

Imperial Handbook to the Arts and Science

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Imperial Arts Handbook

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The Imperial Arts Handbook is just that a handbook not a manual. It is to help future artisans or judges understand how the arts work. In the pages of this handbook you will find guidelines on judging, entering arts, running arts tourneys, and entering a masterwork. I hope that this will help the arts be less confusing and make judging easier.

ARTS SYSTEM OVERVIEW

There are two types of arts projects: regular art projects and Masterworks. For now we will concentrate on regular art entries, and the similarities with masterworks. Masterworks will be covered in more detail in a separate section.

There are four categories a project will be judged on: periodness, difficulty, craftsmanship and function. Arts projects are given a point value by a judging system. Each art project will be judged by 3 different judges. The scores from the judges are averaged to determine the projects ECS Arts point value. Masterworks are an all or nothing proposition. If the masterwork passes the artist is given 50 points. If the masterwork fails they receive no points. Again, this will be described in more detail below.

DOCUMENTATION

The first step in any arts project, whether regular or masterwork is research and documentation. According to the Imperial Arts Manual documentation is:

A. DOCUMENTATION IS REQUIERED!

B. Documentation is defined as a written or verbal statement:

1. Describing the work
2. Listing materials and tools used (ingredients in food must be submitted in writing)
3. Citing references establishing periodness, design, etc...(except for verbal see section D below)
4. If you use modern machines and/or materials, you need to cite the period correct means and/or materials.

C. Acceptable documentation:

1. The original book,
2. A copy of a page from a book (preferably with a copy of the Title page or Card Catalog entry of the book),
3. A written or verbal statement from an expert witness,
4. A written statement from the entrant as to how they came about the periodness of the item.
5. A copy or print out from a web site (preferably with the web site information on it)
6. At minimum, they should fill out the field documentation form. The field documentation form will be available at all tournaments.

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D. Verbal documentation is defined and limited to the work you as the artisan have done to create the piece and is not allowed for periodness. Periodness must be in one of the forms described in section C. It is not the job of the judges, the Arts Minister, or their deputies to track down an artisan to obtain verbal documentation.

E. Any entry meant to be consumed or applied to the skin (such as a cooking, brewing, salve, balm, essential oil, perfume, etc.), must include an ingredients list and be the **FIRST** thing on the documentation.

Materials or ingredients used in the construction of an item should appear as period as reasonably possible. Use of modern machines to construct an item is permitted as long as the same effect can be theoretically accomplished by period means. If you use modern machines and/or materials, you need to cite the period correct means and/or materials.

Note to Artisans: The field documentation form has two purposes. First, it is an acceptable substitution if you do not have written documentation for a particular event. Second, it is a guideline to help you, the contestant, in developing documentation. All exceptions to common known facts should be documented. Inclusion of more information could only help your score. Documentation may be legibly handwritten or typed.

ENTERING ARTS

A member of the ECS may enter as many as 3 regular arts projects per tournament. However, a member may only earn 50 arts points per month. To enter an arts project a member must sign in each entry on the arts sign-in sheet at a tournament before it closes. Any group entering a joint item must decide how to split the points.

It is the right of any member to withdraw any of their projects from a tourney and turn the item in at a later tourney.

JUDGES

To serve as an arts judge, a member must meet the following requirements:

1. Arts Minister, and/or
2. Arts Deputy, and/or
3. Qualified members of the Populace.
 - a. Has a minimum of 50 points in the Arts, OR
 - b. Has proven to Arts Minister and/or Deputy experience in the area of judging

Each item will have 3 judges.

No one will ever judge their own project.

No one will judge an item made by a family member, unless there is no alternative judge available.

No one under the age of 21 will be allowed to judge any item containing alcohol.

Each judge is **REQUIRED** to write comments! These are for the edification of the artisans. It is one of the best ways to help an artisan advance in their art! (REMEMBER: This is constructive

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criticism. Tell the artisan what is good as well as what may need work and how they may improve.)

SCORING

Each judge will assign a number from 1 to 10 for each of the following areas: Function, Craftsmanship, Periodness and Difficulty. The sum of function, craftsmanship, and periodness is divided by 10 then multiplied by the difficulty to determine each judge's total score. The total score from the 3 judges are then averaged together and rounded to the nearest whole number to determine the ECS arts points earned by the project.

