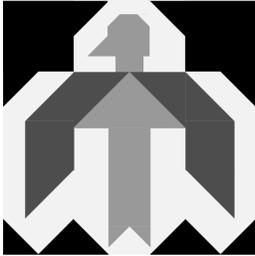


## Know Them, Raise Them, Be Them Sampler

### Maria Tallchief, 1925 - 2013 CE



Born on an Osage Indian reservation in Oklahoma, Elizabeth Marie Tall Chief and her sisters began dancing as children. The entire family moved to Los Angeles when Maria was eight to find work for the sisters in Hollywood musicals. Maria's parents settled the family in Beverly Hills and it was there that Maria experienced painful discrimination and began spelling her last name as one word, Tallchief.

Dissatisfied with the limited bit parts in Hollywood, at the age of 17 Maria moved to New York City to pursue her dreams of becoming a professional dancer. Many New York dance troupes would not accept Maria because of her Native American ancestry, but rejection did not stop her. After seeing her dance, the director of Ballet Russe, a touring ballet company, felt that her obvious talent (along with a valid passport) would make her a perfect apprentice.

As Maria's career began to take off, many tried to persuade her to change her last name to a Russian-sounding name such as Tallchieva, a practice common in ballet at that time. She refused and continued to perform as Maria Tallchief. Within two months at Ballet Russe, Maria appeared in seven different ballets. In 1947, she became the first American to dance with the Paris Opera Ballet. After marrying world renowned choreographer George Balanchine who created her signature role in the famous ballet *The Firebird*, she earned the status of *prima ballerina* of the New York City Ballet. Maria was also the first American to perform at the Bolshoi Theater in Moscow in 1960.

After retiring from the stage in 1965, she became a noted teacher in Chicago, where she and her sister opened the Chicago City Ballet. Never forgetting her Native American ancestry, she spoke out against injustices and discrimination. In 1996 she was inducted into the National Women's Hall of Fame, and also received a Kennedy Center Honor. Her autobiography *Maria Tallchief: America's Prima Ballerina* was published in 1997.

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Maria Tallchief's Block contains (please consider marking all pieces letter and size on the seam allowance of each with a disappearing marker or Frixion pen in order to keep track of them):

Fabric A (wings): (1)  $4\frac{3}{8}$ " square cut diagonally OR (2) 4" *folded triangles*

(2) 4" squares

(1)  $4\frac{1}{2}$ " square

(1) 5" square

Fabric B (body): (1)  $3\frac{1}{2}$ " x  $6\frac{1}{2}$ " rectangle

(2) 2" squares

(1) 5" square

Fabric C (smoke/corners): (8) 3" squares

(1)  $3\frac{1}{2}$ " square

(2)  $5\frac{1}{2}$ " squares

Fabric D (sky/surrounds bird): (2) 1" squares

(1)  $2\frac{1}{2}$ " square

(1)  $4\frac{1}{2}$ " square

(2)  $5\frac{1}{2}$ " x 4" rectangles

(2)  $3\frac{1}{2}$ " squares

(2)  $7\frac{1}{2}$ " x 2" rectangles

$1\frac{1}{2}$ " x 8" strip then subcut or cut separately:

(1) 2" x  $1\frac{1}{2}$ " rectangle

(1)  $3\frac{1}{2}$ " x  $1\frac{1}{2}$ " rectangle

(2) 1" x  $1\frac{1}{2}$ " rectangles

(1)  $2\frac{1}{2}$ " x 3" rectangles

(1) 2" x 3" rectangle

(3)  $5\frac{1}{2}$ " x 3" rectangles

(2) 3" x 7" rectangles

Fabric E (head) (1)  $3\frac{1}{2}$ " square

(1)  $2\frac{1}{2}$ " square

(1)  $1\frac{1}{2}$ " x  $2\frac{1}{2}$ " rectangle

## Know Them, Raise Them, Be Them Sampler

**Step 1:** Draw a line diagonally from corner to corner diagonally across the back of each square.

**Step 2 (HSTs):** Pair the Fabric A 5" square and the Fabric B 5" square together. Use your favorite Half Square Triangle method to create a total of (2) HST units. (See the half square triangle page posted at the same website where you found this pattern.) Trim to 4<sup>1/2</sup>" square. Sew these (2) units together with Fabric B touching in the middle to create a flying geese unit. Label as "body mid".



