

The Limbourg Brothers: Illuminated Artists

1. What were the names of the Limbourg brothers and when did they live?
 2. Why did they go to live with their uncle?
 3. Who was Philip the Bold?
 4. How did the boys repay Philip the Bold for paying their ransom?
 5. Tell about the books of that time.
 6. What was the Book of Hours, or *Tres Riches Heures*, and why was it made?
 7. Why were books so expensive in the 1400's?
 8. How did the Duke of Berry benefit from supporting the three artists?
 9. What is an artistic patron and why did artists need them in pre-modern times.
 10. Describe *Duke of Berry On A Journey* (online at <http://www.gardenofpraise.com/images/duke.jpg>). What does it depict? What does it tell you about life in the 1400's?
 11. How did the Limbourg brothers create their paintings? What tools and materials did they use?
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THE CALENDAR: A VISUAL INVESTIGATION

The *Book of Hours* gives us insight into what the people of this time and place believed and how they lived. In the *Très Riches Heures*, each representation of a month is accompanied by the corresponding calendar. This is the calendar page for January. Use the online version of the *Book of Hours* (<http://www.christusrex.org/www2/berry/index.html>) to note how seasons and harvests governed their social and spiritual lives.

JANUARY

<http://biblelessons.org/images2/limb4.jpg>

The month of giving New Years' gifts (a custom which seems to have died out now). Jean de Berry himself can be seen on the right, wearing the brilliant blue robe.

FEBRUARY

<http://www.christusrex.org/www2/berry/f2v.html>

Winter in a peasant village. The inhabitants of a farm are shown warming themselves by the fire, while in the background daily life - cutting wood, taking cattle to the market - goes on as normal.

MARCH

<http://www.christusrex.org/www2/berry/f3v.html>

The year's first farm work, sowing and ploughing and suchlike. The chateau in the background is that of Lusignan, one of the Duc's favourites.

APRIL

<http://www.christusrex.org/www2/berry/f4v.html>

The arrival of spring, hope and new life - the grass is green and a newly betrothed couple are exchanging rings in the foreground, accompanied by friends and family. The chateau is another one of the Duc's, that of Dourdan.

MAY

<http://www.christusrex.org/www2/berry/f5v.html>

The May jaunt, a pageant celebrating the "joli mois de Mai" in which one had to wear green garments known as "livree de mai". The riders are young noblemen and women, with princes and princesses being visible. In the background is a chateau thought to be the Palais de la Cite in Paris.

JUNE

<http://www.christusrex.org/www2/berry/f6v.html>

Harvest time - the peasants are moving the meadow in unison, with the Hotel de Nesle, the Duc's Parisian residence, in the background.

JULY

<http://www.christusrex.org/www2/berry/f7v.html>

More of the harvest; the sheep are being shorn and the hay is being reaped. The chateau behind them is that which formerly stood on the Clain at Poitiers.

AUGUST

<http://www.christusrex.org/www2/berry/f8v.html>

The month of hawking; the nobles, carrying falcons, are going hunting while in the background peasants are harvesting and swimming in the river. Behind them is the Chateau d'Etampes.

SEPTEMBER

<http://biblelessonsite.org/images2/limb6.jpg>

Probably the most famous of the calendar images. The grapes are being harvested by the peasants and carried into the beautifully detailed Chateau de Saumur.

OCTOBER

<http://www.christusrex.org/www2/berry/f10v.html>

Tilling and sowing are being carried out by the peasants, in the shadow of the Louvre - Charles V's royal palace in Paris.

NOVEMBER

<http://www.christusrex.org/www2/berry/f11v.html>

This is the only calendar image executed by Colombe; the Limbourgs painted only the zodiacal tympanum above it. The picture shows the autumn acorn harvest, with a peasant knocking down throwing sticks to knock down the acorns on which his pigs are feeding.

DECEMBER

<http://www.christusrex.org/www2/berry/f12v.html>

Represented by a wild boar hunt outside the castle. Shows the rectangular castle flanked by nine towers.