

Ronald L. Thomas General Grand Council Ritual Award

I. Overview

A. General Considerations

- Ideally, a Companion's path to earning a ritual bar would be through service as an officer in a Cryptic Council over several years' tenure, learning to be proficient in the work going through the chairs and assisting in the leadership of several conferrals. Serving progressively from at least Conductor of the Council through Illustrious Master, and performing the roles associated with their respective chair, a Companion would be positioned to earn the ritual bars for the degrees. Especially talented ritualists who take more roles should be able to contribute more significantly to the degree work by taking on non-chair role parts of the ritual and would therefore be able to earn the distinction quicker.
- Some active and exemplary Cryptic ritualists have already served as an officer in their Council, District, or Grand Council. They should be afforded opportunities through the program to earn the distinction. Councils of Instruction at the district level or jurisdiction level as well as Statewide (Jurisdiction) Festivals are examples of these opportunities.
- Ritual is an important element of our craft and one deserving of flawless presentation. The expected standard of ritual delivery is from memory complete with full floor work. Our Cryptic ritual is deserving of the very best and near perfect rendition.
- Ideally, points are earned through degree conferrals at the Council, District or Statewide level.
- Public exemplification is useful to spread the knowledge of the degrees and may contribute to the earning of a ritual bar, but earning points through conferral of the degrees is preferred. Private exemplification is not allowed as may give rise to corruption or conflict of interest, "quid pro quo" situations. A ritual bar cannot be earned solely through exemplification.
- Ideally, points are earned through a work in a Council where the Companion is a member. Assisting other Councils is encouraged and points earned in those situations may contribute toward overall points.
- Ritual Award, Ritual Bars should not be something easily earned as will diminish the perceived distinction and value.
- The criteria should not be so onerous so as to dissuade Companions from seeking to earn the distinction.
- Certifiers who attest to a Companion's application should be qualified by both their official organizational position and their knowledge of the ritual. Certifiers would include past recipients of the **Ronald L. Thomas General Grand Council Ritual Award**, current Grand Lecturers/Instructors, current or past MIGMs, current Grand Recorders. Attestation by the Grand Recorder facilitated through the Council's Recorder to the qualification of the certifier should be provided.

II. Expected Impact and Outcomes

- By providing General Grand Council providing a recognition mechanism and therefore incentive, Companions will earn the reward through service as officers in their Council.
- Ritual delivery from memory will be re-established as a standard expectation. The reading of ritual will occur less frequently.

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- Overall, a larger population of Companions will be ritually proficient, and continue to do so as a function of time with the Ritual Award program in place.

III. Award Criteria

Recording period will commence February 27, 2016

Final date for this recording period to submit nomination will be September 1, 2020. Recording Periods will correspond to General Grand Council Triennial.

Upon the achievement of criteria for any one of the three degrees, a Companion's application can be completed and submitted to General Grand Council. The Grand Recorders of the various jurisdictions have nomination forms available for Companions who qualify.

A. Royal Master

Based on Review of Royal Master Ritual as found 2016 March - General Grand Council, Columbian Council No. 1 (New York), New Jersey Royal and Select Masters

Total Points Required: 16

Maximum Points Allowed through Exemplification: 8

Points Allowed through Councils where not member: 4

Royal Master, Ritual Element	Points
Any parts suspend labor in Secret Vault and open Council of Royal Master	1
Prologue	1
First Section, King Solomon	1
First Section, Hiram Abif, One Prayer	3
Second Section, Captain of the Guard, Hiram King of Tyre	1
Second Section, Conductor of the Council	2
Section Section, King Solomon	3
Royal Master Lecture	2

Typical Progression for Council Officer

Year	Officer	Point Open Close	Points by Role
1	Conductor of the Council	1	2
2	Captain of the Guard	1	1
3	Hiram Abif	1	3
4	Hiram King of Tyre	1	1
5	Illustrious King Solomon	1	3
Total		5	10

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B. Select Master

Based on Review of Select Master Ritual as found 2016 March - General Grand Council, Columbian Council No. 1 (New York), New Jersey Royal and Select Masters

Total Points Required: 20

Maximum Points Allowed through Exemplification: 8

Points Allowed through Councils where not member: 4

Select Master, Ritual Element	Points
Open and Close Council of Select Masters – Illustrious Master, Captain of the Guard	2
Open and Close Council of Select Masters-all other Council Officers	1
Prologue	1
Ahishar’s Soliloquy	1
King Solomon	3
Hiram King of Tyre, Hiram Abif	2
Conductor of the Council, Captain of the Guard	2
Select Master Lecture/History	2
Apron Presentation	2
Charge	1

Typical Progression for Council Officer

Year	Officer	Point Open Close	Points by Role
1	Conductor of the Council	1	2
2	Captain of the Guard	2	2
3	Hiram Abif	1	2
4	Hiram King of Tyre	1	2
5	Illustrious King Solomon	2	3
	Total	7	11

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C. Super Excellent Master

Based on Review of Super Excellent Master Ritual as found 2016 March - General Grand Council, Columbian Council No. 1 (New York), New Jersey Royal and Select Masters

Total Points Required: 13

Maximum Points Allowed through Exemplification: 6

No limit is given for non-member Councils

Super Excellent Master, Ritual Element	Points
Any parts open and close Council of Super Excellent Masters	1
Conferral, Illustrious Master	3
Drama, Level 1 (Principal) Role – e.g. Zedekiah, Jeremiah, Nebuchadnezzar, Ezekiel	3
Drama, Level 2 (Supporting) Role – e.g. Gedaliah, Pashur, Nebuzaradan	2
Drama, Level 3 (1 line/Nonspeaking) Role	1
Super Excellent Master Lecture	2
Super Excellent Master Charge	1
Total	13

Typical Progression for Council Officer

Year	Officer	Point Open Close	Points by Role in Degree
1	Conductor of the Council	1	0
2	Captain of the Guard	1	0
3	Hiram Abif	0	0
4	Hiram King of Tyre	0	0
5	Illustrious King Solomon	1	3
	Total	5	3