DebBee's Designs

QUILT BLOCK 1

Design size 108 X 108 stitches, about 6" square on 18 ct. canvas

Quilt Block 1
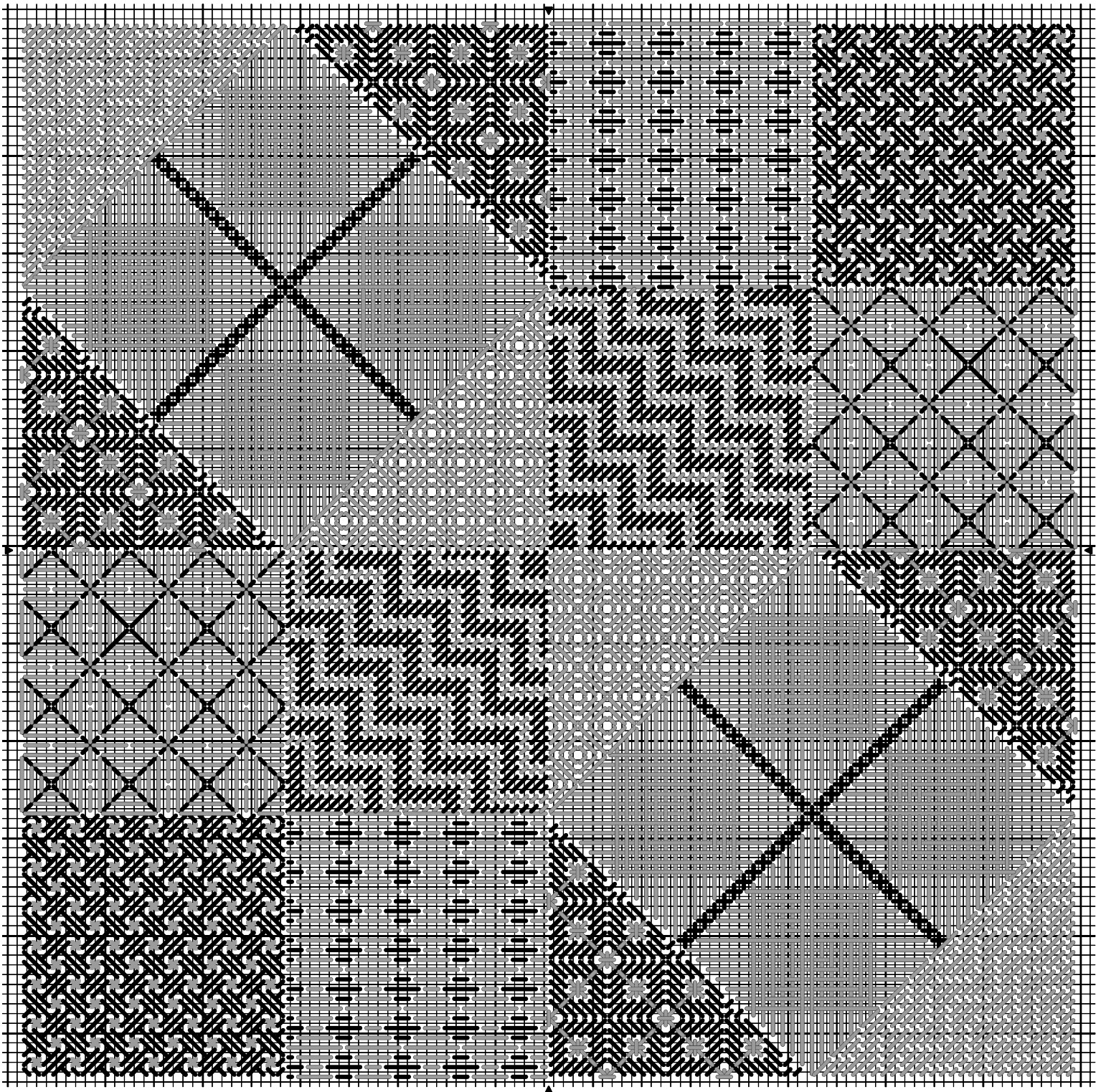
QUILT BLOCK 1

By Debbie Rowley

This is a beginning counted canvas design, so the instructions are little more thorough. If you don't need as much instruction just skip over it. If you do, it's there for you.

Begin by mounting the canvas to stretcher bars. The design is 6" x 6", and I always cut the canvas to allow 3" on each side of the design, so the canvas is cut 12" x 12". Tape or bind the edges of the canvas; this will help prevent the thread snagging on the rough edges of the canvas as you stitch. When I mount the canvas I begin by placing one tack in the center of each side, then working out from the centers, pulling the canvas as I go. I place the tacks very close together to prevent distorting the canvas as I stitch, and to hold the canvas tightly to the stretcher bars. A tight canvas is easier to stitch than a loose canvas, because you aren't pulling the canvas up and down with each stitch. The threads also lay nicer on a tight canvas. I place one tack on each side of the center tack on each bar, then another tack on each side until I reach the corners. I pull as I go to get the canvas as tight as I can. I work the north/south bars, then the east/west bars, then the north/south bars, continuing in this manner until I reach the corners.

You may mount the canvas on top of the bars or under the bars. It doesn't make any difference to the stitching and is strictly a personal preference. I prefer the canvas on top of the bars so I'm not reaching over the bars to stitch; it's easier on my wrists.

I will recommend an anchor to begin and end each stitch.

Each stitch will be titled, with a table immediately under the title. The table indicates which type of thread I recommend, the exact thread that I used, and a place to record your changes. If there's a number in parentheses after the thread I used, that indicates the number of strands I used.

This is your project so feel free to make changes that suit your color taste and preference. Also, if you prefer stitching with fewer strands or more strands than I did, that's fine too. You should always stitch what makes you happy.

Let's get started!

MILANESE

Thread Type	As Shown	Your Choice
Stranded floss	Rainbow Gallery Mandarin Floss M910 Bubblegum (4)	

The floss I'm using is a bamboo floss, 6 strand, but any stranded floss will work—cotton, rayon, silk. The strands of bamboo floss are a little bit thinner than stranded cotton floss, so I'm using 4 strands. If you find that fewer strands will cover the canvas well with the type of floss you're using, then that's perfectly fine.

I'm using a loop start to begin since I'm using an even number of strands. For a loop start, cut the thread from the skein/card twice as long as you plan to use. Separate out two strands, then hold them together and fold them in half, leaving the cut ends at one end and a loop at the other end. Thread the needle with the combined strands. From the front of the canvas, insert the needle and pull through, leaving the loop on top of the canvas. Bring the needle up from under the canvas just one canvas thread away, take the needle through the loop, and pull the thread through. Insert the needle in the canvas where you brought it up to leave the loop and pull the loop to the back of the canvas. Your thread is anchored and ready to begin stitching.

A loop start is a great way to anchor if you are using an even number of solid color strands. If you are using a variegated thread you will not want to fold the thread in half, because that will disrupt the color placement. If you are using a variegated thread, I recommend a pin stitch. From the front of the canvas, take the needle through the canvas leaving a little tail on top of the canvas. Hold the tail, and take a stitch over a single canvas thread. Repeat until you have taken 3 stitches over the same canvas thread. Your thread is now anchored and you can begin stitching. Snip the tail close to the canvas so it doesn't get in your way while you stitch.

It's important to note that a thread anchor, whether loop start or pin stitch, should be as small as possible and placed where it will be covered by the stitches to come. I don't recommend the anchor be used as your first stitch, but be placed where it will be covered.

The Milanese stitch is a satin stitch, which means there will be as much thread under the canvas as on top. The goal is to have a very smooth pattern, which can be difficult to achieve when stitching with multiple strands. To encourage the threads to lay smoothly, use a laying tool. This can be a trolley needle, a laying tool or even a large needle.

Bring the needle up to begin the stitch. Use the laying tool to hold the thread against the canvas in the opposite direction of the stitch, holding it flat as possible. Insert the needle to complete the stitch, and use the laying tool to encourage the thread to lay flat as you stitch. Think about the mechanics of a stitch—the thread arcs into the canvas as you pull the thread through. Use the laying to hold the under side of the arch until the stitch is complete, then pull the laying tool out. It takes a bit of practice, but after about 5 minutes you should have it down.

Measure 3" from the top left corner of the canvas—3" down and 3" to the right. This will be where we're beginning. Stitch as shown in Diagram 1.
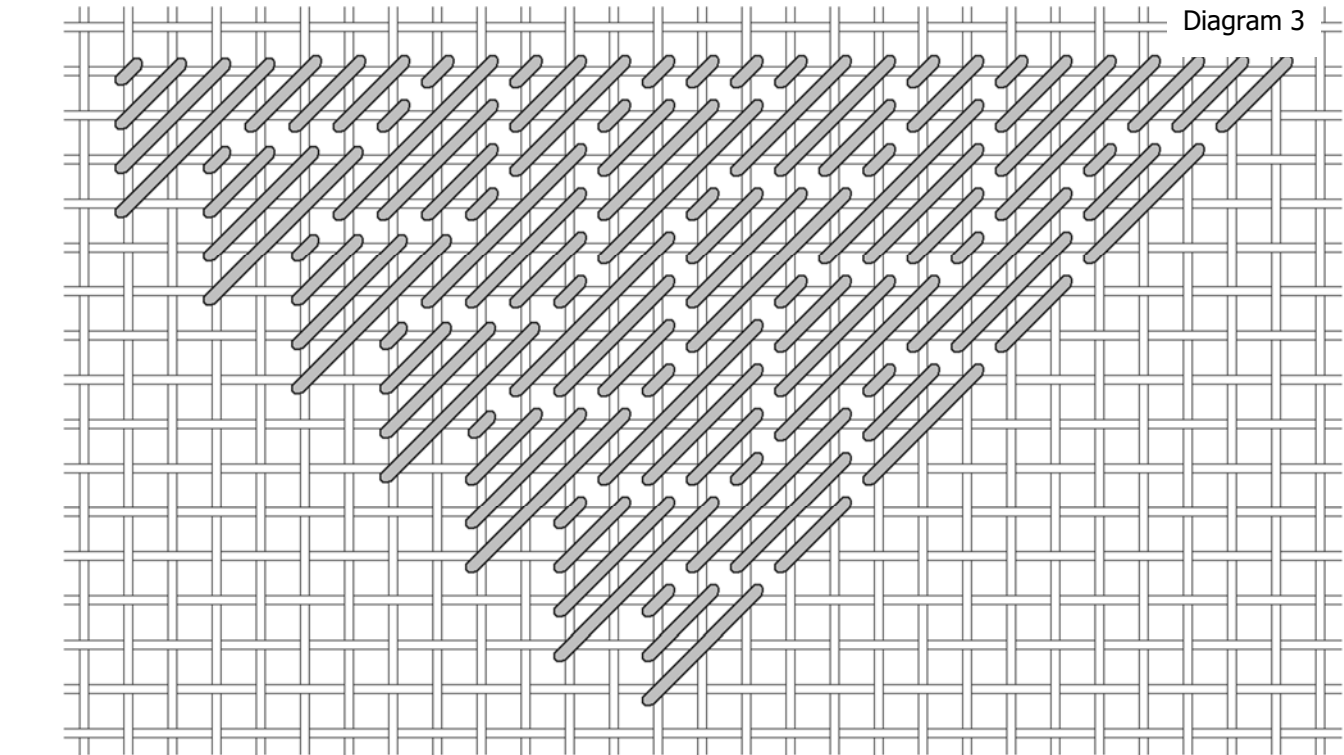

Diagram 1
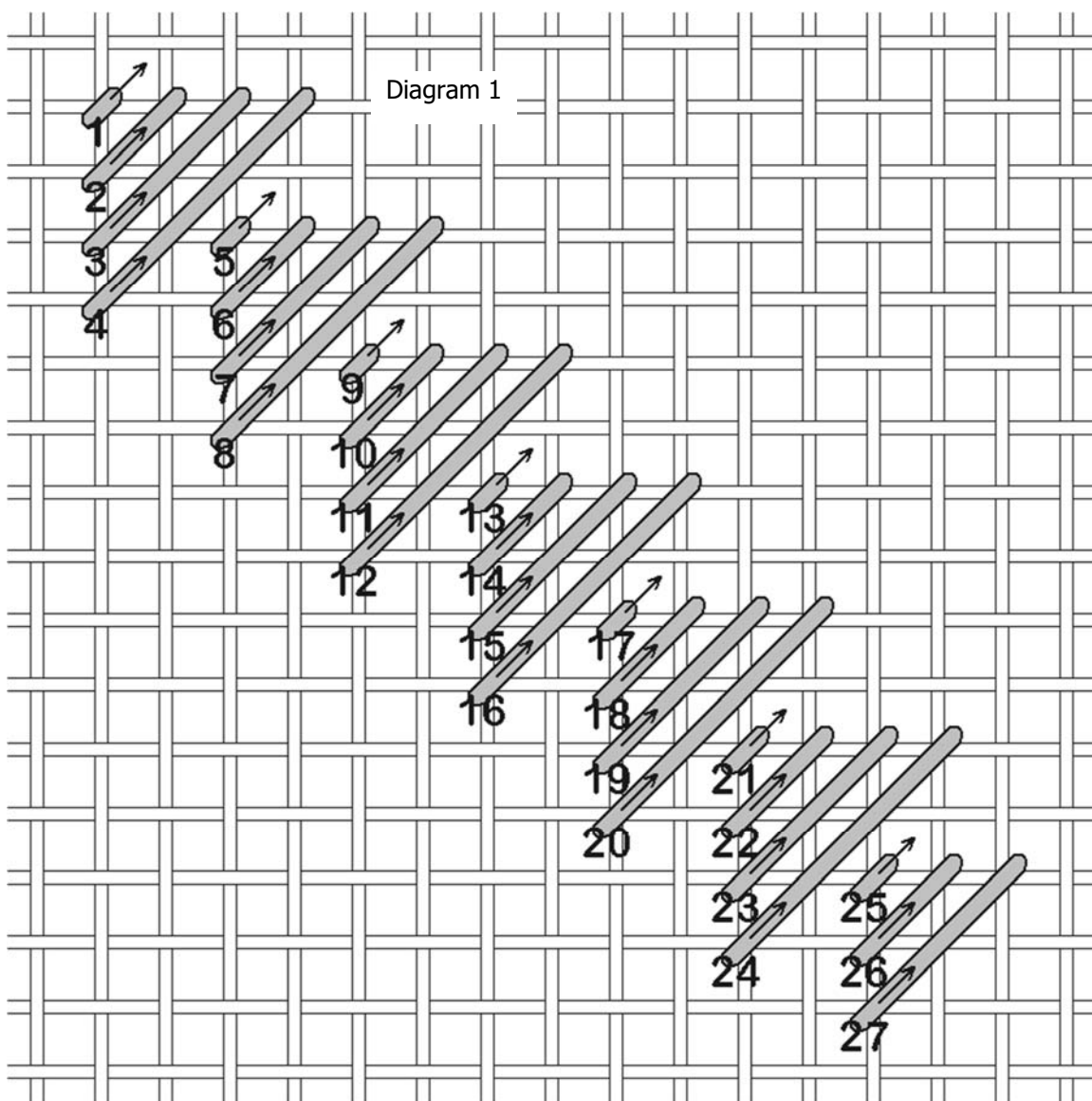
This is exactly what you need to stitch for this project. Notice at the bottom after six complete Milanese blocks, an incomplete block. This is compensation, making the pattern fit the area.

Now change the direction of the stitch. It's always best to bring the needle up in an empty hole and down in a shared hole. This disturbs the stitching less, especially when working with multiple strands. It's ok to work from the bottom to the top when stitching this pattern.
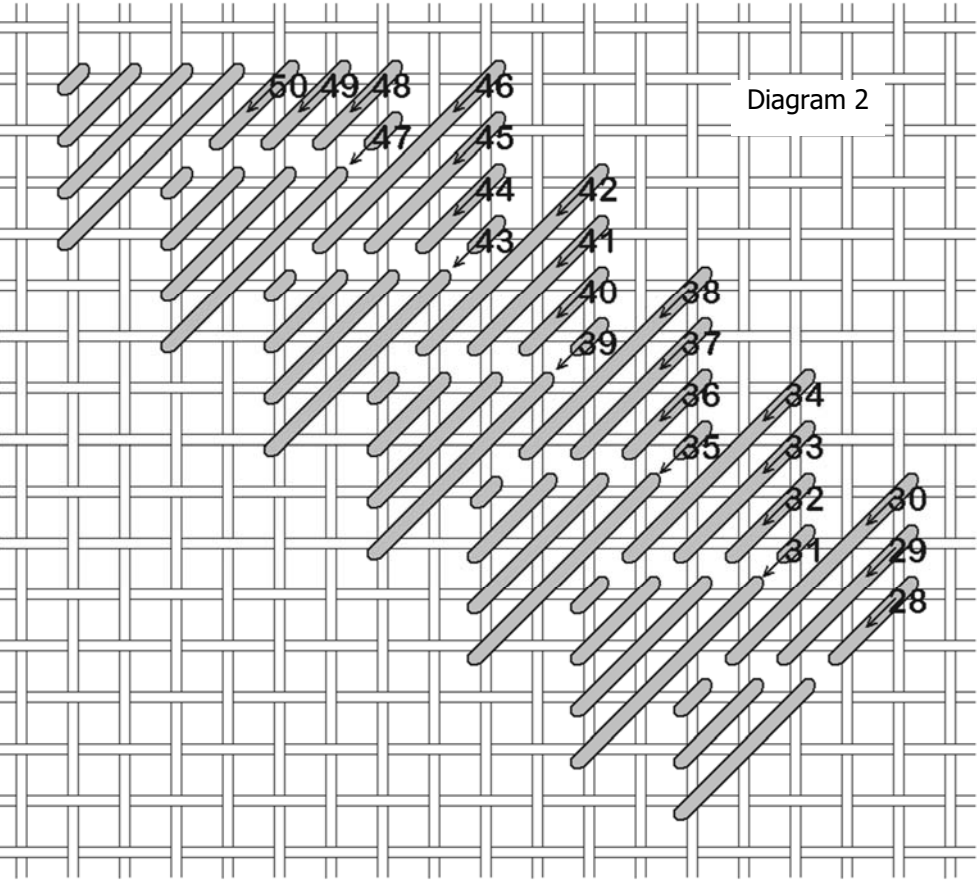
Diagram 2

Complete this side of the Milanese block as shown in Diagram 3. Arrows and numbers aren't shown, but you should be able to do it—bring the needle up in the empty holes and down in the shared holes.

