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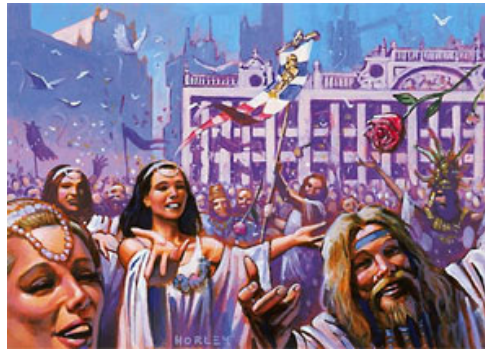


The Tournament of Signets Parade

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Taste the Magic
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It happens every year – the Festival of the Guildpact. On the last day, the festivities culminate in the great Tournament of Signets Parade. Proud Ravnicans create works of wonder and enter them in the parade in hopes of winning one of the many parade awards. Since the Festival of the Guildpact actually took place a few months ago, when *Ravnica: City of Guilds* was released, we cannot actually see the parade. But, in the spirit of the Festival, we will hold our own **Magic** version of the parade, complete with official Tournament of Signets awards. There is a sneaky little benefit to not actually attending the Tournament of Signets Parade - no risk of [the Gruul showing up](#).



Dissension's release is right around the corner, so I have decided to make the theme of our Tournament of Signets parade *Guildpact* Art. Once the *Dissension* previews start, our *Guildpact* buddies will be shuffled to the side. This parade will be a celebration, a send-off, a here's to you to the images of *Guildpact*. After all, the parade takes the Festival of the Guildpact out with a bang. Let's give the art of *Guildpact* a little boom of its own.

The Awards

The Accolade of Architects – “For art capturing the power and wonder of Ravnica's signature feature - her buildings.”



Siege of Towers – by Anthony Waters

Siege of Towers is one of my favorite pieces from *Guildpact*. The judges from the Council of Architects seem to feel the same way. I overheard one of them say, “Wow, ‘capturing the power and wonder’ was meant to be vague - so we could pretty much pick whatever building art we liked most. But this shows buildings with actual power and wonder!” The discussion did not last long. They made their choice, congratulated each other, and went back to work trying to construct a *Helldozer* detector.

The Juggler's Nod – “For art that depicts the awesome majest - hey, pull my finger!”

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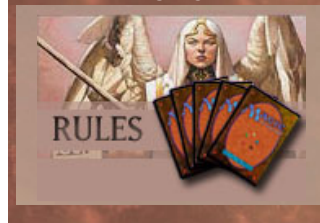
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RULES





Cry of Contrition – by Daren Bader

Leave it to the Jugglers to throw a wrench in the gears. *Cry of Contrition* is obviously not the humorous piece that the Jugglers usually choose. They considered *Wildsize* and *Goblin Flectomancer*, but decided it would actually be funnier to choose a picture of a woman crying. As the proxy commissioner of this parade, I could have forced them to choose one of the other pieces, but it could have been seen as a conflict of interest should the Flectomancer be chosen. In the end, I decided to keep *Cry of Contrition* because I think it is an excellent piece in its own right.

* * *

The Chronarch's Trophy – “For art skillfully capturing the impression of a moment in time.”



Orzhov Euthanist – by Zoltan Boros & Gabor Szikszai

Ah, the Euthanist. (Side note- the name is *not* “Enthusiast.” Common mistake. He may be into his work, but he is a dark and sinister trigger man, not a cheerleader.) I like the way this piece skillfully delivers the image of a mysterious, passionless killer. But, what I like most is *when* this piece depicts the killer. The artists chose to show us the moment after the deed was done, allowing us to see the hands of the victim trying in vain to hold on. We get to see how the victim's struggles elicit zero emotion from the Euthanist. Strong!

Interestingly, this was not supposed to be the winner of the **Chronarch's** Trophy. It was the runner-up to **Quicken** (below). But, I decided to pull rank and swap them - since it was obvious to me that the Izzet fix was in. **Quicken** is an awesome piece, but this commissioner does not allow tampering!



Quicken - by Aleksii Briclot

* * *

Matka's Tiara – “For art edifying the women of Ravnica.”



Angel of Despair – by Todd Lockwood

It was an easy year for the Matka. (For those of you who don't know who that is - it's the title of a female Golgari Guildmaster. For those of you who do know this term, you're probably wondering how a Matka could have chosen a winner at this particular time. Don't get all bent out of shape - I chose the winner, with consultation from high ranking female Golgari.) Anyhoo, it was an easy year. Thought was given to **Skyrider Trainee** and **Teysa, Orzhov Scion**, but the deep black eyes of the Angel won us over.

* * *

Starfletcher's Trophy – “For achievement in the use of color.”



