# ANIMALS & OTHER BEASTS

26 May – 8 July 2022

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CONTENTS

# INTRODUCTION

***Animals & Other Beasts*** brings together a wide variety of artworks, which include sculpture, manuscript illumination, ceramics, metalwork and stained glass. While animals and fantasy creatures often appear in the margins of books, buildings and domestic settings, they often take centre stage as well, decorating thrones, jewellery and clothing. The exhibition is divided into three sections – domestic, wild and fantasy animals. Included are an ox and donkey, from one of the earliest known crib ensembles carved in Central Italy (Cat 11); an English folding almanac with a large illumination of the 'Zodiac Man' whose body is composed of beasts that symbolise the zodiac (Cat. 16); and a Romanesque throne support from Southern Italy, which features two stylobate lions carrying an ornate base on their backs (Cat. 27).

Interspersed throughout the catalogue are passages from ancient and medieval sources which describe animals – often in extremely amusing ways. These descriptions reveal that people in the Middle Ages often understood animals and their behaviour to symbolise human characteristics, moral lessons and otherworldly truths. In illustrating the age-old relationship between men and beasts, this exhibition also encourages people to think about our relationship with animals today – especially as their natural habitat disappears.

A part of the exhibition's proceeds will be donated to the World Wildlife Fund (WWF-UK) and we will be featuring information on the vitally important work that they do to ensure people and wildlife thrive together throughout the show.

Jana Gajdošová

1

# A LARGE CHOIRBOOK LEAF WITH A HOOPOE

Italy, Lombardy

c.1470-90

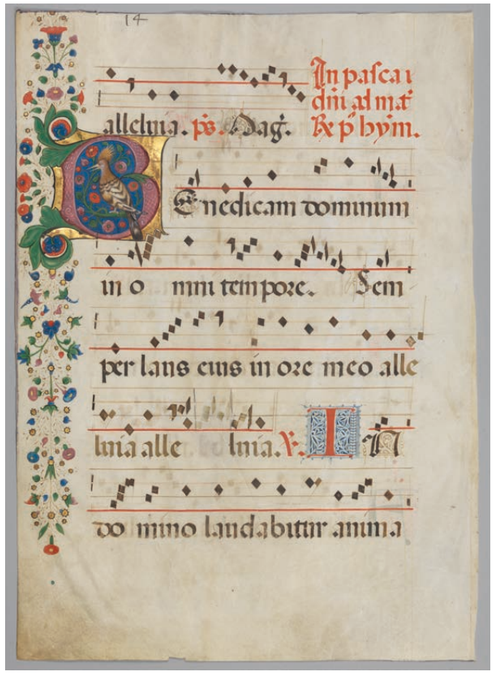
*51.5 x 37 cm*

*ink, gold and pigments on vellum*

**Provenance**
*Collection of Claudio de Polo, Trieste;*
*Private Collection, Italy, 2003*

This large leaf from a medieval choirbook is decorated with a historiated initial B which depicts a large hoopoe perched on a branch. Richly illuminated in a palette of green, red, pink, blue, and gold, the initial begins the second line of psalm 33 on Easter day: 'benedicam Dominum in omni tempore semper laus eius in ore meo / in Domino laudabitur anima'. On the recto, illuminated with three initials in red and blue hatching are selected words from psalm 65 with responses; 'Omnis terra adoret Te, Deus, et psallat Tibi' – 'Alleluia. Alleluia'. Each side is decorated with six lines of text and music in square notation on four-line staves, one line in red, comprising the chant for Easter day. The post-medieval pagination "13" and "14" suggests that this was the seventh leaf of its parent manuscript, which would thus have been a summer volume, starting with Easter.

The hoopoe is perched on a branch with red and pink flowers, accompanied by a foliate border nearly the full height of the page. The hoopoe is a distinct species of Eurasian birds, which are notable for their feathery crowns and their striking black and white wings. This is a very unusual subject for an initial in a liturgical manuscript, and an interesting example of close observation from life. Few comparable examples exist anywhere, not least with an exotic bird so naturalistically depicted. Kyriale K, one of the choir books of San Giorgio Maggiore in Venice, is a close analogue.[1] The style of the illumination is typical of North-east Italian illuminators of the latter years of the 15th century.




**Related literature**
Pesavento, Giulio. 'Maestro del Kyriale K, un miniatore veneto-ferrarese alla ricerca di un catalogo.' Eds. F. Toniolo and C. Ponchia. *I corali miniati di San Giorgio Maggiore a Venezia: L'inCanto nella Parola*. Milan, 2021.

1 See in Pesavento, 2021, pp. 215–223, and p. 271 fig. 5d.

2

# A LARGE CHOIRBOOK LEAF WITH A HEN AND CHICKS

Italy, Lombardy

c.1470-90

*51.5 x 37.7 cm*

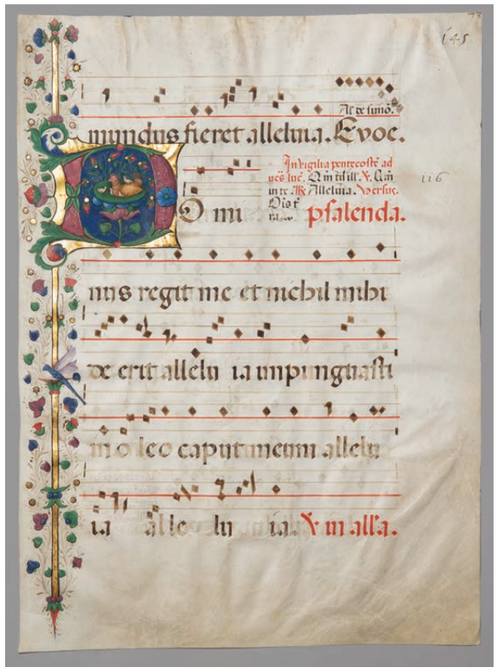
*ink, gold and pigments on vellum*

**Provenance**
*Collection of Claudio de Polo, Trieste;*
*Private collection, Italy, 2003*

This large leaf from a medieval choirbook is decorated with a historiated initial D, which depicts a hen with four playful chicks. Two chicks are sitting under their mother's wings, one is on the hen's back and one looks on from the edge of the nest. The green nest is atop a blooming flower, surrounded by strawberries. Richly illuminated in a palette of green, red, pink, blue, and gold, the initial on the recto begins Psalm 22: 'Dominus regit me et nihil mihi deerit ....,' while the verso comes from Psalm 103:'Emitte spiritum tuum, et creabuntur…' Each side is decorated with six lines of text and music in square notation on four-line staves.

The leaf belongs to the same manuscript as the large leaf with a hoopoe, illustrated in Cat. 1, and it is related to Kyriale K, one of the choir books of San Giorgio Maggiore in Venice.[1] The style of the illumination is typical of North-east Italian manuscript painters of the latter years of the 15th century.

**Related literature**
Pesavento, Giulio. 'Maestro del Kyriale K, un miniatore veneto-ferrarese alla ricerca di un catalogo.' Eds. F. Toniolo and C. Ponchia. *I corali miniati di San Giorgio Maggiore a Venezia: L'inCanto nella Parola*. Milan, 2021.



1 Pesavento, 2021, pp. 215–223, and p. 271 fig. 5d.

**The cock was designed by nature to announce the dawn; by singing they awaken men. They are skilled astronomers, sing at the start of every three-hour period, go to bed with the sun, and at the fourth hour of the night awaken us with their song.**

Pliny the Elder, 1st century CE

3

# A CANDLESTICK FOOT IN THE FORM OF A COCKEREL

Germany, Lower Saxony

c.1250-1300

*7.7 x 3.2 x 12 cm*

*hollow (lost-wax) cast, chased, engraved and punched copper alloy with a deep brown patina. A central drilled hole runs through the upper and lower sections of the body. The proper right leg is restored below the hock, and there is a small fill on the tip of the beak. The central sickle feather of the tail is broken at the tip.*

**Provenance**

*Collection of Claudio de Polo, Trieste; Private Collection, Italy, 2003*

This diminutive cast-bronze cockerel is shown in full crow, its weight carefully balanced over its delicately modelled talons. The bird's head, with its tooled comb and wattle standing proud from the skull, is turned subtly to the left as it crows, giving it a dynamic and naturalistic sense of action, further emphasised by the angling of its legs as if in mid-stride. A cape of sharply backswept feathers modelled in low relief enclose the neck above a bare breast and overlap the bird's wings, which are represented with a pronounced wing bow and a combination of engraved and modelled feathers. The large, elegant feathers of the down-swept tail are separated from the wings and body by a saddle of smaller feathers encircling the back. The feet have three toes, a claw extending from the reverse, and a spur below the hock joint. The bird's underside is smoothly modelled without feathers.

The defining features of this strutting cockerel place its creation in the second half of the 13th century, when the famed bronze casters of Hildesheim in Lower Saxony led the technological and aesthetic advancement of the artform. Large free-standing monuments such as the eagle lectern of c.1230–40 in Hildesheim Cathedral (fig.1) brilliantly elucidate how the Hildesheim bronze casters and their sculptor collaborators had developed an acute sense of anatomical verism and an attentiveness towards naturalistic balance, with animals and birds carefully poised over their feet in a thoroughly believable pose. Following the example of the Hildesheim lectern, key specimens of this approach to verism, weighting and balance are a series of cockerel aquamaniles thought to have been produced in the region toward the end of the 13th century.[1] An example now preserved in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York is modelled so as to balance perfectly over its claws, and just like our

Fig. 1
The Hildesheim 'Eagle Lectern'
Lower Saxony, Hildesheim
c.1230-40
*57.5 cm (height); cast, chased, engraved and punched copper alloy*
Hildesheim Cathedral

1 Alternatively dated to the second half of the 13th century or c.1300, see Mende, Ursula, *Die mittelalterlichen Bronzen im Germanischen Nationalmuseum: Bestandskatalog,* Nuremberg, 2013, pp.189–90.

much smaller bird it has a similarly opened beak, with the same hooked upper section, as well as comparably arranged wattles and comb (fig.2). A similarly conceived dove aquamanile, also standing over its feet and with its head and neck positioned in an identical manner to our bird is in the Kolumba Museum in Cologne.[2] Two other surviving cockerel aquamaniles in Frankfurt and Nuremberg (figs.3–4) also have elements of this approach, though both are supported in three places by way of their tail feathers or projecting struts respectively. Technically, the presence of a sprue hole in the rear feathers of our bird is especially analogous to the Nuremberg vessel, suggesting a similar approach to the founding process in spite of differences in scale.

These parallels all serve to highlight the question of function. While larger cockerel aquamaniles clearly

served as vessels for pouring water and potentially other liquids, our bird, despite its opened beak and the piercing through to the interior of the casting visible at the back of the mouth, has no apparent place or capacity in this context. The drill holes present in the top of the body (bordering the saddle feathers just behind the cape) and on its underside suggest that the figure was attached by way of a pin or screw to a larger object, perhaps a base, and that it supported a superstructure of some form on its back. Such features are in fact absolutely typical for cast copper alloy candlesticks and candle 'feet' of the period, which were often assembled from multiple parts held together by a central column, stem or pin. The diminutive scale of our cockerel also serves to bolster such a reconstruction, being closely analogous to a number of surviving anthropomorphic and zoomorphic candlesticks cast in 13th-century Hildesheim. Of these, the famous *drachenleuchten* or dragon lights preserved in museums around the world offer direct parallels, particularly in their approach to engraved surface detail (fig.5). The language of the

Fig. 2
Cockerel aquamanile
Germany, Lower Saxony
Second half 13th century
*25.2 x 10.5 x 24.7 cm; cast, chased, engraved and punched copper alloy*
New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, inv. 1989.292

Fig. 3
Cockerel aquamanile
Germany, Lower Saxony
Second half 13th century
*cast, chased, engraved and punched copper alloy*
Frankfurt am Main, Museum Angewandte Kunst, inv. WMF 1
New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, inv. 1989.292

Fig. 4
Cockerel aquamanile
Lower Saxony
13th century
*22.5 x 21.8 cm; cast, chased, engraved and punched copper alloy*
Nuremberg, Germanisches Nationalmuseum, inv. KG490

tooling used on our cockerel, with small circular or 'ball-point' punches texturising the comb and wattle, and engraved linear elements enlivening the various feather motifs over the body, all accord closely to the techniques and decoration of Hildesheim metalwork at this time, both larger aquamaniles and the variously sized *drachenleuchten*.[3] It would appear, however, that our cockerel is the only surviving example of its type and iconography, making it a unique document in the story of Hildesheim metalwork of the 13th century.

**Related literature**


Barnet, Peter and Pete Dandridge. *Lions, Dragons and other Beasts: Aquamanilia of the Middle Ages, Vessels for Church and Table*. New York, 2006.
Brandt, Michael, ed. *Bild und Bestie: Hildesheimer Bronzen der Stauferzeit*. Hildesheim, 2008.
Hütt, Michael. *Aquamanilien; Gebrauch und Form*. Mainz am Rhein, 1993.
Mende, Ursula. *Die Mittelalterlichen Bronzen im Germanischen Nationalmuseum*. Nürnberg, 2013.


Fig. 5
Candlestick in the form of a dragon disgorging a knight
Lower Saxony, Hildesheim
c.1250
*27.7 x 28 cm; cast, chased, engraved and punched copper alloy*
Stuttgart, Landesmuseum Württemberg, inv. 9462

2 Falke, Otto and Erich Meyer, *Romanische Leuchter und Gefässe: Giessgefässe der Gotik,* Berlin, 1983, p.101, fig.232.

3 cf. horse and rider aquamaniles dated to c.1225–50 and now in the Nationalmuseet in Copenhagen, inv. nos.D 333/1974 and D 334/1974, illustrated in Michael Brandt, ed., *Bild und Bestie: Hildesheimer Bronzen der Stauferzeit*, Regensburg, 2008, p.203, figs.12–20. See also a number of Hildesheim-type dragon candlesticks with feathers engraved in an identical manner to those on our cockerel, illustrated on pp.73–79.

**Sheep are useful for offerings to the gods, and for their fleeces. Male lambs are produced when the north wind is blowing, while the south wind produces females. Thunder causes pregnant sheep to miscarry if they are alone, but not if they are in a flock.**

Pliny the Elder, 1st century CE

4

# A RELIEF OF A SHEPHERD WITH HIS FLOCK

Belgium, Wallonia, or Northern France

c.1520–30

*85 x 54 x 24 cm*

*softwood; three thick sections of (perhaps pine) aligned with their grain running vertically and pinned together with wooden dowels. The carving on the front face is decorated with polychromy. The reverse is plain but hollowed in two places on the central plank, with a perhaps contemporary fillet nailed to the larger of the two. Losses to the paint surface and some insect damage and breaks to the timber.*

A clean-shaven shepherd, clad in a fashionable belted garment of green cloth that stops just above his knees, tends his flock with the aid of a sheepdog that appears at the lower left corner of the scene. The shepherd's right hand appears to grasp an attribute that is now lost, and it is likely, given its close proximity to the collar of the dog in the lower corner, that it originally held a length of rope or chain representing the dog's leash. Nine sheep, their shaggy winter coats enveloping their bodies, graze on rocky outcrops to the left and right.

Along with southern Germany, the regions of northern France and the southern Low Countries were among the key epicentres of woodcarving in late-Medieval Europe. Our relief was almost certainly produced in Wallonia (in the south of present-day Belgium) or the neighbouring region of northern France across the border, since the figure's forceful anatomy as well as the fashion of his costume (especially his round-toed, shin-length boots) can be compared with a number of carvings surviving in these regions (see figs.1 and 2), and moreover, suggest a date in the third decade of the 16th century.

Carved wood reliefs centring on a single protagonist survive in comparatively large numbers across these regions, and several such high reliefs of a similar scale can, for instance, be found punctuating the spaces above each of the arched openings of the polygonal jubé of the church of Saint-Materne de Walcourt, carved in the 1520s and early 1530s.[1] However, the identities of the figures carved on these scenes – Saints Hubert, Quentin and Margaret – are made clear by the inclusion of their traditional attributes and a wealth of other accompanying details, which is not the same as the figure of the anonymous shepherd striding across our relief. His lack of saintly attributes (and with no suggestion of a miraculous event being described on the relief) it may suggest at first that we are supposed to read him as an image of the Good Shepherd, Christ. And yet he is totally cleanshaven and does not accord at all closely with the conventional representation of Christ in late-Medieval European art.

Alongside this unusual lack of identity, the carving of this relief and the timber from which it was produced are both of such roughly hewn and forceful character that it is highly possible we are looking at an object that was purposefully made for secular use, as opposed to display within a liturgical context. This reading is further supported by the iconography, which appears to

1 Toussaint, 2001, pp. 263–71.

be unique among the entire corpus of surviving late-Medieval French wood carving. Might he, indeed, be a wool merchant or someone involved in the booming wool industries that provided whole areas of the Low Countries and northern France with much of their wealth during the period? If so, the thickness of his garments and the prominently displayed length of cloth draped over his proper left shoulder could easily be interpreted as an advertisement for the products of the wool industry. Such a reading would suggest that our relief was carved as a shop, wharf, or agent's sign, to signify and highlight the role of the trader(s) above whose premises it would originally have been mounted. Since so few secular carvings of any kind have survived from the Middle Ages, the present relief is of extreme importance for our understanding of artistic output outside of the circumscribed patronage of the church. If its identification as a shop or agent's sign is correct, then its significance is even greater.

**Related literature**

Toussaint, J acques *et al.*. *Art en Namurois: La sculpture 1400–1550,* Namur, 2001.


Fig.1
Saint Roch
Belgium, Namur
c.1530
Jemeppe-sur-Sambre, Chapelle Saint-Roch (originally made for the church of Saint Martin)

Fig.2
Saint Michael
Belgium, Namur
c.1530
Walcourt, Saint-Materne

5

# THE PERTENGO HOURS
## Book of Hours

Southern Netherlands, Bruges

c.1500

*88 x 62 mm; ii (paper) + 195 + ii (paper) manuscript leaves; 16 full-page miniatures and 25 smaller illuminations; some wear and flaking of pigments, e.g. in some Signs of the Zodiac, usually visible only with a magnifying glass; some leaves a bit cockled; one quire near the beginning coming loose; the binding with very minor wear; generally in very good condition throughout.*

The manuscript is lavished with sixteen full-page miniatures surrounded by full borders (each facing a page with a matching full border and a six-line initial) and 25 smaller illuminations. The manuscript is named after Count Pertengo of Turin, who owned the book in the 18th century and had it rebound with its armorial binding. The intimate size of this book testifies to its function as a private prayer book called a Book of Hours, which was made up of a set of prayers to be recited at 8 particular times of the day – mirroring the 8 monastic hours chanted by monks in monasteries.

Preceding the prayers is a calendar, which is illustrated with signs of the Zodiac and 12 occupations of the Month. With the inclusion of the calendar, the reader would know what occasion or which saint to pray to that day, and the saints included here would have been tailored to the patron's wishes. This Book of Hours was most likely made in Bruges for an Italian member of the Franciscan Third Order: the calendar does not suggest a patron from any particular region, although the translation of Donatian (30 August) is a feast characteristic of Bruges; the litany, however, includes the following sequence of

monks and hermits: Francis (of Assisi), Benedict, Anthony (of Padua), Bernardino (of Siena), Elziarus, and Louis (of Toulouse). Elziarus (Eleazar) is an exceptionally rare saint: he was Count of Ariano in the Kingdom of Naples, ambassador of King Robert of Anjou, and member of the Third Order of Saint Francis; he died in 1323 and was canonised in 1369. As the calendar includes Saints Bernardino (20 May), Dominic (5 August), Clare (12 August) and Francis (4 October), and the litany includes Clare, a connection with the Franciscans in Italy seems certain. An almost identical identical litany occurs in a manuscript sold at Sotheby's, 8 July 1974, lot 89, whose catalogue description states that it has a litany 'including a number of Franciscan saints'. The hypothesis of an Italian patron is supported by the book's Italianate script as well as its later provenance and other details that define the mode of production, such as the very fine vellum used for the text pages and the thicker vellum used for the inserted leaves with miniatures.

The artist responsible for the illuminations worked in a traditional style based on models from the 1460s and 1470s, the Golden Age of Flemish manuscript illumination, when naturalistic 'scatter borders' were introduced and when the so-called Master of Mary of Burgundy emerged as the most inventive and sophisticated illuminator of several generations. The scene of the Flight into Egypt, for example, is based on the miniature showing the same subject by Simon Marmion in the Berlaymont Hours[1] of c.1470–75: in both the Virgin is rendered in profile, wearing a headscarf topped by a sun hat. The source for the illuminations of the Annunciation and the Three Living and the Three Dead is the Master of Mary of Burgundy. The pictorial programme and the *mise-en-page* clearly indicate that the artistic origins of the miniaturist are to be found in the southern Netherlands, and therefore presumably in Bruges or Ghent. The illumination shows close links with a group of small-format Books of Hours that was produced by a team of painters who collaborated with the so-called Master of the Prayerbook of c.1500. The small-scale miniatures are of narrative character and include a variety of details that enliven the images. A striking detail in the manuscript is the frequent rendering of flies on the inner fields of the initial letters marking the beginnings of prayers. Corresponding to contemporary practise in illumination, motifs are often repeated, for instance the architecture of the stable in the scene of the Adoration of the Magi corresponds to the one rendered in the miniature of the Nativity. More unusual subjects like the motif of the Three Living and the Three Dead are also rendered by an artist who was obviously skilled and experienced.

**Description**

The manuscript is foliated in modern pencil i–ii, 1–197; occasional traces of 17th- or 18th-century foliation in ink at the fore-edge on the top horizontal ruling; two cancelled blanks at the end and perhaps also at the beginning (the structure of the calendar is uncertain); the collation apparently: $1^{8-2}$ (1st and 2nd blank leaves cancelled; fols.1–6), $2^{8}$ (fols.7–14) | $3^{8-2}$ (central bifolium missing; fols.15–22) | 4–$20^{8}$ (fols.23–171), $21^{8+1}$ (last leaf inserted; fols.172–80) | $22^{8}$ (fols.181–89), $23^{8-2}$ (7th and 8th blank leaves cancelled; fols.190–95), plus inserted leaves as fols.15, 18, 23, 29, 41, 61, 73, 78, 83, 88, 93, 101, 107, 116, 137 and 181, each blank on the recto and with a full-page miniature on the verso; vertical catchwords in most quires; fols.1r–2r, 14v, 17v, 22v, 60v and 192r–195v are ruled, otherwise blank; ruled in pale pink ink for 17 lines of text per page, the ruled space approx. 49 x 32 mm; written in a very regular fine Italianate rounded gothic bookhand in brown ink, rubrics in pale pink; sixteen full-page miniatures surrounded by full borders of naturalistic fruit, flowers, insects, etc., as if scattered on a solid, yellowish ground, each facing page with a matching full border and a six-line initial usually enclosing a naturalistic fly or flower; one eight-line historiated initial with a three-sided border; the calendar with twelve miniatures depicting the occupations of the months occupying the lower margin of versos, forming part of a three-sided border, facing twelve roundels depicting the zodiac signs on the rectos, incorporated into a three-sided border; two 3-line initials in gold on a square red field, to a gospel reading and a prayer (fols.35v and 178r); similar 2-line initials throughout to psalms, collects, hymns, etc.; similar 1-line initials throughout to verses; similar line-fillers throughout, especially in the litany of saints.

