

## All I Want for Christmas is... SUPPLIES!

The holidays are upon us and you would like to buy that special scribe in your life something nice but you don't know what to get them. Here are some things that might help.

These items have been recommended by various scribes throughout Æthelmearc as good items to buy.

### PENS

In period they used quills or reed pens. Today, there are many other items we can choose from. Recommendation: stay away from Sharpie brand markers. They contain a high level of acid (hence the smell) and will bleed and change color with time. Look for pens/ink that is "fade proof" or archival.

These pens have been recommended by various scribes within Æthelmearc.

For drawing:

- \* SAKURA Pigma Micron pens in sizes .005 mm, .03 mm, .01 mm. These disposable pens are waterproof, archival ink, and quick drying. Cost is about \$2.00 per pen. Come in various colors.
- \* Uniball Vision Elite comes in different sizes and colors that are waterproof and fade proof.
- \* Pitt Artist Pens - waterproof, smudge proof (when dry) archival ink (pH neutral) disposable pens. Costs about \$2.50 per pen.
- \* KOH-I-NOOR or Rapidograph Technical Pens. These are high quality professional technical pens that include a chrome stainless steel point with a refillable ink cartridge. Costs about \$20 per pen. Rotring Rapidoliner are also good. Some scribes have found disposable rapidoliners and have been very happy with them for a lot less money.
- \* Hunt crow-quill style nibs (cost - \$1.00 per nib) and Speedball Super Black Waterproof Indian Ink (costs about \$3.50 for a two ounce bottle).
- \* What to avoid - Sharpies or pens with high acid. If they smell then they have a high acid.

For Calligraphy:

Cartridge pens:

- \* Sheaffer - Basic set (includes pen, 3 nibs and 4 ink cartridges) will cost about \$10.00
- \* Parker Vector. Come in a deluxe calligraphy set for about \$25. The set includes six ink cartridges of different colors, 4 nibs, and a booklet.

Dip pens:

- \* Speedball. Pen holder runs about \$2.00 and nibs (C-5, C-6) costs about \$1.90 per nib.

\* Mitchell nibs - costs about \$1.00 per nib. For a set of 10 nibs with 2 reservoirs costs about \$9.00.

\* Brause nibs - per nib it is about \$1.30. For a set of nine (including Oblique cut, rigid. .5, .75, 1, 1.5, 2, 2.5mm.) costs about \$12.00.

## PENCIL

Your basic No. 2 will work just fine. Many scribes choose to use mechanical pencils. They are easy to find and can be bought very inexpensively. Recommendation: stay away from pencils marked 3H to 6H. These are pencils have higher clay to graphite ration and you might dent your paper with them. These are more for professional artists working in pencil. Likewise, pencils marked 3B to 6B have higher graphite content and not necessary for scribal work. HB, F, H and B are safe to use.

ERASER: It is recommended to stay away from colored erasers as they have the potential to leave a colored mark across your paper. Any of these erasers will work just fine:

Stanford Magic Rub vinyl eraser 2 ¼" by 1 7/16" - costs less than one dollar.

\* Design Kneaded Rubber Eraser - depending on size, they cost about 30-70 cents.

\* Staedtler Mars Plastic Eraser - About 60 cents

\* Stanford Tuff Stuff Eraser Stick - about \$1.50 for one.

Some people chose to purchase Duster to remove the eraser dust without smudging the artwork. Draftsman sells dusters for about \$2.50. This is a personal preference item.

## PAPER

140 lb (or higher) Hot press watercolor paper (HP) surface is smooth and suitable for detailed, precise work. You can remember "hot press" as having "the wrinkles ironed out".

Pergamenata is a paper that has the look and feel of vellum. According to Paper & Ink Arts, it is a pH neutral paper, made of 100% cellulose from Italy. Pergamenata can be found on Paper & Ink Arts website.

You can find pergamenata at <http://www.paperinkarts.com/shop.html>.

When buying paper, check to see if it is acid free or archival. Paper with a high pH tends to yellow and disintegrate with time (like newspapers). If you are not sure, asks one of the store employees if they can give you any information.