An alternative method to calculating art points is to use the Difficulty Chart. For each judge's scores, locate the sum of function, craftsmanship and periodness cross reference this with the difficulty. Then average these three results and round to the nearest whole number to determine the ECS arts points earned by the project.

GENERAL INFORMATION ON FUNCTION

This category should be judged on how well the item fits its function. For example: a garment should fit the wearer (not the judge), a cart should roll, etc. An item which meets its function perfectly should receive a ten. An item which falls short of its function should receive below a ten accordingly. An item's score with regard to Function is based solely on how well an item performs its intended purpose. When judging an item, one needs to be aware of the intended purpose. If there could be any doubt as to what the purpose of an item is, it should be mentioned in the documentation. While judging Function, the craftsmanship of the item should only be considered if the item has been constructed so poorly it can not possibly fulfill its function.

Function should be judged in two parts: Fit and Purpose.

Fit- how well the item fulfills its purpose

Purpose- does the item do what it was designed to do?

Score Guidelines for function:

1. (9-10) the entry goes beyond both fit and purpose for recipient or audience.
2. (7-8) the entry goes beyond one or the other in fit or purpose for recipient or audience.
3. (5-6) the entry adequately fits the recipient or the audience. The entry also adequately performs its purpose.
4. (3-4) the entry does not fulfill one or the other in fit or purpose for recipient or audience.
5. (1-2) the entry neither fulfills fit or purpose for recipient or audience.

GENERAL INFORMATION ON CRAFTSMANSHIP

This category should be judged on how well the item is put together. An item which is constructed perfectly should receive a ten. Any item which is not constructed perfectly should be judged below a ten accordingly. An item's score for Craftsmanship is based solely on how well the item was made. The craftsmanship score for a handkerchief with 4 perfectly square, perfectly hemmed sides should receive the same 10 for craftsmanship as a perfectly sewn, no faults anywhere Elizabethan dress.

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Craftsmanship should be judged in two parts: structure and appearance.

Structural integrity- How sound is this item made? Will it fall apart if used?

Appearance/Presentation- How well does it look? Is it pretty?

Use of modern tools should not negatively affect craftsmanship.

Score Guidelines for Craftsmanship:

1. (9-10) the entry excels in both structural integrity and finished appearance/presentation. The entry exhibits attention to detail.
2. (7-8) the entry excels in one or the other in structural integrity and finished appearance/presentation.
3. (5-6) the entry is properly made with an adequate finished appearance/presentation
4. (3-4) the entry is lacking in one or the other. Improperly made or unfinished appearance/poor presentation.
5. (1-2) the entry is both improperly made and unfinished appearance/poor presentation.

GENERAL INFORMATION OF PERIODNESS

This category is to be judged on how precisely period an item is. The period which the Empire of Chivalry and Steel acknowledges is the years between 800 A.D and 1650 A.D.,and encompasses all of Europe. Documentation needs be provided where an item's periodness is in question. The contestant may use Field Documentation Form. If the judge is certain of the periodness of the item, then the item should receive a ten. If a judge is uncertain of the periodness of the item, then the item should receive less than ten points accordingly.

It is up to the artisan to convince the judges of an item's Periodness - This means Documentation.

The rules state materials or ingredients used in an item should appear as period as reasonably possible. Use of modern machines to construct an item is permitted as long as the same effect can be theoretically accomplished by period means.; And just what do these sentences mean? This means you can use an inexpensive polyester satin in your dress, instead of an expensive true period blend of cotton and silk. The modern satin will still drape close to the same way, look close to the way period satin would. No one should have to spend an extraordinary amount of money in order to receive a 10 for Periodness. Substitutions for expensive, poisonous or unavailable items are acceptable. And the item can still receive a 10 for Periodness even though power tools, a sewing machine, a stove, etc. were used to make the project. If you use modern machines and/or materials, you need to cite the period correct means and/or materials.

