

Rethinking the Renaissance

BURGUNDIAN ARTS ACROSS EUROPE

MARINA BELOZERSKAYA



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

PUBLISHED BY THE PRESS SYNDICATE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE
The Pitt Building, Trumpington Street, Cambridge, United Kingdom

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS
The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge, CB2 2RU, UK
40 West 20th Street, New York, NY 10011-4211, USA
10 Stamford Road, Oakleigh, VIC 3166, Australia
Ruiz de Alarcón 13, 28014 Madrid, Spain
Dock House, The Waterfront, Cape Town 8001, South Africa

<http://www.cambridge.org>

© Marina Belozerskaya 2002

This book is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception
and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements,
no reproduction of any part may take place without
the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2002

Printed in the United Kingdom at the University Press, Cambridge

Typeface Bembo 11/14 pt. and Poetica Chancery System QuarkXPress® [GH]

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Belozerskaya, Marina, 1966–
Rethinking the Renaissance : Burgundian arts across Europe / Marina Belozerskaya.
p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 0-521-80850-2.

1. Arts, European – 15th century. 2. Arts, Renaissance – Europe – 15th century.
3. Arts – Netherlands – 15th century. 4. Netherlands – History –
House of Burgundy, 1384–1477. I. Title.

NX542.A1 B45 2002.

709'.02' – dc21

ISBN 0 521 808502 hardback

Contents

| | | | |
|-------|--|---------|-----|
| | <i>List of Illustrations</i> | page xi | • v |
| | <i>Acknowledgments</i> | xv | |
| | Rethinking the Renaissance | I | |
| ONE | The Legacy of Vasari | 7 | |
| | Early Conceptions of the “Renaissance” | 8 | |
| | Vasari’s Formative Role | 10 | |
| | In the Wake of Vasari | 15 | |
| | Art Academies and Academic Values | 17 | |
| | History as a System | 19 | |
| | The Rehabilitation of the Middle Ages | 24 | |
| | Universalist Art-Histories | 26 | |
| | Enter Flemish Primitives and the Burgundian Dukes | 29 | |
| | Grand Visions of “the Renaissance” | 32 | |
| TWO | Through Fifteenth-Century Eyes: The Burgundian Dukes in the International Arena | 47 | |
| | The Princely Virtue of Magnificence | 48 | |
| | The Burgundian Dukes and International Politics | 58 | |
| | Chivalry | 65 | |
| | Classical Learning and Stagecraft | 67 | |
| THREE | Perceiving Value: The Hierarchy of Arts and Their Uses | 76 | |
| | The Language of Splendor | 78 | |
| | Goldwork and Politics | 84 | |
| | Tapestry, Embroidery, and Luxury Fabrics: Cloths That Made Men | 103 | |

CONTENTS

| | | |
|------|--|-----|
| | Armor in the Culture of Tournament and War | 125 |
| | Music – The Auditory Grandeur | 130 |
| | Multimedia Festivities | 135 |
| FOUR | The Politics of Desire: Burgundian Arts across Europe | 146 |
| | England: Edward IV and Henry VII | 146 |
| | The Catholic Monarchs of Spain | 160 |
| | Between Spain and Italy: Alfonso V of Aragon and Ferrante I of Naples | 179 |
| | The Sforza | 194 |
| | The Medici | 201 |
| | Federigo da Montefeltro | 208 |
| FIVE | The Economics of Consumption: Art for the Masses | 221 |
| | Social Climbing | 222 |
| vi • | Markets, Fairs, and Mass-Marketing | 226 |
| | Brabantine Altarpieces | 232 |
| | Netherlandish Painting | 238 |
| | Netherlandish Artists and Artifacts on Foreign Soils | 255 |
| | “Playing the Market” | 262 |
| | Conclusion | 271 |
| | Notes | 275 |
| | Bibliography | 325 |
| | Index | 355 |

