How to make an SCA silk banner
**Materials needed:**

* A frame to stretch the banner in. It needs to be bigger than the banner since you will attach it from rubber bands. Silk stretches when it gets wet so the rubber bands make sure you maintain the stretch.

* Rubber bands or the type of rubber band you use to put in linings of clothing.
* Safety pins – about 30 small ones
* A staple gun to attach the rubber bands in the frame
* Brushes of different sizes – make sure they have soft tips!
* A bowl of Water
* Some paper tissues
* Silk paints
* Gutta (preferably in tubes)
* Resist (or no flow, or anti diffusant)
* Iron
* A template for your banner (I use the type of paper you buy on rolls)
* Thin flowing silk – not thai silk or any rough texture silk
* If you have a light board or a glass table that you can put a lamp under it will be much help in the outlining of your banner design.

1. Wash your silk and cut out the banner. Hem it with silk thread. This is important because if you use any other type of thread it might not absorb the paint. It is also very important that the fabric is washed before painting because it might be treated with some substance that will make it hard to get the paints to really dye the fabric. If you want tails on your banner you can either cut them from the start or then attach them to a rectangular banner. The tails are those that will start fraying first and by attaching them separately you make it easy to exchange them when they are worn.

2. Make a template of your design. It can be only your own arms (which it was in period) or you can start the banner with the Kingdom populace badge or perhaps the badge of your barony, principality or local group. If you want any text on your banner it also needs to be put on the template. I usually print the heraldic devices I will use on paper and then glue it to the kind of paper you buy on rolls. On that paper it is easy to make sure you get the right distance between the different parts of your banner so that you will get a nice composition of your banner.
3 Attach your banner to the frame. It helps if there are two of you so that you can get a nice and even stretch. I prefer to first staple some rubber bands around the frame and then pin them onto the banner with the safety pins.

4 Start to outline your design onto the silk with gutta. Make sure the gutta gets rather evenly applied and be very careful with any "breaks" in the gutta outline! If there is no gutta or too little gutta in the outline the silk paints will bleed out into the other fields of the banner. If you have complicated designs on your banner it is good to have a colour copy of it next to you when you do the outlining so that you can see what lines you need to get done for the design to look right.

5 Let the gutta dry and then you can start filling in the spaces with the silk paint. The paint flows when touching the fabric so be careful not to spill any paint where you don’t want it! Start painting the light colours in areas where you plan to make effects with two colours. You can always put dark on the light areas – never light on the dark areas... Once the fabric has been painted once the colours won’t flow as much anymore so next layer will take a lot more effort.
To make special effects like the vine patterns around my own device you first put gutta around the edges of the two thick lines. Then you paint the lines yellow. When the yellow paint has dried you put see though gutta where you want the vine pattern and after the gutta has dried you can paint the thick lines black. Now you have to be a bit more careful and put down a bit more work since the silk paint won’t flow as it did when you painted the first yellow colour. It is also possible to paint the entire area with resist or no flow and then paint a pattern or shading in a darker colour straight on the fabric like on the picture above to the right.

After you are done painting you should let the banner dry. That goes rather fast. To fix the paint you iron it. Each paint has different instructions for the fixation so please make sure to read it through on your paint jars! Iron it through a thin cloth – the gutta will otherwise stick to your iron. After it is fixed you rinse it in water and the gutta will come off. Black gutta leaves black outlines, gold gutta leaves gold outlines and see though gutta leaves white outlines.

The only thing left to do now is to attach the tails if you chose to do those seperately and ties to tie your banner to a pole. I have used linnen ties on my banner but you can ofcourse use anything that suits you.

useful links:
http://mktag.org/projects/banners/content.html
http://whitebard.tripod.com/flags.htm
www.vestyorvik.org/library/heraldicdisplay.pdf
www.bayrose.org/Poppy_Run/15C_Banner.pdf
http://www.dharmatrading.com/ (for silk fabrics and paint)
a few facts:
Banner: The personal flag of the armiger. This shows the arms and nothing else. The purpose is to locate and identify the owner.
Gonfannon: or gonfalon. This is a flag hanging from a horizontal bar, supported by a carrying staff.
Pennon: The little banner that was attached to the lance.
In early periods the banners were more of the gonfalon type. Often they were higher than they were wide. In later periods the tend to get narrow and long.

Please observe!
This is a handout to help you make an SCA banner for yourself. I have not included any bibliography or made any deep studies of period banners! If you wish to make a period banner completely "by the book" this is not a handout for you. However, painting a banner on silk is period. For instance there is an extant example in the book "Textile conservation and research – a documentation of the textile department on the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of the Abegg Foundation". On page 101 you can find Julius banner from Saanen, a 16th century banner featuring a crane on five hills. That is painted on silk tafeta.
Among the links in this handout you can find more information on period banners and start your research from there. Different cultures and countries had different banner traditions and banner shapes so if you want it to be period for your persona you need to do research on your era and place of origin.