

A Dreamlike Scene

InspireDesign



The Fairfield by Marriott Fair Oaks Farms didn't want the typical indoor pool set in a nondescript, neutral room. Instead, the Indiana property added some fun flair to its "Pool Party" room—a mosaic designed by R. Tom Gilleon in collaboration with Artaic.

"The typical hotel pool is often found in an opaque corner," said Michael McCall, chief strategy officer, Fair Oaks Farms. "For our Fairfield by Marriott Fair Oaks Farms, we chose to showcase the pool and to make it visually part of the public experience of the hotel. We sited the pool along the primary public hallway with 42 linear ft. of an 8-ft.-high glass wall. This transparency showcases the pool while providing visual expanse and enrichment to the public area experience.

"This strategy committed us to making the design of the pool worthy of this prominence," he continued. "So, the mandate was to make it a cool Pool Party, both functionally and visually. The word 'Art' is embedded in the phrase 'Pool PARTY,' and art became the theme of the space."

It was important for the hotel to make it a space for all ages. "Often, a place designed for children talks down to these small guests, as many designers seem to think such environments need to be cartoon-like," McCall said. "However, classic Disney feature animation has taught us that people of all ages love beautiful art—hence, the refined mandate [for] art that could be appreciated at multiple levels: from the pure color and form for toddlers with formative cognition, to bold and fanciful images for older kids and adults, to riddles and parodies appreciated by the slightly more cerebral."

A dreamlike scene depicting a manicured farm with apple trees, horses, and a Rodin-style thinker bull contemplating which came first, the chicken or the egg, the mosaic is titled "Surruralism," reflecting the surrealist take on ruralism. In order to recreate such a particular design as a mosaic, the hotel and Gilleon turned to Artaic, which is capable of recreating existing imagery on tile.

"As the name implies, Tom Gilleon's 'Surruralism' is about surreal ruralism—about rural objects captured in a scene of a manicured sculpture garden," said Ted Acworth, founder/CEO of Artaic. "Working collaboratively with Artaic, Tom was able to bring his signature color saturation and seemingly straightforward narrative directly from the 'Surruralism' painting to the beautiful mosaic, with 300,000 pieces of 3/8 inch vitreous glass tile, with each piece equating to a pixel. The result is a totally unique visual delight, both in image and technique, creating a one-of-a-kind brand-bonding experience for our guests."

Artaic designer Ashley Trap worked closely with Gilleon on each step of the translation, including choosing materials, emulating a brushstroke texture, balancing color composition, and creating the character of the featured animals. To do so, Trap and Gilleon used a vibrant palette of reds, yellows, and various greens, that would closely match the color and texture of the original artwork.