List of Illustrations

Color Plates

• vii

Color plates follow page xvi

- I. Presentation miniature in Jean Wauquelin, *Roman de Girard de Roussillon*, Master of Girard de Rousillon. Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek
- II. Presentation miniature in Quintus Curtius and Vasco da Lucena, *Les faiz du grant Alexandre*, Loyset Liédet. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale
- III. Philip the Good at the Seige of Mussy l'Eveque," in *Avis pour faire le passage d'Outre-mer*, Jean Miélot. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale
- IV. "1473 Chapter of the Order of the Golden Fleece," in Guillaume Fillastre, *Histoire de la Toison d'or*. Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale
- V. *Trojan War* tapestry, "Andromache and Priam Urging Hector Not to Go to War," Tournai
- VI. *Trojan War* tapestry, "Siege of Troy," Tournai
- VII. *Goldene Rössl*, Paris
- VIII. "Philip the Good at Mass," in *Traité sur l'Oraison Dominicale*, Jean le Tavernier (?), Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale Albert 1er
- IX. Goblet of Philip the Good, Burgundian
- X. Saltcellar and poison detector, West German or Burgundian
- XI. Reliquary of Charles the Bold, Gérard Loyet, Lièges
- XII. *Three Coronations* tapestry, Netherlandish
- XIII. *Three Coronations* tapestry, detail
- XIV. Coronet of Margaret of York
- XV. Tomb of Juan II of Castile and Isabella of Portugal, Gil de Siloe
- XVI. Breviary of Queen Isabella Catolica. London, British Library
- XVII. *Triumph of the Mother of God*, or *Paños de Oro* tapestry, Pieter van Aelst

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

- XVIII. Reliquary for a finger of St. Catherine, Burgundian
 XIX. Urbino Palace, studiolo
 XX. Urbino Palace, frescoed room
 XXI. *Famous Men*, Joos van Ghent, Urbino studiolo
 XXII. *Annunciation*, Jos Ammann
 XXIII. *Cloth market in s'Hertogenbosch*, Anonymous
 XXIV. Aristotle, *Ethics, Politics and Economics*, translated by Nicole Oresme,
 Netherlandish master, Rouen, Bibliothèque Municipale
 XXV. *Holy Sacrament Altarpiece*, Jan de Molde

Figures

| | | |
|--------|--|-----|
| viii • | 1. <i>Philip the Good</i> , Rogier van der Weyden's workshop | 50 |
| | 2. <i>Charles the Bold</i> , Rogier van der Weyden's workshop | 51 |
| | 3. <i>History of Alexander the Great</i> tapestry, Netherlandish | 54 |
| | 4. Burgundian booty in Diebold Schilling, <i>Chronique de Lucerne</i> . Lucerne, Zentralbibliothek | 88 |
| | 5. Swearing-in cross of the Order of the Golden Fleece, France | 89 |
| | 6. Drageoir. Reconstruction by the author | 91 |
| | 7. Spoon with a fox, Netherlandish | 93 |
| | 8. <i>Huntsman Salt</i> , Netherlandish? | 95 |
| | 9. Ring of Mary of Burgundy, Burgundian | 96 |
| | 10. Brooch, Burgundian | 96 |
| | 11. Charles the Bold's bejeweled hat. Seventeenth-century engraving after ca. 1555 drawing | 97 |
| | 12. Sword of Charles the Bold, Burgundian | 98 |
| | 13. <i>Throne of Grace</i> , Burgundian | 99 |
| | 14. Philip's columnar monument, after Aubin-Louis Millin, <i>Antiquités Nationales ou Recueil de Monumens</i> , Paris, 1798–9 | 104 |
| | 15. <i>Story of Caesar</i> tapestries, Netherlandish | 109 |
| | 16. <i>Millefleurs</i> tapestry, Netherlandish | 113 |
| | 17. <i>Virgin with Canon van der Paele</i> , Jan van Eyck | 117 |
| | 18. Pluvial of the Order of the Golden Fleece, Burgundian | 118 |
| | 19. Antependium of the Order of the Golden Fleece, Burgundian | 119 |
| | 20. <i>St. John Altarpiece</i> , Hans Memling | 125 |
| | 21. Parade armor of Philip II of Spain, Desiderius Helmschmid and Jörg Sigman | 127 |
| | 22. Medusa shield of Charles V, Filippo Negroli | 129 |

