



International Guild of Miniature Artisans, Ltd.

Guidelines for Artisan Membership Application

2024

PLEASE DO NOT POST YOUR SUBMISSION
ON THE INTERNET BEFORE THE
COMMITTEE MEETS TO JURY YOUR
WORK.

Please review these Guidelines carefully before completing the Application Form.

ARTISAN SELECTION CATEGORIES

The following categories are used to classify handcrafted pieces. Artisan membership is awarded to successful applicants in one of these categories.

Please submit **five (5)** pieces if applying in one of the categories* in this group:

Accessories	Fine Arts	Metalwork
Animal Figures	Flowers & Plants	Needlework & Textiles
Costuming	Food	Pottery & Porcelain
Decorative Arts	Furniture	Smaller Scales
Figures	Glass	Toys

Please submit **one (1) to three (3)** pieces if applying in one of the categories* in this group:

Landscaping	Structures
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* If none of the categories adequately describes your submission, please contact the Chairperson as soon as possible to clearly explain why none of the standard categories is applicable. The committee will devise a category that is appropriate for your work.

PLEASE NOTE: **Folk Art** and **Wicker** are now subcategories, which can be added to any of the categories above. For example, if you make folk-art furniture, you should apply in the category of Furniture/Folk Art. The guidelines for Folk Art and Wicker are found under Subcategory Guidelines at the end of this document.

EVALUATION CRITERIA AND SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS:

- The applicant must have been a member of IGMA for at least one year immediately prior to the Artisan Evaluation.
- If you are unsure what category to use, please contact the Chairperson as soon as possible, as this is an important step in the evaluation process.
- All pieces sent for evaluation must have been handcrafted by you within the past two (2) years. Items made from a kit or in a class are unacceptable. The items should demonstrate a range of techniques and skills.
- One (1) to three (3) pieces are required for the Landscaping and Structures categories; five (5) pieces are required for the other remaining categories. Only the pieces designated on the application form will be evaluated.

- Please do not sign your work. The evaluation is 'blind'; committee members do not know whose work they are judging. If a piece is already signed, we will cover your signature with a label or some other removable method.
- Please do not send more than the number of pieces required. Send your best work. The Committee must limit its evaluation to the work submitted. Photographs or reviews of other work will not be considered.
- **Supporting documentation for each piece in your submission is very important. It is strongly recommended that you include photographs of your work in various stages of the process.** If any piece in your submission is a reproduction, please send photographs, drawings or photocopies of the piece that inspired you. For an original piece, it is recommended that you explain your inspiration.
- Please do not send magazine or newspaper articles unless they describe your work process. Articles that are purely publicity are not considered supporting documentation.
- **The use of accessories should be very limited.** Accessories used to complement your work may be handmade—by you or someone else—or manufactured. In all cases, accessories must be of the same quality as your own work. Please choose accessories carefully; use them only when necessary.
- If you are applying for a second or third time, you must submit different items than those previously sent. The same work will not be considered.
- **If you are awarded Artisan Membership, you must keep your IGMA membership current. If you let your membership lapse, you will no longer retain Artisan Membership.**
- The Guild expects and requires that you maintain in your work the standards for which you were awarded Artisan Membership, for your own benefit and for that of the Guild.

CATEGORY GUIDELINES

General Guidelines

Please read this section carefully. It applies to all categories.

The Artisan Selection Committee evaluates many aspects of an applicant's submission, including overall impression, degree of difficulty, workmanship, adherence to scale, and creativity. Your submission should include a diverse selection of pieces within your category, so the Committee can evaluate a variety of your skills. If you are using accessories to enhance the display of your work, they may be either handcrafted—by you or someone else—or manufactured, and they must be of the same quality as your own work. The origin of the accessory should be noted in your documentation. **The use of accessories should be very limited.**

All materials used in your work must be inert, *i.e.*, not organic, so there is no potential for mold or contamination by insects. Materials that are unacceptable include plants (even if dried), seeds, and any type of food.

Air-Dried Clay: If you are submitting work made of air-dried clay (sometimes referred to as Cold Porcelain), you must provide the Committee with information about the clay. If it is commercially made, please supply the name of the clay. **If you use homemade clay, please**

provide the formula (or recipe), so the Committee can decide whether or not to accept the material. It is recommended that you supply the formula before submitting your work, in case the material is not acceptable.

3D Printing: If you use 3D printing for any portion of your work, you must contact the chairperson to provide a detailed explanation of your use of the tool. The committee is willing to consider the use of new technologies, but they must not overshadow the handmade nature of the work.

