**Block of the Month – April Showers**

Wynn Martin and Jeanne LaMoore

This month will feature a 12 ½” block with a twist. The final effect will be an overhead view of twirling umbrellas and each umbrella top will sprawl across the corner sections of the blocks that we’ll create. Sound confusing? Don’t worry, this scrappy block is big, fun and easy to make. My quick directions follow, or you can use a very thorough set of directions and pictures from Heather Bostic at the link below:


Please note that she calls it a Spiderweb Block, while we call it an umbrella block. In our imagination, anything can take shape!

**Materials to get started**

Cut out one 12 ½” background block in a pale neutral color of your choice. Pale gray, pale lemon, pale aqua, pale lavender, anything will do, it’s your choice.

Set aside random strips of brightly colored fabric. It can be stripes, floral or any color you want to choose. Just pick a background color that seems appropriate for Spring and then select scrappy strips that work well against that color. The strips should vary in width from 1 ½” to 2 ½” and the length can be anything up to about 8”.

Note: Please note that we are using triangular strips that are wide at one end and narrow at the other end. The online version shows straight strips but we are using strips of uneven widths for this block.

**Assembly**

**Step 1:** Begin by cutting the background block diagonally into 4 pieces as shown at right. Your 12 ½” block is now in four sections.

**Step 2:** Fold the triangle in half to mark the center of the outside edge. Then measure 6” in from the outer corners and mark with a pencil.

This will be your first stitch line and your quarter-section should look like the diagram shown below. Repeat this marking on each quarter section with a light pencil or marker.

**Step 3:** Stitching the strips together.

This step is a simplification of the directions found in the online tutorial. We recommend that you sew together several strips of your brightly colored fabric. The width and length of these combined strips should be large enough to cover the area between the stitch line and the end point of the triangle.

**Step 4:** Attach strips to the background fabric. Press the seams on the strips and then attach this section at the stitch line. Repeat this process and attach it to the other end of the quarter section.

When finished, the untrimmed block will look like this:

**Step 5:** Trim the Block

Use a rotary cutter and ruler to carefully trim away the extra fabric. The gray background triangle will serve as your template for trimming the edges.

When you finish trimming the four triangles, your “finished” block will look like the last photo.

Don’t stitch the four quadrants together. The recipient of the blocks will be given the opportunity to mix the quadrants in whatever way she (or he) may choose.

Enjoy stitching your block!

**BOM basics:**

Each person may enter up to three blocks each month.

Please include your name on your block(s)! Many of us just use a mailing label.

If you have nice scraps left over, consider including them with your block (pinned on or in a baggie) for the winner (a border or other finishing touches).

If you cannot bring the blocks to the quilt meeting, you may mail them to the MQ office. Please allow adequate time for them to arrive before the Saturday drawing.

Block of the Month, Minnesota Quilters, Inc., 1203 Fifth St. SE, Minneapolis, MN 55414

To help us celebrate more winners, we will draw two names if we have over 24 blocks (3 if we have 36+, 4 if we have 48+).

Drawings are held at the Saturday meeting. If the winner(s) are not present, the blocks will either be mailed or left at the MQ office for the winner to pick up. We will call to notify winners.