LOS ANGELES—From around 1250 to the close of the fifteenth century, the most important and original work being done in secular illumination was unquestionably in French vernacular history manuscripts. *Imagining the Past in France: History in Manuscript Painting, 1250–1500* (Getty Publications, $80.00 hardcover, $49.95 paperback) celebrates the vivid historical imagery produced during these years by bringing together some of the finest masterpieces of illumination created in the Middle Ages. It is the first major publication to focus on exploring the ways in which text and illumination worked together to help show medieval readers the role and purpose of history.

The images enabled the past to come alive before the eyes of medieval readers by relating the adventures of epic figures such as Hector of Troy, Alexander the Great, the Holy Roman Emperor Charlemagne, and even the Virgin Mary.

*Imagining the Past in France* presents approximately fifty-five manuscripts from over twenty-five libraries and museums across the United States and Europe, supplemented by medieval objects ranging from tapestries to ivory boxes. Together they show how historical narratives came to play a decisive role at the French court and in the process inspired some of the most original and splendid artworks of the time. Additional contributors to this volume include Élisabeth Antoine, R. Howard Bloch, Keith Busby, Joyce Coleman, Erin K. Donovan, and Gabrielle M. Spiegel. An exhibition of the same name will be on view at the J. Paul Getty Museum from November 16, 2010 through February 6, 2011.
ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Elizabeth Morrison is curator in the Department of Manuscripts at the J. Paul Getty Museum. Anne D. Hedeman is professor of art history at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION

*Imagining the Past in France: History in Manuscript Painting, 1250–1500*

Elizabeth Morrison and Anne D. Hedeman

J. Paul Getty Museum

384 pages, 9 x 12 inches

194 color illustrations, 1 map

ISBN 978-1-60606-028-5, hardcover, $80.00 [CAN $100.00] [UK £55.00]

ISBN 978-1-60606-029-2, paperback, $49.95 [CAN $59.95] [UK £35.00]

Publication Date: November 16, 2010

# # #

For more information about the exhibition, please contact:

Rebecca Taylor

Getty Communications

(310) 440-6427

retaylor@getty.edu

Kindly send two tearsheets of your review when published to:

Melissa Crowley

Getty Publications

1200 Getty Center Drive, Suite 500

Los Angeles, CA 90049-1682

Available at bookstores or through Getty Publications, (800) 223-3431. Distributed to the trade in the U.S. by the University of Chicago Press, in the U.K. and Europe by Orca Book Services, and in Canada by the Jaguar Book Group.