

Changing the way Austin looks

BY MELANIE SPENCER

Building designer Michael Hsu is changing the look of Austin. If you've been to Bess Bistro, Fino, Uchi or the Belmont, to name a few, you are familiar with his work.

After graduating from the University of Texas in 1993, Hsu worked in the Netherlands at OMA for architect Rem Koolhaas. A year later, he was working at a Dallas firm, but wasn't happy in the corporate environment.

The designer returned to Austin to work at Dick Clark Architecture, where he would remain for 11 years before starting his own firm, Michael Hsu Design Office.

"My personal style is to be quiet, listen and try to decipher what the client wants, without them saying it," Hsu says. "I read between the lines and give them more than what they were looking for."

Hsu says he is less tied to more Western traditions in design, such as historical European styles, but as in many Chinese or Asian traditions, his work tends to be spare and simple with interest in details and in the way materials are chosen and shown.

Restaurant projects have remained a constant for Hsu, but retail and mixed-use developments, such as the shops at 2100 S. Lamar Blvd. and some aspects of the 04 development on South Congress Avenue, are also in his repertoire.

"My work strives to be modern," Hsu, 38, says. "Modern is soothing, rich and calming and when it's done with the right materials it's kind of soulful."

"I think Austin is a great place, because we all have a feeling of its identity and that's kind of exciting for a designer. That's why I've chosen to stay here."

Nak Armstrong. Anthony Nak
Linda Asaf. Linda Asaf Design, Downtown Austin Alliance
Melissa D'Attilio. Fly Productions
Christy Butler. Jewell
Scott Butler. By George
Anthony Camargo. Anthony Nak
Deborah Carter. Pink Salon
Gail Chovan and Evan Voyles. Blackmail, Vivid, Neon Jungle
Cami Cobb and Stephanie Coultrass. Estilo, MexicArte Museum, Ballet Austin, Leander High School, Any Baby Can, Austin Children's Shelter
Katy and Matthew Culmo. By George
Riley and Tomas Esteves de Silva. St. Thomas Boutique, Austin Children's Shelter
Connie Fredericks. Avont Salon
Patty Hoffpauir. Garden Room, Ballet Austin



FORTUNATE 500 FOOD AND DRINK

Jabour pours on the philanthropy

BY KAREN ODOM SPEZIA

In the notoriously flamboyant liquor business, "modest" and "mild-mannered" aren't words typically assigned to its top brass. But then again, David Jabour is no ordinary beverage baron. As president of Twin Liquors, this former banker is a genteel family man and tireless philanthropist who just happens to own some liquor stores. Forty-six, to be exact.

Behind the desk of his humble office in a liquor warehouse, Jabour, 43, runs his family's 70-year-old business and coordinates his extensive community calendar. If there's a fundraiser in town, chances are Jabour or his company supports it. Beneficiaries include Austin Lyric Opera, the University of Texas Performing Arts Center, Austin Symphony, American Heart Association, the Long Center, Ballet Austin, St. Elias Church, KMFA and Caritas. In all, Twin Liquors sponsors more than 200 local events a year.

The company's level of involvement varies for each — from discounted

drinks to underwriting — but Jabour prefers to roll up his sleeves and get involved. "It's not just a matter of making product available or donating it," he says. "We're also able to provide counsel and advice by knowing what attributes will make an event successful. We're very much a part of the creativity that goes on with these events." That creativity has helped launch events such as the immensely popular Umlauf Garden Party and resurrect faltering ones like the now-successful La Dolce Vita for the Austin Museum of Art.

But Jabour doesn't do it alone. In addition to a committed staff, he gets help from his executive vice president Margaret Jabour, who also happens to be his sister. Together, the siblings share in the company's charitable responsibilities. (Their father and uncle are the twins in the company's name.)

Between his burgeoning business and his young family, how does Jabour find time for all this community service? He responds in his typically modest, mild-mannered way, "When you're committed to something, you just do it."

Claudia Alarcon. Austin Chronicle, Zagat Restaurant Guide, Ambiente Wine Imports, Texas Hill Country Wine & Food Festival
Alma Alcocer-Thomas. Jeffrey's
Paula Angerstein. Texacello Distillery, Paula's Texas Orange and Lemon liquors
Susan and Ed Auler. Fall Creek Vineyards
Matt Bair. Wine & Food Foundation of Texas, Surgient Inc.
Chris Bauer. Finn & Porter
Eddie Bernal. 34th Street Cafe, Santa Rita Cantina, Blue Star Cafeteria
Tito Beveridge. Fifth Generation Inc., Tito's Handmade Vodka
Paula Biehler. Biehler & Associates, Texas Hill Country Wine and Food Festival

Jeff Blank. Hudson's on the Bend
Kevin Blessing. Central Market, Texas Hill Country Wine & Food Festival
Pamela Boyar. Sunset Valley Farmers' Market
David Bull. 'Iron Chef America,' 'The Driskill Hotel: Stories of Austin's Legendary Hotel — A Cookbook for Special Occasions'
Tyson Cole. Uchi
Quincy Adams Erickson and John Nagle. Fete Accompli Inc., Wine & Food Foundation of Texas, Texas Culinary Academy, Annie's List
Lisa and Emmett Fox. Asti, Fino
Michael Girard. Speakeasy, Cuba Libre
Chuck Huffaker. Grape Vine Market
Darrell Joseph. Cibo, Bellaverde Farms
Howard Kells. Dona Emilia's South American Bar & Grill, One Management Inc.
Jane King. Central Market
Liz Lambert. Hotel San José, Jo's Hot Coffee, 'The Last Days of the San José'
Lou Lambert. Lamberts Downtown Barbecue
Matt Luckie. Lucky Lounge, the Belmont
Trina and Damian Mandola. Mandola's Italian Market, Mandola's Estate Winery, Austin Children's Shelter, Marywood Foundation, St. Stephen's Episcopal School
Madeleine and Edward Manigold. Spice-wood Vineyards, Texas Hill Country Wine & Food Festival
Gary Manley. Iron Cactus
Charles Mayes. Cafe Josie
Angela Shelf Medearis. 'The Kitchen Diva'
Aimee Olson. Texas Culinary Academy, Les Dames
Dawn Orsak. Texas Hill Country Wine & Food Festival
Will Packwood. Cibo
Mark Paul Wink. Zoot
Elmar Pramb. Four Seasons Cafe, Caritas
Robert Rhoades. Hudson's on the Bend
Scott Roberts. Salt Lick Barbecue
Rebecca Robinson. Wine & Food Foundation of Texas
John Roenigk. Austin Wine Merchant
Bud Royer. Royer's Round Top Cafe, Meals on Wheels, American Youthworks
Carol Ann Sayle and Larry Butler. Boggy Creek Farms, Green Corn Project
Suzanne Santos. Austin Farmers' Market
Amy Miller Simmons. Amy's Ice Cream
Scott Simons. Whole Foods
Foo Swasdee. Satay, Texas Asian Chamber of Commerce.
Michael Terrazas. Starlite, The Woodland
Michael Vilim. Mirabelle, Castle Hill Cafe, Wine & Food Foundation of Texas
Sharon Watkins. Chez Zee, UT Performing Arts Center
Peggy and Ron Weiss. Shoreline Grill, Jeffrey's
Kevin Williamson. Ranch 616
Teresa Wilson and Robert Brady. Aquarelle