

Maude Anne May
WISH YOU WERE HERE!
Stitched Fabric Collage

“**Everybody is a story.** When I was a child, people sat around kitchen tables and told their stories. We don’t do that so much anymore. Sitting around the table telling stories is not just a way of passing time. It is the way wisdom gets passed along. The stuff that helps us live a life worth remembering.” *Rachel Remen*

In March 2020, when we were told to stay home & stay safe, like everyone else, I felt isolated, scared and stir-crazy. In order to feel connected I started creating stitched-paper collaged postcards. At first they were only mailed to a few friends and family, but as my practice continued and cards began accumulating in the studio, I posted an open invitation on my Instagram® “**DM me your address and I’ll mail you a postcard.**”

Needless to say, things snowballed and to date I’ve mailed over 100 one-of-a-kind stitched-paper collages to recipients as near as five blocks from my home in St. Johns and as far as Finestré, France. Sometimes I received a card in return (usually from a fellow artist) which was a great bonus, but I kept making the cards regardless – **reaching out with my art literally kept me sane.** Additionally, my daughter turned me onto Postcards To Voters and from August-October 2020 I made and mailed around 300 stitched-paper cards to registered voters in Georgia, Ohio, Illinois, North Carolina and Florida. Simple machine-stitched designs kept the “making” fairly simple, especially since all the messages and addresses had to be hand-written.

My year+ **POSTCARD-PALOOZA** resulted in my current show of 60 stitched fabric collages – all created between August and October 2021. The 5 x 7 size pays homage to my life-long obsession with postcards. I love everything about these small, often thrown-away cardboard rectangles – the images, the notes written, the stamps (art in themselves), the postmarks, the addresses – they all offer potential stories. Brief handwritten messages, telling of places visited, people met, food eaten, art seen and adventures experienced – delivered right to your door for as little as 45¢. **What could be better?** Combining and layering fabric photo transfers of previously created encaustic works, family pix, discarded snapshots, collected fabrics, papers and more with machine and hand stitching allows me to tell brief visual stories. By utilizing this intimate format I strive to move the viewer towards discovering and honoring the mysteries of the people, ideas, places and possessions that were once deemed precious and have now been left behind.

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