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# Technicolor Dream Spin Art Quilt



I guess it's safe to say I've always been a creative sort. One of the first projects I remember making (with Mom's guidance, of course – I was 4 years old) was a piggy bank out of a plastic bleach container. My brother and I cut out pictures of cars from magazines and pasted them to the exteriors. (It's actually not the first project I recall. The first project was drawing on the wall with crayons. I don't recall the actual drawing, but I do recall the scrubbing...)

I saved every coin I received in that piggy bank. My brother... suffice it to say, he did not. Sometime later – and we're talking a few years of savings - my brother treated his friends to a trip to "Tom's Cash Market", our local convenience store, where he and his friends filled up on candy and soda at the same time they emptied the contents of my piggy bank...

Coupled with this creativity, I've also always been fascinated by spinning things. Though I predate the advent of the "fidget spinner" by several decades (it hasn't escaped me, by the way), my "fidget spinner" was a wooden top or a wooden yo-yo. From spinning tops, to yo-yos to the gyroscopic inertia created by the rotation of the wheels on a bicycle or a coin spinning on its edge, I still become completely transfixed.

When, as a child, I learned that I could combine my creativity with my fascination for all things spinning to create "spin art" by squirting paint onto a rotating piece of paper – you can guess that I was immediately captivated - and quite easily entertained.

As a young adult, I lived in Westwood Village near UCLA. In the Village, there was a great arcade with all sorts of pinball machines and state-of-the-art electronic games like Centipede, Galaga and PacMan (I know – I date myself...). I could keep myself entertained for hours for a few dollars in quarters.

Next to the arcade was this outdoor shop that specialized in... spin art on clothing... Well, couple my love for fashion with spin art and they'd devised the perfect hook for a customer like me! I didn't indulge often (it felt expensive at the time), but I did indulge my inner creative chaos a few times.

Most notably, I recall the size of the contraption in which you would mount your garment. Now that I think of it, it was likely a large circular, aluminum water trough – perhaps 4 feet in diameter. In the middle was a platform on which the garment would be mounted. Someone would deliver textile paints in squeeze bottles. Then, they'd flip a switch and you'd become the mad scientist of spin art for a few minutes, an alchemical process of spinning fabric mixing with paints and flying through space – what's not to love?!

As an older adult who indulges his creative processes by dabbling with fabrics and dyes and bleaches and all sorts of tinctures (some successful, some not so successful), it occurred to me that I could create some pretty cool spin art fabric pieces. And... if I incorporated them into useful projects like quilts I could easily justify my neuroses. Et voila! I have done just that.

Not only was it fun for me, but it was also fun for my 8-year old son, and kept him busy for a couple of hours. (If you are a parent, 2 hours of focused entertainment not otherwise in front of a screen is priceless!) It will keep me busy a bit longer...



*You'll need some things to start:*



**A spin art toy.** The one I use has a trigger you squeeze to rotate the platform. Others are battery operated. I squeezed the trigger and set the fabric squares. My son squirted the textile paint.

If you don't have a local fabric and or art supply store that has the following items, [www.DharmaTrading.com](http://www.DharmaTrading.com) carries everything – even the freezer paper.

**Fabric.** I used Robert Kaufman's organic wide PFD (prepared for dyeing) cotton sheeting. It's 53" wide. 1/2 yard netted me 52 four-inch squares. The quilt project I designed calls for 49 squares and 7 color ways (so – 7 squares per color way).

**NOTE:** The quilt pictured includes 8 additional borders and finishes at 91 ½" square. (It easily took me the same amount of time to put the borders on the quilt as it did to piece the blocks!) The following instruction and yardage do not include these borders. The finished measurement of the quilt referenced in the instructions below is 63 ½" square. If you would like the yardage requirements for the additional borders, backing and binding, feel free to reach out to Russell Conte at [Russell@SewpBox.com](mailto:Russell@SewpBox.com).

