

LES ENLUMINURES



GOTHIC COFFRETS



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LES ENLUMINURES

Paris • New York • Chicago



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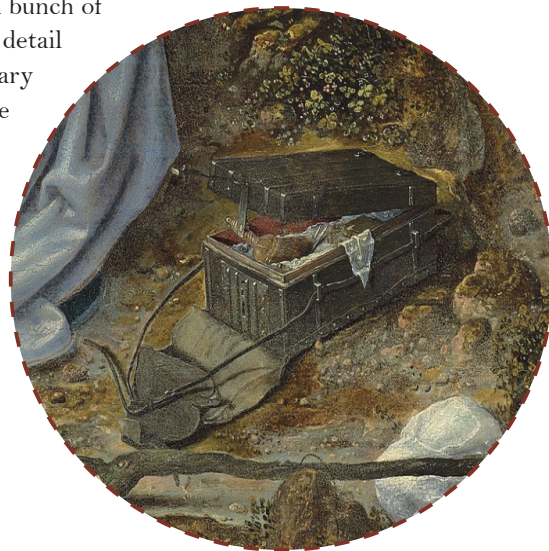
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Introduction

In 2019, Séverine Lepape recorded 139 examples of woodcuts either in Gothic Coffrets or separated from them, of which 67 are in the style of Jean d'Ypres and 72 are in heterogeneous styles. Of these, 110 Coffrets still preserve their prints. A few of the larger examples preserve their secret compartments or their horsehair cushions, evidence that they once contained relics and were carried as backpacks. All include rare hand-colored prints, some unique, others surviving in only a few impressions. Any study of the origins of French printmaking must consider these Coffrets and their remarkable prints. The body of material is exceptional, for the viewing context helps explain the function of the prints.

A landmark sale in 2007 of twenty-two Gothic Coffrets – the largest single collection formed by André and Marie-Thérèse Jammes – prompted renewed interest in these art works and resulted in a flurry of new studies. Significant among these are investigations by Séverine Lepape and Michel Huynh on the typology of the Coffrets, the identity and attribution of the prints (including a yet-unpublished census), and the union of print and Coffret. All but one (no. 1) of the Coffrets with prints offered here have established provenance in the Jammes Collection.

The discovery of a Northern Renaissance painting of the Rest on the Flight, published by Sandra Hindman in 2015, prompts a reconsideration of the Coffrets with prints as traveling boxes. Painted in Antwerp c. 1530 by an artist working in the tradition of Joachim Patinir, the painting includes a detail of a large, partially opened box. A small leather-bound book with clasps, a rosary composed of precious gems, a brush, scissors, and two finger-rings all nest on a bunch of diaphanous white cloth inside the box. This detail survives as the only known contemporary depiction of these Gothic Coffrets. The painting thus encourages us to revisit the question of the purpose of these traveling boxes – symbols of “the house and the garden of the Virgin.” The painting helps clarify the interactive viewing context of the Gothic Coffrets and confirms the long-held theory of their use as book boxes.



This small group of Coffrets with prints tells the story of this unusual art form from its inception in the late fifteenth century through the eighteenth century. Our six examples exhibit the diversity of the medium. They include some of the smallest known (no. 1) and the largest known (nos. 2 and 5). They consist of ones with rounded or domed tops (nos. 1, 2 and 5), ones with flat tops hiding secret compartments (the classic form, no. 4), and ones with flat tops of a different hardware and leather design (nos. 3 and 6). A group photo provided by the Musée de Cluny offers a telling image of the different sizes and types – rounded, flat with a hidden compartment.



At least half the extant prints are attributed to the Parisian artist Jean d'Ypres (active c. 1490-1508; see nos. 1-3; and Lepape 2019). From a dynasty of painters in northern France, this artist is thought to be identical with the Master of the Très Petites Heures of Anne de Bretagne (variously known also as the Master of the Apocalypse Rose of the Sainte-Chapelle, the Master of the Chasse à la licorne, and the Master of the Life of Saint John

the Baptist). The multi-media artist was responsible not only for designs for woodcuts, but for painted altarpieces, stained glass windows, designs for tapestries, and illuminated manuscripts (his eponymous Book of Hours of Anne de Bretagne is Paris, BnF, nouv. acq. lat. 1320 of 1498). His style, as well as his repertory of models, establishes him as the artistic heir of the Master of Coëtivy, the latter possibly identical with the painter, Colin d'Ypres (active 1450-1485). The documented career of Jean d'Ypres corresponds with that of the Master of the Très Petites Heures of Anne de Bretagne.

