



**April 9 - 12, 2026**  
**Booth 311**  
**Navy Pier Festival Hall, 600 E Grand**  
**Ave, Chicago IL 60611**

Les Enluminures is pleased to return to EXPO Chicago 2026 with the exhibition *Past Is Present: Collecting Medieval Art Today*, celebrating the enduring appeal and continued relevance of medieval art.

As the only gallery at the fair featuring pre-19th century work, we are proud to bring a carefully curated selection of manuscripts and historic jewelry, which offer a fresh and dynamic bridge between past and present and encourage viewers to reflect on the lesser-known yet undeniable parallels between then and now.

A highlight of the booth is the long-lost Missal of St. Adrian's Abbey in Geraardsbergen, illuminated in the early sixteenth century for Abbot Jan van Broedere (fig. 1). A remarkable miniature by the Masters of Raphael de Mercatellis depicts the abbot and the presumed patron, Daniel van Boeckhout, kneeling side by side during the Veneration of the Host in the abbey's Lady Chapel. The manuscript was likely created for the altar of that very chapel, where Jan Gossart's celebrated *Adoration of the Magi* altarpiece—commissioned by the same two patrons—once stood.

The history of collecting continues with an exquisitely painted *Ascension* miniature from a choir book by the Master of the *Vitae Imperatorum* (active 1430-1450, fig. 2). With an unbroken nineteenth-century provenance that includes William Young Ottley and Robert Stayner Holford, the miniature reflects the formative moment when medieval manuscript paintings first captivated modern connoisseurs who laid the foundations for how we view and interpret them today.

At the same time, the exhibition asks how medieval objects continue to be reimagined today. The Books of Hours—once the late medieval devotional “best-sellers”—remain relevant to contemporary audiences. A jewel-like example illuminated by Francesco di Antonio del Chierico (1433–1484) invites an intense, almost microscopic mode of looking, its minuscule details unfolding only through sustained gaze (fig. 3).

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

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

The dialogue between past and present continues in a Renaissance Revival diamond ring by the celebrated jeweler Louis Wièse (fig. 4). The ring channels the spirit of French Renaissance through its ornamental scrollwork, caryatid figures, and boldly articulated bezel. Here, revival becomes reinterpretation—a nineteenth-century master looking back to the Renaissance, just as today’s collectors look back to both.

Together, these works encourage viewers to look again—and to experience anew how art “then” continues to shape and speak to art “now.” Medieval art resonates deeply with modern concerns of beauty, devotion, and the enduring desire to collect and preserve meaningful objects.

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Figure 1

*Missal of Jan de Broedere* (Summer Part)

In Latin, Illuminated manuscript on parchment. 5 large miniatures, 1 full page, with 4 historiated initials and illuminated borders by the Masters of Raphael de Mercatellis

Belgium, Abbey Church of St.-Adrian of Geraardsbergen or Grammont, c. 1510-1520?

(IIM-5892)



Figure 2  
Follower of the Master of the Vitae Imperatorum  
Ascension of Christ in an Initial 'I', from a Choir Book  
Italy, Lombardy, c. 1450  
122 × 107 mm  
(MIN 25-09)

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Figure 3

*Book of Hours, Use of Rome*

In Latin, illuminated manuscript on vellum

19 historiated initials by Francesco di Antonio del Chierico (1433-1484)

Italy, Florence, c. 1460-75

(BOH-0260)

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Figure 4  
Louis Wièse  
Renaissance Revival Ring with Diamond  
Gold, platinum, diamond  
Paris, c. 1900  
Weight: 13.5g; US Size 6; UK Size M; Circumference 51.87mm

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