



Spotlight

on

Three “Beauties”

New acquisitions of fine
French illumination





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St. John writing on Patmos.
Illuminated by the Mazarine Master – one of the greatest illuminators of his time.

Book of Hours, use of Soissons or Laon.
189 x 132 mm, 225 leaves, vellum.
30 large miniatures with full borders in burnished gold and colours.
Paris, c. 1405.



God in Majesty.
Illuminated by the Mazarine Master. The master's palette displays a delicate balance, his technique an extraordinary finesse.

Book of Hours, for the use of Soissons or Laon.
189 x 132 mm, 225 leaves, vellum.
30 large miniatures with full borders in burnished gold and colours.
Paris, c. 1405



*The Annunciation
to the Shepherds*
shows that the
Mazarine Master is a
storyteller with great
attention to detail.
Notice how the dog –
faithful to his master
– gazes upwards,
while the sheep
remain oblivious.

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Paris, c. 1405.



memorie de saint michiel. a

The *Archangel Michael* in a splendid white robe
and with radiant orange wings overcomes the
devil by piercing his throat.
Illuminated by the Mazarine Master.
(Detail)

Book of Hours, use of Soissons or Laon.
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colours.
Paris, c. 1405



Noli me tangere,
Christ appears to
Mary Magdalene.

When she realizes
what miracle has
happened, the
young woman,
startled and amazed,
drops her flask of
ointment. Christ
wards her off,
careful that she does
not touch him.

Book of Hours, use of Soissons or Laon.
189 x 132 mm, 225 leaves, vellum.
30 large miniatures with full borders in burnished gold and colours.
Paris, c. 1405.



Annunciation.
The Talbot-Beauchamp Book of
Hours, use of Sarum.
Manuscript illuminated in the
circle of the Dunois and Harvard
Hannibal Masters.
Rouen, c. 1430.

221 x 155 mm, 187 leaves, vellum.
With 31 large miniatures, historiated
borders, and illuminated initials.
Possibly made for Sir John Talbot or
his wife, Margaret Beauchamp.



Detail of the illuminated lower border of the Annunciation.

Within densely coloured flowers and foliage, an angel unfurls a scroll of musical chant to two winged grotesques with peacock tails, all on a highly burnished gold ground.

Talbot-Beauchamp Book of Hours, illuminated in Rouen, c. 1430.



*Saint Mark writing the
Gospel.*

The Talbot-Beauchamp
Book of Hours.
Illuminated in the circle of
the Dunois and Harvard
Hannibal Masters.
Rouen, c. 1430.

221 x 155 mm, 187 leaves,
vellum.

With 31 large miniatures,
historiated borders,
illuminated initials.

Possibly made for Sir John
Talbot or his wife Margaret
Beauchamp.



*Visitation and
Adoration of the
Magi.*

This manuscript's heraldry seems to refer to John Talbot and his wife Margaret Beauchamp, both known bibliophiles. If not made for this couple, then the manuscript was likely commissioned by someone in their close circle.



The hybrid figure is adorned with an orange chaperon (hooded cape), inscribed with what may refer to the golden cross crozlets of Beauchamp.



All other insignia refer to Sir John Talbot, one of the principal English commanders during the occupation of France. Talbot, constable of France, appears in Shakespeare's *Henry VI*.



The *Presentation in the Temple* miniature's border includes: (top-left) a man standing on a marble pillar in a meadow, with a text scroll that says "*verite va*" (John 8:32, "*la verité va vous liberer*"), and (top-right) a seated talbot with a lance and a banner presenting a gold lion passant on a red ground. The belt around the man's middle evokes a garter, Sir John Talbot's insignia. Talbot was a member of the Order of the Garter (from 1424). He was taken prisoner by the French in 1429 and held captive until 1433.



Credidit clamitant
horatitiam. Et
lulus induitur vel



Con lata ihus. Et
aia condauius
Et at aui latouu

*Scouring of Christ and Christ carrying the Cross.
The Talbot-Beauchamp Hours, 31 miniatures.*



Three more miniatures in the same Hours: *King David in Prayer*, *St. George*, and the *Virgin and Child*. Illuminated in Rouen during the English occupation of the city, in the last phase of the Hundred Years' War, c. 1430.



The amazing Fauquier Hours.

Rich in iconography and subtle in colours, illuminated by two great artists working in Besançon, c. 1420-1440.

180 x 130 mm, 140 leaves, vellum.

With 13 large miniatures within full borders, numerous illuminated initials.

The Master of Walters W 219 was an itinerant painter from Italy on the road in France: he is known to have worked in Paris, the Champagne region, and in the Franche-Comté. His miniatures are marked by ingenious scenes occupied by many small characters and rich in Italianisms.



God in Majesty (detail).

Fauquier Hours.

Illuminated by the Master of Walters W 219.

Besançon, c. 1420-1440.

The striking miniatures in this manuscript count among this master's final and best work.

This splendid miniature recalls Lombard virtuosity – especially in the two allegories of the Christian and the Jewish Churches: *Ecclesia* and *Synagoga*. The present miniature has no coloured or gilded background, perhaps intentionally.