Diagram 3

Now stitch the other side of the Milanese block, again changing the direction of the stitch to come up in an empty hole and down in a shared hole.
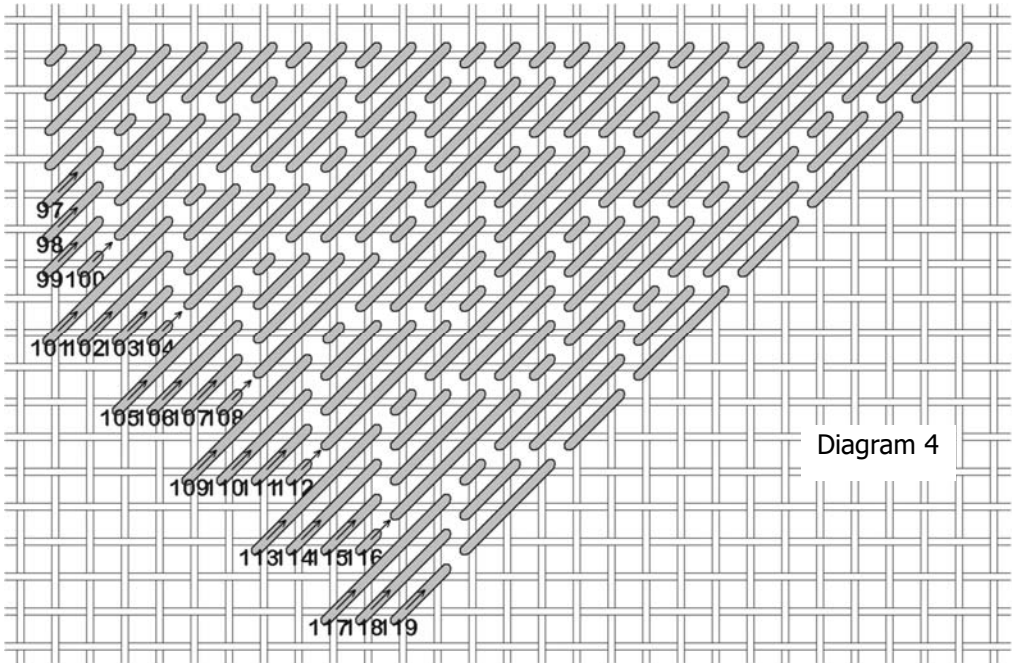
Diagram 4

Complete the Milanese block as shown in Diagram 5.

Diagram 5
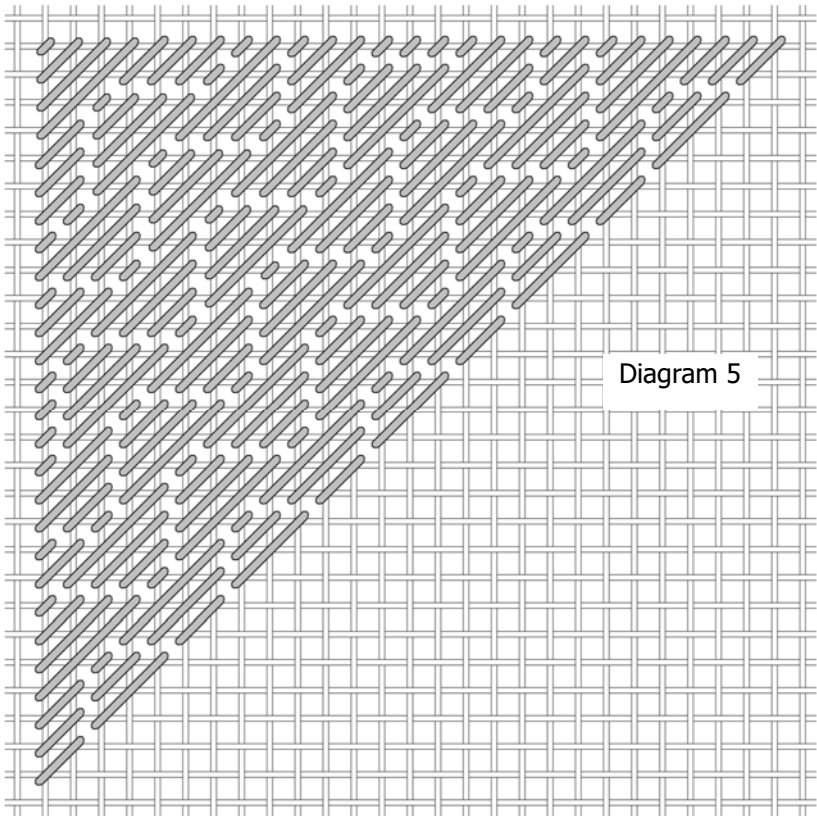
End off the thread by either weaving through the stitches on the back, or making a pin stitch from the front. To end off with a pin stitch, from the front, separate a couple of strands of the stitches. Take a stitch over the same single canvas thread 2 times, then snip the thread either from the front if you're very careful, or from under the canvas if you prefer. Smooth the stitches back over the pin stitch to hide it.

There will be another block of Milanese in the lower right corner, but wait to stitch it until we have more on the canvas.
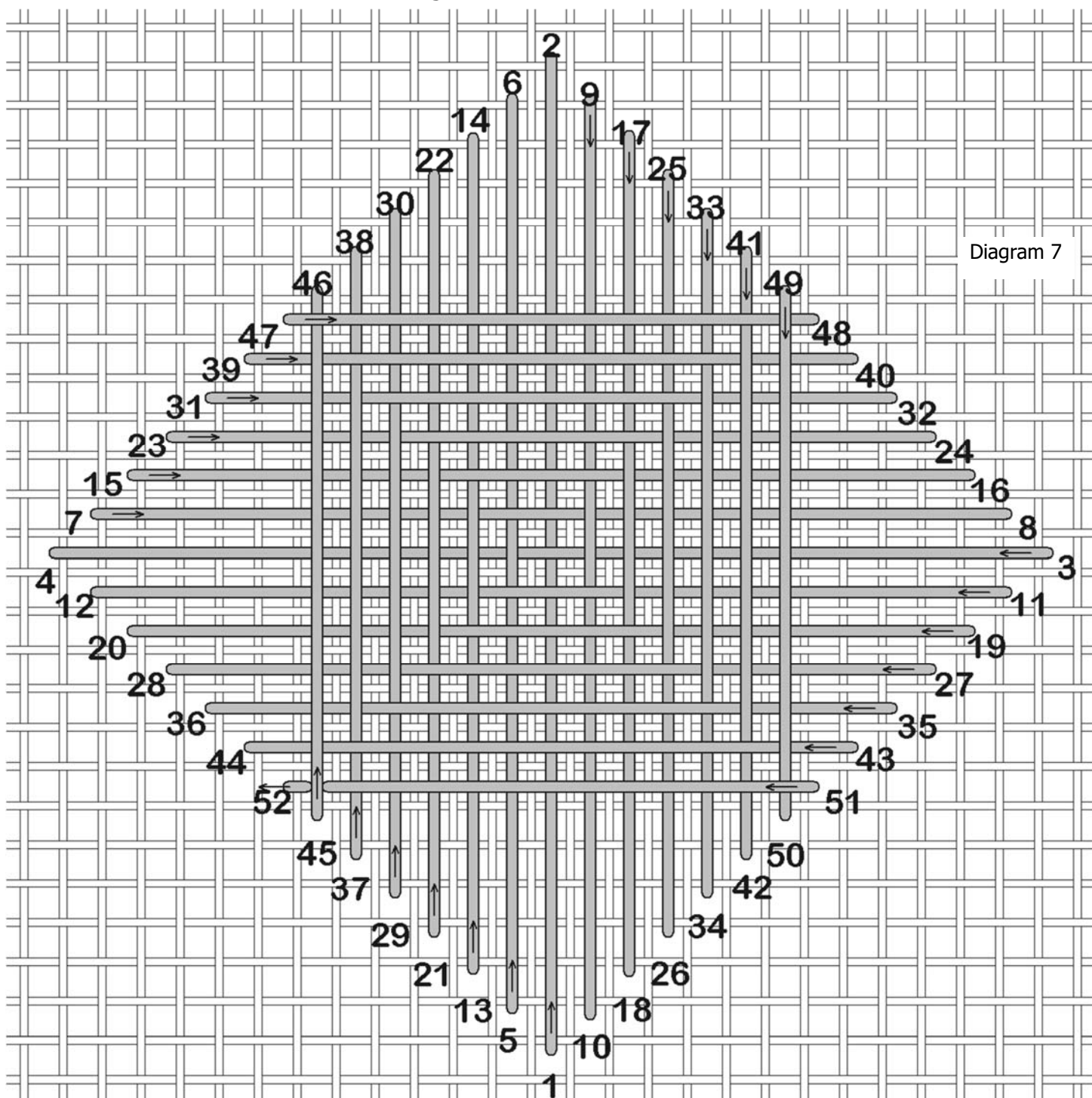
WAFFLE STITCH

Thread Type	As Shown	Your Choice
Rayon Ribbon	Rainbow Gallery Neon Rays N14 Hot Pink	
Metalized rayon ribbon	Rainbow Gallery Neon Rays + NP14 Hot Pink	

The next block is a combination of four waffle stitches, all the same size and shape, stitched with ribbon. You may use a different thread if you like. I stitched two of the waffle stitches with the rayon ribbon, and the other two with the metalized rayon ribbon. You may stitch all four of them with the same thread, alternate the rayon ribbon with the metalized ribbon, stitch three with one of them and the fourth with the other one, however you want.

Anchor with a pin stitch in the shape of a "T" in the center of the waffle stitch; this will be covered by the stitches but won't raise the center. The Milanese block is shown for reference and placement for the first two stitches, but won't be shown for the rest of the diagram.
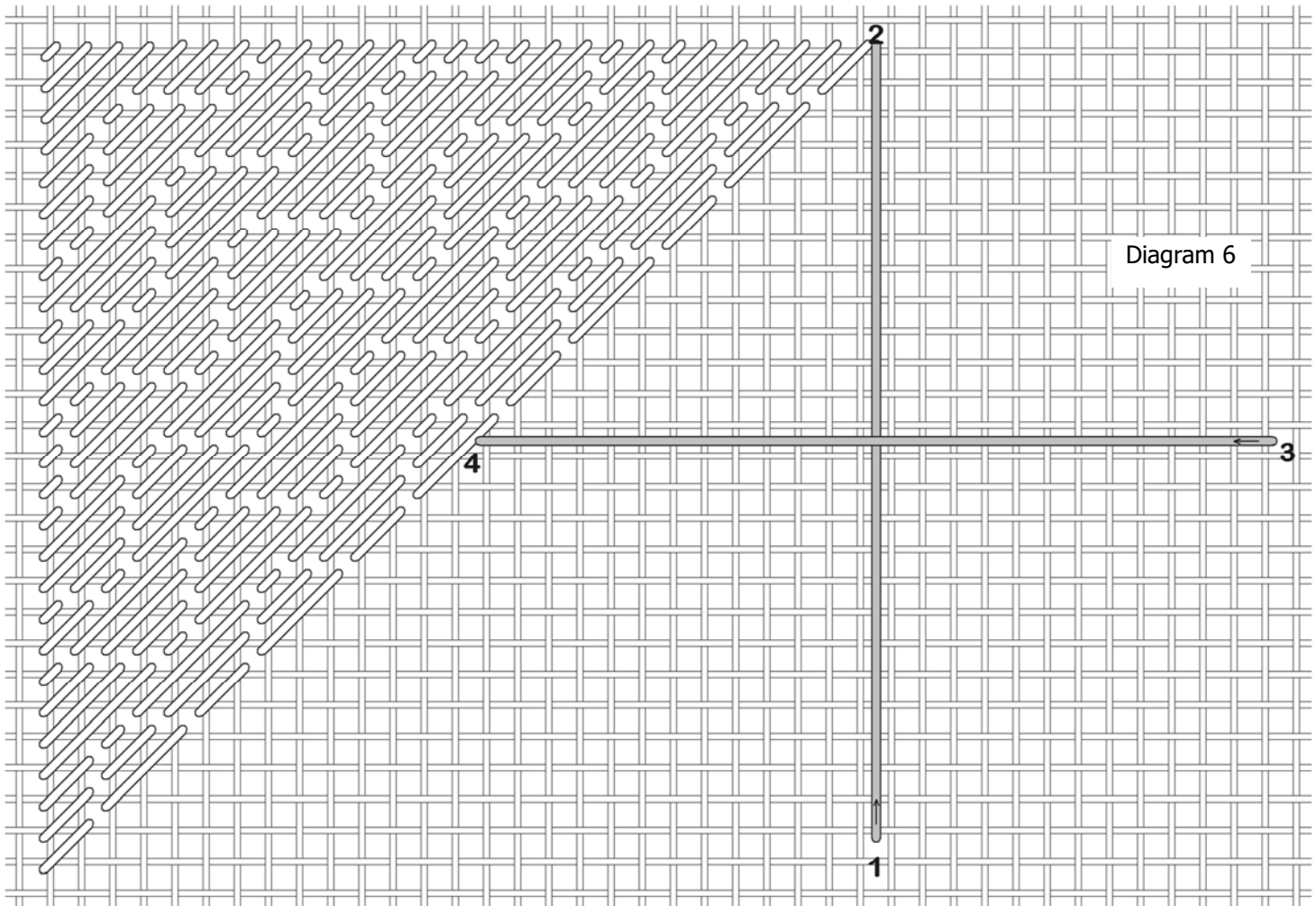
Diagram 6

Stitch the waffle stitch as shown in Diagram 7.

Diagram 7

The last stitch, stitch 51, slides between the canvas and the first stitch of the last round, stitch 45, before ending; this puts a thread on top of every thread around the waffle and gives it a more finished look.

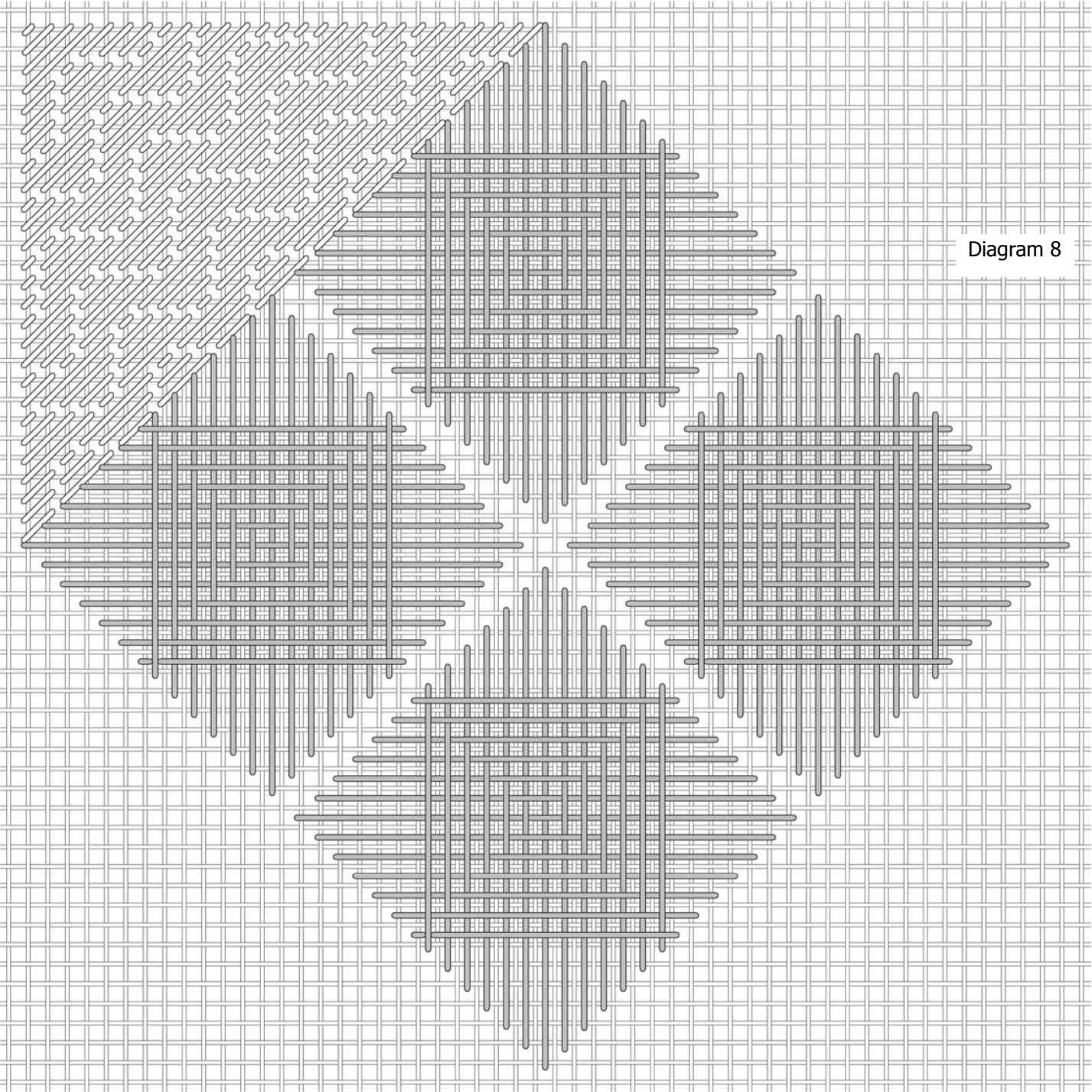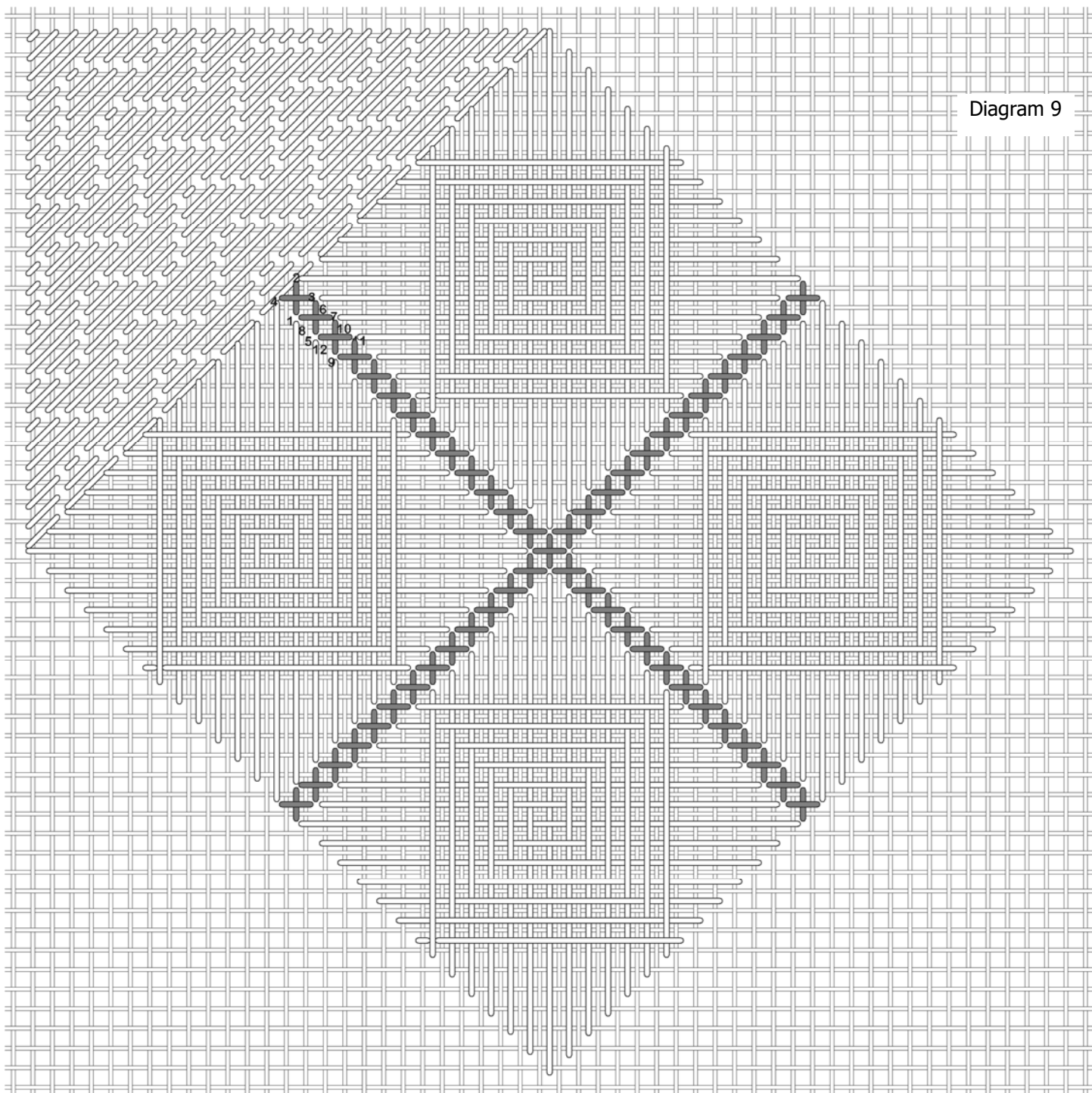Stitch three more waffle stitches, leaving a gap between them as shown.