ACCESSORIES

This is a broad category. Accessories can be made of almost any material. Please use the guidelines that most closely relate to the material you are using. If you submit one type of accessory, the Committee will very likely add a subcategory that reflects the type of work you submitted. For example, a submission of lighting fixtures would be designated as Accessories/Lighting.

ANIMAL FIGURES

- Please read the General Guidelines on page 2.
- The animal figure should be a realistic portrayal and accurate reproduction of the species or breed in miniature scale.
- Attention to detail is very important. Muscular structure, bone structure, limbs, eyes, ears, teeth, tongue, paws, claws, skin, wrinkles, scales, fur, feathers, etc., should be accurately shaped, sized and detailed.
- The animal should have an essence of being alive, and the eyes should have light to suggest this.
- The bottoms of all pieces should be neatly finished.
- Accessories (such as harnesses or saddles, etc.) may be handcrafted—by you or someone else—or commercially made, and they must be of the same quality as the animal figure.

COSTUMING

- Please read the General Guidelines on page 2.
- Costumes should be submitted on mannequins or by themselves, not on figures. A mannequin may be as simple as a dress form or articulated with limbs and/or a head. Hats may be displayed on a mannequin or a hat form. Shoes, purses, fans, etc., should be displayed separately.
- Fabric and trim must be accurately in scale.
- Garments must drape well in a realistic way.
- Stitching should be hidden unless it is a design feature. Fine threads should be used to be in scale.
- No glue, seam sealer or soiling should be visible.
- Belts, buttons, bows, jewelry, etc., must be in scale.
- Undergarments must drape well and not add bulk to the finished costume.
- Colors and textures must please the eye and be appropriate for the style and period.
- You must indicate whether or not you have designed the patterns for your garments. If not, you must provide the source of the pattern. Use of another designer's miniature pattern is not acceptable. It is permitted to scale down another designer's full-size pattern; in such a case, you must provide the name and source of the original pattern.
- Mannequins are considered accessories to your submission. As such, they may be handcrafted—by you or someone else—or commercially made, and they must be of equal quality to your costumes. This applies also to any other accessories.

DECORATIVE ARTS

- Please read the General Guidelines on page 2.

We currently have no guidelines for this category. If you intend to submit items of this type, please contact the Chairperson as soon as possible, so the Committee can provide you with guidance.

FIGURES

- Please read the General Guidelines on page 2.
- Human figures must be either hand-sculpted or made from the applicant's own original mold. The use of commercial molds is not acceptable.
- The following materials are acceptable: porcelain, ceramic, metal, resin, paper Mache, wood, clay, polymer clay, fabric, leather, or natural fibers.
- At least one of your figures must be unclothed or minimally clothed (*i.e.*, undergarments only), so that the structure of the figure itself (whether fully sculpted or wired and padded) may be evaluated.
- Correct proportions are necessary, with the exception of fantasy or character figures. Attention to the hands, feet, and length of limbs is important.
- Figures should be posed in a natural way and properly displayed (*i.e.*, standing or sitting).
- Figures must be neatly and securely wrapped. Lumps, wire ends or unpadded sections must not be evident. Cloth figures must be smooth and evenly padded.
- Hands, fingers, feet, nostrils, ears, dimples and other features must be well defined. In particular, the scale and sculpting of hands and feet require careful attention. Many otherwise excellent submissions have lost considerable points due to poor rendering of these vital areas.
- Shading on facial features should be even and blended. Eye make-up should reflect the period in which the figure is historically based.
- Wiggling must not show glue, stitching or bald spots. Wigs should not be glued to ears.
- Accessories may be handcrafted—by you or someone else—or commercially made, and they must be of the same quality as the figure.

FINE ARTS

- Please read the General Guidelines on page 2.

PAINTING:

- The overall effect of the subject matter within its frame should be a pleasing presentation.
- Attention to the surface of the 'canvas' is important. If silk or wood is used, it should not be overly evident under the painted surface. The 'canvas' should be perfectly flat.
- Attention to the weight of line work and brush stroke needs to be considered in order to keep the painting in scale. All materials, such as type of paint and final finish, should be in scale.
- The reverse of the painting must be clean, except perhaps for the name of the painting, artist and the date.
- Watercolors must adhere to the same guidelines regarding paper and application. The paper must lie perfectly flat.
- Frames should be appropriate in style and not detract from the painting. They may be handcrafted—by you or someone else—or commercially made, and they must be of the same quality as your work. A poorly made and finished frame can cause a deduction in points.