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

| | |
|--|-----|
| 23. Dance at court, in <i>Histoire of Renaud de Montauban</i> , Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal | 131 |
| 24. Monkey Cup, Netherlandish | 143 |
| 25. Frontispiece of Caxton presenting the volume to Margaret of York, in Raoul Le Fevre, <i>Recuyell of the Histories of Troy</i> , San Marino, The Huntington Library | 149 |
| 26. <i>Henry VII</i> , Michel Sittow | 153 |
| 27. <i>Marriage of Prince Arthur</i> tapestry, Pier Enghein (?) | 157 |
| 28. Tomb effigy of Lady Margaret Beaufort, London, Westminster Abbey | 159 |
| 29. Tomb of Prince Alfonso, Gil de Siloe | 164 |
| 30. Retablo, Gil de Siloe and Diego de la Cruz | 165 |
| 31. <i>Catherine of Aragon</i> , Michel Sittow | 167 |
| 32. <i>The Assumption of the Virgin</i> , Michel Sittow | 168 |
| 33. <i>Christian II of Denmark</i> , Michel Sittow | 169 |
| 34. <i>Temptation of Christ</i> , Juan de Flandes | 172 |
| 35. <i>Isabella of Castille</i> , Juan de Flandes | 173 |
| 36. <i>Juana la Loca</i> , Juan de Flandes | 175 |
| 37. <i>Philip the Fair</i> , Juan de Flandes | 175 |
| 38. "The Visitation," in the <i>Book of Hours of Queen Isabella the Catholic</i> . Cleveland, Cleveland Art Museum | 177 |
| 39. <i>Mass of St. Gregory</i> tapestry, Brussels | 178 |
| 40. <i>Miraculous Draught of Fish</i> tapestry, Pieter van Aelst after cartoons by Raphael | 179 |
| 41. <i>Altarpiece of the Virgin with the Councilors</i> , Luis Dalmau | 181 |
| 42. Arch of Alfonso of Naples, Francesco Laurana. Naples, Castel Nuovo | 182 |
| 43. Medal of Alfonso of Aragon, Antonio Pisanello | 183 |
| 44. <i>Sforza Crucifixion</i> triptych, Rogier van der Weyden | 210 |
| 45. Urbino Palace, courtyard, Luciano Laurana | 211 |
| 46. Urbino Palace, west facade, Luciano Laurana | 212 |
| 47. <i>Très Riches Heures</i> of the Duc de Berry, "September," Limbourg brothers, Chantilly, Musée Conde | 213 |
| 48. <i>Federigo da Montefeltro</i> . Urbino, Galleria Nazionale delle Marche | 214 |
| 49. <i>Communion of Apostles</i> , Joos van Ghent | 217 |
| 50. <i>Famous Men</i> , Joos van Ghent, Urbino studiolo | 219 |
| 51. <i>Annunciation</i> , Rogier van der Weyden | 223 |
| 52. <i>Merode Altarpiece</i> , Robert Campin | 228 |
| 53. <i>David Aubert</i> presenting " <i>Les Chroniques et Conquêtes de Charlemagne</i> " to <i>Philip the Good</i> , Jean Le Tavernier. Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale | 229 |

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

| | | |
|-----|--|---------|
| | 54. Västerås II retable, Antwerp | 233 |
| | 55. Strängnäs I retable, Jan Borreman II workshop | 234 |
| | 56. Retable of Claudio de Villa, Brussels | 235 |
| | 57. <i>Columba Altarpiece</i> , Rogier van der Weyden | 239 |
| | 58. <i>Lamentation</i> , Rogier van der Weyden | 240 |
| | 59. <i>Lamentation</i> , Fra Angelico | 241 |
| | 60. <i>Entombment</i> , Michelangelo | 241 |
| | 61. <i>Last Judgment</i> triptych, Hans Memling | 242 |
| | 62. <i>Last Judgment</i> triptych, Hans Memling, wings | 243 |
| | 63. <i>Portinari Altarpiece</i> , Hugo van der Goes | 244 |
| | 64. <i>Tommaso Portinari</i> , Hans Memling | 245 |
| | 65. <i>Maria Maddalena Baroncelli</i> , Hans Memling | 245 |
| | 66. <i>Ludovico Portinari</i> , Master of St. Ursula Legend | 246 |
| x • | 67. <i>Lamentation</i> , Master of St. Lucy Legend | 247 |
| | 68. <i>Virgin and Child in a Landscape</i> , Master of St. Lucy Legend | 248 |
| | 69. <i>Virgin and Child with Saints Altarpiece</i> , wings, Master of St. Lucy Legend | 249 |
| | 70. <i>Donne Triptych</i> , Hans Memling | 251 |
| | 71–72. <i>Triptych of Bonkil</i> , Hugo van der Goes | 252–253 |
| | 73. <i>Marco Barbarigo</i> , Follower of van Eyck | 254 |
| | 74. <i>Edward Grymeston</i> , Petrus Christus | 254 |
| | 75. Eton College paintings, Eton College Chapel | 257 |
| | 76. Tomb of Richard Beauchamp, Warwick, Church of St. Mary in Warwick | 258 |
| | 77. Chapel of Richard Beauchamp, Warwick, Church of St. Mary in Warwick | 259 |
| | 78. Tomb of Richard Beauchamp, detail. Warwick, Church of St. Mary in Warwick. Warwickshire Museum | 261 |
| | 79. Vestments with the Life of St. John the Baptist | 262 |
| | 80. <i>Federigo da Montefeltro and Battista Sforza</i> , Piero della Francesca | 264 |
| | 81. <i>Christ as the Man of Sorrows</i> , Hans Memling | 265 |
| | 82. <i>Christ as the Man of Sorrows</i> , Florentine replica of Hans Memling | 265 |
| | 83. <i>Madonna and Child</i> , Botticelli's workshop | 266 |
| | 84. <i>Madonna of the Goldfinch</i> , Raphael | 267 |
| | 85. <i>St. John the Baptist</i> , Hans Memling | 268 |
| | 86. <i>St. Veronica</i> , Hans Memling | 269 |
| | 87. <i>St. George with the Dragon</i> , Raphael | 270 |