The binding is sewn on five bands and bound in brown calf probably in 1747, the covers stamped in gilt with the Turinetti arms (quarterly, 1 and 4 a half eagle, crowned, turning away from the partition, 2 and 3, a tower, surmounted by a coronet; these arms are as found, for example, carved in stone on the Palazzo Madama, Turin) within a gilt frame; the spine compartments each with a gilt saltire cross; the edges of the leaves gilt; decorated endpapers; in a modern fitted box of patterned paper and brown calf lined in silk, the spine titled in gilt 'Heures'; signed in gilt 'Alain Devauchelle'.

1 This is reproduced in T. Kren and S. McKendrick, *Illuminating the Renaissance: The Triumph of Flemish Manuscript Painting in Europe*, Los Angeles and London, 2003, fig.12c.

**Text**

[Item 1 occupies quires 1–2]

1. (fols.2v–14r) Calendar.

[Items 2–3 occupy quire 3]

2. (fols.16r–17r) Devotion to the Holy Face: 'Salve sancta facies …'.
3. (fols.19r–22r) Hours of the Cross, lacking prime and terce, and parts of matins and sext.

[Items 4–10 occupy quires 4–21]

4. (fols.24r–28v) Hours of the Holy Spirit.
5. (fols.30r–40v) Mass of the Virgin.
6. (fols.42r–106v) Hours of the Virgin '... *secundum usum Romanum* …'; with (fols.108r–115v) variants for Advent and other liturgical seasons.
7. (fols.117r–136v) Seven Penitential Psalms, litany of saints (fols.128v–131r), petitions, and (fols.135r–136v) the first three and last three of the usual ten collects.
8. (fols.139r–173v) Office of the Dead, Use of Rome.
9. (fols.174r–180v) Prayers 'Obsecro te' and (fols.178r–180v) 'O intemerata', both using masculine forms.

[Item 11 occupies quires 22–23]

10. (fols.182r–191v) Psalter of St Jerome.

**Illumination**

The calendar (fols.2v–14r) has twelve Occupations of the months and corresponding Zodiac Symbols (except that Scorpio and Libra have accidentally been swapped), some of them with highly unusual and inventive compositions:

1. January. A man in a domestic interior warming himself at a fireplace. Aquarius.
2. February. Two men coppicing trees. Pisces.
3. March. A man taking a break from digging by drinking from a gourd. Aries.
4. April. An elegantly dressed man strolling in the countryside, a branch over his shoulder, followed by a servant. Taurus.
5. May. A man out hunting on horseback, with a falcon on his wrist. Gemini: a very unusual depiction, with a man playing a pipe to serenade a woman at a window.
6. June. A man mowing grass with a scythe. Cancer.
7. July. A man reaping tall wheat with a sickle. Leo.
8. August. Two men threshing with flails in a barn, the bottom of its doorway blocked with a piece of wood to prevent the grain blowing away (the origin of the word 'threshold'). Virgo.
9. September. A man broadcasting seed in a ploughed field. Scorpio.
10. October. One man carrying a basket into a chamber where another man treads grapes in a large vat. Libra.
11. November. Pannage: a man knocks acorns from a tree to feed his hogs. Sagittarius.
12. December. A man in a barnyard burning the bristles from a hog before butchering it. Capricorn.

The subjects of the full-page miniatures are:

1. (fol.14v) Christ as *Salvator Mundi*: half-length full-face figure of Christ holding an orb and blessing.
2. (fol.17v) The Crucifixion, with John, the Virgin, and another Holy Woman to one side of the Cross; a large group of mounted soldiers arriving in the background on the other side.
3. (fol.23v) Pentecost: the Virgin seated, the apostles kneeling, in a church interior; the Dove above them, and also in the lower border.
4. (fol.29v) The *Virgo Lactans*: the Virgin half-length, with the infant suckling at her left breast.
5. (fol.41v) The Annunciation: the Virgin seated in a vaulted interior; Gabriel pointing to the Dove above her head.
6. (fol.62v) The Visitation: the Virgin and Elizabeth greet one another on a bridge, in a setting reminiscent of Bruges.
7. (fol.75v) The Nativity: the Virgin adoring the infant, who lies on the edge of her cloak; golden rays descend from heaven.
8. (fol.79v) The Annunciation to the Shepherds: two shepherds look up at the angel who appears to point to a stable in the background.
9. (fol.84v) The Adoration of the Magi: the Magi bring their gifts to the Virgin and Child.
10. (fol.89v) The Presentation in the Temple: the Virgin presents the Infant, who stands on the altar.
11. (fol.94v) The Massacre of the Innocents: King Herod and soldiers look down at two infants wrapped in swaddling clothes on the ground between them.
12. (fol.102v) The Flight into Egypt: the Virgin carries the infant and rides the ass, Joseph carries a bundle on a stick.
13. (fol.108v) The Coronation of the Virgin: the Virgin kneeling, with God the Father to one side, wearing a papal tiara; Christ to the other side, blessing; the Dove above.
14. (fol.117v) David in Penitence: kneeling in a courtyard, looking up at heavenly rays of golden light.
15. (fol.138v) The Three Living and the Three Dead: at a roadside cross, the three well-dressed young men on horseback are startled by three naked corpses, each holding a gold spear.
16. (fol.182v) St Jerome in the wilderness kneeling in front of a Crucifix, his lion behind him.

One historiated initial:

(fol.175r): The Virgin and Child of the Apocalypse, half-length, on a crescent moon.

**Provenance**

Giuseppe Maurizio Turinetti, Count Pertengo of Turin: bought in Venice in 1747 and rebound for him with his arms; inscribed 'Del Conte di Pertengo / 1747' and 'Comprato in Venezia lo / 26 aprile 1747 Zechini [?] 2' (fol.1r); Private collection, Germany

6

# A RELIEF PANEL CARVED WITH COMPLEX INTERLACE AND THE HAUNCHES OF A HORSE

Southern Italy

c.1000-50

*51 x 44 x 5.5 cm*

**Provenance**
*Collection of Jacques and Henriette Schumann;*
*Sold Christie's Paris, Sept. 30, 2003;*
*Private collection*

A marble panel carved in low relief on both sides with crisp lines and bold patterns. The panel is decorated on one side with the rounded haunches of a horse or centaur, and on its opposite side with a sophisticated design of thick scrolling bands, interspersed with stylised *rinceaux*, geometric motifs and flowers. This panel belongs to a group of fragments which were once in the collection of Jacques and Henriette Schumann in Paris, now dispersed in private collections. They are all carved on one side with mythological subjects and on the other side with an interlace pattern framing various stylised motifs including crosses, stars, geometric shapes, flowers and animals. Having two carved faces, the panel is likely to derive from a templon or chancel screen, where both sides of the carving would have been visible.

This fragment almost certainly originated in southern Italy, where white marble was abundant and where its stylistic treatment finds numerous close parallels. The geometric motifs included on the panel were perceived as good luck and would not have been inappropriate for a setting within ecclesiastical architecture – particularly on sanctuary barriers. One analogous example to the present fragment is an interlace panel from Bari, which shares a very similar loose interlace framing stars, crosses and foliage (fig.1).This interlace pattern also finds prototypes in early Greek churches and monasteries, which led some archaeologists to argue that many surviving fragments of this type in Italy might have been looted from sites further afield. Examples of this might include the fragments that are now incorporated into the façade of Saint Mark's Basilica in Venice and those in Saint Mark's Museum (figs.2–3). Dated to the early 11th century, the style of these fragments is extremely similar to the present sculpture.

The depiction of mythological creatures such as the centaur-like horse is also commonly found in Italian

Fig.1 (above)
Pluteo panel
10th–11th century
Italy, Bari, Saint Nicola

Fig.2 (below)
Transenna panel
10th–11th century
Italy, Venice, Saint Mark's Basilica (west façade)

Fig.3 (left)
Marble panel (possible war loot?)
10th–11th century
Italy, Venice, Saint Mark's Museum Nicola

architecture and church furnishing. The signs of the Zodiac, as well as creatures derived from pagan iconography, were standard motifs in the margins of early religious buildings, especially as stone elements from ancient buildings were reused in religious settings. In Italy some of these mythological creatures were also copied by masons from ancient sculpture easily at their disposal, such as pagan monuments or sarcophagi, and they remained a constant theme which found a way to merge with Christian iconography. Mermaids, centaurs and other mythological creatures can be found on the frieze that runs along the bottom of the exterior of the baptistery in Parma, created around 1196 (fig.4). Further north, examples of such iconographies can be found on the entrance and in the atrium of the monastic church of Saint Ambrose in Milan (fig.5).

Together with its surviving companion panel of a figure grasping the neck of a peacock (possibly a representation of Alexander the Great ascending to heaven), this relief is a highly sophisticated testament to the creativity of sculptors from the early Middle Ages and to the elaborately decorated screens that existed in church structures in Italy in the period (fig.6). 11th-century chancel screens rarely survive *in situ* anymore and so fragmentary examples such as this are important evidence that allows us to reimagine the visual and architectural splendour of these buildings.

**Related literature**

Evans, Helen C. and William D. Wixom, eds. *The Glory of Byzantium: Art and Culture of the Middle Byzantine Era, A.D.843-1261*. New York, 1997, p.38.

Fig.4 (above)
Centaur
1196
Italy, Parma Baptistery (exterior)

Fig.5 (below)
Centaur
c.1100
Italy, Milan, Sant'Ambrogio (exterior)

Fig.6 (right)
Double-sided companion bas-relief panel from the Schumann Collection
Southern Italy
c.1000–50

**The domestic animal that is most faithful to man is the dog. Only dogs recognize their master, know when someone is a stranger, recognize their own names, and never forget the way to distant places. The people of India breed dogs with tigers, but discard the first two litters as being too fierce, keeping only the third litter. A dog with rabies is only dangerous to humans during the period when the dog-star is shining; the disease can be prevented by mixing dung with the dog's food.**

Pliny the Elder, 1st century CE

7

# A TALL JUG WITH A RAMPANT DOG

Italy, Lazio, Viterbo

c.1430–50

*27.5 x 13.5 cm*

*tin-glazed earthenware with cobalt blue and manganese purple; The neck and rim are restored.*

**Provenance**
*Collection of Carlo de Carlo (1931–99)*

A tall jug of tin-glazed earthenware with cobalt blue and manganese purple on a buff-coloured clay with a tall strap handle, round body and narrow neck below a pinched spout. On the front of the body is a full-length figure of a rampant dog which leaps across a cobalt blue garden. Its representation is partly fantastical since it is shown with large, elongated claws, a shaggy mane on his chest and a forked tongue emerging from huge jaws. Around the animal are slender plants that sprout buds, berries and large hawthorn leaves amidst a background pattern of small dots. The scene is framed on all four sides by double and triple lines of manganese brown. Two vertical panels of rippling lines punctuate the spaces immediately on either side of the handle. Around the neck is a design of thick blue marks that 'hang' from a double line of manganese immediately under the rim. The interior is lead-glazed.

The form and proportions of the jug, its elegant hawthorn-like leaves picked out in vivid blue glaze and the rippling manganese design around its handle are all characteristic features of Viterbo relief blue pottery made in the second quarter of the 15th century.[1] Particularly close in treatment is a jug depicting a rearing hound now in the Torgiano Wine Museum, and another with a fantastical beast in the Museo Internazionale delle Ceramiche (MIC), Faenza.[2] An example in the Metropolitan Museum of Art is also closely comparable, even though its subject is rather different (fig. 1).

Fig. 1
Jug with Finely-Dressed Woman
Italy, Viterbo
1430s
MET 2018.144

**Related literature**
Conti, Giovanni. *Zaffera et similia nella maiolica italiana.* Viterbo, 1991.
Ravanelli Guidotti, Carmen. *La donazione Angiolo Fanfani: ceramiche del Medioevo al XX secolo*. Faenza, 1990.

1 Conti, 1991, pp.183–245, esp. pp.195–98 and p.233, no.34.
2 The Faenza and Torgiano jugs are illustrated in Ravanelli Guidotti, 1990, figs.78a and 78c respectively.

8

# WROUGHT IRON SPIT SUPPORT

Spain, Aragon

c.1400-1450

*46 x 16 cm*

*iron*

**Provenance**
*Private collection, Spain*

This iron split bracket has been given a zoomorphic shape by the addition of a neck, head and an open mouth. It resembles a dog; however, its abstraction makes this only a speculative identification. The eye of the beast supports a hanging ring, which has been twisted in the same way as the beast's neck in order to give this object a decorative character. Its body is pierced by three openings and several notches which would have function as supports for the spit rod. Someone from the household would have sat near the fire, turning the spit by the hand.

The style of this object can be compared to ironwork from the 15th and 16th centuries, especially in Spain. Two analogous examples survive in the Metropolitan Museum of Art – one is a comparable, though more monumental, example of a zoomorphic iron spit bracket, and the other is a candlestick, which displays a wrought iron technique similar to that used in our example (figs. 1–2).

Fig. 1 (above)
Iron Spit Bracket
Spain
15th – 16th centuries
New York, MET 58.174.1

Fig. 2 (above)
Candlestick
Spain
15th – 16th century
New York, MET 07.24.10

9

# TILE WITH A RUNNING DOG

France, Burgundy ?

c.1370-1400

*10 x 10.5 cm*

*two-colour earthenware tile with a lead glaze*

**Provenance**
*Collection of Anthony Ray*

This gleeful hound was stamped on an earthenware tile made from lightweight clay with low iron content. Flecks of tin glaze are visible on the edges, suggesting it was fired in a kiln with tin glazed tiles. Tin glazing was a technique rare in France in the 13th - 14th centuries but there is documentary evidence which suggests that both two-coloured and tin-glazed tiles were produced at Chartreuse de Champmol, the latter technique introduced to Burgundy by the Spaniard Jehan de Gironne, while working in the Duke's tileries.

**Related Literature**

Norton, E. C. 'De l'Aquitaine a l'Artois: Carreaux Stannifère et Carreaux plombifères des XIIIe et XIVe siècles en France.' In Rosen and Crépin-Lebrond, eds. *Images du pouvoir, pavements de faïence en France du XIIIe au XVIIe siecles*. Lyon, 2000.

Norton, E.C. 'Les carreaux de pavage bourguignons: chronologie et technique.' In M. Pinette ed. *Les carreaux de pavage dans la Bourgogne médiévale*. Autun, 1981.

10

# A DOORKNOCKER IN THE FORM OF A DOG

Portugal or Western Spain

c.1450-1550

*10.1 x 3.6 x 37.2 cm*

*wrought iron with chased and hammered details*

**Provenance**
*Private collection, Spain*

A lively and boldly worked door knocker of early date, formed by hammer and fire into the shape of a dog, with a curly tail and a large phallus. Its legs are spread widely to form the hanging mechanism for the knocker. The dog's face is incised with large almond-shaped eyes and a prominent snout.

The art of the European iron worker is often considered to have reached a high degree of perfection at the turn of the Renaissance.[1] The period of obligatory apprenticeship was always long – alike that of painters and sculptors of the age – and the smith's responsibilities entailed tremendous physical effort alongside a keen eye for extraordinarily delicate detail, and a skilful hand in applying it to the material.

Doorknockers of this early period survive in lamentably low numbers, meaning that few allow for definitive localisations, although the early twentieth-century provenance of the present example strongly suggests a point of origin in Portugal or the Western regions of Spain, and on stylistic grounds it can be dated to the 15th or early 16th century at the latest. Similar doorknockers reside in some of the world's most important public collections, such as a zoomorphic example with comparable chasing and tooling, also dated to the 15th or 16th centuries, in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (Fig. 1).

**Related literature**

Frank, Edgar B. *Old French Ironwork;The Craftsman and His Art*, Cambridge, 1950.
de Souza, Rodney, trans. *Doorknockers;A Collection of Iron Sculptures*. Milan, 2009.
Campbell, Marian. *Decorative Ironwork*. London, 1997.
Schrader, J. L. 'A Medieval Bestiary.' In *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*, n.s., 44, no.1 (Summer 1986). p. 50.

1 Frank, 1950, p. 7.

Fig.1
A cast-iron doorknocker in the form of a salamander
Western Europe, Spain (?)
15th-16th century
10.3 x 7.8 x 32 cm; cast iron with chasing and wrought details
New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Inv. 52.121.12

**Asses are useful for ploughing, and for the breeding of mules, which are the offspring of an ass and a horse. Though female asses have great affection for their young, they have an even greater dislike of water, so that they will go through fire to reach their foals but will not cross even a small stream to do so. Asses will only drink from a stream they are used to and can reach without wetting their hooves; they will refuse to cross a bridge if the water of the river can be seen through cracks in the bridge boards.**

Pliny the Elder, 1st century CE

11

# AN OX AND A DONKEY FROM AN EARLY CRIB ENSEMBLE

Central Italy

c.1270–1300

*Ox: 20 x 39 x 14cm,*
*Donkey: 18.5 x 28 x 16cm*

*limestone. A break along the ox's snout has been repaired and its horns have been lost; there are breaks to the donkey's ears; some traces of polychrome on survive on the eyes and inside the mouth of both animals.*

**Provenance**
*Private collection, Italy(?) (Label from the early 20th century on the ox read ha dato, ha tolto. This probably comes from Job 1:21–22, which in Italian states L'Eterno ha dato e l'Eterno ha tolto and in English translates to Naked I came from my mother's womb, And naked shall I return there. The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away);*
*Private collection, Paris, acquired in the 1980s*

These two small-scale limestone sculptures of a donkey and an ox probably come from a larger group of three-dimensional figures that once enacted a Nativity scene. Carved in the round and dated to the late 13th century, they represent two fragments from what must have been one of the earliest stone 'cribs' in Italy. As such, they belong to a very small group of ensembles that may have gained popularity following the first living crib that was set up by Saint Francis.

With their legs tucked under their bodies, the two animals are displayed resting peacefully. The donkey

its head sharply to the left; its facial features include a slightly open mouth, a long straight snout and almond shaped eyes. The toolmarks on the donkey reveal a sculptor who is using coarse horizontal lines to add texture to the animal's body. The ox is carved with more naturalistic details, suggesting that the two animals were made by different hands. The detailed folds on the back of its neck, the prominent spine, the deeply carved ribs and the realistically situated hooves all create a contrast to the donkey. Even though the facial features of both animals share similarities, the ox's face displays the same tendencies as the rest of its body – its structure taking on a more realistic shape than that of the donkey. The toolmarks present on the ox are also much finer and more structured. If these two animals were a part of a larger ensemble, it would not be unusual that more than one mason would take part in creating it. Such as setup might explain the differences between the carving of these two sculptures.

The two animals follow a trend that began in 1223 when Saint Francis of Assisi celebrated the feast of the Nativity by assembling the first living crib scene (fig.1). As Saint Bonaventure (1221–74) recounted, 'Now three years before his death it befell that [Saint Francis] was minded, at the town of Greccio, to celebrate the memory of the Birth of the Child Jesus, with all the added solemnity that he might, for the kindling of devotion. That this might not seem an innovation, he sought and obtained license from the Supreme Pontiff, and then made ready a manger, and bade hay, together with an ox and an ass, be brought unto the spot'.[1] Dissecting this theme more broadly, however, it is clear that the ox and donkey play a crucial role in the iconography of Christ's birth from the very start. They appear on several very early sarcophagi, such as one in Sant'Ambrogio Museum in Milan, dated to the early 5th century, the Sarcophagus of Marcus Claudianus from San Giacomo in Settimiana, dated to the 4th century, or a relief in the Christian and Byzantine Museum in Athens, dated to the 5th century (figs.2–4). In many of these early examples, the two animals are on either side of Christ, even though all other figures are missing from the scene. However, the consistent use of the two animals in scenes of the Nativity is surprising because they do not appear in any biblical references. While the sheep are mentioned in the Gospel of Luke, the Gospel of Matthew does not mention the presence of any animals. It is believed, however, that the reference to the two animals comes from the Old Testament, namely the prophecy of Isaiah, which reads: 'The ox knows its owner, and the donkey its master's crib; but Israel does not know, my people do not understand' (Isaiah 1:3).

