



Littera Scripta

the written word

Medieval illuminated manuscript leaves

Incunabula & early printed leaves

Books & Ephemera



Newsletter June 2021

Here are a number of new items, both printed and manuscript with dates from c.1390 to c.1510. None are yet listed on the website so for more details and photos contact us and we'll respond promptly. All leaves are mounted in archival materials, ready to frame and are unconditionally guaranteed genuine.

Prices are in Australian dollars. Free postage for purchases over \$500. Items may be combined to reach this figure.

PRINTED LEAVES.

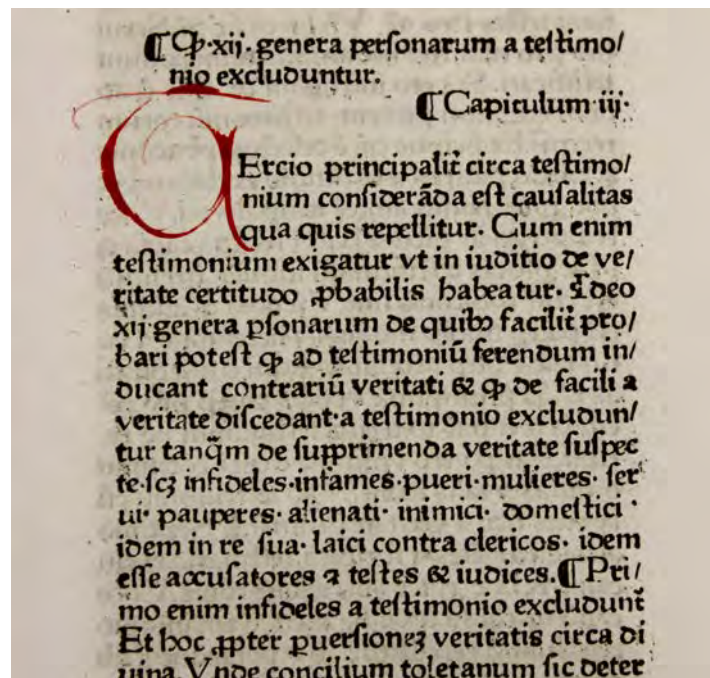
From Folio to Octavo, from 1474 to 1498, a selection of recently acquired incunabula leaves, many with hand colouring in red, blue and/or yellow.

A superbly printed leaf with hand rubrication, printed by Zainer on high quality rag paper in 1474. The text is from the *Pantheologia* of Rainerius of Pisa - a dictionary of theological concepts written in 1331 and influenced by the works of Thomas Aquinas. A very large leaf (405x285 mm.) with Jenson-like placement of the text on the page, a delight to the eye.