To this fabric add fabric for (presuming a useful fabric width of 42"):

- Quilt Block Frames: 1/3 yard per color way (I used 7 color ways)  
Cut 1 strip 4" wide selvage to selvage. Sub cut fourteen 2 ¼" strips.  
Cut 1 strip 7 ½" wide selvage to selvage. Sub cut fourteen 2 ¼" strips.
- Sashing: 1 1/2 yards  
Cut 7 strips 7 ½" wide selvage to selvage. Sub cut one hundred and twelve 2 ¼" strips.
- Sashing Cornerstones: 1/3 yard  
Cut 4 strips 2 ¼" wide selvage to selvage. Sub cut sixty-four 2 ¼" squares.
- Backing: 67" x 67" (3 ¾ yards) (If you purchase 45" wide goods, this is going to leave left over fabric. If you prepare your backing first, you can use the leftover for the cornerstones or sashing. Or, you can add borders to the quilt to accommodate. If you add borders, don't forget you will likely need extra length.)
- Binding: 266 linear inches (I cut mine 2 ¾" wide): 5/8" yard (seven 2 ¾" wide strips selvage to selvage)

- And don't forget batting and thread! (Oh, yeah... and time...)

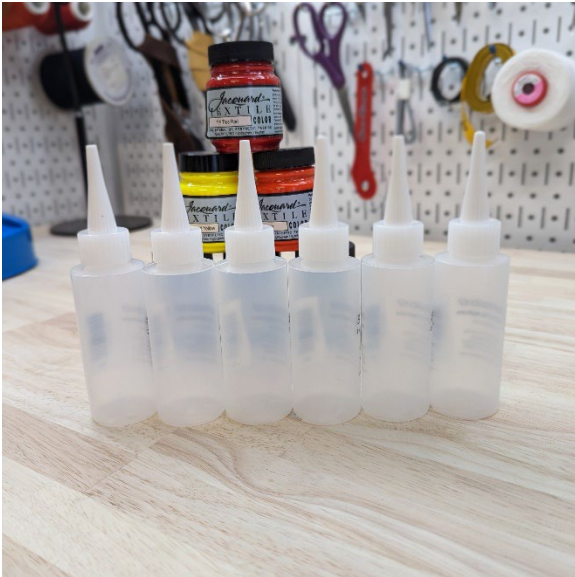


**Freezer paper.** Freezer paper is sewing sorcery! From perfectly formed welts to patch pockets to Sharon Schamber's Pieceliqué technique, I use it for a myriad of sewing projects. Place the shiny side of the freezer paper to the wrong side of the fabric. With the heat of the iron apply pressure, and the plastic coating temporarily adheres to the fabric, making it very stable – very paperlike... just what we need for this spin art project.

(The other cool thing about freezer paper is that placed on your work surface, it acts as a protective barrier. But like all projects, your due diligence in protecting your workspace will serve you well.)



**Textile paint.** If you've done spin art before, you know the dyes used are quite watery. That doesn't work as well with textiles. You want something that is a bit more cohesive. I used Jacquard Textile Color. Soft to the touch, colorfast, semi-transparent, once heat set with the iron, it becomes permanent. Of course, follow the instructions, and do some **test-Test-TESTING** before committing to your project. (Disclaimer: Be prudent. Protect your area, clothing and anything that might be damaged by textile paint. It's not remarkably messy, but with any textile medium, there is always the risk. Neither me or Baby Lock will be held liable for any damages resulting from this project!)



### **1-2 oz squeeze bottles with yorker spouts and caps.**

You need something in which to put the paint and to express it onto your fabric as it spins wildly around. I used 2 oz squeeze bottles with yorker spouts (they have a narrow opening to control the flow) and protective caps.

**Disposable rubber gloves.** Though the medium washes off your hands fairly easily, you'll save yourself some cleanup if you use rubber gloves.

## *Fabric Preparation*

The finished quilt has 49 blocks and seven color ways. Cut four 4 1/4" strips of fabric, selvage to selvage – enough to make 49 (and a few extra for testing) fabric squares.

Cut 4 1/4" strips of freezer paper, in the same length as your fabric.



With the fabric face down, place the freezer paper on top of the fabric, shiny side of the freezer paper to the reverse (or wrong) side of the fabric. With the heat of the iron, affix the freezer paper to the wrong side of the



fabric. (I leave my iron on the cotton setting to help with adhesion. If the freezer paper starts to pull away from the fabric, you can always reapply heat and a little steam.)

