



Copious windows and sliding glass doors in the Smith home provide easy access to the pool and backyard orchards (and a great place to show off kids' artwork). **RAYMOND ELSTAD**

Cardiff

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lot of finesse and flow," he said. That flow is far from accidental and harkens from KimBal's unconventional process for the design. She began by creating a brush painting over an aerial view of the pool in May 2012. The pool is actually two pools: a small shallow children's pool and an adjoining larger adult pool.

In January, when water was drained for reconstruction, KimBal and Hubbell got in the pool with her large brushes. She put different colors of paint on a special mop that she uses for large-scale Zen brush painting, and, starting in the shallow end, she made one pretty much continuous stroke until she got to the deep end. She got out of the pool and did more strokes from the top. The mosaic they designed essentially has the same shape and colors as that brush painting.

She was inspired years ago after seeing the pool mosaics in artist James and Anne Hubbell's Santa Ysabel home. It was natural then, to call on their son Brennan to partner in the project.

"Brennan just took off with it. The way he cuts tile so that it thins out, you feel the movement in it. It

is real talent and he is a joy to work with," KimBal said.

The mosaics took five months to complete. They used aqua, green, yellow, white, orange and iridescent cobalt glass tiles to translate those original strokes. They also added new elements, including their artist Asian seals (hers translates to "beautiful joy" and his to "happy treasure") and mosaic versions of Asian brush painting characters.

In the children's pool, the two designed three oval mosaics on the bottom, which KimBal likens to drips from a paintbrush. "This one is the character for center or core, so you think about this being the center or core of the home. And in the other (adult) pool, I have the character for heart, so it's like the heart of the house, since this is a multi-generational home."

Five generations of Smiths have lived in the main house or the three homes/art studios across the street since Milton's mother, Mary Flandrena Smith, built her cottage on the land that she and Milton bought in 1929.

The pool project also became a multi-generational undertaking, with KimBal's sister Tricia Smith, who conceived of and financed the project, making the "drips" and

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