Up till now we have discussed the materials and ingredients in our arts project, but what about period styles and design? Here there is not as much leeway as there is in the materials of a project. You cannot paint a picture of a tractor instead of a horse and claim "but it is a modern equivalent!" State specifically that the entry existed in period (800-1650 AD.)

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Periodness can be judged by one of two categories: documentation or personal knowledge.

Documentation- The artisan proof of Periodness, craftsmanship, function, difficulty and period for the game (i.e. shanai glaives, armour made from Kydex ect)

Personal knowledge- What the judge has knowledge of.

Scoring Guidelines for Periodness:

1. (9-10) the item is completely period with excellent documentation
2. (7-8) the item mostly period with good documentation
3. (5-6) the item likely period, but no/substandard documentation presented
4. (3-4) the item could be period but no/substandard documentation presented
5. (1-2) the item is likely not period

GENERAL INFORMATION ON DIFFICULTY:

This category should be judged on how difficult the item was to construct within the medium. Any non-standard construction methods used by the contestant should be outlined in their documentation (i.e. sewn by hand, pegs instead of nails, etc.). An extremely difficult item to construct should receive a ten. Anything less should be judged under ten accordingly. Difficulty is the most important score an item receives in an Arts Tournament, and is probably the hardest to determine. The Arts and Sciences Manual states that difficulty is determined by how difficult the item was to construct within the medium. This means that when you are determining the difficulty score of an item, you should consider how difficult it was to construct compared to all other items in its judging area. This is where you judge the extra work put in a project. Did the Artisan spin the wool? Weave the cloth? Tan the leather? Make the paint? Grow the food?

Score Guidelines for Difficulty:

1. (9-10) the item is very difficult-it was challenging in every aspect, taking much time and care to produce.
2. (7-8) a difficult version of the item: it was difficult to make but not of master work quality
3. (5-6) an average version of the item
4. (3-4) a simple version of items, produced with a low level of skill- such as using a kit or an unaltered pattern.
5. (1-2) a very simple version of the item, quickly and easily produced with little or no skill necessary

LIST OF ARTS AREAS (Medium)

Areas are used for judging criteria only!!

Armouring/Weaponry - armour, any hand held weapon, etc.

Written/Performed - Poetry: written or performed, Music: written or performed, Fiction: written or performed. Any non fiction, research, or scientific research etc.

Cooking/Brewing-Any item meant to be consumed.

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Crafted - Dyes, weaving, wood crafts, leather crafts (not considered armour), stain glass, jewelry, gem cutting, metal work (not armour or weapons), soap, sculptures, etc.

Sewing/Needle Arts - needle point, crochet, knitting, tatting, bobbin-lace, cross stitch, sewing, leather clothing sewn by machine, crewel, etc

Visual Arts - Illumination, calligraphy, painting, sketching, etc

Note: It is entirely possible an arts project may fit into 2 or more areas. Ultimately it is the artisan's choice of which category their item falls in.

Armouring and Weapons:

Function - When scoring armour, you need to determine how well the piece covers and protects the intended area. If the armour or weapon is intended to be used in ECS combat, then how well the item conforms to the Manual of combat is judged under Function. How well a piece of articulated armour moves is also important to function. The difficulty involved in getting a piece of armour to articulate is not considered here, but under Difficulty.

Whether or not the correct materials were used for armour/weapons is judged under Function if it affects the function of the item (if not, materials used are judged under Periodness). For items intended for ECS combat, they must be made of materials approved in the Combat Manual.

Craftsmanship - You should look at the methods used to put the item together (riveting, soldering, etc). Edges on an item should not be jagged, except in the case of some weapons. Chainmail should be checked for missing links. Weapons meant to be straight should be straight. The method used to join the hilt/handle to the weapon should be able to withstand the item's intended purpose. Items meant for ECS combat need to comply with combat regulations, and be able to withstand their intended purpose. Remember there will be times when a piece of armour or weapon will be meant for decorative purposes only.

Periodness - When judging the Periodness Armour/Weapons you must determine how closely the entry resembles period pieces. Remember that entries intended for ECS combat will have obvious non-period components for safety reasons.

