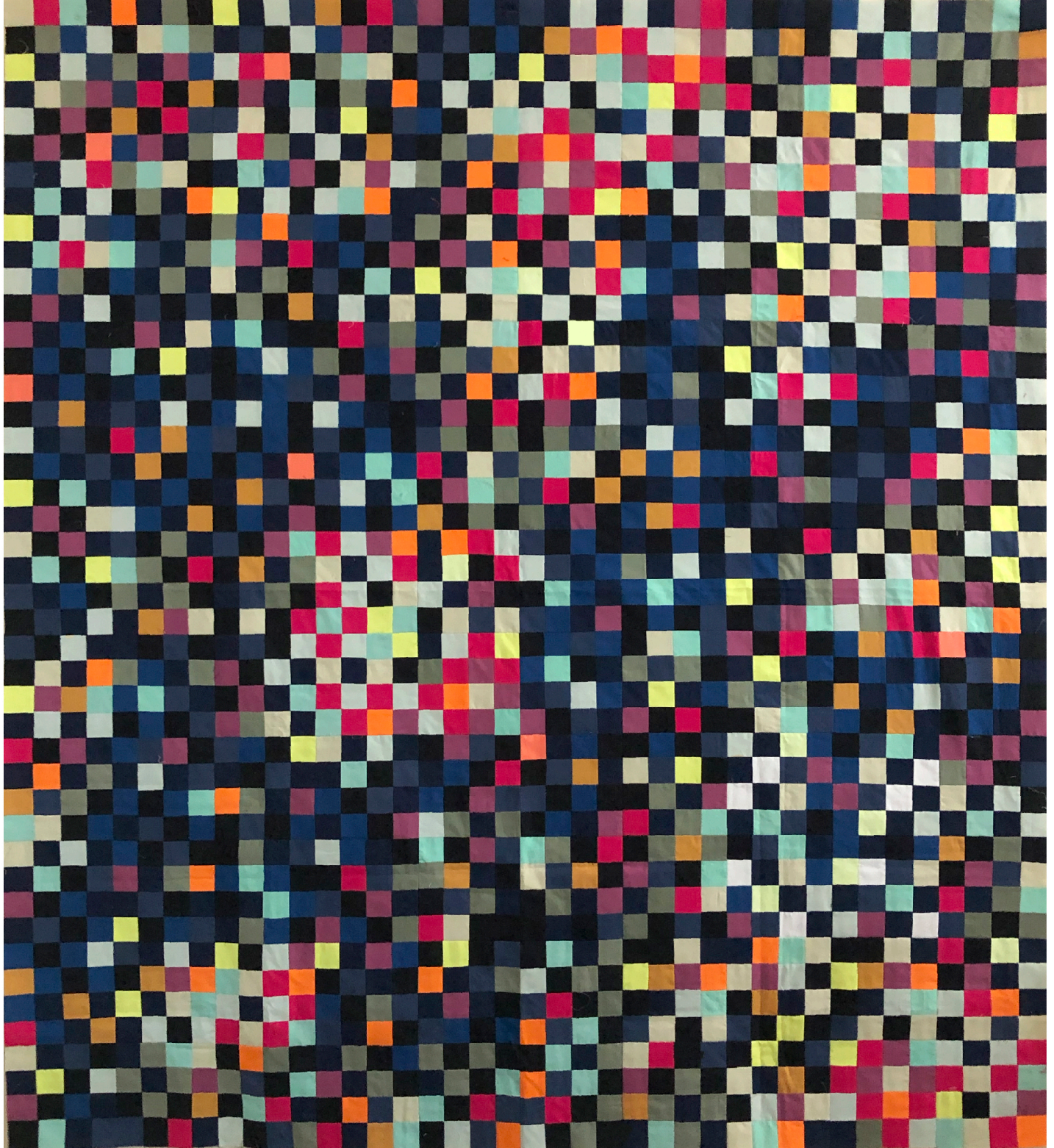# Bokeh Quilt

pattern by tara faughnan

finished block size: 6" x 6"

Bokeh:
The visual quality of the out-of-focus areas of a photographic image, especially as rendered by a particular lens.