PRINTMAKING:

- The same requirements apply – scale of surface, line and thickness of paper are paramount. Frames also follow the same guidelines as for paintings.
- Preparation of the plates should leave clean edges so that only the image appears on the paper. The paper should lie perfectly flat, and there must be no ink smudged on the back.

OTHER ART:

Please contact the Chairperson if you intend to submit other types of fine art.

FLOWERS & PLANTS

- Please read the General Guidelines on page 2.
- Formal cut-flower arrangements should follow all the design rules used for professional full-size flower arrangements. This includes style, balance, texture, movement and the proper use of color and scale.
- The structure of a plant must be accurate for the specific variety, and the growth pattern must look realistic.
- Attention to scale is essential. If a plant is potted, it should be obvious whether the plant is floor size or table size.
- The flowers and plants should look real.
- The type of material used for the leaves and petals must not be obvious.
- The use of laser-cut leaves and petals is acceptable as long as the applicant made the original templates. Altering techniques—painting, shading and shaping—must be used to lend realism and originality.
- Leaves should vary in size and color. They must be veined and connected to the stems or branches in a realistic way.
- The use of natural foliage is unacceptable, as it does not demonstrate enough skill and is unstable over time.
- All pots and vases should complement the work and must be the correct size for the flower arrangement or plant.
- Containers and other accessories may be handcrafted—by you or someone else—or commercially made, and they must be of the same quality as the work.

FOOD

- Please read the General Guidelines on page 2.
- The five pieces submitted should not amount to more than five plates of food or the equivalent. Five tables (or the equivalent) laden with food will not be considered.
- Submit a good variety of foods using different accessories. Above all, be creative.
- Foods that are grouped together must be in scale with each other.
- Use only inert materials. Edible items or spices used in real foods are not to be used in miniature. There is a real possibility of disintegration or the development of mold over time.
- Surface finishes and textures must be true to the look of real food.
- Accuracy of color, shading and contrast is important.
- No glue should be visible, and there must be no evidence of fingerprints.
- Containers or other accessories may be handcrafted—by you or someone else—or commercially made, and they must be of the same quality as the food.

FURNITURE

Pieces submitted in this category must be made of wood. The only exception is wicker furniture, which may be submitted in this category with a subcategory of Wicker. (See the

guidelines for Wicker on page 10.) Metal furniture should be submitted in the Metalwork category. If you are submitting furniture made of yet another material, please contact the Chairperson for help with choosing a category.

- Please read the General Guidelines on page 2.
- The overall size and appearance should be in the correct scale as documented in the application.
- A variety of joinery should be presented showing historical accuracy and the scope of the applicant's expertise.
- The choice of wood must be appropriate for the furniture in terms of period reproduction or style. The size of the grain should be properly in scale.
- The thickness of the wood should be properly in scale. Likewise, knot holes should be in scale and used sparingly.
- All joints should be smooth and even. There should be no holes or gaps where wood parts meet. Joints should also be tight and closed.
- There should be no evidence of wood filler or excessive sanding to make a joint fit.
- Drawers should be perfectly square, fit the opening, and slide smoothly yet tightly.
- No glue should be visible anywhere on the piece.
- Visible tooling marks are unacceptable.
- A clear or painted finish must be smooth and without brush marks.
- Stain on the end-grain should not be too dark compared to the other edges of the wood.
- The finish material should be realistically in scale and not appear too thick or glossy.
- All hardware must be in scale with the piece.
- Hinges must fit tightly and work smoothly. Hinged doors should swing square to the body of the piece and close cleanly without binding.
- Overall, the furniture piece must sit square and level.
- Accessories submitted with your work may be handcrafted—by you or someone else—or commercially made, and they must be of the same quality as the furniture.

GLASS

We currently have no guidelines for this category. If you intend to submit items made of glass, please contact the Chairperson as soon as possible, so the Committee can provide you with guidance.

LANDSCAPING

- Please read the General Guidelines on page 2.
- If submitting only one piece, it must incorporate several different landscaping features in order to demonstrate a variety of skills. If one piece does not include enough features, please submit three pieces which, overall, include a good variety.
- Examples of landscaping include a garden or yard, an outdoor scene such as a campground or beach, etc.
- Features may include—but are not necessarily limited to—trees, shrubs, plants, flowers, walls, pathways, sand, soil, water features, ornamental bridges, grasses, rocks, outdoor ground cover, arbors, sheds, benches, figures, animals, statues, etc.
- All materials must be in scale and should duplicate nature as closely as possible without the use of natural materials.
- Natural plant materials should not be used, as they do not demonstrate skill on the part of the applicant. There is also a potential for disintegration over time.
- The base should be prepared in an appropriate color so that, for example, no bald spots are apparent underneath the overlaying ground cover.

