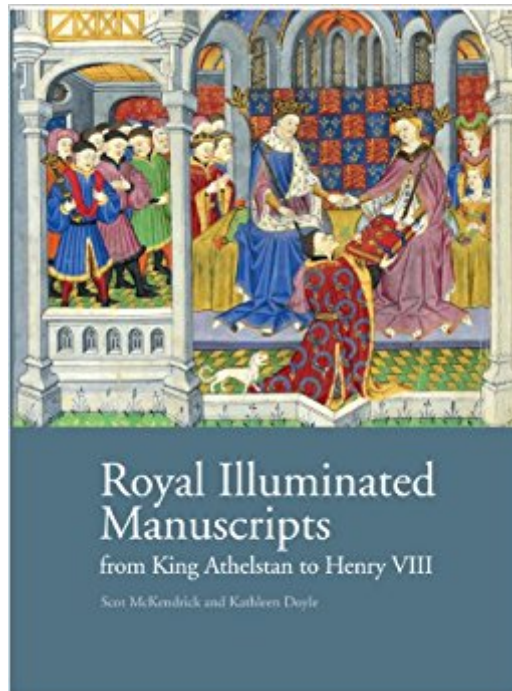


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Royal Illuminated Manuscripts: From King Athelstan To Henry VIII



Synopsis

Before the introduction of printing to Western Europe during the mid-fifteenth century, all books were written by hand. As a result, manuscripts were extremely rare and expensive, particularly those that were illuminated. Decorated with illustrations of brightly colored pigments and burnished gold leaf, illuminated manuscripts were first made by monasteries for their own libraries, but later, as literacy increased, for the visual and literary entertainment of royalty and the wealthy elite. Royal Illuminated Manuscripts showcases the illuminated manuscripts collected by the kings and queens of England from the ninth to the sixteenth century. The forty-one manuscripts featured here, chosen for their beauty and significance, are presented chronologically, beginning in the Anglo-Saxon period and ending in the Tudor period. Accompanying each full-page image is an explanation of its content, symbolism, and provenance, as well as a discussion placing each within the wider context of the tradition of illuminated manuscripts. This informative book will serve as an extraordinary introduction to these beautiful and historically significant texts, offering vivid insights into subjects of royal identity, moral and religious beliefs, learning, faith, and international politics.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Scot McKendrick is head of history and classics at the British Library. He is the author of numerous publications on medieval and earlier manuscripts, including *In a Monastery Library*, *Flemish Illuminated Manuscripts*, and *Illuminating the Renaissance*. Kathleen Doyle is curator of illuminated manuscripts at the British Library. Her previous publications include *Bible Manuscripts*.

This book is an introduction to a specific collection of illuminated manuscripts at the British Library. They are part of the Old Royal Library, which was donated to the nation by George II in 1727. These are beautiful manuscripts That represent the art of hundreds of years of book production by scribes who copied texts which were then decorated in brilliant colors and gold leaf. It is a lovely, small book, with only about 100 or so pages, and was probably a bargain when it was first sold in 2011 ago celebrate the exhibition of the collection. However, because there are so few copies available now, booksellers are now gouging buyers by charging exorbitant and ridiculously inflated prices. No matter how much a person loves illuminated manuscripts, spend your money elsewhere. You can purchase a good many other books on this subject with the money you would pay for one copy of this.

The collection of manuscripts are all in colour, and are of excellent clarity . There are drawbacks, which are the cost of this very small book, 96 pages, and a study of the manuscripts is barely touched upon. The total number of reproductions are limited and very little history about the manuscripts is included. In reflection, although I enjoy looking at it, I do not think it is the best bang for the buck..

I liked this book because I do illumination, and along with all the religious illuminations which are well covered in many books, there was a fair sampling of some "How to be a King" manuals, bestiaries and other secular works, and some documents like genealogies, etc.

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