WELCOME!

This month's block is focused on creating rhythm through the use of color and value, rather than on learning a new piecing technique. The block is composed of (16) 2" squares, created in 4 strip sets which are sub cut and rejoined for the final block. You can either pre-plan the look of the blocks, or play with random choices and only know the results of those choices once the final block is assembled. One thing to keep in mind while constructing your blocks is value; concentrate on sewing some blocks in darker tones and some with lighter tones. By keeping value in mind, you will create light and dark areas in the quilt which will move the eyes and create differing areas of focus.

VALUE/ COLOR ADDITIONS

• Notice in my quilt, some of the blocks skew lighter and some skew darker. Pay attention to creating different looks in each block by varying the values significantly from one block to the next.
• I added in a lot of black to create an overall darker look, but think about if you want to skew the quilt lighter instead and omit using black as an extra color.

• I find that varying the amount of fabric I cut from each color helps to create the the proportions of that color I use in the quilt top. If you want the quilt to have a lighter and brighter look than my example, cut more from the light colors, and you may wish to add a cream color to the palette.

• I've also included a coloring page to help you work out color choices before you begin to sew.

TIPS

It can be challenging to gain accuracy on simple patchwork and have all the seams line up. Below are some simple tips to keep in mind when sewing small squares together:

• Sew with a consistent 1/4" seam allowance.

• Check completed block, and make sure it measures 6 1/2" (including seam allowance). Adjust seam allowance as needed.

• Generally, nesting seams can increase accuracy when joining many small pieces. However, for this block I recommend pressing all the seams open. You then have the option to rotate and move blocks around without worrying about creating issues in areas where many seam allowances will overlap and create too much bulk.

• When sewing the block together, pin at the seam intersections.

• Start pinning in the middle of the block, and work towards the edges.

• You can gently stretch fabric to make seam intersections line up.

• If you have excess fabric in one area, this needs to be adjusted to line up the seam intersections. Use extra pins in this area to gently distribute excess fabric across a 1" area.

CUTTING FABRIC

Cut 2-3 strips of fabric from all the colors. If you wish to use some colors more heavily than others, cut more strips of that color to start. If you wish to use some colors as pops or accents, cut only 1-2 strips of that color to start.

1. Cut fabric into 2" x width of fabric (WOF) strips.

2. Sub cut all strips into 8 1/2" pieces.

Note: If you wish to preplan the blocks, cut an assortment of 2" squares from each color. The squares will only be used to mock up the blocks as explained below. The construction of the block will be strip pieced.

MOCKING UP COLOR BLOCKS

 The following directions are for using the 2" squares or the coloring pages to mock up the blocks. If you want to create random blocks proceed to the section: Sewing the Blocks.

1. Lay out 16 squares into 4 rows of 4.

2. Each row corresponds with a set of (4) 8 1/2" strips. Pull the corresponding strips for each row and line them up.

row 1   row 2   row 3   row 4

SEWING THE BLOCKS

1. Sew together (4) 8 1/4" strips. For a smooth finished look, press seams open.
Note: You may choose to press seams to the side, but when sewing the blocks together you will have areas where many seam allowances overlap creating excess bulk in those areas. for best results, we recommend pressing seams open.

2. Repeat with new colors to create 4 total strip sets.
Note: If you want to create a checkerboard look to the block, be sure to alternate the placement of the light and dark values bewtween the strip sets.

3. Trim ends. Cut the sets into (4) 2" strips each.

4. Place the strips into a new arrangement to create (4) blocks. You can rotate strips, choose 1 strip from each color combination, or combine them in any manner you choose as shown below.

5. Once you have decided on your arrangements, place the strips right sides together and sew into blocks. Press seams open.