Diagram 8

7

UPRIGHT CROSS STITCHES

Thread Type	As Shown	Your Choice
Fine metallic braid	Kreinik #8 024HL Fuchsia	

Stitch upright cross stitches between the waffle stitches. You may use the lighter color if you like but I like the contrast of the darker color.
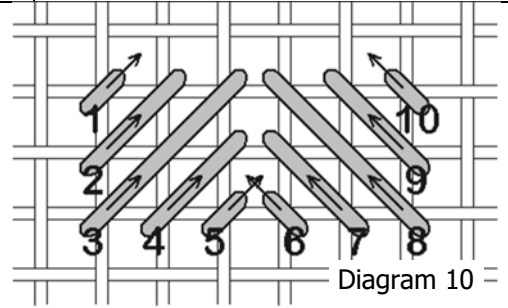

Diagram 9

SCOTCH STITCH

Thread Type	As Shown	Your Choice
Stranded floss	Rainbow Gallery Mandarin Floss M910 Bubblegum (3)	

The next two blocks are the same stitch, using stranded floss and three strands this time. I liked the look of four strands for the Milanese block, but think fewer strands will still cover well and will give a slightly different look even though it's the same thread.

This Scotch stitch is over 3 canvas threads vertically and horizontally, with compensation at the edges to complete the pattern.

The basic stitch is shown in Diagram 10. The block is shown in Diagram 11, with compensating at the edges. I anchored with a pin stitch since I couldn't use a loop start, placed where it would be covered by the stitches.

Diagram 10

The numbers in Diagram 12 indicate a possible path for stitching. You may find a rhythm that suits you better; that's fine, so long as it looks the same on the front it doesn't matter so much what it looks like on the back.
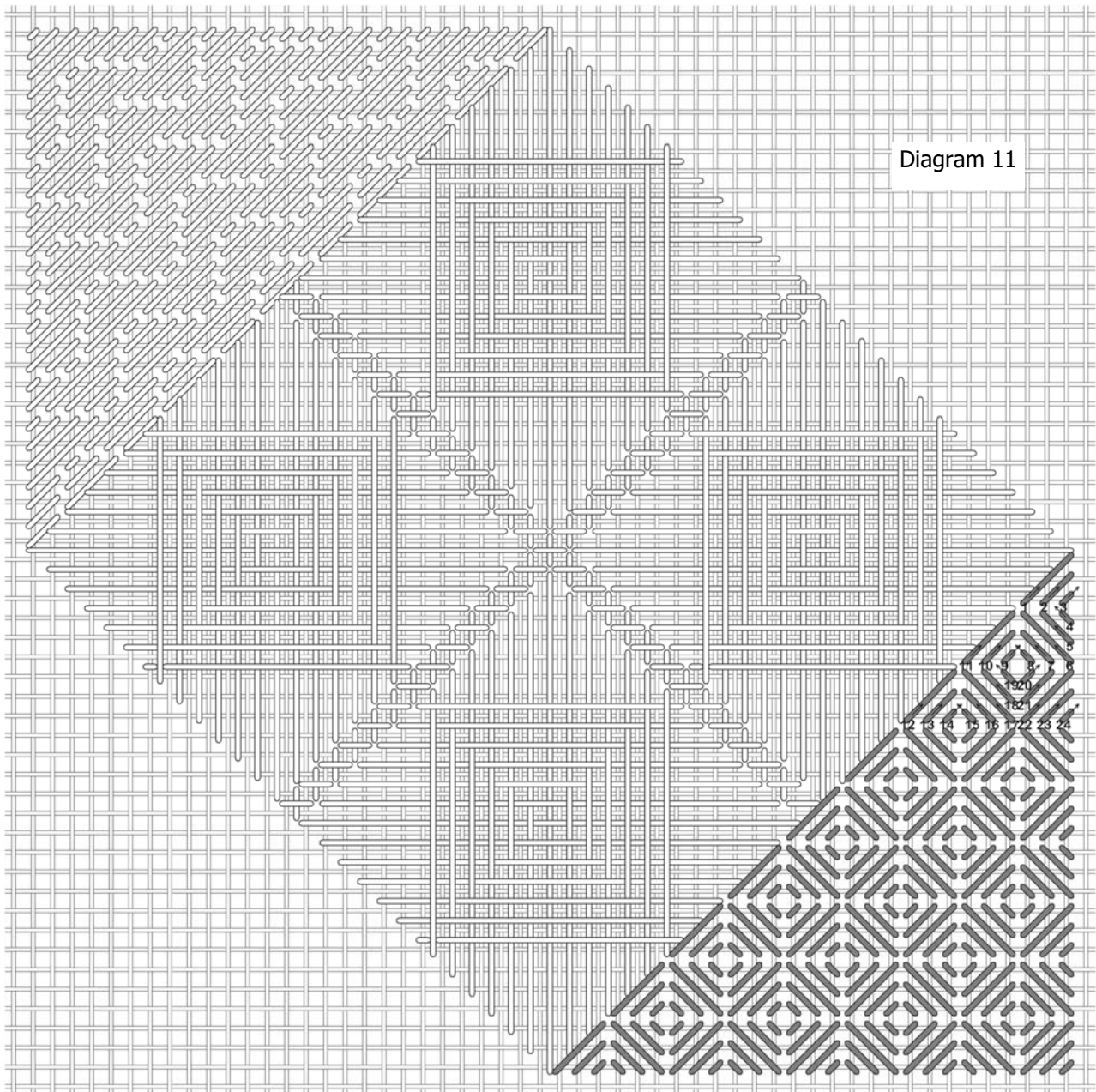
Diagram 11

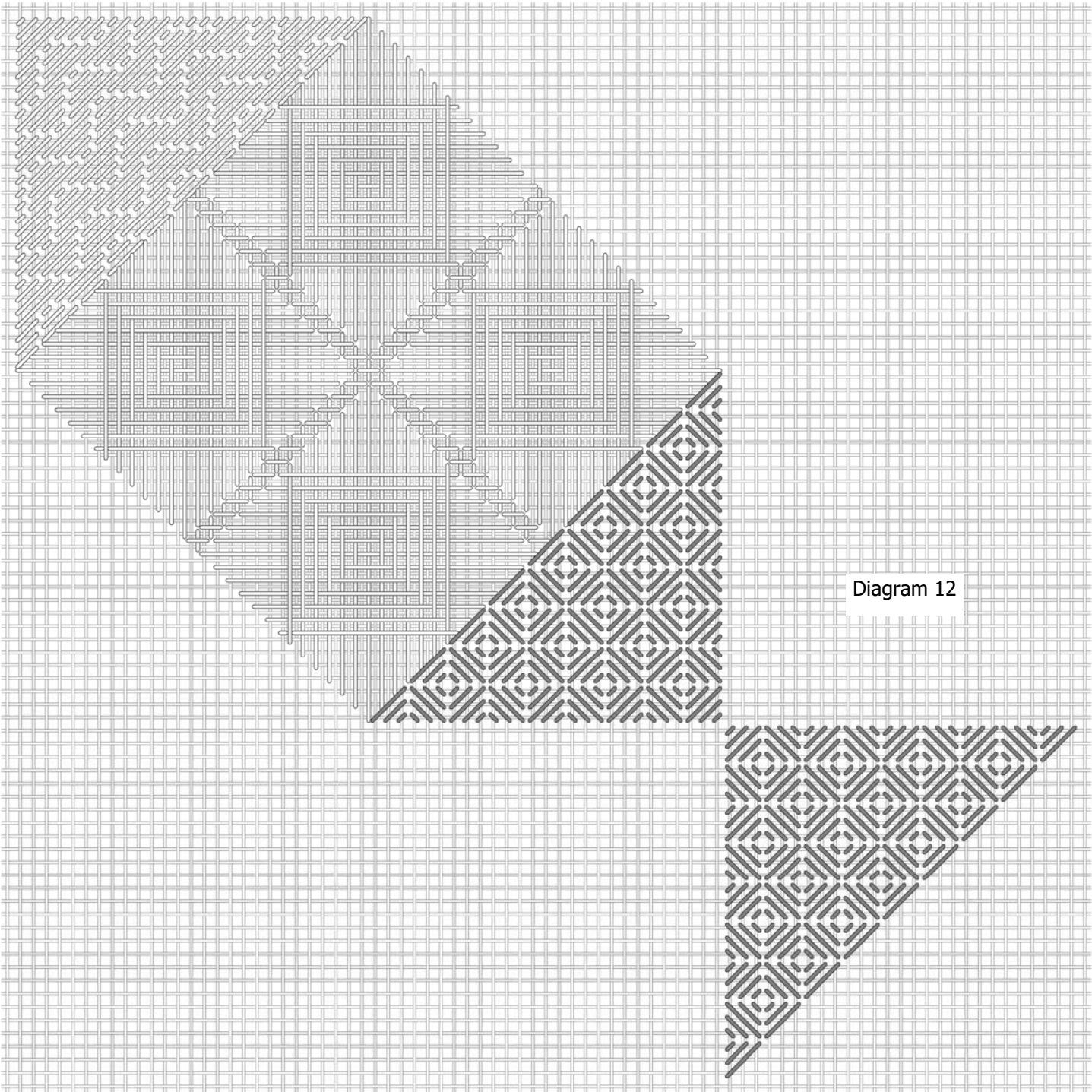Continuing with the same thread and stitch, stitch the next block of scotch stitch.

Diagram 12

Thread Type	As Shown	Your Choice
Glass seed beads size 11	Mill Hill Glass Seed Beads 02077 Brilliant Magenta	
Stranded floss	Rainbow Gallery Mandarin Floss M910 Bubblegum (1)	

If you like, add beads in the tiny spaces between scotch stitches. I used a single strand of floss, and went through each bead twice horizontally.
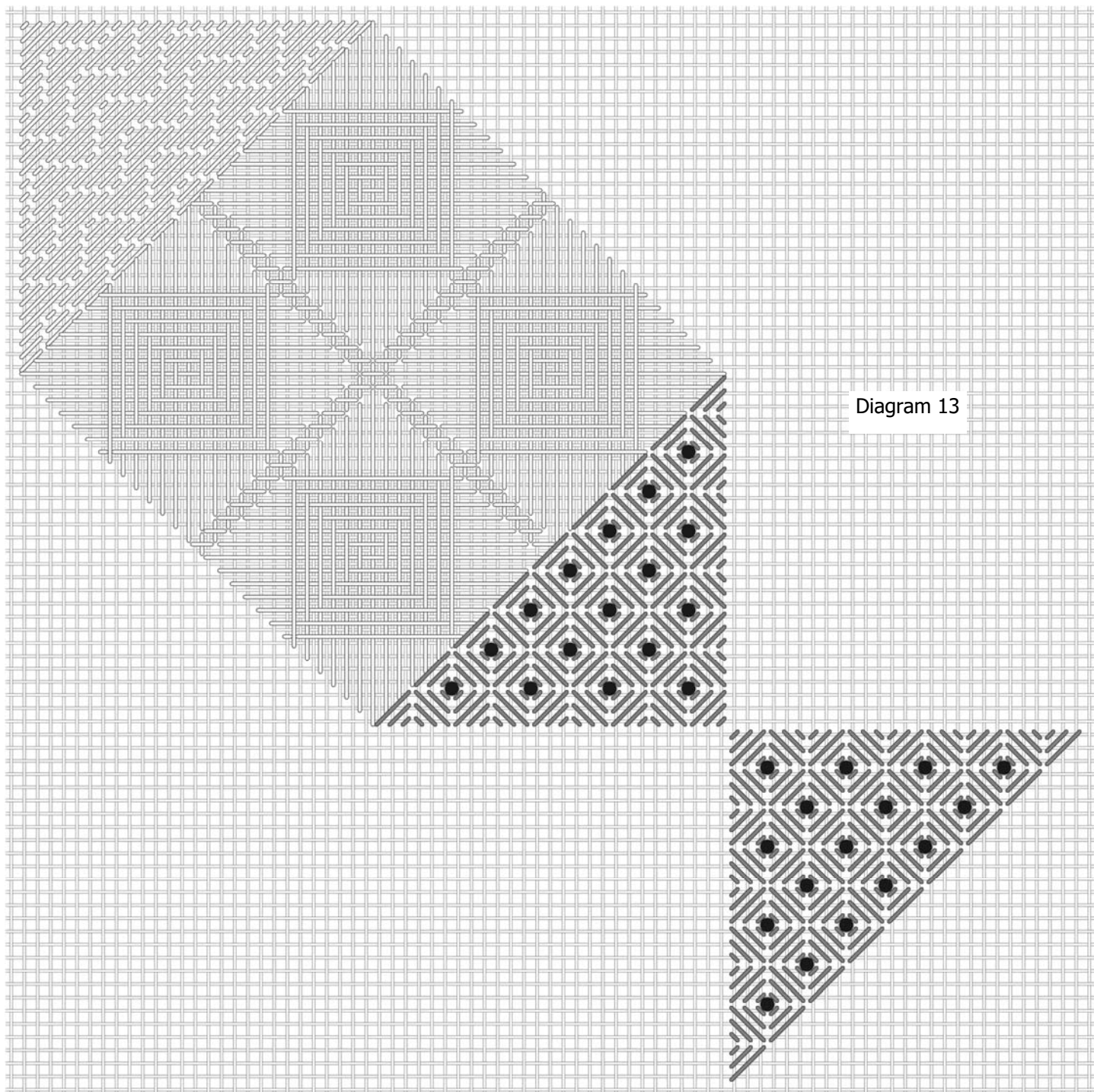
Diagram 13

I like the contrast of the beads, but leave them out if you want. You could also stitch a tiny upright cross stitch, a French knot or colonial knot with a contrasting color if you prefer.

WAFFLE STITCHES AND UPRIGHT CROSS STITCHES (AGAIN)

Thread Type	As Shown	Your Choice
Rayon Ribbon	Rainbow Gallery Neon Rays N14 Hot Pink	
Metalized rayon ribbon	Rainbow Gallery Neon Rays + NP14 Hot Pink	
Fine metallic braid	Kreinik #8 024HL Fuchsia	