Cut the strips to 4". Then sub cut the strips into 4" squares. You need 49 to complete the quilt – a few extras for testing is not a bad choice. If the freezer paper starts to release from the fabric, simply press it again with the iron.



## *Jacquard Textile Paint Preparation*

If your experience is like mine, you'll need to thin the textile paint. According to the instructions, Jacquard Textile Color can be thinned up to 25% with water, and that's what I did... kind of... I put a couple of glops of textile medium into a squeeze bottle, added enough water to make the medium more liquid, and did my tests. Too little water – the textile medium doesn't spread – it just plops. Too much water – it runs into the fabric before it has a chance to spread out. Frankly, I think I probably did more than 25% water, but it remained colorfast and didn't bleed after washing.



A little bit of the concoction goes a long way. If you look at my squeeze tubes, there's about one-quarter inch of textile paint at the bottom. No reason to waist - you can always make more if you run low.

## Spin Art

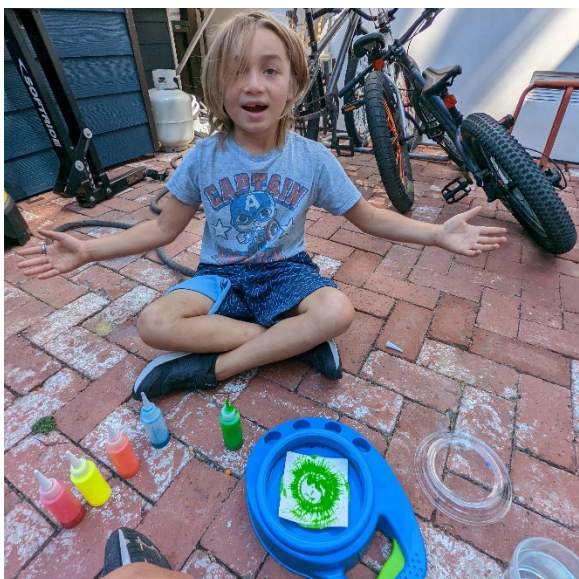
Following the manufacturer's instructions, set up the spin art device. Though it's not remarkably messy, it's prudent to do this project in an area that is protected from textile paint splatter/spillage.



With the freezer paper on the bottom, place the fabric squares onto the spinner.



Turn on the device and apply the textile paint by squeezing the bottle.



My son, Enoch found it quite fun!



If you wish to apply multiple colors to a square, let each color dry completely. Since these colors are not opaque, you will have some overlap and blending of colors. Some colors work better together than others. Play with it see what works for you!



# Piecing Preparation

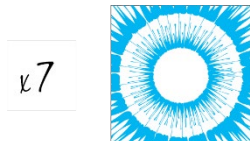


Once the textile paint has dried completely, remove the freezer paper squares (You can reuse the freezer paper squares several times, believe it or not.) Following the manufacturer's directions, heat set the textile paint.

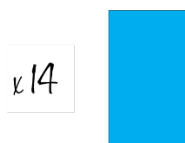
## Blocks

All seam allowances are  $\frac{1}{4}$ ". There are 49 blocks in this quilt with 7 color ways. For each of the 7 color ways, follow these instructions for the blocks:

Retrieve the first color way. There should be seven 4" squares.



Cut two  $2\frac{1}{4}$ " x 4" rectangles. These will serve as the frame components for the left and right side of each square - a total of 14.



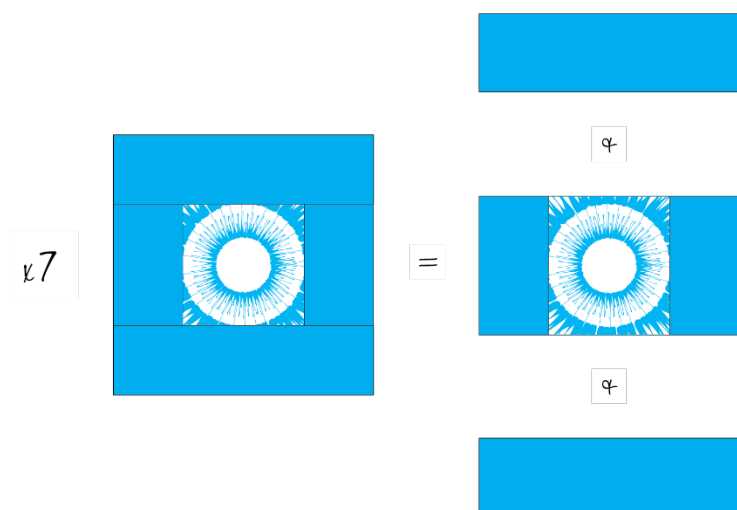
Sew the rectangles to the left and right side of each square. Press away from center.