Of interest also are those Coffrets that display prints by other artists: Hans Burgkmaier of Germany (no. 4), a Renaissance Franco-Italian printmaker from Lyon or Fontainebleau (no. 5), and an anonymous later Spanish Baroque engraver (no. 6). The examples offered here disclose evidence that reveals the “life” of the artwork, that is, how the Coffrets continued in use for centuries, with some repairs, and with new imagery perhaps replacing damaged ones.

Now mostly housed in museums and libraries worldwide, these Coffrets survive as complex, functional artworks. Endlessly intriguing, they still have much to tell us about the material and visual culture of Early Modern Europe.

For short videos on the Coffrets, see www.lesenluminures.com



1 **Coffret**
Woodcut of the *Crucifixion* (90 x 63 mm), after Jean d'Ypres
France, Paris, 1490s

Wood covered in leather (also on the bottom), domed lid with tooled leather, reinforced by iron fittings (two on each side), hinges, a single lock, the interior with its original red cloth lining, side loops, no cushion (70 x 85 x 11 mm.)

This unusually small Coffret belongs to a group of no more than six or seven others that are similarly small in dimensions. The woodcut of the Crucifixion is otherwise unknown, but it is consistent with the style of Jean d'Ypres from the 1490s. Other features of the Coffret also conform with the small group of similar examples: the absence of a cushion, the domed lid, the absence of a secret compartment, the leather covering on the bottom, the two iron fittings on each side (compare *Christ as Salvator Mundi* and *Ecce Homo*, both location unknown, figs. 1 and 2). Closest to the present example is one with a woodcut of *St. Apollonia* in the Musée de Cluny (inventory no. CL. 1611; Lepape, 2019, cat. no. 3, fig. 3). The woodcut and coloring is comparable to others in the larger series by Jean d'Ypres.

Many of the Passion woodcuts in the Coffrets derive from scenes in a unique, exceptionally large xylograph, hand colored and heightened with gold, associated with Jean d'Ypres and now in Paris, BnF, Département des estampes et de la photographie, Réserve, EA-5-II (Boite Ecu) (fig. 4). The present print is an abbreviation of the composition of the Crucifixion in the Large Passion.

Condition

Both the Coffret and hand-colored woodcut are in exceptionally fine, original condition without visible damage or restoration.



Figure 1
Woodcut of *Christ as Salvator Mundi*, after Jean d'Ypres
France, Paris, c. 1490-1500
Present location unknown



Figure 3
Woodcut of *Saint Apollonia*, after Jean d'Ypres
France, Paris, 1490s
Paris, Musée de Cluny, CL. 1612



Figure 2
Woodcut of *Ecce Homo*, after Jean d'Ypres
Small Coffret measuring 73 x 112 x 64 mm.
France, Paris, c. 1480-1490
Present location unknown



Figure 4
Grande Passion, after Jean d'Ypres
France, Paris, end of the 15th century
Paris, BnF, Département des estampes et de la
photographie, Réserve EA-5 (11) – Boite ECU





2 Coffret
Woodcut of the *Arrest of Christ* (230 x 163 mm), after Jean d'Ypres
France, Paris, c. 1500

Wood covered in leather, domed lid with tooled leather, reinforced by nine iron fittings, sides reinforced with three metal fittings, hinges, front latch missing, second ornamental latch, ornamental ironwork lock the interior lined in dark cloth (silk), two pair of side loops, no cushion (210 x 315 x 155 mm.)

The woodcut of the *Arrest of Christ* in this Coffret is unique. It exists in two similar versions, this one and a print on the detached lid from a Coffret in the BnF which has a slightly different inscription (Paris, BnF, Département des estampes et de la photographie, Musée Obj-186-PT ET; on which see Lemoisne 1930, n. CXVII; Schreiber 1931, n. 5; fig. 1). The BnF example lacks the last four words of the inscription, so it cannot be the same plate. It is unclear whether it is missing the ornament on the left side of the print, because it is trimmed to the edge of its left framing line.

