

While the volume seeks to contextualize each object, its main focus is clearly on the aesthetic value of the objects, on the book as a work of art. Each book is introduced with a photograph of the opened object and half a page of introductory text underneath, followed by several pages of full-page or even double-page photographs. Beautifully designed and lavishly illustrated, this book is aimed at a wider interested public, who will find the accompanying texts helpful, clear, and informative. Volkmar Herre's photographs, which take center stage, revel in the aesthetic and material qualities of the objects, the surface texture of the parchment, the gleaming gold leaf, the minute details of drawings, woodcuts, and calligraphy. Yet some of these also offer tantalizing hints to codicologists and book historians: there is a plethora of historical bindings, and many of the book fragments presented in the last section of the volume have not been separated from the bindings in which they were reused, as has been the case in many other libraries.

While this sumptuous publication will not meet a manuscript researcher's needs, it does succeed in throwing a spotlight on a little-known historical collection and will hopefully stimulate more scholarly interest both in individual objects and in the as yet insufficiently studied late medieval and early modern book culture of the region.

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The Burke Collection of Italian Manuscript Paintings. Sandra Hindman and Federica Toniolo, eds.

London: Paul Holberton Publishing, 2021. 472 pp. £80.

The Burke Collection, assembled over the last two decades by T. Robert Burke and Katherine States Burke, is on deposit in Special Collections at the Stanford Libraries of Stanford University. Open to researchers and students, it comprises works produced in Italy from the twelfth to sixteenth centuries, predominantly manuscript paintings and leaves from choir books (antiphonals and graduals that contain the music for the divine offices and the mass, respectively) and their liturgical counterparts (breviaries and missals). Sandra Hindman and Federica Toniolo bring together essays on the collection's forty-two illuminations and two complete manuscripts into a beautiful catalogue, introduced by Christopher de Hamel and organized by chronology and geographic region. Seventeen prominent scholars from North America and Europe contribute artist biographies and individual catalogue entries. While thirty-five artists from six regions of Italy are represented (Umbria, Tuscany, Emilia Romagna, Lombardy, Veneto, and Lazio), the clear strength in the Burke Collection lies in works produced in Florence and Siena during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

Each catalogue entry includes a description of the item; its general condition, provenance, and exhibition history; a list of sister leaves and parent manuscript (if known); a bibliography of relevant scholarly literature; and a detailed commentary. The volume also includes a comprehensive bibliography and helpful indexes. The commentaries, the volume's strongest asset, situate the individual paintings and painters in their wider artistic and cultural contexts, offering comparisons with other works that share stylistic or iconographic qualities, and illustrating the pictorial conventions that distinguish each of the geographic regions. The entries include high-quality, full-page reproductions of the manuscript paintings, accompanied by images of details drawn from the paintings' parent manuscripts, sister leaves, or other works completed by the artists. One of the key messages of the volume is that manuscript painters in Italy, especially those producing large-scale illumination in choir books, were masters of many media, deftly working in manuscript, fresco, and panel painting, and, in some cases, stained glass, metals, and precious stones.

Although often termed *miniatures*, the manuscript paintings in the Burke Collection are not small in scale, which in part accounts for the volume's focus on locating these works within traditions of larger-scale production: panel paintings and frescoes. Choir books, unlike books of hours or personal devotional books, were created for communal worship and, when open, could span several feet. They contain not only illuminated initials, but musical notation, text, and marginal decoration to guide the choristers. The initials in some cases exceed two feet in height and are excised from much larger folios. The books from which these paintings derive were often so large that they stayed permanently in place in the church or chapel.

Some kind of visual reference to illustrate scale would have been helpful in showing the enormous size of a choir book in situ and in grounding the authors' comparisons between the Burke Collection's manuscript paintings and contemporaneous panel paintings and altarpieces. This is my only quibble with an otherwise superbly illustrated volume that provides clear and accessible content about the production and use of illuminated choir books.

De Hamel likens the Burke Collection's manuscript paintings to the young Florentines in Boccaccio's *Decameron* who, fleeing the Plague, took refuge in a garden and shared stories to pass the time. The comparison provides a scaffold for the different stories De Hamel recounts in the introduction. He charts the history of choir book production and the development and use of graduals and antiphonals in the late Middle Ages. He then turns his attention to the bibliomania and history of the paintings' collection in Regency and Victorian England, focusing on the important role of two major collectors and their associated London auctions in driving the hunger for manuscript paintings among British collectors. De Hamel also charts the changing attitudes among (predominantly Protestant) collectors toward the collection and preservation of manuscript paintings from Catholic liturgical books as well as their attitudes about the ethics of excising paintings from manuscripts. These histories are brought to life

through De Hamel's conversational style and anecdotes. The reader feels like a confidante leaning in to hear the latest juicy gossip from a trusted insider.

A handsome volume, well-designed and beautifully produced, *The Burke Collection of Italian Manuscript Paintings* contains delights to please a variety of readers and will be of particular interest to scholars of manuscript studies, liturgical music, and the history of collection.

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Women's Labour and the History of the Book in Early Modern England.

Valerie Wayne, ed.

London: The Arden Shakespeare, 2020. xvi + 320 pp. \$100.

In the past fifteen years, there has been a surge of interest in women's book history. This collection makes a significant contribution to the field by offering new strategies for locating historical data, new frameworks for interpreting data, and new arguments about individual female stationers, writers and editors, and readers. The collection is organized around the concept of women's labor. As Valerie Wayne notes in her introduction, women's labor has not been a central concept in the study of early modern book history; here, it proves to be a fruitful organizing principle that asks us to consider together the various forms of work undertaken by women of different social classes. Thus we find essays on poor and middle-class women involved in the financial and material practices of book production; essays on elite or educated women who were authors or editors; and essays on middling and elite women who read, collected, and annotated books. All the essays discuss the challenges of working with early modern imprints, the bibliographic records in the STC, and the databases that often obscure women's labor. In response, the authors offer a diverse set of strategies for teasing out, speculating about, and assessing women's activities. The collection explicitly builds on Helen Smith's *'Grossly Material Things': Women and Book Production in Early Modern England* (2012), and she provides the afterword.

The first section deals with women who labored in making books. Heidi Craig examines representations of the itinerant women and girls who scavenged the rags that were used to make paper. The next four essays (and the introduction) examine stationers, and the reader will want to have EEBO open while reading these chapters. Alan Farmer identifies a previously unrecognized network of widow stationers from the 1630s and debunks the notion that printers' widows were often pursued by men who wanted to take over their dead husbands' businesses. Sarah Neville examines stationers who printed works under their names but were also involved in the production of texts that make no explicit references to them. She argues that scholars should