

Woodworker nabs cameo on Animal Planet

By Jennifer Hicks
STAFF WRITER

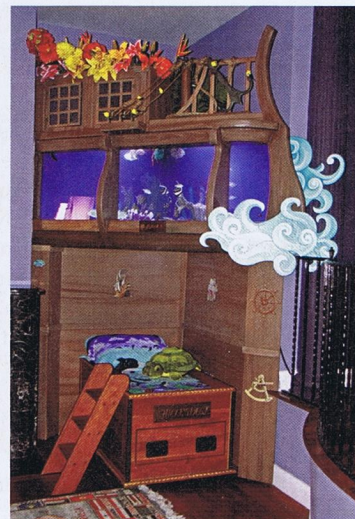
Eric Saperstein is using television as a way of drawing national attention to his custom woodworking business, Artisans of the Valley, in Pennington, N.J. The company builds reproductions and eclectic custom designs. In September, Saperstein's furniture was featured on the new Animal Planet show "Tanked."

"In February, I received a call from Nancy Glass Productions. They were looking for someone to do a project for a new reality show about Acrylic Tank Manufacturing, a Las Vegas-based company that produces custom fish tanks and other acrylic items," says Saperstein.

The show, which premiered Aug. 19, features two brothers-in-law, Wayde King and Brett Raymer, as they build "some of the most outrageous, larger-than-life and one-of-a-kind tanks for some of the most striking fish and clients



The sea chest bunk bed, produced by Artisans of the Valley for "Tanked," a television show on Animal Planet.



around," according to the show's website. Saperstein was commissioned to build a bunk bed that would house the tank on the top rack.

Saperstein created a sea chest-themed bunk bed in collaboration with Michael Pietras, a friend from high school with whom he's worked in the past. It was delivered to New York City for the show's filming and the episode aired Sept. 9.

Saperstein wasn't paid for his work and he only got a few seconds of airtime. But it's the media coverage he's banking on.

"It's really about getting your name out there,"

he says. "You have to play the game with the producers. They will say whatever they have to say to get you to do it. In the end, you never know what you're going to get, so you have to parlay it yourself. So what we did was take the fact that we were going to be on the show and turn it into all the local press that we could get."

Saperstein believes producers found him through his website, www.artisansofthevalley.com, and association with Custommade.com. The experience got him thinking about starring in his own reality series. Stay tuned. **W**

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