Repeat the waffle stitch blocks and upright cross stitches between them. I'm going to use the same threads as before, but if you want to change things feel free to do so.
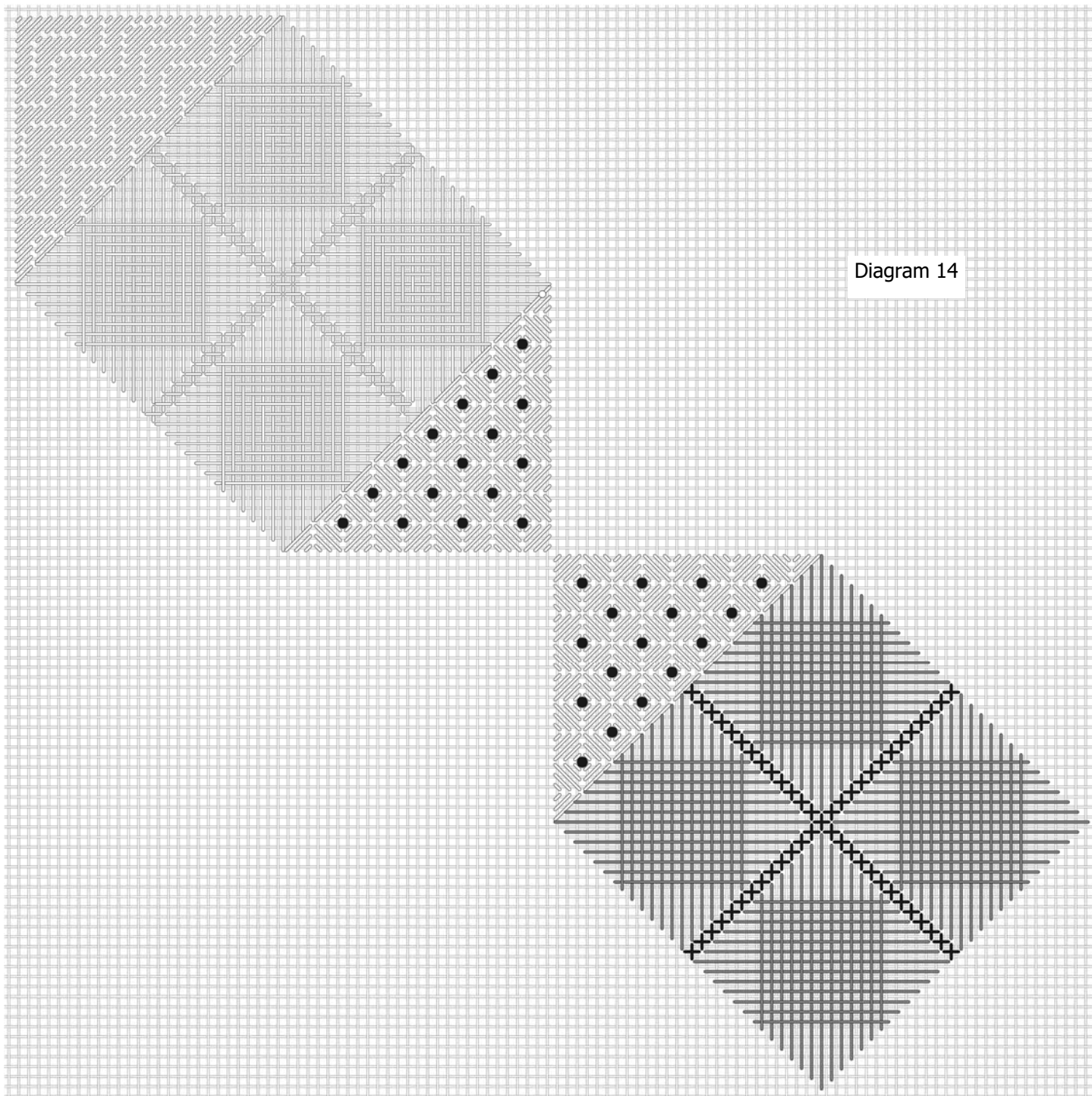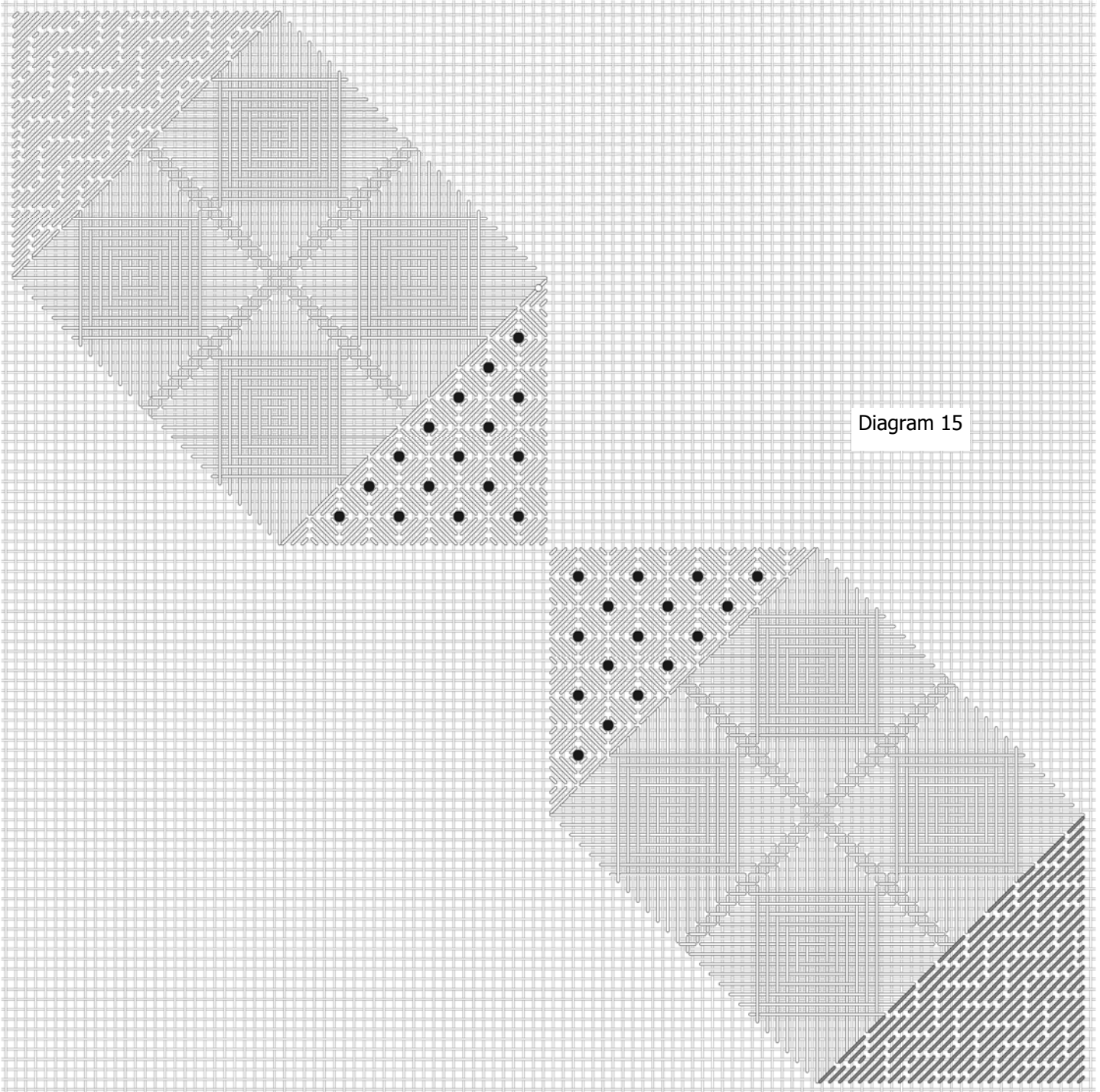
Diagram 14

MILANESE STITCH (AGAIN)

Thread Type	As Shown	Your Choice
Stranded floss	Rainbow Gallery Mandarin Floss M910 Bubblegum (4)	

Finish the diagonal center with another block of Milanese stitch. I used the same threads as before to make sure there's a balanced look, but you may use something different if you want.

Diagram 15

That takes us through the center—next time we'll start working on filling out the rest of the design.

BYZANTINE STITCH

Thread Type	As Shown	Your Choice
Stranded floss	Rainbow Gallery Mandarin Floss M910 Bubblegum (2)	
Stranded floss	Rainbow Gallery Mandarin Floss M911 Raspberry (2)	

The next block is in two places, the same block but mirrored. This is Byzantine stitch, a pattern of diagonal stitches. Use the lighter color to stitch the tent stitches over 1 diagonal intersection, and the darker color to stitch the longer diagonal stitches. I usually work with two needles at the same time, to reduce counting errors while I stitch. I used 2 strands of each color for this section of relatively smaller stitches, anchoring with loop starts.
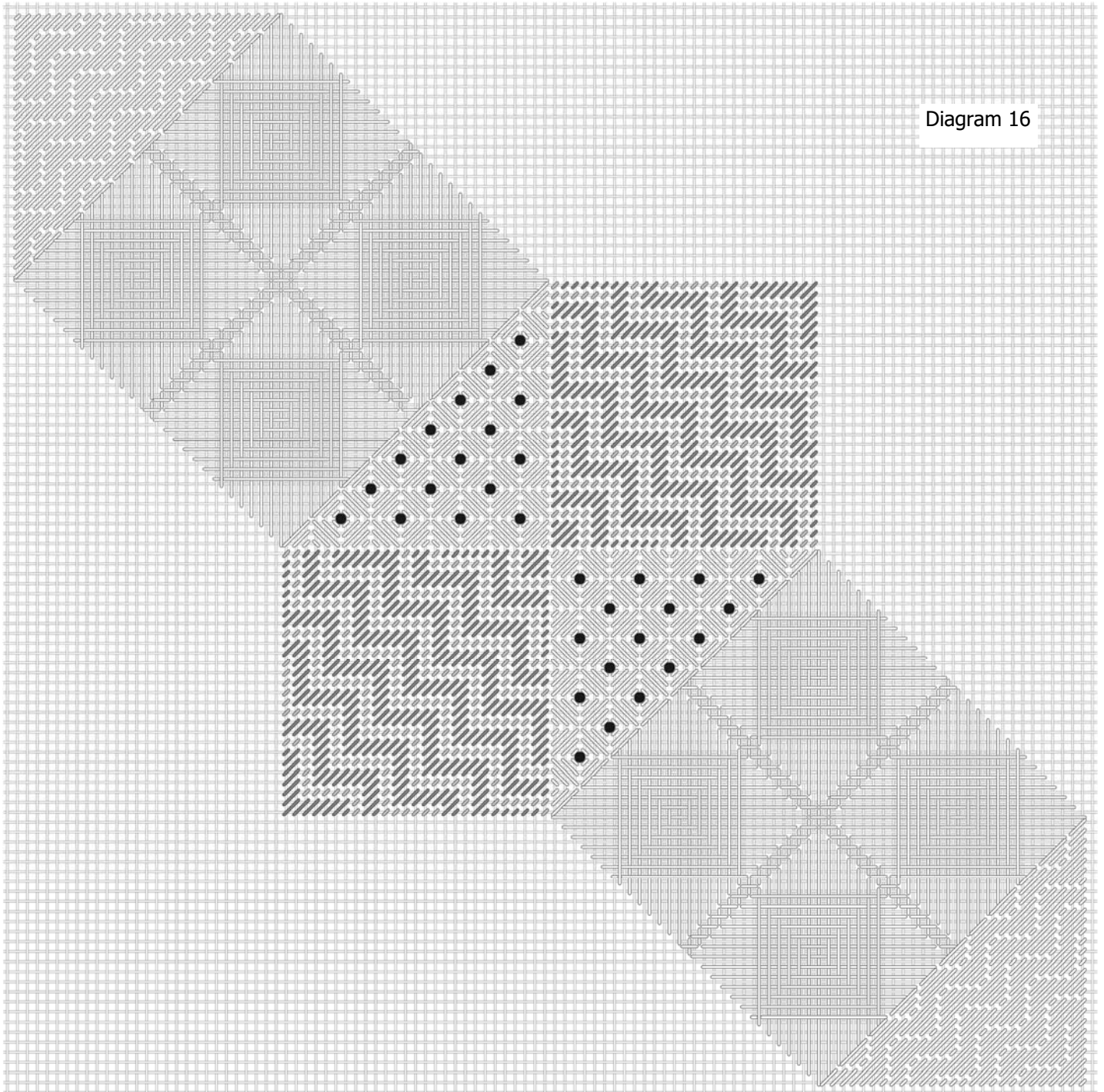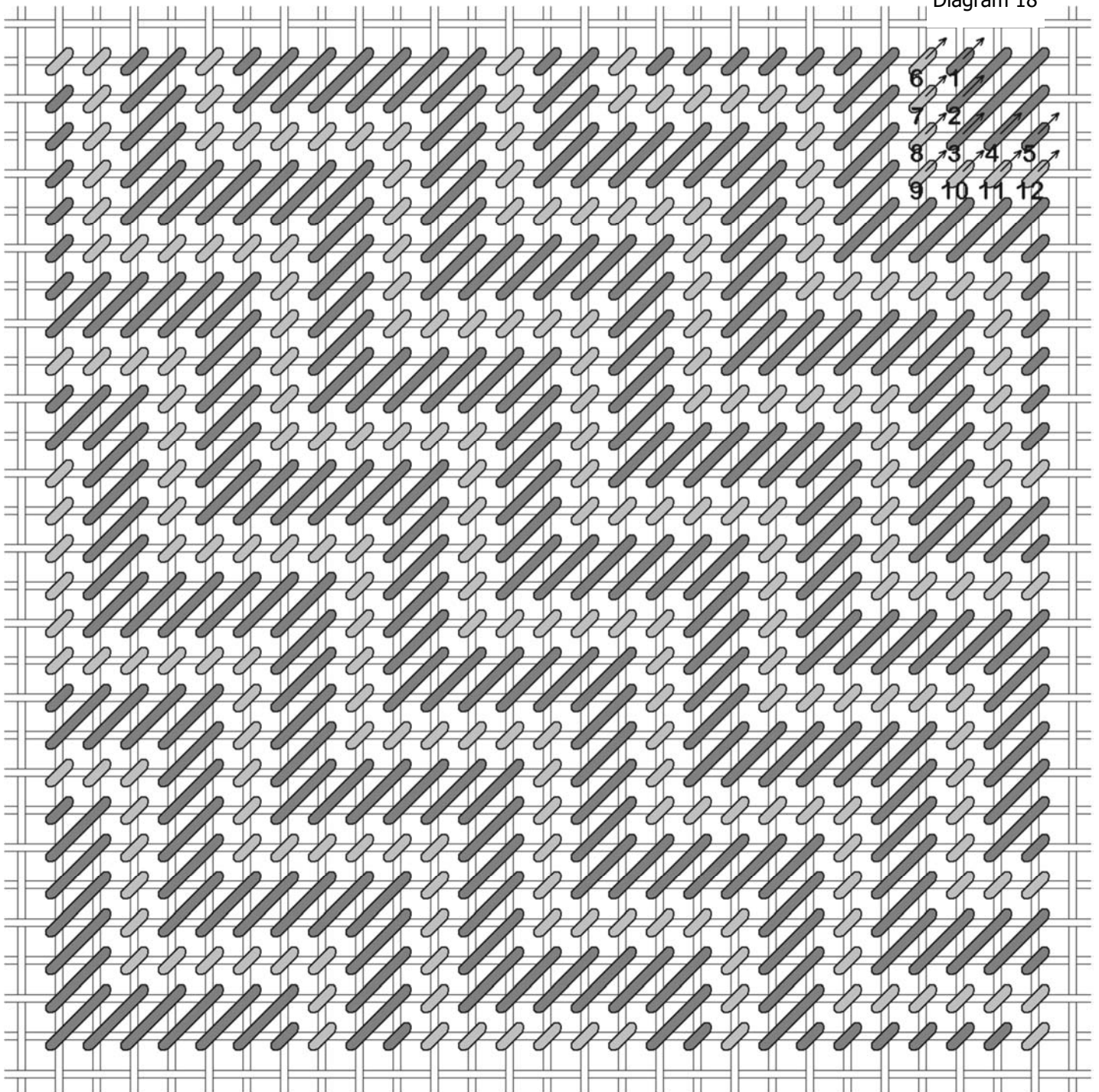

Diagram 16

How about a close up?

Here's the block above the center line:
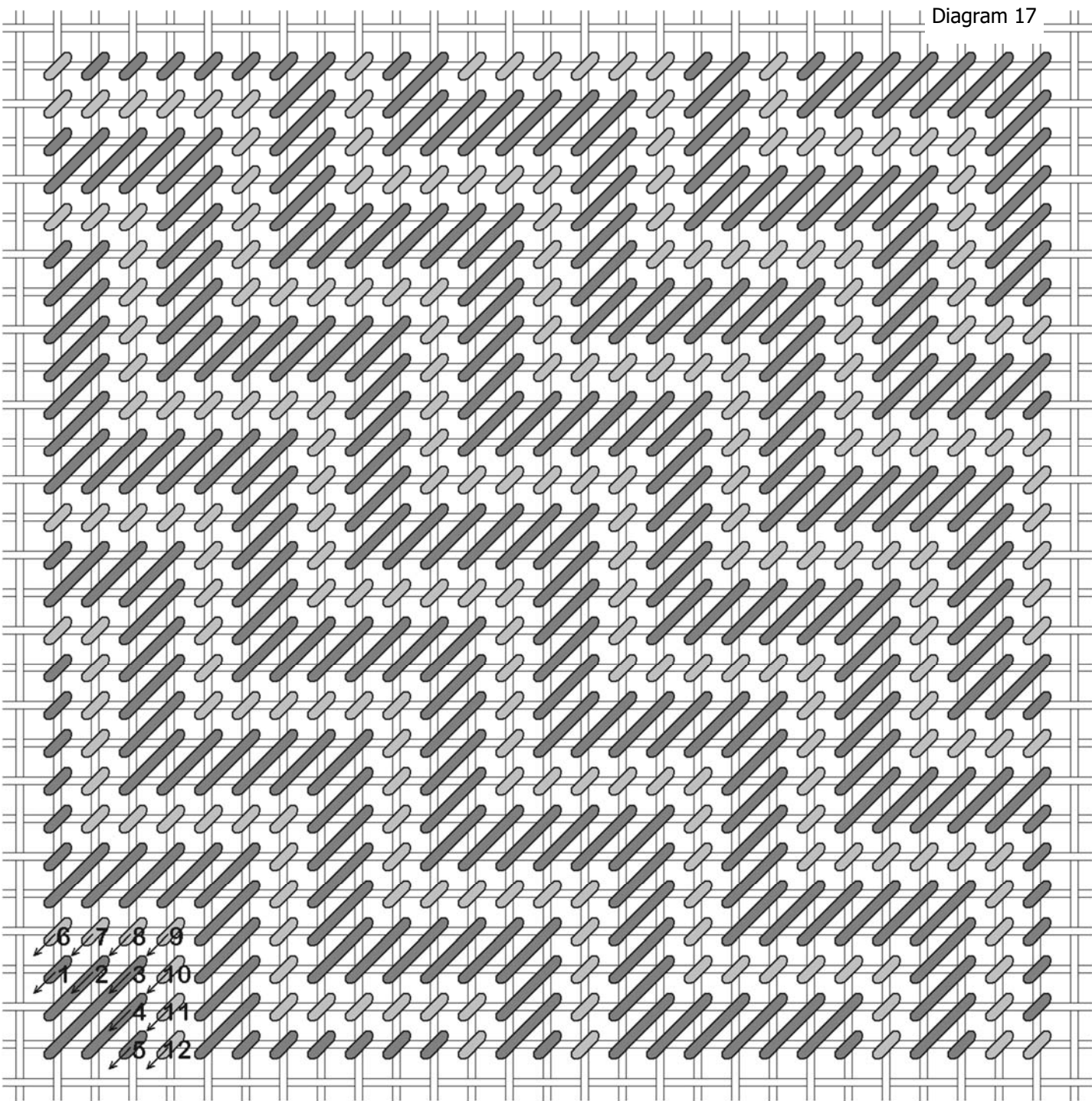
Diagram 17

I started stitching closest to the center line because that was easiest, stitching toward the stitches already in place so I could bring the needle up in an empty hole and down in a shared hole.

Here's the block below the center line:

Diagram 18

Again, I stitched toward the previous stitches so I could bring the needle up in an empty hole and down in a shared hole.