Cut two  $2\frac{1}{4}$ " x  $7\frac{1}{2}$ " rectangles. These will serve as the frame components for the top and the bottom of each block - a total of 14.



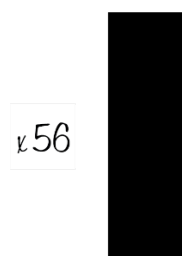
Sew the rectangles to the top and bottom of each block. Press away from center.



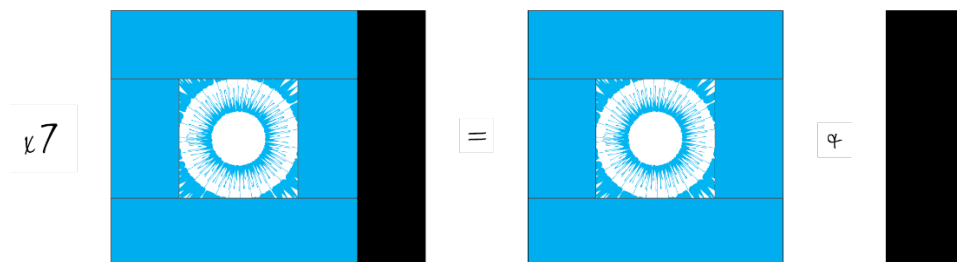
Repeat 7 times for each color way. When complete, you will have 49 blocks.

## Sashing

Cut eight  $2\frac{1}{4}'' \times 7\frac{1}{2}''$  rectangles for each of seven rows - a total of 56.

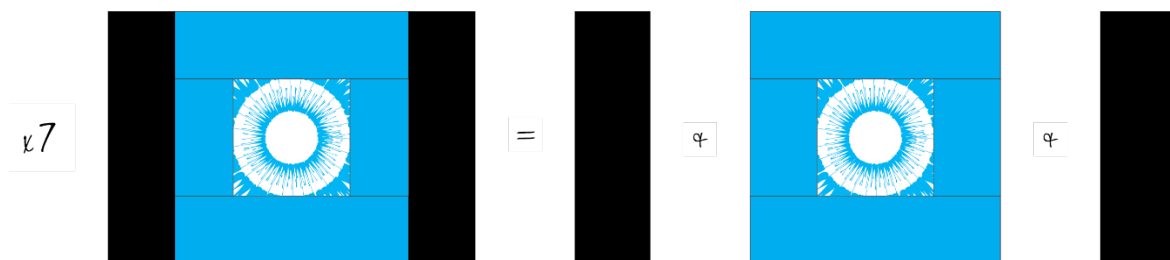


Sew the rectangles to the right side of each block. Press away from center (toward sashing).



Sew the remaining strip to the left side of the block that will take the left position. Press away from center (toward sashing).

