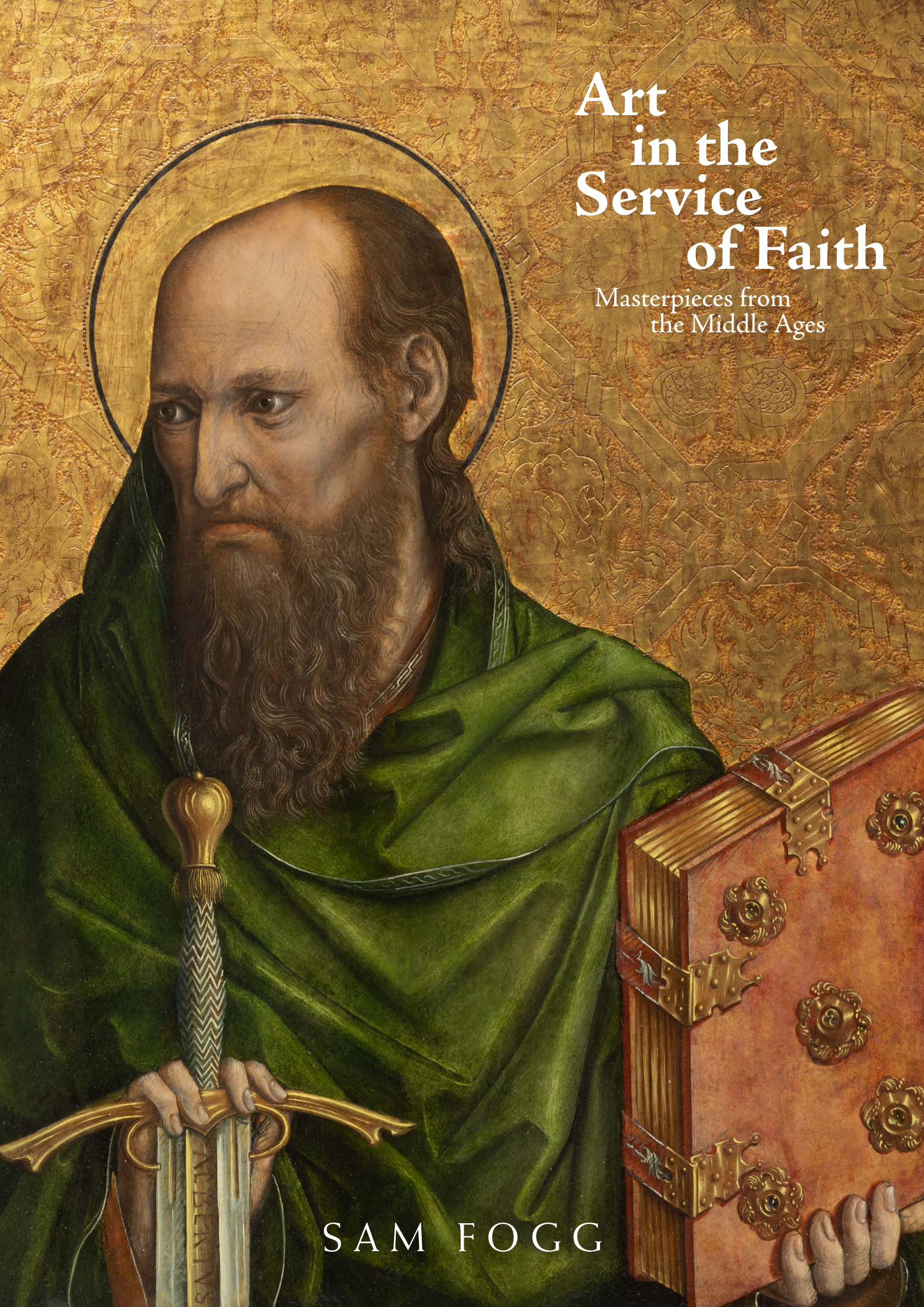


A detailed portrait of a bearded man, likely a saint or scholar, wearing a green robe and holding a sword and a book. The background is a gold leaf pattern. The man has a long, dark beard and a halo. The sword has a gold hilt and a silver blade. The book is red with gold clasps. The overall style is that of a medieval manuscript illumination.

Art in the Service of Faith

Masterpieces from
the Middle Ages

SAM FOGG

Art in the Service of Faith

Masterpieces from the Middle Ages

29 May - 10 July

Introduction

Writing in the twelfth century, the French cleric, statesman, and one-time regent Abbot Suger (d. 1151) imagined faith as an experience shaped by the material things with which he surrounded himself. Artistic invention, craftsmanship, and the rarefied world of precious objects were, for him, stepping stones to higher contemplation. They called him away from external cares and allowed his thoughts to wander from the ‘slime of the earth’ toward the ‘purity of Heaven’. The more refined the work, the more powerfully it could lift the faithful toward God.

