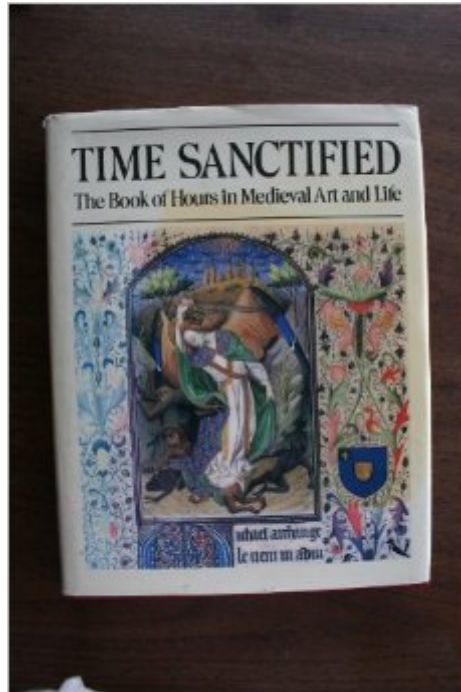


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Time Sanctified: The Book Of Hours In Medieval Art And Life



Synopsis

The illuminated manuscript was the primary vehicle of learning, religion, and art during the Middle Ages and Renaissance. Within the pages of these hand-painted treasures, medieval civilisation flourished. Of all the illuminated manuscripts from this period, the Book of Hours was, by far, the most popular and among the most exquisitely made. In the words of scholar L. M. J. Delaisse, it was the "best seller" of its time - the most frequently commissioned book by both the aristocracy and the middle classes. A selection of these splendid pages is presented in *Time Sanctified*, along with a detailed discussion of their importance and their contents. A prayer book for the laity, the Book of Hours contains, at its heart, a series of prayers devoted to the Virgin Mary, which were meant to be recited at seven canonical times (or hours) during the day. The most highly skilled calligraphers and painters were commissioned to execute the finest decoration with the most luxurious materials, such as gold, silver, and lapis lazuli. An understanding of the contents in the Book of Hours, both textually and pictorially, is essential to our understanding of not only late medieval piety, but of late medieval social life as well. The contributions of four authorities on Books of Hours guide the reader: Roger Wieck provides a detailed description of the contents of the Book of Hours, Lawrence Poos discusses its social context, Virginia Reinburg sheds light on the role of the Book of Hours in late medieval piety, and John Plummer provides essential textual analysis. The images are assembled from the Walters Collection, which contains one of the finest and largest collections of Books of Hours in the world. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Book Information

Hardcover: 230 pages

Publisher: George Braziller; 1st edition (May 1988)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0807611891

ISBN-13: 978-0807611890

Product Dimensions: 11.1 x 8.6 x 1 inches

Shipping Weight: 2.8 pounds

Average Customer Review: 5.0 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (3 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #2,427,249 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #85 in [Books > Arts &](#)

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Customer Reviews

It seems today that everyone is writing about Books of Hours. The lush painting and rich ornamentation make these small manuscripts veritable jewels for owners, collectors, historians, and viewers alike. Oddly though, up to the appearance of this book, the subject as a whole had never been treated in a comprehensive way. This book examines the subject using multiple examples from American museums and does not go for the big-name Berry, Bedford, or Royal French items. Therefore a whole group of fine but less well-known books gets introduced to us, and the scholarly text examines the theological, social, and stylistic aspects of these attractive medieval status-symbols. Abundant illustration takes us through the texts and Roger Wieck deftly handles variants and trends in the painting of subject matter. One of his pet interests is the medieval view of death, and he carefully elaborates the artistic themes associated with the rituals of last rites, funeral, and burial. As in other books produced before computer scans, much of the photography is in black & white and of relatively small size, and, through no fault of its own, the book suffers on this account, but is balanced by the plethora of material not otherwise accessible and the highly readable text combining erudition with humor. It is a great overview of what these precious picture books were about.

This book arrived in excellent condition and is invaluable as a scholarly text to any student, postgrad or full-time researcher working in this field, although anyone who is interested in the intricacies and wonders of medieval Books of Hours should obtain a copy of this seminal book.

Fascinating, accessible information on illuminated manuscripts.

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