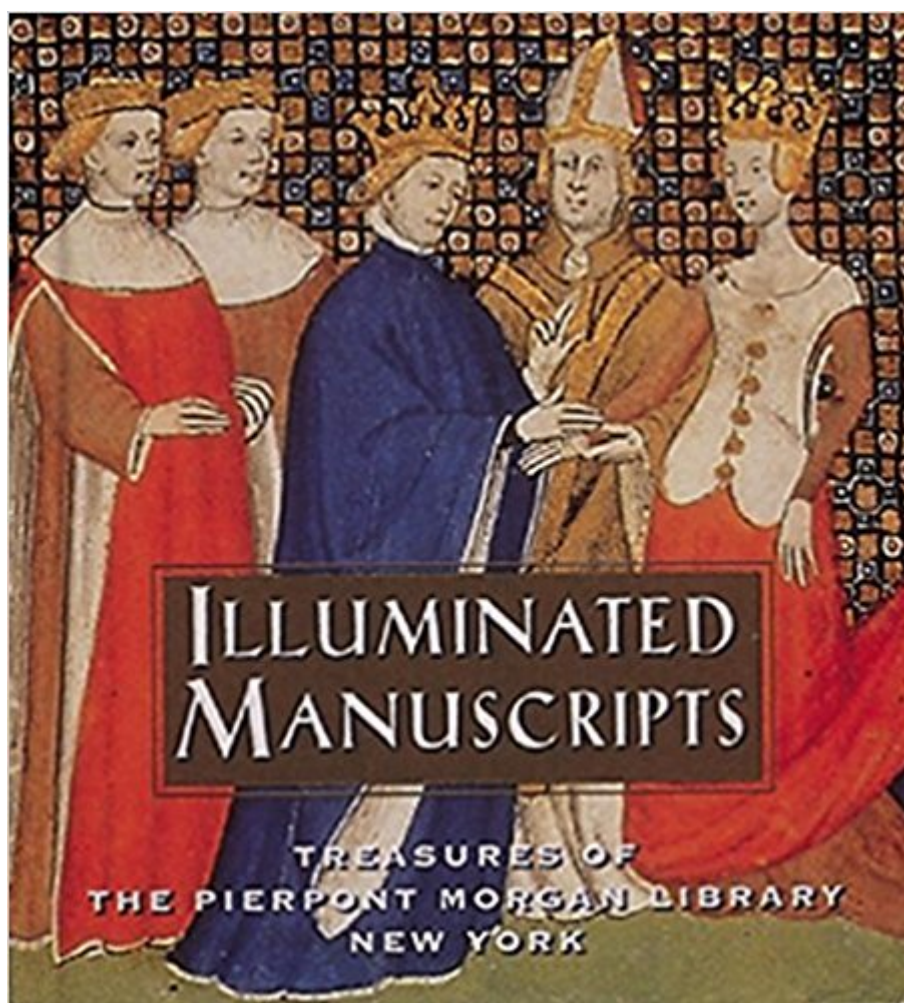


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Illuminated Manuscripts: Treasures Of The Pierpont Morgan Library New York (Tiny Folio)



Synopsis

Glorious works of art as well as documents of bygone eras, painted and illuminated manuscripts supply perhaps the greatest and by far the best-preserved evidence of daily life during the Middle Ages and Renaissance. This Tiny Folio draws on one of the greatest collections in the world to illustrate the angels, demons, and everyday denizens of the medieval world.

Book Information

Series: Tiny Folio

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Average Customer Review: 3.9 out of 5 stars 12 customer reviews

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Collectibles > Records #293 in Books > Arts & Photography > Other Media > Calligraphy

Customer Reviews

This little treasure is one of a score of pocket-size tomes in the "Tiny Folio" series, which offers mini courses in art history based on the collections of the world's great museums. The nearly 300 pages, just four by four-and-a-half inches, hold almost that many full-color illustrations of the jewel-like illuminations that adorn Medieval manuscripts. This handy book is the perfect purse or pocket-stuffer, guaranteed to transport the reader to a paradise of unicorns and crimson-clad maidens, jousting knights, lute music, and gold-framed bestiaries. There are also the mouths of hell, Satan and the damned, and a hirsute "wild woman" rescuing a child from a curiously lamb-like dragon. All in all, it's a mesmerizing trip through five chapters: Biblical Scenes; Saints, Rites, and Rituals; Royalty, Pastimes, and Professions; Flora and Fauna; and The Supernatural, with a short essay to introduce each one. This is a great book to give as a gift or use as a visitor's guide to the Morgan Library, as the editors have provided thorough captions, an index to the illustrations, and a short but carefully chosen bibliography (which includes Roger S. Wieck's *Painted Prayers: The Book of Hours in Medieval and Renaissance Art*, a larger look, so to speak, at one particularly

beautiful type of illuminated work in the Morgan Library's collection). Be warned that some readers may need to take a magnifier to these minuscule, detailed pages, which teem with brilliant colors, vividly drawn decorations, and scenes that range from the bizarrely imaginative to the pastoral and serene. --Peggy Moorman

Charles E. Pierce, Jr., is former director of the Pierpont Morgan Library. William M. Voelkle is the Library's Curator of Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts. Susan Lengle is a curatorial assistant.

