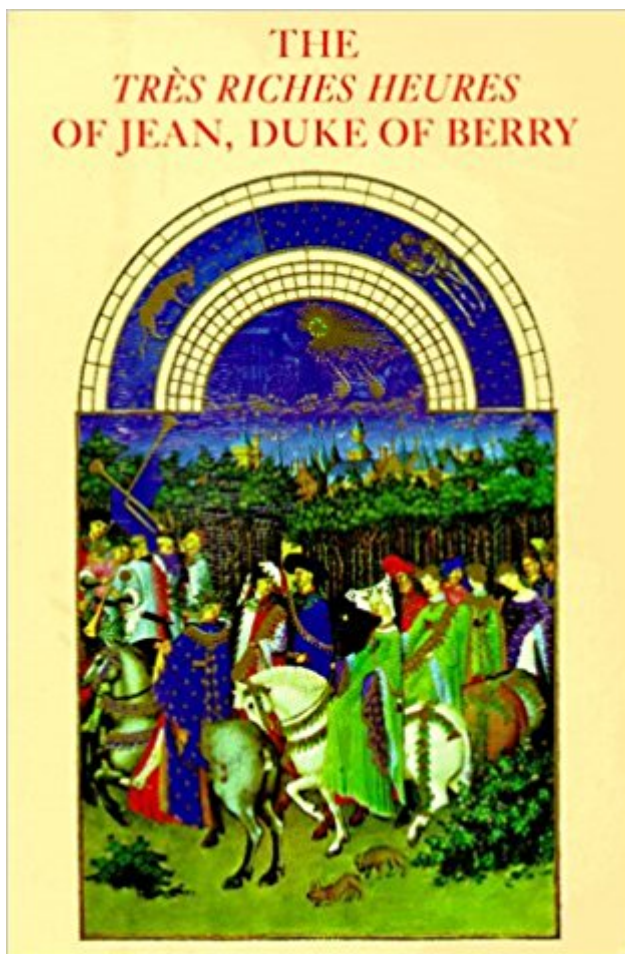


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The Tres Riches Heures Of Jean, Duke Of Berry



Synopsis

One of the most successful art books of all time is now available in paperback for the first time. In their now-classic texts, Longnon and Cazelles recount the history of this work from its inception up until modern times. 139 color plates.

Book Information

Paperback: 224 pages

Publisher: George Braziller, Inc.; Revised edition (March 1989)

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Customer Reviews

Widely praised for providing unprecedented access to perhaps the most closely guarded and celebrated of medieval illuminated manuscripts, Braziller's sublime 1969 facsimile is denatured in this first paperback version. Only the jacket has retained the metallic gold that supplements the four-color art of the cloth edition; within, the plates are flat and often indistinct. The preface, for example, cites the "sparkling diapered background" of a particular night scene, but here the stars not only do not sparkle but are barely perceptible. The absence of the gold has a disastrous effect on the manuscript's famous architectural renderings, robbing them of their depth of field and subtlety of color. The text, written by three unimpeachable art historians, is unchanged, although the legends (previously facing illustrations) are now inconveniently segregated in a section following the plates; one also wishes that the bibliography had been updated. Surely this relatively inexpensive paperback has been designed with the goal of making the Tres Riches Heures even more accessible; ironically, the reproductions are so dramatically inferior that the purchase of the volume is a false economy. \$30,000 ad/promo; BOMC and QPBC selections. Copyright 1989 Reed Business Information, Inc.

Braziller first published the hardcover edition of this now-classic work 20 years ago, and many libraries already own it. This paperback edition may provide a more affordable alternative for smaller collections. The bulk of the volume consists of good reproductions of all the miniatures and many of the decorated text pages in the same size as the original medieval manuscript. No enlarged details are provided. In contrast, the recent volume from Abrams on the Tres Riches Heures, Cazelles's & Rathofer's Illuminations of Heaven and Earth (LJ 12/88), does provide detail views. Its text, however, draws heavily on the scholarship of the Braziller volume, which is also more accessible to lay readers and students. The effect of looking through a copy of this famous manuscript will be satisfying to a wide audience.- Kathryn Finkelstein, M.Ln., Cincinnati Copyright 1989 Reed Business Information, Inc.