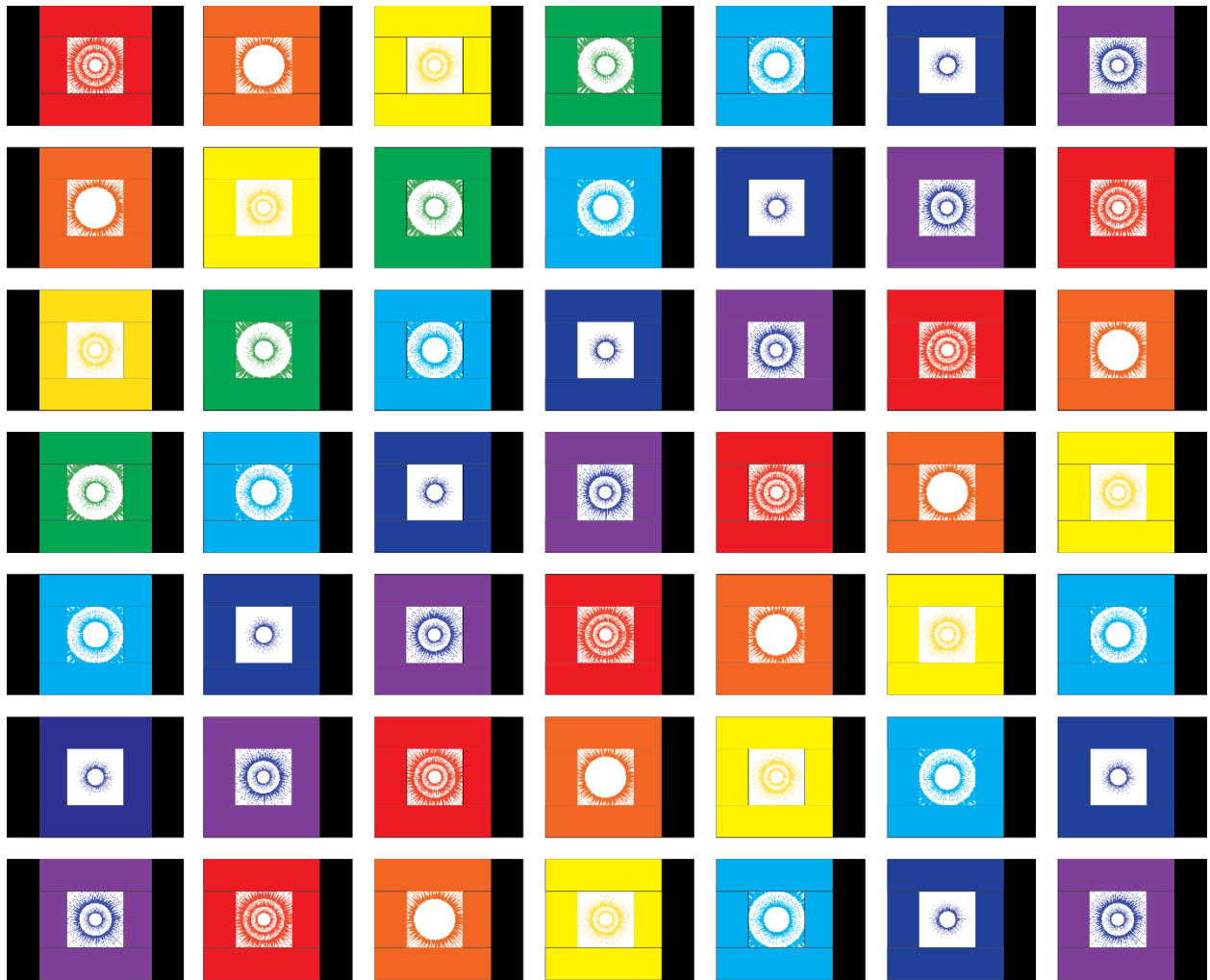




Repeat for each color way. When complete, you will have 49 blocks – 7 blocks with sashing on both left and right sides (the block that will take the left position of each row), 42 blocks with sashing on the right.

Following the illustration below, join the blocks – seven blocks in each of seven rows. If you are following the layout in the illustration below, the following table identifies the block order. Remember, the block with 2 sashing strips always sits in the first position at the left.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2	3	4	5	6	7	1
3	4	5	6	7	1	2
4	5	6	7	1	2	3
5	6	7	1	2	3	4
6	7	1	2	3	4	5
7	1	2	3	4	5	6



Cut seven 2 ¼" x 7 ½" rectangles for each of eight rows, for a total of 56.



Cut sixty-four 2 ¼" squares. (When applied as they will be in this top, they are referred to as "cornerstones".)



Sew the rectangles to the right side of each cornerstone. Press away from the cornerstone.



Retrieve eight of these units. To the left side of these units, sew a cornerstone. Press away from the cornerstone. These units (cornerstone-rectangle-cornerstone) will take the left position.