While the Nativity appears in art as early as the 4th

1 Saint Bonaventure, *The Life of Saint Francis of Assisi*, trans. E. Gurney Salter, New York, 1904.

Fig. 2 (above)
Sarcophagus
Italy, Milan, Sant'Ambrogio
Early 5th century

Fig. 3 (above)
Detail from the Nativity
Sarcophagus of Marcus Claudianus from San Giacomo in Settimiana
Italy, Rome
4th century

Fig. 4 (left)
Nativity
Greece, Naxos
4th or 5th century
Athens, Byzantine and Christian Museum

Fig. 5 (above)
Nativity Scene (Virgin and Child later)
Arnolfo di Cambio
Italy, Rome, Santa Maria Maggiore
1291

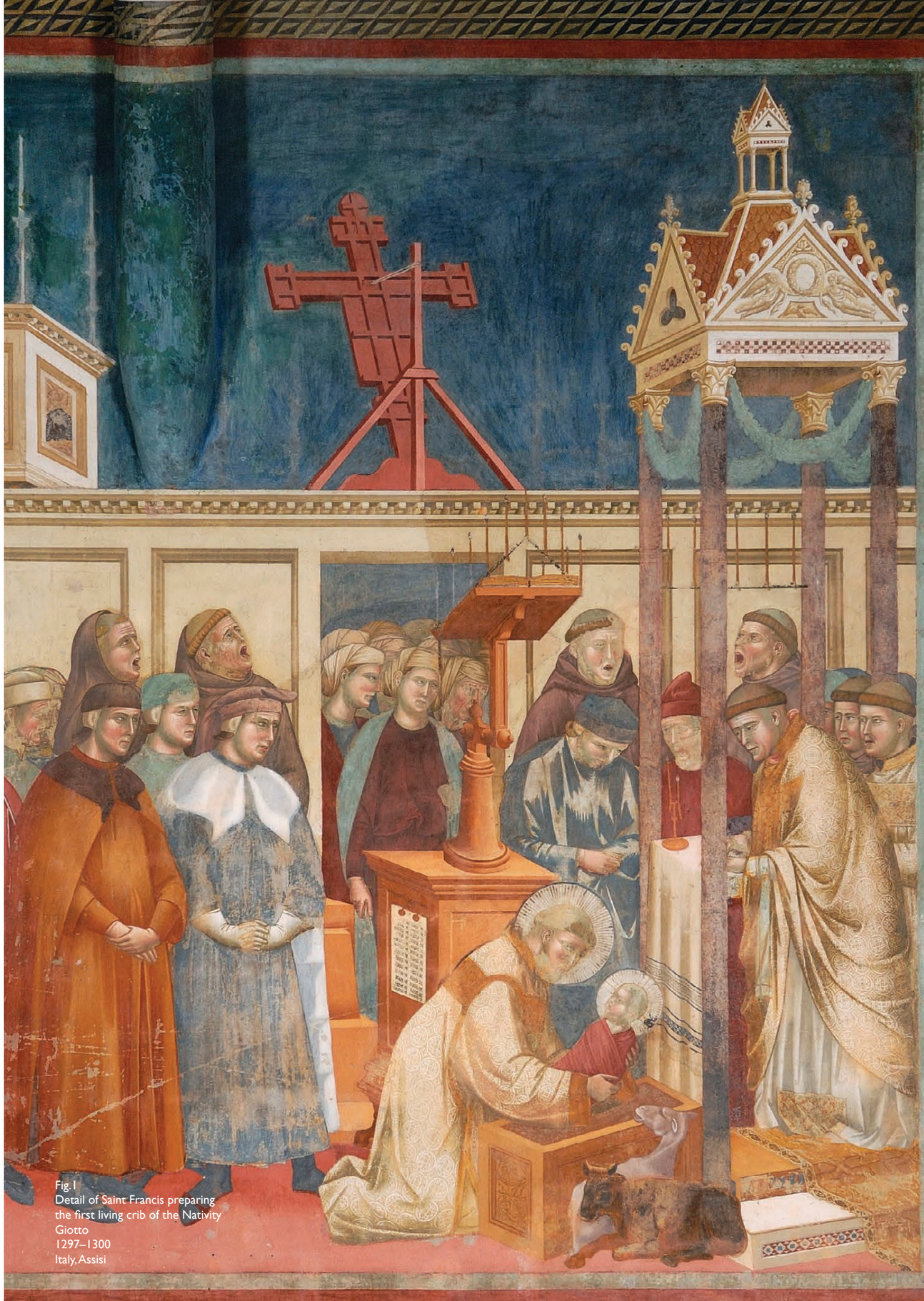


Fig. 1
Detail of Saint Francis preparing the first living crib of the Nativity
Giotto
1297–1300
Italy, Assisi

century, the crib is a distinct object that can be defined as an ensemble where the 'events associated with the Nativity are represented in literal, three-dimensional miniature'.[1] Crib figures from the 13th century are very rare but the two earliest surviving examples are Arnolfo di Cambio's ensemble in Santa Maria Maggiore in Rome, dated to 1291, and a wooden group of sculptures in Santo Stefano in Bologna, dated to the second half of the 13th century (figs.5–7). The patron of Arnolfo's statues was Pope Nicholas IV (1288–92), who was the first Franciscan to become pope. As this group was made less than seven decades after Saint Francis' living crib, the commission almost certainly bears a connection to that event.[2] Santa Maria Maggiore was also significant to the commission, holding the relic of the Holy Crib and shards from the Holy Manger. In contrast to our sculptures, Arnolfo's ox and donkey are carved from one block of marble but separate from the rest of the figures (fig.6). They are unfinished on the back because they must have originally been fitted into a niche, similar to the solution that was created by Domenico Fontana in the late 16th century when their original setting was reconfigured to create the current Capella Sistina in the crypt. The Santo Stefano group from Bologna is dated similarly to Arnolfo's sculptures, testifying to the fact that such ensembles were starting to become more prevalent in Italy in the decades after Saint Francis' living crib in Greccio. This group, however, is missing the animals that must have once accompanied the figures.

Stylistically, our examples can also be compared to other ensembles such as the fragments from the Piacenta Nativity group, now in the Liebieghaus Museum in Frankfurt, the figures on the façade on Gemona Cathedral as well as the reliefs on the Siena Cathedral Pulpit by Nicola Pisano (figs.8–9). Dated to the late 13th century, these examples illustrate the stylistic variety of carving in Italy at this time. We can also turn to painting, where the Nativity appears much more abundantly. Just as those early Christian sarcophagi, Giotto's fresco of Saint Francis setting up the first living crib shows the donkey and ox as the only two figures, apart from the Christ Child, that are necessary to recreate the scene (fig.1). The close parallels between this fresco and our figures also appear in the details – the donkey twists its neck sharpy to look at the crib, while the ox rests peacefully and looks forward.

The late 13th century examples discussed in this entry highlight the enthusiasm around art that was more performative. They relate not only to the actions of Saint Francis and his living crib but also to a more general trend, which saw mystery plays gain momentum at this particular time.

1 Rudolf Berliner, 'The Origins of the Creche,' *Gazette des beaux-arts: courrier européen de l'art et de la Curiosité* **30** (1946), p.249.

2 Sante Guido, *Il Presepe di Arnolfo di Cambio della Basilica di Santa Maria Maggiore*, Rome, 2005, p.6.

Fig. 6 (left)
Ox and Donkey from Arnolfo di Cambio's Nativity Scene

Fig. 7 (above)
Wooden Nativity
Italy, Bologna, Santo Stefano
c.1250–1300 (polychrome c.1370)

Fig. 7 (below)
Limestone relief fragments of Saint Joseph and two shepherds from the Nativity
Italy, Piacenta
1250–75
Frankfurt, Liebieghaus Museum
Inv. no.283 and 140

**Related literature**


Berliner, Rudolf. 'The Origins of the Creche', in *Gazette des beaux-arts: courrier européen de l'art et de la Curiosité* 30 (1946): pp.249–78.

Guido, Sante. *Il Presepe di Arnolfo di Cambio della Basilica di Santa Maria Maggiore*. Rome, 2005.

Roller, Stefan. *Heilige Nacht: die Weihnachtsgeschichte und ihre Bilderwelt*. Frankfurt am Main, 2016.

Saint Bonaventure. *The Life of Saint Francis of Assisi*. Transl. E. Gurney Salter. New York, 1904.

**The white hares of the Alps are thought to eat snow in the winter, for they turn colour when the snow melts. Some say that the hare is as many years old as it has folds in its bowels, and that it is a hermaphrodite that can reproduce without a mate.**

Pliny the Elder, 1st century CE

12

# PAINTED CERAMIC BOWL WITH HARE DESIGN

Transoxiana, Tashkent

c.900–1000

*17 cm (diameter)*

*glazed earthenware*

**Provenance**
*Private collection, United Kingdom*

This ceramic bowl is slip-painted with a large rose-coloured hare in the centre. Although the design is abstract, it appears that the hare is skipping through a field. The body of the hare is decorated by stippling. He is surrounded by a brown border with three stylised palmettes as well as leaves in transparent green glaze.

The technique of this slip-painted earthenware bowl with a central, coloured and stylised animal motif is characteristic of pottery from the 10th and 11th centuries from Khorasan and Transoxiana. There is a tremendous degree of variety in the painted designs for these bowls, but with regards to the present piece, the theme seems to derive from Fatimid lusterware (fig. 1). Produced in Egypt and Syria and imitating gold in its monochrome yellowish glaze with a lustre finish, the running hare was a favourite motif over a long period, extending into Ayyubid and Mamluk times.

In the present piece, this familiar subject and its stylised execution remain, yet without the monochrome lustre treatment because the technique was not practised in Eastern Persia–at this time. Instead, there is a sparing use of semi-naturalistic colour over a white ground. This results in a rather livelier interpretation of the theme.

Fig. 1
Bowl depicting a running hare
Fatimid Egypt
c.1000–25
New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art
Inv. no.64.261

13

# A SET OF NINE TILES WITH FLEURS-DE-LYS, A STAG AND RABBITS WITHIN PIERCED ROUNDELS WITH FLAMING PROJECTIONS

Flanders or Northern France

c.1450-1500

*36.5cm x 36.5cm, each tile 12cm x 12cm*

*lead-glazed earthenware; surface worn in places*

**Provenance**
*Private collection, United Kingdom*

A group of nine multi-coloured medieval floor tiles inlaid with rabbits and a stag - all set within a pierced roundel with flaming projections. Four of the tiles are decorated with fleur-de-lis, four with rabbits and one with a stag. Animals of this type were a common theme in medieval iconography. Stags and rabbits were especially associated with hunting and aristocracy and so we can imagine that these tiles may have originally decorated the floor of a private hunting lodge or a castle.

For much of the Middle Ages, decorated pavement floors were extremely popular in both secular and religious buildings. In France, inlaid tiles of this type were favoured from the thirteenth to the sixteenth centuries. While decorated floors of this type were restricted to royal or religious building in earlier centuries, by the later Middle Ages even wealthy merchants and aristocratic houses featured such extravagant flooring. Our tiles are especially analogous to a floor tile that survives in the British Museum – both its colouring and the pierced roundel that frames the flower within are closely comparable (fig.1).

Fig.1
Floor tile inlaid with flower set
France
Late 15th century
British Museum 1924.0414.51.
CR

**The peacock is conscious of its own beauty and takes pride in it. When praised, it spreads out its feathers to face the sun, so they shine more brilliantly, and curves its tail to throw shadows on its body, because the colours there shine more brightly in the dark. It is pleased when others look at the eyes on its tail feathers; it pulls them all together in a cluster for this purpose. When the peacock's tail feathers drop out during the fall moult, it is ashamed and hides itself until new feathers grow in. Peacocks live for 25 years, but their colours begin to fade at the age of three.**

Pliny the Elder, 1st century CE

14

# RELIEF WITH PEACOCKS

Italy, Veneto

c.1200

*94 x 28.5 x 9 cm*

*limestone. Surface worn, a fracture (repaired), the heads of two birds and parts of the frame are lost.*

**Provenance**
*Private collection, United Kingdom*

Oblong panel carved in low relief with three pairs of peacocks in framed compartments. The upper section shows one bird mounting another and pecking its head, the middle one depicts addorsed birds twisting their necks to face one another (their heads now lost) and the bottom section shows affronted birds pecking at a stylised husk. The border surrounding the panel framing the bird pairs is carved with a clopping billet-moulding.

*Formelle*, or lancet-shaped reliefs, were often designed as part of the exterior embellishment of churches, palazzos and mercantile buildings in and around Venice. This genre of sculpture forms part of the *patere* family and although it is thought to have been invented in Venice in the 12th century, its design and iconography uses Eastern prototypes. The shape of this panel is quite unusual for reliefs of this kind, the majority are circular and most other vertical-format reliefs have arched tops. Such carved panels, in stone and marble, can be found in Venice, Torcello and the surrounding area, from the 12th century onwards. There are many examples still *in situ* and a great number in museum collections. The colonnaded façade of the Fondaco dei Turchi in Venice, dated to 1225, is a notable example (fig.1). Another example is the colonnade of the Ca' da Mosto in Venice, showing a row of six arched panels alternating with roundels (fig.2). Once panels such as these are removed from their original provenance, without documentation, they are difficult to place exactly as they were commonly used and reused over generations of building history from Venice eastwards.

Fig.1
John Ruskin
Watercolour showing the façade of Fondaco dei Turchi in Venice
1845
Private collection

The iconography of this sculpture derives from images of the Tree of Life, which was a central theme in early and middle Byzantine art. A related relief can be found in the Museum für Byzantinische Kunst in Berlin (fig.3), which shows the Tree of Life as a fruit bearing organism, feeding a variety of animals. In contrast, our relief is much more stylised and is in line with the more ornamental *patere* and *formelle* that survive from this period, such as an example from the Walters Art Gallery in Baltimore (fig.4).

**Related literature**

Arslan, Edoardo. *Gothic Architecture in Venice*. London, 1972.
Buchwald, Hans. 'The Carved Stone Ornament of the High Middle Ages in San Marco, Venice', in *Jahrbuch*

*der Oesterreichischen Byzantinischen Gesellschaft* 11/12 (1962–63), pp.169–210.
Cahn, Walter and Linda Seidel. *Romanesque Sculpture in American Collections*. Vol.1, *New England Museums*. New York, 1979, p.27.
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Effenberger, Arne and Hans-Georg Severin. *Das Museum für Spätantike und Byzantinische Kunst in Berlin*. Mainz, 1992.
Franz, Heinrich Gerhard. 'Das Medaillon als architektonisches Schmuckmotiv in der italienischen Romanik', in *Forschungen und Fortschritte* 31 (1957), pp.118–25.
Rizzi, Alberto. *Scultura esterna a Venezia: corpus delle sculture erratiche all'aperto di Venezia e della sua laguna*. Venice, 1987.

Fig.2 (above)
Detail from Ca' da Mosto
Italy, Venice

Fig.3 (left)
Formella with animals
Italy, Venice
c.1100–50
Berlin, Museum für Byzantinische Kunst

Fig.4 (below)
Decorative roundel
Italy, Veneto
c.1200
Baltimore, Walters Art Gallery

15

# A RELIEF WITH A CHI RO SUPPORTED BY TWO PEACOCKS

Byzantine, Syria or the Holy Land

c.500-50

*145 x 39 x 15 cm (38.5 x 69 cm / 39 x 76 cm)*

*grey-black basalt in two sections*

**Provenance**
*Asfar Brothers, Hotel St. George, Beirut;*
*Private collection, acquired from the above 7th April 1972;*
*Phillips Auctions, Zurich;*
*Feine Möbel, November 2000;*
*Private Collection, Germany*

This schematically carved low relief shows two peacocks flanking the Chi Ro symbol, which is formed by superimposing the first two letters of the Greek word ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ(Christos). The bodies of the peacocks are elongated in order to fill the entire space of this relief. They are carved only as simple outlines with few further details which describe their eyes and wings. They stand on a long undulating scroll, which curls on either end of the relief. The entire group is framed on three sides with a simple indented line. The size and shape of this relief suggests that it was probably a lintel, originally decorating the top of a door to a church.

The Chi Ro sign is among the earliest forms of Christian symbolism. The most established example of this subject can be found on the so-called 'Peacock Sarcophagus' in the Basilica of San Vitale in Ravenna (fig. 1). On this massive basalt lintel, the same motif is carved with boldness and vitality, in its Latinized form with a florid tail extending from the Ro motif. Three Basalt reliefs thought to have come from the same complex are in the Menil Foundation in Houston and another is on long term loan to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York (inv. 1, 2008.65.1). Other related reliefs are preserved in the Walters Art Museum in Baltimore (inv. 26.5) and in situ at sites in Syria, including Qasr Ibn Wardan (fig. 2).

Fig. 1 (above)
The so-called Peacock Sarcophagus
c. 493-540
Ravenna, Basilica of San Vitale

Fig. 2 (left)
Lintel with Christian relief-carving at Qasr Ibn Wardan, Syria

16


# FOLDED ALMANAC BASED ON THE KALENDARIUM OF JOHN SOMER

England, Oxford?

1391-96

*27 x 12 cm (unfolded)*

**Materials and Condition**
Vellum; 6 leaves, each approx. 270 x 120 mm when unfolded; folded once horizontally and twice vertically to produce six panels, each approx. 135 x 40 mm; ruled in brown ink guided by prickings still extant in the margins; written in a gothic bookhand in brown and red inks; the leaves stitched together at foot and attached to alum-tawed leather thong, retaining but detached from original silk-lined leather covering (probably deerskin) edged with decorative stitching. Lacking the upper half of fol.1 (containing January–February), all of the original fifth leaf (containing October–December); the upper half of fol.5 (containing cycles 2 and 3 of the lunar eclipses), and the upper half and lower left third of fol.6 (containing the introduction to the Zodiac Man and the short phrases referring to Aries–Capricorn; overall somewhat worn, and with a few small holes, mainly along the folds; one (blank) outer face very dirty; lacking the left extremity of the Zodiac Man; but generally in fair condition and the text almost entirely legible.

**Description**
This manuscript is not foliated, and the nature of the folded sheets makes it very difficult to refer to its constituent parts. Unlike a leaf in a codex or a document in which the front and back or recto and verso are plainly distinguished, each folded sheet has six sections on the front, and six on the back, and a front/recto side of a folded sheet becomes the back/verso side when it is unfolded. It is not even clear how the order of the sheets was conceived by its maker: compared with codex version, the sequence should be (1) Calendar of the year, (2) Zodiac Man, (3) Tables of Eclipses; but (2) and (3) are here reversed, and in order to read the calendar month in correct sequence one must start at the 'back' of the almanac and work towards the 'front'.[1]

1. Sheets 1–3: Calendar: the central panel has a fairly standard calendar of saints' days, with columns to the left recording the Dominical Numbers, Golden Numbers, Dominical Letters, and the date according to the Julian calendar. The left and right panels each have a column of hours and minutes, and four groups of conjunctions (headed '1 [or 2/3/4] Ciclus coniunctio') of three columns (for cycles, hours and minutes, respectively). At the far left and right of the left panel are columns for the length of the night and, headed 'Ortus solis', the ecliptic (the angle of the sun at sunrise in relation to the zodiac). To the left and right of the right panel are columns giving the 'Hore planetarium', giving in degrees and minutes the length of a planetary hour on that date and, headed 'Medie diei', giving the length of time from midday to sunset, with hours (in brown ink) and minutes (in red) usually getting one or two minutes earlier each day (23, 21, 19, 17 etc.) towards the equinox, and then usually rising by one or two minutes per day (37, 38, 40, 42 etc.) after it.

2. Sheets 4–5: 'Eclipsis solis et lune': tables of solar and lunar eclipses for the meridian of Oxford, with a total of 64 diagrams, each series with dates from 1384 (lunar) or 1387 (solar) to 1462. Each diagram has a caption giving the year, date of the eclipse, the dominical letter for that date, and the time of the beginning of the eclipse. Around each diagram are four sets of numerals alternately red or brown (which are explained in a note between the end of the solar and beginning of the lunar diagrams), recording (i) the portion of the sun or moon

1 The texts are edited and translated into English by Mooney, 1998.

minutes (60ths of a point) and seconds (60ths of a minute); (ii) the time from the beginning of the eclipse to its fullest eclipse; (iii) half the duration of the eclipse itself; and (iv) the total duration of the eclipse. Below are the Dominical Letter and Golden Number.

3. Sheet 6: A large illuminated miniature of the Zodiac Man: each zodiac symbol is identified by a caption in red, and to the sides (most of the left side missing) the names of the symbols are repeated, with cautions about performing medical procedures when the moon is in that sign (e.g. 'Taurus: beware of cutting in the neck or in the throat, and do not cut into the vein in these places'). On the back of this sheet is the end of the canons (i.e. explanations) of the tables for the planets, and how to know the sign of the moon and the angle of the moon, ending 'sed aquea per lineam croceam subtractam a terreis discernuntur'.[1]

**Illumination**
The main illumination is a miniature of the so-called Zodiac Man, a full-length male figure, with arms spread and feet apart, with various parts of the body, from the head to the feet, associated with the symbols of the zodiac, in order:

Head: Aries, the ram
Neck: Taurus, the bull
Shoulders and arms: Gemini, the twins
Chest: Cancer, the crab
Sides: Leo, the lion
Belly: Virgo, the Virgin (here represented by a bust-length Virgin and Child)
Buttocks: Libra, the scales
Genitals: Scorpio, the scorpion
Thighs: Sagittarius, the centaur-archer
Knees: Capricorn, the horned goat
Lower legs: Aquarius, the water-carrier
Feet: Pisces, the fish

The calendar with 7 illuminated 'KL' monograms in gold on a red and blue ground; the tables of eclipses with diagrams in blue and gold (solar) or pink and gold (lunar).

The style of the Zodiac Man is closely comparable to the male figures in the large Crucifixion miniature of a missal at the Vatican Library (fig.1). The head and face of Saint John have several points of similarity, in the ways in which the features are delineated, and the hair composed of irregular S- and J-shaped curls. While facially different, the semi-naked figure of Christ also has features in common with the anatomy of the Zodiac man, such as the way in which the sinews and muscles on the insides of the arms are drawn. The Vatican missal has been dated c.1385–95, and other internal evidence suggests that the present manuscript may date from about the end of this range.[2]

**Date and place of origin**
The fact that the table of eclipses of the moon in the present almanac covers the period 1384–1462 suggests it derives from the earliest tables (which were composed in 1380): all other recorded manuscripts start from 1387 (the start of a Metonic cycle) except for two: one is thought to be the earliest surviving exemplar (London, British Library, Add. MS 10628), the other was acquired less than a decade ago by the Wellcome Library in London (sold at Christie's, 20th November 2013, lot 52).

Although not made obligatory in England until 1415, the feasts of Saints David and Chad (1 and 2 March), which are present in the calendar, were introduced in 1391; this provides a terminus post quem. Many comparable almanacs produced in the 15th century omit the eclipses that were in the past: thus, for example, in the folding John Somer almanac (London, British Library, Sloane MS 2250), the cycles for the solar tables start at 1406 (i.e. the first eclipse of the second cycle, the last eclipse of the first cycle having taken place in 1396) and the lunar tables start in 1399 (i.e. omitting the first 11 eclipses of the first cycle), suggesting that this copy was made between 1396 and 1399. The fact that the present manuscript does not omit any eclipses in this way may indicate that it was written within the first Metonic cycle (i.e. 1387–1405 for the moon, and 1387–1396 for the sun). While not conclusive, this suggests a date for the present manuscript of no later than 1396.
The fact that the astronomical data are based on the meridian of Oxford; that the text was composed in Oxford and disseminated from there; and that Oxford was one of few centres of astronomical study, suggest that the present manuscript may have been made there.

**Commentary**
'The European medieval Kalendarium, which modern readers would call an almanac, combined Greco-Roman attempts to record the days of the year with Greco-Arabic mathematics, astronomy, and medicine.'[3]

Almanacs are represented in conventional codex format in many manuscripts but also, much more rarely, in the folded form found here: they have been evocatively termed 'bat-books' in the most recent study, 'because when in rest they hang upside-down and all folded up,

1 Mooney, pp.142–43.
2 Scott, (1996), cat. no.3.
3 Eisner, 1980, p.5.

but when action is required they lift up their heads and spread their wings wide'.[1] Although upside-down when hanging from a belt, when the wearer lifts and opens it, the text is the right way up. Gumbert knew of only 30 English examples, of which 15 date from 1463 or later, and only three are 14th century. He knew of only one still in a private collection (datable to 1406–1424, and sold by Quaritch in 1989).

In the introduction to his 1392 Treatise on the Astrolabe, Geoffrey Chaucer states that the third part (of five; only the first two parts survive) would contain astronomical tables taken from 'the kalenders of the reverent clerkes, Frere J. Somer and Frere N. Lenn', i.e. the Friars John Somer and Nicholas of Lynn. Somer belonged to the Franciscan house in Oxford, and composed his Kalendarium in 1380 at the request of the Provincial Minister of the Franciscans in England, for Joan, Princess of Kent, King Richard II's mother. It consists of a calendar of the whole year, with astronomical data for each day, and a selection of church feast-days marked. The calendar itself is accompanied by other related medical and astronomical material for four Metonic cycles (i.e. the periods of 19 years that it took before the phases of the moon repeat themselves), from 1387 to 1462.

Somer probably came from Somerset (as his name suggests) and certainly returned there late in his life: he is recorded at the Franciscan house at Bridgewater, and a few copies of his Kalendarium have medieval provenance in west and south-west England: one belonged to the Benedictine priory of Dunster, in Somerset; one belonged to Sherborne Abbey, in Dorset; and one mentions the village of 'beddmyster with-in a mylle of brystowe' (Bedminster, which is now a district within Bristol). He presumably learned astronomy while at Oxford, a major centre for the study of the subject, continuing the work of several important 14th-century astronomers, mostly affiliated with Merton College, including Richard of Wallingford, Simon Tunstede, Simon Bredon, John Ashenden, and William Rede.