180 x 130 mm, 140 leaves, vellum.

With 13 large miniatures within full borders, numerous illuminated initials.



The Raising of Lazarus is an arresting, stunning composition set in an elaborate landscape of rocks, trees, and water, with architecture, travellers, ships, and even a bear.

Within the complex composition's large group of onlookers, in the foreground, Christ stands between Lazarus' sisters Martha and Mary and raises his right hand in blessing.

Fauquier Hours.
Illuminated by the Master of Walters W 219.
Besançon, c. 1420-1440.



The three protagonists and Lazarus himself are singled out by halos. Five men assist in opening the tomb, lifting the corpse and removing the shroud.

Behind the saintly group stand four women wearing white veils decorated with red and white ovals. Do they refer to Beguine sisters who cared for the sick, and accompanied the dead for burial? But what do the ovals represent?

Could they perhaps refer to the sisters who wished to “relight the evangelical flame”, as did Colette of Corbie? She founded her first community in 1410 and made Besançon the cradle of her reform movement. In this, she was accompanied by three ladies who were the first sisters of this reformed order, the Colettine Poor Clares.



The manuscript's second master, who painted 11 miniatures, is perhaps a little more conservative. He remarkably combines the colours purple and blue with different shades of green. The above initial *D* is decorated with the coat of arms of the Fauquier family of Poligny, south of Besançon:

d'azur à trois faux d'argent, emmanchées d'or le fer, posées 2 et 1, le deux du chef affrontées [but, NB: un anneau d'argent en chef, brisée d'une bordure de sable].

Fauquier Hours.
Illuminated by the Master of Walters W
219.
Besançon, c. 1420-1440.





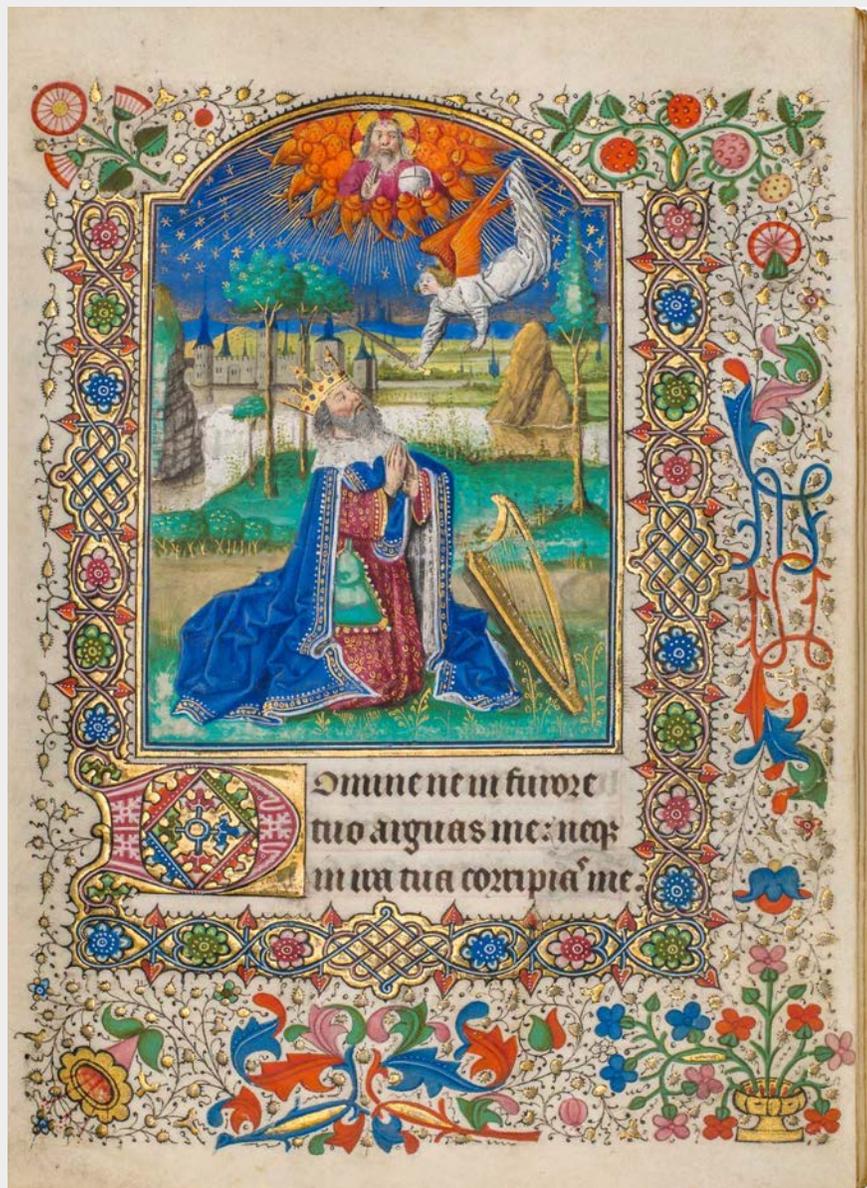
Eus in adiu **ad tertiā**
torum meū intende
Domine ad adiu



Eus in adiu **ad sextā.**
torum meū intende.
Domine ad adiu

Nativity and *Adoration of the Magi*: two of eleven miniatures by the second illuminator, who has a preference for an exceptional palette of colours. This long lost manuscript will incite new research into these important illuminators.

