

think outside

THE TANK

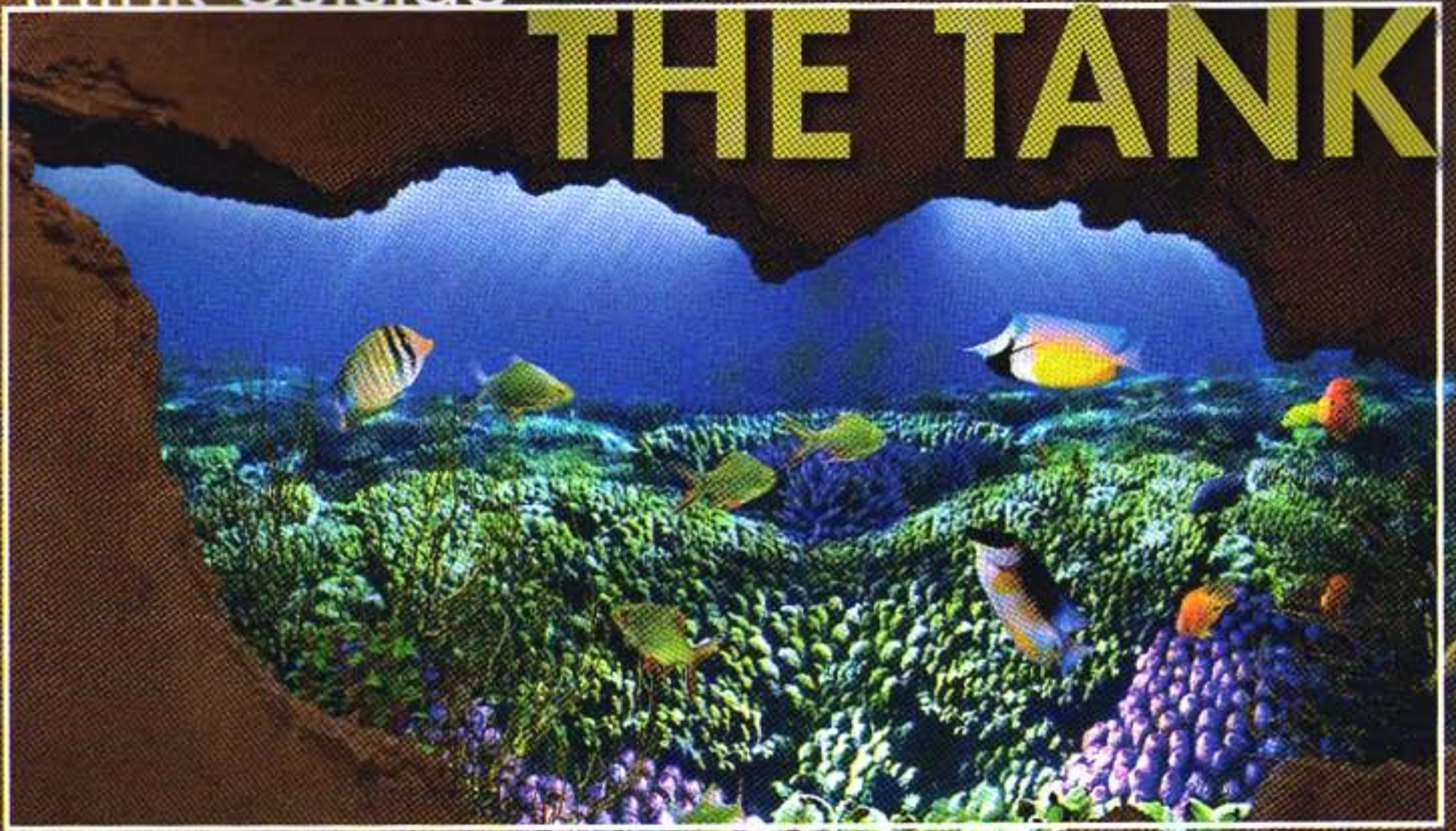


PHOTO BY JOEL MARK

The clock strikes eight p.m. and the aquarium across the room snaps on its "twilight" fluorescent lights indicating to the fish inside that it is evening. Guests turn their heads and wander over to the tank, entranced by the light, bluish-purple glow and the angelic movements of the creatures inside, shimmying and gliding through the bubbles and caves in the coral.

What draws customers so feverishly to such expensive and high-maintenance pets? It may be that aquariums are not really in the category of *pets* at all. The most elaborate and high-end aquariums could truly be categorized as art – *living art*. Artist and aquatic installation specialist Richard Bilow of Aqua-Terra Studios recently contributed to one such extreme project in Montecito where the usual tropical coral was replaced by a magnificent seascape composed of volcanic rock and hand-blown glass sculptures. Bilow says, "I approach aquarium design as a multi-dimensional form of fine art. This allows me to avoid preconceived assumptions about aquariums, which typically



cause all aquariums to look very similar." Giving an all-new meaning to the term think-tank, Bilow's groundbreaking, "fusion form" art-aquariums have become popular with such famous patrons as Shaquille O'Neal and Charlie Sheen.



aquarium design as a multi-dimensional
FORM OF FINE ART



PHOTO BY JOHN DISENDIG

PHOTO BY JOHN DISENDIG

All aquariums shown were constructed
by Aqua-Terra Studios

Aqua-Terra Studios:
Richard Bilow, 310.314.2216
www.aquaterrastudios.com