Modern ideas about the Middle Ages often portray the period as dark, primitive, or intellectually backward—a time caught between the achievements of the ancient world and the Renaissance. Suger’s words, however, help bring us sharply to our senses. Here was a man who strongly supported the arts, encouraged artistic excellence, and valued beauty in the material world. He believed that art created in the service of faith could move people emotionally, intellectually, and spiritually. Although Suger expressed these ideas more fully than most thinkers of his time, he was not unique. His way of thinking is vividly reflected in the extraordinary outpouring of creativity that medieval art still has the power to convey many centuries later. From gemstones to stained-glass windows, from the smallest goldsmith’s work to the largest cathedrals, all artistry was sacred—and perfection the goal.

This catalogue and its accompanying exhibition brings together more than thirty masterpieces of medieval art, including paintings, sculpture, goldsmith’s work, stained glass, and manuscript illumination, created by artisans working between the twelfth and sixteenth centuries. Together, they reveal the extraordinary aesthetic innovations reshaping Europe during this period and the remarkable range of materials mastered by artists whose skills rival—and at times surpass—those of any generation since.

Matthew Reeves



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An incense burner surmounted by a lioness
Southern Mediterranean, Spain, Coptic Egypt
or Constantinople
c. 6th-8th century





An enamelled reliquary chasse with applied angels and cabochons
South-central France, Limoges
c. 1210



A large morse clasp showing the Annunciation
South-central France, Limoges
c. 1250-1270





An enameled gemellion depicting Saint Martin and four scenes of courtly love
France, Limoges
c. 1240

A large window panel painted with scrolling vine work in grisaille
Northern France, perhaps Normandy
c. 1250-1270





Head of an Angel
Northern France, Artois, Arras
c. 1280

The Virgin Mary Nursing the Christ Child
Northern France, Normandy or Paris
c. 1310-1320