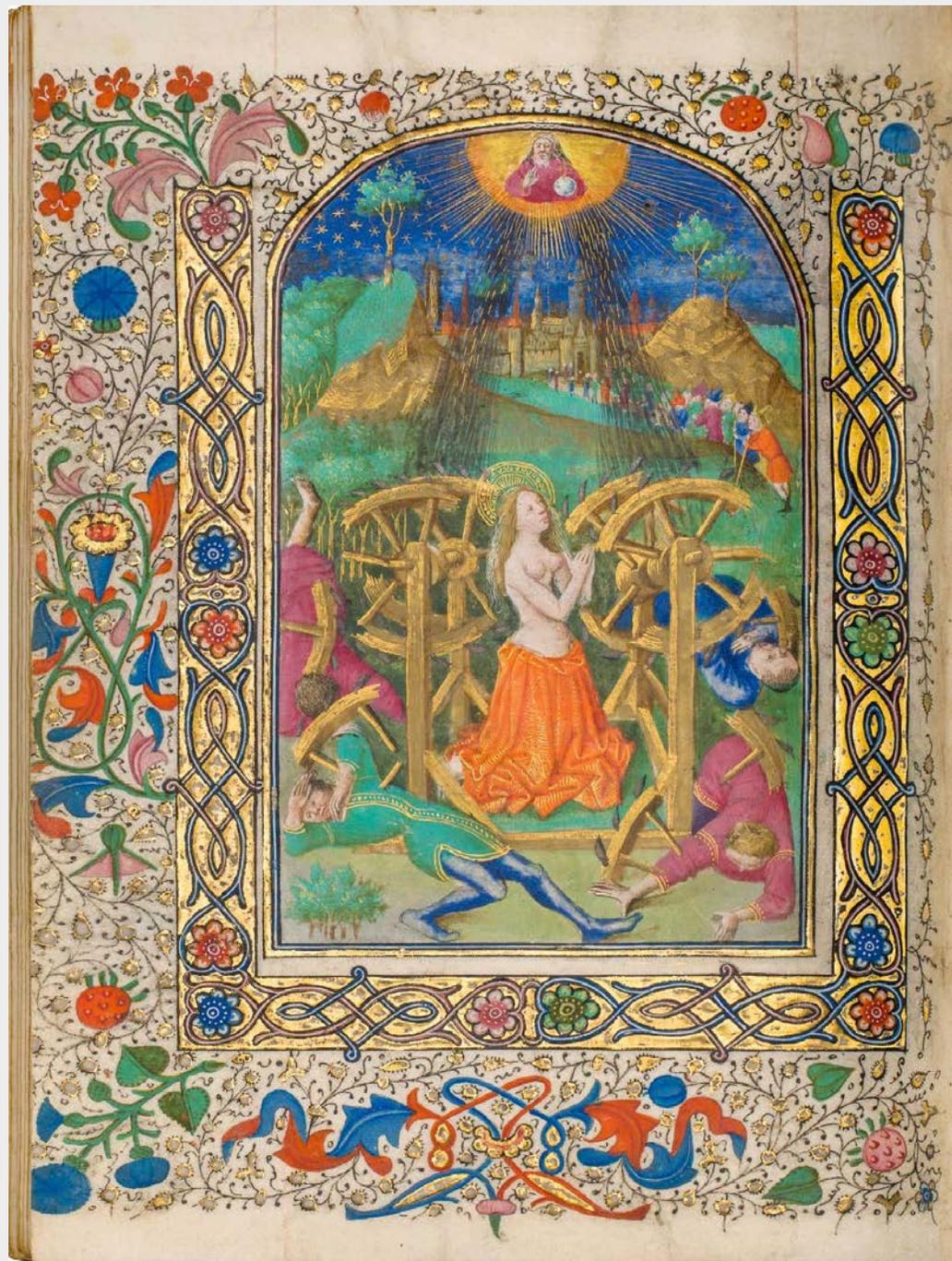
Fauquier Hours. Illuminated by the Master of Walters W 219. Besançon, c. 1420-1440.



Domine ne in furore
tuo arguas me: neque
in ira tua corripas me.



David in Prayer and the *Virgin and Child* surrounded by angels playing music:
two of eleven miniatures by the second or (perhaps even a third ?) illuminator of the so-called Fauquier Hours.
Illuminated by the Master of Walters W 219, Besançon, c. 1420-1440.



The Office of St. Catherine opens with a miniature of the saint and, in the lower border, what seems to be another coat of arms: *D'azur, au rencontre de boeuf d'or allumé de gueule* – as of yet unidentified. Can anyone identify the owner?

Fauquier Hours.
Illuminated by the Master of Walters W 219.
Besançon, c. 1420-1440.



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