## PAINT BRUSHES

Oriental: Many people in the SCA have been pleased with using Oriental paintbrushes. BRUSH SIZES

Brushes are generally numbered along the side (like pencils). The number indicates the size of the brush, which is the diameter or width in millimeters or inches. For illuminations, choosing a smaller number (like a no. 3) will work better than a larger brush (like a no. 20).

Type of hair - Kolinsky sable is the cream of the crop for watercolor brushes. Red sable is still very good.

#### WHAT TO LOOK FOR WHEN BUYING A PAINTBRUSH

There are a few things you can do to make sure that you are buying a quality paintbrush. First, press the bristles against the palm of your hand and then release. The bristles should spring back and form a good point/shape. Second, test to see how much water the paintbrush can hold in the belly (the fat area of bristles). A good belly should hold a decent amount of fluid. Some art stores provide a little water for you to test the paintbrush out with. Dip the brush into the water and just draw a line with it. See how far you can go with dipping the brush just once.

Next, look at the ferrule (the part that holds the bristles on). It should be seamless and made with something that will not corrode from being dipped in water (like nickel). Finally, observe the handle. It should not have any chips or cracks. If it does, water can get in and damage the wood.

#### PAINT

Majority of the scribes who do illuminations use watercolors or gouache. Painting with watercolors in the SCA is different from modern watercolor painting. When mixing your paint with water, try to get it to the consistency of melted ice cream. You want to have a smooth, solid layer of paint as opposed to thick washes.

It is recommended to stay away from acrylic based paint since it is not period. Also, avoid any oil base paint since it will increase the rate of corrossions of your paper if it is unprimed. Many model paints contain oil so it is recommended to stay clear of them.

While majority of the scribe prefer to buy their paint in tubes, you can all purchase them in cake forms. What matters is buying good quality paint. When it comes to paint, what you pay for is what you get.

Cheaper paint will fade faster, and not re-hydrate as well as a higher quality pant. Below are brands that scribes have had success with.

Good Student Grade Watercolors:

\* Cotman by Winsor & Newton - about \$2.00 for a 8 ml tube.

- \* Van Gogh Watercolors - about \$1.50 for a 10 ml tube.
  - \* Grumbacher Academy Watercolors - about \$2.00 for a 7.5 ml tube.
- Professional or Artist Grade Watercolors:
- \* Grumbacher Finest Watercolor - about \$5-\$7.00 for 16 ml tube.
  - \* Holbein (note, some of Holbien's contain traditional artist's pigments that are toxic. Read containers for cautionary instructions). Cost is about \$5.00 to \$15.00 for 15 ml tube.
  - \* Winsor & Newton Artists' Watercolor - comes in 5 ml and 14 ml tubes. Cost ranges from \$4.50 to \$12.00 depending on the tube size.
- Gouache: Note - "acrylic gouache" is not really gouache because it has an acrylic polymer binder. People call it "acrylic gouache" because it produces similar properties to true gouache, such as the opacity.
- Recommended brands:
- \* Winsor & Newton Designer's Gouache - common tube size is 14 ml, but come in larger sizes. Price ranges about \$4.50 to \$10.50 depending on the tube size.
  - \* Holbein Artists' Gouache - Tubes come in 15 ml or 40 ml sizes. Prices range about \$4.50 up to \$11.50, depending on the tube size.
- Here are some basic starter colors
- Red: Spectrum Red
- Orange: Cadmium Orange or Orange Lake Light
- Yellow: cadmium yellow pale or Cadmium Yellow Deep or Cadmium Primrose
- Blue: Ultramarine or Azure Blue
- White: Chinese white, Zink white or titanium white
- Black: Ivory or lamp black
- Brown: Umber (burnt or raw)

**GOLD PAINT:** In period, manuscripts were gilded with gold leaf or painted with shell gold. You do not need to have real gold on your scroll and many scribes have found suitable alternatives. Some have found that when they mix the various gold paints together, they get better results. Here are a few that scribes have recommended.

- \* Holbein Artist's Gouache in gold
- \* Winsor & Newton designer Gouache in gold
- \* Winsor & Newton drawing ink in gold
- \* Schminke powder gold (this might need some additional gum Arabic mixed in)

#### PAINT PALLET/MIXING TRAYS

In period, shells were a popular means to keep paint in. Today, there is a range of container options. Here are some ideas from various scribes.