The Carmelite friar Nicholas of Lynn, mentioned above, an Oxford contemporary of Somer, composed his own Kalendarium six years later, along similar lines. When codex manuscripts are complete, their authorship is usually evident from their prefatory text, but the prologue is usually omitted when it is adapted for the folded almanac format. As a rough rule of thumb, Nicholas's Kalendarium contains more medical information but less astronomical than Somer's, but their works have often been confused from the Middle Ages onwards, and indeed some manuscripts conflate them. To confound easy definitions even further, the Kalendarium is essentially a collection of tables of data which, unlike a literary text, could be presented in different sequences, with omissions or additions. Most copies of the work are in codex form and occupy approximately 10 to 20 leaves, while copies in folded pocket format usually have fewer than ten leaves, with some sections of the text omitted, and with significant areas left blank. The present manuscript, for example, omits or lacks the tables to know the sign of the moon and to know the angle of the moon.

Medieval provenance of surviving copies of the text is sparse, and does not allow us to draw any simple generalisations about their intended or actual use. They range from luxury illuminated codices to simple folded sheets. It must be remembered that the Kalendarium of Somer and that of Nicholas of Lynn were dedicated to noble laypeople: Joan, Princess of Kent and John of Gaunt respectively. Yet it is hard to imagine who – other than astronomers – would have needed to know about eclipses, for example, and yet the eclipse tables are a major part of most copies. Conversely, the medical information is extremely brief – it is the sort of thing that could easily be learned by heart by a practising physician – and it certainly does not depend upon the plethora of astronomical/astrological data that accompanies it. The information about church feast-days was easily available elsewhere, where it was needed: in liturgical books. It therefore seems likely that the text had relatively little practical purpose except as an academic compendium of 'potentially useful knowledge'. It can perhaps be compared to a modern printed diary that includes, in addition to a calendar for the year, pages of data such as the telephone dialling codes of the major countries of the world, lists of the holidays observed by members of various religions and conversion charts between UK, US, and European dress- and shoe-sizes. One could also perhaps draw an analogy with modern lawyers who line their offices with matching bound volumes of case-law, even though they expect to very rarely consult any particular volume. Perhaps akin to the white coat and stethoscope of a 20th-century doctor, the mathematician or astronomer of c.1400 may have felt it lent him an aura of authority to display a recognisable indicator of his specialist knowledge.

As Somer's Kalendarium could be owned either in codex format or in an abbreviated form in folded almanac format, it must be assumed that owners of the

folded almanac format generally valued portability over comprehensiveness. Physicians making house-calls and friars seem to fit this profile best.

**Provenance**

Perhaps made for the use of a friar: by the end of the 13th century, and certainly by the end of the 14th, the liturgical Use of Sarum was standard throughout England (except for the small diocese of Hereford in the far west and the larger diocese of York in the north), but the present calendar lacks many of the standard Sarum feasts, and the feasts that are present have no liturgical gradings. It seems to have been intended for use by someone with a very specific interest in the mendicant orders, to judge by the non-Sarum Dominican and Franciscan saints, most of which are treated as important feasts (in red) in the calendar: Thomas Aquinas (7 March), the translation of Saint Francis (25 May), Anthony of Padua (13 June), Dominic 'fratrum minorum' (5 August), Clare (12 August), Louis of Toulouse (19 August) and the

1 Gumbert, 2016.

Stigmata of St Francis (16 September). There is of course a natural reason for a mendicant friar to want an easily portable booklet rather than a heavier and larger book: 'They reflect the needs of the mendicant orders to travel lightly and with due respect to their vows of poverty, as well as the high educational standards achieved by the later medieval friars.[1] Somer, who devised the almanac, was himself a Franciscan, so an alternate interpretation is that the present copy is closely based on his calendar, whose introduction (missing from the present manuscript, but known from other copies) begins 'To the honour of God and the glorious Virgin and also of the holy confessors Francis, Anthony [of Padua], and bishop Louis [of Toulouse]'. Mooney lists the variant feasts in the calendars known to her, from which we can see that only two other surviving manuscripts of Somer have a similarly mendicant emphasis (Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Digby 5, and London, British Library, Harley MS 321).[2]

Major-General Sir Richard Howard-Vyse (1883–1962), owned by 1960 when he deposited it temporarily at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London for inspection; accompanied by a letter and description by J.P. Harthan, Assistant Keeper of the Library, on behalf of the Museum; by descent to:

Richard Edward Howard-Vyse (1941–2009), and thence to his widow.

**Related literature**


*The Kalendarium of Nicholas of Lynne*. Ed. Sigmund Eisner. Athens, 1980.

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1 Carey, 2003, p.485.
2 Mooney, 1998, pp.167–79.

**Boars are very rough when mating; they fight with each other after rubbing against trees to harden their skin.**

Pliny the Elder, 1st century CE

17

# CARVING OF BOARS AND FOLIAGE FROM A FONT

Italy, Lombardy

c.1110-30

*15.5 x 41 x 41.5 cm*

*marble, losses to the top and bottom of the sculpture; general surface wear, which is typical for sculpture of this age.*

**Provenance**
*Altounian Collection, Mâcon (1905-1947)*

A corner relief decorated with two ferocious beasts in profile, best identified as wild boar. Bearing their sharp teeth, the two boars face each other beneath a stylised tree as they open their mouths to bite into fruit that grows from the three's trunk. Their manes are represented by several long incisions, which distinctively terminate in circlets at the ends. Their eyes are encircled by two incision lines, which create a thick ridge around the pupils. The shape of this fragment, which is proportionately much deeper than it is high, suggests that this piece might come from a shallow font. However, it could also come from a large capital or a liturgical furnishing.

The style of the relief with the characteristic incisions along the animals' bodies, the way that their open mouths are carved and their distinctive manes can be compared

to early 12th century sculpture from Lombardy, especially Sant'Ambrogio in Milan (figs. 1–3). While the sculpture on the capitals in the courtyard of Sant'Ambrogio, which are dated to the first decade of the 12th century, is much flatter, the sculpture decorating the celebrated pulpit, which is believed to be carved a decade or two after the capitals, is carved with more three-dimensionality and much closer in style to our sculpture.

Fig.1 (above)
Reliefs from the courtyard of Sant'Ambrogio
Italy, Milan, Sant'Ambrogio
c.1100

Fig.2 (below)
Capital from the courtyard of Sant'Ambrogio
Italy, Milan, Sant'Ambrogio
c.1100

Fig. 3
Frieze from the pulpit
Italy, Milan, Sant'Ambrogio
c.1120-30

18

# TILE WITH A HOG

Northern France

c.1300

*13.5cm x 13.8 cm*

*lead-glazed earthenware*

This floor tile is decorated by a two-colour design with a running hog. The hog is depicted with a shaggy back and although the design is simple, the animal's body is detailed with lines that describe muscle tension of its front legs as it runs. The hog takes up the entire space of this tile without any framing devices.

While tiles of this type were commonly found in a variety of medieval buildings, this hog may have been associated with more leisurely aristocratic activities, such as hunting. Thus, it would not be outlandish to assume that it decorated a floor in a hunting lodge or palace.

**Related Literature**

Norton, E. C. 'De l'Aquitaine a l'Artois: Carreaux Stannifère et Carreaux plombifères des XIIIe et XIVe siècles en France.' In Rosen and Crépin-Lebrond, eds. *Images du pouvoir, pavements de faïence en France du XIIIe au XVIIe siecles*. Lyon, 2000.

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19

# BOOK OF HOURS
## Illuminated by the Master of the David Scenes in the Grimani Breviary

Southern Netherlands
(probably Ghent)

c.1485–90

*125 x 86 mm ii + 291 + ii leaves, vellum plus some paper interleaves, illuminated with two full-page miniatures and 24 smaller calendar miniatures with three-sided borders, numerous large initials with full borders; lacking two text leaves after ff.26 and 46, tear to f.6 at gutter, some retouching to the miniature on f.2 (the lady's costume has been altered, a curtain in the doorway is added, and the townscape retouched) and the armorials of both miniatures overpainted (see provenance); bound in 19th-century red velvet over wood boards with chased white metal clasp and corner pieces and attachments with two rings for hanging from a belt.*

The miniatures in this manuscript are by one of the finest Flemish illuminators of the time – the Master of the David Scenes in the Grimani Breviary. The composition of the two prefatory miniatures was used as a model for completely new miniatures intended for Philip and Joanna that were added to a celebrated Book of Hours otherwise illuminated by the Master of the Dresden Prayerbook (London, British Library, Add. MS 17280).

The calendar miniatures are delightful evocations of seasonal activities in detailed landscapes or interiors, the costume indicating a date in the later 1480s or early 1490s. They largely derive from patterns originated or popularised by the Master of the Dresden Prayerbook but seem closer to the work of the Master of the David Scenes in the Grimani Breviary in the figure types, articulation of landscape and interest in reflections in water. Miniature patterns were widely circulated, yet the manner of painting as well as the compositions have many counterparts with the Prayerbook calendar illuminated by the David Scenes Master c.1515 (Copenhagen, Kongelige Bibliotek, GKS MS 1605 40).

The loggia settings of the owner portraits can be parallelled in the Master's half-length portraits of the owner of the Ince Blundell Hours of c.1500 (Christie's, 23 November 1998, lot 11).

The Master of the David Scenes, named from his contribution to the great Grimani Breviary of the later 1510s, has been localised to Ghent from the 1490s to c.1520. His earliest datable work is the Book of Hours actually made for Joanna for, or during, her marriage to Philip the Fair, from 1496 to 1506 (BL Add. MS 18852); other small Books of Hours have also been dated to the 1490s. If the present lot is to be associated with him, his stylistic development will need to be reconsidered.

**Text**
Calendar ff.3–14; prayers ff.15–46v; Hours of the Cross ff.47–54v; Hours of the Holy Spirit ff.55–60v; ruled blank f.61; Mass of the Virgin ff.62–69; Gospel extracts ff.70–76v; Obsecro te and O intemerata in masculine f.77–85; Hours of the Virgin, Use of Rome ff.86–171; Penitential Psalms and Litany ff.172–99v; Office of the Dead, Use of Rome ff.200–53v; memorials ff.254–90v; ruled blank f.291.[1]

**Provenance**
This manuscript was apparently made for a soldier named Pieter from Lier, near Antwerp. It was written and illuminated in Flanders, probably Ghent, for the man depicted opposite his wife in the full-page miniatures. His first name began with the letter 'P', as revealed by the text of a prayer in which the supplicant refers to himself as 'famulo tuo P.' ('your servant, P.', f.196v), and by his initial 'P' which appears in many borders (ff. 38v, 67v, 70, 72, 74, 76, 252v, etc.) where it is linked by a love knot to the letter 'J', revealing the initial of his wife's first name, which might therefore have been something like Jeanne. He is dressed in armour and was therefore a soldier, and next to him is a gold statue of Saint Peter, from which we can guess that his initial 'P' stands for Pieter. A very strong clue to his home town is provided by the last of the memorials to saints whose antiphon and versicle address Saint Gummar as a patron ('O patrone care bone [. . .] O patronum reverendum [. . .] Ora pro nobis pie pater sancte patrone Gummare'; ff.281–282v): this indicates the town of Lier (about 15 kilometres south-east of Antwerp, and 65 kilometres east of Ghent), which had Saint Gummar as its patron saint. The original owner's arms have been over-painted, but from the intact mantling of the helm (the acanthus- or seaweed-like swags either side of the helmet) the we know that the original colours were *azure* and *gules* (blue and red); the crest, in the form of a ship's mast and sail, is very unusual and may allow him to be fully identified in due course.

The heraldry of the patron was altered to *or* 3 bendlets *azure*, on a chief *gules* a barulet *argent*, and a crown was added to the helm; similarly, new heraldry was added for his wife: bendy sinister of 10, *gules* and *or*. It seems that the intention was ingeniously to suggest that the original owners with initials 'P' and 'J' were Philip the Fair, Duke of Burgundy, and his wife Joanna of Aragon and Castile who, coincidentally, were married at Lier (see above) in 1496. The altered miniatures were then copied into the so-called Hours of Philip the Fair (London, British Library, Add. MS 17280), which must have been done before 19 July 1842, when the latter manuscript was auctioned. It also follows that it is likely that the present manuscript and the British Library in London had the same owner before 1842, in which case the present manuscript belonged to Colonel Theubert, of Porrentruy, Switzerland.

Bernard Quaritch (1819–99), whom *The Times* of London described as 'the greatest bookseller who ever lived. His ideals were so high, his eye so keen, his transactions were so colossal, his courage so dauntless, that he stands out among men', sold the manuscript in July 1895 to Henry Yates Thompson (1838–1928), arguably the 20th century's greatest collector of illuminated manuscripts. His anonymous sale ('The Property of a Gentleman') occurred at Sotheby's, 3 May 1904, lot 32, with full-page plate; bought by Leighton.

Michael Tomkinson (1841–1921), of Franche Hall, Kidderminster included his bookplate in the book, announcing himself as the book's next owner; his sale occurred at Sotheby's, 3 July 1922 and four following days, lot 1518, with full-page plate.

The next owner of the manuscript was Thomas Evelyn Scott-Ellis (1880–1946), 8th Baron Howard de Walden, peer, landowner (for some years he was known as 'Britain's wealthiest bachelor', partly due to the fact that he owned a large tract of north London), writer, patron of the arts, sportsman and Olympic powerboat racer. He also had a particular interest in Medieval armour, which may explain why he bought the present manuscript with his large engraved armorial bookplate depicting a mounted knight outside a castle with moat and drawbridge. He owned the manuscript in for several decades before it was inherited by his daughter, the Hon. Mrs James Lindsay (1912–2003), and sold as her property at Sotheby's, 11 July 1966, lot 237; it was bought by T.A. Measures. The book was then owned by Nico Israel (1919–2002), Amsterdam bookseller and it was part of his private collection from 1971 until dispersed recently by his heirs.

**Related Literature**
James, M.R. *A Descriptive Catalogue of Fifty Manuscripts from the Collection of Henry Yates Thompson*. London, 1898, no 21.
Backhouse, J. 'The so-called hours of Philip the Fair: An introductory note on British Library Additional ms 17280', *Wiener Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte* 46/47 (1993–94): pp.45–55, at 50–51, fig.8.
Brinkmann, Bodo. *Die Flämische Buchmalerei am ende des Burgunderreiches: der Meister des Dresdener Gebetbuchs und die Miniaturisten seiner Zeit*. Turnhout, 1997, pp.278 and 299, figs. 256–57.

**by Peter Kidd**

1 A more detailed listing of textual contents is provided by James, 1898, pp.97–102.

**Deer are the enemies of snakes. When they feel weighed down with weakness, they draw snakes from their holes with the breath of their noses and eat them and are restored.**

The Aberdeen Bestiary, England, c.1200

20

# A DISH WITH A GAZELLE
## Workshop of Muhammad Ibn Muhammad Al-Nishapuri

Iran, Kashan

c.1220

*21.5 cm (diameter)*

*glazed earthenware*

**Provenance**
*Altounian Collection, Mâcon (1905-1947)*

This fritware dish is decorated with a gazelle and painted with golden lustre and cobalt blue over an opaque white glaze. The walking gazelle is shown grazing in a leafy field. It is framed by a wide band with a Persian inscription separated by four stylised petals. A further inscription around the exterior consists of a large band of Kufic letters.

In the Persian inscription around the gazelle, the writer asks: 'what have the gazelles to boast of while you have such eyes?' And the inscription around the rim states: 'whatever reaches your palate from this bowl, Oh Master of the World, adds to your life'. Poetry was a source of inspiration for Kashan potters, and by combining verses with illustrations alluding to these poems, bowls such as the present example represent both a written and visual idea. The gazelle particularly features on such poems and ceramic wares as a metaphor for elusive beauty.

The dish is attributed to the workshop of Muhammad Ibn Muhammad Al-Nishapuri and can be compared to a very similar example in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London (fig.1). They both share a similar decorative scheme that includes two bands containing inscriptions, one with a lustre inscription separated by four stylised petals and another near the rim with the inscription written in reserve against a lustre ground. The bowl in the Victoria and Albert Museum is signed Muhammad Ibn Muhammad Al-Nishapuri. Another similar bowl that possibly originated from the same workshop is in the David Collection, Copenhagen, inv. no.Isl. 64.[1]

**Inscriptions**
Around the rim:
hamvareh to-ra dawlat o 'izz afzun bad eqbal-e to bogzashteh ze hadd birun bad ta harcheh azin kaseh be-kam-e to rasad ey sadr-e jahan to-ra be-jan afz [un bad]
'May your wealth and glory be always increasing, May your prosperity surpass all limits, So that whatever reaches your palate from this bowl, O master of the world, adds to your life.'

dar 'alam-e eshq gham ze shadi kam nist shadan nabovad an-ke be-gham khorram nist har chand derazast biyaban-e bala didim be-pa-ye 'eshq gami ham nist
'In the realm of love, grief is no less than happiness, He who is not happy with grief, would not be happy, However long the desert of affliction is, We have seen that there is no step to put forth in love.'

Around the inner wall in lustre: ey gorosneh-ye mehr-e to siran-e jahan tarsan ze faraq-e to daliran-e jahan ba chashm-e to ahuan che darand be-dast ey zolf-e to pay-band-e shiran-e jahan

1 Kjeld von Folsach, *Art from the World of Islam in The David Collection* (David Collection, 2001), p.149, no.156.

‘O you, for whose love the sated ones of the world are hungry, Fearful of your separation are the fearless ones of the world, What have the gazelles to boast of, while you have such eyes, O you, whose ringlets tie the legs of the lions of the world.’

negah kardan andar hameh karha beh az dorr o gawhar be-kharvarha ‘izz [wa], iqbal
‘To consider all affairs, Is better than loads of pearls and gems. Glory [and] prosperity.’

Outer wall, in Kufic: repeats a few benedictory words such as al-baqa ‘Long-life’ and al-nasr ‘Victory’ (not every word can be deciphered).

**Related Literature**
Kjeld von Folsach, *Art from the World of Islam in The David Collection* (David Collection, 2001), p.149, no.156.

Fig.1
Bowl
Iran, Kashan
c.1220
London, Victoria and Albert Museum
Acc. no.C.162-1977

21

# THE MISSING VOLUME OF THE TAVISTOCK BREVIARY

England, probably Oxford

c.1310-20

*153 x 100 mm (folio); illuminated manuscript on parchment. 256 folios, some rubbing with loss to pigment and gold, text to opening leaves affected by damp, five marginal vellum repairs, inner margins strengthened on final versos or quires; bound in chestnut-brown morocco c.1913 by or under the supervision of Douglas Cockerell (1870–1945) (fol.i verso inscribed in pencil "Bound by D. Cockerell")*

This manuscript is the long-lost sister volume of the celebrated Tavistock Breviary in the Morgan Library, New York, which includes the feast of Saint Eustace in the calendar as a major feast and two other uncommon feasts, 'Ruthonis' (1 June) and the Cornish saint Petroc (4 June), who was also venerated in Devon. It has thus been determined that the manuscript was intended for use in the church of Saints Eustace and Rumon in Tavistock and various early obits that suggest 14th-century ownership in Devon support this. The stag of Saint Eustace (with a cross between its antlers) appears twice in the margins of the Morgan volume (fig.1) as well as in the lower margins of the present manuscript (fols.13v and 166r). The original Breviary was divided into two volumes by the 17th century, as the Morgan volume is described as bound in 17th-century English brown calf. This volume is complete.

The manuscript has ten historiated initials on gold ground, which include Christ in Majesty (fol.1r) blessing and holding an orb inscribed 'a', 'z', and 'Amen' (?); the margins here include naturalistic birds, a hybrid creature with a human head, a man blowing a horn (he has a duck attached to his belt and a pair of bird wings on his head, perhaps as a decoy), a man tuning a harp and a man playing a psaltery. On another folio, the Prophet Isaiah (fol.4r) is complemented in the margins with a large naturalistic bird, probably a jay, and a large hybrid creature with a human head. Others include: the Angel Gabriel holding a scroll inscribed 'Ave Ma[ria]' (fol.4v), the margin with a beardless saint with a walking stick,

and a lion; the Nativity (fol.37r) with the Virgin holding aloft the blessing Infant, accompanied by with Joseph, the ox and the ass; the Annunciation to the Shepherds (fol.37r) with an angel holding a scroll inscribed 'Gloria' addresses a shepherd with a curved crook, behind him in the margin a large Star of Bethlehem and another angel holding an object like a rope with the Star at one end and a tassel at the other (the lower margin includes three more shepherds playing hockey with a ball and their curved crooks, watched by their dog); Christ seated, holding a book (fol.57v), the margins with a naturalistic bird, perhaps a finch; the Three Kings (fol.68r), holding their gifts, receiving a warning from a large angel in the margin; the Resurrection of Christ (fol.155v), he steps out of a tomb, blessing and holding a cross-topped staff of victory; Pentecost (fol.185v), the Dove flies down to the Virgin, who sits between two disciples; Christ Enthroned (fol.191v), displaying his wounds. The initials are accompanied by full or partial borders of foliage and figures, naturalistic birds and other charming scenes. These scenes include a jousting monkey riding on the back of a dragon (fig. 1), a youth tuning a harp, a youth sitting cross-legged playing a psaltery, a man playing bagpipes, heads of kings and bishops, a jester with a bell hanging from the tip of his hat, a stag scratching himself, Moses (with horns) and other human-animal hybrids.

Fig.1 (above)
Tavistock Breviary, fol.16v
New York, Morgan Library
MS M.329

The lively drolleries inhabiting the borders that mark the major texts and the profusion of humorous figures and heads drawn in the margins of almost every page make this a delightfully appealing manuscript. Genre details, such as the huntsman with a duck tied around his waist and the shepherds playing hockey, are excellent examples of the sort that flourished in English manuscripts of the late 13th and early 14th century. The disparities of scale, variety in technique (full body colour alongside colour ink outline drawing), juxtaposition of naturalistic details with stylised narratives and the fantasy hybrids are characteristic features of English illumination and they reappear throughout the 14th century. Although differing in format, quality and border forms, there are broad similarities with the Pabenham-Clifford Hours (Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum, MS 242) and the Vaux Psalter (London, Lambeth Palace Library, MS 233) in the manner in which the disparate elements are brought together, and quite precise similarities in some of the naturalistic and grotesque inclusions; for example, the large blue jay, the lion (fol.4r-v) and the large-headed

backward-looking bipeds.[1] In addition, it may be relevant that the Vaux Psalter includes in its decoration the arms of the Moels family (cf. provenance, above). Sandler suggests that these two manuscripts may have been produced in the Midlands, in which case Oxford might have been the most obvious centre for the dissemination of the style.