I used two needles at the same time, and stitched with one color then the other to reduce counting errors.
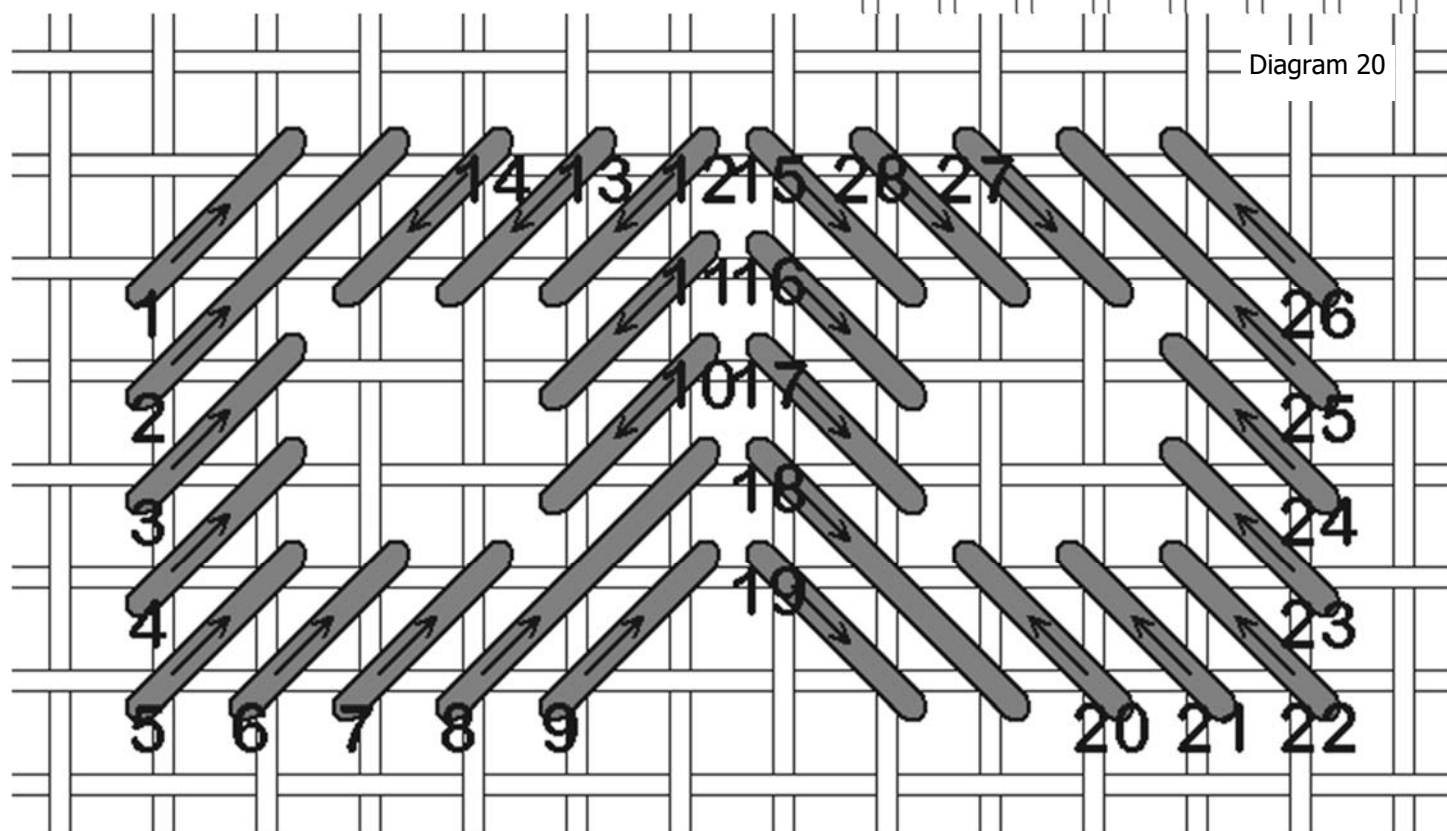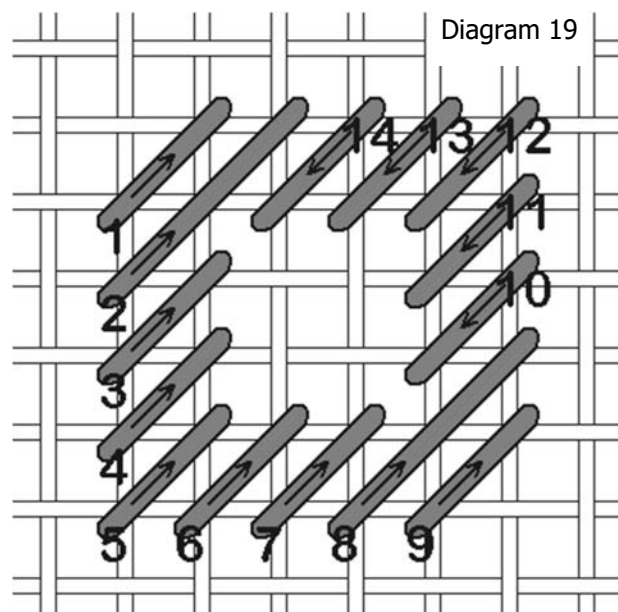
GOBELIN WITH SMYRNA CROSSES

Thread Type	As Shown	Your Choice
Stranded floss	Rainbow Gallery Mandarin Floss M911 Raspberry (2)	
Fine metallic braid	Kreinik #8 007HL Pink High Lustre	

I wasn't sure what to call this pattern. I'm pretty sure I found it in a stitch reference book somewhere, but can't remember which one and of course can't recall enough of the name to search for it. So if you know what this pattern is called, please let me know! In the meantime, it consists of gobelin stitches with Smyrna crosses.
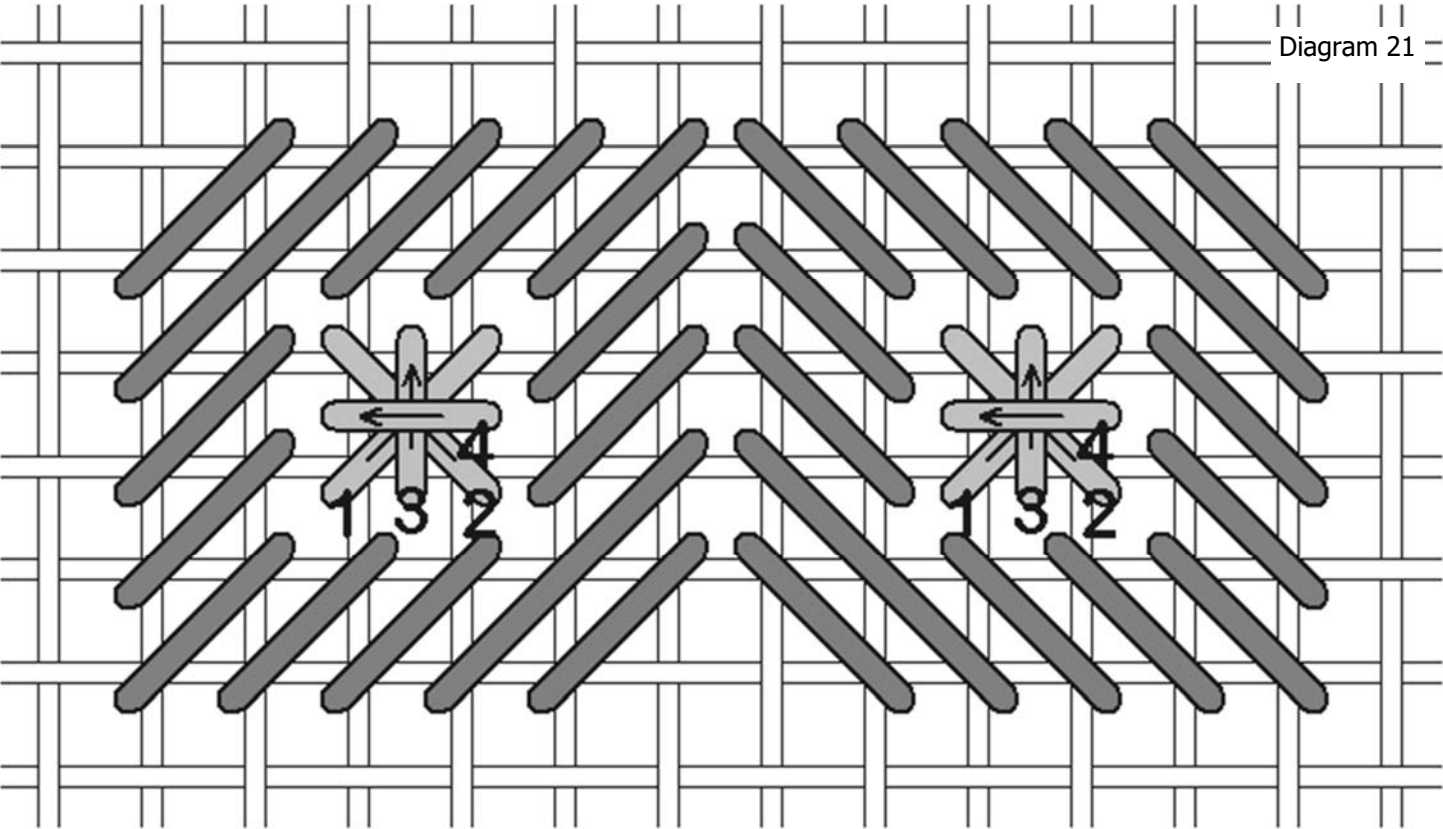
First stitch the gobelin stitches with the stranded floss. I didn't really like the look of 2 strands for the previous section, so let's use 3 strands for this section and see if it's better.

The basic block is shown in Diagram 19.

Stitch a mirrored block sharing holes, shown in Diagram 20.

Diagram 19

Diagram 20

17

After stitching all of the gobelin stitches, stitch a Smyrna cross in the voids with the fine metallic braid.

Diagram 21

There will be compensation of both the gobelin stitches, and the Smyrna crosses to complete the pattern. The entire area is shown n Diagram 22 with the compensating stitches.

Diagram 22

18
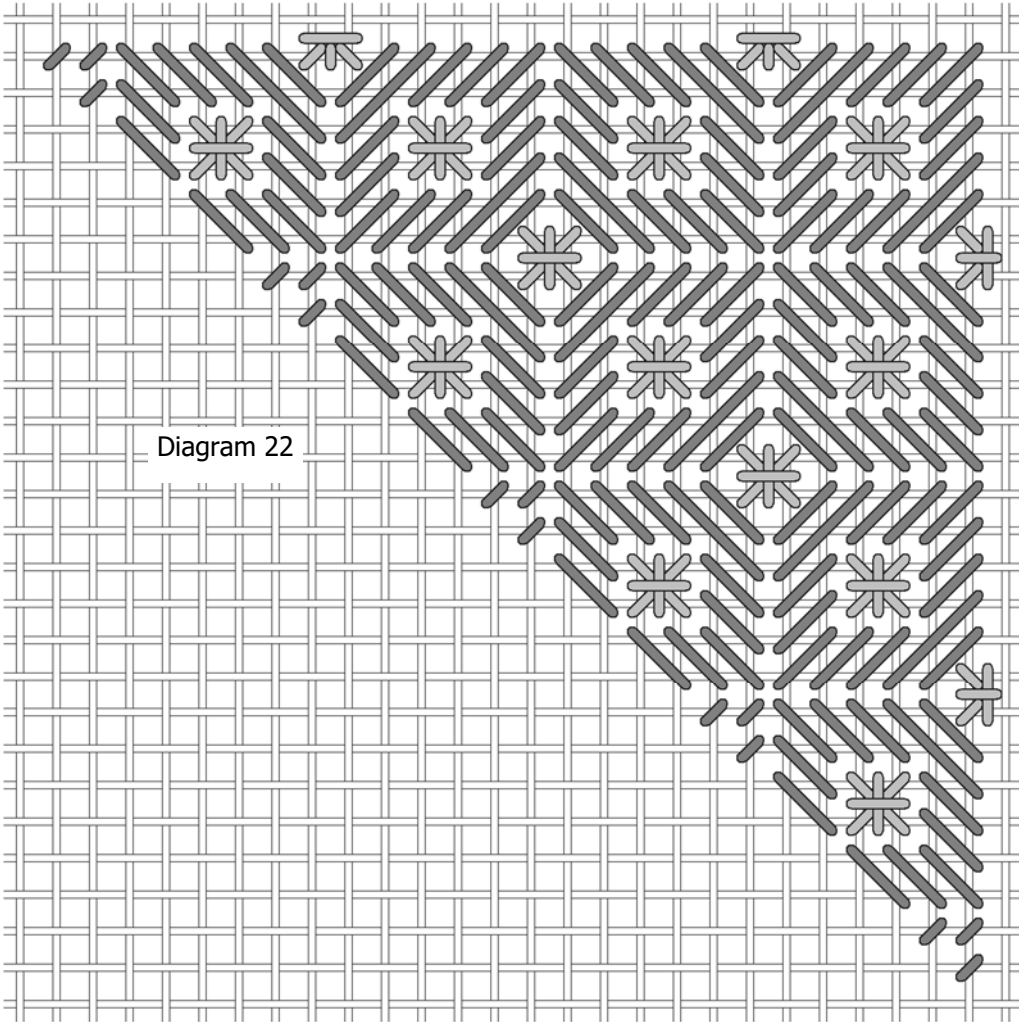
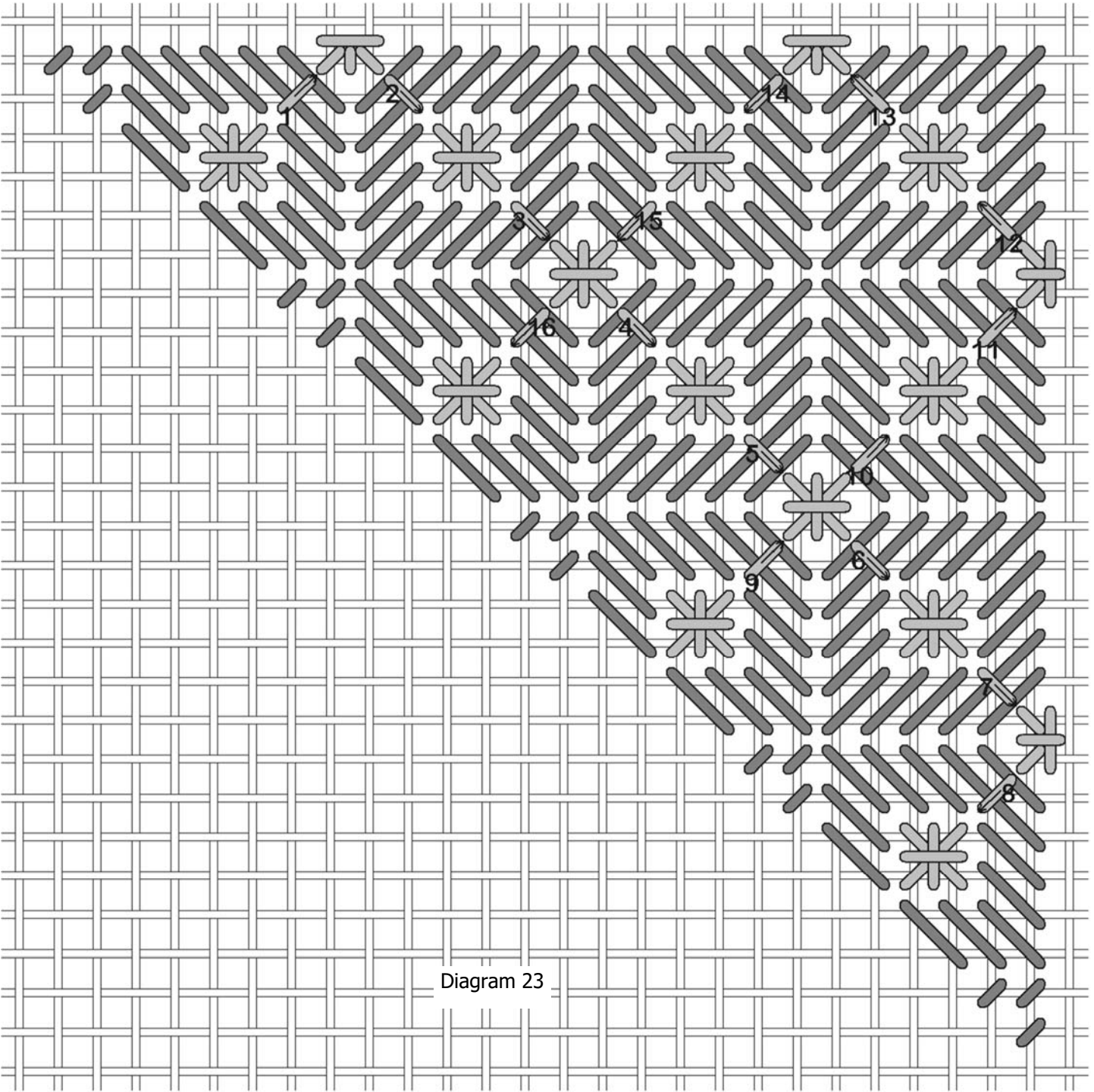Next stitch a diagonal stitch over the gobelin stitches with the fine metallic braid.

Diagram 23

You may find a different path for the overlay, and could even do it as you are stitching the Smyrna blocks if you like. This is how I did it, but it's certainly not the only way possible.

