

To Whom it May Concern:

I write this letter in recommendation of Afrika America to formally endorse her as candidate for QM II of the Americas.

As a courtier who did not have the immense pleasure of meeting or spending time with our incomparable founder, Mama José Sarria, I have made it my business to become as familiar as possible with the traditions, missions, commitment, and history of the International Court System (ICS). In doing so, I've communed with veteran courtiers who knew Mama José personally, invited them to lead and participate in court camps for my own court, traveled to San Francisco and participated in the pilgrimage to Mama José's grave, and absorbed materials available to me that detail the life and ideology of our founder. In my continuous quest to align with the values of this system I cherish, I've been fortunate enough to meet a few individuals who are the paragon of what this system is built upon and a champion for what this system could be. Afrika is one of them.

The traditions on which this system is built are clear: advocate for those who cannot advocate for themselves and create a space of belonging for the spectrum of LGBTQ+ individuals. We are in a transitional period during which the traditions remain the same, but the way in which we practice these traditions must change. In the time I've known Afrika, not only has she embodied these traditions, but she has been able to do so in a way that meets people where they are, when they are. In a time when courts are struggling to raise funds for their communities, let alone themselves, not only has Afrika traveled to support these organizations at their fundraisers, but she has also raised money for their travel funds. She has met these monarchs and courtiers where they are and strived to push them forward. During her reign, she actively made space for and connections with the leather community of San Francisco, welcoming them into the safe spaces that her court helped to create. Afrika is skilled at finding ways to uphold our system's traditions while modernizing our customs, which I believe is what we need during this time of growth.

While there are candidates that boast tenure within the system, I believe that Afrika's "newness" brings fresh vision, lifeblood, and hope into the system. She represents more than just a change in name combed over the continuation of an old regime. She represents a change in direction and a new way of thriving, coupled with continued growth of our traditions. She offers leadership that advances all of us. Most importantly, she offers respite from the division and disenchantment that often plagues this system when regarding our leadership.

To be clear, there are several candidates and QM hopefuls that are qualified, but none are quite as fitting as Afrika. Just because an individual *can* be QM, doesn't mean they *should*. That said, I firmly believe Afrika *should* be the next titular head of the ICS and offer my full endorsement of her efforts to do so.

Kind Regards,

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