- Accessories submitted with your work may be handcrafted—by you or someone else—or commercially made, and they must be of the same quality as your work.

PLEASE NOTE: If you submit a very large piece, it will be necessary for you to transport it to the evaluation site. This can be done at the committee’s meeting, which is held just before the Guild Show. Please contact the Chairperson to make arrangements.

METALWORK

- Please read the General Guidelines on page 2.
- Silver, copper and brass may be etched and blackened using a variety of acid products.
- Tin and iron may be painted to give a proper finish.
- An applied wire may be used to give the appearance of rolled bead.
- Tinware and ironware pieces must be fabricated from sheet and wire material rather than being cast. The only exception would be if the original was cast.
- Joints should be soldered with a silver-bearing solder or, in some cases, joined in a riveted and peened style.
- Joints must be flush metal-to-metal; solder should be contained completely within the joint. There should be no visible solder outside the joint.
- In the reproduction of historical pieces, tinsmiths and blacksmiths should not use purchased hinges.
- If using purchased hinges and/or jewelry findings (such as beads for handles, domes for lids, etc.), those items must be re-worked to appear original.
- Components such as handles, lids, knobs, etc., must be properly aligned.
- Accessories submitted with your work may be handcrafted—by you or someone else—or commercially made, and they must be of the same quality as your work.

NEEDLEWORK & TEXTILES

- Please read the General Guidelines on page 2.
- The needlework category will often require additional defining such as Needlework/Rugs, Needlework/Petit Point, Needlework/French Knots, unless the artist demonstrates ability in a variety of types and sizes of needlework. This is because one rule does not fit all types of needlework. For example, rugs are acceptable in a larger mesh; petit point will require various sizes and scales; and we do not require various sizes in French knots.
- Items made from a kit or in a class are unacceptable. Stitching a pattern created by someone else is the equivalent of using a kit.
- Patterns can be original designs or adaptations of existing full-sized work. It is required that you send a copy of your pattern/chart with your submission.
- If you are adapting a full-sized piece, it is strongly recommended that you send photos of the original.
- All finished pieces must be clean, neat, smooth, perpendicular, parallel, and soundly constructed. Backs must be neatly finished.
- Knitted or crocheted garments should be submitted on mannequins or by themselves, not on figures.
- Bed linens and table linens must drape naturally. The thickness should be in scale.
- Accessories submitted with your work may be handcrafted—by you or someone else—or commercially made, and they must be of the same quality as your work.

PETIT POINT:

- For petit point, 40-count silk gauze is the largest mesh allowable for 1:12-scale work.
- Mesh sizes from 40 stitches per inch and above are acceptable, as is suitable cloth for surface stitching. Smaller mesh sizes are not required at the Artisan level, but are very

suitable for smaller items, such as pillows, samplers, or chair seats.

- Threads must be the proper size for the mesh, allowing for uniformity of stitches (no looping or bulging), and texture stitches must conform to the illusion of scale.
- Use of a computer charting program is allowed, whether your design is original or adapted from a full-sized piece. It is required that you identify which program was used and send a copy of your chart with your submission.
- Scanning a design into a computer charting program is not permitted. Even if adapting a full-sized piece, the chart must be your own creation.
- Any design stitched without a pattern or chart must include at least five photos of the work in progress, and one photo of the original inspiration.
- If needlework is submitted on a piece of furniture, each must be compatible and complementary to the other. The furniture may be handcrafted or commercially made, and it must be of equal quality to the needlework.

RUGS (PETIT POINT, WOVEN, OR ANY FORM OF NEEDLEWORK):

- Rugs and carpets must each be squared; no diagonal striations should be visible.
- The thickness of rugs must be in scale, not bulky, so the rug lies flat.
- Fringes should be the proper length in proportion to the size of the rug.