**Provenance**

The long-lost sister volume of the Tavistock Breviary in the Morgan Library in New York, MS M.329;
Nicholas de Moels, 2nd Baron Moels (died 1316) (obits added to the Morgan volume);
Richard Sterne (1596–1683), Archbishop of York; (inscription in the Morgan volume);
Bernard Quaritch Ltd, *A Catalogue of Rare and Valuable Books*, catalogue no.328 (January 1914), no.580, rebound for them;
Allan Heywood Bright (1862–1941), nephew of Henry Yates Thompson, his bookplate on the front pastedown;
Private collection, by descent, until 2014.

**Related literature**

Sandler, Lucy F. *Gothic Manuscripts 1285–1385: A Survey of Manuscripts Illuminated in the British Isles, 5*. 2 vols. London, 1986.

1 Sandler, 1986, nos.30 and 31.

22

# AN AQUAMANILE IN THE FORM OF A STAG

Scandinavia or Lower Saxony

c.1150

*24.5 x 9.3 x 23.2 cm*

*bronze with a black patina, in excellent condition, missing only its sprue-hole cover. Possibly some lost elements on the antlers and tail.*

**Provenance**
*Private collection, France;*
*With Brimo de Laroussilhe, by 2002;*
*Wyvern Collection, UK*

A fine aquamanile in the form of a statant stag, the body roughly cast with a chased surface and decorated with herringbone incisions. The short pronged antlers curl upwards above the head, while the mouth is shaped and pierced to form a narrow spout out of which water would have been dispensed, with the tongue charmingly extended to aid in pouring.

The broad haunch, simple arched carrying handle and schematic, inverted eyes and other incised details, indicate an early date range for the piece. Few examples of this type survive, particularly with their hinged lid and carrying handle intact. Closest comparison can be drawn to a concise group of aquamanilia dated to the 12th century with similarly rotund forms and fine, tubular snouts, illustrated in Otto von Falke and Erich Meyer, Bronzegeräte des Mittelalters, Berlin, 1935, especially figs. 498, 501, and 502 (pp.203-4). Another example, which must come from the same workshop as Fig.498 (now housed in Trier), is preserved at Hildesheim (see this document, fig.1), which has led scholars to suggest a localisation to Lower Saxony for the surviving group. However, just as many can be found in Scandinavian museums, and the overtly reindeer-like features of our example mean that we should not rule out a Scandinavian origin. Nevertheless, few early examples are as large in scale as the present piece, and its unusual incised decoration is almost unique save for another aquamanile in the form of a ram now housed in the Nationalmuseum, Copenhagen, Inv. 9093 (illustrated in M. Blindheim, Middelalderkunst fra Norge I Andre Land, Oslo, 1972, Cat.51). The dual presence of a sprue hole (created to aid in the removal of the casting core) as well as the pouring funnel running through the snout is echoed by another early aquamanile also in Hildesheim (illustrated in von Falke and Meyer, 1935, Fig. 473b). See also a small number of candlestick bases that take a very similar form, including one in Copenhagen and another, found in the river Meuse in 1891,

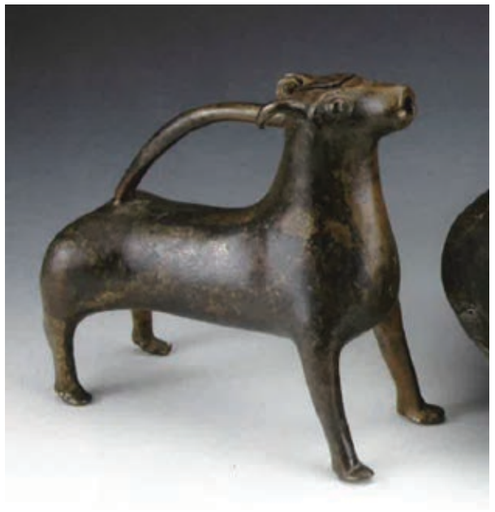

Fig. i (above)
Aquamanile
Hildesheim (?)
12th century
*15.5 x 16 cm; bronze*
Hildesheim, Stastmuseum im Knochenhauer-amtshaus, Inv. No. K 776

now preserved in Brussels (illustrated respectively in U. Mende, Die Mittelalterlichen Bronzen im Germanischen Nationalmuseum, Nürnberg, 2013, p. 239, fig. 291, and A. Jansen, Art Chrétien jusqu'à la fin du moyen âge, Brussels, 1964, Cat. 94, Plate XXXIV).

Aquamanilia, from the Latin for aqua (water) and manus (hand), are a form of human- or animal-shaped bronze vessel, made between the twelfth and sixteenth centuries across northern Europe, and used during the medieval period for hand washing ceremonies, in both domestic and liturgical contexts. They remain the earliest known examples of hollow bronze casting in Europe, and utilised the lost wax process to create an evenly moulded, thin, and smooth surface to the material, completely watertight and highly durable. They range in size, shape, and style, and with the exception of those examples that incorporate spigots in order to allow the vessels to remain stationary during use, most aquamanilia would have necessitated a loaded and complex ceremony between two or more parties, in which the hands are washed by another participant as part of social and liturgical rituals.

We are sincerely grateful to Drs Neil Stratford, Ursula Mende, and Joanna Olchawa for their assistance in authenticating and cataloguing this piece.

**Related literature**

Hütt, Michael. *Aquamanilien; Gebrauch und Form,* Mainz am Rhein, 1993

Barnet, Peter and Pete Dandridge, Eds., *Lions, Dragons, & Other Beasts; Aquamanilia of the Middle Ages*, Vessels for Church and Table, New York, 2006

Brandt, Michael . *Bild unde Bestie; Hildesheimer Bronzen der Stauferzeit,* Exh. Cat., Hildesheim, 2008

Mende, Ursula . *Die Mittelalterlichen Bronzen im Germanischen Nationalmuseum*, Nürnberg, 2013

23

# CAPITAL WITH MONKEYS AND LIONS

Spain, Palencia

c.1120-50

*38 x 37 x 24.5 cm*

*limestone, losses include volutes and base*

**Provenance**
*Private collection, UK*

A double capital with monkeys and lions, which are nestled below scrolling volutes. The animals have distinctively long legs, which stretch down to the base of the capital. The lion swishes its tail through its legs and up over its waist, while the monkey holds onto one of its legs with its long fingers. The monkey is the best preserved animal on the capital and it is carved with a round face and large almond-shaped eyes, which have drilled pupils.

The form of the capital and the elongated legs of the beasts are similar to those sculptures that survive in churches on the pilgrimage route to Santiago da Compostela – namely in Southern France and Northern Spain. The lions decorating a capital from the monastery of San Zoila, Carrión de los Condes, Palencia, for example, share many similarities with our sculpture. The capital is also comparable to several from Saint-Martin Fromista in Palencia (fig.1), especially one which shows rearing lions with monkeys on their backs beneath scrolling volutes.[1] The shape as well as the composition of the capital is also analogous to sculpture north of the Pyrenees, such as a capital now in the Museé des Augustines in Toulouse (fig. 2). The parallels between so many locations in Northern Spain and Southern France are evidence of the movement of masons between institutions on the route to Santiago in the twelfth century.

**Related literature**
Luaces, Joaquin and Gerardo Boto Varela. *Claustros Románicos Hispanos*. Léon, 2003.
Durliat, Marcel. *La Sculpture Romane de la Route de Saint-Jacques*. Dax, 1990, *fig. 295, p. 293.*

Fig. 1
Capital from the portal
Saint-Martin Fromista in Palencia
c.1100

Fig.2
Capital with beasts
Southern France, Toulouse?
c. 1120 – 40
Toulouse, Musee des Augustins
MA 218

1 Illustrated in Duliat, 1990, p.293.

**The Greek word leo is translated as ‘king’ in Latin, because he is the ruler of all the beasts. Their strength is indicated in their chest, their steadfastness in their head. They fear the rattle of wheels, but they fear fire even more. Even when they are sleeping their eyes are watchful. When they walk their tail brushes away their tracks, so that a hunter cannot find them. When they bear their cubs, the cub is said to sleep for three days and nights, and then after that the roaring or growling of the father, making the den shake, as it were, is said to wake the sleeping cub.**

Isidore of Seville, 7th century CE

24

# A SMALL ROMANESQUE LION

Central France

c.1140-60

*20.5 x 34 x 12 cm*

**Provenance**
*Southern France, Private Collection*

This miniature stylobate lion is a late Romanesque sculpture that belongs to the decoration of a group of monuments in the Ile-de-France, built and decorated at the dawn of the early Gothic style. The trends that developed here have been attributed to a network of masons that worked between southern and northern France, shaping a style which saw the culmination of Romanesque and which set forth the so-called Renaissance of the 12th century.[1] Carved in a recumbent pose, the lion's head is raised and turned to one side, its legs tucked neatly at the sides of its body. A bushy tail swings around its back leg, resting below the bulky rectangular base on its back. The face of the lion is abstracted, carved with a wide-open mouth and protruding teeth which are gripping a serpent. His bulging, almond-shaped eyes have drilled pupils and his

1 Scher, 1969.

nostrils are shown flared. The lion's mane is composed of stylised locks and dense curls that extend down his chest.

Broken on the reverse and relatively small in size, we may speculate that the sculpture may have originally been part of a larger monument or an architectural member - perhaps as a part of a biblical scene on the base of a column. Analogous sculptures with similar iconography and composition survive at the Louvre and on the façade of Saint-Trophime d'Arles (figs. 1– 2). Both examples depict a scene with Daniel in the Lions' Den and in both examples, the two lions that flank Daniel are shown in profile, their body taking up the entire face of the base capital. Viewing the architectural member in profile, only the lion can be seen, and this allows us to imagine the context in which our sculpture would have functioned.

Stylistically, the lion can be compared to sculpture from buildings in and around Paris in the wake of the Gothic style. The crisp and determined carving of our lion's main, its bulging eyes and wide nostrils can be related to sculptures that survive from the cloister of Saint-Denis in Paris and from Saint-Remi in Reims (figs 3–4). While these buildings seem distant from one another, it has been argued that the sites may have shared the same masons. The basilica of Saint-Remi was begun in the 11th century and its choir was rebuilt in c.1180. The monsters, harpies, scaly figures and biblical scenes that survive in the Musée de Staint-Rémi, however, come from the second phase of rebuilding, which occurred in c.1140 under Abbot Odo, a contemporary of Abbot Suger of Saint-Denis.[2] There was a significant shift that happened in sculpture and architecture at this time, and this shift can be partly attributed to the movement of masons from Languedoc, Poitou and Burgundy to the Ile-de-France. As Whitney Stoddard has argued, 'the Ile-de-France produced no great regional Romanesque [in the same way] as Burgundy, Provence, Languedoc, and western France. Thus, when Suger in the late 1130's set out to rebuild Saint-Denis, he was forced to import artists foreign to the royal domain.'[3] And while this style matured in the royal domain, analogous sculpture can therefore also be found further afield. Outside of Paris, our lion can also be compared to the the lions on a capital in the Cleveland Art Museum, which originate in Saint-Aignan-sur-Cher, and to sculpture from the Collegiate church of Notre-Dame in Poissy (fig 5-6). In both of these examples, the carving of the wide mouthed creatures with flared nostrils shares a lot of characteristics with our lion.

Due to the dissemination of this style in the middle of the 12th century, it is tricky to localize this sculpture more precisely. However, the style of the lion clearly categorises it among the best late Romanesque sculpture produced in the Ile-de-France.

*limestone; losses to the back of the sculpture and to the lion's front paws, general surface wear typical of sculpture from this period*

Fig. 1 (above)
Detail of the base of a column on the façade showing Daniel in the Lion's Den
France, Arles, St Trophime
c.1180

Fig. 2 (below)
Capital with a scene of Daniel in the Lion's Den
France, Ile-de-France, Abbey Saint Geneviève?
c.1100-1125
Paris, Louvre RF 457

Fig. 3
Corbel head
France, Church of Saint-Remi
c. 1140
Reims, Musee St Remi

**Related Literature**


Cahn, Walter. 'Review: Saint-Remi de Reims: l'oeuvre de Pierre de Celle et sa place dans l'architecture gothique by Anne Prache.' In *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* (1980) 39 (1):68.
Prache, Anne. *Saint-Remi de Reims: l'oeuvre de Pierre de Celle et sa place dans l'architecture gothique*. Geneva, 1978.
Scher, Stephen K. *The Renaissance of the Twelfth Century*. Rhode Island, 1969.
Stoddard, Whitney S. *Sculptors of the West Portals of Chartres Cathedral*. New York, 1987.


Fig. 4 (above)
Detail of a collonette with hybrids
France, Saint Denis
c. 1140
Paris, Musee de Cluny 11659b

Fig. 5 (left)
Daniel in the Lion's Den
France, Saint-Aignan-sur-Cher
12th century
Cleveland Museum of Art
1962.247

Fig. 6
Detail of base with harpies
France, Ile-de-France, Collégiale Notre-Dame de Poissy
1140-60

2 Prache, 1978.
3 Stoddard, 1987, pp.42.

25

# A LARGE CAMEO OF A LION

Southern Italy

c.1230

*17 x 23 mm*

*sardonyx cameo set in a modern gold ring on a white paper backing, minor repair to upper left corner*

**Provenance**
*Previously set into a 19th century; diamond mount;*
*Private collection, UK*

This impressive cameo is decorated with a walking lion in profile. Almost certainly made at the court of Emperor Frederick II Hohenstaufen (1194–1250), its skilful carving is a testament to the art that flowered in Southern Italy in the first half of the thirteenth century (fig.1). Although this artwork is miniature in its form, it depicts the lion realistically – the animal has a slightly open mouth, almond shaped eyes and a thick, stylised mane. It is carved in two layers of sardonyx, a stone that has been used in the production of cameos since antiquity. Associated with strength, stability and protection, its richly coloured layers allowed the craftsmen to carve away the top orange layer of sard, revealing the creamy white layer below. This contrast in colours gives the image three-dimensionality, attracting attention when worn.

This lion cameo is one of only three known examples based on the same model and argued to originate in the court of Frederick II Hohenstaufen. They are all dated to c.1230. The first of these is a lion cameo now in the Hermitage Collection in St Petersburg (fig.2). The second cameo from this group is in the Historisches Museum in Basel and it is incorporated into the late thirteenth century reliquary of Saint David, which also includes an antique cameo of Gorgon's face taking the place of David's head (fig.3). The close similarities in the style, the carving technique and stone colour of the Basel cameo suggest that this may have been carved by the same hand as the present example. A comparison can also be found in the two cameos of Hercules and the Nemean Lion, which are located in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York and in the Ladriere Collection, also attributed to Southern Italy during the reign of Frederick II (figs.4-5). The stylistic details of the New York example, particularly the facial features of the lion and the carving of its body, offer a closer parallel than the Ladriere example even though both emphasise the importance of lion imagery for the court of Frederick II.

Fig. 1
Frederick II Hohenstaufen
"Manfred manuscript" of De arte venandi cum avibus
Biblioteca Vaticana, Pal. lat 1071

Frederick II was renowned as a great patron of art and architecture. He has been defined as both the 'first Renaissance tyrant' and as a 'messiah-emperor'- his true persona often shrouded by overzealous historians of the

nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.[1] The artistic boom of his court, often called a 'proto-renaissance', was a testament to the cultural fusion in Southern Italy, which was inspired by its Roman, Byzantine and Islamic past and its diverse population of Christians, Jews and Muslims.

Animal cameos created at the court of Frederick II were long argued to be associated with both the family and the official coats of arms. Among these are the eagle cameos, which survive in several guises (fig. 6). As Hans Wenzel has pointed out, while the eagle was used in the official sphere, the lion was used in the private sphere.[2] Lions had a particular significance for Frederick II because his family on his mother's side used an image of a lion as a symbol of their dominion in Southern Italy. While it is certain that these cameos were associated with the Hohenstaufen family, 'it remains undecided, whether they were bestowed by them as "symbols" or "orders", whether they were worn by court officials as a symbol of their office, or whether they actually were worn by the Hohenstaufens themselves.'[3] Still, the freedom with which some of these cameos are carved illustrates that heraldry was not the only driving force here. Lions, without a doubt the most widely depicted animals in Romanesque art, were drawn from a broad spectrum of liturgical, textual, and visual sources, see for example the carved marble Paschal Candelabra in the Palatine Chapel in Palermo (fig. 7). Lions were carved on thrones, on church portals and put up in town squares because they symbolised justice, power and authority.[4]

Fig. 2 (above)
Sardonyx Lion cameo
Southern Italy
c.1230
2.2 x 3.6 cm
Hermitage Collection, St Petersburg (K-2953)

Fig. 3a (below)
Saint David Reliquary from the Treasury of Basel Cathedral
Southern Italy
c. 1230
Historisches Museum, Basel

1 William Tronzo, 'Introduction,' in *Studies in the History of Art* Vol. 44 (1994), 12.

2 Hans Wenzel, "Staatskameen' im Mittelalter," *Jahrbuch der Berliner Museen Staatskameen in Mittelalter* (1962).

3 Ibid, 77.

4 The four lions of Parma Cathedral also flanked the episcopal throne. Adalbert Erler, *Das Strassburger Münster Im Rechtsleben Des Mittelalters*. (Frankfurt am Main: V. Klostermann, 1954), 19; Dirk Jäckel, *Der Herrscher Als Löwe : Ursprung Und Gebrauch Eines Politischen Symbols Im Früh- Und Hochmittelalter* (Köln: Böhlau, 2006). The throne of Solomon is described in the *Second Book of Chronicles* as a 'throne of ivory, and overlaid with pure gold; and there were six steps to the throne, with a footstool of gold, which were fastened to the throne, and stays on each side of the sitting place and two lions standing by the stays; and twelve lions stood there on the one side and on the other upon the six steps.' See Warwick Rodwell, *The Coronation Chair and Stone of Scone: History, Archaeology and Conservation* (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2013), 35.

In Rome, for example, an ancient statue of a lion sinking its teeth into a horse, now in the Capitoline Museum, stood on the terrace in front of the Senatorial Palace, representing Rome's secular authority. The lion was the symbol of Rome until the 15th century and live lions were even kept in cages on the Capitoline Hill to 'embody the living image of the city's political authority.'[5]

Ancient lion cameos probably served as models for our example as they too were collected by wealthy patrons in the middle ages and early Renaissance. Cameos were famously also incorporated into reliquaries, as we have seen in the King David reliquary from the Treasury of Basel Cathedral. A lion cameo carved in sardonyx also once decorated the shrine of the Three Kings in Cologne cathedral, being prominently placed above the head of the Virgin and Child on the open shrine.[6] As Erika Zwierlein-Diehl has argued, in this instance, the lion could be interpreted as a symbol of the incarnation, the resurrection, Christ himself, or of Saint Mark but the meaning was changeable depending on the circumstances.[7]
In this case, the image of the lion in Frederick II's court would have remembered the importance of the lion in antiquity but it would have also assumed a meaning which was more in tune with medieval traditions, symbolising power, justice and authority.

**Further literature**


Scarisbrick, Diana, Claudia Wagner, John Boardman, *The Guy Ladriere Collection of Gems and Rings*. London, 2016.
Wenzel, Hans. "Staatskameen' im Mittelalter," *Jahrbuch der Berliner Museen Staatskameen in Mittelalter* (1962).
Zwierlein-Diehl, Erika. "'Interpretatio christiana": Gems on the Shrine of the Three Kings in Cologne,' in *Engraved Gems: Survivals and Revivals*, ed. Clifford Malcolm Brown. Washington DC: National Gallery of Art, 1997.
Kagan, Ju. *Western European Cameos in the Hermitage Collection*. Leningrad, 1973.


5 Mazzoni, *She-Wolf*, 50.

6 Erika Zwierlein-Diehl, "'Interpretatio christiana": Gems on the Shrine of the Three Kings in Cologne,' in Engraved Gems: Survivals and Revivals, ed. Clifford Malcolm Brown (Washington DC: National Gallery of Art, 1997), 74.

7 Ibid. 74.

Fig. 3b
Detail of lion cameo in the Saint David Reliquary
Southern Italy
c. 1230
Basel Treasury

Fig. 4
Cameo with Hercules and the Nemean Lion within a Garland
Southern Italy
c. 1220-40
New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art

Fig. 5
Hercules and the Nemean Lion with a Dragon
Southern Italy
c. 1220-40
Paris, Guy Ladriere Collection

Fig. 6
Cameo of an Eagle with a Hare
Southern Italy
c. 1240-60
Hermitage Collection, St Petersburg (K-2141)

Fig. 7 (right)
Lions at the base of the Paschal Candelabrum in the Palatine Chapel
c. 1200
Sicily, Palermo

26

# AN AQUAMANILE IN THE FORM OF A LION

Germany, probably Lower Saxony

c.1200

*17.1 x 22.9 x 5.5 cm*

*cast copper alloy with fine soldered repairs to the handle at its upper and lower connecting points. Hairline fractures to the legs in two places. The hinged lid a modern replacement.*

**Provenance**
*With Blumka Gallery, New York; November 1988;*
*The Longridge Collection, until 2021;*
*Private Collection, UK*

A stout, hollow-cast bronze aquamanile sculpted in the form of a lion. The animal's short, thick-set legs are planted firmly on the ground, and angle up towards a short midriff cleanly moulded with robust haunches and ribcage. A long neck is covered in a heavy mane which has been deeply grooved by a graver to simulate thick strands of fur clumped in triangular locks. The lion's visage is similarly robust in its modelling, with rotund cheeks and eyes encircled by double outlines. A slender tail whips through the lion's back legs and up around its flank to lie with bushy tip on its back. Clinging to the lion's back is a lizard or dragon-like creature, the head of which bites into the animal's neck and whose arched back forms a handle for carrying and use.

Fig.1 (above)
Aquamanile in the form of a lion
North Germany
12th century
22 x 20 cm; cast copper alloy
Maastricht, Sint-Servaaskerk

Aquamaniles are zoomorphic or anthropomorphic vessels used during the Middle Ages to pour water for hand washing, and were made to function in both religious and secular contexts. They take their name from the Latin words for water (aqua) and hand (manus).[1] Aquamanilia were the first hollow-cast vessels in medieval Europe and were costly, rarefied objects made for the highest echelons of society. Usually cast in copper alloy through the lost wax process (*cire perdue*), surviving examples all date from the period spanning the early twelfth to the late 15th century. As is typical, our example has two openings, a hinged aperture (the lid) on the lion's head for filling the vessel, and a spout ensuing from the animal's mouth for pouring.

The precise form taken by our vessel is apparently unique amongst the surviving corpus of medieval aquamanilia, making it an important document for this type of early pouring vessel. It can, however, usefully be compared to a small group of related lion aquamanilia, believed to have been produced in northern German workshops in the twelfth and early thirteenth centuries, including versions in the Sint-Servaaskerk in Maastricht (fig.1), in the Kestner-Museum in Hannover[2] (inv. no.1913.373) and in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York (fig.2). Several others, including in the Bayerisches Nationalmuseum in Munich boast the same stout proportions, lively forward-jutting visage, and rounded upper lip (for which see O. Falke and E. Meyer, Romanisches Leuchter und Gefässe Giessgefässe der Gotik, Berlin, 1935 (1983 reprint), pp. 109-110, 114, no. 353, fig. 328). Like the present example, the Hannover and New York aquamanilia have similarly delineated facial types and the same short, stout legs. Additionally, their tails are treated in the same way as ours, curling up through the gap between the hind legs to emerge and rest on the animal's flank – that of the New York example is shaped into a similarly bushy or lanceolate form. These examples relate closely to contemporaneous metalwork from Saxony, including from Magdeburg, which was one of the great centres of production responsible for the famous bronze doors of Cathedral of Saint Sophia, Novgorod, dated to 1152-54.