Rethinking the Renaissance

The art of fifteenth-century Europe tends to be studied in parochial terms, with greatest attention paid to individual masters, regional developments, and local patronage. Europe, however, was then, as now, highly cosmopolitan, its diverse countries and polities linked into larger communities through intricate webs of political, economic, religious, and social ties. The period, moreover, is steadfastly associated with the revival of ancient Greco-Roman art and literature at the hands of Italian artists and humanists, Florentines in particular, and with the aesthetic and intellectual innovations they inspired. Yet such interpretations are only partially accurate and to a large extent retrospective. They are grounded in Giorgio Vasari's *Lives of the Artists* (1550/1568) and the widespread adoption of Italian classicism in the sixteenth century and thereafter. For most of the fifteenth century a renewed awareness of ancient monuments and texts mingled with other, equally pressing concerns – chivalry among them – and the Italian cultural exports with which we have come to identify the Renaissance mixed with those from Germany and France, Byzantium, and the Islamic world.

• I

This book explores the particular prestige of arts emanating from the Burgundian Netherlands, why they were coveted and adopted by rulers throughout Europe as eloquent expressions of power, and how they were acquired by patrons of lesser means to enhance their status and display their taste. The technical mastery and aesthetic refinement of Netherlandish tapestries, metalwork, manuscripts, music, sculpture, and painting earned them far-ranging esteem; associations with the Burgundian dukes, the most illustrious princes of the time, and provenance from their domains enhanced the desirability and accelerated the distribution of these artworks. The following study of creations hailing from the ducal lands and produced elsewhere in emulation of them, viewed

in a pan-European context, seeks not only to restore them to the forefront of contemporary culture, but also to offer a model for inquiry into the internationalism and pluralism of the fifteenth century. It is but one alternative to the Italo-centric perception of the era.

The book engages diverse disciplines and methodologies. It poses historiographical questions, scrutinizing biases and assumptions that have dominated Renaissance studies, in order to clear the ground for new interpretations; it revisits fifteenth-century inventories and chronicles, travel accounts and literary treatises, patterns of acquisition and the works of art themselves to reevaluate contemporary perceptions and values; and it addresses the political and economic contexts within which patrons, artists, and artworks operated. Case studies are used to elucidate larger phenomena, for a comprehensive cataloguing approach would render this volume unmanageable.

2 • The popularity of Netherlandish painting abroad is well-known. Yet few scholars have attempted to analyze the causes of its widespread appeal or to view it within larger artistic and social settings. Painting is examined here in conjunction with other media – tapestry, embroidery, goldwork, and armor – that are often dismissed as “decorative” or “minor.” At the time of their creation, however, they were considered preeminent and an investigation of their reception across Europe reveals significant patterns unrecognized by traditional inquiries which have, for the most part, been limited to painting and/or Italo-Netherlandish relations. Renaissance patrons pursued their ideological objectives through a complex aesthetic language and with keen awareness of international developments: I hope to reflect something of the breadth of their mental and material worlds.