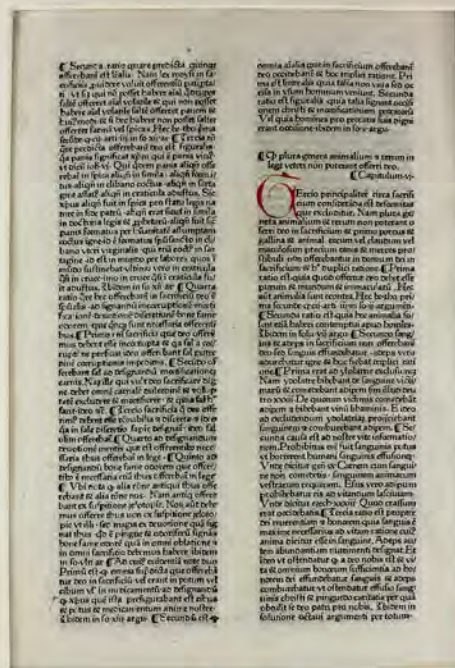
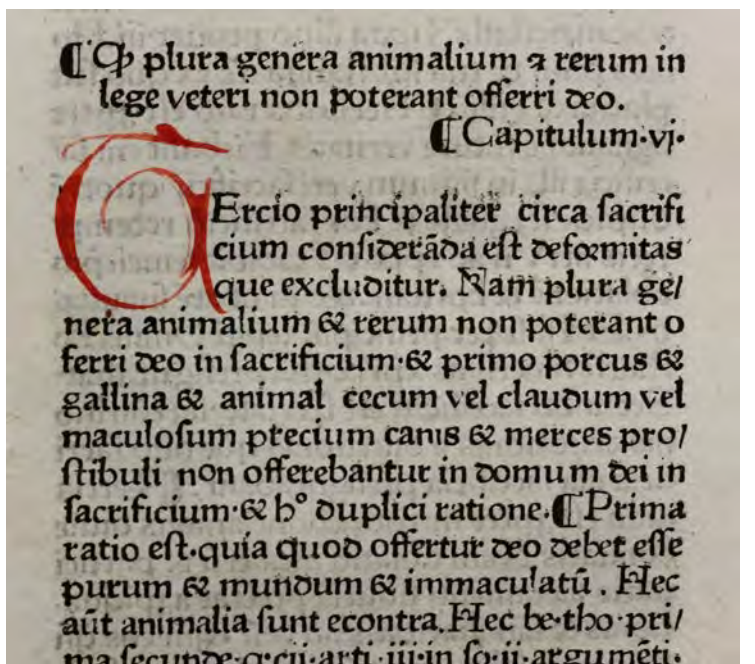
Chapter 3 concerns Rainerius' discussion on "12 types of persons excluded from giving testimony". They include "infidels, the infamous, boys, women (!), servants, paupers, aliens, enemies and domestics."

Item **PSA163.**

\$225



Another *Pantheologia* leaf with Rainerius' discussion on animal sacrifices. The chapter heading above the initial reads: "Many kinds of animals, under the old law, were not able to be offered to God". Excellent condition, ready to frame. Item **PSA140. \$195.**



The Decretals of Pope Gregory IX, a collection of medieval canon law, printed by Peter Drach in 1486.

The gloss (commentary by the noted Italian canonist Bernard of Botone) surrounds the encyclicals in the centre of the page.

The numerous three-line red initials were printed in a second pass through the press, after the black text was printed.

A very large (425x290 mm.) leaf of this important compilation of papal legislation. It is a splendid example of early printing from a lavish and remarkably large folio edition of this work. The leaf is the size of the Gutenberg Bible.

Apart from several worm holes and slight edge browning, the leaf is in fine condition, a testament to the quality of the paper and the printing skills of Drach.

Mounted in archival materials,

Item **PSA131**

\$180

A tiny, scarce leaf from the 1495 second edition of the first Bible printed in Octavo by Johann Froben, founder of a great printer's dynasty and friend of Erasmus. The size of Froben's Bible conforms to that of many 13C manuscript Bibles. Froben used an unusually small but very clear gothic font in 7 point size. The Bible was known as the "Poor Man's Bible" because it was convenient to carry and easily affordable.

The Book of Tobias with coloured initials added by hand. Leaf size: 150x105 mm. Fine condition, a small notation in brown ink in the margin.

Item **PSA153** \$140



The "Poor Man's Bible"



Glossed Bible leaf, coloured initials added by hand. Koberger, 1487



Anton Koberger, best known for his monumental work, the Nuremberg Chronicle, printed this Bible in December of 1487. Koberger used Nicolaus de Lyra's biblical commentary for the gloss, which is in the smaller type. Fine condition, a small stain in the top margin, edge browning. Leaf size 310x220 mm. The text in the larger type is The Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews. **PSA138** \$140

