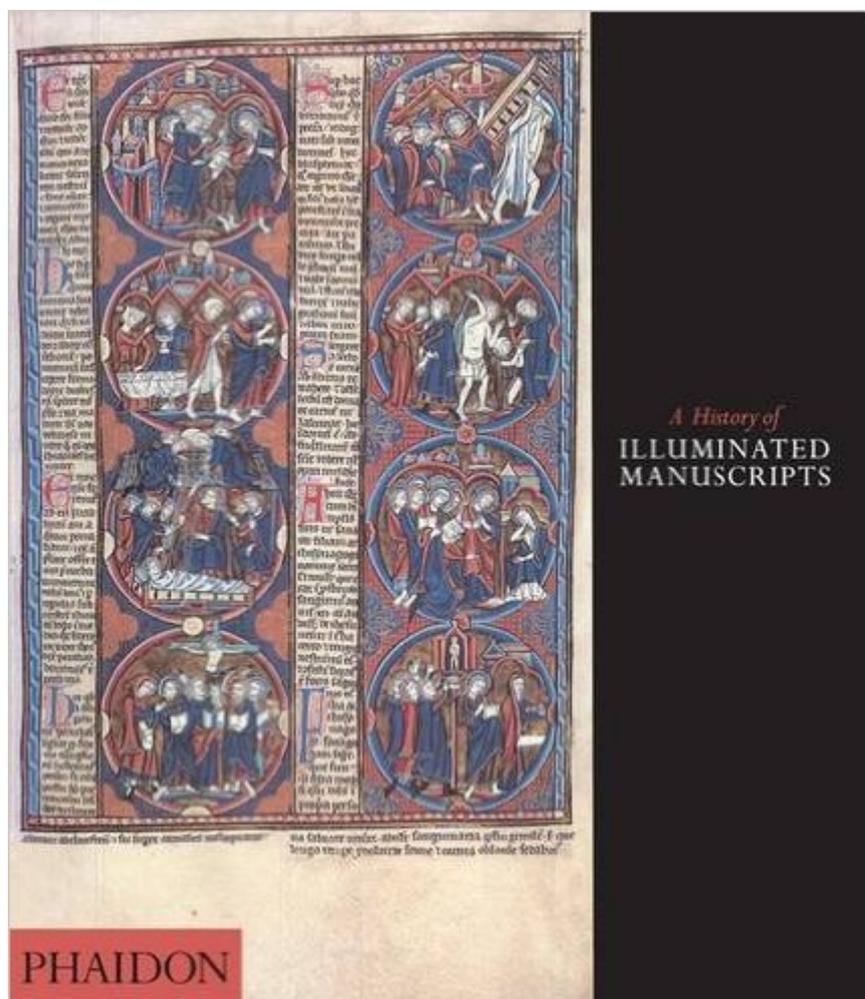


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A History Of Illuminated Manuscripts



Synopsis

Illuminated manuscripts are perhaps the most beautiful treasures to survive from the middle ages. This authoritative volume provides a comprehensive introduction to the medieval world of books, their production and their consumption. The text divides this world into different groups of readers and writers: missionaries, emperors, monks, students, aristocrats, priests, collectors and the general public. De Hamel is both informative and immensely readable, and the sumptuous illustrations render this book too good to be missed.

Book Information

Paperback: 272 pages

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Customer Reviews

Christopher De Hamel's "A History of Illuminated Manuscripts" (now in its second edition) is certainly the definitive history for lay readers, but it is probably the best starting place for aspiring professionals as well. It is well-written, faultlessly researched, and copiously illustrated. I happily use it in my university course on illuminated manuscripts together with Ingo Walther's "Masterpieces of Illumination" (published by Taschen)--in my opinion, the perfect companion piece. The second edition of De Hamel's book is structured as was the first: an informative introduction is followed by chapters which divide and discuss the manuscripts according to their intended users (missionaries, emperors, monks, students, aristocrats, everybody, priests, and collectors); an extended bibliography precedes several useful indexes. This Phaidon paperback edition is a beautiful book, with a white paper cover adorned with a full-color dust-jacket. Many new illustrations have been added, and there are many more color illustrations than there were in the first edition. More

importantly, the text has been updated to reflect ongoing research in the field. My only complaint about this edition is that many of the important full-color and full-page illustrations in the first edition (to which I often referred in my classes) have either been reduced in size or eliminated entirely in the new edition. There are also significant (and inexplicable) differences in the color reproduction of illuminations between the first (David R. Godine, Publisher) edition and this second (Phaidon Press) edition--sometimes the differences are so radical that only a close inspection (or a familiarity with the actual documents) reveals they are photographs of the same manuscript.

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