

Dr. Jörn Günther Rare Books Presents Highlights for TEFAF Maastricht 2018

[Dr. Jörn Günther Rare Books AG](#) returns to [TEFAF Maastricht](#) (10-18 March 2018) with an exceptional collection of museum-quality, Medieval and Renaissance illuminated manuscripts, miniatures, and early printed books.

This year's highlights focus on the masterful artistry displayed in one-of-a-kind secular and sacred works of art from the 15th and 16th centuries. The first outstanding manuscript in the TEFAF Maastricht 2018 line-up is an exceptionally fine Book of Hours that shows the exquisite refinement and sophistication of a great artist. This elegant prayer book is attributed to the Master of Petrarch's *Triumphs*, a distinctive master whose earlier work is localized in Tours.

The manuscript's delicate grisaille and touches of jewel-toned colours emanate a degree of translucency and purity. This devotional work includes 38 small miniatures with gold and red frames, as well as 4 full-page miniatures surrounded by borders of gilt scrolls containing the repeated motto "*Parce Michi Domine*", meaning "Spare me, O Lord", which may possibly indicate a yet unidentified patron's device. While rooted in spiritual aspiration, this opulent manuscript nonetheless provides the owner with a luxury object that expresses his or her social status.



Another impressive manuscript highlight that Dr. Jörn Günther Rare Books is bringing to Maastricht is a superb copy of Livy's *History of Rome*, translated into French as *Les Décades*. This text is the first translation of any major classical author into French, originally commissioned by the French King John II the Good. This 15th-century manuscript is outstanding in size and in historical importance. The history measures 450 x 318 mm and includes 87 large miniatures, making it the most profusely illustrated of all known copies of Livy. Equally spectacular is the extremely fine 16th-century binding *à la fanfare*.

This manuscript's engaging illustrations offer everything that the Middle Ages are supposed to be: battles, jousts, knights, armour, castles, trumpeters, kings, maidens, and banquets in a profusion of colour and chivalric splendour. The makers of this manuscript are not only named, but there is also a self-portrait of the artist, a portrait of the scribe, and a portrait of their patron.

Dr. Jörn Günther Rare Books will also show an extremely rare early printed book: Albrecht Dürer's *Apocalypse* - which is considered to be the first book in history that was both created and published by an artist. The copy at hand is the second Latin edition and the first with the title woodcut depicting the apparition of the Virgin with Child to St. John. It includes the complete series of 16 monumental woodcuts.

The publication of the *Apocalypse* was a revelation of Dürer's artistic genius: never before had a single artist executed a project of such scope with total mastery over every aspect. Dürer utterly transformed the appearance of the illustrated printed book and of woodcuts. His large, complex images in realistic settings, full of life and movement, feature a descriptive power evident in the present series. Revolutionary in its time in both technique and breadth of concept, Dürer's woodcut style graphically manifests the potency of St. John's visions, capturing minute detail, rich texture, profound physical vigour, and his mastery of light and darkness.

His interpretation of the events before Doomsday was a great popular

success. With editions in Latin and German, the book became accessible to the widest possible audience. However, today, this outstanding work is rarely seen in commerce.

Image: Book of Hours, use of Rome. Manuscript on vellum, illuminated by the Master of Petrarch's Triumphs. France, Tours, c. 1490-1500. Dr. Jörn Günther Rare Books AG. Price: 1,600,000 EUR.