19

There's an area of gobelin stitches with Smyrna crosses on the sides of both waffle stitch areas.
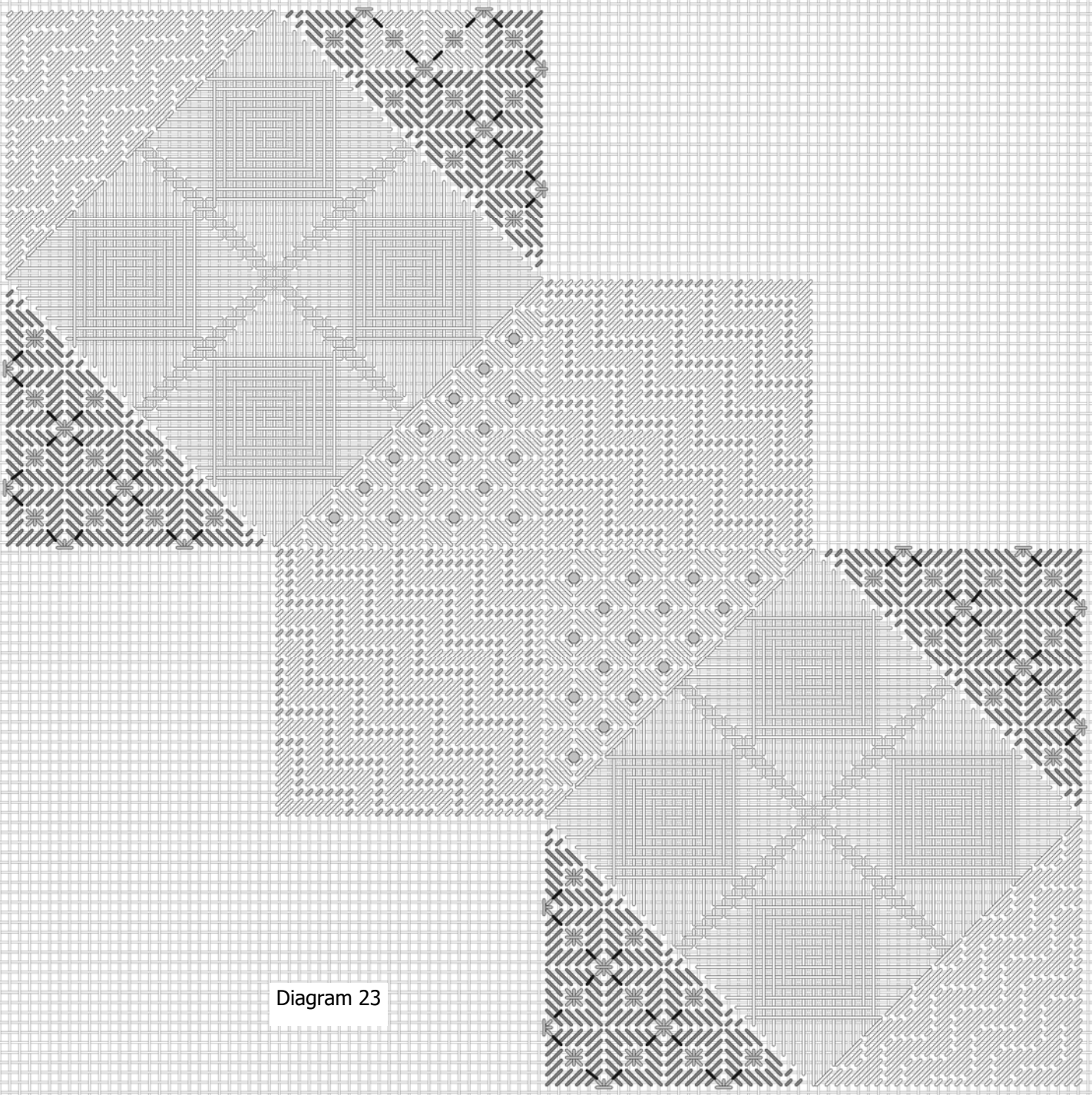
Diagram 23

PAVILION DIAMONDS AND HORIZONTAL HUNGARIAN

Thread Type	As Shown	Your Choice
Silk/metallic braid	Rainbow Gallery Silk Lame' Braid SL24 Baby Pink	
Silk/metallic braid	Rainbow Gallery Silk Lame' Braid SL80 Pink Carnation	

There are two stitches in this area, pavilion diamonds which are the longer stitches, and horizontal Hungarian, the shorter stitches between the pavilion diamonds. You may stitch with two needles at once, one threaded with one color and the other threaded with the other, or stitch all of one color then all of the other color. Your stitching will be prettier and lay nicer if you bring the needle up an empty hole and go down in a shared hole; I stitched with two needles so I could always bring the needle up in an empty hole.

There is compensation at the edges of the area, already worked out for you.

Diagram 24
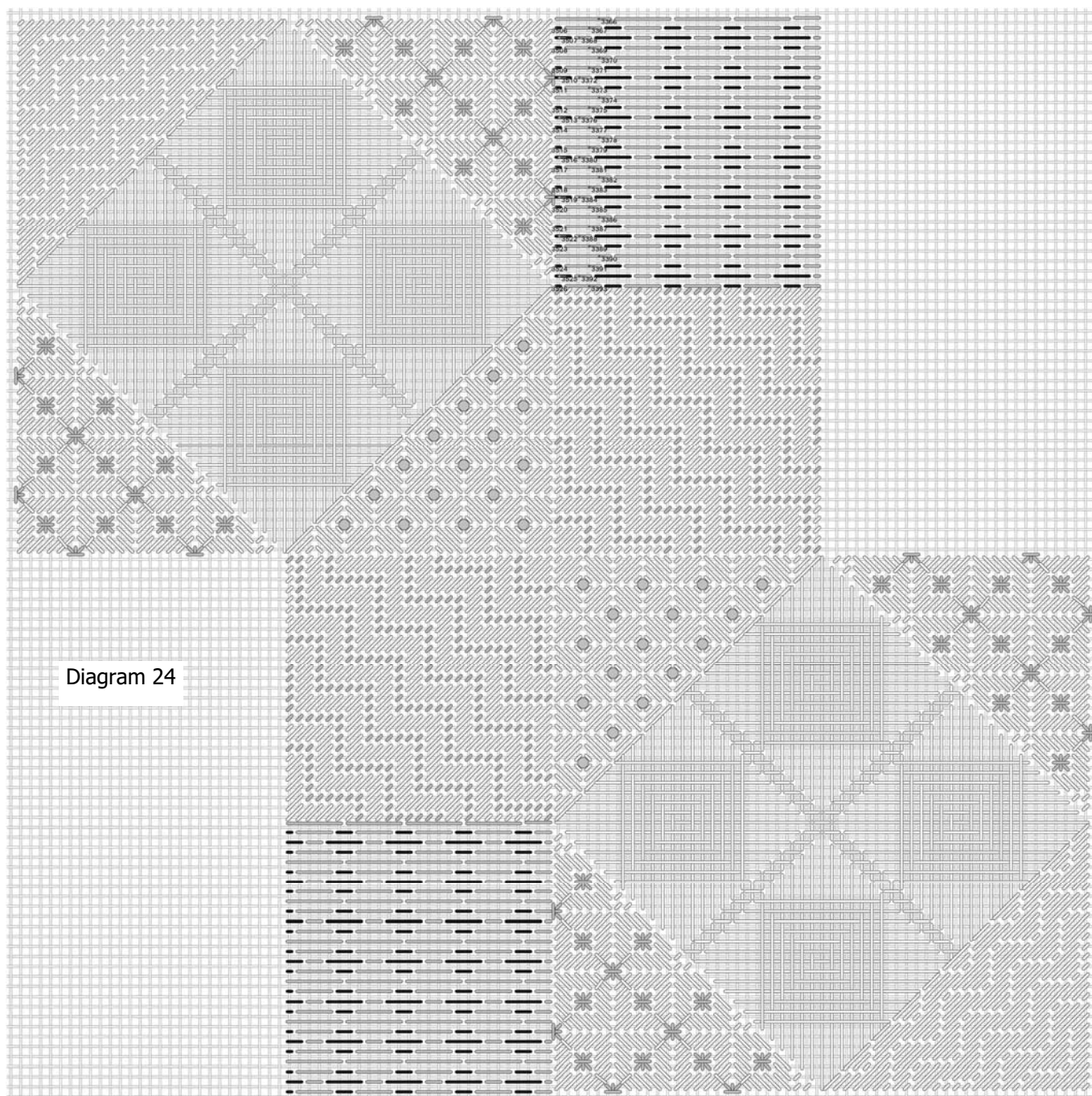
Here's a close up of the area:

Diagram 25
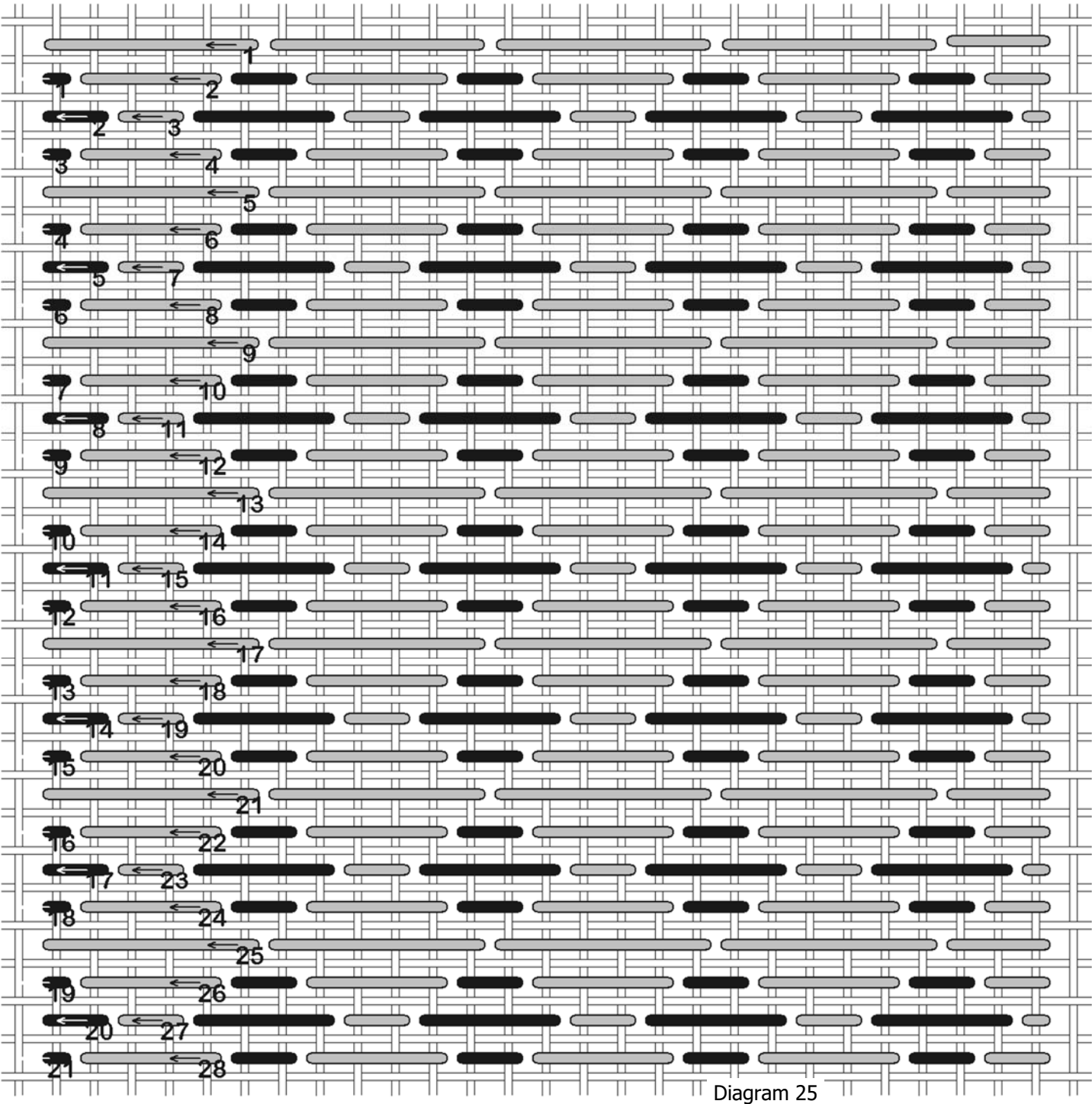
The other area is identical to this one.

CRISS CROSS HUNGARIAN

Thread Type	As Shown	Your Choice
Stranded floss	Rainbow Gallery Mandarin Floss M911 Raspberry (3)	

The next area is filled with criss cross Hungarian. You'll have an option for filling the spaces between the stitches which I'll discuss later.

I used 3 strands of floss. I'm happy with the coverage with 3 strands for diagonal stitches. There are compensating stitches at the edges to complete the pattern, which are included in the diagram.

I stitched in back and forth horizontal rows, but you may find a stitching path that you like better. I found it easiest to count if the slant of the stitches was the same direction I was traveling. For instance, the stitches that slant left were easier to count if I was traveling left to right, and the stitches that slant right were easier to count if I was traveling right to left. The diagram reflects this traveling path. I stitched the compensating stitches with each row.
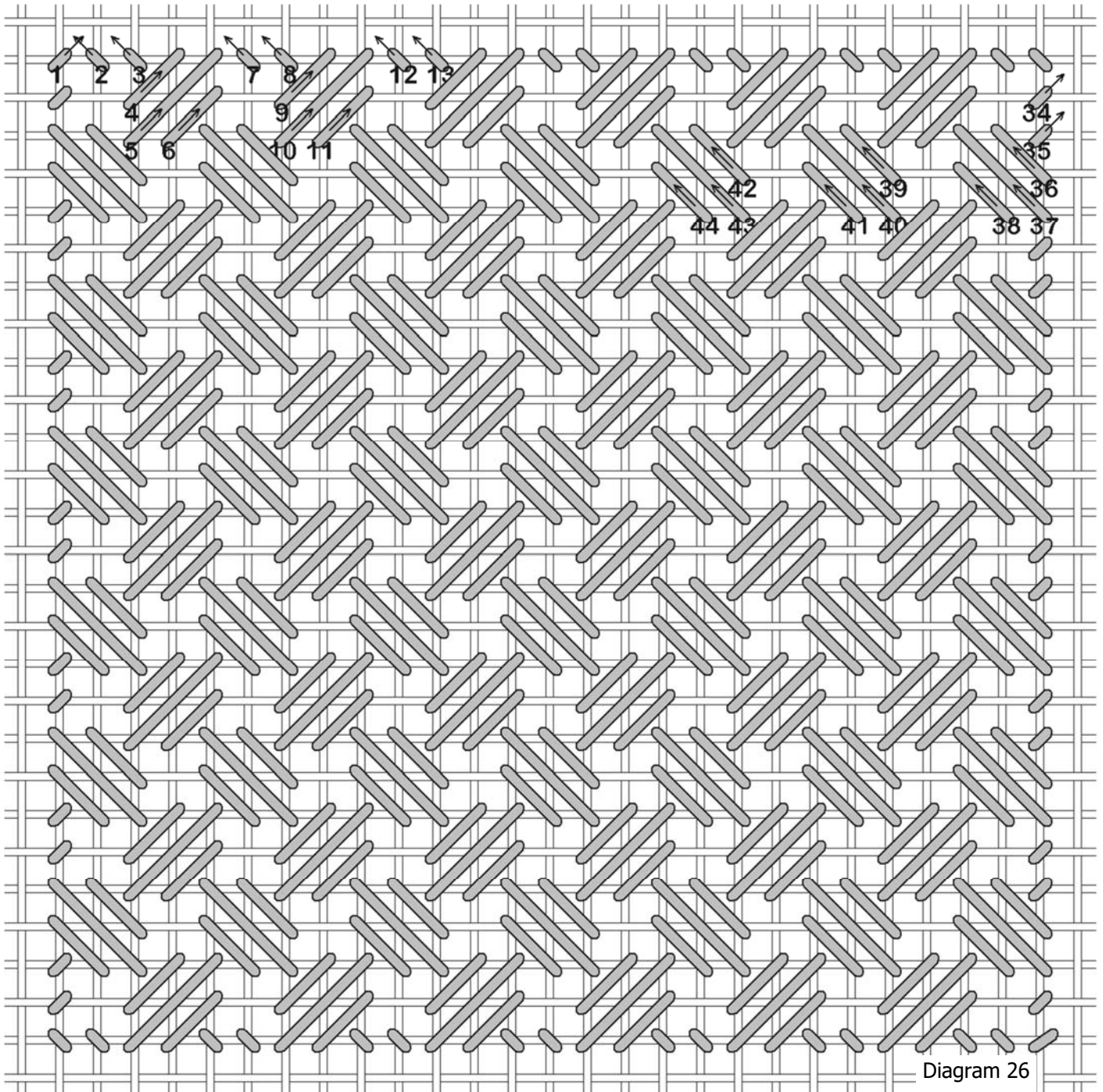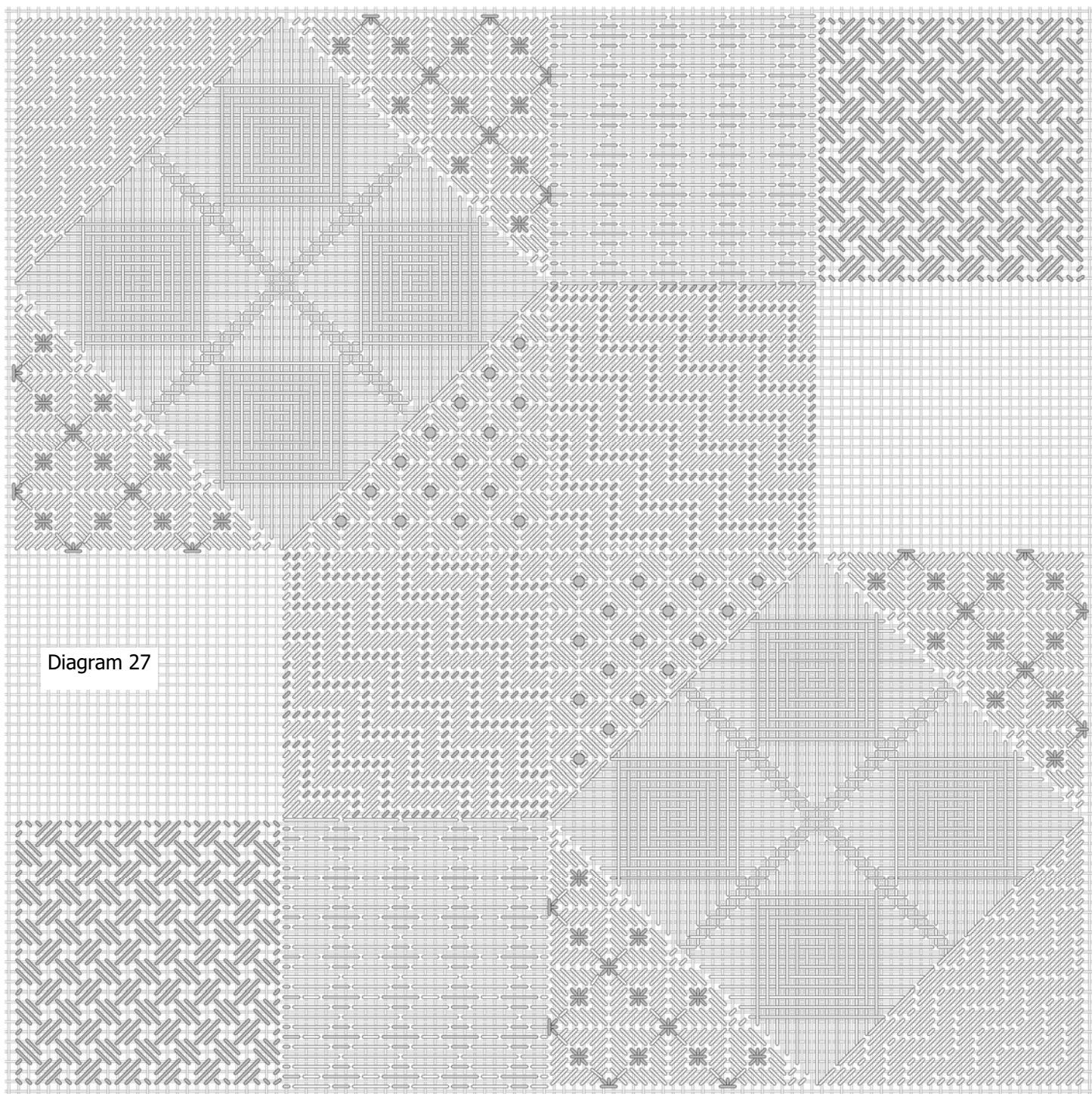

Diagram 26

There are two areas of criss cross Hungarian, identical in size and shape, and I stitched both of them before filling the spaces in the rows.