Some years ago I reluctantly parted with my copy of The Très Riches Heures in the magnificent 1969 edition published by George Braziller, and I'd been missing it ever since. So it was with considerable anticipation that I ordered this new Braziller hardcover edition from Amazon at a terrific price. (The same book sells for \$125 at the George Braziller website.) Unfortunately, the 2008 edition, printed and bound in Singapore by Tien Wah Press, bears little resemblance to the stunning 1969 version published in France by Draeger Frères, Paris. The illustrated slipcase is gone, replaced with a glossy paper dust jacket. Most critically, many pictures are out of focus--disastrous for these highly detailed and delicate miniatures. The colors are no longer clean and vibrant, and the use of gold (gilt) is gone, and with it, much of the artwork's radiant, other-worldly atmosphere. Additionally, the informative commentaries, which originally appeared on the facing pages, are now lumped together at the back of the book. Not an improvement, in my opinion. I suspect what we're dealing with here is simply a hardback copy of the 1989 paperback edition which Publishers Weekly, in its review reproduced above on this Product Page, describes in extremely negative, and accurate, terms. [Two different 13-digit ISBN numbers appear on the hardcover's dust jacket: the number on the back inside flap is in fact the same as the paperback edition (!) while the number on the back cover refers to this new hardback.] In short, I am disappointed that George Braziller has reissued one of its most celebrated fine art books in such a poor quality edition. Until a fully-restored version is available, I recommend everyone (myself included) seek out a copy of the 1969 original. JANUARY 2010 UPDATE: I did seek out, and have received, an excellent used copy of the 1969 edition. Now that I have both books here, sitting side by side, I urge you to forget the 2008 version. Picture clarity and color reproduction (particularly the use of gilt) are unquestionably superior in the original edition. Used copies are available from online booksellers, including Amazon. I paid

\$68.00 for mine, and it was worth every penny. JANUARY 2013 UPDATE: A comment on this review suggests that the 1969 edition is not in sharp focus. I have personally owned two copies of the 1969 Braziller edition and both were beautifully clear. One thing, though, is certain: picture quality in the 1969 Braziller book far surpasses the 2008 reprint.

[A WORD OF WARNING: My review below of the 1969 Braziller edition of the *Très Riches Heures* now appears with reviews of a 2008 Braziller reprint edition. The 2008 version is inferior to the 1969 original in printing quality and editorial layout. Do not buy it. (See my review of the 2008 printing for more details.) Also be advised that other editions from other publishers have come and gone over the years, but the 1969 Braziller slipcased version is the one to own.] Review of *Très Riches Heures*, 1969 George Braziller edition: If you love great art, you simply must have a copy of this book. Originally published in 1969 by George Braziller and lovingly printed in France by Draeger Frères, Paris, the *Très Riches Heures* is an artistic wonder, the greatest of all illuminated manuscripts. This book made it accessible to a worldwide audience. The images from the calendar that begin this Book of Hours are beloved the world over. The rest of the book is comprised of less well known but equally beautiful renderings of (mostly) biblical stories. I must also mention the highly informative essays and annotations by John Longnon and Millard Meiss. Let them guide you through the *Très Riches Heures*. You will be rewarded with a deeper appreciation of this incomparable work of art.

Before the reviews here were written, I bought the latest edition of this book, thinking the more modern the better. However, after noticing the reviews on this page, I got the 1969 edition as well. As has been observed, there is no comparison between the earlier edition and the latest one. The earlier printers took enormous pains to reproduce accurately the various shades of gold in the illuminations; the later printers appear to be relying on a scan that in general turns gold of any shade to a fairly uniform, drab brown. The use of gold in the earlier edition is fantastic--miniatures like 'The Fall of the Rebel Angels' depict the fallen angels dropping looking as though they are trailing light. In the later edition, this whole effect is lost. Not only that, the precision of the original drawing is well-depicted in the earlier edition (the printers of this edition, Draeger Freres, have also taken great pains about this); however to my eye, it is lost in the later. The outlines in the later edition are vague: this is particularly striking in the rendering of faces. This doesn't mean the later book doesn't have a beauty of its own. If nothing better were available, it would deserve high praise. However, seeing that something better is available, I can only award the new edition 3/5. Where this book is

concerned, it is well worth taking the time and trouble to find a copy of the edition printed by Draeger Freres.

Supremely gorgeous triumph of the International Gothic and a brilliant work of modern publishing. Thank you, Mr. Braziller! You were the model of the great 20th century publisher and you will be sorely missed in a world that needs those with your talent and taste more than ever.

This is the the original facsimile publisher, Braziller, 1969, of this magnificent medieval manuscript. The picture quality is absolutely superb. The binding is superb, and the red slipcase is a wonderful protector of this fabulous facsimile. I recommend this to anyone interested in acquiring high quality facsimiles of absolutely stunning illuminated manuscripts. Highly Recommended.

The 1969 edition by Braziller is definitely the one to get. It's a lovely reproduction of a beautiful book with things well explained. Truly stunning. I was lucky to get one used. I want to mention though that the copy I got had a glued, not sewn binding and the pages are falling out. I was surprised as I also have the Grands Heures and the Belles Heures by the same publisher and the pages of those are sewn in.

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