Secundus pbs



Secundus artemensis pbs hoc tpe in pto fuit qui semp silentii seruans pythagorica vita duxit: cuius tacturnitas ca bec fuit. Qd cu mare ppiā de illicito cōcubitu tēpasse: illa (incognito filio) assensit: vt cū cognouit esse filiū pē pudore spm exhalauit: qd aiaduertens secundus id mari propter suā loquelā accidisse: hanc se in posterū eregit penā: vt de cetero vniq nemini loqueretur: quod cū hadriano qui apud athenas esset nūciatū fuisse: ipsū illico accersit fecit. quē cū nec salutatione nec exhortatione aut minis a tacturnitate pposito retrahere potuisset: admiratus ipsius tacturnitatē atq constantiā dixit. Cū ista silentij lex a te nullo modo solui pōt: manu tū tua ppleumantibus meis rēpōdere digneris. Et interrogans dixit. Quid est deus. Ille pscitū referripit. Deus est immortalis mens incōtemplabilis celsitudo forma multiformis multiplexq: spiritus: incogitabilis inquisitio: omnia continens lux indeficiens: et optimū bonus: fuere: et alia multa hadriani popleumata philopobo pposita.

Tiburina latine regionis ciuitatē que hodie vetus tibur appellat p hoc tēpus hadrianus imperator (vt helius sparciannus historicus testat) miro sumptu edificauit. et ex villa oppidū fecit. Idē quippe ciuitas. i 6. passū milibus a roma distare videt. et iuxta anienem flumi in diuoso loco cōstruta est. quam tū ciuitatē longe ante romanā urbem a grecis originem et cōditiōne habuisse Strabo et regilius volunt. autē em q ipsius primus cōditor fuit quidā tiburinus coras et catilli frater. Ibi nāq fratres thebani fuerē: qui post thebanorū interitiū a patre in italia pgeniti: singuli postea oppidū ex suo nomine pstruxerē q testis est quidā mons ppinquus qui catillus adhuc dicit. Et coras aliud oppidū famosum inter volscos erexit. fuit itaq tiburina hec quondā nobilis ciuitas cui etiā testimonij phibet. p pū que adhuc extantes ipsius antiquitatis ingentes et magnifice edificiorū ruine: que dignitatē verbis pre se ferunt. eo siquid loco tiburinus lapis fortissimus fodit: qui ad cōstruendam cōseruandāq romanā urbē multū adūmēto fuit. Idē em vrbē fridericus cognomēto barbarossa impator: ab alijs theotonis supiorib⁹ annis duratā reedificauit. et deinde multi sumi pōntifices multiq cardinales aurere et mli edificijs illustraue. ex hac simplici roman⁹ pōntifer et aliq viri scia et dignitate clarissimi omē habuere

Tiburina ciuitas



Nuremberg Chronicle leaf, 1493, woodcut of Tivoli.

Latin edition, with eleven woodcuts including the city of Tiburtina (now called Tivoli), heretics, bishops, a physician, a philosopher and the first woodcut of a person with spectacles.

One of the most famous early illustrated books, it chronicles the history of the world, from the Creation to 1493. It is considered to be the first book to successfully integrate illustrations and text.

This monumental work is more than simply a fine example of the skills of early printers and illustrators, it also reflects the spirit of its time. While on the one hand it demonstrates the influence of Renaissance humanism, it also shows a society in the process of transformation from medieval to modern and from a scribal culture to a print culture.

Fine condition, full margins, watermarked paper and sharp impressions of the woodcuts. Leaf 465x320 mm.

Item PSE102

\$295

Bexta

Secundus pbs



Secundus artemensis pbs hoc tpe in pto fuit qui semp silentii seruans pythagorica vita duxit: cuius tacturnitas ca bec fuit. Qd cu mare ppiā de illicito cōcubitu tēpasse: illa (incognito filio) assensit: vt cū cognouit esse filiū pē pudore spm exhalauit: qd aiaduertens secundus id mari propter suā loquelā accidisse: hanc se in posterū eregit penā: vt de cetero vniq nemini loqueretur: quod cū hadriano qui apud athenas esset nūciatū fuisse: ipsū illico accersit fecit. quē cū nec salutatione nec exhortatione aut minis a tacturnitate pposito retrahere potuisset: admiratus ipsius tacturnitatē atq constantiā dixit. Cū ista silentij lex a te nullo modo solui pōt: manu tū tua ppleumantibus meis rēpōdere digneris. Et interrogans dixit. Quid est deus. Ille pscitū referripit. Deus est immortalis mens incōtemplabilis celsitudo forma multiformis multiplexq: spiritus: incogitabilis inquisitio: omnia continens lux indeficiens: et optimū bonus: fuere: et alia multa hadriani popleumata philopobo pposita.

