

Judging in an Arts and Sciences Competition

Arts and Sciences is an important part of the SCA. The Arts and Sciences competition is a time for those who have learned the skills to further our recreation to display their works, to get helpful feedback and to inspire others. The role of the judge in a competition is to give helpful, honest feedback to encourage the artisan to take the next step along their road to re-creation. The role of the judge is *not* to discourage or demean the artisan. If there is something that does not rate well in a criterion, the judge's job is to suggest how it might be improved (rather than, say, complain about how it is unsatisfactory or unacceptable).

Documentation is an aid to help determine the artisan's knowledge, materials, method and intent with their entry. If the documentation is incomplete (thus scoring poorly for that criterion) **please try to seek out that artisan** to gain enough information to be able to accurately judge the other criteria. The low documentation score should not force the judge to score the other categories low as well. You may also feel free to confer with other judges if more information is needed.

Documentation: (10 points)

Give score based on the following:

- Description of entry including some of the following: country of origin, period of origin, characteristics of style for that period
 - Lists materials and skills used to complete the project
 - Lists methods and tools used to complete the project
 - Research and reference: cites at least one source and one visual or descriptive reference, or two of either.
 - If there is not enough information available to finish with the other judging criteria, you are **encouraged** to seek out the entrant and ask them whatever is needed to further judge this item.
- 0 No documentation
- 1-2 Very inaccurate Documentation, no explanation of choices. Description of period practice with no mention of sources or use of non-period works.
- 3-4 Minimal information (time, place, style). Copies of pages from unknown works. With performance, some discussion of performance elements.
- 5-6 Minimal information including visual references, photocopies, of period examples or minimal information plus discussion of period practice or performance elements but no visual example or sources.
- 7-8 Minimal information plus visual references and discussion citing period examples. With performance, copy of play or music, with a well-developed commentary.
- 9-10 Very complete examples and discussion including a well-developed commentary in all areas, use of critical sources, explanation of original research and/or experiments, and deviations or variations from period norms.

Creativity and Authenticity: (10 points)

Efforts to achieve a completely authentic item (except those items that are unsafe) will score best. Judge on appropriateness, cultural consistency, and period effect. This is balanced with creativity in materials and methods. When authenticity is not available, was a creative substitute used to give a period effect?

- Form/function— is it a period item and does it work in a period way (apparent knowledge or application of period practice)
 - Methods of creation— appropriate to period or are consistent and give a period effect
 - Materials used- period or reasonable substitutions that give a period effect
 - Design, style— is the design or style period or give a period effect
- 0 Blatantly modern entry. No original or adaptive elements.
- 1-2 Obvious mixture of elements from different cultures or periods. Some modification but no innovation. Logical combination of a few copied elements.
- 3-4 Generally period with some modern elements. Evidence of original work logical to period context with attention to period styles with innovative use of elements.
- 5-6 Overall period style, materials of period or reasonable equivalents, some minor inconsistencies. Some innovation logical to period context or style.
- 7-8 Overall period style, materials of period or reasonable equivalents, with no inconsistencies. Creative interpolation in combination or elements; much innovation logical to period context.
- 9-10 Special effort to achieve a completely period product by use of period design, technique and materials. Original, innovative combination of all aspects of performance, as might have been done by a period artist. Special consideration such as personalization to an event, individual or idea.

Complexity and Difficulty: (10 points)

Rank the ambition of the entry, not the workmanship, based on the following. Keeping in mind that not all period items are complex.

- Scope of endeavor-attention to detail, overall presentation, etc.
 - Difficulty/variety design elements used
 - Difficulty/variety of techniques attempted, including research and material preparation
 - Difficulty/variety media, materials, tools used
 - Extent of original work or ideas
- 0 Attempt is simple, with little effort expended.
1-2 Attempt shows some ambition or labor to complete piece.
3-4 Scope of project is larger, more research is made, more steps are involved.
5-6 Some inclusion of composition or design, originality or interpretation evident.
7-8 Interpretive elements and composition, difficulty of design shows ambition. More detailed steps and a variety of techniques are presented.
9-10 Attempt is highly complex, illustrating details steps or preparation, difficulty of performance and techniques is easily shown.

Workmanship: (10 points)

Rank the quality of execution and success of the entry. Judge based on the following:

- Effective use of tools, methods—appropriate application of design
 - Techniques, handling of materials, etc., how well the heraldic design translates into the media used and the finished product
 - Design: period aesthetics, motifs, design (note: period sense of balance and proportion is not necessarily the same as modern) etc
 - Form/Function: does it do what it should do and look as it should look?
 - Period styling or personalization or special embellishment
- 0 Did not succeed.
1-2 Minimal success.
3-4 Minimal success with potential for growth.
5-6 Adequate success. Item or performance has some impact.
7-8 Great success. Item or performance shows knowledge and skill but still not complete.
9-10 Fully succeeded in performance or entry.

Judge's Observation (5 points)

Evaluate the work as a whole, rating the aesthetic effect and appeal beyond the mere technical proficiency. Consider how you react to the entry (intuitive response) and other items not previously addressed. This is the 'wow' factor; following are some examples to consider, but the category is not limited to these.

- Completely authentic from the ground up -OR-
- Unique or outstanding display or attempt at period presentation -OR-
- Logical creative endeavor within a period methodology (creativity/individuality) -OR-
- You want this piece for your birthday