

FIRST ATTEMPT: CALLIGRAPHY

This is my first attempt at creating an illuminated manuscript page. I have painted miniature images, but have never attempted calligraphy. For this project, I chose to practice the Gothic (or Blackletter) style alphabet because I felt that the style better reflected the meaning behind the piece. I wanted a strong, bold style for this knighting gift. The wording on the left is that of the Midrealm Chivalric Oath of Fealty, and the Latin on the right was used for the knighting ceremony of Sir Vitus von Atzinger. The decorative illumination on the manuscript was inspired by 14th century designs incorporating leaves and red and blue columns with white-work (see examples marked in "A History of Illuminated Manuscripts"). I chose to include the white belt, a recognizable Society symbol for knighthood. The desire to personalize this manuscript let me to add the arms of soon-to-be-Sir Odo von Atzinger (formerly Captain Odo of the Abbey of Saint Martin) within the belt.

Illuminated manuscripts have been created for centuries, and calligraphy using the Gothic style alphabet was popular in Europe between 1000 and 1400 AD (Shepherd 1977:45), but it continued to be used and is still popular for certain manuscripts today (ex. certificates). Various period texts were created using the Gothic and other styles of calligraphy: religious books and Bibles, university books, charters, vernacular texts, and more. Period manuscripts would have been created on paper, vellum, or other forms of parchment using pen and ink, paint made with various pigments, and applied gold and/or silver.

Materials Used:

Base: Aquabee white parchment

Pigments: Black ink; Gouache - Titanium White, Ivory Black, Phthalocyanine Blue, Cadmium Red, Cadmium Yellow Light, and Pearl Gold

Tools: Pencil and eraser, ruler, various dip pens, brushes

During the creation process, I spent about five hours on my own practicing the Gothic alphabet to become more comfortable with the style. Then I attempted to plan out two columns for the text while leaving space for decoration. I learned that I need some instruction on spacing, because I did not end up with the amount of white space I desired. I enjoyed the challenge of the Gothic style, although it felt very robotic, which was difficult to adjust to. I lined my parchment using a ruler and pencil and chose to erase all pencil lines since the manuscript was a gift. I plan to continue practicing calligraphy and hope to begin creating scrolls for the Middle Kingdom.

Sources of inspiration:

De Hamel, Christopher. 2006: *A History of Illuminated Manuscripts*. New York: Phaidon Press Limited.

Newhall, Arthur. 1989: *Calligraphy & Lettering Design*. Laguna Hills, CA: Walter Foster Publishing.

Shepherd, Margaret. 1977: *Learning Calligraphy: A Book of Lettering, Design, and History*. New York: Macmillan Publishing Company.

Artist: Lady Marissa von Atzinger – representing the Barony of the Flame as A&S Champion