

Beyond Solid Colors: Shading and Highlighting for Texture

THL Sophia de la Roche, m.k.a. Teryl Basinger
Known World Heraldic & Scribal Symposium, June 13-15 2014 · A.S. XLIX

This workshop focuses on ways to enhance illumination painting by creating the illusion of texture. Different types of textures are presented in the following examples from manuscripts created between the 9th-16th ce., with a focus on the High Middle Ages and early Renaissance.

Blending colors on the working surface, as is seen in modern oil and watercolor painting, was not widely used outside of adding a blush to facial features or a smudge of blood or mud. Also, limited palettes of base colors were often used. Richer colors were used in finer scriptoria which served more wealthy patrons, and duller colors were used in less well funded artists. Interest was created by juxtaposing different fields of color, and by varying (brightening or saddening) the colors within each field. Recreation of period styles should consider this compartmentalization of color and judicious use of different hues.

Creating interest in illumination can be accomplished through use of these period techniques:

- **Shading** : Applying darkened (saddened) versions of a base color to create the illusion of shadow or depth, made by mixing in black
- **Outlining** : Defining the boundaries of a figure or parts of a figure with black lines
- **Black-lining** : Use of fine black lines to add detail to a figure
- **Highlighting** : Applying lightened versions of a base color to create the illusion of sheen or raised areas, made by mixing in white
- **White-lining** : Adding lines of detail to a figure with white

As you examine the subtle (or not so subtle!) stylistic changes manifested across time and between cultures in the following examples, try to identify these techniques in the artwork.

Feathers



Left: "Ostrich" from Hugues de Fouillois, *De avibus*, 12th ce. (BNF)



Right: "Griffin" from anonymous English, *Physiologus*, 13th ce. (BNF)



Initial from the Anonymous Italian, *Natural History of Pliny* (Arch. G b.6, or Douce 310), 15th ce. (LUNA)

Scales



“Beast of the Apocalypse” from anonymous Spanish, *Apocalypse*, 9th ce.



“Whale” from Anonymous English, from the Harley Bestiary (Harley MS 4751), 13th ce. (DTL)



“Dragon” from Anonymous English manuscript (Harley MS 3244), 13th ce (DTL)

Fur



Left: “Ape” from Anonymous English, *Harley Bestiary* (Harley MS 4751), 13th ce. (DTL)



Right: Detail from Barthélémy l'Anglais, *Livre des propriétés des choses*, 14th ce. (BNF)



Detail from “Arthur vs. the Saxons” from the Anonymous *Rochefoucauld Grail* (Add. MS. 10292-4, Royal MS.14.E.III), 14th ce. (WMC)



Left: Detail of “Unicorn” from *Ashmole Bestiary* (MS Ashmole 1511), 13th ce



Right: Detail from “Venezia's Presentation of Comissio to Contarini with Saints, Victory and a Lion” in Anonymous Italian manuscript, (Walters W4841V), 16th ce. (WMC)

Greenery



Left: Detail from "Adam," English *Book of Hours*, (Walters W102, fol. 28v), 13th ce. (Flickr)



Right: Detail from Turkish manuscript, *Five Poems or Quintet*, (Walters W666, fol. 127a), 13th ce. (Flickr)



Initial from Italian *Natural History of Pliny* (Arch. G b.6, or Douce 310), 15th ce. (LUNA)

Stone



Capital detail from “Mephibosheth kneels before David,” *Maciejowski Bible*, 13th ce. (WMC)

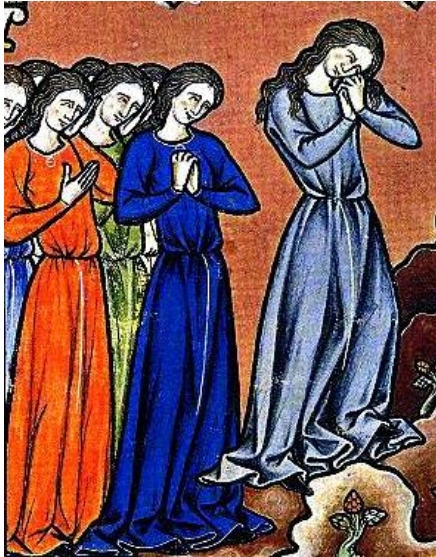


Left: Obverse detail from the *Bellemare Book of Hours*, 16th ce. (WMC)



Right: Initial detail from “Joshua in silver armor leads the assault on Jericho” from a compiled manuscript in Walters Collection (W805, fol. 124v), 16th ce. (Flickr)

Fabric



Detail from "Jephthah's daughter laments," French, *Maciejowski Bible*, 13th ce. (WMC)



Women Hunting - ??? (WMC)



Miniature from Boccaccio, *De claris mulieribus* (Royal 16 G. V; f.3v.) 15th ce. (BL)



Detail of "Month of May," Limbourg Brothers, *Très Riches Heures du duc de Berry*, 15th ce. (GAP)

Image Resources:

Digital Text Library (DTL) “The Digital Text Library is a collection of mostly out of print and difficult to find books and articles relating to animals in the Middle Ages. The originals of the texts listed here are believed to be in the public domain.” available at <http://bestiary.ca/etexts.htm>

National Bibliotheque de France (BNdF) “Bestiary” On-line exhibit of the National Library of France, available at <http://expositions.bnf.fr/bestiaire/expo/index.htm>; and

“Livre de la Chasse” On-line exhibit of the National Library of France, available at <http://classes.bnf.fr/phebus/>

Google Art Project (GAP) - available at www.googleartproject.com

It’s About Time - “Searching centuries of Art, Nature, & Everyday Life for Unique Perspectives, Uncommon Grace, & Unexpected Insights” blog, downloaded from <http://bjws.blogspot.com/2013/02/illuminated-manuscripts-dogs-hunting.html>

History of Information (HI) - “Manuscript Illumination Timeline index on Jerry Norman’s *From Cave Paintings to the Internet - Chronological and Thematic Studies on the History of Information and Media*” blog, available at <http://www.historyofinformation.com/index.php?category=Manuscript+Illumination>

British Library (BL) “Books of Beasts in the British Library: the Medieval Bestiary and its context” available at <http://www.bl.uk/catalogues/illuminatedmanuscripts/TourBestiaryOrigins.asp>

Wikimedia Commons (WMC) - Category: Illuminated Manuscripts, available at http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Illuminated_manuscripts

LUNA - “A collaboration between ARTstor and the Bodleian Library to produce 25,000 images from 35mm filmstrip negatives and positive slides. Material includes medieval and Renaissance illuminated manuscripts.” available at <http://bodley30.bodley.ox.ac.uk:8180/luna/servlet>

J. Paul Getty Museum on Google Art Project - available at <http://www.getty.edu/art/>

Flickr - Walters Art Museum Illuminated Manuscripts’ Photostream, available at http://www.flickr.com/photos/medmss/with/7166587707/#photo_7166587707