

On Master Scrolls

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Thank you for your interest in painting scrolls in service to the Kingdom. Each and every scroll that is painted will be cherished by the recipient and displayed with pride. It is our duty as illuminators to ensure that the scrolls produced by our hands are worthy of the recipient.

To start is a short review of the scroll production process here in Meridies.

Master Scrolls

For each award that is given there is at least one "Master" scroll designed specifically for the award. Any talented illuminator in the Kingdom is welcome to design and create a Master scroll. If that sounds like something you would like to do, please discuss it with the Parchment Pursuivant to determine where there is the greatest need. These Master scrolls are kept by Parchment and copied as needed. All scroll blanks are copied onto high quality, acid free Bristol board. Any member of the populace is welcome to then paint a scroll blank.

Getting Scrolls to Paint

To receive scroll blanks it is necessary to contact Parchment. To have scroll blanks shipped to you please consult the back of your Popular Chivalry for the phone number and email address of the current Parchment. After receiving scrolls you need to paint them and don't forget to sign the back lightly in pencil with your name and group affiliation.

Getting Painted Scrolls to Crown

After you have completed the blanks they need to get to the Crown for distribution as soon as possible. The best way is to give them to Crown at an event. If you will not be at an event attended by Crown shortly after you finish your scrolls I would encourage you to find a friend that can deliver them. If that is not possible then the scrolls can be mailed to the Crown. You can find the address of the current Crown in any copy of Popular Chivalry. If it is very close to Coronation weekend you might want to consider waiting a short time or sending them directly to their Highnesses.

It is necessary to pack the painted scrolls very carefully; if a scroll is bent or folded the paint will crack and flake. Ship the scrolls in a large, well padded envelope and add a stiff piece of cardboard or chipboard to prevent folding. It is also a good idea to cover the face of the topmost scroll with another piece of paper to prevent scratching. Make sure to write DO NOT BEND and FRAGILE on the outside of the package.

What to Paint With (Mediums)

The recommended mediums for painting scrolls are either Gouache or Watercolor. The following mediums are unacceptable and should not be used to illuminate a Kingdom Scroll: felt tipped pens, "Magic" markers, colored pencils, watercolor pencils, watercolor pens, crayons or gel pens. These items are of suspect permanence and are prone to fading. The scroll that you have worked so hard on will soon fade away to nothing.

Gouache and watercolor are made up of similar ingredients; pigments suspended in water soluble binder such as Gum Arabic. The primary difference is that the pigments in gouache are opaque where watercolor pigments are translucent. Gouache provides the dense coverage seen in most period manuscripts. It is possible to achieve a similar result with watercolors by not diluting the paint as much as you would for normal watercolor painting.

Gouache can be purchased in either Student or Artist grades. In Artist grade gouache the opacity is provided by the pigment itself. In Student grade the opacity is provided by white fillers such as chalk. Excellent examples of Artist grade gouache are Winsor & Newton and Holbein. The drawback to Artist grade is the cost, for a beginner it is completely acceptable to use the Student grades two examples are Pebeo and Savoir Faire. If you find Gouache at a local store read the package carefully, check the ingredients and make sure that there is no acrylic in the paint.

Watercolors are made by many of the same manufacturers as gouache and have similar differences between Student and Artist grade. Use the same check on ingredient lists to ensure no acrylic content.

If you are an experienced illuminator then by all means you can use period pigments if you so desire.

Suggested Paint Colors

- Blacks: Lamp Black, Jet Black, Ivory Black
- Whites: Permanent White (use for lining), Zinc White (for mixing)
- Blues: Ultramarine (if mixed with a little Zinc White it will look more period), Prussian Blue
- Greens: Windsor Green, Permanent Green, Olive Green, Sap Green
- Yellows: Yellow Ochre, Permanent Yellow Deep, Cadmium Yellow Pale, Deep Spectrum Yellow
- Reds: Spectrum Red, Alizarin Crimson, Cadmium Red Pale, Red Ochre
- Metals: Gold, Silver (here it is good to invest in the higher quality gouaches)
- Other: Flesh Tint, Purple Lake, Burnt Umber, Raw Umber, Burnt Sienna, Raw Sienna

To use gouache it needs to be mixed with water, distilled is best. It is a matter of feel and preference to find the proper viscosity that you are comfortable working with. This is where practice helps. Another liquid that can be added to assist in smoothing out the paint is Ox Gall. Mix the liquids and the paint well until the paint flows behind your brush.

How to Determine the Proper Colors for Your Scroll

One of the most important things that you can do to become a better illuminator is to look at period examples. There are literally thousands of surviving examples of illuminated manuscripts, these can be easily acquired in book form and there is a vast amount of examples catalogued on the internet.

First you need to determine what style the scroll blank you have represents. Some of the scrolls do not have a specific style, they are “SCA Generic” with these it is best to select a similar style and stick with the colors and techniques that it incorporates. If you are having difficulty determining the style you should find someone with different knowledge to help you.

One resource you can consult is the Parchment Pursuivant website. On this site there are images of every Master Scroll so that you can identify what scroll you have. The site is still in development, but the goal is to have a link to a period example associated with every Master Scroll. By examining period pieces you can determine the appropriate colors and style with which to paint your scroll.

Creating Original Scrolls

If you are looking for a challenge, or desire to be more creative, original scrolls are *always* greatly appreciated. You can find the updated Meridian Scribe’s Handbook on-line at the Parchment Pursuivant’s website. Within the Handbook are guidelines for creating original scrolls. These guidelines include paper choices, layout, necessary incorporated elements, and suggested wording. If you are interested in doing original scrolls please contact Parchment and you will receive the appropriate information.

If you have been painting scroll blanks for a long time then you are strongly encouraged to consider doing original scrolls. If you do not think you can draw well enough please contact Parchment and ways of getting around that issue can be discussed. And if you think you might be ready to do original illumination but calligraphy scares you, again, contact Parchment and you will be paired up with someone who likes to do calligraphy but is scared to death of illumination.

Visit the Parchment Pursuivant Web Site

This website is an ongoing project to help with all aspects of scroll production in Meridies. Please visit and if you have suggestions, do not hesitate to send them. www.serenadariva.com/Parchment/index.htm If you have any questions regarding any aspect of scroll production, please do not hesitate to contact Parchment.