



DR. JÖRN GÜNTHER RARE BOOKS AG

Medieval Manuscripts and Miniatures

PRESS RELEASE

Dr. Jörn Günther Rare Books at TEFAF Maastricht 2026

Dr. Jörn Günther Rare Books is returning to TEFAF Maastricht in 2026, displaying new remarkable manuscript masterpieces. TEFAF (The European Fine Art Fair) is widely regarded as the world's premier fair for fine art, antiques, and design, bringing together 7,000 years of art history under one roof. Featuring over 260 prestigious dealers from some 20 countries, TEFAF Maastricht is a showcase for the finest art works currently on the market.

At stand 114, Dr. Jörn Günther Rare Books will display a large variety of the finest Medieval and Renaissance manuscripts and miniatures, among them the following highlights: a Northern Italian Herbal with over 400 plants, the opulent 'Croÿ-Arenberg Hours', and the St. Pantaleon Legendarium, a collection of saints' lives, which has a particular connection to Maastricht.

Herbal.

Illustrated manuscript on vellum.

Northern Italy, perhaps Veneto or Padua, 1500-1520.

225 x 170 mm. Watercolour, tempera and ink on vellum.



This highly unusual northern Italian herbal, filled with almost 400 drawings of plants, was most probably used as a workbook with botanical sketches for apprentices of a high-end workshop. However, the high degree of naturalism in the illustrations could just as well point to a precursor to the first real botanical compendiums, which start to flourish in the 16th century. Labels in different languages identify many of the plants, documenting continuous use of this work- and study book throughout the 16th to the 17th centuries. The majority of the botanical depictions in this hitherto unstudied manuscript are astonishingly lifelike, bearing witness to late 15th and early 16th centuries illustrators' renewed interest in the accurate observation of nature. In addition to the plants, this herbal also features individually scattered, luscious fruits, as well as insects and a lizard. The arrangement of the

botanical depictions, sometimes with two, three or more plants on one page left no space for further explanatory text, focusing entirely on the visual representation of the countless plants, ranging from Chamomile to White Poppy.

The 'Croÿ-Arenberg Hours'.

Book of Hours for the use of Sarum (Salisbury). Manuscript in Latin on vellum, illuminated by the Master of Sir George Talbot and a collaborator, the Master of the Older Prayerbook of Emperor Maximilian, the Master of the David Scenes in the Grimani Breviary and artist from the circle of the Master of James IV of Scotland.

Flanders, Ghent or Bruges, c. 1508-20

211 x 153/156 mm. Tempera and ink on vellum.



The 'Croÿ-Arenberg Hours' represents one of the finest examples of Flemish illumination and was made for a high-ranking member of the English royal court, as strongly suggested by the Tudor roses in its marginal decoration. The commission for this book was undoubtedly motivated by the patron's desire for uniqueness and luxury.

Most of the large miniatures are the work of the Master of the Older Prayer Book of Maximilian I, a leading artist in celebrated manuscript projects. Another famous collaborator on this prestigious project was the Master of Sir George Talbot, known for his lively colour palette and magnificent landscape backgrounds. An additional enigmatic illuminator was an artist from the circle of the Master of James IV of Scotland, who also worked on the legendary Spinola Hours. The

astounding, dramatic close-ups in the miniatures were copied from the groundbreaking image cycle created by Simon Marmion. Stunningly rich border decorations and single motifs on every single blank margin complete this one-of-a-kind masterpiece.

The St. Pantaleon Legendarium.

Lives of Saints Servatius, Leonardus, Medard, Heribert, Adrian, Gorgonius, among other saints, Berno of Reichenau, Vita Sancti Udalrici. Illuminated Manuscript in Latin on vellum.





Cologne, Abbey of St. Pantaleon, c. 1140-1180 (one added quire from around 1050).
225 x 150 mm. Tempera and ink on vellum.

This early German manuscript recounts eighteen legends of saints' lives, and includes Berno of Reichenau's text on the Life of Saint Udalric. It preserves remarkable penwork illustration and was produced in Cologne, one of the centres of this discipline at the dawn of the 12th century. This masterpiece of medieval bookmaking holds numerous breathtaking illustrations, including a full-page penwork diagram with 14 roundels with portraits of saints and other personalities, arranged genealogically. The diagram picks up the claim that Saint Servatius, first bishop of Maastricht and the city's patron saint, was related to Jesus Christ by insinuating that Esmeria, the sister of Mary's mother Anna and grandmother of John the Baptist, was also the great-aunt of Saint

Servatius.

There are unproven claims that this genealogical connection was rejected by the Mainz Council in 1049 on the grounds that Servatius' Armenian roots spoke against it, however a synodal decision did not survive, thus making our manuscript a fascinating witness to the debate of Servatius' origins.

Note to Editors

Company Info Dr. Jörn Günther Rare Books is the world leading specialist dealer of manuscripts and miniatures from the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. Dr. Günther has accumulated 40 years of experience with Medieval Manuscripts, opening his first Antiquarian book store in Hamburg in 1990. Today, the gallery and company office can be found in the historical old town of Basel, Switzerland, located at Gemsberg 10. Our team of experts thoroughly investigates and documents every book and miniature for the benefit of our clients and collectors. We actively circulate our findings and participate in scholarly discourse.

www.guenther-rarebooks.com

TEFAF Maastricht 2026

March 12 and 13 (by invitation only). Public access: March 14 – 19, open 11AM – 7PM. MECC Forum 100 6229 GV Maastricht The Netherlands. Dr. Jörn Günther Rare Books exhibits at **stand 114**. More information can be found on www.tefaf.com

Contact Us Dr. Günther is available to speak with the press and provide further information. Please contact Elisabeth Wingerter (ew@guenther-rarebooks, +41 (0)61 275 75 62) with your questions and possible interview dates.

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Photo Captions – English



Herbal. Illustrated manuscript on vellum. Northern Italy, perhaps Veneto or Padua, 1500-1520. 225 x 170 mm. © Courtesy of Dr. Jörn Günther Rare Books, Basel.



The ‘Croÿ-Arenberg Hours’. Manuscript in Latin on vellum, illuminated by the Master of Sir George Talbot and other masters. Flanders, Ghent or Bruges, c. 1508-20, 211 x 153/156 mm. © Courtesy of Dr. Jörn Günther Rare Books, Basel.



The St. Pantaleon Legendarium. Illuminated Manuscript in Latin on vellum. Cologne, Abbey of St. Pantaleon, c. 1140-1180. 225 x 150 mm. © Courtesy of Dr. Jörn Günther Rare Books, Basel.



The St. Pantaleon Legendarium.

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Cologne, Abbey of St. Pantaleon, c. 1140-1180.

225 x 150 mm. © Courtesy of Dr. Jörn Günther Rare Books, Basel.



Dr. Jörn Günther Rare Books' Stand at TEFAF Maastricht 2025

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