POTTERY & PORCELAIN

- Please read the General Guidelines on page 2.
- Clays and porcelains must be appropriately fired. Air-dried and polymer clays may not be submitted in this category. Please see paragraph 2 of the General Guidelines for instructions regarding air-dried and polymer clays.
- A piece may be carved, scored, modeled, burnished, underglazed, glazed, china-painted, lustered, etc.
- Acrylics and other types of paints are not acceptable finishes.
- The walls of a wheel-thrown pot must be in scale to the piece. There should not be excess weight in the foot of the piece.
- If the work is a reproduction of a full-sized piece, it should be as technically accurate as possible. Photographs of the original must accompany the submission.
- Spouts, knobs and handles must be in scale and in proportion to the body of the piece.
- Lids must fit snugly and sit well down into the flange or onto the rim of the piece.
- The bottoms of all pieces should be neatly finished.
- Decorative surfaces must be in scale. Drawn lines should be appropriately fine.
- Glaze applications must be even and not too thick, which would add bulk to the form and fill in dimensional detail.
- Accessories submitted with your work may be handcrafted—by you or someone else—or commercially made, and they must be of the same quality as your work.

SMALLER SCALES

This category refers to work in 1:48 (quarter-scale) and 1:144. For structures, please submit three (3) items; all other types of work require five (5) pieces.

- Please read the General Guidelines on page 2.
- A complete structure must include exterior and interior architectural elements such as doors, windows, roofing, floors and moldings, and exterior surface finishes such as clapboard, brick, stucco, stone, etc.
- If a structure is a replica of an existing building, a photo of the original building must also be submitted.

- A structure may be submitted either furnished or unfurnished.
- All interior and exterior finishes such as paint, varnish, stucco, etc. should appear to be in correct scale.
- If landscaping is used, all materials used must appear to be in scale and duplicate nature as closely as possible.
- A room setting may be in a room box, dome, or appropriately scaled container.
- Any furnishings and accessories used in a structure or room setting must be hand made by you or someone else, appear to be in correct scale, in correct proportion to each other, and must be of the same quality as the structure.
- Furniture and accessories made using laser or other reproductive processes may be used if they were designed by the applicant.
- All materials used must appear to be in scale. Particular attention should be paid to weave and thickness of fabrics, grain and texture of woods and thickness of metals.
- No glue should be visible.

STRUCTURES

- Please read the General Guidelines on page 2.
- You may submit either one complete structure or three sections of structures. A complete structure must include interior and exterior architectural elements such as floors, moldings, doors, windows, stairs, ceilings, lighting, clapboards, brick, stone, etc. If submitting three sections of structures, the above elements should be included.
- In addition, send good-quality photographs of at least one of your completed structures. Include various views—front, back, sides, etc.—as well as close-ups to show detail work.
- All architectural details must be accurately scaled and be made of materials that look realistic.
- Accessories submitted with your work may be handcrafted—by you or someone else—or commercially made, and they must be of the same quality as your work.

PLEASE NOTE: If you submit a very large structure, it will be necessary for you to transport it to and from the evaluation site. This can be done at the committee’s meeting, which is held just before the Guild Show. Please contact the Chairperson to make arrangements.

If a structure is shipped to the Chairperson for transportation to the meeting, it must fit into an average-sized car and be moveable by one person.

TOYS

This is a broad category. Toys can be made of almost any material. Please use the guidelines that most closely relate to the material you are using.

SUBCATEGORY GUIDELINES

FOLK ART

This is traditional art that is produced in particular areas of countries around the world; it is not limited to North America. This is not a primary category; it is a secondary description.

- It is extremely important that very comprehensive documentation accompany the submission.
- If this submission is an original, please send photographs of the work from the same family of folk art that inspired you, as well as comprehensive documentation.
- The overall size and appearance should be in the correct scale as documented in the application.
- No glue should be visible anywhere.

- A variety of pieces should be sent to show the scope of your expertise.

WICKER

- Weaving must be tight and even in the solid areas, with equal spacing between ribs. Openwork should have equidistant spokes forming the diamond patterns.
- Waxed linen cord is generally acceptable, but other fibers may be used to get specific effects with even smaller, tighter weaves. Choose the material that will allow you to create the number of rows comparable to the full-sized piece.
- As in other needlework, exact scale may not be possible. However, the illusion of proper scale must be achieved.
- Upright spokes must be finished evenly and neatly. Flush cutting or bending back the spokes to finish the top edge should stay true to what is possible in real wickerwork.
- Wood bases and wheels must be of the same quality and workmanship as the woven sections.
- If you submit your work in the Furniture category, all five pieces must be wicker furniture. If you submit a mix of furniture and accessories, the category will be Accessories.