

# PROPOSAL FOR THE CREATION OF A MASTER OF COMBAT ARTS WITH THE ORDER OF THE LAUREL

## Introduction:

This proposal is for the creation of a martial branch with the Order of the Laurel (OL) to recognize those who attain exceptional skill with non-rattan weapons and meet all of other requirements listed for candidates of Patent Orders as given in Corpora. The proposed Order would be called Master of Combat Arts (MCA).

There are four main concepts behind the formulation this proposal.

- 1) By creating the MCA, members would be part of an already established Patent Order. This could make implementation easier across the Known World, as well as provide an already extant framework for the members to work within as they become comfortable with their new role.
- 2) The MCA honors both the original intent of the Laurel, as well as the past responsibility of the Laurel to recognize members of the Society who possessed and displayed exceptional skill in service to the kingdom as defined in Corpora prior to the creation of the Order of the Pelican:
  - a. Proclaimed in A.S. II by His then Majesty William the Silent, when he created the Order of the Laurel:

“Though it be the prime business of our Society to present such Revels and Tourneys as are pleasing to the populace; and as the prime pleasure of that populace is to see the Great Sport of the Tourney; There are yet those without whom our Society would not be half so pleasant; yet who do not join in the lists and thereby come not to the Glory of Knighthood or the Throne. It is the intention of His Majesty that these persons should not go unrecognized.”
  - b. The definition of the Order of the Laurel, prior to the creation of the Order of the Pelican, which did not limit the OL to Arts and Sciences:

“...the candidate must have attained the standard of excellence equal to that of his prospective peers in some art, skill, or area of knowledge, and have made this art, skill, or knowledge available for the service and instruction of the kingdom, above and beyond that expected of S.C.A. members.” (Corpora, 1996)Both of these precedents allowed for the recognition of skill outside the orbit of Arts and Sciences within the Laurel. By re-opening this option, it more easily permits the recognition of those individuals who do not currently “fit” within the three existing peerages, without having to create an entirely separate Patent Order.
- 3) The MCA would allow the OL to fulfill the above functions for the non-rattan combat arts, while at the same time not requiring the OL to surrender or drastically alter the Arts and Science focus it has developed over the intervening years. By creating the MCA within the OL, it allows for a limited separation of specialties (skill in combat arts as opposed to skills in arts and sciences) for evaluation purposes, while still allowing the entire Order to consider the General Requirements of candidates for a Patent of Arms.

- 4) Creation of the MCA within the OL will, by its very nature, not require that the Board determine or define what combat activities will or will not be included under the new Order. By explicitly recognizing that the OL can, through the MCA, recognize skill in non-rattan combat arts, it will be up to individual Crowns and the members of the Order of the Laurel to determine what activities to recognize, not the Board.

The response to the unofficial poll overseen by Sir John Fitz-Rauf shows, if nothing else, that the majority of respondents feel that the current status quo does not adequately allow for peerage-level recognition of those who practice the non-rattan combat arts. The poll numbers indicate a rough preference for a new Patent Order, but this is not a certainty, either in its overall support across the Society or in any possible implementation by the Board of Directors. This proposal for the creation of a Master of Combat Arts is offered as an alternative path, should the Board or the Membership of the SCA, Inc. decide to examine other options.

I stand ready to assist the Board in any way possible should it decide to further examine or adjust this proposal.

I remain, in service,

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## Proposed Wording for the Order of Master of Combat Arts:

Below are the proposed changes to the “Society for Creative Anachronism, Inc. Organizational Handbook” (also known as “Corpora”) for the creation of a Patent Order to be called “Master of Combat Arts” within the Order of the Laurel. Changes are denoted by CAPITAL letters.

### VIII. Personal Awards and Titles

#### A. Patents of Arms:

##### 4. Patent Orders:

b. The Order of the Laurel: **THE ORDER OF THE LAUREL CONSISTS OF TWO EQUAL PARTS: MASTER OF THE LAUREL AND MASTER OF COMBAT ARTS. THE CANDIDATE FOR MASTER OF THE LAUREL must have attained the standard of excellence in skill and/or knowledge equal to that of his or her prospective peers in some area of the Arts or Sciences. THE CANDIDATE FOR MASTER OF COMBAT ARTS MUST BE CONSIDERED THE EQUAL OF HIS OR HER PROSPECTIVE PEERS WITH ONE OR MORE WEAPONS OF NON-RATTAN/NON-TOURNAMENT COMBAT. CANDIDATES FOR EITHER MASTER OF THE LAUREL OR MASTER OF COMBAT ARTS must have applied this skill and/or knowledge for the instruction of members and service to the kingdom to an extent above and beyond that normally expected of members of the Society.**

Members of the Order of the Laurel may choose to swear fealty, but are not required to do so.

The duties of the members of the order are as follows:

- To set an example of courtesy and chivalrous conduct.
- To respect the Crown of the kingdom; to support and uphold the laws of the kingdom and Corpora.
- If in fealty, to support and uphold the Crown of his or her kingdom.
- To enrich the kingdom by sharing his or her knowledge and skills.
- To advise the Crown on the advancement of candidates for the Laurel.