DESIGNING THE LAYOUT

This quilt is less about sewing technique, (though pressing seams open may be new to some of you) and more of an exercise in creating interest and rhythm through color and value. Each of your quilts and blocks will be entirely unique due to how you lay them out. My original intention was to sew the 4 blocks created by the 4 strip sets together into a four patch before joining them into a larger quilt. I found that it created some hard visual lines in the layout, the effect proved to be more of a distraction than a design feature. As a result I ended up dispersing them throughout the layout vs grouping. You may decide you like one over the other, but the fun part of this quilt is experimentation, play, and the freedom make it your own. Be sure to pay attention to the proportion of dark and light colors in your blocks as the heaviness and lightness each create also add to the design and movement of your quilt.

In this example, the 4 smaller blocks were grouped together into larger units.
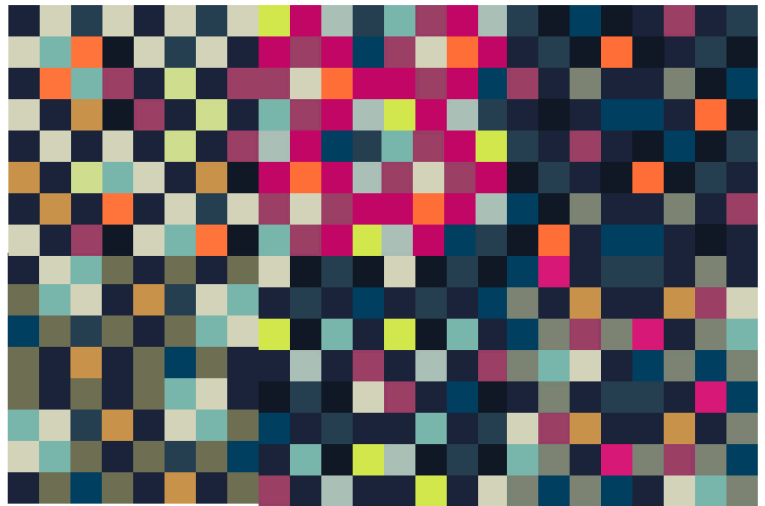
In this example the 4 smaller blocks were dispersed throughout the quilt.
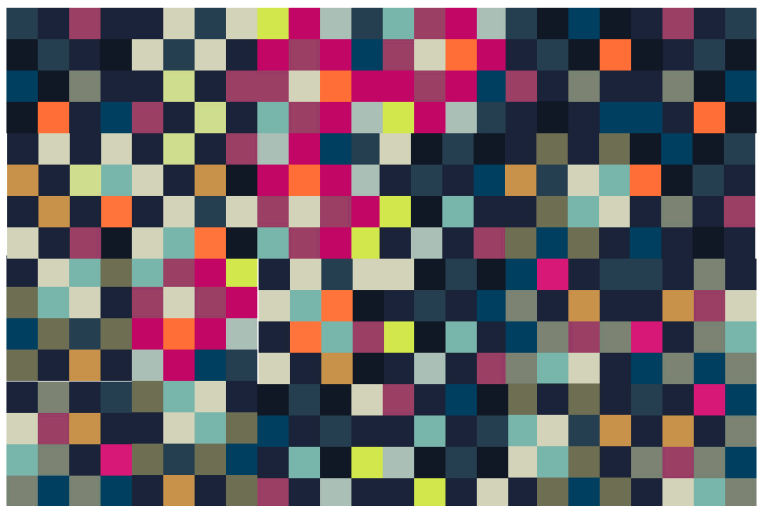
THANK YOU!!

Thank you so much for being a part of the Color Collective! We hope you enjoy the process and we'd love to see what you make, so don't forget to post on Instagram and/or Facebook and use the hashtags #thecolorcollective, #bokehquilt, or just tag us!