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Salienus medicus





Glossed Bible leaf, 1498, expertly printed by Froben & Petry, Basel. Three coloured initials added by hand after the printing. Chapter and gloss headings marked in red. Capital letters touched in yellow. Two manicules (pointing hands) and a "catchword" in the margins. The text from 1 Timothy chapter 2 is the central block of text and is surrounded by the gloss (commentary) of Nicolas de Lyra and others. Leaf 290x210 mm. Fine, unblemished condition.

PSA139

\$150



The City of God, Saint Augustine. Glossed incunable leaf, 1489, with coloured initials added by hand. The City of God, written by the medieval philosopher Saint Augustine (354-430AD), titled originally *De Civitate Dei* is arguably the first magnum opus of Christian philosophy. It was one of the most influential works of the Middle Ages. St. Augustine's famous theory that people need government because they are sinful served as a model for church-state relations up to and beyond medieval times. He influenced the work of Thomas Aquinas and John Calvin and many other theologians throughout the centuries. Printed in Basel, 1489 by Amerbach. Leaf 320x225 mm. Very good condition overall. a few worm holes.

Item PSA137

\$170

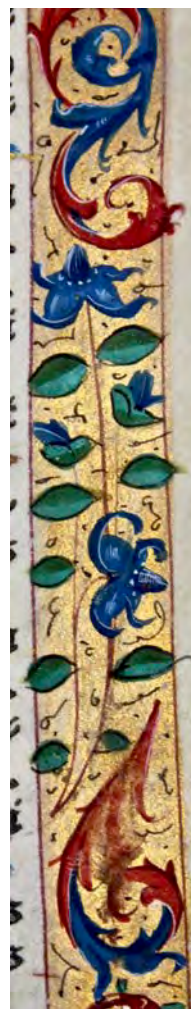


Woodcut depicting Augustine at work and the two cities of God and Satan.



Hand painted miniature of The Virgin & Child on a Book of Hours leaf c.1510, printed on vellum. The figures are seated in front of a red and gold tapestry. Mary is depicted with fair hair and robed in blue. She gazes at the Child sitting on her knee who raises his right hand in blessing while holding a "globus cruciger" "(an orb topped by a cross) in the other. The miniature is skilfully composed and finely detailed. The text includes the plaintive "Obsecro te" and the prayer for the Veneration of Veronica's Veil.

Excellent condition with just slight brushing to the miniature. Leaf 175x110 mm. **PSA155** **\$850**



Kerver Book of Hours leaf printed on vellum, 1507, with illuminations added by hand.

Thielman Kerver (active 1497-1522) was one of the best known early Parisian printers, regarded particularly for his finely printed Books of Hours. He worked, and probably lived, "in vico sancti iacobi, ad signum Vnicornis" (in Saint Jacob's lane at the sign of the Unicorn, in the shadow of Notre Dame.) Kerver's work is much less common than that of his colleagues, Simon Vostre and the Hardouins. Verso has another illuminated panel with different flowers. Very good/excellent condition, sharply printed and with colourful illuminations and shining gold. 200x125 mm. Item **PSA165** **\$380**

The Annunciation. Hand painted miniature on a French Book of Hours leaf c.1510. Printed on vellum. This leaf, like the two previous, is from the intriguing transitional period when Books of Hours began to be printed from movable type. To mimic the appearance of manuscript works, they were often printed on vellum, and were decorated with metal-cut illustrations, or more rarely, as in this case, hand painted miniatures. Mary stands at a reading desk under a red and gold canopy, one hand resting on her book and the other raised in demurral at the enormity of the archangel Gabriel's message. The winged angel points heavenwards to indicate that he has been sent by God. Rays of golden light shine down on Mary from Heaven and above the two figures is a white dove representing the Holy Spirit. Leaf 200x125. Excellent, unflawed condition. **PSA156 \$925**



MANUSCRIPT LEAVES

New items dated from c. 1390 to c. 1500 with illuminations that include an owl, a skylark, three dragons and a variety of flowers, foliage and vines.