The book is much too small. You only can view the reproductions with a magnifying glass. The selection of titles is well done.

This book is smaller than I realized when I purchased it, so the pictures inside sometimes need a magnifier; however, there are a lot of great images!

This "tiny folio" is very useful if you think of it as a thumbnail guide to the collection at the Pierpoint Morgan library. The range of subject matter is quite educational, and they do give a few details for each illustration (size, place of origin). If the reproductions had been better it would be a collectible book in and of itself, but the book was printed in 1998 and a lot of refinements in printing technology have come since then. Most illustrations are serviceable, but several are blurry and a couple are pixilated. (Yes, they are small, but a magnifying glass will only magnify the halftone dots; you won't see more detail.) But if you can find a used copy cheaply you shouldn't have any regrets.

I was so pleased when this arrived. I had no idea that so much could be packed into so little space. Excellent quality photos, great detail, and the information on the original size of each manuscript is priceless! I'm in a historical recreation society and I can tell you this will go with me to every scribal and illumination event I go to.

Perfect for my Scribal kit to take to SCA events to give me inspiration when needed!

This volume is way too small to enjoy these manuscripts.

The Pierpont Morgan Library has the best collection of Medieval Illuminated Manuscripts in the United States. This SMALL book showcases the best of them. The book is slightly larger than the

palm of your hand so you need reasonable sight. The book is organised topically-- Biblical Scenes, Saints Rites and Rituals etc. I prefer to see illuminated manuscripts in chronological order, that said, I think there arrangement has its strong points. This book is inexpensive and will be one of the earliest books that a number of people who know nothing about Medieval Illuminated Manuscripts might buy. I think the thematic approach would be helpful to them. It is good to see so many of the illuminated treasures the Morgan owns in one place-- one wishes they would also issue this book in a larger size. The bibliography at the back guides the reader to other volumes on the Morgan collection. I think this is a great place for a person to start looking at illuminated manuscripts-- with due allowance made for its size. The Morgan collection is the best in the United States and of world class standard. The small size keeps the price down which is good for entry level buyers. If you enjoy what you are looking at I suggest you look at some other books on illuminated manuscripts. Helpful other books: Masterpieces of Illumination: The World's Most Famous Manuscripts 400 To 1600. The Masterpieces of Illumination is a real gem. If you are interested or getting interested in illuminated manuscripts it is a great book to own -- and it isn't very expensive. It introduces you to about 150 great illuminated manuscripts from 400--1600. Most are European -- about 130 or so, with a few Turkish, Mughal and other manuscripts as well. Arranged chronologically. It allows you to see changing patterns and styles of illumination and you may well find a period that is congenial to you. See the reviews. The Getty has a much smaller collection of illuminated manuscripts that is broad based-- it covers a wide time period, is geographically diverse and represents a number of different schools of illumination. They too have produced an inexpensive set of books on illuminated manuscripts. Their book is larger than the Morgan Tiny Folio format so you see a lot more detail-- well worth sampling a volume to see if you like it. Arranged chronologically. See the reviews. Italian Illuminated Manuscripts in the J. Paul Getty Museum (Getty Trust Publications: J. Paul Getty Museum) French Illuminated Manuscripts in the J. Paul Getty Museum Illuminated Manuscripts of Germany and Central Europe in the J. Paul Getty Museum Illuminated Manuscripts from Belgium and the Netherlands at the J. Paul Getty Museum

This is one of my favorite illumination books. Being a practicing illuminator, I need photos much more than I need lengthy discussions, historical analyses, elaborate provenance notes, etc. They have to be color photos and they have to be large enough, and at a high enough resolution, that I can learn something from them--and maybe even copy an initial, a diapering pattern, a bit of the border, or more. This book satisfies all these criteria. In fact, the only thing I dislike about this book is the fact that it's so small, it's really hard to keep open while I paint from it. REALLY hard, because if

you get large and heavy enough items to hold both sides down, inevitably the items obscure parts of the page you are painting from! Its size can be an advantage, though. I purchased this at the National Gallery in Washington, on a midday jaunt during a conference, then went back for the next conference presentation. When the speaker turned out to be droningly boring, I brought out this tiny book and paged through it inconspicuously under the table. Could I have done that with Janet Backhouse's monumental work? I think not...;) The selections are wonderful, and they're usefully broken down into sections based on content--excellent when you need to find a quick animal or floral image for a border, a rendering of a king or queen, or a picture of a dragon or other supernatural being. Not so excellent when you need to find an example of, say, a late 1400's eastern French book of hours (there are many, just not in any kind of chronological or geographical order). But then, there are other resources that do that. This book is interesting for its variety, its excellent reproductions, and its well-selected and unusual miniatures.

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