The motif of the tail resting on the animal's flank fell out of fashion over the course of the thirteenth century, and while our example is an abbreviated form of a general type epitomised by versions in Maastricht (fig.1) and New York (figs.2-3), it can be dated within the first half of the century.

Fig. 2 (above)
Aquamanile in the form of a lion
North Germany
12th century
19.5 x 8.7 x 21.9 cm; cast copper alloy with glass inlays
New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, inv. 64.101.1491

Fig. 3 (below)
Aquamanile in the form of a lion
North Germany
12th century
23.2 x 22.7 x 9.5 cm; cast copper alloy
New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, inv. 52.24.1

1 See Peter Barnet and Pete Dandridge eds, *Lions, Dragons, and Beasts: Aquamanilia of the Middle Ages, Vessels for Church and Table*, Exh. Cat., Yale, 2006.

2 Ferdinand Stuttmann, *Bildkataloge des Kestner-Museums Hannover VIII, Mittelalter I: Bronze. Email. Elfenbein*, Hannover, 1966, no. 28, pp. 36 and 152.

27

# LION THRONE SUPPORT

Southern Italy

c.1100-50

*34 x 55 x 55cm*

*marble*

**Provenance**
*Stefano Bardini Collection, Italy, before 1918 (fig. 1);*
*Sold by the American Art Association, New York, 1918, lot 432;*
*Private collection, USA*

Carved in the round, these two marble lions support two sides of a low rectangular base. With their heads bowed, the lions are carved in a recumbent pose with mouths somewhat open. The lions' manes are composed of stylized sections, which spread over their backs and below the ornamented edges of the base that they support. The base is carved with an interlace ornament that runs along three of its four edges. The heads of the two lions extend above this base and a chamfered section between them includes a further band of foliate ornament. Drill marks along the lions' manes and within the ornamental edges create deep pockets of shadow throughout the sculpture. The composition, size and style of this piece suggest that it once formed a part of a throne.

The sculpture can be compared in style and composition to the episcopal thrones in Southern Italy – namely those in the Cathedral of Saint Nicholas in Bari and in the Cathedral of San Sabino in Canossa (figs.2). In Bari, the throne is carried by several Atlas figures; however, a small footstool is attached to the front of the throne and it is this part that bears remarkable similarity to our example. While the Canossa example is carried on the backs of two tall elephant, the Bari throne has a rectangular base in front of the throne – a footstool carried by two squat lions, which is decorated on three sides by an interlace ornament. This composition, which sees the throne composed with a shorter footstool carried by lions, can also be found in Calvi Cathedral (fig.3). Moreover, two small, squat lions (presumably from a similar type of throne) also survive in Lecce Museum (fig.4).

Often guarding the throne of King Solomon, lions could be imbued with apotropaic and judicial symbolism. As Adalbert Erler pointed out, the lion can frequently be interpreted as an image of justice and jurisdiction in the Middle Ages, a fact that is illustrated by the frequent use of lion imagery in the decoration of royal and episcopal thrones.[1] In Rome, the link between leonine imagery and public punishment was articulated from at least the 10th century on the Capitoline Hill. Here, the statue of Marcus Aurelius, then thought to have been Constantine, stood in a square in front of the Senatorial Palace. An ancient statue of a lion sinking its teeth into a horse, located now in the Capitoline Museum, also stood on the terrace in front of the Senatorial Palace, and represented Rome's secular authority. It was in front of this statue that capital punishments were announced by the Senate and often carried out, mimicking the role of the She-Wolf statue, which stood for papal power in the Lateran precinct.[2] The lion was the symbol of Rome until the 15th century and live lions were even kept in cages on the Capitoline hill to 'embody the living image of the city's political authority.'[3] In Southern Italy, this was similarly stressed by that fact that 'the site of


Fig. 1
The Throne Support published in the Bardini Collection Catalogue, 1918

1 Erler, 1954, p. 19; Jäckel, 2006.
2 Mazzoni, 2010, p.49.
3 Mazzoni, p.50.

Bari's open-air law court was prominently marked with a stylobate lion, on whose neck was inscribed CVSTOS IVSTICIE.'[4]

Since our sculpture is only a fragment of the furnishing that it originally formed, it is difficult to propose a secular or a liturgical function. However, as Rowan Dorin argued, even the episcopal throne in Bari, 'expressly intended for a liturgical purpose, bears few traces of the religious iconography that one might expect. Instead, the most striking feature of the throne is its intense aura of raw authority.'5

**Related literature**


Erler, Adalbert. *Das Strassburger Münster Im Rechtsleben Des Mittelalters*. Frankfurt am Main, 1954.
Jäckel, Dirk. *Der Herrscher Als Löwe : Ursprung Und Gebrauch Eines Politischen Symbols Im Früh- Und Hochmittelalter.* Köln, 2006.
Mazzoni, Cristina. *She-Wolf: The Story of a Roman Icon.* Cambridge, 2010.
Dorin, Rowan W. 'The Mystery of the Marble Man and His Hat: A Reconsideration of the Bari Episcopal Throne.' In *Florilegium* Vol. 25 (2008).


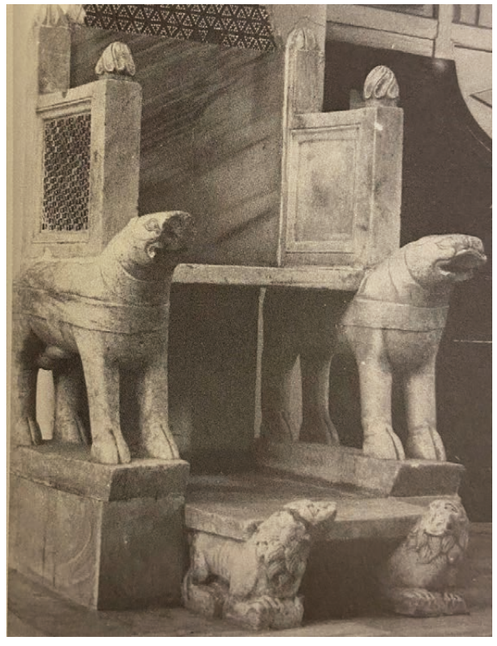

Fig. 3
Episcopal throne
Italy, Calvi Cathedral
c. 12th century

4 Dorin, 2008, p. 41.
5 Dorin, 2008,p. 29.

Fig. 2 (above)
Episcopal throne
Italy, Bari, St Nicholas Cathedral
c.1100

Fig. 4 (below)
Lions from a throne
Italy, Lecce Museum
c. 12th century

28

# PANEL FROM A STAIRCASE CARVED IN RELIEF WITH LIONS HUNTING A BULL

Iran, Hamadan

c.1300

*43 x 68 x 11 cm*

*carved limestone, missing top right corner*

**Provenance**
*Private collection, Switzerland*

The present sculptural frieze, carved on two sides, would have once formed part of a larger series of panels, and was likely used to decorate a private house. Amidst the foliate tracery in the central space, two lions bear down on a horned bull, whilst in the background two hounds pursue two hares. The edge is framed by a thin bevelled border, with the left edge further decorated by a tripartite key-meander style border. The reverse is decorated with a foliate arabesque carved in relief centred around three fleurs-de-lys. The upper left section of the panel has been lost.

Figural stone carving of this type is essentially an anomaly within Islamic art, making the few remaining pieces of this frieze of considerable importance. The style of carving was most likely inspired by Byzantine sculpture, evidence of which can been seen by comparison with stonework depicting animals from the 10th and 11th centuries. Many of the stone reliefs that relate to the present piece have been found in north-western Persia – specifically in the region of Hamadan, which was the capital of the Seljuk Empire from 1150 to 1224.

The Seljuks, a Turkic people from Anatolia, founded a dynasty that occupied parts of Central Asia and the Middle East from the 9th to the early 13th centuries. Unlike the majority of Medieval Islamic dynasties, the Seljuks eschewed taboos of figural representation in their secular architecture and regaled their palaces with all manner of figural imagery: dragons, lions, elephants, fantastic animals, astronomical figures, princes, courtiers and attendants. While the Seljuk Empire came to a decline in the early 13th century, the sculptural decoration in Hamadan exhibited a stylistic continuity in the following decades, when the region was under Mongol rule. Our relief belongs to a group of sculptures produced at that time. It could be compared to an example in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, which bears the name of the donor and mason, as well as a date: AH 703/AD 1304 (fig.1). Other known examples of these stones formed part of a balustrade in the same private house, such as the example in the Cleveland Museum of Art (fig.2).

**Related literature**


Anavian, Habib. *Catalogues of the Habib Anavian Collection.* New York, 1979, no.27.

Redford, Scott. 'Thirteenth-Century Rum Seljuq Palaces and Palace Imagery.' *In Ars Orientalis Vol.* 23, Pre-Modern Islamic Palaces (1993), pp. 219-236.

Roux, J.-P., P. Amiet, É. Anglisade and F. Baratte. *L'Islam dans les collections nationales*. Paris, 1977, pp.113–14, nos.203–05.

Von Folsach, Kjeld. *Art from the World of Islam*. Copenhagen, 2001, nos.396–97.


Fig.1 (above)
End of balustrade
Seljuk Empire
AH 703/AD 1303–04
New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art
Inv. no.32.15.1

Fig. 2 (below)
Balustrade Fragment with Animals from the residence of Hajji Hasan ibn Ibrahim ibn Muhammad
Iran, Hamadan, Ilkhanid period (1256–1353)
Cleveland Museum of Art
1938.15

29

# CORBEL WITH TWO LIONS BITING THE EARS OF A MAN

Spain, Catalonia

c.1300-50

*26 x 35 x 22 cm*

*limestone, losses to one of the lions*

**Provenance**
*Private collection, Spain*

A corbel carved with two lions, who seem to be biting the head of a bearded man. This imaginative iconography decorates a pentagonal moulded corbel, which would have been a load bearing element jutting out from a wall. The man has a short beard, which curls at the edges, a narrow nose and thin lips. His almond shaped eyes are notably pinched at the outer edges. The two lions are completely symmetrical as they seem to attack the head from each side, covering the man's ears with their mouths. While the lion on the left has lost the top of his head, the lion on the right has a wide nose, small eyes and three rows of short strands that form his mane. The face of the man, however, is completely composed – he shows no reaction to the lions. The size of the corbel suggests that it may have decorated a portal or a window, and although it is impossible to guess where exactly it came from, it must have been in a covered location as its surfaces are notably well preserved.

The quality and style of the carving fits well into the high Gothic style and it relates to Spanish sculpture of the early 14th century. The face type is broadly comparable to carving from the Cistercian Monastery of Santes Creus, dated to the first half of the 14th century (figs. 1-2). Although the monastery was erected in the 12th century, parts of it were rebuilt in the late 13th and early 14th centuries after King Peter III of Aragon, his wife, Blanche of Anjou, and son, James II, decided to be buried here. The cloister was begun in 1313 and remarkably for a Cistercian foundation, it was decorated with an overabundance of monstrous figures and imaginative capitals. The faces of the human figures, especially the treatment of the eyes, with pinched outer corners, are particularly notable as they present a close parallel to our sculpture.

Fig. 1 (above)
Capital from the Cloister
Spain, Monastery of Santes Creus
c. 1313 – 1341

Fig. 2 (below)
Capital from the Cloister
Spain, Monastery of Santes Creus
c. 1313 – 1341

The iconography of this corbel has few parallels but the theme seems to be a more violent portrayal of Daniel in the lions' den, where the lions are more dangerously close to Daniel than usual. Still, he remains calm. A parallel can be drawn with a monumental capital in San Martín de Elines in Cantabria and with a cloister capital in Monreale, both dated to the 12th century (fig. 3).

Fig. 3 (right)
Detail of a capital with Daniel in the lions' den
Sicily, Monreale
c. 1200

30

# CAPITAL WITH A LIZARD

Southern France

c.1400

*20 x 14.5 x 10.5 cm*

*limestone, surface wear is typical of sculpture of this age*

**Provenance**
*Segarra Collection, Barcelona*

This hexagonal capital with a heavy abacus is decorated with a large lizard, which crawls between its leaves. The distinctively curled leaves are arranged around the core of the capital, growing up towards the moulding below the abacus. The capital is flat and uncarved on the back, evidence that it was engaged with the building it decorated. Its worn surface suggests that it may have decorated an engaged column on the exterior of a building – perhaps as a part of a portal or a window.

Already by the early 13th century, there was a development in architectural ornament that pulled away from figurative (or historiated) capitals, favouring instead naturalistic carving. Foliage, just as that found on a similar capital now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art (fig.1), dominated throughout the 14th and 15th centuries. This was also true of manuscript illumination, especially the ornate borders that included lush vegetation and animal life. It was also in this later period that foliage became much more organic, suggesting that its forms were taken directly from life. Insects, birds and lizards that may have been found on the foliage being studied, may have been incorporated directly into the architectural ornament.

Fig. 1
Capital
France
15th century
Metropolitan Museum of Art
41.190.278a

**The parrot is a green bird with a red circlet around its neck. It can be taught to speak; it greets its master and repeats words said to it. Its head and beak are very hard. While being taught to speak it must be beaten on the head with an iron rod; its head is so hard that it will not feel lesser blows. Its feet are week, so when it lands from flying it does so on its beak, and supports itself thus.**

Pliny the Elder, 1st century CE

31

# AN ABACUS SECTION DEPICTING ADOSSED BIRDS

Western France, Guyenne or Saintonge

1125-50

*17 x 25 x 12 cm*

*Caen limestone*

**Provenance**
*Private collection, Belgium;*
*Private collection, Paris*

A boldly carved limestone abacus section of diminutive and intimate scale, depicting two adossed birds standing amongst rinceaux tendrils. The remains of rampant lions can be seen on the sides, while the back is cut cleanly, indicating that the current form of the capital is a fragment of a larger block likely removed from a door lintel or cloister space.

Such is the ubiquity of bird motifs in the art of Romanesque France, that it is very difficult to provide a definitive localisation for the present piece. Nevertheless, in its present state this fragment retains all the constituent motifs of a well-known decorative pattern common to architectural sculpture found in particular concentration in western France; two birds with their bodies turned away from each other, two scrolling rinceaux with billeted decoration, a coin-shaped spandrel fill marking the central vertical axis, the vestiges of lions on the adjacent faces, all interpreted through a bold and forceful geometry that transfers the gaze across bisecting diagonals and countered arches in a manner typical of the best Romanesque carving. Both the choice of material and the stylistic treatment of our fragment point to western France as the most likely origin. Compare with an en-

gaged capital from La-Charité-sur-Loire now in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, which also depicts adossed birds with long curving beaks shown partially opened, and with similarly stylised wings. [1] See also an engaged capital showing Daniel in the Lions' Den which survives in the church of Notre-Dame in Cunault, Maine-et-Loire (fig.1). While the figure styles diverge, the Cunault capital incorporates the same triangulated billeting pattern on the rinceaux above the figures' heads as can be seen on the vine tendrils encircling the bodies of the birds on our piece. The most compelling parallel is offered by an abacus fragment now in the Indiana University Art Museum, Bloomington, which corresponds in iconographic and stylistic terms with our example, and which undoubtedly originates from the same building (fig.2). Like our relief, it shows two birds placed together in a symmetrical arrangement on the front, with similar mane-like neck detailing, lozenge-shaped feather patterns on their wings, and identical hooked beaks. Also closely matching in composition are the remnants of lions at the corners and sides of the block.

The combination of bird and tendril motifs (and bird and leaf, as on the Bloomington example) can be found frequently on Romanesque structures in western France, particularly in Saintonge and neighbouring Guyenne, which depended artistically on Saintonge to a large degree during the 12th century. In Saintonge, the motif is found in Chadenac, Sainte-Marie, and Saint-Eutrope in Saintes, Pont-l'Abbé, and Fontaines d'Ozillac, and on the façade of Angouleme Cathedral (lower-right arcade), where the rare technical feature of a double ridge forming a hem along the tapered feathers of the wings, which also appears on our block and the Bloomington relief, is seen. [2] Since the same subject recurs elsewhere in Guyenne, at Soulac (a dependency of Sainte-Croix), at Arces, Pont-l'Abbé-d'Arnoult, and others, this is the likely place of origin for both our relief and the Bloomington fragment, with Saintonge nearby being another plausible contender.[3]

Fig. 1 (above)
Daniel in the Lions' Den
Early 12th century
Maine-et-Loire, Cunault, Church of Notre-Dame

Fig. 2 (below)
Fragment of an abacus
Guyenne or Saintonge
Second quarter 12th century
17.7 x 14.8 x 10.1 cm; limestone
Bloomington, Indiana University Art Museum, inv. 62.37

**Related Literature**

Daras, Charles. Angoumois roman. Coll. Zodiaque, 1961.
Scher, Stephen. K. The Renaissance of the Twelfth Century. Providence, 1969.
Crozet, René. L'Art roman en Saintonge. Paris, 1971.

1 Scher, 1969, p. 39, Cat. 6.
2 C. Daras, 1961, pl. 45
3 Crozet, 1971, pp. LXVIIa.

32

# CLOTH OF GOLD WITH ADDORSED PARAKEETS

Central Asia

c.1250

*28 x 35.5 cm; Lampas-woven textile section of gold-hued silk with gilded lamella of animal substrate wound around a silk core. A border of ivory, green, blue and red silks embroidered horizontally close to the uppermost cut edge. Some fraying to all four edges. Discolouration to the silk and iron-based staining and thread losses in smaller spots. Some small tears and surface abrasion, though both minimal*

This textile panel with two pairs of addorsed parakeets, which are below a further half row of birds, is similar in style to group of textiles that were excavated in Burgos Cathedral. The parakeets in this example face each other, even though their bodies turn away. They are nestled against a floral pattern of stylised palmette motifs which divides each pair. The panel would have originally made use of an extensive amount of gold thread, which would have given the parakeets texture and shine.

This example could be compared with fragments from the al-Sabah Collection and from the Metropolitan Museum of Art (fig. 1-2). The latter was acquired from a Tibetan monastery – the piece is thought to have been

sent there as a gift soon after its manufacture. The extensive use of gold on both pieces reveals the expense of these objects, which were commonly used as palls in important funerary ceremonies or to wrap up relics in church treasuries. As Barbara Drake Boehm noted, 'such rich silks have been preserved almost exclusively in the great church treasuries of Europe, and are associated with popes, emperors, and saintly bishops.'[1] With all such examples, however, a precise localisation is tricky on account of their incredibly portable nature. 'Exchange among centres of textile production and the sites of their subsequent use – exemplified in an inventory of the Cathedral of Lugo in northern Spain, which includes a cope made of cloth produced in Baghdad – was the rule, not the exception, in the Middle Ages.[2]

**Related literature**


Curatola, Giovanni. *Art from the Islamic Civilization from The al-Sabah Collection, Kuwait.* Kuwait, 2010.

Drake Boehm, Barbara. 'Woven Silk.' In *Mirror of the Medieval World*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Wixom, William D., ed. New York, 1999.

von Folsach, Kjeld and Anne-Marie Keblow Bernsted. *Woven Treasures – Textiles from the World of Islam*, Copenhagen, 1993, fig. 11.


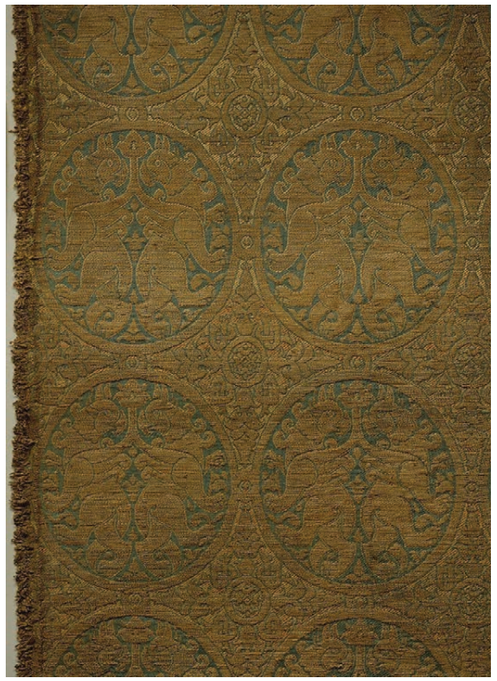

Fig. 1 (above)
Detail of a silk with griffins
Central Asia
c.1200-1250
MET 1984.344

Fig. 2 (below)
A silk fragment with addorsed birds
Central Asia or East Iranian world
13th century
Kuwait, The al-Sabah Collection
Inv. LNS 1071

1 Drake Boehm, 1999, p. 112-13.
2 Drake Boehm, 1999, p.113.

**It is said that the eagle does not even avertits gaze from the sun; it offers its hatchlings, suspended from its talons, to the rays of the sun, and the ones it sees holding their gaze unmoving it saves as worthy of the eagle family, but those who turn their gaze away, it throws out as inferior.**

Isidore of Seville, 7th century CE

33

# A LECTERN FIGURE IN THE FORM OF AN EAGLE

Flanders

c.1600-20

*60 x 28 x 18 cm*

*wood with gilding and polychromy, nail fixings and early repairs to the wing joints. The gilding partially covered by a later green pigment layer.*

**Provenance**
*Private collection, south west France*

A large gilded eagle stands with wings outstretched and its red talons clutching a blue orb. It looks straight ahead with open eyes and its head proudly extended on its long, feathered neck.

Lecterns, a type of stand used to support bibles or books of prayer when used by officiating priests to preach to a congregation during liturgical ceremonies, were produced throughout much of Europe during the Middle Ages and later, and can be found in various materials ranging from carved wood to hammered silver, and perhaps most famously cast copper alloys;

the bronze lecterns from the Meuse river valley are among the most original and sophisticated of their kind. Most surviving lecterns produced between the early 15th century and the late 16th relate very closely to one another, since they mainly take the form of eagles or pelicans standing atop either an orb, as in this case, or an animal of some form. Those perched with their talons tightly gripping a sphere or globe tend to have been raised on a slender architectural support, either in wood or iron, to bring them up to reading height, with a stem in turn supported on a tripartite or circular base. Some of these lecterns have relatively simple supports, though others are extremely accomplished examples of late-Gothic architecture; among the most complex is the lectern of Jean de Joés still preserved at the Church of Notre-Dame in Tongeren.[1] Ours, with its more fluid, shapely feather forms, was very likely carved at the end of the 16th century or the first decades of the 17th.

The spiky feathers issuing from the top of the bird's head resemble somewhat the feathers seen on the head of a pelican lectern in the Sint Bavokerk, Haarlem (see Museum het Prinsenhof, Tentoonstelling van kerkkelijke Geelgieterskunst uit de zuidelijke en noordelijke Nederlanden, Delft, 1961, cat. no.27). Ours is unlikely to be a pelican however, since such birds tend to arch their heads down in order to peck at their breasts, a feature entirely absent from our version.