Many of the Passion woodcuts in the Coffrets derive from scenes in a unique, exceptionally large xylograph of the Large Passion, hand colored and heightened with gold, associated with Jean d'Ypres and now in Paris, BnF, Département des estampes et de la photographie, Réserve, EA-5-II (Boite Ecu) (fig. 2). The present scene is found in the upper left corner of



Figure 1
 Lid (detached from a Coffret)
 Woodcut of *The Arrest of Christ*, after Jean d'Ypres
 France, Paris, end of the 15th century
 Paris, BnF, Département des estampes et de la
 photographie, Musée-Obj-186-PT FT



Figure 2
Grande Passion, after Jean d'Ypres
 France, Paris, end of the 15th century
 Paris, BnF, Département des estampes et
 de la photographie, Réserve EA-5 (11) –
 Boite ECU

the Large Passion and is used in our woodcut with little modification of the composition but with a somewhat different palette. The present woodcut is also virtually identical to that attributed to Jean d'Ypres in a Book of Hours first printed in 1496 by Simon Vostre in and then in 1497 by Philippe Pigouchet (compare fig. 3, in a Book of Hours using the same plates from 1507).

On the left frame of the woodcut appears an ornamental column in a style that appears to be later than the print. This ornament also appears in the margin of a Last Supper in a Coffret found in Paris (ENSBA, inv. MAS 1069, fig. 4).



The xylographic text in the *Arrest of Christ* print comes from the Gospel of John, “Si ergo me queritis sinite hos abire ut impleretur sermo quem dixit quia quos dedisti michi non perdi ex eis quemquam. Symon ero petrus habens” (John 18: 8-10, translation [Jesus answered] I told you that I am he. If you are looking for me, then let these men go. This happened so that the words he had spoken would be fulfilled: I have not lost one of those you gave me. Then Simon Peter, who had [a sword, drew it and struck the high priest’s servant, cutting off his right ear]). The function of the various texts found on woodcuts in the Coffrets remains to be studied.

The present Coffret was included in the Jammes sale (lot 19, sold for 37,176 Euros), to a Private Collection.

Condition

Original coloring by stencil consistent with the related example of the print in the BnF, some fading, the closure missing and the right side of the box partially detached from the front; the image has suffered, there is a lacuna in the center of several cm. square, but on the whole all the persons are intact with the exception of the Roman soldier in the foreground where there is a lack. The Coffret may have once had a leather cushion; no leather covers the bare wood on its underside.



Figure 3
The *Arrest of Christ* (fol. biii), after Jean d'Ypres from a Printed Book of Hours (Use of Rome) France, Paris, Thielman Kerver, January 20, 1507 Les Enluminures, BOH-216

Figure 4
Woodcut of the *Last Supper*, after Jean d'Ypres France, Paris, end of the 15th century Paris, ENSBA, MAS 1069





3 **Coffret**
Woodcut of *Saint Roch* (234 x 167), after Jean d'Ypres
France, Paris, c. 1500

Wood covered in tooled leather, flat lid, reinforced by three iron fittings, two iron fittings on lateral sides, hinges, metal fittings for the lock, the interior lined in grey-green cloth (silk?), two pairs of side loops, no cushion, underside tooled and covered with three iron fittings (180 x 260 x 110 mm.)

This is an interesting and rare print. It exists in three other examples: one in the BnF Département des estampes et de la photographie, Musée Obj.-188 PR FT (fig. 1), one at the Musée historique du Vieux Vevey in Switzerland, and one in the Jammes sale of 2007 (present location unknown, no. 21, sold for 68,000 Euros).

The print depicts the legend of Saint Roch (1348-1376/79), a pilgrim who was much venerated in France and throughout Europe as a protector against the plague. In the center the saint (identified in part by his name on the halo) points to the wound in his thigh from the plague; on the right appears the dog, who brought him bread for sustenance each day after he retired to the woods, while on the left is the angel who miraculously appeared to cure him. At the end of the fifteenth century, confraternities dedicated to Saint Roch were established in Italy and in France, and when a violent plague struck Paris in the last decade of the century, the Carmelites placed themselves under the saint's protection.

The xylographic text of a suffrage to Saint Roch appeals to the saint: "Ora pro nobis beate roche. Ut mereamur preservari a peste epidemie Oremus. Deus qui beato Rocho per angelum tuum tabulam eiden afferentem promissisti ut qui ipsum pie invocaverit a nullis pestis cruciate lederetur. Presta quesumus, ut qui eius memoriam agimus meritis ipsius a motifera peste corporis et anime liberemur..."(Pray for us Saint Roch. Let us pray that we may be worthy of being preserved from the plague. God, who through your angel brought the tablet to St. Roch, promised that all those who invoke it piously would never suffer from the plague. We ask that we, for the sake of his memory and through his merits, be saved from the mortal plague of body and soul.).

