



An Introduction to Weavers' Marks

Weavers' Marks are how a tapestry weaver or a tapestry atelier 'signs' their tapestries, in the same way that an artist signs a painting, or indeed an original design for a tapestry. Some commercial studios or ateliers also have their own studio mark which may be used alongside the marks of the individual weavers. They may also incorporate the signature of the artist or designer of the original artwork into the tapestry. See this Article about the use of tapestry borders [Living on the Edge: Tapestry Borders](#) from the Metropolitan Museum.

Historically in many early tapestries the weavers may be extremely hard to identify as most tapestries before the sixteenth century were anonymous or the marks have been lost. Once marks began to be used they initially seem to have focussed more on where the tapestries were made such as the red

 shield and double B for Brussels, the fleur-de-lys and P for Paris, or  the appropriate town arms in other areas of France which later became compulsory on Tapestries alongside a seal of authenticity.

See [Tapestry Signatures And Makers](#) for these and some other historic marks.

Individual ateliers or workshops each developed their own marks and then individual weavers would add their initials or personal marks to the tapestries which might be placed so as to be visible on the front of the tapestry, for example in the border if there was one, or in some cases discreetly at the side or even on the reverse of the work hidden by the backing and sometimes only revealed when an historic tapestry is sent for conservation such as in the case of the [Gideon tapestries from Hardwick Hall](#).

Several early weavers' marks as well of those for ateliers and later design studios have been identified and this fascinating topic will be the subject of a more detailed article being written on historic marks which will be made available on the weaversbazaar website in the Knowledge Zone. Any additional information on early weavers' marks that readers may be able to contribute towards the article would be very gratefully received and can be sent to info@weaversbazaar.com.

Coming back to the present day, not all contemporary weavers "sign" their work and some only place their mark on larger pieces. Whilst many contemporary weavers are identifiable by their signature style or content this can change over time making it hard at times to confidently identify the originator of the piece unless the provenance is already known. There is no known public catalogue for weavers' marks. So, weaversbazaar and BTG have put their heads together in this project to set up an online catalogue for weavers' marks.

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<https://www.weaversbazaar.com/>