

Medieval Herbals

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著者:Minta Collins

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Medieval Herbals: The Illustrative Traditions is a new, wide-ranging and generously illustrated study of manuscript herbals produced between 600 - 1450. The book examines the two principal herbal traditions of Classical descent: the Dioscorides manuscripts in Greek, Arabic, and Latin and the Latin Herbarius of Apulcius Platonicus. It shows how, from 1300, the illustrations of the de herbis Traetatus treatises, the first of which was British Library, MS. Egerton 747, showed a new observation of nature, paving the way in the fifteenth century for French Livres des Simples and the magnificent plant paintings of later Italian Herbals. Medieval Herbals provides one of the few syntheses in English of existing research on the subject and also addresses issues of dating, location, production and ownership of the individual codices. Minta Collins demonstrates how many herbals were not only codices for medical scholars but expensively illustrated books for bibliophiles, of equal interest to students of manuscripts, to historians of medicine and botany, and to art historians.

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