

**A window into the Medieval World**

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Are you inspired by the powerful symbolism of the Angel of the North? Does the speed of construction of the 2012 Olympic stadiums leave you in awe? Well, consider the architectural feats of engineers, stonemasons and craftsmen of the Middle Ages who built castles, cathedrals, churches and palaces without the benefit of modern technology.

The British Library's latest book, *Building the Medieval World* contains vibrant illustrations from medieval manuscripts depicting buildings from farmhouses to churches, and castles to a dog kennel. It explores these amazing structures and what they signified to people in the Middle Ages.

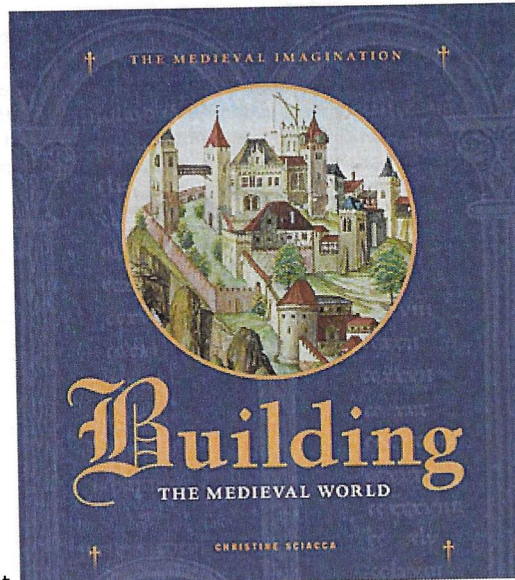
Illuminators in the Middle Ages often used elements of architecture to represent the importance or holiness of an individual or an event. For a king in feudal Spain, his sturdy castle was the greatest bastion of his wealth and influence. Similarly, for a saint to cement their claim to posterity, a sacred church interior guaranteed an eternal line of devotees.

*Building the Medieval World* presents a vibrant snapshot of a forgotten world populated by architectural majesties and, while many structures still stand, the medieval manuscripts featured in this book means that edifices long destroyed can still be viewed in their original splendour.

Sourced from collections at the British Library and J. Paul Getty Museum, *Building the Medieval World* draws upon 84 of these colourful manuscripts to explore the medievalist's fascination with the buildings that influenced their daily lives.

**Christine Sciacca**, author of *Building the Medieval World*, said:

"The captivating castles and cathedrals of medieval Europe have been studied extensively, but relatively little has been said about what happened when medieval artists took it upon themselves to depict these buildings in the pages of illuminated manuscripts. These vibrant painted images not only document structures sometimes long destroyed, they also tell us a great deal about what people of the time thought about these buildings and what their greater meaning was for the individuals who lived with them every day."

**For more information please contact**

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**Notes to editors**

*Building the Medieval World* (price £12.95) is available from the British Library Shop (tel: +44 (0)20 7412 7735 / e-mail: [bl-bookshop@bl.uk](mailto:bl-bookshop@bl.uk)) and online at [www.bl.uk/shop](http://www.bl.uk/shop) as well as other bookshops throughout the UK. The book comprises of 96 pages with 84 colour illustrations, (ISBN 9780712350945), published May 2010.

*Building the Medieval World* is part of the Medieval Imagination series. Preceding titles (all hardback) are:

- *Beasts, Factual and Fantastic*, Elizabeth Morrison, ISBN 9780712349918; RRP £12.95
- *Faces of Power and Piety*, Erik Inglis, ISBN 9780712309813; RRP £12.95
- *Images in the Margins*, Margot McIlwain Nishimura, ISBN 9780712350839; RRP £12.95

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