Difficulty - To determine Difficulty score Armour /Weapons, you must consider how difficult the item was to construct compared to other types of Armour or Weapons. Consider the size of the item (does its large or small size make it more difficult to construct?), number of pieces used to construct ornamentation, etc.

Sewing/Needle Arts

Function - Items which are meant to be worn should fit the intended wearer. It is preferable the intended wearer model the item for the judges. If this is not possible, the artisan should document the fit, and the judge must take their word. Almost every other item in this category is meant to be looked at, or gazed upon, as in the case of needlepoint or cross-stitch. Some exceptions include tablecloths, rugs, bedcovers and banners.

The selection of materials can influence function in sewing. The artisan should not have used thin lace for fighting gloves, or heavy leather for a lady's court gloves. As a judge you must

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decide if the material used in an item is appropriate for its intended purpose.

Craftsmanship - In judging Sewing/Needlework items for craftsmanship, there are a few important elements a judge should look for. Are the seams sturdy? Are the stitches even? If the artisan's work looks careless with hanging threads, missed stitches, ragged edges you should take this into account under the craftsmanship score.

Periodness - When determining periodness for Sewing/Needle Arts consider the materials used. Remember the words "as period as reasonably possible." The style of clothing should follow a period fashion. Embroidery should have a period theme and be made up of period stitches.

Difficulty - Difficulty for Sewing/Needle Arts is determined when the item is compared to all other Sewing or Needle Arts projects. Consider the size of the item, number of pieces used, embellishments, etc

Written/Performed (Bardic)

Function - Function within the Written and Performed Arts is determined by how well the piece succeeds at having the desired affect on the audience. Does the artisan wish the audience to be sad, angry, humored, etc? The artisan should also let the judges know what type of audience the piece is intended for.

For a non-fiction work you must determine (by inference or better yet documentation) what the author's purpose is. The purpose may be teaching an art form, or explaining the everyday life of a French peasant in 1543. Whatever the purpose is, you should be clear about it by the time they have finished reading the work.

Craftsmanship - Judging the Craftsmanship of a piece of Written/Performed art is a little different than judging other areas. Judging the craftsmanship of a Performed piece is a bit more abstract than deciding if a cart's corners are square. The craftsmanship of a written piece is a little easier to judge than a Performed piece, if the judge is familiar with the style the artisan is trying to emulate. This means documentation!

When judging Craftsmanship of a Performance piece, you must determine how well the instrument was played, song was sung, poem was recited, etc. You are judging only the performance, not the piece.

In determining the Craftsmanship score of a written piece you need knowledge of the style used by the artisan. This style could be anything from a completely free form short story to a rigid poetic style. If the artisan is trying to emulate a particular style, they should have an example of that style and an explanation of the style in their documentation.

If the Artisan is performing a piece they have written, (and wish to be judged for both the writing and performance) then both aspects (performance and content) should hold equal weight in deciding the scores.

If the piece is a nonfiction work, the style may not be as important as the organization of the piece. 99.9% of nonfiction items are meant to educate the reader. Crafting or organizing the

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information in a readable fashion is important.

Grammar and spelling is also judged under Craftsmanship. Always remember there are differences between modern and period spelling and grammar. The artisan should mention if they are using period spelling and grammar in their piece.

Periodness - When judging Written/Performed entries, first and foremost make sure the topic(s) in the piece are period. Writing or singing a story about life aboard an aircraft carrier is not period, but one about life aboard a sailing ship is. The style of the piece should be within the boundaries of a true period style, but always remember free form story telling is also period.

Writing a non-fiction work (research paper) to educate the public is completely period. Most likely the work will be laid out in a modern style, to educate a modern audience, there is no way to get around it. Be a little flexible in this case.

Difficulty - In order to judge difficulty for Written/Performed entries, you must consider how difficult the item being judged is compared to all other written or performed styles. Consider the length of the piece, language used, style used, etc.

Cooking/Brewing

Function - When judging the function of Cooking/Brewing items you must determine if the item is edible or palatable. Remember you cannot use your particular taste to determine this. For example, you cannot score an item's function low because it contains garlic, and you don't like garlic. You must judge the item as if you liked garlic. Also, culinary tastes have changed over the centuries. You may judge items that have what we would consider now strange ingredient combinations or seasonings.