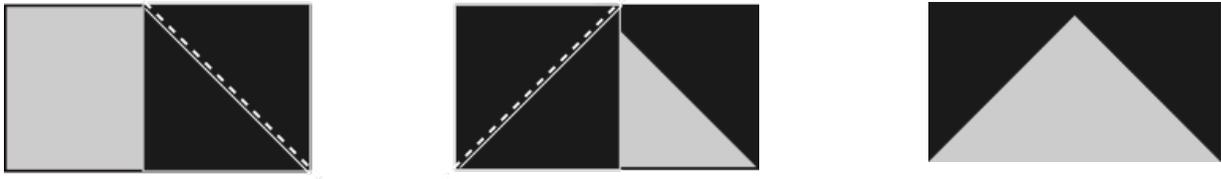
Pair Fabric A 4<sup>1/2</sup>" square and the Fabric D 4<sup>1/2</sup>" square together and make (2) HST units. Trim to 4" square. Label as "wing tip" and set aside.

Pair the Fabric C 3<sup>1/2</sup>" square and (1) Fabric D 3<sup>1/2</sup>" square together and make (2) HST units. Trim to 3" square. Label as "low mid" and set aside

Pair the Fabric D 2<sup>1/2</sup>" square and the Fabric E 2<sup>1/2</sup>" square together and make (2) HST units. Trim to 2" square. Label one as "beak" and set aside. (You may discard or throw the other into your orphan blocks pile, or use in Block 20.)

**Step 3:** Place a Fabric C 3" square on one side of a Fabric D 5<sup>1/2</sup>" x 3" rectangle. Stitch just a touch outside your drawn line. Flip back and check your seam, adjust as needed to have enough of the Fabric C triangle to meet or cover the Fabric D underneath. When accurate, trim away excess fabric underneath and press. Repeat with a Fabric C 3" square on opposite side of same Fabric D 5<sup>1/2</sup>" x 3" rectangle to create a flying geese unit. Repeat from start of Step 3 with another Fabric D 5<sup>1/2</sup>" x 3" rectangle and (2) Fabric C 3" squares/triangles, for a second flying geese unit. Label both as "low sides"

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Repeat with last Fabric D  $5\frac{1}{2}'' \times 3''$  rectangle and (1) Fabric C  $3''$  square specifically with the lower right of the Fabric D rectangle in a horizontal position as illustrated. Label as "rt head".



**Step 4:** Lay out your (2) Fabric D  $5\frac{1}{2}'' \times 4''$  rectangles horizontally (so longest dimension is running left to right). Place a Fabric C  $3''$  square on the upper-left of one of the Fabric D rectangles and place another Fabric C  $3''$  square on the upper-right of the other rectangle. Using the same stitch-and-flip method from Step 3, sew together.

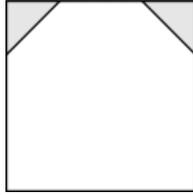


Take the triangles of the split Fabric A  $4\frac{3}{8}''$  square and place them in opposite directions on the Fabric D rectangles - note "mirrored" positions in the illustration below. This is a little trickier placement - you need to make sure your quarter inch seam intersects the corner of the Fabric D rectangle as precisely as you can. Feel free to draw your quarter inch seam allowance on the triangle at both ends and maybe a bit in the middle - be careful not to stretch that bias edge as you do this. Use the stitch-and-flip method again. Label as "left shldr" and "rt shldr"



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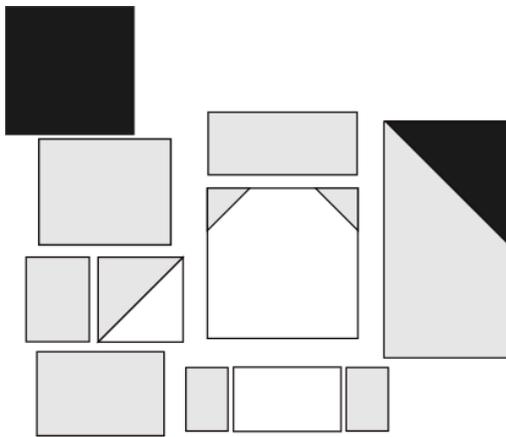
**Step 5:** Place Fabric D 1" squares on top two corners of Fabric E 3<sup>1/2</sup>" square. Use stitch-and-flip method again to sew and align these pieces. Label as "head".



**Step 6:** Place Fabric B 2" squares on top two corners of Fabric D 3<sup>1/2</sup>" square. Use stitch-and-flip method again to sew and align these pieces. Label as "tail".