Condition

The Coffret is in good solid condition, the silk lining faded, the print has suffered some visible water damage, and there are losses on the sky. A paper label (signum manus?) covers a portion of the text. Hand coloring by stencil possibly using the same stencils used in Jammes 21 and in the BnF example, both of which employ the same palette. Wax residue on the print on the angel's garment and on the lid of the Coffret.





Figure 1
 Woodcut of *Saint Roch*, after Jean d'Ypres
 France, Paris, end of the 15th century
 Paris, BnF, Département des estampes et de la photographie, Musée-Obj-188-PT FT





4 Coffret
Woodcut of *Saint Veronica's Vernicle* (288 x 200 mm) by Hans Burgkmair the Elder, Germany (Augsburg, c. 1509)
France, probably Paris, c. 1515

Wood covered by tooled leather, reinforced by 9 metal fittings on the lid, raised to enclose a hidden compartment, three metal fittings on each lateral side with a pair of loops, double locking mechanism intact with latches and ornamental ironwork, lined with green silk (290 x 200 x 95 mm)

This Coffret contains a rare print of Saint Veronica by Hans Burgkmair the Elder of Augsburg with hand-stenciled coloring from a Parisian workshop. While over 140 Gothic Coffret prints survive today, most of these woodcuts were created in Paris by the atelier of the French artist Jean d'Ypres. This impression is one of the few Coffret woodcuts known to originate outside of Paris. Printed in 1509 in Burgkmair's shop, the impression was later imported to Paris where it was stencil-colored and affixed to the interior lid of its Coffret around 1515. Only a few other impressions of this woodcut are known: one inside a Coffret of approximately the same date and produced in the same workshop (formerly Jammes no. 28; now Cleveland Museum of Art, J. H. Wade Fund 2020.228) and fugitive impressions in the Metropolitan Museum of Art (fig. 1) and the British Museum (fig. 2). This print is recorded in Hollstein (no. 269) and in Jammes (no. 27). The coloring of this coffret is the same as that of the Cleveland Coffret (fig. 3), which like the present one preserves its secret compartment, still unopened.

The print shows Saint Veronica standing in a meadow and gazing down at the Holy Vernicle she holds in both hands. The scene is enclosed by an architectural frame of a round arch supported by fluted columns and stylized Corinthian capitals on either side. Papal and Imperial arms are displayed in the upper corners, surrounded by wreaths. A xylographic inscription at the foot of the print reads: "SALVE.XPI.EFFIGIES.SACERRIA" (Hail,



Figure 1
Hans Burgkmair the Elder, woodcut of *Saint Veronica's Vernicle*,
Augsburg, c. 1509
New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, acc. no. 37.43.6

Figure 2
Hans Burgkmair the Elder, woodcut of *Saint Veronica's Vernicle*
Augsburg, c. 1509
London, British Museum, reg. no. 1904,0519.3

sacred image of Christ). It remains unknown how the impression first arrived in Paris, but similarities in the stencil technique and color palette to Parisian Coffret prints indicate that it was stencil colored in a Parisian workshop (fig. 4). By comparison, colored impressions of Burgkmair's *Vernicle* of German provenance display a much different color scheme (see fig. 2).

Hans Burgkmair the Elder, (1473–c. 1531), was a painter and printmaker and one of the first German artists to show the influence of the Italian Renaissance. Some 700 woodcuts are ascribed to him, including his principal work, a series of 135 prints celebrating the triumphs of the emperor Maximilian I. His prints include some of the first chiaroscuro woodcuts, produced from two or more blocks inked with different tones to give gradations of light and shade. His son Hans Burgkmair the Younger (c. 1500–59) collaborated with him to produce the famous *Turnierbuch* (tournament book) of fifty-two illustrations published in 1530.

Condition

The Coffret is sturdy with iron fittings, ornamental metalwork, and latches wholly intact, its hidden compartment unopened. It may have had a cushion; the underside is now bare wood. The print lacks on the cloth impressed with Christ's face, showing the bare wood behind it, as well as on the columns in the border. Otherwise the stencil coloring is identical with the Cleveland example.



