

## Now What?

Congratulations! You entered to participate in ATA's postcard exchange! What happens next? How does one go about participating in a postcard exchange that is a woven tapestry? This document will address most of the questions you may have about this fun and exciting process. If you have any further questions, please reach out to [info@americantapestryalliance.org](mailto:info@americantapestryalliance.org).

### Connecting With Your Partner

By now, you should have received your tapestry pen-pal's email information. Connect with each other as soon as possible so that you can get to know one another and begin to sketch out some inspirational ideas for your tapestry. Since many of us are now proficient using Zoom, Google Meet, or other forms of interactive digital programs, you and your partner may find it easier to connect with one another that way.

### What Do I Weave?

We all know that the fiber community is filled with special events, workshops, and meetings that allow us to reveal unique and personal facts about ourselves that we might not otherwise share via email, social media, or even on a Zoom call. These special exchanges help us develop the strong community of fiber artists & makers that we come to depend upon. However, since the pandemic, many of the events have diminished the opportunity to sustain our feeling of connection. The postcard exchange attempts to fill in the gap by creating a visual expression about yourself that will be shared with a fellow tapestry weaver.

Below are some questions that might jump-start your journey into weaving a unique and meaningful postcard that represents you:

- Who taught you to weave?
- What do you like most about tapestry weaving, or what types of imagery, colors, and subject matter appeals to you most?
- Do you see a connection between your weaving and other areas of your life? For example, do you also spin yarn that you weave into your tapestries? Do you garden and draw inspiration from the plants that you care for? Do you take pictures while traveling, walking, hiking, etc. that inspire the tapestries you weave?
- How might you weave a self-portrait that doesn't include your face? Another words, what objects/places/patterns, etc. represent you?

The list could go on, but hopefully these suggestions will get the ball rolling.

### What Size Should My Tapestry Postcard Be?

We suggest the size of 5" x 7" as this is a small enough size that will work with the United States Post Office but large enough to not be too challenging to weave. While the traditional size of a postcard is 4" x 7", it is rather small and challenging as a tapestry. Other countries may have limitations on postcard sizes and participants are encouraged to check with local postal stations outside the United States to verify the largest acceptable size for a postcard.

Thickness of the card is also an issue. Previous participants had some difficulty in sending their final postcard via the traditional method due the choice of yarns used to weave the tapestry. Ideally, the postcard will be shipped like a traditional postcard so that the delivery person can enjoy the card too! However, if you weave with thicker yarns, be prepared to have to ship your card in an enclosed envelope so that it can properly be sorted by automated equipment. Your postal clerk will be able to

assist you in determining the best method of shipment. For other tips, please read **How Do I Mail My Postcard?**

### **How Do I Submit My Tapestry Postcard to ATA?**

Once you have completed preparation of your postcard, **photograph the front only** of your postcard **before** mailing it to your partner. In order to protect participant data, we will not be displaying the back of the postcard. If you are looking for tips on how to best photograph your tapestry, please visit the Postcard Exchange page on ATA's website to access a wonderful document that outlines best practices. Submit the photograph by completing the form on the Postcard Exchange page on ATA's website **(note, the form will not be visible until July 1)**.

**The form will be open for submissions beginning July 1 and close on October 31.** Please include the text of the message, if any, that you include on your postcard in the submission form. All submissions will be posted on ATA's Instagram account under the following hashtags: #postcardexchange #tapestrypostcardexchange #ATAtapestrypostcardexchange and feel free to tag ATA on Instagram @americantapestryalliance.

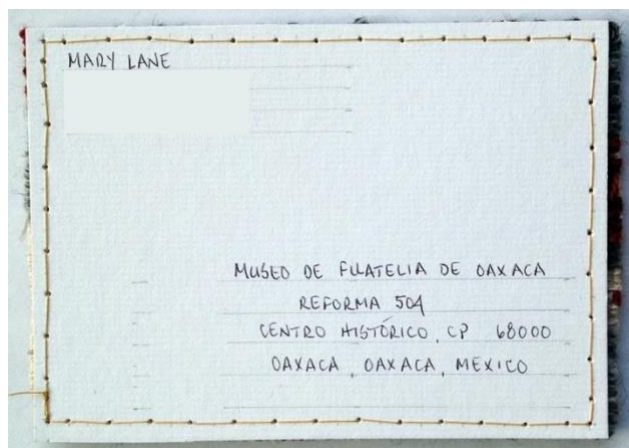
**Deadline to submit your photo is October 31!**

### **How Do I Prepare My Tapestry Postcard For Mailing?**

We advise not weaving hems on your postcard tapestry. That will increase the bulk and weight and make it difficult to mount the tapestry to the cardboard backing. You can sew the warps to the back of the tapestry and trim them. (see image below)



Cut a piece of non-corrugated cardboard about the same size as your postcard tapestry. The cardboard that comes on the back of a drawing pad or a cereal box is a good weight.



Use an awl, or something with a strong point, to create holes in the cardboard every ½ inch. These will be used to sew the tapestry to the cardboard. (see image above).

Use a strong sewing thread, e.g. carpet and button thread, to sew the tapestry to the cardboard.

Add the address and return address, leaving plenty of room for the post office to add stamps.

Add a message to your postcard exchange partner, if you like.

### **How Do I Mail My Postcard?**

All mailing costs are the responsibility of the participant. Please leave ample room (as described in the directions above) for the postal service to stamp and frank the card. Again, your postal clerk may advise you to send the postcard via an envelope depending upon sorting equipment of the postal station. Tips from previous participants include going to another post office if you are not able to send the postcard as desired as some postal clerks may have other ways to handle the oversized or thicker than usual item.

***If mailing overseas, try and not use an envelope as this will be a lot more expensive. If you have to send it in an envelope overseas, state that the value is \$0 and that this was not an item that was purchased on the customs form. This will avoid any additional charges to the recipient.***

Questions? Please contact ATA at [info@americanalliance.org](mailto:info@americanalliance.org) with any questions.