**Related Literature**

Antoine, Elisabeth et al. *Art from the Court of Burgundy: The Patronage of Philip the Bold and John the Fearless, 1364-1419*. Paris and Cleveland, 2004.

1 Antoine, 2004, p. 180, fig. 3.

34

# LEAD MODEL OF THE EAGLE OF ST. JOHN

England, Cambridge?

Dated 1475

*20.4cm x 17.4cm (without base), 34.8cm x 25cm; cast lead*

**Provenance**
*Collection of William Stokes (1921-2015)*


A representation of Saint John the Evangelist, this lead eagle is resting on a vine tendril. Its wings are outstretched and its head turned to the left. The bird is cast in low relief, appearing flattened throughout. The piece is inscribed on the reverse: "Lead St. John's College Cambridge, Oak from St. Paul's Church Exeter". On the reverse, the eagle is unfinished, suggesting that it was meant to be seen only from one side. There are also remains of a fixing in the form of a broken bronze wire soldered to the left wing. The right part of the tendril and the top of the right wing have been repaired, suggesting the piece fell at some point, damaging the right side. Although it has not been possible to verify the inscription, the piece may have been a part of a gutter drain or the roof in the original St John's College chapel. St John's College was established in 1511; however, the original site was occupied by the Hospital of St. John the Evangelist founded in c.1200. In 1470 the hospital was extended the privileges of membership of the University. In 1863, the construction of the new chapel was begun and the late medieval chapel and infirmary were demolished.[1] Our lead eagle may have been salvaged during that demolition. Similarly, the wooden oak base may have been reclaimed around 1920-1930 from St. Paul's Church in Exeter, which was a medieval parish church demolished circa 1920.

**Related Literature**
Babington, Charles Cardale. *History of the infirmary and chapel of the hospital and college of St John the Evangelist, at Cambridge*. Cambridge, 1874.

1 Babington, 1874.

35

# A SULTANABAD BOWL WITH PHOENIXES

Iran, probably Kashan

c.1260–1320

*16.5 cm (diameter)*

*glazed earthenware*

The frustoconical body of this richly painted bowl rests on a delicate pedestal. It is covered in a translucent glaze and loosely painted with three phoenixes flying among a backdrop of foliage. The foliage is made up of densely painted bulbous blue flowers on a backdrop of greenery, which is typical for this period. The thick rim of the bowl

is decorated with white circlets on a cobalt blue background. The exterior has a striped pattern on a dotted backdrop.

Sultanabad style encompassed a group of wares in underglaze painting, which were found by excavators at Sultanabad in the early 20th century. They are typified by their underglaze painting and by the influence of Chinese design – this can be noted in both the vessel shape and the iconography, which frequently includes the lotus and phoenixes.[1] Our bowl can be compared to two examples from the Kuwait National Museum, which show a similar design, technique and vessel shape (fig. 1–2).

**Related literature**

Watson, Oliver. *Ceramics from the Islamic Lands*. London, 2004.

Fig. 1 (above)
Bowl with flying phoenix
Iran, probably Kashan
Late 13th - early 14th century
Kuwait National Museum LNS 28C

Fig. 2 (below)
Bowl with two large birds
Iran, probably Kashan
Late 13th - early 14th century
Kuwait National Museum LNS 317C

1 Watson, 2004, p. 374.

36

# BRONZE BIRD

Germany or Scandinavia

c.1200

*10.5 x 12.5 x 5 cm*

*cast bronze*

This small bronze bird is cast with a modeled beak, narrow neck and claws which are superimposed on a round base. The body and tail of the bird are decorated with schematic herringbone incisions that resemble feathers. On either side of the body, there are slots into which detachable wings would have been inserted. The original function of the object remains a mystery; however, a deep hole at the base of the bird suggests that it may have been a part of a large object – perhaps a candlestick.

The bird most likely symbolizes the Dove of the Holy Spirit, a popular motive in medieval Christian iconography. Comparisons can be drawn with metalwork from Northern Europe, dated to the 12th and 13th centuries. The patina and simple, schematic incisions that represent fur or feathers is closely comparable to the 12th century aquamanile of a stag in this catalogue (Cat. 22). Several broadly comparable examples can be found in museums in Denmark and Nuremberg (fig.1).[1]

**Related literature**

von Falke, Otto and Erich Meyer. *Bronzegeräte des Mittelalters*. Berlin, 1935.

1 Illustrated in von Falke, 1935, pp. 203-4.

**There is such a thing, if we must trust Ctesias. He says that the beast among the Indians, whose name is 'martichora,' has triple-rows of teeth on both sides. In size, he says it is as big as a lion, equally hairy, and having smaller feet. Its face and ears are human-like, its eyes shining blue, its colour like cinnabar. Its tail is similar to that of a land-scorpion, and in it, it has a sting-er and it can shoot the spines like arrows. Its cry is like the sound of a shepherd's-pipe and a war-trumpet at the same time, and it runs as quickly as a deer. It is savage and a man-eater.**

Aristotle, History of Animals, 4th century BC

37

# A CORBEL OF A HYBRID FIGURE FROM THE ABBEY OF BELLEPERCHE

France, Tarne-et-Garonne

c.1300

*73 x 80.6 x 53.3 cm*

*limestone, losses to the nose and the ends of the beard, surface wear typical of sculpture of this age*

**Provenance**
*Abbey of Belleperche, Tarne-et-Garonne, France (by repute);*
*Joseph Brummer Collection, acquired from Nicolas Brimo 1937;*
*Parke Bernet Galleries, June 8 and 9, 1949, III, lot 611;*
*Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, until 2004*

This massive carved corbel is thought to come from the Cistercian Abbey of Notre-Dame-de-BellePerche. It is decorated by a grotesque figure, probably a manticore, with the head of a man, the tail of a scorpion and a hoofed leg. The creature has a long beard, slightly open mouth and a defeated facial expression with deeply furrowed brows. A hood, which covers its head and shoulders, might be a reference to the monastery which it once adorned. The long spiny tail of the creature is curled up underneath its body as it supports itself with its hoofed leg. Although the corbel is now orientated in a way that the large supporting block is underneath the sculpted figure, it would have originally been on its side with the figure looking down below and the six colonette bases facing above. These bases would have supported a cluster of colonettes that carried the ribbed vault.

Belleperche Abbey, now in ruins, lies on the banks of the Garonne River. It is about six kilometres south of Castelsarrasin, Tarn-et-Garonne, and about fourteen kilometres from the Abbey of Moissac. Benedictine in its foundation, it became a Cistercian abbey in 1147. A new refectory was built at the abbey at the end of the thirteenth century and beginning of the fourteenth century. It is likely that our corbel came from the interior of this vast hall, which measured 26 x 10 metres. Ruined at the end of the 16th century, the refectory retains three spans of its eastern wall, parts of the west wall, its arched door and the remains of the window of the south gable (fig. 1).[1] It was built of alternating brick and stone beds, the latter made up of massive blocks comparable to the present example. The refectory was covered with ribbed vaults, which were carried by grouped colonettes with 'vigorously' sculpted corbels.[2] Marcel Aubert writes that the

Fig. 1 (above)
Remains of the refectory
France, Abbey of Belleperche
c.1300

1 Garric, 2014, p. 69.
2 *Congrès Archéologique*, p. 275.

corbels were sculpted with foliated scroll ornament: 'Le réfectoire de BellePerche du XIVè siècle, était couvert de voutes d'ogives portées par des groupes de colonnettes aux chapiteaux ornés de feuillages très découpés posées sur des consoles sculptées.'[3] The six colonettes that would have carried the vault in the refectory correlate with the six bases of on our sculpture, strengthening and supporting this localisation.

The style of our sculpture and of the refectory's architecture fits well into the years around 1300. As Jean-Michel Garric noted, the height and momentum of the vaults as well as the novelty and lightness of the supports distinguished the architecture of the refectory radically from other buildings in the region and referred directly to the Gothic of the Ile-de-France [Rayonnant], which must have been adapted by a southern contractor.[4] Rayonnant gothic is also reflected in our manticore, which speaks the language of late 13th century sculpture. It can be compared to a series of kings and prophets from the Abbey Charroux, dated to the last quarter of the 13th century (fig. 2). The furrowed brows, stylised beards and almond-shaped eyes of these figures find close parallels with our corbel.

3 Aubert, 1943, p.105.
4 Garric, 2012, p.69.

While Cistercian churches are celebrated for their engineering ability and vastness, they are also known for their austerity. Figurative sculpture, such as this example, is therefore rare in these foundations. Still, it is not completely absent as is illustrated by the sculpture that survives from the Cistercian Abbey of Fontenay. Moreover, by the 14th century, the austerity that ruled these foundations started loosening its grips and more figurative sculpture entered the churches. Our sculpture is an example of that trend, which also attested to the wealth of Cistercian abbeys in the later Middle Ages.

**Published**
*Joseph Brummer Collection,* Parke-Bernet Galleries: New York, Part III, June 8-9, 1949, no.611.
*Metropolitan Museum of Art Eightieth Annual Report of the Trustees for the Year 1949*, p.23.

**Related literature**
'Abbaye Cistercienne de Notre-Dame-de-Belle-Perche.' In *Congrès Archéologique de France, XXXIIe Session, Moutauban, Cahors et Guéret,* 1865, pp.275-278 .

Garric, Jean-Michel. 'Belleperche (commune de Cordes-Tolosannes), abbaye cistercienne.' In *Congrès archéologique de France*. Eds. Arnauld-Cancel, Marie-Paule. Paris, 2014, p. 65-72.

Aubert, Marcel. *L'architecture Cistercienne en France,* Paris, 1943, vol.2, p.105.

Fig. 2
Prophet figure detail
France, Charroux Abbey
c.1269 - 1300

**‘Serpent’ is the term for the family of all snakes, because they can bend and twist; and thus it is anguis because it is ‘turned at angles’ and never straight. Snakes were always considered among the pagans as the spirits of places.**

Isidore of Seville, 7th century CE

38

# A MASSIVE CAPITAL WITH HUMAN FIGURES TORMENTED BY SERPENTS

Spain, Pyrenees

c. 1100-30

*74 x 75 x 39 cm*

*medium-grained rose limestone with large blue-tinted veins, missing heads of the figures, surface slightly abraded caused by weathering.*

**Provenance**
*Altounian Collection, Mâcon (1905-1947)*

This monumental capital depicts a harrowing scene: two men, bound by ropes, are tormented by winged serpents. The men turn away from the viewer as if burying their heads in the core of the capital. It is particularly curious that they should be represented with their backs to the viewer, as the monsters converge around their heads to devour them. Carefully delineated scales and feathers adorn the monsters' upper bodies and demonic wings. The artist's enthusiasm for these features Is clear because he brakes with what is otherwise a perfectly

symmetrical composition in order to accommodate different decorative patterns: one serpent being feathered and the other covered in wriggling scales. Occasionally, these patterns carry an expressive function; thus, the curling of the monsters' tails is artfully emphasized by deeply incised parallel lines that stress the motion, and the bulk of the subdued human bodies is exaggerated by the diagrammatic web of drapery folds.

Characteristic for northern Spanish sculpture of the Romanesque period, the patterns and textures on this capital are accorded great preponderance by the carver, who covers textile surfaces and animal forms alike in a dense network of incised motifs. This feature developed in parallel with manuscript illustration during the period, such as that of the Silos Apocalypse (completed c. 1090), and it appears to be firmly rooted in the region's Mozarabic and Visigothic heritages. Another curious feature of the sculpture are the bulbous shapes given to the upper bodies of the human figures, which are covered by large plate-like drapery. These characteristics can also be found in other regions of the Pyrenees, such as at Saint-Pons de Thomières (figs. 1-2). This plate-like drapery, which resembles armour, can also be found on some of the figures on the Portada del Crucero at Santo Domingo de Silos (fig. 3). Although the figures here possess a rather different body composition, the regional similarities are also felt here.

The iconography recasts a well-known topos of beasts devouring a human with special verve and imagination. Capitals with the same iconography can be found in several churches in Northern Spain and Southern France, including at Lescar Cathedral, dated to c.1130, and St. Isidoro in León, dated to the second half of the 11th century (fig. 4). Although simplified and smaller than our capital, the spread of this iconography across the region is hardly surprising, since these monuments were connected by the pilgrimage route to Santiago de Compostela. Although a precise localization for our capital is difficult to identify, it must have been carved to support the vault of a large church along this famous route, announcing the skill of the local craftsmen and warning of the perils of sin. The general terms of the composition are not unique, since the symmetrical representation of two beasts or birds consuming human victims is a well-documented motif of Iberian and French Romanesque art. While the use of snakes or dragons in compositions of this kind is rare, a much cruder and smaller capital extant in San Isidoro, León attests to a simplified rendition of the same design (fig. 4), while at St. Sernin in Toulouse, a seated man is similarly assaulted by winged dragons (fig. 5). The latter example is curious in that it shows a very similar conception of the monsters' wings

Fig. 1 (above)
Virgin and Child Capital
Southern France, Saint-Pons de Thomières
c. 1100 – 1150
Musee des Augustins, Toulouse
ME 264

Fig. 2 (below)
Crucifixion portal
Southern France, Saint-Pons de Thomières
c. 1100 – 1150

Fig. 3 (right)
Capital with bound figure
Santo Domingo de Silos, Portada del Crucero

and their attachment to the body; as in our capital, they are prolonged into fearsome talons, with which the creatures restrain their prey.

The subdued stance of the victims clearly marks this as a scene of punishment, rather than combat, and associates it with the supernatural realm of hell, more commonly depicted in the marginal spaces of medieval buildings. A wide variety of demonic forms is attested in the Hispanic religious imagination of this period, both in sculpture and in manuscript illustration, and infernal torments afforded an engaging, dramatic motif to local carvers. As shown here, the two infernal beasts find a close resonance with the representation of snakes or dragons in the Book of Apocalypse - a theme immensely popular in contemporary Iberia, owing in large part to the diffusion of Beatus of Liébana's commentary on the last book of the Bible. Certain stylistic parallels can be drawn between the Mozarabic-influenced illustration of the monumental Silos Apocalypse, completed circa 1090, and the conception of the monstrous and human forms here — namely its recurrent depiction of enormous, contorted serpents, which are not conceived as two- or four-legged dragons as in later French and English Apocalypses. Further affinities include the schematic and symmetric conception of the drapery folds or plates of armour on the creatures' human victims, resonant with the scheme employed in the manuscript (consider, for instance, the group of figures on its fol. 105 v., or the scene showing the Defense of Jerusalem on fol. 222 v.) (fig. 6). Another characteristic is the division of the human torso by a straight vertical line, here applied to the victims' backs and clearly corresponding to a strip of fabric, which lends the body schematic appearance and emphasises the symmetry of its incised decoration (e.g., the figure of St. John on fol. 163 v.) (fig. 7).

Fig. 4 (above)
Man tormented by snakes, St. Isidoro, León.
Photograph uploaded by user 'tiogilito' onto the forum Amigos del Romanico (accessed 4-7-2017).

Fig. 5 (below)
Man tormented by dragons, St. Sernin, Toulouse.
Photograph uploaded by user 'tiogilito' onto the forum Amigos del Romanico (accessed 4-7-2017).

Though an exact provenance of this capital eludes us, it is clearly the product of a sophisticated workshop of early 12th century Spain. Its grand scale, complex iconography and crisp carving are all testament to the great skill and innovation of the anonymous artists of this period.

**Related Literature**


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Palol, Pedro de; Hirmer, Max. Early Medieval Art in Spain, New York, pp. 96, 99, 106, 108-112 Schapiro, Meyer. 'From Mozarabic to Romanesque in Silos', The Art Bulletin, 1939, Vol. 21, No. 4. pp. 312-374.
Whitehill, Walter Muir. 'The Destroyed Romanesque Church of Santo Domingo de Silos', in The Art Bulletin, Vol. 14, No. 4 (December 1932), pp. 316-343
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Fig. 6 The Silos Apocalypse (London, British Library MS Add. 11695, fol. 105 r.)

Fig. 7 The Silos Apocalypse (London, British Library MS Add. 11695, fol. 222 v.)

39

# FIGURE ATTACKED BY FLYING SERPENTS

France, Burgundy

c.1120-50

*24 x 30 x 9 cm*

*limestone. Stone analysed by Annie Blanc in October 2010*
*general surface damage, lower part of the relief has been lost.*

**Provenance**
*Altounian Collection, Mâcon (1905-1947)*

This limestone relief shows a figure attacked by flying serpents beneath a frieze of undulating vine tendrils with leaves. On the left side is a small composite column, the scrolling volute of its capital still visible but the rest lost. The human figure has long hair, parted in the centre, perhaps suggesting that this is a woman. She has drilled pupils, a downturned mouth and abstracted facial features. Her arms come up as she holds on to two snake-like beasts with wings. One of the serpents is almost completely lost, though its head is visible to

the right of the figure. It is difficult to discern the original position of this relief as it may have decorated any number of locations in a medieval church. However, its condition and iconography suggest a location on the exterior of the church.

The iconography bears resemblance to depictions of Luxuria, or lust, a common theme in Burgundian art where the figure usually takes on the form of a tortured naked woman (fig.1). Another comparable example with an image of Luxuria is a spandrel from Cluny, now in the Musée Ochier (fig.2). The figure on the Ochier relief straddles a beast while a serpent reaches for her breasts. Although our figure is not as clearly depicted, the fact that serpents reach for her breasts enables this iconographic interpretation.
The style of this figure, with its oval face, drilled pupils and striated hair is also analogous with sculpture from Burgundy, such as the capitals in the abbey church of

Fig.1 (above)
Capital with a figure of Luxuria
France, Sainte-Marie-la-Madeleine at Vézelay
Early 12th century

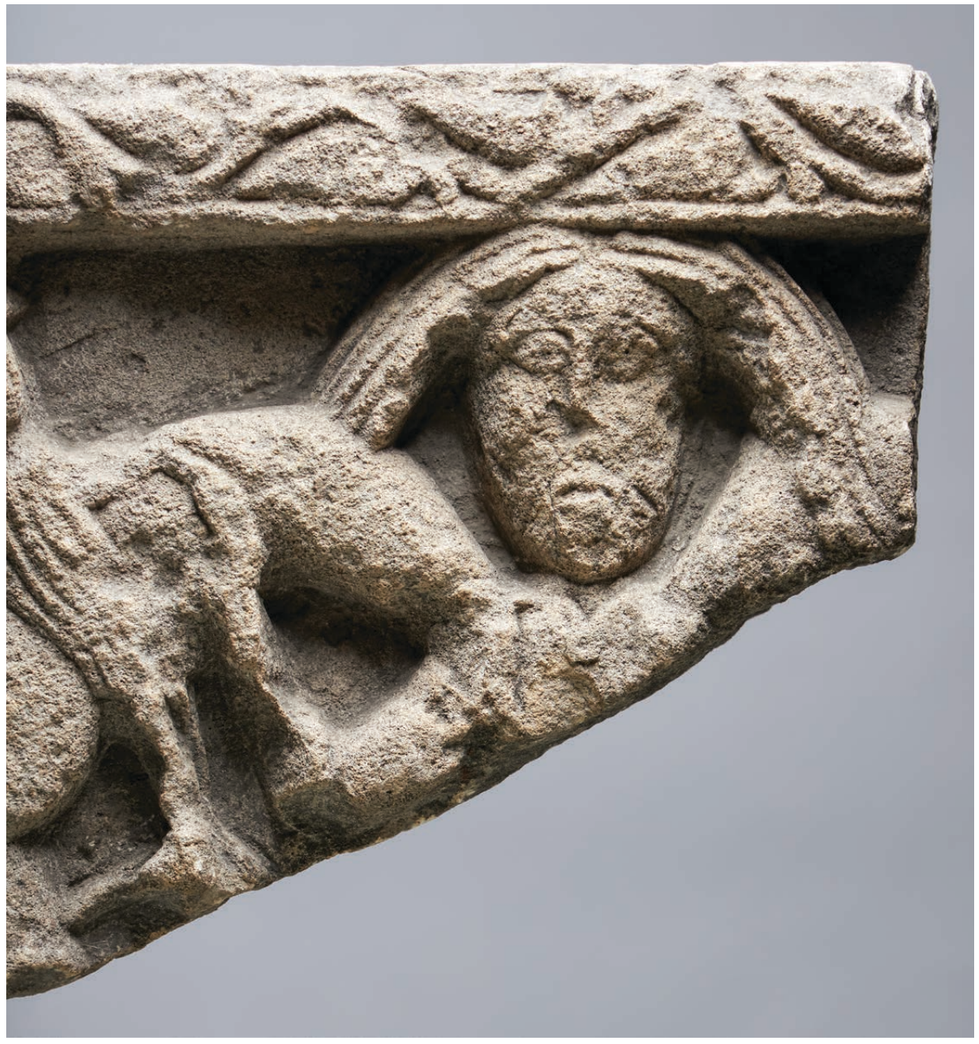


Fig.2 (below)
Luxuria attacked by serpents
France, Burgundy, Cluny
Early 12th century
Cluny, Musée Ochier
Inv. no.06.25

Fig.3
Figure of Libra
France, Vézelay
Early 12th century

**The griffin is so called because it is an animal with feathers and four feet.  They are lions in their entire torso,but they are like eagles in their wings and faces. They areviolently hostile to horses. They also tear humans apart when they see them.**

Isidore of Seville, 7th century CE

40

# A CARVED ROUNDEL WITH TWO GRIFFINS PECKING AT A CROCKET

Veneto-Byzantine

c. 1200

*35 cm (diameter)*

*marble, crack running from top right to bottom left now restored, surface worn*

A roundel carved in relief with two griffins pecking at a crocket. The griffin is a legendary creature with the body of a lion and the head and wings of an eagle. On this panel the two griffins are back-to-back, with their heads turning towards one another, pecking at the crocket which rises between them. Two branches laden with berries descend from the crocket stalk.

Carved roundels such as this in stone and marble were often designed as part of the exterior embellishment of churches, palazzo façades and mercantile buildings such as the Fondaco dei Turchi, in and around Venice from the twelfth century onwards. There are many examples still surviving in situ and a number reside in museum collections. Once removed from their original context and without documentation they are difficult to localize precisely, since they were commonly used and re-used over generations of building history in the Veneto.