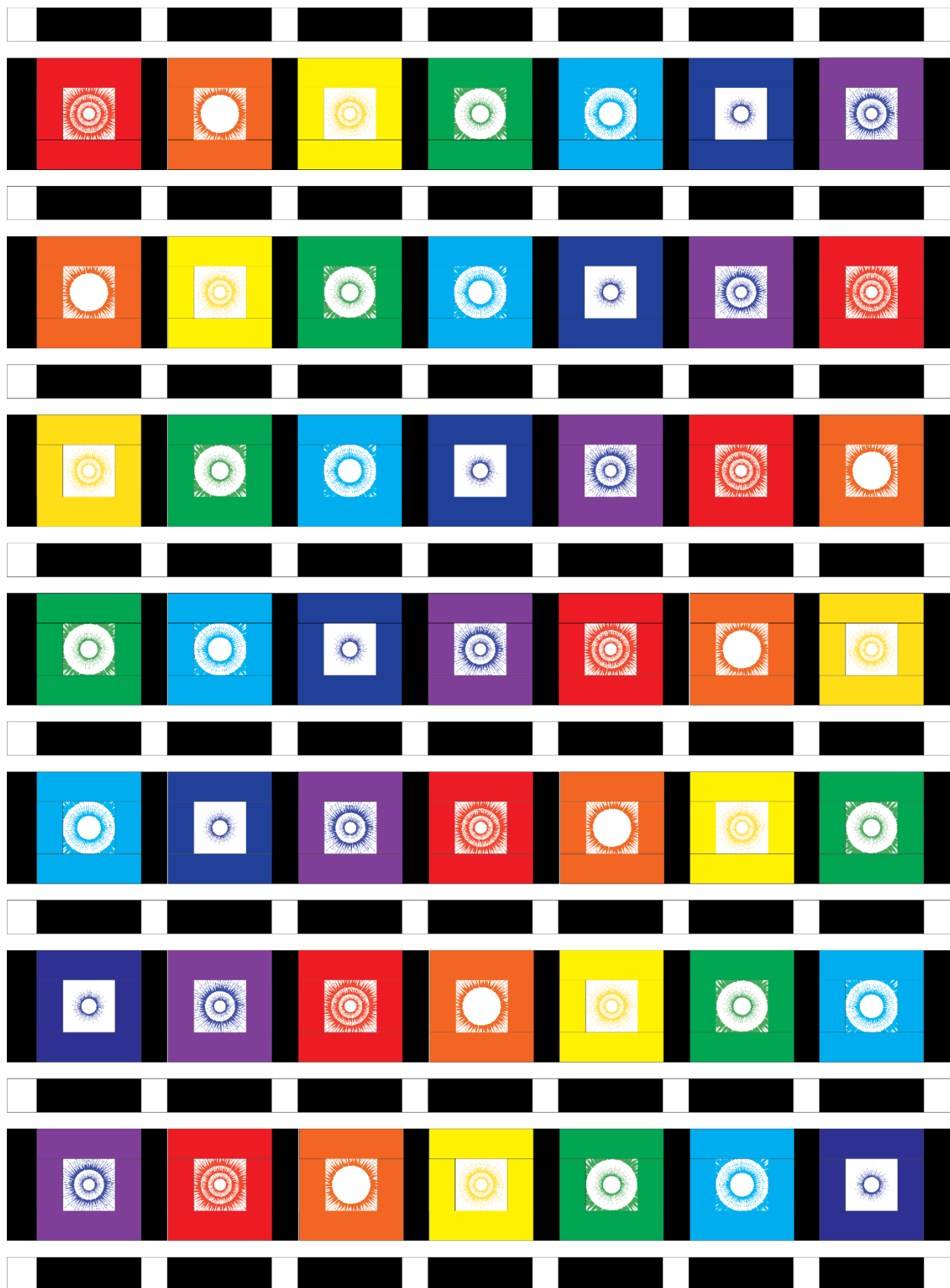


Retrieve one cornerstone-rectangle-cornerstone unit and six rectangle-cornerstone units. Join to create a sashing row with cornerstones at both ends. When complete, each sashing row will have eight cornerstones and seven rectangles.