Figure 3
Hans Burgkmair the Elder
woodcut of *Veronica's Veil*
Coffret: France, probably Paris, 1515;
Woodcut: Germany, Augsburg 1509
Cleveland, Cleveland Museum of Art,
no. 2020.228



Figure 4
Follower of Jean d'Ypres
woodcut of *Sacred Monogram*
France, Paris c. 1505
National Gallery of Art, Rosenwald
Collection 1943.3.637





5 **Coffret**
Woodcut of *Erope* surrounded by Grotesques (260 × 235 mm)
France, Lyon or Fontainebleau. c. 1550

Wood covered in leather, domed lid with tooled leather, reinforced by nine iron fittings, hinges, a lock, four side iron fittings and two loops, lined in red silk, no cushion (235 × 355 × 165 mm)

Distinctive from late-medieval varieties, this Renaissance Coffret is an extremely rare object containing a one-of-a-kind print. Inspired by works produced by Italian painters in the famed Galerie François at the chateau of Fontainebleau, the impression personifies the continent of Europe as a young woman wearing an elaborate headdress surrounded by an intricate field of grotesques and foliage. It was once part of the largest single collection of Gothic Coffrets formed by André and Marie-Thérèse Jammes (no. 29), which was sold in 2007. It belongs to a series of Coffret prints that are not devotional but rather humanist in inspiration, depicting the four continents (Europe, Africa, Asia, and America) and the deities of antiquity. Only three other impressions of this series are known: Africa personified as “La Sovage” (Allen Memorial Art Museum, Oberlin College, no. 2016.5; formerly Jammes no. 30) (fig. 1); “Hercules” (BnF, Département des estampes et de la photographie, Musée OBJ-389-PT FT; formerly Jammes no. 31); and “Juno” (Private Collection; formerly Jammes no. 32) (fig. 2).



Figure 1
 Woodcut of Africa “La Sovage”
 c. 1550
 Allen Memorial Art Museum, Oberlin College,
 no. 2016.5



Figure 2
 Woodcut of *Juno*
 c. 1550,
 Private Collection

Research by Séverine Lepape has shown that Coffrets continued to be produced well after their initial popularity in the decades around 1500 (Lepape 2019, 66-67). However, few of these later sixteenth-century examples have survived. Prints from these Coffrets reflect the latest vogues in Renaissance France. This impression of *Erope* draws heavily on images of masked women attributed to Léonard Thiry, now preserved in Paris at the École nationale supérieure des beaux-arts (Brugerolles 1994). Thiry was a Flemish painter and draughtsman, active in France between 1530 and 1550 who worked as Rosso Fiorentino's assistant in the Galerie François I at the chateau of Fontainebleau. Thiry's drawings were translated into engravings by Pierre Milan around 1535-1545 from which the medallion image of *Erope* takes inspiration (Baselitz et al 1994, nos. 76-79) (fig. 3).

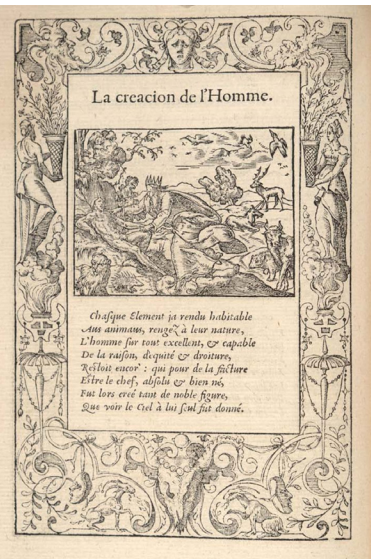
Though inspired by the atelier at the Galerie François, the Coffret is Parisian, and the print may have been produced in Lyon. The print was composed from two blocks. The impression of the central medallion of "Erope" is framed by a second block incised with an ornamental field of grotesques, birds, and flowers. These borders come from two sources: a 1557 edition of Ovid's *Metamorphosis* illustrated by Bernard Salomon for the printer Jean de Tournes (Cartier 1937, figs. 5, 14; Brun 1969, pl. 22) (fig. 4) and an engraved series of saints and mythological heroes from by Martial de Bargues, an illuminator from Lyon (Lepape 2019, 67).