- \* Plastic lid to something like butter, yogurt or cool whip. Low cost,

disposable and easy to obtain.

- \* Ceramic or plastic flower style palette. These can about \$3.00 for a plastic and \$8.00 for a ceramic.

- \* Round 10-well trays. These are circular palettes with ten circular wells and a center mixing center. Cost: for plastic is about 50 cents. For aluminum they are about \$1.50 each.

- \* Possum Palette - more expensive than other pallets, this tray has 22 plastic cups with flip-top lids to store your paint in (which might be preferable to those who mix their paint) and a flat palette for mixing colors. These cost about \$30 for the tray and \$8.00 for a package of 8 replacement flip-top cups.

- \* Butcher Tray Palette - these are metal trays covered in porcelain enamel. Easy to clean and very durable (they will last for generations). You can purchase these at most any art store. 11" x 15" pan will run about \$6.00.

- \* Shells (oyster, muscle, clams) with a tray (like a Deviled Egg Tray) to support the shells.

## CONTAINER FOR WATER

Like many of the art supplies, these can run as simple and cheap as you want. Recommendation: select something to exclusively be your water for paint and don't use it to drink out of. Also, some scribes choose to have more than one water container. One to rinse the dirty brush, one to run the brush through clean water before mixing with another color. This helps to decrease any unwanted crossing of color. Also, some scribes have found using a separate container for gold or silver to help prevent unwanted metal flex from getting into their other paint. Here are some containers that scribes have used for their water.

- \* Plastic yogurt cups. Cheap and disposable. Also, the lid doubles as a paint palette. Also, plastic Dixie cups, or empty plastic frozen juice containers.

- \* Empty baby food jars. Easy to obtain, the lids close tightly and the glass looks a bit more period than plastic containers.

- \* Small lab bottles

- \* Old ceramic coffee mug. White coffee mugs can help you gauge how dirty your water is.

- \* Children's liquid Tylenol bottles with eye droppers (this is for transporting water to events and mixing with paint).

- \* Hand-made ceramic cups/bowls. More expensive than other options, but looks more period.

## RULER

Any straight edge will work just fine, but many scribes prefer to use a

stainless steel nonskid ruler (aka cork-back rulers). This allows for people to draw straight lines with a pen and not have the ruler touch the ink, causing smudges or bleeding of the ink. A 12" stainless steel ruler runs about \$4.00 and up. T-squares are also helpful. They run from \$2.00 and up. Some scribes attach pennies, felt or washers to the back side of their T-square so they can draw straight lines without the ruler touching the ink.

#### ART BIN

This is just a container to keep all of your art supplies in. It can range from something very simple and cheap to very extravagant and pricey. Some scribes choose to find boxes or bins that they can lock. Here are some bins scribes have used:

- \* Fishing Tackle Box. These can be found at any Wal-Mart for a reasonable price.
- \* Art Bins sold at art/craft stores. These can be more expensive than a tackle box.
- \* Picnic basket
- \* Hand made wooden box

#### OTHER SUGGESTED ITEMS

- \* Bamboo Brush Roll-up (costs about \$5.00). Protects the brushes from any damage, keeps them together and allows air in to dry wet bristles.
- \* French Curves - helpful with drawing vines/ivy. A set of 8 will run about \$10.00.
- \* Templates - come in various shapes such as circles, ovals, squares and more. Each template will cost about \$3-\$5.00.
- \* Aimes lettering guide

where can I buy stuff?

Here are some sites you can find supplies at.

<http://www.dickblick.com/>

<http://www.jerrysartarama.com/>

<http://www.naturalpigments.com/default.asp>

<http://www.johnnealbooks.com/>

<http://www.icubed.com/users/jrose/jartindx.html>

<http://www.paperinkarts.com/shop.html>

Gilding supplies

<http://www.jerrysartarama.com/discount-art-supplies/online/534/?GTSE=goto>KW=gold+leaf&OVRAW=gold%20leaf&OVKEY=gold%20leaf&OVMTC=standard>

<http://www.dickblick.com/categories/goldleaf/>