The Death of Jesus in a French Book of Hours leaf c.1475 with an owl in the illuminations.

The most likely reason for the owl's inclusion in the illuminations was as a common medieval Christian symbol representing mourning and desolation.

The text is from the Office of the Holy Cross. The two-line initial 'H' begins the hymn: *Hora nona Dominus Iesus expiravit: Eli clamans spiritum patri commendavit* (Jesus Lord at the ninth hour his spirit forth did send: Crying Eli and his soul to father did commend.)

A very small leaf 145x100 mm. in good condition. Some edge toning, light toning through the centre of the text block and a stain & minor loss of vellum at the bottom are minor considerations.

MBH150

\$790



Hours of the Virgin at Matins in a manuscript French Book of Hours leaf c. 1500. The bird depicted in the illuminations is a skylark - the joyous spirit of the divine was often symbolised by a skylark singing as it flew to heaven.

The leaf is in very good condition, apart from a couple of spots in the bottom margin which are well away from the text and illuminations. Some edge browning. The beautifully executed illuminations retain their original bright colours. Leaf: c.160x100 mm.

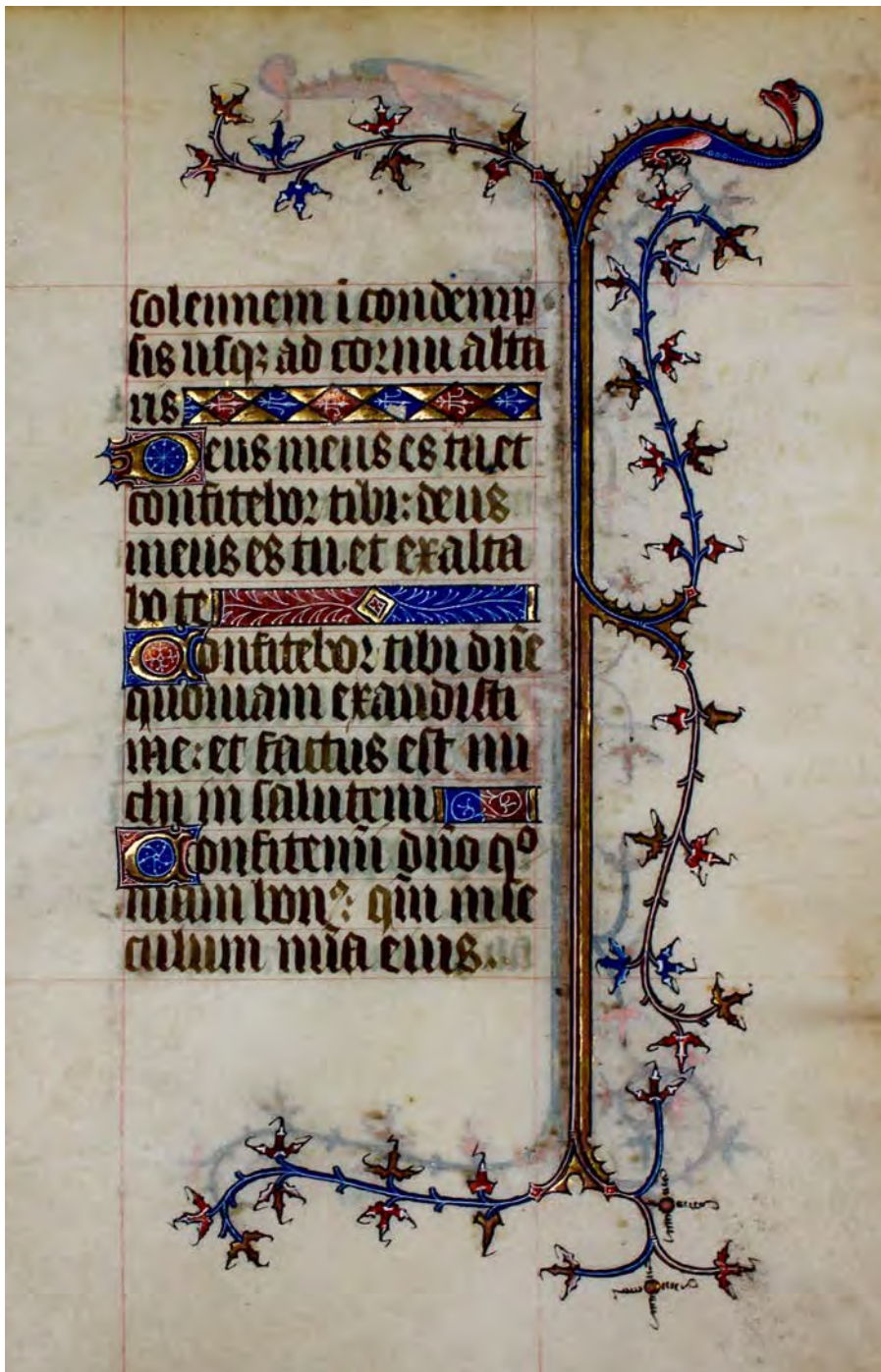
Item **MBH146**

\$645



High quality gilding on a Missal leaf, France, c.1450. The text is part of the Masses for the second Saturday and third Sunday after Pentecost. The six illuminated initials are in raised and highly burnished gold outlined in black on pink, blue and white grounds. One has black tendrils radiating into the margin bearing coloured flowers and foliage and burnished gold ivy leaves. A larger leaf in excellent condition, light cockling to the binding edge. Leaf 235x165mm. Item **MMI026** **\$685**





Winged dragons, fine illuminations, in a very early Book of Hours leaf c.1390.

For most God-fearing people in the fourteenth century, the dragon was a real creature: a reptilian, winged, fire-breathing creature aligned with Satan, the bearer of death and misfortune and, significantly, the evil of paganism.

The dragons depicted on this Book of Hours leaf may well have been included in the illuminations as a reminder to the devout reader of the evils associated with the creature and to direct him or her to the safety and truth of the holy text where salvation was to be found.

Recto has three one-line illuminated initials in burnished gold outlined in black on grounds of blue, pink and white. Three similarly illuminated line fillers. A bar border in burnished gold terminates in coloured & gold ivy vines and leaves and a splendidly depicted dragon with a gaping mouth. *Verso* has similar illuminations and includes a winged dragon with its mouth biting into its neck.

France, probably Rouen.

Leaf 185x130 mm.

Very good condition for its age.

The vellum has darkened around the edges over the centuries but is otherwise clean, particularly on *Recto*. There are a few small brown spots on *Verso*. The colours of the illuminations on both sides remain strong and the high quality gilding shines brightly.

Item **MBH147**

\$1400



Another leaf from the same source with text from the Hours of the Virgin at Vespers, including the beloved hymn *Ave Maris Stella* (Hail Star of the Sea).

As in the previous leaf, the illuminations include a bar border in burnished gold which terminates in coloured & gold ivy vines and leaves and a winged dragon with a gaping mouth, (*Recto* only).

The vellum on this leaf has darkened and there are a number of (very small) spots. Yet the illuminations remain in fine order, bright and shining.

Ivy has long been associated with Christian belief. Ivy climbs towards the sky, symbolising the believer's striving towards God. It forms a union with whatever it may be clinging to, making the two almost inseparable and thus symbolising fidelity and faithfulness. The evergreen ivy was also viewed as a symbol of the eternal life of the soul after the death of the body.

Early Books of Hours were decorated and illuminated with ivy vines and leaves before illuminators turned to the elaborate contortions of acanthus leaves in the 15th century. Leaf 185x130 mm.

Item **MBH145**

\$1140



Thank you for looking. Do contact us if you'd like to reserve an item or would like more details or photos. The items will soon be listed on our website.



vox audita perit; littera scripta manet - the spoken word is lost; the written word abides

