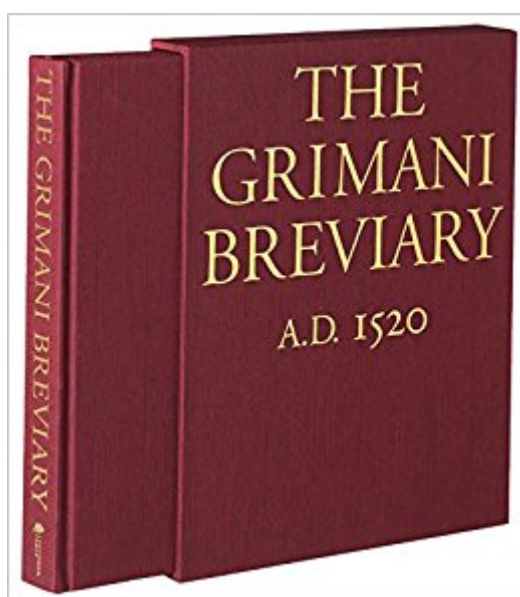


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The Grimani Breviary: Reproduced From The Illuminated Manuscript Belonging To The Biblioteca Marciana, Venice



Synopsis

In the Middle Ages a breviary was an illuminated manuscript daily devotions commissioned by only the wealthiest and most powerful. Today, The Overlook Press making the legendary Grimani Breviary available to all. While the original Grimani Breviary is safely housed in the Biblioteca Marciana in Venice, this linen-bound, facsimile edition captures all of the beauty and enchantment of this ancient manuscript. The pages are filled with full-color images of prayers and daily life in the early 16th century painstakingly drawn by the Flemish miniaturist painter Gerard Horenbout and his collaborators.

Book Information

Hardcover: 276 pages

Publisher: Overlook Press; Slp edition (September 16, 2010)

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Average Customer Review: 4.0 out of 5 stars 5 customer reviews

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Customer Reviews

Text: English, Italian (translation)

I hesitated to buy this book because of the negative comments by other reviewers. I went ahead and bought it and am very glad I did. It is true that there is an absence of gold paint on the reproductions; but I believe that a layer of harsh glitter on top of works of art such as these would have detracted from their gentle beauty rather than enhanced them. The art work here is the most beautiful illuminated art I have ever seen. People and objects are rendered accurately in amazing detail. It is an excellent chronicle of life and fashion in the beginning of the Sixteenth century in Western Europe. The colors used are never dull. Soft pinks and yellows are used effectively as well as more vivid blues, greens and reds. Many of the pictures contain delicate images in the background as well as the stronger images in the foreground. One extraordinary example is a

representation of the Trinity with Father and Son rendered almost as twins with a dove between them on a throne of gold. Surrounding the throne is a subtle pink cloud in which adoring angels can be seen as ghostly images. This is a book of art worth owning and meditating on. If you have an interest in illuminated manuscripts or in religious art, I would strongly recommend making an effort to buy this book. You will not regret it.

The Grimani Breviary itself is stunningly beautiful. The comparison of the calendars with those from Tres riches heures of Jean de Berry is just fun. However, I cannot say the same with the printing quality of this book. The color images lack contrast and they look dull sometimes. Because of the absence of gold in the printing, we don't see the sparkles that shine in some of the early George Braziller book of hours facsimiles. The hefty price tag is not making the situation any better. But I still recommend getting hold of a copy, documents of such a masterpiece are very rare. Note: I am commenting on the Overlook Press 2010 edition, the first edition in US dated back to 1974.

The Grimani Breviary makes for beautiful reading and is a wonderful addition to my current collection. The condition of the book and slip case were slightly buckled but the book itself, pages text and illustrations were perfect. It was purchased with that full foreknowledge.

Poor quality printing, the images look washed out. Not what I was expecting. The hardcover is nice, hence the two stars.

I'm sure it was my fault, but this is not a breviary, which is what I wanted. I wanted the Grimani Breviary. Instead, it's a book ABOUT the Grimani Breviary. Big difference if your goal is to pray the Divine Office using this breviary. Keep looking, and good luck, too. I could never find a Grimani Breviary to actually use, not for any price.

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