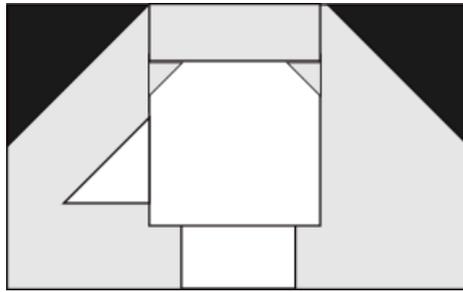


**Step 7 (Assembling the head unit):** Loosely lay out the head area of block by placing Fabric D 2" x 1<sup>1/2</sup>" rectangle to the left side of the "beak", Fabric D 2" x 3" rectangle below these, a Fabric D 2<sup>1/2</sup>" x 3" rectangle above those and a Fabric C 3" square above that rectangle. To the right of these pieces go the "head" from Step 5, a Fabric D 3<sup>1/2</sup>" x 1<sup>1/2</sup>" rectangle across the top of it, the Fabric E 1<sup>1/2</sup>" x 2<sup>1/2</sup>" rectangle below as the neck with the (2) Fabric D 1" x 1<sup>1/2</sup>" rectangles on either side of the neck. On the right side of all of this goes the "rt head" unit from Step 3.

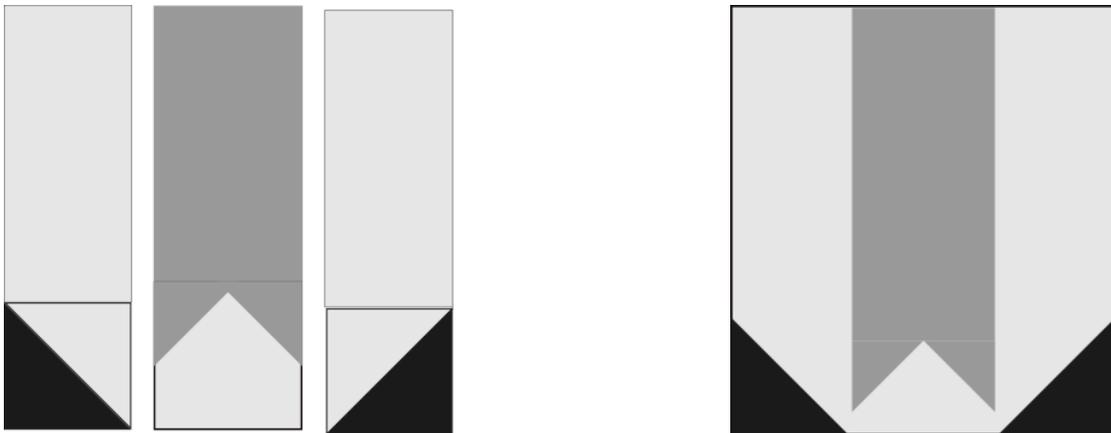


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You can chain piece as you assemble this. Sew Fabric D  $2'' \times 1\frac{1}{2}''$  rectangle to the left side of the "beak". Sew a Fabric D  $1'' \times 1\frac{1}{2}''$  rectangle on one side of the neck. Now sew the top-left Fabric D  $2\frac{1}{2}'' \times 3''$  rectangle onto top of "beak" unit. Sew other Fabric D  $1'' \times 1\frac{1}{2}''$  rectangle onto other side of neck. Sew bottom-left Fabric D  $2'' \times 3''$  rectangle onto lower edge of "beak" unit. Sew neck to head. Use stitch-and-flip method from Step 3 to sew Fabric C  $3''$  square onto top-left of "beak" side unit (this seam does cross another seam). Sew Fabric D  $3\frac{1}{2}'' \times 1\frac{1}{2}''$  rectangle to top of "head". Lastly, sew the "beak" side to the left side of head, then sew the "rt head" to the right side and the top center head unit of the block is ready.