Diagram 27

Thread Type	As Shown	Your Choice
Glass seed beads size 11	Mill Hill Glass Seed Beads 02018 Crystal Pink	
Stranded floss	Rainbow Gallery Mandarin Floss M910 Bubblegum (1)	

I applied glass seed beads in the spaces between the criss cross Hungarian stitches, using 1 strand of floss. I use a cross stitch to apply beads: I bring the needle up to begin the cross stitch, go through the beads, then down to complete the first leg, then bring the needle up, go through the bead again, and end the cross stitch. You may have a different method of applying beads that you prefer.

If you don't want to use beads, that's fine. You can leave the spaces empty. You can stitch a cross stitch, half cross stitch or French knot in the spaces. I think it looks best to use a contrasting color or metallic. You get to decide which you prefer.
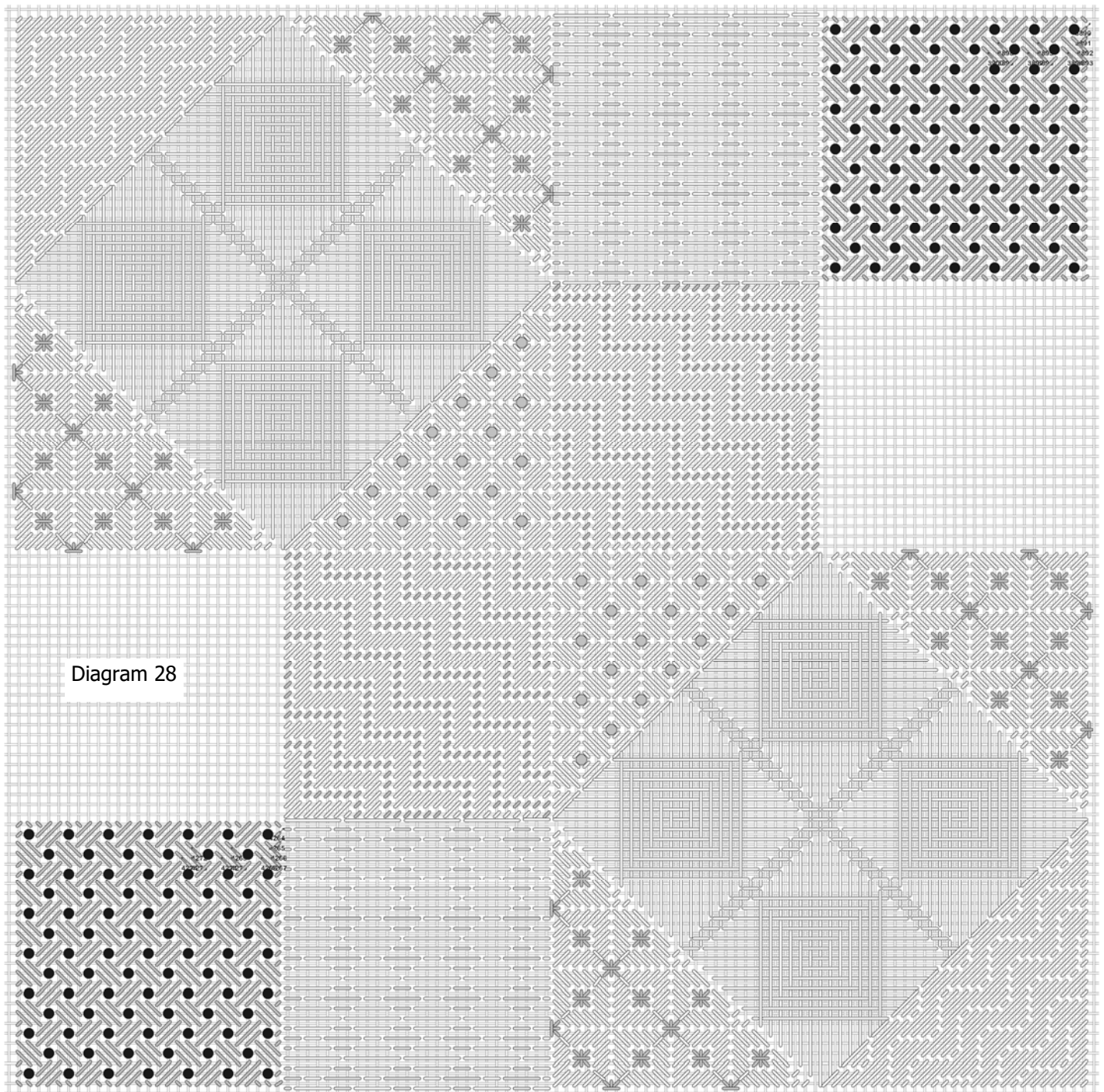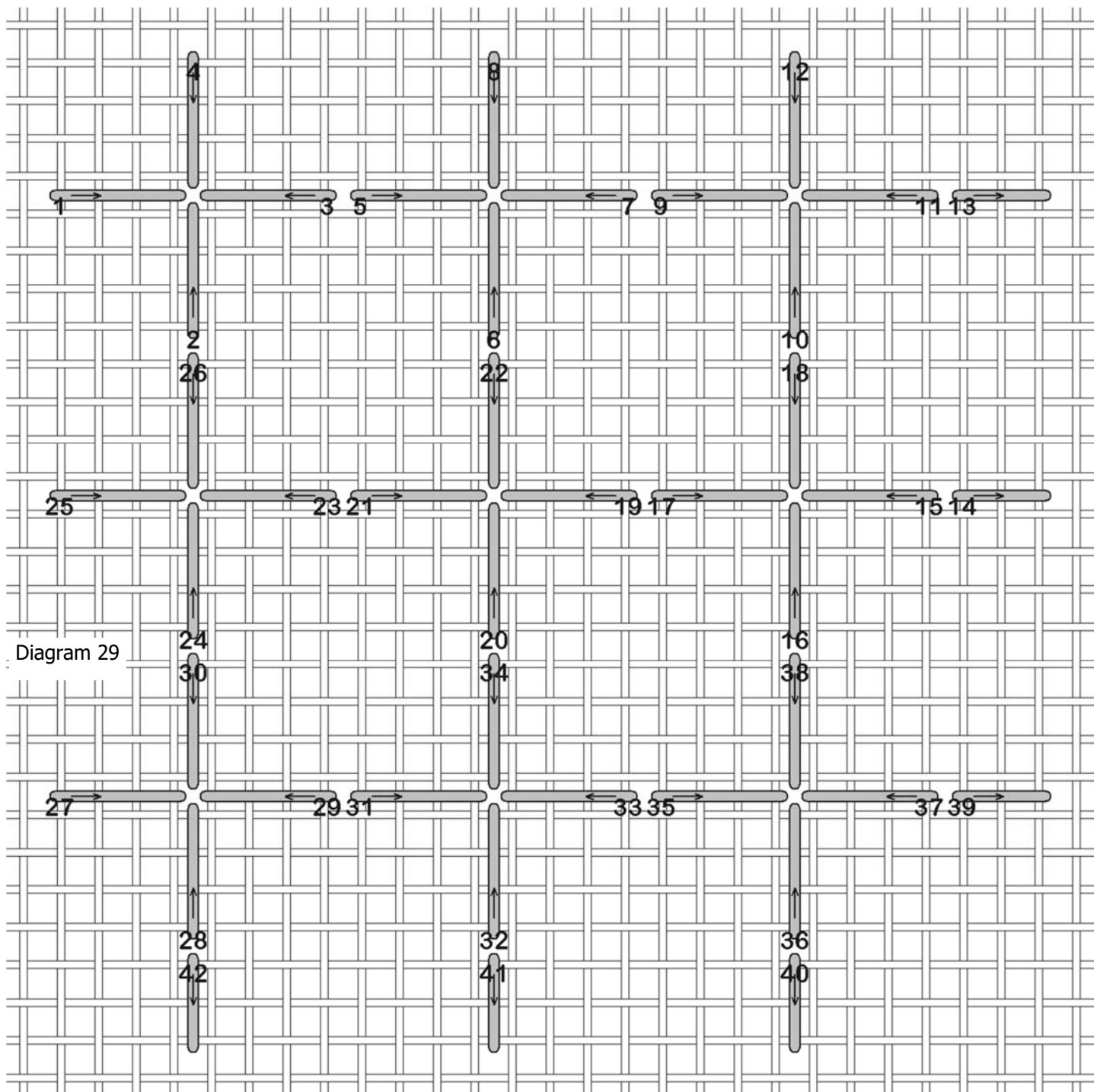
Diagram 28

FLORAL CROSS

Thread Type	As Shown	Your Choice
Silk/metallic braid	Rainbow Gallery Silk Lame' Braid SL80 Pink Carnation	

The last areas are filled with floral cross, a lovely composite pattern utilizing several different thread types in layers.

Begin with the silk/metallic braid and stitch the "skeleton" of straight stitches as shown in the diagram. There are going to be a lot more stitches through the entire area, so your thread carries should not show when the area is finished. There are compensating stitches at the edges.

Diagram 29

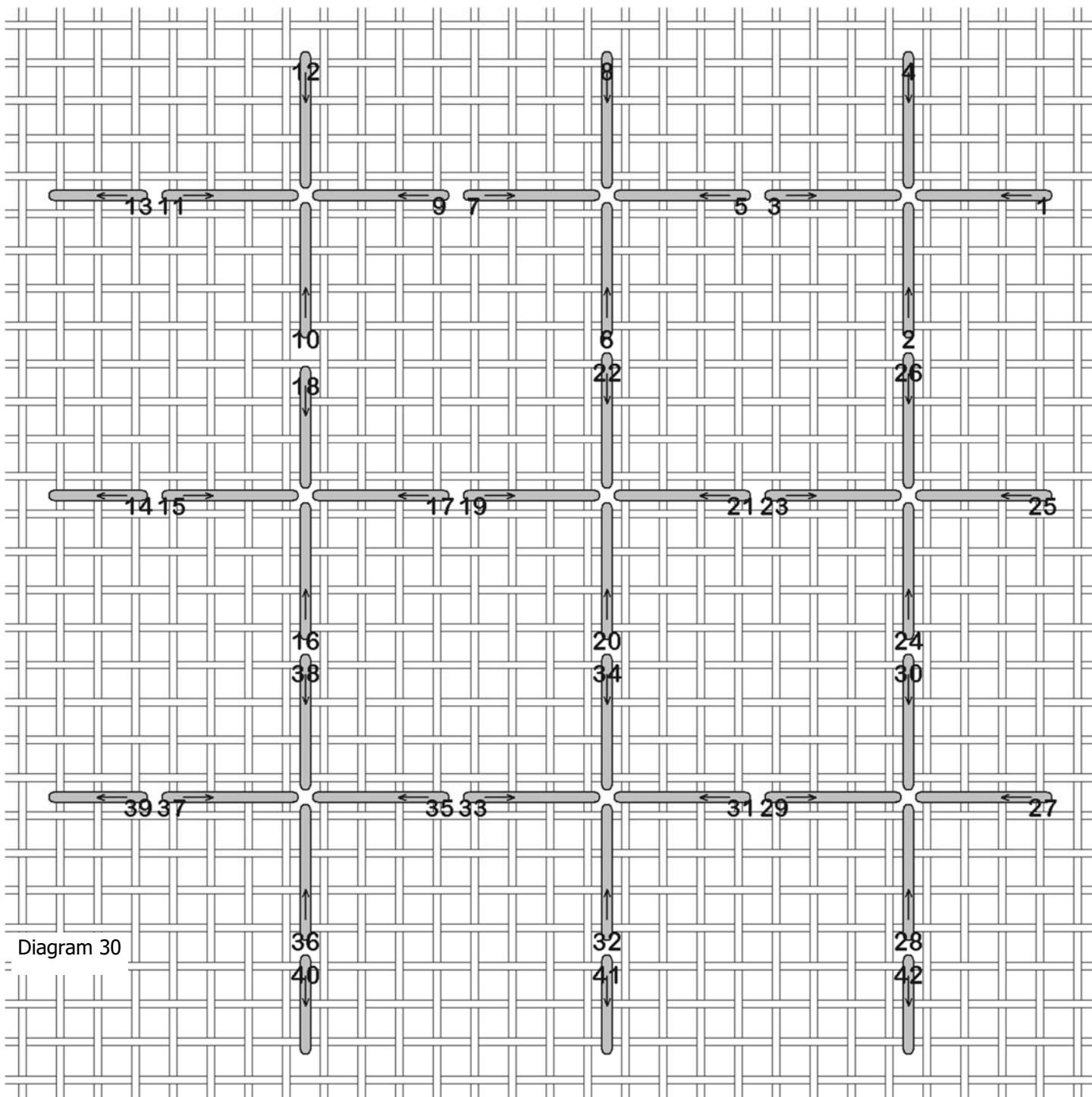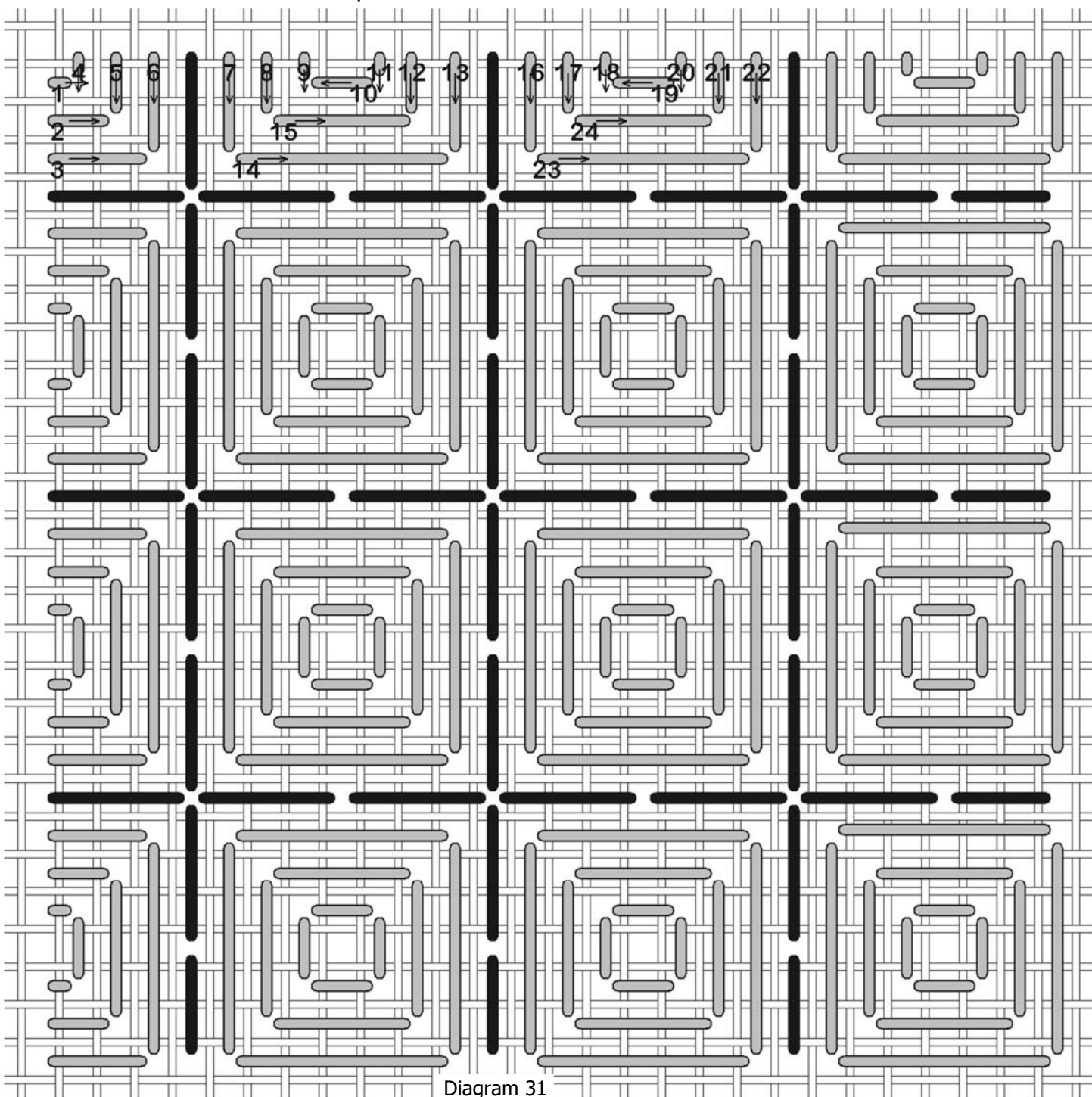This is for the area on the right edge of the design; the area on the left edge is identical but mirrored.

Diagram 30

Thread Type	As Shown	Your Choice
Stranded floss	Rainbow Gallery Mandarin Floss M910 Bubblegum (4)	

Use 4 strands to stitch the next part of the floral cross.

Diagram 31

The numbers show a possible path, but you may find a path you prefer. As much as possible try to bring the needle up in an empty hole and down in a shared hole.

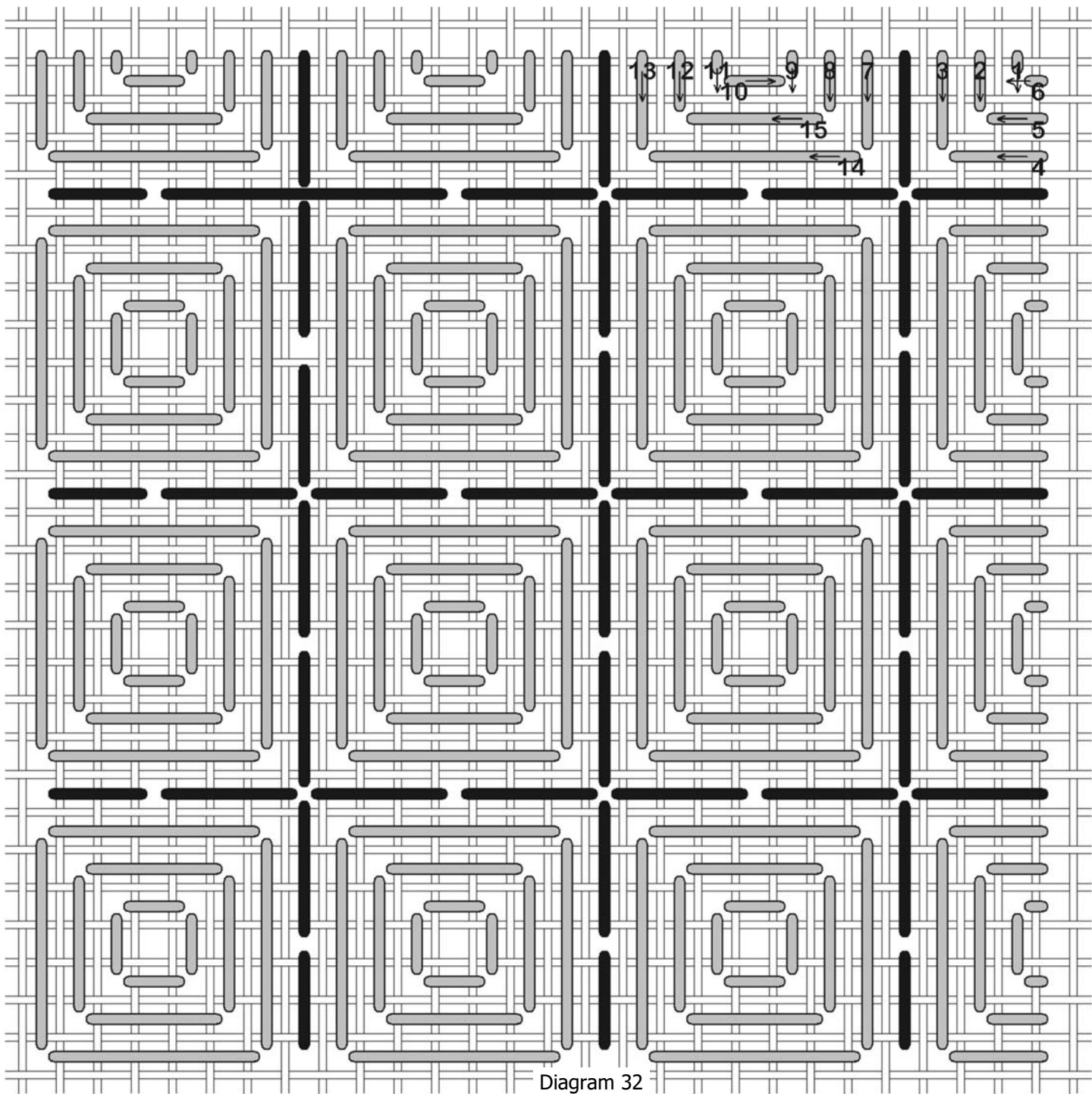This diagram shows the area on the right side.

