

Description:

These are two pieces designed for use as SCA award scrolls. The style is northern French / southern Flemish, 15th century. I have sought to remain faithful to the composition, color scheme and decorative detail of my exemplar, while making modifications, as necessary, to adapt them for SCA use. These modifications include (1) leaving the miniature panel blank to hold the scroll text; (2) introducing two blank circles for badges and one blank shield for the recipient's personal device; and (3) simplifying the floral elements of the outer border so as not to detract from the badges and device.

Exemplar:

The scrolls are based on folios 13v, 14r, 86r and 178v of Walters MS 267, from the collection of the Walters Art Museum in Baltimore, MD, as described and pictured in *Time Sanctified* by Roger S. Wieck. Wieck describes the manuscript as a Book of Hours made in northern France or southern Belgium in the 1450's.

Composition:

This style of illumination typically uses a painted panel, slightly left or right of, and slightly above, center-page (left-of-center on rectos, right-of-center on versos). The painted panel is generally bordered by a narrow frame. Below the panel, there usually appears several lines of text, beginning with a decorated initial. Both panel and text are usually surrounded by a U-shaped bar. This bar is sometimes a simple narrow stripe, but is often wide enough to carry foliate decoration within it. The initial is very often incorporated into the bar as well.

Proportions:

Four folios from Walters 267 are illustrated in *Time Sanctified*. The proportions of panel and border spacing vary slightly among the four folios, but average out to a set of ratios consistent with other manuscripts of the same period and area. Generally, the wider side border is one-third the width of the composition; the narrower border, one-sixth; and the panel width one-half. The ratios of upper border:panel:lower border vary more widely among various manuscripts, but are fairly consistent within Walters 267. **The proportions on the two scrolls use an average of measurements taken from the four folios from Walters 267 illustrated in Wieck.**

Decorative detail:

The "bar" which runs along the sides and bottom of the panel and text area has been copied as closely as possible from folios 13v (the foliate bar) and 14r (the roses bar). For the outer border I chose not to copy the design elements exactly. **For the outer border, I tried to deconstruct the general rules of this border style and then use them to create an original border design in the 15th c. French style**, based on a visual survey of book plates illustrating similar 15th c. French manuscripts.

This outer style is typified by several features:

1. Four sprays of acanthus leaves emanate from the four corners of the bar. Usually, if foliate decoration exists within the bar, the stem of the foliage within that bar is continuous with the stems of the acanthus leaves. In other words, the acanthus leaves are usually outgrowths of any foliage within the bar. Generally, acanthus leaves are modeled using a mid-tone color as base, followed by both shadowing and highlighting. **In Walters 267, however, only shadowing is added to the base color of the acanthus leaves. I have left my acanthus leaves without highlighting in order to be consistent with Walters 267.**

2. Vines of ivy emanate from the sprays of acanthus and from spurs along the outer edge of the bar. These vines carry a variety of decorative elements, generally following a repeated pattern of ivy leaf-tendrill-oval bud-tendrill. This repeated pattern is deviated from (in period MSs as well as here) as available space dictates. The primary rule-of-thumb is to fill the border space with consistently-sized elements at a consistent density.
3. Flowers are the usual terminus of the ivy vines and branches, although vines do sometimes end with a leaf. Generally, Flemish work uses a wider variety of flowers more prominently than contemporary French work. The use of flowers in Walters 267 falls midway between the French and Flemish norms. **For my scrolls, I chose to use only a few simple flowers, in the French style, so as not to detract from the badges and device.**

Materials:

The carrier is Strathmore Bristol board, vellum finish. The carrier in period would have been parchment, but this is cost-prohibitive for me at this time.

The underdrawing and outlining was done with India ink (Speedball Super Black) in a crow quill style dip pen (Hunt 107 nib). In period, a quill would have been used. Period ink would have been either a carbon-based ink, such as lampblack, or oak gall ink. [1] India ink gives the appearance of period carbon-based ink, but includes shellac which makes it waterproof when dry. This is very helpful when painting over with water-soluble paint!

The faux gilding was done using Schminke powdered Tro-Col-Bronze dry gouche (Reichgold). This is intended to mimic shell gold, and was used as a replacement for cost considerations. While gold leaf gilding was certainly used in this style, shell gold (or “wash gold”) was also widely used for Books of Hours, and was intentionally left unburnished to act as a highlight. [2]

The paint is Winsor-Newton gouache. I have chosen not to use period pigments at this time, because of toxicity concerns with young children at home. There are two dominant pigments in the exemplar:

1. The red tending toward orange is most likely minium (red lead) which was used throughout period especially before the beginning of more widespread use of vermilion (synthesized cinnabar) in the 15th c. I have chosen Winsor-Newton “flame red” as a close substitute. It is interesting to note that Winsor-Newton’s name for this color corresponds to Pliny’s name for minium, *colour flammeus*. [3]
2. The medium-tone blue is most likely azurite, ultra-marine blue still being very costly (more-so than gold). [4] I have chosen Winsor-Newton “sky blue” as a color match, based on the pantone color match for azurite in The Compleat Anachronist pamphlet #43 [5]

[1] Thompson, Daniel V., *The Materials and Techniques of Medieval Painting*. New York: Dover Publications, 1956, pp. 81-84.

[2] Ibid, pp. 199-200.

[3] Ibid, 100-104.

[4] Ibid, 132-135.

[5] Anfusio, Linda (ska Megan ni Laine de Belle Rive), “A Palette of Period Pigments,” *The Compleat Anachronist*, volume 43. Milpitas, CA: The Society for Creative Anachronism, Inc., 1989, appendix.

Bibliography:

Wieck, Roger S., *Time Sanctified: The Book of Hours in Medieval Art and Life*. New York: George Braziller, Inc., 1988, 2001.

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