

Arts and Sciences Championship Competition (Objects)

Barony of Dragon's Lair

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This competition paradigm focuses on breadth and depth of knowledge as demonstrated in a single field chosen by the artisan. For instance, a weaver would demonstrate breadth of knowledge (both intellectually and "in the hands") about weaving in the medieval period by being able to produce woven objects of some skill from a specific times and place. They should know what sort of materials were used, how to select the ones proper to the task, what weave structures were used, and how to produce woven cloth on the tools used in that time and place.

Depth of knowledge would be demonstrated by picking a particular sub-set of the craft, in this case weaving, done in period, based on what is known about how the people of that time structured their craft divisions, and learning the skill necessary to produce the entire range of objects within that sub-category. In tablet weaving it would mean being able to produce bands in all of the medieval techniques to a high degree of skill and to draft designs rather than just copy the drafts of others.

Once this type of depth is obtained the artisan/scientist is able to create original works that completely embody the skills and aesthetic used by the artisans/scientists of the SCA-period. The artisan has become a medieval artisan and is able to move beyond copying extant works and move into the realm of creating original medieval items.

The competition is based on the following core values:

- Knowledge and use of period materials, period tools, period processes, and a period aesthetic
- competition designed to educate participants in the required skills of their chosen art or science, in the process of research and documentation, and in identifying and internalizing a sensitivity to the aesthetic of time and place
- competition based on an absolute standard of excellence, which is determined by those standards found in medieval period (as the SCA defines it)
- breath of knowledge illustrated by knowledge of the parameters of one's chosen art or science and depth of knowledge illustrated by a mastery of the skill/craftsmanship required to produce a particular object in that art/science and the integration of the aesthetics of the time and place in which it occurs

Each competitor will submit one entry consisting of four objects:

- one final object that is the competition piece and that is thoroughly documented as to time and place, period aesthetics, period tools, period materials, and period processes, and
- three objects that demonstrate the development or mastery of the skills required to produce the final object.

Presentation should focus on:

- skills required to produce the object,
- what tools and materials were used to create the object and how the tools and materials differ from period ones, if they do,
- the process of making the object and how it differs from the process used in period, if it does,
- and a discussion of the aesthetic sensibility of the time and place as it relates to the object,
- the range of variability found for the object in period; what did the usual example of this type of object look like compared to the most elaborate and sophisticated version of the object.

Judging will be done by a panel of three knowledgeable judges and the assessment made by the judges will follow the attached judging sheet. The standard against which the entry will be judged is that of similar objects found in the designated time and place.

The judging sheet will assess the development of skill, the use of period tools, materials and process, the successful integration/internalization of a medieval aesthetic, and the level of sophistication and elegance the artisan/scientist has achieved based on the same level achieved by the medieval artisan/scientist.

The competitor will have up to an hour to make an oral presentation to the judges and answer their questions. At the judges' discretion members of the audience may also ask questions. The judges will then have 45 minutes to deliberate and fill out the judging forms.

In order to encourage and support a depth based competition the Minister of Arts and Sciences and the Arts and Sciences community will:

- At our weekly fight practice we institute a "show and tell" for the artisans that focuses on each artisan talking about what they are working on, where the idea or model came from, how it might have been done in period, and what they have learned. This is exactly the kind of information, in written form, that is the basis of documentation. Keeping notes of one's projects will be encouraged. This helps folks to learn the basics of documentation and encourages interactive rather

than parallel play in the Arts and Sciences community providing support, encouragement, sharing of knowledge.

- Engage the Laurels and the Pearls in being more of a resource to upcoming artisans.
- Create a listing of which artisan does what at what level of skill and which of these folks would be willing to mentor, teach or advise.

The joy of "making" is often lost in the preparation for a competition, although it is the foundation of all artistic creation. Artisans/scientists should have a place where creativity is a higher value than documentation or re-construction. Therefore, an A&S tournament for historically-inspired (but not necessarily documentable) objects will to be held separately from the competition and at a different event thus giving artisans free-reign to express their creativity.

A person adequately prepared to enter a competition of this type will have come closer to the reality of a medieval artisan/scientist than is achieved with the current model. In preparing for the competition the participant will also have learned how to do research, to document, and be well on the way to having mastered a skill. All of which prepare the person to enter a Kingdom competition if desired.

Arts and Sciences Championship Judging Form (object) Barony of Dragon's Laire

Name:

Entry:

Judge:

Each question (21 total) will be assessed as: inadequate, adequate, good, very good, or excellent. Bonus "points" can be awarded by the judge by delineating the ways in which the entrant has excelled beyond the following criteria.

1.Craftsmanship

- How well does the entrant demonstrate a mastery of the skills required to produce the final piece?
- How well does the entrant demonstrate a mastery of the materials used to produce the final piece?

2.Context and Authenticity of Design and Process

- Were period appropriate tools used to create the final piece?
- Were period appropriate materials used to create the final piece?
- Were period appropriate processes used to create the final piece?

- Were the processes used appropriate to the final object?
- Does the entrant demonstrate knowledge of the context of the object (when, where, how it compares to other similar objects)?

3. Aesthetics

- What is your initial impression of the final piece?
- How historically accurate does the final piece look?
- Does the entrant demonstrate knowledge of the style and artistic conventions of the time and place of the object?

4. Complexity/Degree of Learning

- Does the entrant demonstrate improvement in skill and understanding from the first piece to the final piece?
- Does the final object illustrate complexity of technique?
- Does the final object illustrate sophistication of technique? Does the final piece require a large amount of skill to create?
- Does the final piece require the use of many different techniques or elements?

5. Documentation

Did the documentation include:

- a description of time and place the object?
- the process involved in the interpretation and creation of the piece in period?
- the process the entrant used in the interpretation and creation of the piece as well as suitable rationale for any departures from period?
- quality primary and secondary sources?

6. Oral Presentation

- Was the entry presented in a clear and organized manner?
- Was depth of knowledge displayed during the presentation and question/answer?
- How well was the was the entrant able to field questions?

Bonus points

These may be awarded if the entrant has gone above and beyond the criteria listed above.