Blind Hunter – by Warren Mahy

The *Starfletchers* and I conferred long and hard on this one. It seemed like the obvious choice was *Shattering Spree*, but I could not help but sway the elves into looking at some art that made color choices that were interesting rather than “over the top.” Both *Blind Hunter* and *Stitch in Time* were then considered. Both had chosen limited palettes of just two, not-often-combined colors. It was a toss-up. The elves ended up choosing *Blind Hunter* (I later found out) because one of the palette colors was Green. Lame, but I liked the piece enough to let it through.) Just to be fair, here's *Stitch in Time* all big and glorious:



Stitch in Time – by Jon Foster

The Laurels of Azor – “For works executed in painstaking precision, with attention to detail and respect for edge quality, symmetry, line, and compositional balance, all of which illuminate the control of the artist.” (Wow, what a bunch of hooley. Leave it to the Azorius to get all regulatory on an art show.)



Burning-Tree Bloodscale – by Kev Walker

Ha! It tickles me that the Guild of laws chose art depicting a card-carrying member of the Guild of lawlessness. Irony aside, the Bloodscale does show Kev's precision, control, and ability to make exactly the right marks every time. The awesome thing about this illustration is how organic and alive the pose is while the technique is so precise and hard-lined. It is no wonder why Kev is a favorite of art snobs and gamer goobs alike.

* * *

Craftsman Trophy – “For art that doesn't do any of the stuff that Azor likes, but is still awesome!” (This category is a recent addition to the parade. The people of Ravnica are becoming more savvy with their appreciation of art, and now have an appetite for art that is expressive in both technique and theme.)



Beastmaster's Magemark – by Brandon Kitkouski

I love this piece. The people seem to love it too, since here it is hoisting the trophy. *Stitch in Time* was also considered for this award, but at the time, it was already the winner of the Chronarch's Trophy, so the nod went to the *Magemark*. Check out aggression in the linework. It's almost like the art was made by Zorro, swinging his brush, cutting lines and shapes with dexterity and aggression. (I also dig that the Magemark is in the shape of a hoof. Nice touch.)

Tin Street Trophy - "For art that shows a slice of life in the city of Ravnica."



Skyrider Trainee – by Adam Rex

I, too, am a big fan of this painting. It captures the Ravnican worker in her own environment. The earthy tones emphasize the non-guilded, working-class feel of the piece. Details in the griffin landing pad as well as the background make this a true slice of Ravnican life. And, for the art aficionados out there- it's painted with skill and honesty, as Rex's work often is.

Psychomancer's Award – "For art with emphasis on mood."



Vedalken Plotter – by Greg Staples

Myznar and his cronies huddled up to decide between *Vedalken Plotter*, *Cry of Contrition*, and *To Arms!* They felt the exclamation point in "To Arms!" was a ploy to trick them into thinking there was more mood than there really was, so they passed on it. Psychomancers do not like any forms of mental manipulation (unless it's done by them, of course). *Cry of Contrition* was a favorite, but they ended up going with the *Plotter* because it, in their

words, "really epitomized *mood lighting*." I tend to agree. The lighting is ominous and dramatic. I support the psychomancers' pick.

* * *

Firemind Trophy – "For the art most exemplifying the omnipotence and omniscience of the Firemind."



Niv-Mizzet, the Firemind – by Todd Lockwood

Duh. The same thing wins every year. The Izzet are insane with their submissions to this category - hoping to hit upon the one supermind idea that wins the favor of the Dragon without giving in and depicting Niv-Mizzet himself. Of course, no one has been able to do so. And so, as it is every year, some non-Izzet entry wins it by producing the most ambitious portrait of the Dragon. Bias or no bias, I still believe Todd's painting is worthy of the trophy.

* * *

Parun's Trophy – "Awarded to the most shining example of the spirit of a guild."



Izzet Guildmage – by Jim Murray

Here here! All the living paruns and I agreed on this one. (I cannot tell you who they are- it might spoil some fun for novel readers who have not yet reached the part where Parun death occurs. Also, some of the Paruns are up and at 'em, but not technically alive, so let's just move on.) Anyway, we all agreed that Jim's depiction of the quintessential Izzet mage most faithfully exemplifies the spirit of that guild. There is magic, there are gizmos, there's the signature flared up hairdo of a member of the Firemind, there is the kooky complex garb in primary

colors. Oh, and it's drawn and painted with facile virtuosity that has other artists drooling (okay, maybe it's just me). Whatever. Everybody loves the thing not only because it's dripping with Izzet mojo but also because it is a wonderful painting. The non-draconic paruns did lobby for pieces illustrating members of their own guilds, but Razia had no Boros art to vote for, so she went with the Dragon on this one. Oh, and Szadek was a no-show. Imagine that.

Well, there goes the last marching band. Oh, wait, there's a mule cart with the mayor of the slum district. He and his wife are waving, but everybody is leaving. It really stinks to bring up the rear. But, he's used to it. Where he's mayor of, even the **buildings get up and walk away**.

*Matt Cavotta has always been a fantasy goober. At various points in his gooberhood, he has used his nerdy knowledge to become a professional goober. He went from scribbling pictures of his own **D&D** characters to illustrating books and cards for his two favorite games; **D&D** and **Magic**. Then he channeled his inner 7th level Illusionist/3rd level Bard and landed himself a job at Wizards as a writer. He continues to cast his illusion spells each morning, lest they find out he's just another goober.*



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