

Ceramics and Pottery

Category Rules

This category is for pottery, ceramics, and other works of clay. Because of the inherent durability of ceramics and the importance of pottery to archeology and cultural study, many excellent sources are available, and many museums are well-stocked with period pieces. These actual pieces reveal a great deal about form, scale, and decoration, although construction and materials must usually be determined through archeological articles and personal research. It is suggested that documentation include photo duplicates of visual sources.

Pottery is made to be used, so **no** penalty will be made for the substitution of a modern glaze for an authentic lead-based glaze, if such is documented. Slip-casting from molds is an authentic process but modern commercial molds are inappropriate. Documentation should discuss whether glaze would have been used, and if so, a comparison of period and modern glaze materials and appropriate applications. Entrants are encouraged to provide period formulae for any glazes.

Research and Documentation (Score: 0-4 points)

- 0 No documentation provided with entry. Face-to-face judging adds very little information.
- 1 Minimal information is provided for time, place and style. Face-to-face judging adds some background information.
- 2 As in #1, generalized sources are given with no emphasis on primary and/or scholarly resources. In face-to-face judging, no further understanding of the resources is evident. Materials and methods of construction of the entry are described.
- 3 As in #2, there is a good balance of resources: primary and/or scholarly sources well supported by other resources. Documentation and/or face-to-face judging provides well developed discussion of research. Materials and methods of construction are described and the reasons for the choices made are discussed.
- 4 As in #3, in-depth and extensive documentation provides a good balance of resources, emphasizing primary (if available) and/or scholarly resources backed up with a significant selection of other resources. Documentation and/or face-to-face judging provide a good explanation of original research and experimentation related to the research. Face-to-face judging indicates a keen grasp of the research and the entrant can discuss it easily with active engagement. Appendices included in documentation (if any) help provide further pertinent information to subject and time period.

Materials and Methods (Score: 0-4 points)

- 0 Entry is completely modern with no relationship to period elements or practices.
- 1 Use of modern materials and methods to produce an item that would not be accepted in period but bears some relationship to an authentic work or which might be useful within SCA culture. Entry is inconsistent to period, location, and persona.
- 2 Use of **both** modern materials and methods to produce a work that looks or feels authentic to the intended time period, location, culture, and economic class.
- 3 Use of **either** period material **or** methods to produce a work that looks or feels authentic to the relevant time period, location, culture, and economic class.
- 4 Use of materials and methods entirely documentable to the period for which it was constructed. Substitutions of modern materials for those no longer readily available will not be penalized so long as an effort has been made to substitute materials with a close look & feel to the original. Please explain the substitution in your documentation, and, if possible, explain how your substitution either resembles

a period material, or how the handle of a period material would differ from the replacement. This will not reflect on the glaze. The SCA supports safe habits, and use of lead glaze is not safe, even in suspension.

Scope (Score: 0-6 points for each bullet item)

Rank the **ambition**, not the success, of the entry for each of the following elements as it applies to the specific culture and ceramic object in question. Do not score irrelevant items.

- Number: Were the items made in large batches in period? Should there be more than one? Was more than one made in trial and error?
- Understanding of clay methods: One point each for documentation noting:
 - clay harvesting
 - clay additives
 - wheel or appropriate building techniques
 - firing techniques
 - appropriate glazing techniques
 - finishing techniques
- Difficulty of design and decoration: anything added to the overall shape, as appropriate to the specific object. Consider stamps, slip work, handles, lids, feet, spouts, size (hand-built large pots are harder than small ones), and other decoration.

Optional

- Fit: do pieces that are supposed to fit together do so?
- Attachment: are additional pieces of clay attached well?

Skill (Score: 0-6 points for each bullet item)

How well is the entry made is it appropriate to the time/culture in which it was produced? Be aware that evenness and circular perfection is a result of mass production and may not be appropriate to the specific ceramic object. Rank the **success** of the entry for each of the following elements.

- Finish: is it constructed in a manner that looks appropriately finished, even, and polished for the style of ceramic? The finished product should have a look and feel of a well-produced pot.
- Functionality: does it work, or could it work?
- Appearance: period look and feel.

Optional

- Handling of glaze: a commercial glaze applied with a spray gun < a glaze made from raw materials and applied with period techniques.

Ingenuity (Score: 0-4 points)

Judge the ingenuity of the entry. Was the entrant resourceful and inventive in the approach to creating their entry? Does the entry reflect the entrant's vision of period context? Is original thought, contemplation, interpretation, and vision evident according to the entrant's period?

Judge's Observation (Score: 0-6 points)

Rank the entry as a whole. How well do all the separately judged parts fit together? The entry's overall effect is judged in this section. This is the only section of the criteria where the judges may allow their personality, private opinions, and personal preferences to influence scoring.