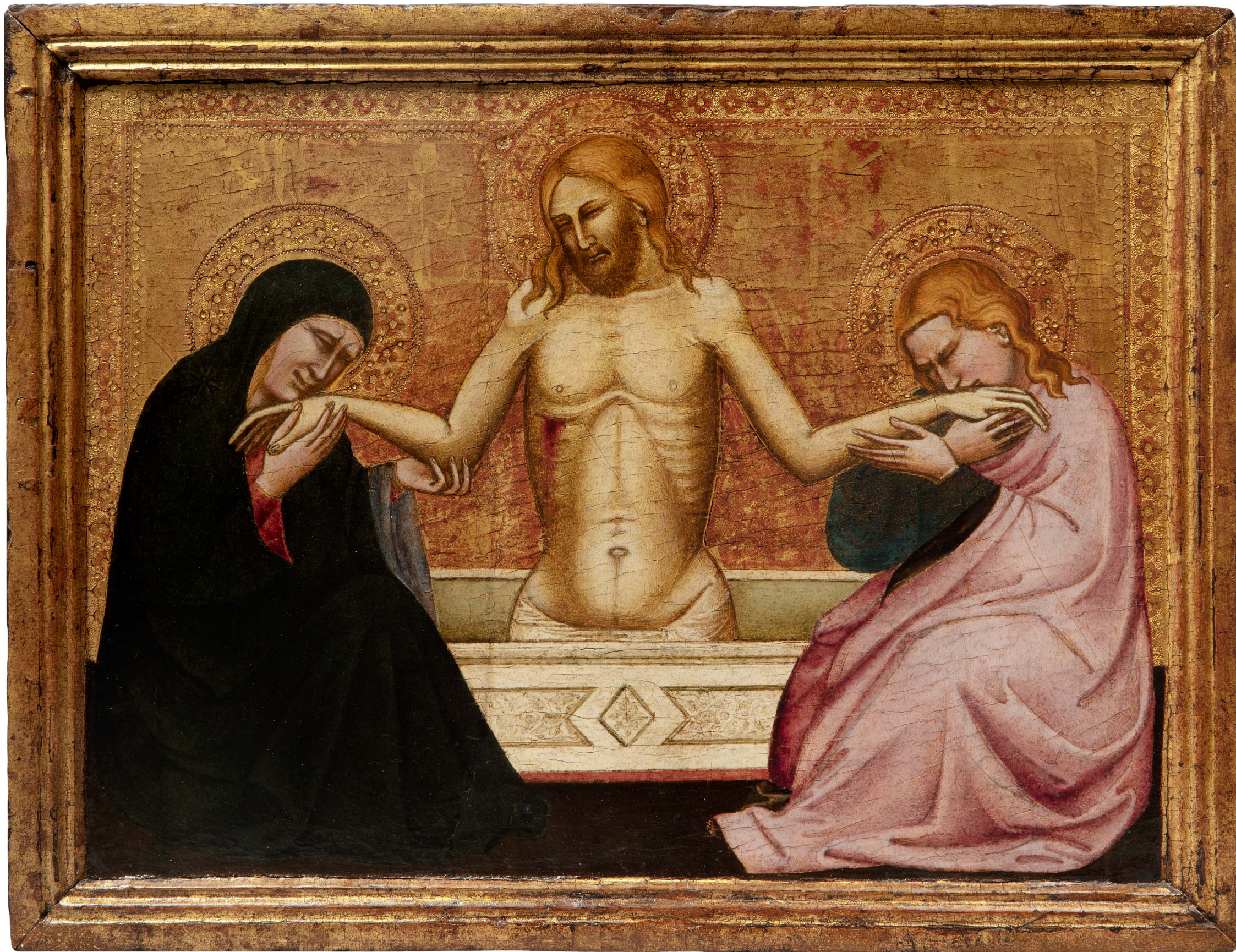


An Illuminated Initial 'E' from a Dominican Antiphonary
Germany, Cologne
c. 1325-1350



Bartolo di Fredi (c. 1330-1410)
 Saints John the Baptist and John the Evangelist
 Italy, Tuscany, Siena
 c. 1375





Jacopo di Cione (doc. 1362-1398)
Christ in Pity between the Virgin and Saint John
Italy, Tuscany, Florence
c. 1390



Tommaso del Mazza (active 1377-1392)
 A vision of the Madonna and Child, with Saints Anthony Abbot, Catherine, Margaret and Julian
 Italy, Tuscany, Florence
 c. 1390s





The Master of the Joinville-Vignory Workshop
Saint John the Baptist and the Mystic Lamb
France, Marne Valley
c. 1410s

The Angel of the Annunciation
Austria
c. 1430s





Saint Peter with his Keys
Southern Germany
c. 1440

João Afonso (doc. 1433-1469)
Saint Michael trouncing the Devil
 Central Portugal, Coimbra
 c. 1450





João Afonso (doc. 1433-1469)
Saint Anthony the Great
Central Portugal, Coimbra
c. 1450





A Cypress-wood chest with the Annunciation
Northeastern Italy, Veneto
c. 1450-1475



Fernando Gallego (Salamanca, active 1468-1507)
 Saint Albert the Great, from the Ciudad Rodrigo retable
 Spain, Castile, Salamanca
 1480-1488



The Holy Face
Northern Italy or South Tyrol
c. 1480



an. Veni sancte spūs. **v.** E mitte spm. **oro**

E mmpotens sempiternus deus

*Si Orpheus jadis l'eust entendue,
La sienne, il eust à quelque arbre pendue.
Si Ariem l'eust ouï resonner,
Plus de la sienne, il n'eust voulu sonner.
Et si Phœbus un coup l'eust escoutée,
La sienne, il eust en cent piéces boutée.*

In septem psalmis à Ne remissaris. ps.



omne nem
furore tuo ar
tibus me ne
qz in ira tua
corripas me.

AD. i scire
mei domine
qm infirmus
sum sana
me domine
qm contur

luta sunt ossa mea. **E**t anima mea turbata
est valde sed tu dñe usquequo. **C**onuer
te dñe z eripe animam meam saluum me fac
propter misericordiam tuam. **Q**uoniam non est in
morte qui memor sit tui in inferno aut
quis confitebitur tibi. **L**aboraavi in gemitu
meo lauabo per singulas noctes lectum
meum lacrimis meis stratum meum rigabo.
Turbatus est a furore oculus meus in
ueterem inter omnes inimicos meos. **D**isce
dite a me omnes qui operamini iniquitatem:
qm exaudivit dñs vocem fletus mei. **Or**



Saint George and the Dragon
Austria, Tyrol
c. 1490





The Annunciation in grisaille
Central Europe
c. 1490-1500



A pile of nested weights, commissioned by the King of Portugal Manuel I
Cast in Nuremberg and handled through a Flemish agent
Dated 1499





The Annunciation, the Dormition and the Nativity, from a monumental altarpiece
Southern Germany or Tyrol
c. 1480-1500



The Virgin Annunciate
Italy, Tuscany, Siena
c. 1500







Mair von Landshut (active 1485-1510) and workshop
Christ among the Doctors
Southern Germany, Bavaria, Landshut
c. 1500

Saint Martin cutting his cloak for the Beggar
Southern Netherlands or Northern France
c. 1500





The Master of Delft (active 1490-1520) and workshop
The Holy Kinship
Northern Netherlands, Delft
c. 1510s



Veit Hirschvogel, after a design by Hans Suess von Kulmbach
Saint Vitus with the Arms of the Imhof Family
Germany, Nuremberg
c. 1500-1510 (possibly 1504)





The Ulm Master (active Ulm from c. 1500), or his circle
Portrait of a Patrician Lady
Southern Germany, Swabia, Ulm
c. 1510-1520

Saint Christopher
 Eastern Netherlands, Limburg
 c. 1500-1520





S A M F O G G