Condition

The construction of the Coffret follows the typology of the late-Gothic Parisian models with iron fittings, sturdy hardware for the locking mechanism, and hoops for the straps. The boxes of the Continents (Europe and Africa) display small hooks—not present on the other Coffrets—that must have served to keep them open for display purposes. The print has suffered some losses primarily along the left upper margin and through the center of the woodcut, resulting from a split in the lid. Some discoloration appears in the lower right margin. The palette is consistent with the other three prints of this group. Some worming on the underside, now inactive.

Figure 3
Pierre Milan, after Léonard Thiry
Female Mask, from Suite of Ornamental Masks
Engraving, mid-16th century
Private collection

Figure 4
Bernard Salomon, *La creacion de l'Homme* with borders of small grotesques, masks, and figures, engraved for Jean de Tournes, *La Metamorphose d'Ovide figuree* (1557)





6 Coffret
Copper engraving of *Los Sanctisimos Corporales de la ciudad de Daroca*
(190 x 125 mm) (Spain, Aragon (?), late 17th century)
France, Paris, early 16th century (Coffret)

Wood covered in tooled leather, reinforced by three iron fittings with openwork designs, tooling on the sides and bottom, once stained red, ornamental metalwork for the lock, pair of hoops in lateral sides, lined in red velvet, used to frame to print (313 × 196 × 115 mm)

This Coffret contains a rare copper engraving of the miraculous hosts of Daroca, a Spanish relic from the late thirteenth century. It is pasted to the interior lid of a Coffret dated to the early sixteenth century, most likely as a replacement to an earlier print that was either damaged or considered to be outdated. A xylographic inscription at the top reads: “NON FECIT OMNI N[ATIONI]” (He has not done anything like it for other nations). A French name, “DESSERRES,” at the bottom of the print was likely added by a former owner. No other impressions of this engraving are presently known.

The engraving features a scene of the Virgin and Child accompanied by angels who display the cloth on which the miraculous hosts left their impressions. The two registers below show episodes of the miracle story, beginning with the consecration of the hosts before a battle against Muslim forces; the discovery that the hosts had turned to blood during the battle; and finally, the journey of the donkey who brought the miraculous hosts to the city of Daroca. The engraving may have been purchased as a souvenir during a visit to church of Saint Mary Colegiata in Daroca where a shrine was built for the corporeals in the sixteenth century. Single souvenir prints of the miracle were sold well into the nineteenth century (fig. 1).

Research by Séverine Lepape has shown that Coffrets continued to be produced well after their initial popularity in the decades around 1500 (Lepape 2019, 66-67, compare fig. 2). However, only a handful of these later seventeenth-century examples have survived, and additional investigations are needed. The Coffret itself predates the engraving by over a century. Its construction is similar to another Coffret of the same era, which contains an early sixteenth-century woodcut of Saint Roch (no. 3).

This Coffret was once part of the largest single collection of Gothic Coffrets formed by André and Marie-Thérèse Jammes, which was sold in 2007 (this Coffret not included in the catalogue).

Condition

Print worn and discolored, Coffret in good, solid condition; velvet frame around print and lining the box not original (replaced).



Figure 1
 José Dordal
Los SS. mos Corporales de la Ciudad de Daroca
 engraving, c. 1800
 Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional de España, inv. no. 30237



Figure 2
 Woodcut of a Couple of Lovers Around a Rosebush
 Lyon (?), c. 1550-1570 (?)
 Paris, BnF, Département des estampes et de la
 photographie, Réserve Musée-Obj-430-PT FT



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Pricelist

1. Coffret Woodcut of the <i>Crucifixion</i> , after Jean d'Ypres France, Paris, 1490s	Reserved
2. Coffret Woodcut of the <i>Arrest of Christ</i> , after Jean d'Ypres France, Paris, c. 1500	\$85,000
3. Coffret Woodcut of <i>Saint Roch</i> , after Jean d'Ypres France, Paris, c. 1500	\$75,000
4. Coffret Woodcut of <i>Saint Veronica's Vernicle</i> by Hans Burgkmair the Elder Germany, Augsburg, c. 1509	\$65,000
5. Coffret Woodcut of "Erope" surrounded by Grotesques after Léonard Thiry France, Lyon or Fontainebleau. c. 1550	\$35,000
6. Coffret Copper engraving of <i>Los Santisimos Corporales de la ciudad de Daroca</i> Spain, Aragon (?), late 17 th century	\$20,000