A historiographical reappraisal is a necessary preamble to this investigation. The fifteenth century has been studied largely through the prism of Italy, as the result of political, literary, and artistic accretions beginning in the sixteenth century. The demise of the Burgundian court – the paragon of princely magnificence in its day – following the disastrous military engagements of its last duke, Charles the Bold (d. 1477), led to a gradual decline of the prestige of Burgundian visual culture. Meanwhile, Vasari’s *Lives* valorized Italian, and especially Tuscan, artistic traditions, codifying the terms of subsequent art-historical discourse. The founding of art academies in which Italian masters dominated, as well as the writings of such luminaries as Voltaire, Winckelmann, and Hegel, further canonized Italian art. Burckhardt’s *Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy* (1860) and Huizinga’s *Autumn of the Middle Ages* (1919), which portrayed Italy as the quintessence of spiritual and creative triumph and Northern Europe as a society in decline, have polarized and prejudiced the discussion of these two cultural traditions with remarkable tenacity. Of similarly lasting impact has been

the work of connoisseurs such as Berenson, Friedländer, and Post, who established the oeuvres of Italian, Netherlandish, and Spanish painters, respectively, reinforcing notions of regional distinctions and the perception of painting and its practitioners as key indicators of cultural development. By scrutinizing the evolution of assumptions concerning “the Renaissance,” I seek to prepare the ground for a reevaluation of the period.

“The Renaissance” is such a loaded term that it calls for a qualification at the outset. The “Renaissance” is generally considered to be “the great revival of art and letters, under the influence of classical models, which began in Italy in the 14th century and continued during the 15th and 16th.”¹ This definition exposes commonly held presuppositions: that the period was primarily concerned with and inspired by antiquity and that Italy was the cultural leader of all of Europe. As Anthony Hughes notes,

To write about the Renaissance is inevitably to accept as given a particular model of the movement of western culture, to see significant divisions between medieval and “humanist” world-views, however blurred the transitions seem to have become. In addition, the Renaissance has always been characterized as a movement primarily associated with the urban man of letters and the innovative visual artist in and around Florence and there has always been a difficulty in matching social to cultural change in an unassailable way.²

• 3

Chapter 1 will outline the process by which this epoch came to be so characterized. Subsequent chapters will use the term “fifteenth-century” instead of “the Renaissance” because its neutrality accommodates a multiplicity of cultural currents and manifestations. By sidestepping the label, and the traditional definitions of “the Renaissance,” the book will highlight some of the many faces of the fifteenth century, and explore why the period was by no means dominated by Italy, as is commonly asserted and assumed. The issue of continuity or disruption of “medieval” culture, which has preoccupied many scholars, will not figure in this discussion. Rather, informed by contemporary documentary evidence, the book will focus on the political and social motivations that underlay the pursuit of particular forms of behavior and visual currencies. As Burckhardt acknowledged in the passage from his *Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy* that serves as the epigram to this volume, the Renaissance is a formulation of the scholarly and popular imagination.

It is my contention that fifteenth-century Europeans perceived the Burgundian dukes and the arts emanating from their domains as cultural leaders of the day. Contemporary accounts of travelers, diplomats, and chroniclers indicate that the dukes were viewed as majestic and paradigmatic. Legitimate, but

4 • recent lords of a rich and politically consequential territory that they inherited and augmented through a series of diplomatic and military maneuvers, the dukes employed a vast array of artworks to project and justify their multifaceted ambitions to subjects, allies, and foes alike. The brilliance and ingenuity of ducal displays – splendid attire in peace and war, sumptuous adornment of palaces and festivities, lavish banquets and tournaments – prompted admiration in their beholders. The dukes' financial means far exceeded those of other rulers of the time: An astonished Bohemian diplomat reported that their treasury surpassed even the legendary riches of Venice. Their rise also coincided with the weakening of other major contenders for European dominance, such as the kings of France and the Holy Roman Emperors. Through astute positioning within European politics and creative self-promotion, the Burgundian dukes succeeded in rivaling the stature of kings and fashioning a mode of ascendance that came to be emulated by the Tudors, the Catholic Monarchs of Spain, numerous Italian princes, and other peers abroad for the potency of its sovereign aura.