Diagram 32

This diagram shows the next step of the floral cross on the left side of the design.

Thread Type	As Shown	Your Choice
Silk/metallic braid	Rainbow Gallery Silk Lame' Braid SL24 Baby Pink	

Stitch a diagonal stitch over the intersections of the straight stitches with the silk/metallic braid.
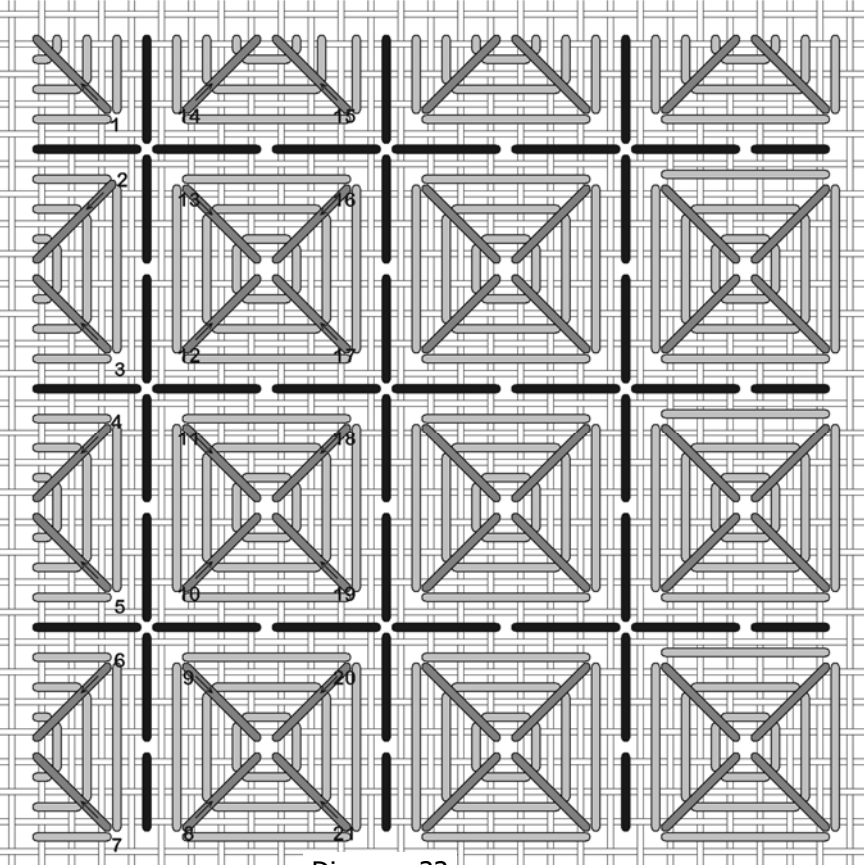
I worked in vertical rows, working down then up. The numbers reflect the path I took, but you may find a different path that you prefer.

Diagram 33
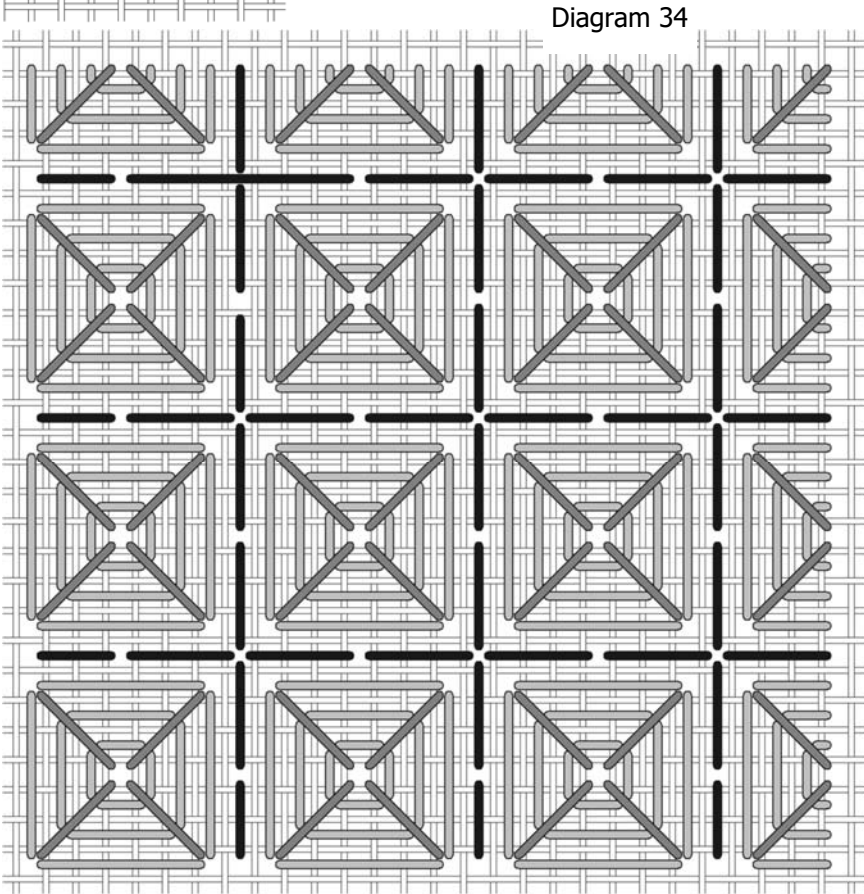
Diagram 34

30

Thread Type	As Shown	Your Choice
Fine metallic braid	Kreinik #8 007HL Pink High Lustre	

Finish the floral cross areas with a cross stitch over the intersections of the dark silk/metallic braid.
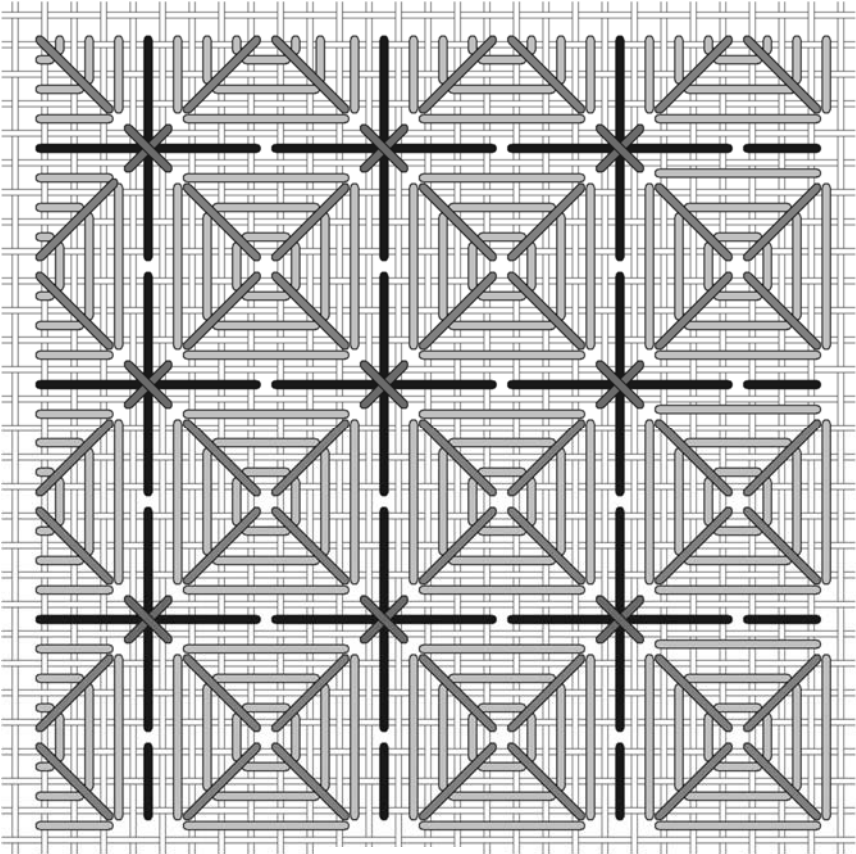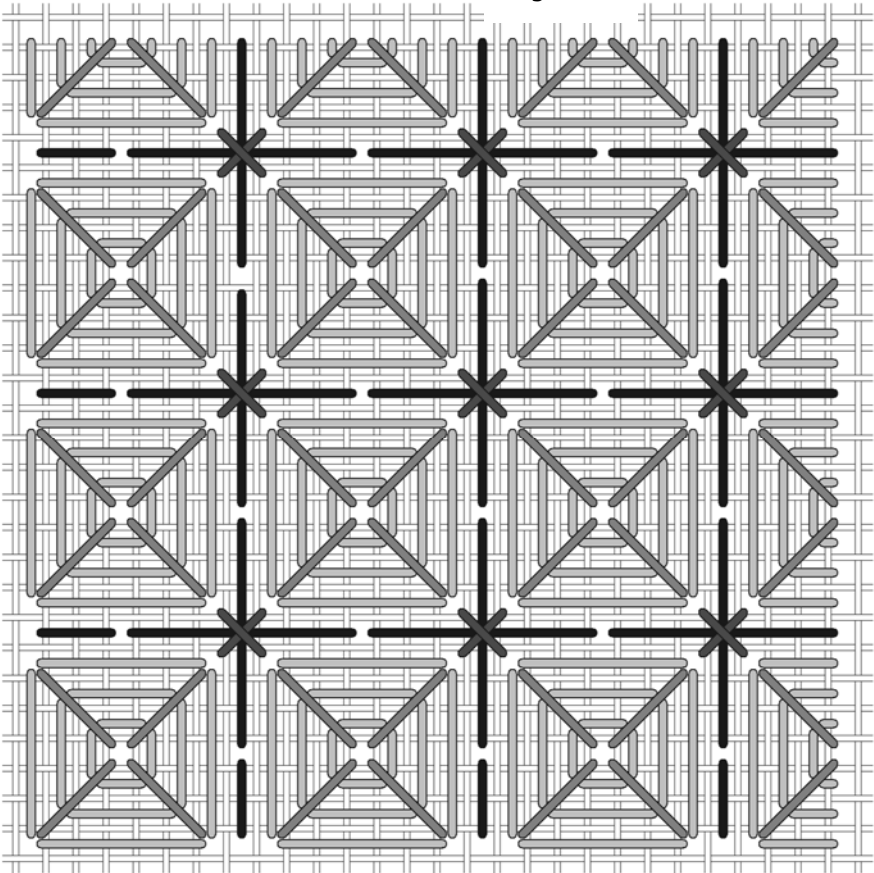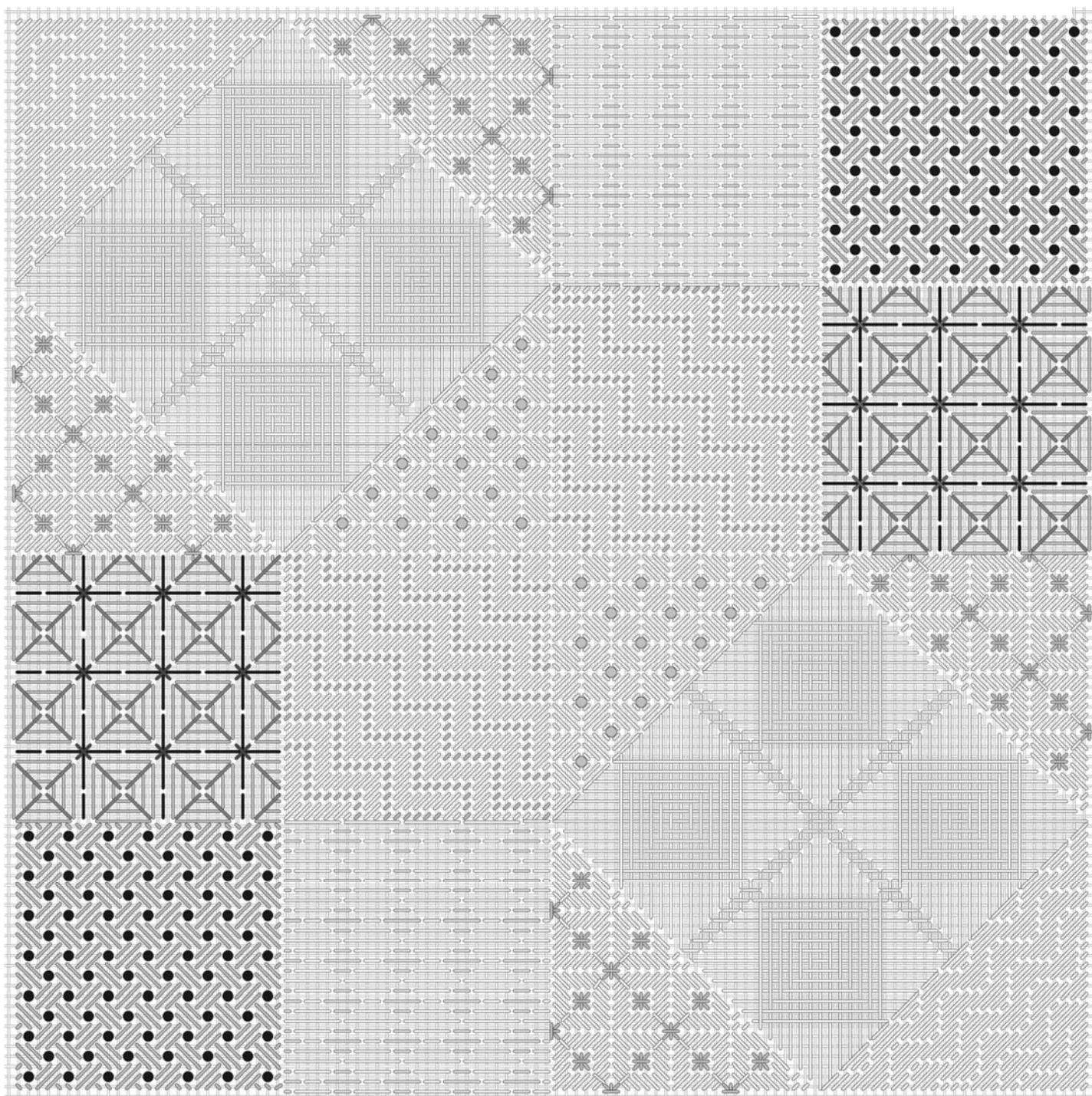
Diagram 35

Diagram 36

This shows the completed design, with the floral cross areas.

Diagram 37

I hope you've enjoyed stitching this project! Please contact me if you have any questions about this or any of my other projects:

Debbie@DebBeesDesigns.com

As always, happy stitching!

REFERENCES

I recommend the following books for additional information on needlework:

Favorite Stitches for Linen and Canvas, Volumes I, II, III and IV, by Linda Driskell, Needlecrafts Unlimited Co., Gadsden, AL, www.888needleu.com

The Needlepoint Book, by Jo Ippolito Christensen, a Fireside Book by Simon & Schuster, Inc., 1976 and 1999, 1230 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10020

Needlepoint Stitches (1988) and Stimulating Stitches (1992) by Jean Hilton, 43479 Alto Dr., Hemet, CA 92344

RESOURCES

THREADS:

Kreinik Mfg. Co., Inc., PO Box 1966, Parkersburg, WV 26102, kreinik@kreinik.com,
    1-800-537-2166, www.kreinik.com

Rainbow Gallery, 7412 Fulton Ave. #5, North Hollywood, CA 91605-4126 www.rainbowgallery.com

CANVAS:

Zweigart, 232 Old New Brunswick Rd., Ste E, Piscataway, NJ 08854, www.zweigart.com

SOFTWARE:

EasyGrapher Stitch Wiz, Davis Computer Services, Inc., PO Box 750141, New Orleans, LA 70175 www.easygrapher.com

Easy Cross DeLuxe, Fulford Software Solutions, 92 Penrhyn Crescent, Chilwell,
    Nottingham, NG9 5PA www.easycross.co.uk

Cover Photography by Rod Rowley

QUILT BLOCK 1

Rainbow Gallery
Mandarin Floss M910 Bubblegum
Mandarin Floss M911 Raspberry
Neon Rays N14 Hot Pink
Neon Rays+ NP14 Hot Pink
Silk Lame' Braid SL24 Baby Pink
Silk Lame' Braid SL80 Pink Carnation
Kreinik
#8 Braid 007HL Pink High Lustre
#8 Braid 024HL Fuchsia High Lustre
Mill Hill Glass Seed Beads
02018 Crystal Pink
02077 Brilliant Magenta

Other materials needed:
Zweigart 18 ct. White mono canvas, 12" x 12"
2 pairs of 12" stretcher bars
22 tapestry needle
Laying tool

About DebBee's Designs

My goal as a designer is to provide the clearest instructions possible so your stitching experience is enjoyable and free of frustrations. Please contact me if you have any questions or problems with your project.

I support my local needlework shop, and I encourage you to do the same.

A friendly word about copying—please don't!

This project was inspired by quilt block patterns. I used threads I had on hand, so explore your stash to find colors and threads that appeal to you. I liked the different textures of threads and the added texture of beads, but if you have other threads that you like feel free to use them. I hope you enjoy this project!

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