The texture or consistency of a cooking or brewing item also contributes to its function. Make sure the texture and consistency of the item intended by the artisan is inherent in the item. Again, this should be included in the documentation. Baked goods should generally not fall apart when picked up, though sometimes items are made to crumble and be used with another dish. An item that is meant to be drunk out of a glass, but is too thick to pour falls short of its intended function.

Function and Construction within a Cooking/Brewing item are intertwined. An item which is burnt will neither score well in Function nor Construction.

Craftsmanship - When judging the craftsmanship of Cooking/Brewing you are judging how well the ingredients were placed together to achieve the desired result. The Artisan's documentation should inform the judges what the desired taste, texture and consistency should be. This is why the item's function and Craftsmanship are so intertwined. A Cooking/Brewing item that is not well constructed is not going to score well on function either. When scoring these items for craftsmanship you must use your own judgment in deciding where to place the blame for an unappetizing item.

Periodness - Periodness of a Cooking/Brewing entry is determined by the recipe and ingredients used. The recipe should be what was used in the time period cited, or was likely used.

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(Documentation is important here.) Non-period ingredients should not be used, except for as a substitute for expensive, poisonous or unavailable items.

Note : All Cooking/Brewing entries must be accompanied by an ingredient list.

Difficulty - Difficulty of Cooking/Brewing is judged against all other Cooking or Brewing possibilities. Consider the number and type of ingredients used, preparatory work and time, number of stages to complete, etc

Visual

Function - The Function score for a Visual item is determined by how well the item portrays the artisan's intended visual impact. Was the artisan trying to create an emotion in their audience, recreate a particular scene, or both? You must be able to look at the item with its intended audience in mind.

Craftsmanship - When determining the craftsmanship of a Visual Item you must determine if the artisan has stayed true to the intended style of the piece. The artisan should note in their documentation if they are trying to recreate a particular period style, though the artist may not be duplicating a particular style at all, but working from purely personal style.

It is the Craftsmanship score for a Visual item where you should look at the composition of the piece- how well the artisan used shapes, form, color and texture to impart the intended visual impact to the audience. You must also look at the actual technical skill displayed by the artisan in the piece. Always keep in mind the intended style of the piece. Many period artists purposely distorted their figures. The artist should mention in their documentation or, better yet, show an example if this is the case.

Periodness - When determining the periodness of a Visual Item, you must consider both what the piece is made from, and the style in which it was made. The artisan should inform you of the style the piece is trying to emulate. (Documentation again!)

Difficulty - When determining difficulty for a Visual Item, you should consider all other similar visual arts. Consider the size of the item, if it follows a particular style, and how detailed the item is.

Crafted

Function - The Crafted Arts area takes into account many different disciplines. To judge an item under Crafted for its function, you must first determine for what purpose it was made. Some of the items in Crafted will have a very obvious purpose, others will not. It will sometimes be difficult to tell if an item was meant to have a practical purpose or a decorative one. The purpose should be in the artisan's documentation. If you have no documentation, you must infer the purpose of the item.

Craftsmanship - Judging the craftsmanship of a Crafted Item means determining how well the item was made. Are the corners square? Are the circles round? Are the joints correct? Is the texture consistent in a woven fabric? Many different disciplines are encompassed by the crafted category therefore it is important to have documentation, especially for the lesser known

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disciplines. As a judge, you need to look at the item and determine if there are any faults in the construction of the item and how well the item was put together.

Periodness - Again, Crafted encompasses many items, and it is important the artisan supply documentation to support the periodness of an item. Lacking that, you must determine to the best of your ability whether the item was constructed in a period style with period materials (or acceptable substitute).

Difficulty - This is sort of a catch all category for those items that don't fit anywhere else. The judge should consider the difficulty of similar items when determining the score for the entry. Depending on the item, consider the size, detail, embellishment, number of materials used, etc.

MASTERWORK

Anyone wishing to have a Masterwork judged should approach the Arts Peerage with the Proposed Masterwork Form. It is suggested that a person approach the peerage for advice about masterwork project before they start (this is a suggestion and not a requirement). Any item in whole or in part, previously entered in a tourney (and not withdrawn) or a previously successful masterwork cannot be considered as a masterwork. The basic rule of thumb is an item can never receive arts points more than once. It is strongly advised that the artisan read the masterwork section in the Imperial Arts Manual covering the imperial requirement for a masterwork before beginning the process!!

