

The Blue Strand

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER



One of the many iconic framing shots from the movie Rashōmon.

A Black & White Mystery

Rashōmon: The Beautiful Gate to Reality, Expectation, and Other Benign Things

———— VEDANT PITHIA

Rashomon (1950) is a *Jidaigeki* (Japanese Period/Samurai) film by Akira Kurosawa, set in Heian Period Japan (794-1185), that tells the story of a bandit, a nobleman, and a noblewoman, through a total of four different, questionable narratives offered by different narrators.

Picture a beach, beautiful grounds, muddled fields and pathways, and a Heian-era Palace that makes the natural beauty of nature question itself. Kyoto is in full bloom, the Fujiwara clan is a rising star, and Japan is developing an identity of its own.

None of this is present in Rashomon, the Kyoto gate is in disrepair, the Palace serving as the confessional very much behind the camera with its domineering walls in the background.

Crime and banditry were commonplace, yes, but the point is, Rashomon isn't about Heian Japan, it is about Japan

in the aftermath of the Second World War. Hell, it isn't even about that, it's about storytelling, humanity, and morality. Or maybe it's about light seeping into dark spaces, truth and human experience colliding with fancy clothing, improvised fight scenes that are still impressive, distinct, and powerful, or even just a harrowing tale about the pliant nature of truth and hearsay.

The truth is, Rashomon isn't any of these, it is all of these. It is brilliant, it is beautiful, it's the greatest film ever made... except there's no such thing, it can bore some, confuse others, or at worst, do nothing at all for some except for passing time.

Every film serves a purpose, and it is my honest opinion that Rashomon serves its purpose exceptionally well.

What's yours?

WHAT'S ON?

September Activities

- Friday 5th – Sunday 7th September – **Spring Crown Tournament** (Stormhold)
- Thursday 11th September – **Fighter Training + A&S**
- Saturday 13th September – **Crafthall & Potluck**
- Tuesday 16th September – **Council Meeting**
- Thursday 18th September – **Fighter Training + A&S**
- Sunday 21st September – **Archery Training**
- Thursday 25th September – **Fighter Training + A&S**

Coming Soon!

- 19th October – **Ironbeard Challenge**
- 15th November – **Day of Champions**

More information:

<https://kraeglas.lochac.sca.org/>

Announcements:

Good luck to all the Krae Glas and Stormhold fighters participating in the Crown Tourney! (And I guess the fighters from interstate. If we must.)

May the hours you have all spent practicing shine through on the field and gift us of the audience with an excellent spectacle!



Photo credit: Julia of the Ravens



14th Century Sion purse (simplified), knitted and photographed by Julia of the Ravens.

“Knitting Isn’t Period!”

The first article in our new Medieval Mythbusting series

———— JULIA OF THE RAVENS

While this incredibly pervasive myth is thankfully becoming less common in SCA spaces - though it does still surface on occasion - it is agonisingly popular almost everywhere else. Even in dedicated historical knitting groups online, images of medieval knits cannot be shared or discussed without at least one person insisting “That’s not knitting, it’s nålebinding! Knitting is only 200 years old!”. My good gentle, you are thinking of *crochet*.

Knitting has a documented history of almost a *millennium*. It is not unreasonable to think it is likely a fair bit older than that, because who in their right mind would make knee-high, lace weight, colourwork, cotton socks (such as the *three different* 12th Century blue & white socks found in Egypt) as their *first* project? While some nålebinding stitches can look like knitting from the outside, they are fundamentally different structures and nålebinding does not lend itself to the same delicate and intricate designs as knitting does. The historical evidence we have of nålebinding tells us that it was used almost exclusively for making purely practical items, unlike knitting which was used for everything from casual woollen hats to silk regalia.

