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Treasures of the Medieval World **Luhring Augustine Tribeca** **in conjunction with Sam Fogg**

January 31 – March 8, 2025
Public reception: Friday January 31, 6pm – 8pm

Luhring Augustine and Sam Fogg are pleased to announce ***Treasures of the Medieval World***, the fourth in a series of highly-praised collaborative exhibitions showcasing medieval masterpieces in a contemporary context. Following the success of the first three iterations, *Of Earth and Heaven* (2018), *Gothic Spirit* (2020), and *The Medieval Body* (2022), this exhibition will open on January 31 at **Luhring Augustine Tribeca**, and run through March 8.

This new exhibition brings together over forty rare pieces of art spanning the fields of sculpture, painting, ceramics, textiles, and goldsmith's work. Collectively they evince medieval Europe's astonishing and enduring artistic legacy.

Highlights include one of only five autograph works carved by the master sculptor Tilman Riemenschneider still in private hands, and the only seated limewood Virgin and Child group made by him to survive anywhere in the world (fig. 1). Riemenschneider occupies a central position in the scholarship and appreciation for German limewood sculpture of the late Middle Ages. Never before exhibited in America, and having resided in the same Austrian collection for well over 100 years, this pioneering sculpture is a startling testament of the artist's working processes and ground-breaking creativity.

Another major highlight is *The Apparition of Christ to the Virgin*, painted by Alejo Fernandez, and is the 16th-century Sevillian painter's masterpiece (fig. 2). Originally displayed at the center of a monumental altarpiece, or *retablo* in Spanish, it is a dramatic work which straddles the late-medieval and Renaissance worlds, incorporating influences from Italian masters like Raphael, Bramante, and Pinturicchio. Famously, Fernandez is also known for his portrait of Christopher Columbus in *The Virgin of the Navigators* executed for the Alcazar of Seville between 1531 and 1536.

The exhibition also includes a dramatic Bavarian sculpture of Saint George trouncing the Devil (fig. 3), formerly part of the Thyssen-Bornemisza collection. A tour-de-force of late gothic carving, it is a masterful study of movement and tension, and is the most successful surviving work of an otherwise unknown South German sculptor who flourished before Riemenschneider's rise to prominence.

A rare and complete English alabaster altarpiece, featuring fifteen individual carved panels and traceried canopies, will also be displayed (fig.4) and represents England's often forgotten but far-reaching contribution to the aesthetic texture of the medieval world. Such altars were once found in great numbers across Europe, but in shocking testimony to the destruction wrought during the English Reformation and subsequent centuries of neglect, not a single intact alabaster altarpiece of its type survives in an English religious house today, and only a tiny few are preserved in museum collections.

A superb example of Portuguese royal display silver will also feature prominently in the presentation, alongside other examples of early European precious metalwork (fig. 5). This large silver-gilt ewer represents the pinnacle of goldsmith's work produced for the European nobility at the turn of the 16th

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century, in a medium that has been largely lost due to the ease with which its precious metals could be melted down for extracted value. Once part of the Rothschild collection for 150 years, and one of fewer than a dozen similar vessels in existence, it showcases the opulence of the Manueline style popularized by King Manuel I of Portugal. Its intricate craftsmanship demonstrates the high level of skill involved in European goldsmithing during the period.

The exhibition's broad spread, and its aim to represent the fluid geographical and cultural boundaries of the medieval world, will be manifested in the incorporation of a small clutch of vanishingly-rare Turkish carpets, which came to Europe early in their histories by way of Italian merchants. These carpets highlight the cultural and artistic exchange between the Christian and Muslim communities during the medieval period. One such example, the Bernheimer *Phoenix in Octagon* rug, was woven in a southern Anatolian community and is one of only five of its type surviving anywhere in the world (fig. 6).

Through these exceptional works, *Treasures of the Medieval World* offers a comprehensive view of the artistry, craftsmanship, and cultural exchange that defined the medieval period. The exhibition highlights the diversity of materials and forms that made up this extraordinary era in European and Mediterranean art.

For information on the exhibition, please contact Matthew Reeves at matthew@samfogg.com or Leah Horowitz at leah@luhringaugustine.com.

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Figure 1
Tilman Riemenschneider (c. 1460-1531)
The Virgin and Child Enthroned
Germany, Lower Franconia,
Würzburg
c. 1500-1505
91.5x45x30 cm / 36x18x12 in.
Limewood



Figure 2
Alejo Fernandez (c.1475-c.1545)
The Apparition of Christ to the Virgin
Spain, Seville
c. 1520-1530
Unframed 150x107x3 cm /
59x42x1.2 in.
Oil and gilding on panel

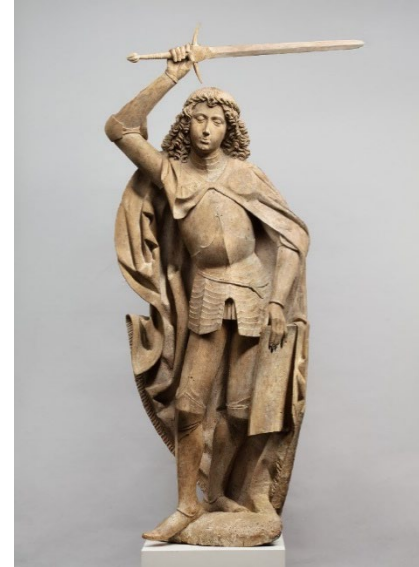


Figure 3
Saint George trouncing the Devil
Southern Germany, Upper Bavaria
c. 1500
148.5x58x32.5 cm / 58.5x23x13 in.
Limewood

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Figure 4
An alabaster altarpiece depicting the Passion of Christ
England, Midlands
c. 1440
75 x 226 x 7 cm / 29.5 x 89 x 2.75 in
Alabaster



Figure 5 (LEFT)
A grand silver-gilt ewer with dragon-headed spout and repoussé ornament
Portugal
c. 1500-1520
50.3 cm (height) x 17.2 cm (diameter) x 26.5 cm (depth)
Silver with gilding and reverse-glass painting



Figure 6 (RIGHT)
The Bernheimer 'Phoenix in Octagon' rug
Southern Anatolia, Tekeogullari or Ramazonogullari Beylik?
c. 1490-1525
200 x 119 cm / 78.75 x 46.85 in
Wool