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VOLUME XVII ■ NUMBER 7

# baths

From classic luxury to trendy flourishes,  
these baths sparkle with personality.



Glass tile dominates this bath's floor and walls, in a wide array of sizes and colors. Large squares in three shades of green adorn the shower wall and tub surround.



THE COOL HUES OF WATER  
SET THE TONE IN THIS BATH

# LIQUID ASSETS

WRITTEN BY NANCY A. RUHLING  
PHOTOGRAPHS BY KEN GUTMAKER  
STYLED BY LINDA POPE

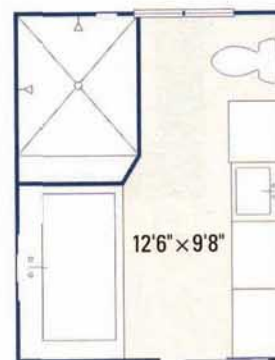
from the abstract pattern of the tile lining the shower stall to the tall wall niches filled with vases of fresh-cut flowers, the bathroom that belongs to Kate Stankis and Mary Ann Rafferty was designed to be a work of art.

Passionate collectors of contemporary art, Kate and Mary Ann wanted to turn the 121-square-foot master bath in their 1960s split-level ranch in Oakland, California, into a gallery-worthy experience. For this, the couple turned to San Francisco-based interior designer Susan Templer, of Templer Interiors.





**LEFT:** One-inch tiles cover the floor and baseboard. A multicolored treatment around the window ties in with the mosaic band that visually binds the tub and shower areas.



FLOOR PLAN: STEVEN STANKIEWICZ

**ABOVE:** The bath's layout is fairly straightforward. The homeowners are fortunate enough to have room for a separate tub and shower, both of which sit on a short riser.

To that end, the designer treated the space like a blank canvas, composing the "picture" using eight sizes of glass tile, squares ranging from one-inch to 12-inch, arranged in a bold manner à la the artist Piet Mondrian. The different dimensions give a variety of effects: In the shower, big boogie-woogie blocks make a striking statement, while the window gets a dainty treatment of tiny tesserae. Tiled baseboards create continuity throughout the elongated 12'6"×9'8" space.

Getting all the pieces to fit was tricky.

"The tile layout was challenging because we had to do detailed mathematical calculations to get it right," Templer says.

"The look of the room," she adds, "all stems from the changes in color, size and direction of the tile." The color scheme, reminiscent of sky and sea, was chosen to bring a serene and natural feel to the space. It centers on a trio of greens—Cactus, Raffia and Olive—plus a neutral hue, called Cameo. "We find water very soothing," Kate says. "And we both like water activities, particularly fly-fishing."





The yellow in the natural maple cabinets helps punch up the green tiles. The mod, funky hardware and lights add an extra dimension of personality.



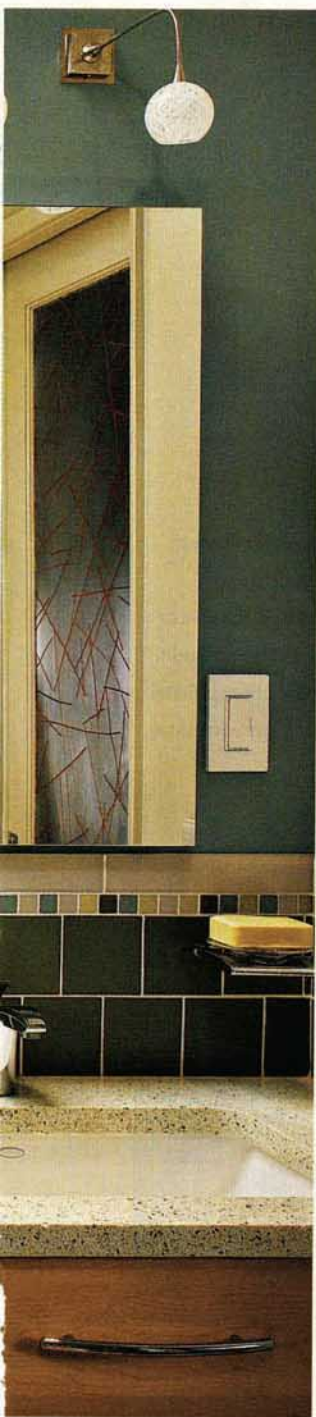


Tile running up the wall from the floor in a continuous stream playfully meets the cabinets, integrating them into the design scheme. The tile's installation pattern is echoed in the beveled slab doors of the natural maple cabinets, which are mounted on the wall a few inches from the floor to give the vanity a floating feeling. A pair of inset, mirror-fronted medicine cabinets sit above the matching vanities.

Art aside, Kate, a Web designer, and Mary

Anne, a biotech consultant, revel in the tranquility of their special space, which they say is reminiscent of a landscape painting in progress. "Seeing a bouquet of flowers in one of the wall niches is a nice start to the day," Kate says. "At night, it's just like a kiss on the forehead." Incidentally, the master bath has turned out to be a great place to grow orchids. "I usually have a half dozen of them set around the air-jet tub," says Kate. "The dendrobiums do the best." ♦





**ABOVE:** The tall inset wall niche visually echoes the two mirrored medicine cabinets, both of which are also set into the wall. One of the owners says seeing flowers in the niche really makes her day.

## design points

### HIP TO BE RECTANGULAR

The Dutch painter Piet Mondrian blazed a mighty path with his modular, rectangle-dominated paintings. His work greatly influenced magazine layout, for starters. And as this bath amply demonstrates, Mondrian left quite a mark on the design of residential spaces. Just check out these modest modular elements:

**NICHE PHILOSOPHY** The gaps between wall studs provide numerous opportunities to add rectangular niches, either for decorative or storage purposes (right).

**SHOWER SHOW** The shower is a perfect place for a niche, and this one (below, right) even has shelves. Not only is the niche itself a long rectangle, but it's both lined and framed with glass tiles, all of which helps the space percolate visually. The same holds true for the horizontal niche (right).

**LITTLE THINGS** The globe lights aren't exactly Mondrian-esque (below, left), but the square bases qualify, especially juxtaposed with the large maple panel and the medicine cabinet. They punctuate and enliven otherwise dead wall space.