The dazzling splendor of the Burgundian court has been contrasted to the putative intellectual superiority of Italians, for the chivalric ethos of the North, which Huizinga pronounced antiquated and empty has been juxtaposed with a presumed enlightened humanistic spirit of the South extolled by Burckhardt. Yet chivalry remained vital to political and military organization throughout Europe. The presence of countless chivalric romances in courtly libraries, the subject matter of tapestries and fresco cycles decorating European palaces, and the tournaments staged at numerous courts, including Italian ones, make clear that classical humanism was not the exclusive preoccupation or priority of aristocratic circles. The Burgundian dukes and their nobility, furthermore, were trained in classical history and literature, albeit largely in French, and although they may not have studied ancient texts with the philological rigor of some of their Italian counterparts, they avidly read ancient writings and cultivated the inheritance of antiquity. Their intellectual concerns and pursuits corresponded to prevalent norms; their court attracted adulation, as well as scions of foreign princely families, as a locus of creative generation and princely education.

The Burgundian dukes and their brilliant court provided a model and an impetus for emulation across Europe. The artifacts they employed to manifest their ideologies were sought after by their rivals and imitators, and they shed light on the values current in the fifteenth century. Today Art History as a discipline centers on the Academic triad of painting, sculpture, and architecture. In the fifteenth century, however, intrinsically costly and finely wrought gold-work, tapestry, armor, and manuscripts, not to mention court pageants that combined all the arts, were exalted not merely for their material worth, but

also for their social and spiritual significance. An attempt to restore to their rightful place the sumptuous arts that since then have been devalued as “decorative” or “minor” constitutes yet another theme of this study. The deployment of such media, and well as of music, by the Burgundian dukes was witnessed with awe by contemporary observers and eagerly coopted by other potentates for the promise of ascendance they offered. I term the aesthetic face of Burgundian ducal propaganda the “Burgundian mode” not because it was original to the dukes – in fact it drew upon French courtly and Netherlandish civic traditions, among others – but because the way the dukes used ensembles of particular artifacts found such resonance and engendered such wide imitation in their day. In speaking of the “Burgundian court culture,” I refer to the combination of objects and practices associated with the dukes, even though its individual components were cosmopolitan.

Indeed, European courts (as well as urban centers) were closely bound into an international community of shared diplomatic, economic, and cultural concerns, and rulers vigilantly observed and competed with each other in expressions of magnificence, deploying those arts that best accomplished their aims. The Burgundian court served as a potent model of princely display, and the arts associated with it were employed by other rulers as visual metaphors of their own power and attainment. The present investigation focuses on how the kings of England and Spain and the princes of Italy used artists and artifacts from the Burgundian Netherlands, but this analysis can be extended to other parts of Europe, likewise linked to the Burgundian court and territories through channels of politics, commerce, and religion.

Social diffusion of Netherlandish arts – their adoption on a more modest scale by the ambitious and rising urban bourgeoisie – followed similar pathways. The geographic location of the Burgundian lands at the intersection of major trade routes, both seaborne and overland, assured a constant stream of goods, traders, and customers passing through the region. Numerous wares were mass-produced specifically for export, and shipped not only to England, Italy, and Spain, but also to France, Germany, and the cities of the Hanseatic League farther north to serve the aspirations of middle-class clientele. The prestige and marketability of artworks emanating from the Burgundian Netherlands, moreover, expanded economic opportunities not only for local artisans, but also for foreigners. Many immigrated there to learn the styles and techniques that would significantly enhance their professional success, or to take advantage of the steady flow of cosmopolitan customers. Countless Netherlanders, meanwhile, worked temporarily or moved permanently abroad, to the many locales with which the Low Countries maintained close mercantile and diplomatic ties. They established local tapestry industries, led or performed in

musical choirs, or founded sculpture or masonry workshops. Finally, English, French, German, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, and other craftsmen adopted the artistic styles of the Burgundian Netherlands because they were desired and thus economically viable across Europe.

The prevalent perception of the fifteenth century emphasizes humanistic antiquarianism and Italy, regional artistic developments, and painting. The pan-European appeal of the arts hailing from the Burgundian milieu provides one of many alternative lenses through which the period can be viewed. The intent of this volume is not to promote the aesthetic merits of Netherlandish creations over those of any other region. Rather, in studying the arts of the period across boundaries of media and geography, I hope to do greater justice to the diverse activities of artists, the varied interests and ambitions of patrons, and the multidimensional links between diverse cultures.