A masterwork shall be judged by 3 judges, one of these judges must be a Knight Artisan. These are picked, one each, by the contestant, the Arts Peerage, and the Sovereign. For regions with less than 3 Knight Artisans, Then a judge with a rank of at least Craftsman may be selected or an expert in the field of the medium can be used (see Imperial Arts handbook for definition of expert) with approval of the Crown and Arts Peerage.

A masterwork is judged by all three judges as either pass/fail. A pass by two of the three judges means the work has passed and fifty (50) points are awarded to the artisan. If a masterwork fails, it may then be entered at the next tourney for points or corrected and re-judged as a masterwork. A Masterwork is meant to be a challenge, and should be of such outstanding quality it would receive a 10 in function, craftsmanship, periodness and difficulty in a normal arts tourney.

A Masterwork needs to be of the highest quality possible and possess that extra special flair to distinguish it as a project accomplishment by someone who truly is a Master of that Art given the time period they are trying to emulate. For example, if you sing, is your voice as good as what we would hear at a performance by a singer we would pay money to listen to? If you paint, is your work good enough to be sold through an art gallery? If you sew, would someone commission you to create a costume for a movie or major theatrical engagement? Generally a masterwork should be a masterwork from conception. You should avoid trying to convert a regular arts project into a masterwork. We are all critical of our own work. PLEASE, do not let this deter you from trying. Talk with the Knight Artisans and others in the Kingdom and get their opinions and advice.

The first part of a Masterwork is the research. Be sure to do meticulous documentation of everything you do. Your documentation could almost be considered a mini-research paper. A

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few key elements to include are:

- The dates or time period the item was used
- The authenticity of materials used or the accurate details of the original materials used and your efforts to come as close as is possible in this day and age.
- The style of the piece. Whether it is clothing, a written piece, or a tapestry there is a style you are emulating. Not copying but emulating. All work should be original.
- The steps you followed to come to the end result. Include time spent on preparation as well as actual time working.
- And give a detailed history of the item.

Plus anything else of consequence the judges should be aware of. Remember the more information you provide, the better informed the judges will be. You want to receive full credit and recognition for all the work you put into the art. These judges may be Knight Artisans, but they may not be as familiar with this art form as you are. Not only are you providing info, you are also showing off your knowledge of this particular art.

Your documentation must list the sources you used. If it is a book, include the title, date published, the author(s), publishing company, and pages you took the information from. If your source is a documentary include the title, year made, and channel it aired on or the library you viewed it at. (Or it was on videotape.) You may want to include your notes you wrote down while watching it. If your source is a person, list their name and credentials or if your source is not an educator then give a history of the person explaining why this individual is a reputable source with correct information. You should list at least 2 sources. This provides the judges with proof you have actually researched this subject. Because we are an educational organization standard academic format for citation and bibliography are encouraged to be used. These forms would be: MLA, APA, AAA, hard court brace standard historical citation or any other academic form you are comfortable using. If you need further information on these methods of citation you can find instruction at the library or on the internet. You may also ask the Arts Minister or any other person who is learned in these areas to assist you.

Something else to consider is the time involved to complete a Masterwork. There is no minimum time, nor a maximum time required, but this project should consume a great deal of time. Difficulty also plays an important role on a Masterwork. The key to difficulty is detail. Include as much detail as possible. Use utmost refinement, down to the last stitch; stroke; breath. This extreme level of skill shows your ability as a master.

Some art forms involve very large amounts of repetitive work (such as chain mail, knitting, and needlepoint). The act of repeating a process thousands of times does not necessarily indicate difficulty. To meet the difficulty requirements with one of these art forms the artisan should include something special. Remember it is always a good idea to seek the opinion of the Arts Minister or other peers before submitting a masterwork project for approval, or beginning work on a masterwork project.

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For an example of what is master quality work, seek out the Arts Minister or Arts Peers for previous examples.