COLOR PALETTE

Kona solids

Storm

Caramel

Windsor

Limestone

Prussian

Aloe

Plum

Seafoam

Pomegranate

Cactus

Torch
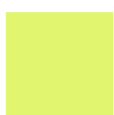
O D Green

ADDITIONAL colors you could add

Black

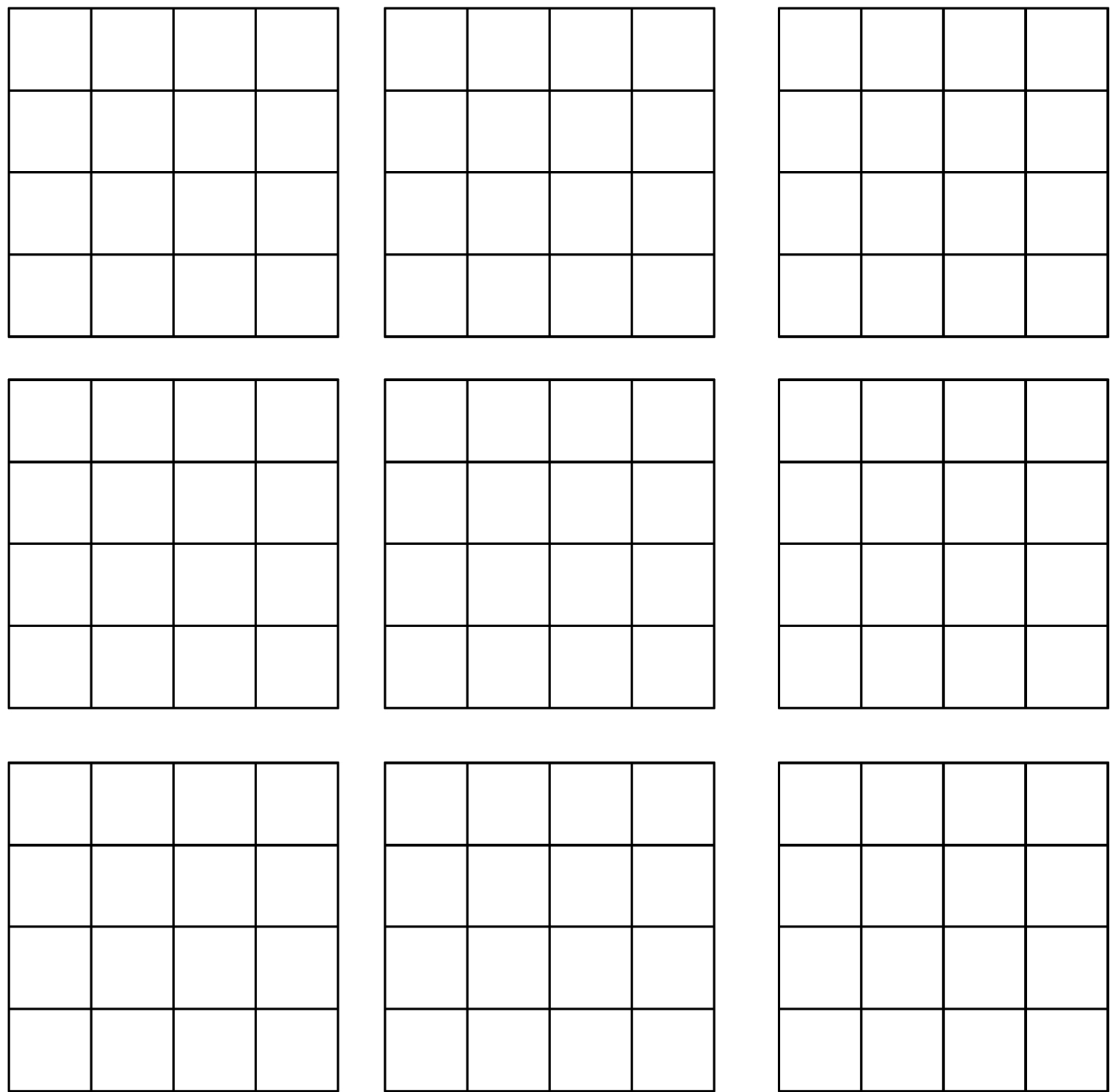Leather

Pepper

Coral

Charcoal

Cantaloupe

Teal Blue

Wasabi

Raisin

Bright Idea

Sangria
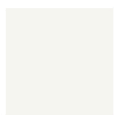
Dove

COLORING PAGE

COLORING PAGE