Part of the confusion may be attributed to nålebinding often being referred to as “Single-needle knitting” or “Viking knitting”, as the term “nålebinding” has only been around for about 50 years. In some languages knitting, crochet, nålebinding, weaving and even

embroidery are all known by the same word, despite being wildly different skills, so it’s understandable that people who have not tried fibre arts may not be able to tell the difference. After all, what knitter has never been asked “what are you crocheting?” (and vice-versa)? (*Editor’s note: this is an extremely annoying problem with nålebinding also, since most people are completely unfamiliar with it, every question becomes a “I must explain this new thing to you”*)

Despite these language barriers, there is clear archival evidence of knitting groups established as early as the 13th Century. By the 16th Century the knitting guilds were widely known and well respected, with their journeymen crafters undergoing long and intensive training before they could be considered professionals. Believers of this myth somehow manage to ignore the *many* medieval paintings showing knitters hard at work - even the Virgin Mary, complete with halo, was featured knitting in multiple medieval artworks! While her clothing is oftentimes extremely anachronistic in these paintings, how would these artists know what knitting looked like if it didn’t exist when they painted it?

Some of these aforementioned paintings also debunk another medieval myth, but that is best saved for next month.

Poetry Corner: The Ballad of Lord Brian di Caffa

———— MARGIE OF GLEN MORE

He hammered out his armour strong
The populace for to please;
His elbow cops and his steel vambrace
And then he formed the knees.

His helmet bold with name inscribed,
Lord Brian worked his craft.
His brigandine with rivets bright
To protect him both fore and aft.

The belt he formed of leather strong
And metal all adorned
With noble birds and shining steel,
At his side a dagger worn.

He plied his needle some few hours
His gambeson made ere long.
On field of gold and grille of green
The crimson hen stood strong.

And then into a mould so strange
He poured such wondrous stuff
To form a crest, a crimson bird,
He vowed it was enough.

His gorget and his crimson trews
His mantling draping down,
Lord Brian went to Ynys Fawr
To fight for Lochac’s crown.

From Riverhaven to fair Polit
The rumours tell it all:
How Brian, a feathered chicken clothed,
At Tanu’s blade did fall.

And so the rumours far and wide
Attest to Brian’s might,
The lord who in a chicken suit
Spring Coronet did fight.

(Brian, little did thy mother think
When first she cradled thee,
The lands thou wast to wander in,
And the chicken you’d come to be!)

October, A.S. XXXI



Brian di Caffa, a pageantry Laurel, sitting on a fabulous chair, built many years ago and sadly lost to the annals of time. Hopefully this image contextualises the above poem well enough for those unfamiliar with Brian!



The Chatelaine helps our group to welcome newcomers and support them in their journey into the SCA – including areas like loaner garb, answering questions and advocating for the newcomer perspective within the Barony. Photo credit: Julia of the Ravens.

Seeking a New Chatelaine!

Do you have a passion for helping newcomers find their feet in our hobby?

———— RÚNFRÍÐR KEILISELGR

Greetings!

Following the stepping down of our previous Chatelaine, Krae Glas is looking for a new one. This officer is our Barony's **Newcomer Officer**, in charge of encouraging and empowering newcomers.

To be eligible, you must be a current SCA member who is 18 years or older and have reliable and responsive access to email and internet.

In an effort to encourage applicants for this role, I (Rúna) thought that I would outline expectations to provide clarity and transparency on **what the role requires**:

- The baseline expectation is to be welcoming to all newcomers, attend Council meetings, report monthly to Council and quarterly to your Seneschal and Kingdom and uphold privacy and the SCA Code of Conduct
- A good officer would also help send emails and reach out to newcomers, keep an inventory of our loaner garb and feast kits, keep track of the newcomers who join us and provide advice on demos and newcomer-friendly events
- An excellent officer would plan strategies for retention and recruitment, run demos and liaise with the College to improve retention for ex-Collegians

If you get this role, this suggests you are willing and able to do the minimum baseline.

While your Barony would appreciate as much of your energy as you are willing to give when you have capacity, you would also be very able to do the minimum on some months and be more hands on when you can. Just be clear and communicate with us. You don't have to do everything yourself - know that you will be well supported by your Kingdom and other officers in this role.

