



MANUSCRIPT ILLUMINATION IN FRANCE 1240 TO 1500

"Interesting in art" – that's how the critic and theoretician John Ruskin described manuscript illuminations. This exceptional group of illuminated manuscript paintings from France lives up to Ruskin's description. Beginning with a small Psalter leaf from the most important Parisian workshop of the mid-thirteenth century and ending with a large painted initial from the royal Choir Book of King Louis XII and Anne of Brittany around 1500, these miniatures tell the story of the artistic achievements of French painting over nearly three centuries. Displaying remarkable freshness, they are truly "monuments of a lost art," as the first-ever sale of manuscript illumination in 1825 declared them to be. Moreover, they tell a history of collecting, owned as they were by significant European art collectors of the nineteenth and early twentieth century.



Workshop of the Vie de Saint Denis

The Adoration of the Magi, full-page miniature from a Psalter (87 x 65 mm.)

France, Paris, c. 1240-60

Provenance: Robert Forrer (1866-1947), Strasbourg, archeologist, art collector, and museum director: one of 5 sister leaves published and illustrated in his 1907 catalogue

By the most important Parisian workshop active during the reign of the king of France, Saint Louis, this intimate scene displays characteristics of their early Gothic style: the use of Gothic architecture to set off a subtle narrative, rich palette, exquisite shading of draperies, and spontaneous expressions.

\$30,000



Perrin Remiet (1386-1428)

6 miniatures from Bartholomaeus Anglicus, *Livre des propriétés des choses*

(70 x 69 mm., 84 x 90 mm., 69 x 92 mm., 78 x 91 mm., c.75 x 89 mm, c.80 x 49 mm.)

France, likely Paris, c. 1390-1400

These engaging secular subjects are all that remain of a popular encyclopedia favored in the royal circle. Old age, a doctor tending the sick, different birds, a landscape, etc. are ground-breaking portrayals of everyday life by a known Parisian artist who specialized in illustrating this text.

\$50,000



Master of the Morgan Life of St. Margaret

The Visitation, from the Bute-Soissons Hours (151 x 116 mm.)

Northern France (Thérouanne?), c. 1400

Provenance: John Crichton-Stuart (1847-1900), third Marquess of Bute, or John Stuart (1713-1792), third Earl of Bute, or his namesake and heir John Stuart, first Marquess (1744-1814)

Made for a noble patron in Soissons, this leaf exemplifies the northern "realism" of Netherlandish artists. A sister leaf (once facing it) is in the Cleveland Museum of Art, and the newly identified artist takes his name from a lovely Prayerbook and Life of St. Margaret now in the Morgan Library.

\$18,000



Jean Colombe (1430-1493)

The Crucifixion, full-page miniature from a Book of Hours (136 x 93 mm.)

France, Bourges, c.1470-75

Provenance: ? John Boykett Jarman (1782-1864), whose London library flooded, resulting in the dismantling and restoration (not evident here) of many of his manuscripts

Best known for his work for the Queen of France, Charlotte of Savoy, and for his completion of the unfinished Tres Riches Heures of the Duke of Berry, this miniature witnesses Colombe's ambitions narrative with its expansive landscape and his subtle palette. A single sister leaf is in the Louvre.

\$65,000



Master of Monypenny (active Bourges, c. 1485-1500)

The Meeting of Anne and Joachim at the Golden Gate, full-page miniature from a Book of Hours (152 x 105 mm.)

France, Bourges, c. 1490-1500

Under-appreciated, this artist is known only through seven manuscripts, of which one held the world record for the most expensive French manuscript at auction. He develops the style of Jean Colombe in Bourges and is distinguished in part by the rich network of liquid gold he uses. Perhaps the present miniature comes from a manuscript made for the Bourbon court.

\$20,000



Master of the Parisian Entries (Jean Coene IV) (active Paris, c. 1500-1520)

The Dedication of a Church, initial 'T' from the

Gradual of Louis XII and Anne of Brittany (215 x 215 mm.)

France, Paris, c. 1498-1500

Provenance: Anatole France (1844-1924), a French novelist, essayist, and art collector

This large initial of an unusual subject indisputably decorated the famous Choir Book commissioned by the King and Queen of France perhaps for the Sainte Chapelle. Dismantled since the mid-19th century, the manuscript is known in sister leaves in many museums. Most miniatures are by one of the preferred artists of the royal court, the Master of the Parisian Entries.

\$35,000

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