



The Anjou Bible: A Royal Manuscript Revealed. Naples 1340 (Documenta Libraria)

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The Anjou Bible is a superbly illuminated manuscript created at the unruly Royal Court of Naples in the turbulent fourteenth century. Power, intrigue, gold, a couple of shadowy figures and several exceptionally talented artists make for an explosive mix. During the first half of the fourteenth century, Central and Southern Europe were governed by the successful dynasty of Anjou, which continued to expand its territories and boasted artists like Giotto, Boccaccio and Petrarch. In 1328, after the death of her father, Joanna of Anjou became the official heir to the prosperous house of the kings of Naples and Sicily. Several years later her grandfather, Robert I, gave Joanna and her young Hungarian fiance Andrew a precious gift. That gift was a book which became known as the Anjou Bible, a manuscript that is priceless from a historical and art-historical point of view. In addition to Bible texts and magnificent miniatures, it contains a wealth of historical information about the Kingdom of Anjou and the book's origins. One of the Neapolitan artists responsible for the magnificent workmanship was Cristophorus Orimina. He put his stamp on the work with his powerful, true-to-life, Byzantine-looking figures. The Anjou Bible is now being carefully conserved and scientifically studied. The precious parchment folios of the bible, which found its way to Brabant many centuries ago, have been carefully taken apart and will be shown to the public during an exhibition at M Leuven museum. After the exhibition, this fragile gem will irrevocably be re-bound and returned for many years to come to the safety of the dark strongroom in the Theology Faculty's Maurits Sabbe Library of the University of Leuven. The research findings are brought together in this book. Essays in English by some of the most noted experts describe just how the arts were promoted at the court of Robert I of Anjou and also shed light on the bible's genesis and on all research methods and results. This book is richly illustrated and contains all the illuminated folios of the Anjou Bible .

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