

# THE LOOP NOW!



Stribling

## [DESIGN WATCH] TUDE TOP

HGTV's breakout diva **Michael Stribling** (described as a must-watch "intolerable jerk" by Joel McHale on *The Soup*) was axed from the reality show early on. The petulant designer, 23, may be out of the running, but he's *in* on the H-Town homefront.

*Were you surprised when you were cast on the show?*

I knew if I sent [the application] in, I was going to be on. I sound all cocky and into myself, but I know my work. *What do you think people thought of you?* I get calls from [fans] constantly. They *love* me. I like how I came across as a catty, fun kind of person. *Let's talk home trends. Who dictates them?* I don't know! Probably some queen in Italy. Hollywood-glam is so hot right now—think of a floor-to-ceiling headboard that's tufted in velvet. *How do you know what a client will go for?* I go into their closet. If she has a great tailored Ralph Lauren suit, I know she's a little more traditional. But if she has a Versace gown, you know she's going to be a little crazy. *'Design Star' gave you great exposure—you're picking up clients left and right. Why come back to Houston?* I like Houston homes the best. It has such a mix of everything ... ultra traditional and ... so contemporary. I get my fix. —Natalie Bogan



Chan Luu bracelets at J. Silver



Burch; the 'Tory Tote' and 'Jackson' boot

## [SCOOP!] TORY PARTY

Picture this fashionably frantic scene from Day One at **Tory Burch's** just-opened Galleria boutique. Staffers are abuzz as they prep the gold and bold digs for its namesake designer's any-minute arrival. A supervisor shouts out Burch's looming location—"She's out of the car. She's walking up!" (You'd think Naomi Campbell was en route.) But when Burch blows into the store—petite, perfectly blonde and without the hint of an ego—her first mission is to meet each staffer. For a designer whose line has jetted to cult status in just four years, she seems grounded *and* insanely stylish. "It's for women that don't have time to think about what they're wearing," says Burch of her line. "It's chic and effortless." For fall, she experiments with three aspects of a woman's style: "Hippy chic" has hues of "purple custard," she says. American classic is a "nod to equestrian," and the gray and eggplant Hitchcockian has "lady-like accents on the waist and neck." —Elyse Weidner

## THAT'S A WRAP

A-Listers everywhere—Christina Aguilera, Nicole Kidman and Houston's own Hilary Duff—can't seem to get enough of jewelry designer **Chan Luu's** chic stone-clad wrap bracelets. And lucky for us, Houston's got its own insider connection to the burgeoning Vietnamese designer. Longtime friend **J. Landa**, owner of J. Silver boutique, began collaborating with L.A.-based Luu in 2006 to create exclusive pieces for his Rice Village store. "Chan and I have a lot in common," says Landa. "It was only logical to collaborate." When the duo first launched the Chan Luu for J. Silver collection in 2006, the pearl-and-gold-beaded looks sold out quickly. Now the pair is adding an effortlessly-chic turquoise wrap mixed with gold-vermeil beads (\$180) to the mix. "It's reminiscent of what I love, my favorite color," he says. "I always incorporate a turquoise flavor." The exclusive pieces, as well as Luu's standard collection, are available at J. Silver (2412 Rice Blvd., 713.807.1644). —Elizabeth Reid

STRIHLING PHOTO BY JULIE SOEFER; BURCH PHOTO BY JEFFREY PREHN