

## What is a Miniature Painting?

From the :THE SPIRIT OF A MINIATURE: This unique art form, based on a minute scale, traces its roots back to the book paintings and illuminated manuscripts set in the 7th century. A work of fine art in miniature is a particularly personal object that draws the viewer into an intimate, concentrated little world that is breathtaking in its execution.

Every single detail is miniaturized – the scale of the subject matter, the brush or pencil strokes – so that only with high magnification can one behold the immaculate details of the artist's technique which may include stippling, hatching or pointillism.

These techniques are a specialized means of producing a perfect balance of color and detail in a series of thinly applied layers of exquisite color intended to reflect light. The miniatures show a high standard of design and the artist's mastery of the chosen media and palette.

A miniature painting is a very detailed, very small painting. The exact size varies among miniature art societies around the world.. Many societies define a miniature painting, no be larger than 25 square inches and the subject must be painted no more than one-sixth of its actual size. So, for example, an adult head which is typically 9" wouldn't be painted large than 1½". For our exhibit however, we are relaxing that rule, and only asking that the subject be 1/3 the size of the subject.

A traditional-style miniature isn't merely about size, but also the level of detail in the painting. It's the detail that makes a miniature instead of just a small painting: if you look at it through a magnifying glass, you'll see extremely fine brush marks with every detail scaled down and miniaturized. Techniques used include hatching, stippling, and glazing. Composition, perspective, and color are as important as in larger paintings.

In Europe in the 1520s, miniature portraits started being used as jewelry, in lockets and brooches, particularly in France and England. Miniatures were especially popular in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The invention of photography, which provided easy portraits, inevitably led to a decline in the popularity of miniatures and the number of artists specializing in miniatures.

The rules for our exhibit are that paintings are no more than 25 sq. inch or smaller. In other words, a 25 sq inch painting would measure 5" x 5" or any combination that totals 25 sq. inches. They may be done on paper or canvas. The judging will be on a **high standard of draughtsman ship and composition.**