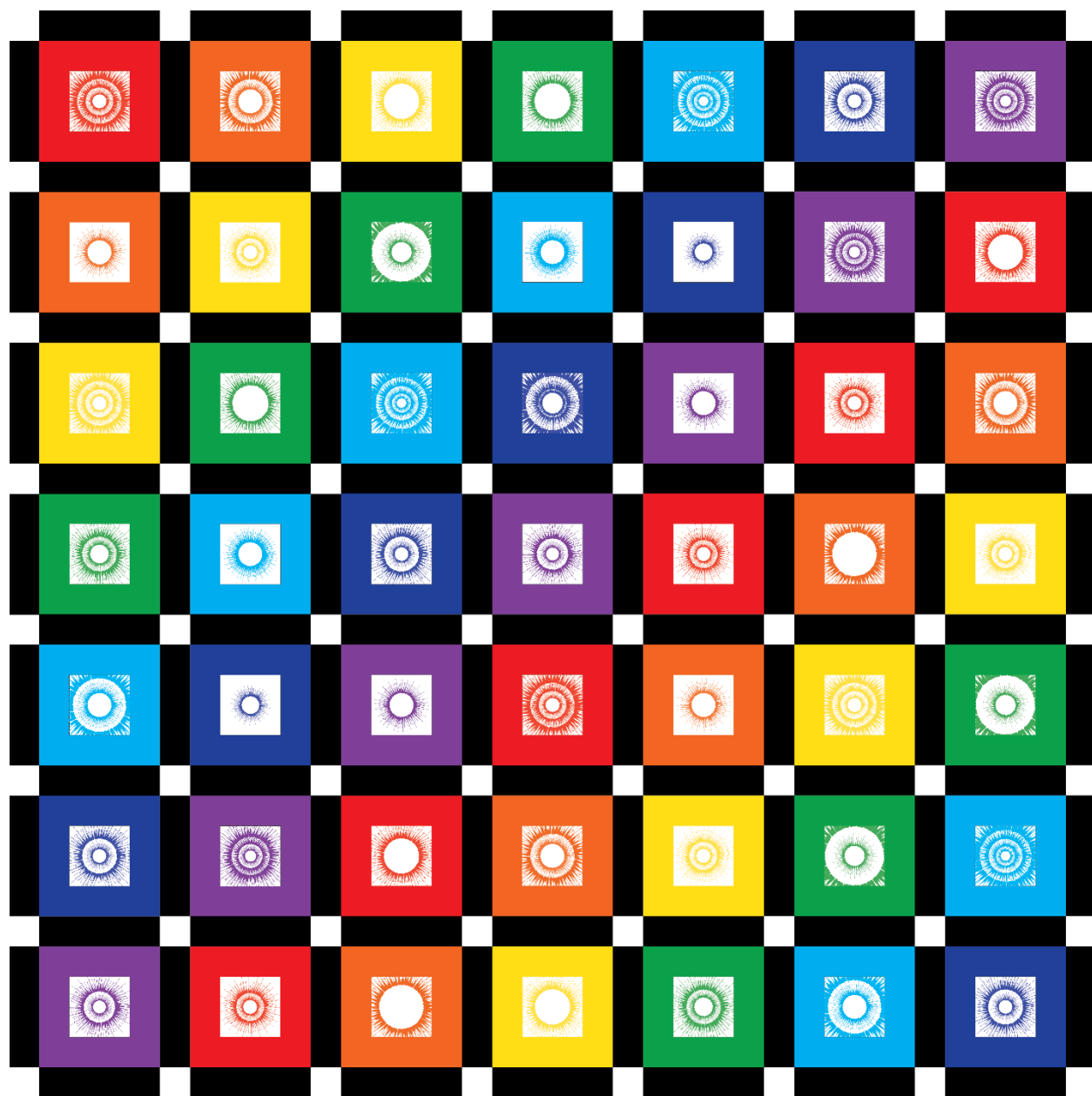




Following the diagram below, join the sashing rows to the rows of blocks. Press toward the sashing.



Once joined, the resulting quilt looks like this:



Quilt and bind and desired.

## *A final note.*

Even though the textile paints have already been heat set, erring on the side of caution, once the quilt was finished, I placed it in the dryer on high to really make sure. Then, I washed the quilt in cold water, and dried again. Even though placing the quilt in the dryer prior to washing was likely unnecessary, I will say that the color stayed quite vibrant with no apparent bleed. I was quite happy with the results.