

Black Hours Illumination

The Sforza Black Hours

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Class topics and materials list

Differences in various Black Hours manuscripts

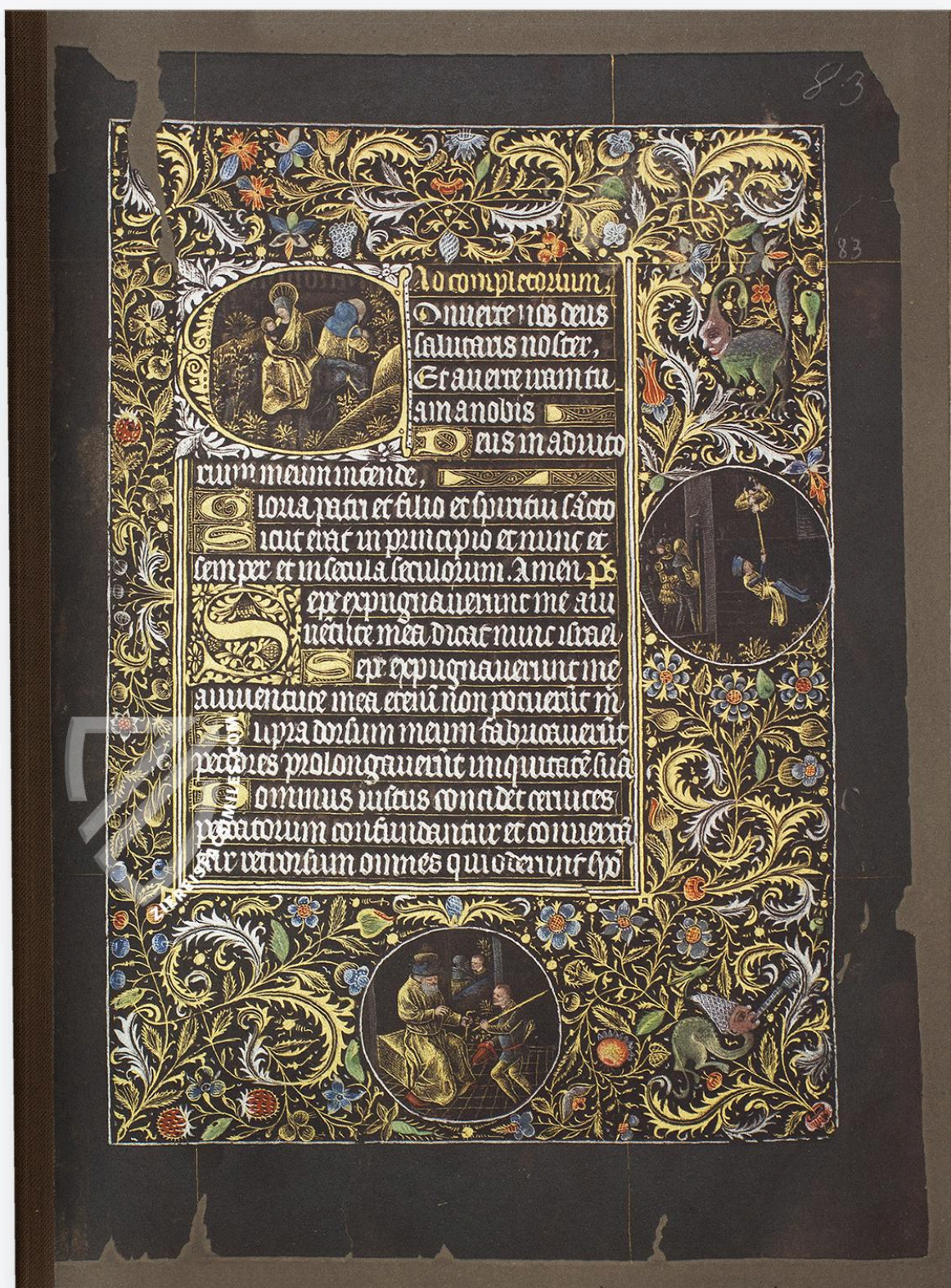
- Different Black Hours used different color schemes; the Sforza Black Hours was multicolored, whereas, for example, the Morgan Black Hours uses a very limited palette with blue and green heavily dominant (in addition to the metallics), and the “Spanish” Black Hours is gold and silver only
- Today’s sample will be based on the Sforza Black Hours (see end of handout or this link) https://www.ziereisfacsimiles.com/black-prayer-book-of-galeazzo-maria-sforza?fbclid=IwAR2iuOZmfQDU2c3wPxbsod6aXYDLxfWfp9aFRZISU0MfUe8V29DAhP_tyw

Materials

- Black ground (either vellum or paper)
 - David Bianco sells vellum through his Etsy shop: <https://www.etsy.com/shop/asofa>
 - Black watercolor paper
 - Strathmore 400 black mixed media paper (an earlier version of this document recommended “Artagain”, but I have found this to be much too thin for our purposes)
 - For this class I will be using Strathmore “Black Board” artist trading cards available through several outlets
- Pencil and white eraser
- Gold and silver
 - Shell gold or silver
 - For this class, Coliro/Finetec metallic paints available through [John Neal, Bookseller](#)
 - Sterling Silver and Arabian gold
- Standard colors
 - Red, a light to medium blue, sort of a minty green, optional brown
 - Gouaches, powdered pigments
 - NOT translucent watercolors
- One small paintbrush
 - Size 0 or 1 will be fine; it isn’t necessary to go super small but a good point on the brush is essential

Steps

1. Sketch out a loose design in pencil, marking where flowers, critters, and acanthus leaves will go
2. Paint objects largest to smallest:
 - a. Acanthus leaves and hidden critters - leaves typically done in silver and gold, critters in full color
 - b. Flowers and fruits - typically done in red and blue, although there were quite a few green pears used as well
 - c. Leaves - green, but some extra leaves were done in just gold or silver outline
3. Highlight flowers and leaves with metallics
 - a. Red and optional brown get gold highlights; blue and green get silver
 - b. There are some exceptions; I have seen red with silver highlights, and green with gold
4. Fill in stems and vines with metallics
5. Fill in empty spaces with squiggles and dots in metallics
6. Outline border in accordance with exemplar (gold, silver, or a combination)
 - a. We won't be doing that on our card today, but if you were doing a scroll border you would definitely want to outline it, both inside and outside, to separate it from the text block
7. Step back to admire your work!



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Ad completorium,
Omnipotens deus
salutaris noscer,
Et auerte manum tuam
a nobis.
Deus in adiuto-
rium meum intende,
Gloria patri et filio et spiritui sancto
sicut erat in principio et nunc et
semper et in secula seculorum. Amen. Ps
Super expugnauerunt me au-
uenticae meae dicit nunc israel
Super expugnauerunt me
auuenticae meae ecce non potuerunt in-
super dorsi meum fabricauerunt
pedes prolongauerunt iniquitatem suam
Dominus iustus concidet ceruices
peccatorum confundantur et conuertantur
in retrorsum omnes qui oderunt hy-



Heather Bungard-Janney, October 2020

Modern commission based on the Sforza Black Hours, gouache and Coliro metallic colors on mixed media paper, © 2020 Heather Bungard-Janney