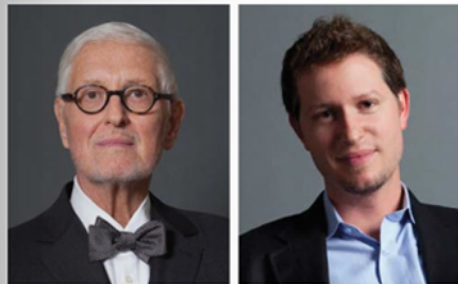


hospitality design



Michael and Misha Bedner

HBA, Santa Monica, California



Clockwise from top left: Michael and Misha Bedner; and two of the some 1,000 projects that HBA has designed: a one bedroom suite at the newly renovated Fairmont Peace Hotel in Shanghai, and lounge LH13, set to open in New Delhi this summer.

Misha Bedner fondly recalls visiting his father's office when he was just four years old. Although he "grew up" at HBA, the company his father, Michael Bedner, founded in 1964 with Howard Hirsch, he had no interest in ever working for the Los Angeles-based hospitality behemoth. "Design was not in my sight," Misha points out. Instead, he envisioned a career revolving around moviemaking or art direction.

After he graduated from UCLA with a degree in art history, however, an art consulting job opened at HBA, which set Misha on a different path. "I took it on thinking it was going to be a few months; it became a few years," he notes. Instead of pursuing the master's degree in computer animation he once desired, he remained at HBA, moving through the ranks from director of art to project manager to his current role as director of marketing and business development.

Michael, chairman and CEO, is thrilled to have had Misha on board over the past nine years—"I have so much confidence in him," he says—but he also acknowledges that in the beginning he was worried. "This is a very large company, and it's hard to be out in front when everyone treats you as 'the son.'"

An ambitious Misha quickly proved his merits were earned, however, thanks to the forward-thinking approach to business his father engendered. Michael understands that the key to maintaining

HBA's prominence in the design sphere is constant reinvention, such as expanding the scope of its residential and senior-care sectors. Plus, the company has just launched four new divisions to diversify itself in an ever-changing market: Canvas, an art consultancy; the Gallery, which, led from the London office, will focus on bespoke, high-concept projects; Illuminate, an independent lighting consultancy; and Studio, which will focus on smaller-scale, lower-budget, faster-turnaround projects in China and New Delhi.

"There are no boundaries to what you can do here, no job description," says Misha. "I'm the director of marketing; I find projects, keep clients happy, and make sure we practice good design. But the same could be said for the other 718 people in the company, too. We all wear 20 different hats but we don't step on each other's toes." Current projects include the Four Seasons Guangzhou, Four Seasons Shenzhen, Park Hyatt Hyderabad, St. Regis Nation Towers, Abu Dhabi, and the Fairmont Baku.

With myriad responsibilities, father and son hardly see each other in the office, but relish those infrequent business trips together where they get to share their different design perspectives. "He's been doing this 45 years," Misha shares, "but I'm just a neophyte." **hd**

Photography by Jeffrey Mosier


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AWARDS

More than 240 guests attended the 7th Annual Hospitality Design (HD) Awards, which took place on June 8th at the Millennium Broadway Hotel. The event, sponsored by Mark David and Interiors from Spain, included a ceremony in the Hudson Theatre and a reception for honorees and guests. The night concluded with an afterparty at the Dream Hotel's AWA Lounge sponsored by Hampshire Hotels & Resorts and Stonehill & Taylor Architects and Planners.

1. Fadi Riscala and Michelle Agnese, Riscala Agnese Design Group. **2.** Thomas and Claire Schlessler, Design Bureaux, Inc. **3.** Edward Yedid and Thomas Hickey, GRADE Architecture and Interior Design. **4.** Stephen Brooke and Jessica Nadler, Stone Source; Chris Sheffield, SLDesign; and Tara Oxley, B.R. Guest Restaurants. **5.** Misha Bedner and Lenor Moses, HBA. **6.** Jose Achi and Clodagh, Clodagh Design. **7.** Brian Gorman, Lords Hotels; and Dan Mazzarini and Brian Humphrey, BH+DM Design.



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