So, if you have the above skills, consider becoming our next Chatelaine and help us grow. If you know someone who would be good, please forward this message to them! Please send your **applications by 4 September 2025** to hospitaller@lochac.sca.org and seneschal@kraeglas.lochac.sca.org.

Please include your membership number, mundane and SCA names, any relevant experience, and your general experience in the SCA - as well as outlining why you think you'd be suitable in the role and any fabulous ideas you have.

If you would like to know more about the job, or to discuss how you see yourself taking it forward, I would love to hear from you!

Yours in Service,
Lady Rúnfríðr Keiliselgr

New Officer Progress:
Applications Opened <<< we are here (closes 4 September 2025)
Consideration Period
Shortlist for Commentary
Consultation Period
Notice to Candidates & Scheduling
Confirmation & Handover schedule



Most of the things we pulled out of the storage room. Even with these things removed from the room, there were still quite a few things left. Photo credit: Julia of the Ravens

Previously On: Krae Glas

A Reflection on August Crafthall

— JOANNA OF BREADWOOD

It was a Saturday like any other day in August when we brave and stalwart souls took to the Dolphin’s Keep to tackle what might have been the most daunting task any of us had approached that year (half joking) – reorganising a veritable TARDIS of a storage room.

Seriously, the number of things we pulled out of that room! We rediscovered many old belongings of the Barony, such as a very fine set of stocks – which we will surely not use on any naughty council members who forget to turn in their quarterly reports – A&S materials, old newsletters from the 70s and 80s, Safety garb for directing traffic (High Visigoth!), tablecloths, tablecloths, tablecloths, armour, and yet more tablecloths! Apparently we are fairly

set on feast hosting gear, so if you’ve ever felt the desire to host a feast, now might be the time (before we forget where everything is again!).

Now you might be thinking, “Huzzah! The storage room is organised! There’s nothing left to do!” Well my good gentles... you would be wrong. Very wrong. It is true we organised the boxes which were in the storage room... but there was so much that we quite exhausted ourselves with just checking and restacking the boxes. We didn’t sort through the contents inside very much. So if you are the sort of person who is dying to sort through boxes to check for things in need of mending or in the wrong place, first of all, we missed you last Crafthall, and secondly, let Lady Rúna know now – for there is plenty to help with still!

Til next time!

From the editor

Technically it’s all from me, but still

Hello.

Are you like me and interested in going on a newsletter related power trip?

You could have an article about whatever niche topic you want added to this very newsletter!

You could be as unhinged as me. It could happen.

Send any write ups (between 100-1000 words) completely without context to joannabraidwood@gmail.com. Make it happen.



About the editor

Joanna of Braidwood is probably a little mad.

If you made it this far, thanks for joining us.

That’s all folks!

Regnum:

- Baron – Baron Jon Dai of the Lane
- Baroness – Baroness Margie of Glen More bandb@kraeglas.lochac.sca.org
- Seneschal – Lady Rúnfríðr Keiliselgr (she/her) seneschal@kraeglas.lochac.sca.org
- Reeve – Lord Finn of St Monica reeve@kraeglas.lochac.sca.org
- Chronicler – Lady Julia of the Ravens (any) chronicler@kraeglas.lochac.sca.org

- Arts and Sciences – Lady Joanna of Breadwood artsandsciences@kraeglas.lochac.sca.org
- Chatelaine – role currently vacant chatelaine@kraeglas.lochac.sca.org
- Captain of Archers – Maude atte Weylete (any) archers@kraeglas.lochac.sca.org
- Armoured Combat Marshal and Fencing Marshal – Muireach mac Gréine marshal@kraeglas.lochac.sca.org fencing@kraeglas.lochac.sca.org

The Blue Strand is not an official publication of the Society for Creative Anachronism (SCA) and does not delineate SCA policy. The official newsletter for the Society in Australia is Pegasus, which is available from the Registrar at registrar@sca.org.au.