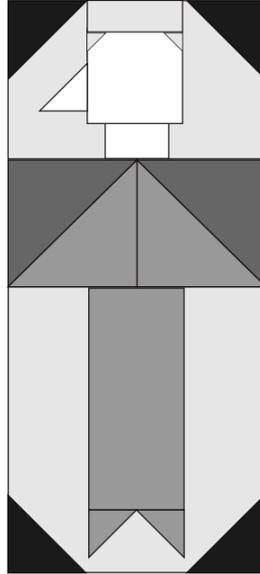


**Step 8:** Sew "tail" unit to bottom of Fabric B  $3\frac{1}{2}'' \times 6\frac{1}{2}''$  rectangle. Sew a "low mid" HST unit to the bottom of each Fabric D  $3'' \times 7''$  rectangle, with Fabric D touching itself all along the seam and the Fabric C triangle running upper-left to lower-right on one and upper-right to lower-left on the other as illustrated, then sew all (3) units together:

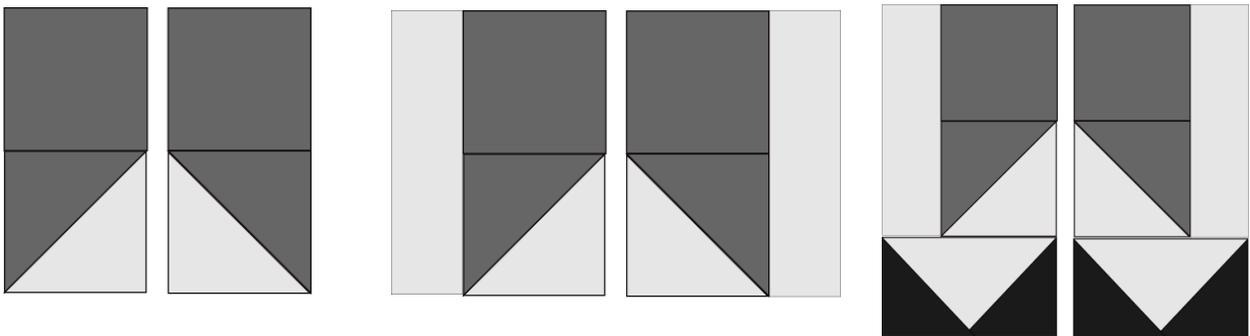


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**Step 9:** Sew head unit from Step 7 and tail unit from Step 8 to the top and bottom respectively of the "body mid" piece from Step 2. This is the Center column of the block and should measure at 8 1/2" wide by 18 1/2" tall.

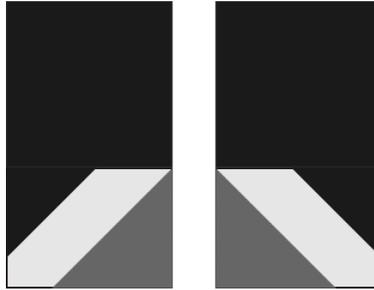


**Step 10:** The left and right columns of the block "mirror" each other. Sew a Fabric A 4" square to the top of each "wing tip" HST from Step 2 with Fabric A touching itself all along the seam and so one wing tip points down to the left and the other down to the right. Then sew a Fabric D (sky) 7 1/2" x 2" rectangle to the left side of the left wing and the right side of the right wing. Lastly, sew a "low side" flying geese unit from Step 3 to the bottom of each of these with Fabric D (sky) touching itself all along the seam and pointing downwards:

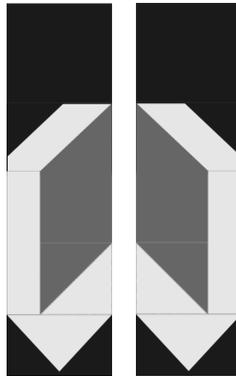


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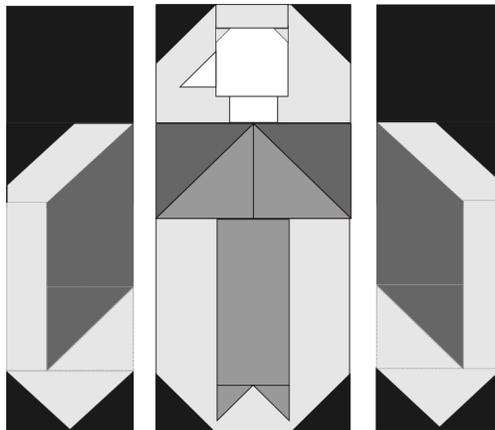
**Step 11:** Sew a Fabric C  $5\frac{1}{2}$ " square to the top of the "left shldr" and "rt shldr" units from Step 4. Again, the left and the right sides "mirror" each other:



**Step 12:** Sew the "shldr" units from Step 11 onto the tops of the wing units from Step 10. Your left and right columns are complete and measure  $5\frac{1}{2}$ " wide by  $18\frac{1}{2}$ " tall.:



**Step 13:** Sew the three columns together.



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Your Maria Tallchief "Firebird Ballet" block is complete and finishes at 18 1/2" square at this stage:

