

## Study day

# 1000 Years of Illumination

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<b>Date</b>	Monday 23 October 2017
<b>Times</b>	10.45–16.00
<b>Location</b>	Knowledge Centre Theatre

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The British Library holds one of the finest collections of illuminated manuscripts in the world. Whether religious or secular, the most luxurious manuscripts were illuminated: lit up by decorations and pictures in brightly-coloured pigments and burnished gold leaf. They are among the most dazzling and intriguing objects ever created. Learn about the cultural and artistic context in which these exquisite works were made in a day of talks exploring highlights from the Library's collections.

### Programme

- 10.45 Arrival; tea and coffee served
  - 11.15 **The World in Illuminated Manuscripts**  
Dr Alixe Bovey, Head of Research, The Courtauld Institute of Art
  - 11.45 **Materiality of Illuminated Manuscripts**  
Patricia Lovett MBE, scribe and illuminator
  - 12.15 **English Biblical Illuminated Manuscripts in the British Library**  
Dr Kathleen Doyle, Lead Curator of Illuminated Manuscripts, British Library
  - 12.45 **Q&A plenary** with morning contributors
  - 13.15 Lunch (not provided)
  - 14.30 **French Illuminated Manuscripts**  
Dr Mara Hofmann, Head of Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts, Sotheby's
  - 15.00 **Flemish Illuminated Manuscripts**  
Dr Scot McKendrick, Head of Western Heritage Collections, British Library
  - 15.30 **Q&A plenary** with afternoon contributors
  - 16.00 Close
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## Talk Summaries and Biographies

### The World in Illuminated Manuscripts

Was there a 'medieval world view'? Interpreting this question literally, Dr Alixe Bovey will consider the variety of ways that medieval artists represented the world in manuscripts. This will take us from the early Middle Ages to the dawn of print, and include maps, diagrams, and symbolic representations of the world in the hands of God and rulers. What do these images reveal about image-making, the transmission of knowledge (geographical, spiritual, historical), and the books that contain them?

Dr Alixe Bovey is a specialist in medieval illuminated manuscripts, and the Head of Research at The Courtauld Institute of Art. Her research focuses on illuminated manuscripts, pictorial narrative, and the relationship between myth and material culture across historical periods and geographical boundaries.

### Materiality of Illuminated Manuscripts

Before the introduction of printing to Western Europe during the mid-15th century, all books were written by hand. Their production was a labour-intensive, highly-skilled endeavour that often required the input of different specialists. Patricia Lovett MBE will explore the materiality of illuminated manuscripts, and introduces the various processes of the medieval scribe and illuminator.

Patricia Lovett MBE is a world-renowned scribe and illuminator, and has taught and lectured all over the world. She produced the replica Book of Hours used in the BBC *Wolf Hall* series, and is also Vice-Chair of the Heritage Crafts Association. Patricia's latest book *The Art and History of Calligraphy* was published by the British Library this year.

### English Biblical Illuminated Manuscripts in the British Library

For two millennia the Bible has inspired the creation of art. Within this legacy of remarkable art and beauty illuminated manuscripts of the Bible offer some of the best evidence for our understanding of artistic interpretations of the Bible. Dr Kathleen Doyle will explore a selection from the treasures of illuminated English biblical manuscripts in the British Library.

Dr Kathleen Doyle is the Lead Curator, Illuminated Manuscripts in the Western Heritage Department of the British Library. Kathleen was the co-curator of the AHRC-funded *Royal Manuscripts* project led by Dr Scot McKendrick, and the follow-on project led by Kathleen, editing and contributing articles to *1000 Years of Royal Books and Manuscripts* (2013), and with Professor John Lowden, *Royal Manuscripts: The Genius of Illumination* (2011).

### French Illuminated Manuscripts

French painting of the Middle Ages is known to us today largely through miniatures decorating the pages of manuscripts. Dr Mara Hofmann will introduce the work of some of the most famous artists from the Gothic and Renaissance periods, as represented in the outstanding collection of the British Library. The focus lies on artists active in Paris, a renowned artistic centre in not only France but also Europe.

Dr Mara Hofmann is Head of Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts at Sotheby's. She is the author of numerous publications on illuminated manuscripts, notably books and articles on French 15th-century illumination. She also contributed to recent exhibition catalogues such as *Les Enluminures du Louvre* (2011), *Tours 1500: Capitale des Arts* (2012) and *Beyond Words: Illuminated Manuscripts in Boston Collections* (2016).

### Flemish Illuminated Manuscripts

The remarkable and distinctive art of early Netherlandish painters such as Jan van Eyck is well known to visitors of art galleries and museums. Yet, illuminated manuscripts, rarely seen in such contexts, offer some of the best evidence for our understanding of early Netherlandish painting. Dr Scot McKendrick will introduce the remarkable collection of Flemish illuminated manuscripts held by the British Library.

Dr Scot McKendrick is Head of Western Heritage Collections at the British Library. He is the author of numerous publications on illuminated manuscripts, including *Illuminating the Renaissance: the Triumph of Flemish Manuscript Painting* (2003) for which he and Thomas Kren won the Eric Mitchell and Eugène Baie prizes. His most recent book, jointly authored with Dr Kathleen Doyle, is *The Art of the Bible: Illuminated Manuscripts from the Medieval World* (2016).