home-grown, rather than imported, manuscripts for the local market. Because the Reformation was so ferocious on English soil, Books of Hours of English origin are very rare indeed and, when they survive, they bear evidence of censorship to conform with royal “anti-papist” proclamations. [BOH 195]

SOLD
Les Enluminures, BOH 195, The Spicer Hours (use of Sarum), Binding.
IN ITS ORIGINAL BINDING, AN IMPOSING FLEMISH BOOK OF HOURS MADE FOR A KNIGHT

3.

Book of Hours (use of Rome)
In Latin, some prayers and rubrics in French, illuminated manuscript on parchment
Southern Netherlands (Bruges), c. 1460
14 full-page miniatures by one of the Masters of the Beady Eyes

This luxurious Book of Hours painted by one of the Masters of the Beady Eyes in Bruges was made for a knight around 1460. The large decorated margins are opulent with a delightful array of flowers and fruit, a magnificent peacock, and other birds. Generous amounts of burnished gold adorn the miniatures, margins, initials, and line-fillers that structure and decorate the carefully written text. The manuscript is in exceptionally fine condition. [BOH 189]

$ 150,000
CRISP, BRIGHT, FULL OF DELIGHTFUL MARGINAL IMAGES

4.
Book of Hours (use of Rouen)
In Latin and French, illuminated manuscript on parchment
France, Rouen, c. 1430-1440
Sixteen large miniatures and thirteen very elaborate borders by the Talbot Master

A sparkling and expressive Hours illuminated by one of the foremost artists responsible for the foundation of the school of manuscript illumination in Rouen in the years just following the exodus of Parisian artists from the capital in 1420. The Talbot Master’s crisp and brightly colored style evident in the miniatures is coupled with lavish parti-colored acanthus borders filled with drolleries, human, and hybrid figures reminiscent of Parisian borders of the 1420s. Probably painted mid-way in the artist’s three-decade career, supported largely by English patronage, this lovely Book of Hours may have been made for the (English?) woman depicted twice in the manuscript. [BOH 200]

SOLD
fui, marvi
torum mei
in tente.
Small gem of a book, printed on vellum and carefully illuminated in vibrant colors. Measuring only 3 ¼ x 2 inches, this miniature Parisian Book of Hours, survives as a charming example of one of the most important types of books printed in sixteenth-century Paris.

Its metalcuts show off the skill of the printer, whose shop was especially known for illuminated Books of Hours, and the illuminator. This is a very rare imprint, not listed in any of the standard sources, and almost certainly a unicum. [BOH 198]

$ 25,000
This deluxe Book of Hours is an exquisite example of late fifteenth-century French illumination. Adorned with floral and illusionist borders surrounding each of its hundred folios, it gathers an impressive cycle of no less than seventy miniatures. The book was first copied, decorated and historiated in Langres, Eastern France, by the Master of the Cluny Romuleon. Soon after, it was finished in Bourges by the Master of the Monypenny Breviary, a talented member of Jean and Jacqueline de Montluçon’s workshop (1461-1505), of whom only a few illuminated manuscripts are known. The present manuscript thus appears as an important discovery for the study of late fifteenth-century Bourges illumination. The many textual and iconographic specificities of this Book of Hours suggest that it was made to suit the demanding needs of a wealthy patron, whose arms and monogram are elegantly presented by the Master of Monypenny in the last folio, alongside the signature “Ganier” or “Gavier,” which may be tentatively read as that of Geoffroy Davier. The latter is said to have written a royal notarial register, written partly under the reign of King Louis XI, where the same signature is found twice (Paris, BnF, MS fr. 5747). Geoffroy Davier might have been a notary or a civil servant to the French King. This delightful manuscript in pristine condition is bound in a refined pastiche binding signed “Charpentier.” [BOH 197]
This is a remarkably early example of a Dutch Book of Hours with extensive, rich decoration related to what L.M.J. Delaissé has called “the beginnings” of Dutch manuscript illumination as represented by a small and coherent group of manuscripts associated with the Counts of Holland and their close circle. The discovery of any manuscript from the so-called Dirck van Delft Group of manuscripts merits our close attention and calls for further study in the light of Delaissé’s proposition that these manuscripts provide evidence of the establishment of the first “workshop.” [BOH 196]

$ 20,000
This beautiful Book of Hours is a fine example of Rouen illumination, decorated within the circle of the Master of the Rouen Echevinage, the leading artist in the city in the second half of the fifteenth century. The eight miniatures of the manuscript are surrounded with rich floral borders, with generous sprouts of gold and blue acanthus and stupendously lifelike depiction of birds. The same artist illuminated another Book of Hours for the use of Rouen now in the Houghton Library. This Book of Hours was evidently produced for a patron living in Rouen, for the calendar feasts and the liturgical texts are perfectly suited to the local cults of the city. [BOH 204]

$ 100,000
Les Enluminures, BOH 204, Book of Hours (use of Rouen), f.99, Pentecost.