The present design derives from a Byzantine prototype. The eight medallions embedded in the marble revetment of the north façade of San Marco are the first known Italian examples, which have been related to the work of the late eleventh-century local ateliers.[1] There is an example with a similar composition in the Walters Art Gallery (fig. 1) Two other roundels with a similar composition can be found at the Detroit Institute of Arts (inv. no. 26.189)[2] and in the Bode Museum.[3]

**Related literature**

E. Arslan, Gothic Architecture in Venice, London, 1972
H. Buchwald, 'The Carved Stone Ornament of the High Middle Ages in San Marco, Venice', Jahrbuch der Oesterreichischen Byzantinischen Gesellschaft, 1962-63
Cahn, Walter and Linda Seidel. Romanesque Sculpture in American Collections, vol. I, New England Museums. New York, 1979.
Darr, Alan P. et al., Catalogue of Italian Sculpture in the Detroit Institute of Arts, vol. I. Detroit, 2002.
Effenberger A. and H-G. Severin. Das Museum für Spätantike und Byzantische Kunst

Fig. 1
Decorative roundel
Italy, Veneto
c. 1200
Walters Art Gallery

1 Zuliani, 1970, p. 156ff., nos. 134-41, and Buchwald, 1962-63, pp. 169-209.
2 Darr, 2002, pp. 46-7, cat. 20.
3 Illustrated in Effenberger, 1992, p. 256, cat. 155.

41

# PEW END DECORATED WITH A GRIFFIN

England, East Anglia

c.1480-1500

*91 x 41.5 x 6 cm*

*oak, in good condition with some wear and staining consistent with age, loss to the one side of the fleur-de-lis terminal*

**Provenance**
*Private Collection, Suffolk until 2015*

A boldly carved oak 'buttress type' pew end terminating in a fleur-de-lis, the arm rest taking the form of a recumbent griffin straddling a pitched roof. The griffin bows his head and wraps his tail around his belly. The arm rest, below the roofline that the griffin straddles, is narrower than the main section of the pew end, giving a sense of separation between the two elements. The edge of the pew between the finial and the shoulder is smooth finished with a simple moulding profile. The main face of the pew is uncarved.

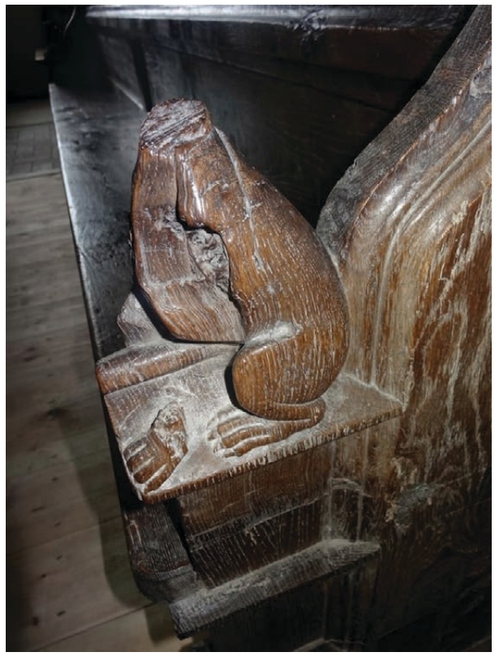
Mythological creatures are often found in the woodwork in English parish churches, either as bench ends or as misericords, straddling the line between sacred and profane. The imagination and craft involved in producing such pews also reflects the rise of the parish church in 15th century England. It was at this time, after England awoke from the aftermath of the Black Death, that a new secular class of patrons entered the scene – a class that was preoccupied with thoughts of life after death. This rising merchant class thus began making substantial contributions to their local churches in order to buy less time in purgatory. Since wood was plentiful, elaborate roofs, choir screens and bench ends, such as this example, began to 'transform' these interiors and to reflect the wealth of their patrons.[1]

Stylistically, finial, or 'poppy head', pew ends are almost exclusively date to the second half of the 15th or the beginning of the 16th century. Comparable pew ends can be found across East Anglian Churches, particularly those retaining their late fifteenth-century furnishings. See in particular the pews at Hitcham Church in Suffolk (fig. 1). As Arthur Gardner has pointed out, it is East Anglian pew-ends that are commonly found with a finial or a poppy head above the main face, which is either plain or traceried.[2] In contrast, pew ends in Somerset, Devon and Cornwall are typically square headed, with carving on the main face.

**Related literature**

Gardner, Arthur. Minor English Wood Sculpture 1400 – 1550. London, 1958.
Tracy, Charles. English Medieval Furniture and Woodwork. V&A: London, 1988.

Fig. 1
Buttress-type pew ends decorated with grotesques
England, East Anglia, Suffolk,
Hitcham Church
Late 15th century



1 Gardner, 1958, pp. 9-10.
2 Ibid. 10.

42

# CAPITAL WITH BEASTS

France, Languedoc

c.1175-1200

*26 x 30 x 24.5 cm*

*limestone*

**Provenance**
*McCarthy Collection, acquired 1999*

Carved in the round, this limestone capital is abundantly decorated with four-legged beasts and animal heads. The most prominent animals on this capital are those positioned under the volutes of the capital. Turning to one another on each face of the capital, these four-legged animals are difficult to identify, although their scales suggest that they might represent lizards. Further snake-like animals slink behind them and four large heads are positioned underneath the abacus in the centre of each capital face. The abacus, which is an integral part of the capital, is decorated by a running scroll with stylised foliage. The size of this capital and the carving on all sides suggests that it originally occupied a cloister arcade in a monastic setting.

The overall composition of our capital is related to a group that are thought to have been made in Toulouse, a major centre of sculpture production in the 12th century. Two analogous examples survive in the Cleveland Museum of Art (fig. 1 – 2). [1] Although the quality among these examples varies, they are all based on the same model. Such decorated cloisters were common in Southern France, home to many famous pilgrimage routes. The pilgrimages brought enormous wealth to the local communities because monasteries were often used as pilgrims' lodges. Powerful orders also set up daughter houses here, further fuelling the wealth of some of the monasteries. By the end of the 12th century, many monasteries and churches in Southern France acquired enough wealth to transform and embellish their buildings. And it is examples such as this capital that give us a glimpse into these transformations.

**Related literature**

Cahn, Walter (ed.). Romanesque Sculpture in American Collections: New York and New Jersey, Middle and South Atlantic States, the Midwest, Western and Pacific States. Turnhout, 1999.

Fig. 1 (above)
Capital with Addorsed Harpies
Southwest France, Languedoc, Toulouse (?)
c. 1200
Cleveland Museum of Art
1916.1983

Fig. 2 (below)
Capital with Addorsed Quadrupeds
Southwest France, Languedoc, Toulouse (?)
Late 12th or early 13th century
Cleveland Museum of Art
1916.1981

1 Walter Cahn (ed.), *Romanesque Sculpture in American Collections: New York and New Jersey, Middle and South Atlantic States, the Midwest, Western and Pacific States* (Turnhout, 1999), 158 -9.

# 43

# THE WODHULL-HARBERTON-MASTER, THE HOUGHTON MASTER, AND OTHER IMPORTANT FLEMISH ARTISTS

Flanders

c. 1490

*175 x 120 mm*

*manuscript on vellum; 162 leaves with 8 full page paintings facing full page borders*

The majority of the full-page miniatures in this near-pristine manuscript are the work of an exceptional Flemish illuminator known as the Master of the Wodhull-Harberton Hours, who married the delicacy and precision of his technique with a thoughtful attention to detail in both narrative and setting.

Although the manuscript is likely lacking a Calendar and six or seven further inserted leaves with miniatures, the text is otherwise complete. The rubrics are in red, 17 lines in brown ink in a gothic bookhand between two verticals and 18 horizontals, top and bottom across margins, ruled in pink, text justification: 94 x 60 mm, one-line initials alternately of blue and burnished gold with penwork flourishing of red and blank respectively, two-line initials of burnished gold against grounds of pink

and blue patterned with white and with hair-line tendrils with golden leaves and trilobe flowers of pink or blue into the margins, eight full-page miniatures surrounded by and facing full-page borders, mostly with sprays of flowers scattered against yellow grounds and including insects, birds or animals, seven further full-page borders of the same type, twelve small miniatures with panel borders, gilt edges, in an 18th century brocade binding.
The manuscript contains the Hours of the Cross ff. 1-6v;

Hours of the Holy Spirit ff. 8-12; Mass of the Virgin followed by Gospel Extracts ff. 14-24v; Office of the Virgin, liturgical use of Rome ff.26-89: matins f.26,lauds f.42, prime f.52, terce f. 57, sext f. 61, none f. 65, vespers f. 69, compline f.77, variants for Advent f. 82; Seven Penitential Psalms and Litany ff. 90-104v; Office of the Dead, liturgical use of Rome ff. 106-145v; Suffrages to the Trinity, St Michael, St John the Baptist, St Christopher, St Sebastian, St Anthony Abbot, St Nicholas, St Francis, St Mary Magdalene, St Catherine, St Barbara and All Saints ff 146-154; Prayers to the Virgin, Obsecro te and O Intemerata ff. 156-161v.

The artist of most of the full page miniatures is known as the Master of the Wodhull Harberton-Hours, named after a Dutch Book of Hours of exactly the same dimensions as our manuscript and including 8 large miniatures. There is an unusual quality of emotional engagement and intensity in the master's protagonists. This is particularly evident, appropriately, in the scenes of divine manifestation, whether the neurotic distraction of some of the Apostles in the Pentecost scene or the hooded mourner standing and contemplating the freshly dug grave in the burial scene.

Some debt to illuminators active in the 1470s is evident in these compositions - the night-time Annunciation to the shepherds is influenced by the Master of the First Prayer Book of Maximilian in the London Hours of William Lord Hastings (BL, Add.Ms 54782). The Annunciation is also remarkably close to the miniature leaf by the newly-named Master of the Houghton Miniatures, now in the Getty Museum (Ms. 60),[1] while the Lamentation recalls the Vienna Master of Mary of Burgundy in the Vienna Hours (ÖNB, Ms.1857). This indicates a date no later than around 1490 for the present manuscript, a suggestion supported by the conservative style of the subsidiary decoration, particularly the two-line initials and hairline tendril part-borders that spring from them. The style of some of the other full-page miniatures shows some relationship to the Master of the Dresden Prayerbook in their animation and anecdote but modified by the polish and elegance of the finest work of the Master of the Prayer Books of around 1500. It is to this latter Master and his workshop that three of the

1 Kren and McKendrick, 2003, no. 32a, pp. 169-173.

full-page miniatures (the Visitation, the Massacre of the Innocents and the Lamentation) and all of the smaller miniatures can be attributed.

The borders too are closely comparable with those found in the finest of the Wodhull-Harberton and the Prayer Books Master's manuscripts. For example, the green ground with growing irises joined by flower-sprays and insects that is opposite the Massacre of the Innocents in the present manuscript is a similar composition to the border around the most famous of the Prayer Books Master's miniatures, the Dance of Sir Mirth in the Roman de la Rose in London (Harley Ms 4425). It has been pointed out that the Prayer Books Master knew the work of the Master of the Dresden Prayer Book.[2]
It seems likely that the Wodhull-Harberton-Master who painted the majority of the delightful and accomplished full-page miniatures of the present manuscript had developed in the same context and absorbed the same influences as the Prayer Books Master himself, after having been trained in the Northern Netherlands.

The subjects of the full-page miniatures are as follows:
folio 7v Pentecost, with the disciples ranged over a domestic interior, mostly looking up at the dove, the Virgin seated at centre, a book in her lap; surrounding and facing borders with strawberries, columbines, knotweed and veronicas with flies, a sheep and a cat (Wodhull-Harberton Master);
folio 13v, Virgo Lactans with music-making angels, with the Virgin and Child seated in a landscape, a large house in the middle-ground; the surrounding and facing borders with veronicas, pansies, strawberry sprays and pink acanthus with a snail, a fly, butterflies and a rabbit and a border miniature of a priest and man at communion (Wodhull-Harberton Master);

folio 25v, the Annunciation, set in a detailed domestic interior, the surrounding and facing borders with a pot and sprays of carnations, veronicas, flies and butterflies and a man- faced monkey (Wodhull-Harberton Master);
folio 41v, Visitation, the Virgin and Elizabeth meet in front of a river, a man on a bridge in the middle ground and a complex of domestic buildings behind them; surrounding and facing borders with acanthus sprays, birds, strawberries and pansies (Master of the Prayer Books);
folio 56v, Annunciation to the shepherds, a nocturnal scene with two startled shepherds and their dog looking up at the pink-robed angel in a mandorla in the sky above, in the background further shepherds and their flock; the surrounding and facing borders with sprays of flowers, fruit and insects (Master of the Houghton Miniatures?);

folio 76v, Massacre of the Innocents, a woman kneeling as a soldier stabs infant in the her foreground, two women fleeing into a large house, a further group of struggling mothers and soldiers an the hillside behind; the surrounding and facing borders with sprays of flowers and insects (Master of the Prayer Books);

2 Kren and S. McKendrick, 2003, p. 394.

folio 105v, Funeral and burial Service, the priest and mourners stand around the catalogue in front of the altar inside a church, in the foreground a gravedigger stands in the grave, he is_digging the pavement of the choir; surrounding and facing borders with flowers, insects, skulls, scrolls and a man ringing handbells (Wodhull-Harberton Master).

folio 155v, Lamentation with Nicodemus supporting the body of Christ and the Evangelist holding the Virgin, Joseph of Arimathea looking on, Calvary in the background and the towers of Jerusalem beyond; borders with flower sprays , a hare, pig, dog, grotesques, birds and insects (Master of the Prayer Books).

Further full-page borders with sprays of fruit and flowers interspersed with birds, insects and, occasionally, grotesques or figures are found on folios 52, 65, 69, 82 and 90. Those on folios 65 and 82 have divided and coloured grounds: that on folio 1 includes a squirrel and an angel presenting the Instruments of the Passion, and that on folio 90 a donkey in rear-view, grazing amongst thistles, stocks, forget-me-nots and strawberries.

The small miniatures with panel borders are by the Master of the Borders in the IsabellaBreviary and his workshop ur. on forios 146r, 146v, 147r, 147v, 148r, 149v, 150r, 150v, 151r, 152r, 153r, 153v and represent the Trinity, St Michael with the dragon, St John the Baptist, St Christopher, St Sebastian, St Anthony, St Nicolas, St Francis receiving the Stigmata, St Mary Magdalene, St Catherine, St Barbara, and All Saints.

**Provenance**

The manuscript's first owner is likely to have been the male donor shown receiving communion from a priest in the marginal border miniature of fol. 14, accompanied by the image of the Virgo Lactans - there is no other reasonable explanation for this rare scene, especially since the Virgo Lactans was an iconographic topos often accompanied by a donor at the time this manuscript was executed. (There may well have been a coat of arms for him or his family on the first page of the Calendar, which is now lacking). The Offices of the Virgin and of the Dead are for the liturgical use of Rome and prayers are in the masculine form which also supports this hypothesis. In 1865 the manuscript was sold by Ellis to the famous book-collector Lord Aldenham (Henry Hucks Gibbs); it is described in his private catalogue of 1876 on p. 76. Thence sold at the Aldenham sale, Sotheby's, 23rd March 1937, lot 178 (illustrated). Since then, in French private collections.

**Related literature**

Kren, Thomas and Scot McKendrick eds. *Illuminating the Renaissance: The Triumph of Flemish Manuscript Painting in Europe*. Los Angeles, 2003.

44

# DOG-HUMAN HYBRID GARGOYLE

France

c.1350-1400

*82 x 48.5 x 35 cm*

*limestone, surface wear typical of gargoyles of this age, minor restoration to the front of its left arm*

**Provenance**
*Private Collection, Cantal*

A crouching gargoyle in the form of a stylised dog-human hybrid. The creature's limbs and neck are elongated but it has a round protruding belly. It holds its left hand up to its open mouth, which functioned as a downspout, and its right hand on his genitals. While its long legs and arms suggest that this is a human, its snout and floppy ears denote that it is in fact a hybrid of sorts. The large block of stone underneath the gargoyle would have originally acted as a support for the sculpture which hung over the roof of the building in order to redirect the water away from the walls. Since the creature was seen from far below, its forms were simplified in order to concentrate on bold, legible carving. In this respect, correct anatomical detail has been sacrificed for maximum dramatic effect.

The sculpture can be compared to 13th and 14th century examples from France, such as those that survive from Trois and from Rouen (fig. 1). Another comparison can also be drawn with a 14th century gargoyle, now in a private collection (fig. 2). The intentional offensive nature of creatures like these is linked to those medieval philosophies much discussed by Michael Camille, who argued that the sacred and the profane were not as distinct in the Middle Ages as they are today. Rude and offensive imagery thus had an important role next to the imagery meant to instruct. It provided a contrast. The margins of medieval churches were thus full of imagery that is obscene, offensive and humorous. In this guise, the message communicated what not to do.

**Related literature**

Camille, Michael. Image on the Edge: the Margins of Medieval Art, 1992.
Benton, Jannetta. Medieval Mischief: Wit and Humour in the Art of the Middle Ages. Stroud, 2004.
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Fig. 1
Woman gargoyle
France, Troyes, St. Urbain
Late 13th century

Fig. 2
Headless gargoyle (below)
France, Ile de France
14th century
Richard Wiseman Collection

**Mermaids or sirens draw sailors, enticed by the song, into shipwreck. In truth, they were harlots, who, because they would seduce passers-by into destitution, were imagined as bringing shipwreck upon them. They were said to have had wings and talons because sexual desire both flies and wounds. They are said to have lived among the waves because the waves gave birth to Venus.**

Isidore of Seville, 7th century CE

45

# THE SENATORIAL APPOINTMENT OF UGO CAVAZZI DELLA SOMAGLIA BY LUDOVICO MARIA SFORZA, DUKE OF MILAN, WITH MERMAIDS

Italy, Milan

Dated 21 July 1495

*452 x 600 mm*

**Provenance**
*Collection of Bernard H. Breslauer (1918–2004), acquired c.1979*


This richly decorated document pronounces the appointment of Ugo Cavazzi della Somaglia to the Senate by Ludovico Maria Sforza, documenting the power shifts that occurred after the suspicious death of his nephew Gian Galeazzo in 1494. The first line has Ludovico's name and his titles in gold. Ugo is mentioned at the beginning of line 4 ('Ugonem Canacum Somalię') and again in lines 10 and 13. The last line of the main text provides the date 'die xxj Julij Mo cccco Lxxxxo quinto', i.e. 21 July 1495. This line is in darker ink, suggesting that the document was prepared some days in advance – perhaps to allow time for the illumination – and subsequently dated on the day that the appointment was officially made. Below this to the left is a subscription dated three days later ('Mcccco Lxxxquinto die xxiiijo Julij') stating that Count Ugo has been admitted to the Senate. Part of the archive of the Cavazzi della Somaglia family is in the Archivio di Stato, Milan, and includes several documents concerning Ugo, dating from 1470 to 1539.

Ludovico Sforza's arms are at the centre of the upper margin, surmounted by a coronet with laurel and palm fronds, and flanked by his emblems – a bucket of tar hanging from flaming branches. The middle of the lower margin depicts a mermaid and a merman, whose tails end in scrolling foliate, each holding another Sforza emblem: she holds a little brush (*scopetta*) and he holds a horse's bit (*morso*). The initial 'L' of Ludovico's name in the first line is in the form of two branches of a rose bush, around which is entwined the biscione, the azure viper with a red child in its mouth, emblem of the Visconti and Sforza family as Dukes of Milan. Below this is a naturalistic hart and semi-naturalistic scrolling foliage enclosing a Renaissance jewel set with pearls and precious stones.

Ludovico Maria Sforza (1452–1508), Duke of Milan, is perhaps best remembered today as a major patron of Leonardo da Vinci, commissioning both his Last Supper fresco and of the clay model for a vast bronze equestrian statue that was famously destroyed by the French army in 1499. The second son of Francesco I Sforza and Biana Maria Visconti, Ludovico's elder brother, Galeazzo Maria, succeeded to the throne when their father died in 1466. When Galeazzo Maria was assassinated in 1476, he left the throne to his seven-year-old son Gian Galeazzo, Ludovico's nephew. Ludovico defeated the boy's mother, Bona of Savoy, in a power struggle to become Regent, and when Gian Galeazzo died under suspicious circumstances in October 1494 (just ten months before the date of the present document), Ludovico was able to assume the ducal title in his own right.

At the lower right of the document is the signature of 'B. Chalcus' of Bartolomeo Calco, ducal secretary under Gian Galeazzo, who was granted the title of cavaliere in 1489 on the occasion of the ceremonial entry of the duke and his wife, Isabella of Aragon, into Milan. Under Ludovico he became head of the ducal chancery, primo segretario ducale, and was thus responsible for overseeing all kinds of business transactions, as well as granting to scholars the privilege of borrowing books, drawings, and maps from the ducal library.

**Exhibited**
Pierpont Morgan Library, 1992 (published in W.M. Voelkle and R.S. Wieck. *The Bernard H. Breslauer Collection of Manuscript Illuminations*. New York, 1992, no.87, p.218 and facing pl.)

**Related literature**
Pellegrin, E. 'Diplomes armoriés et enluminés'. In *La bibliotheque des Visconti et des Sforza ducs de Milan au XVe siècle*. Paris, 1955.
Bascapè, G.C. 'Diplomi miniati delle cancellerie Viscontea e Sforzesca'. In *Città di Milano* 58 (1941): pp.39–47.

# 46

# A CAPED GROTESQUE HOLDING A SOUP BOWL AND SPOON

France, Normandy

c. 1330

*13.3 x 8.2 cm*

*clear crown glass with silver stain and vitreous enamel*

**Provenance**
*Collection of Charles Gordon House (1932-2004);*
*Sold by his estate in 2005*

A writhing beast with the head of a human, a long hairy tail, apelike hands and feet, and a grimacing face growing from its posterior, floats against a black background patterned with thin, vine-like plant tendrils. The figure holds a soup bowl in the toes of its single foot, and raises a long-handled spoon to its lips using long, delicate fingers. Grotesques and hybrid creatures of exactly this kind, often termed *grylli*, can be found populating the margins of illuminated manuscripts in the years around 1325, and can be used to date our glass accordingly. Especially close in style to our beast are those littering the *Hours of Jeanne d'Évreux,* executed between 1325 and 1328, which incorporate the same twisting, hair-covered anatomies (figs. 1-2). The cusped background ornament made with the use of stick lighting, the narrow black border used to frame it, and the broad outermost band of yellow, are of a treatment identical to three other grotesque glass panels attributable to the same workshop and now preserved at the musée de Cluny, Paris (fig. 3). They are attributed in the surrounding scholarship to a Normandy workshop due to the presence in Rouen Cathedral, the church of Saint-Ouen in the same city, and Évreux Cathedral a few kilometres away, of a closely related style of glass painting, and a similarly intricate use of silver stain.[1] Ours seems more intricate even than those in the Cluny museum, due to the unique presence in this case of a fine tendril design, scratched back into the black of the background all around the figure, but it must have been created in the same workshop.

**Related Literature**
Lagabrielle, Sophie, *Vitraux: Musée national du Moyen Âge – Thermes et hôtel de Cluny.* Paris, 2006.

Fig. 1
Jean Pucelle
Detail of a hooded grotesque, from the Hours of Jeanne d'Évreux, fol. 50v
New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, inv. 54.1.2

Fig. 2
Detail of a piping female grotesque, from the Hours of Jeanne d'Évreux, fol. 143r
New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, inv. 54.1.2

Fig. 3
Two grisaille panels with grotesques
France, Normandy
c. 1325-30

1 Lagabrielle, 2006, pp. 57-9.

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