



EMBEDDED IN A SCULPTURED CONCRETE WALL, THIS INSTALLATION FEATURES RICHARD'S PROPRIETARY DEPTH-ILLUSION TECHNOLOGY. THE INSTALLATION IS A BOLD AND DYNAMIC ARCHITECTURAL FEATURE AT THE NEWLY REMODELED FRIAR'S OF BEVERLY HILLS.

## FISHCASSO

Artist Richard Bilow dives into creating unique aquariums



FOR THOSE WHO PREFER A RELATIVELY TRADITIONAL STYLE AQUARIUM, RICHARD'S PHOTO-ILLUMINATED "LIVING IMAGE" (TM) BACKGROUNDS CREATE THE IMPRESSION OF A PHOTOGRAPH COME TO LIFE. SIT BACK IN A SOOTHING WARM BATH AND ENJOY THE SHOW!

Designer, sculptor, innovative aquarium artist.

That's exactly what you get when you commission fusion artist Richard Bilow, who began designing unique aquarium and terrarium environments in the late 80s. "Fishcasso" is what Bilow's clients have nicknamed this talented designer. From traditional aquariums to sculptured one-of-a-kind creations, Bilow guides all of his designs with artistic flare. His work has been featured on Access Hollywood, Eye on L.A., and has hooked such clients as Shaquille O'Neal, The City of Beverly Hills and the San Diego Marriott Hotel.

"To understand my work, it is important to know that the concept of aquariums as fine art is the key driving force behind my creations," says Bilow. "For more than 15 years, I have been exploring and developing concepts, styles and techniques that allow me to create 'aquariums' unlike any you have seen before."

The root of Bilow's work goes back 30 years, when he was creating animal habitats at the age of 10. His vision of creating aquariums as art began during his college years.

One of his early successes was working with Barbara Lazaroff and Wolfgang Puck on an aquarium installation in the renowned (but now closed) Granita restaurant in Malibu, California.

"My vision of using glass sculptures in aquariums was inspired by my work with Barbara Lazaroff," says the Los Angeles-based artist. "The forms I use to compose my seascapes are interpretations of forms found in nature, much like the lighting used at Granita. In most cases, I first design an initial seascape layout using forms that actually exist in nature. Then I study photographs of coral reef life forms to isolate aesthetic qualities that I want each form to have. Once I have a clear vision of the seascape, I use my team of hot glass artists to create the individual forms, under my direction and with my assistance. Over the years I have developed a system that allows me to control the process enough to assure that the end result captures the essence of the look and feel I am after."

More recently, Bilow has begun to use illuminated underwater photographs as aquarium backgrounds to create a sense of depth and a specific aesthetic impact. All the underwater images are captured by the artist himself while diving in natural environments.

"One of the great things about the illuminated photographic technique is that it allows me to create installations which compliment any color scheme" he says.

Aside from the beauty of the aquariums, Bilow notes the health benefits, too:

"Fish are an excellent way to calm children, and babies strengthen their eyes when they follow the fish," he reports.



FIBEROPTIC LIGHTING ACCENTUATES THE ELEGANT BEAUTY OF THIS SCULPTURED GLASS AQUARIUM SEASCAPE. DECORATIVE GLASS INTERIORS DEFINE ONE OF RICHARD'S TRADEMARK STYLES.

"Watching nature is a great way to de stress, and incorporating fish into interiors creates an atmosphere of life and a sense of well-being. Aquariums are also great conversation pieces, especially when they are created as works of art."

The intensity and clarity of Bilow's vision, combined with his passion for nature, art and innovation, makes Aqua-Terra Studios (his company) the world's premier resource for those wishing to transform static spaces into dynamic environments.



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MUSEUM-QUALITY FAUX CORAL, PHOTO-ILLUMINATION, AND AN "L"-SHAPED AQUARIUM EXTENDING DEEP INTO THE WALL COMBINED TO CREATE A 500-GALLON INSTALLATION THAT FAR EXCEEDED THE CLIENTS' EXPECTATIONS.