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● PROVIDED BY DONNIE BROWN

Lubbock native Donnie Brown, left, a Dallas-based wedding planner, is shown on location during filming for the Style Network reality show "Whose Wedding Is It Anyway."

Donnie Brown

■ Lubbock native Donnie Brown, a Dallas-based wedding planner, has been with the Style Network reality show "Whose Wedding Is It Anyway" since its debut in 2003. Watch it at 9 p.m. Tuesdays.

■ A 1981 graduate of Monterrey High School and 1984 graduate of Texas Tech, Brown got his start at College Flowers, a local florist located at 2002 Broadway Ave.

■ Brown doesn't think that getting married will ever lose its mystique. "Not in our lifetime, certainly," Brown says. "It's a hot-button topic, certainly, but every girl wants to get married. Families save money and build businesses so they can do a couple of things — so they can buy homes and property, and so they can give their kids weddings. It's a \$17 billion a year industry. It's a massive industry."

■ www.donniebrownweddings.com.

Groomed for Success

PEOPLE/This Lubbock native is now almost as well-known as his wedding-planning clients

BY JEREMY HENDERSON
A-J RELIGION REPORTER

Donnie Brown has fawned over the nuptials of musicians including LeAnn Rimes and finessed fundraising galas for politicians such as Al Gore. He has adorned the knot tied by professional football players and cast his luxurious



Lubbock native and Dallas-based wedding planner Donnie Brown recently served as master of ceremonies at a Boys & Girls Clubs of America fundraising gala in Dallas.

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● PROVIDED BY DONNIE BROWN

PLANNER: *Lubbock native hopes to plan Jessica Simpson, Tony Romo wedding*

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vision over private events for actresses Dixie Carter and Emma Thompson.

He even hopes to get the Tony and Jessica gig. After all, the Lubbock native now living in Dallas has a celebrity-stuffed portfolio of 2,000 brides — why not Jessica Simpson if she marries Tony Romo?

"I'm waiting patiently for Tony and Jessica to announce their engagement," Brown says. "I think it's more than likely they'll be married here, and I think I'd be the obvious choice. I've had my people reach out to their people, so they know about me ... apparently, we're becoming more and more popular with sports celebrities. We don't ask why."

In 2003, Brown became a celebrity himself with the debut of "Whose Wedding Is It Anyway," a Style Network reality show that follows a revolving cast of wedding planners on the job as they match colors and patch disasters for couples en route to the altar.

Brown has been with the

show, which is about to start its 10th season, since the beginning, obviously the fan favorite.

"I think a lot of the wedding planners just get on there and do their jobs and get all emotional, and I just don't. I use humor on a day-to-day basis to get people through stressful situations, and I just make people laugh."

Like in Episode 501, when after finally being allowed to sneak a peak of Texas bride Carol in her gown, he gasps and goes straight for the cleavage: "Get that stuff down there," he says while turning to the camera. "Nothing is sacred with me. The boobs can be moved; the girls have to be shifted."

Carol smiles and laughs.

Or like in Season 4, when he gives bare-shouldered wardrobe advice clad in a strapless wedding dress.

Growing up

Brown was born and raised in Lubbock, graduating from



● PROVIDED BY DONNIE BROWN

Lubbock native and Dallas-based wedding planner Donnie Brown, right, has done weddings for celebrities such as LeAnn Rimes.

Monterrey High School in 1981, where he was first chair clarinet, and from Texas Tech in 1984, with a degree in business administration.

"Well, as soon as I got out of college, I ran like hell," says Brown. "That old song, 'Lubbock in My Rearview Mirror,'

I knew *that* Lubbock. As much as I love Lubbock, it being my home, I just didn't think it'd be the launching pad for what I had coming."

This he says while making notable exception for his former job at College Flowers, where, beginning at age 16, Brown

learned the wedding planning ropes doing weekend floral arrangements.

Owner Kelly Marble remembers those days.

"He was very young and green," Marble says of Brown. "As young as his career was at that time, Donnie was very talented in his own unique way."

Brown says he was predisposed to wedding planning.

"But they certainly taught me a lot about upscale design and got me ready to move on to other things," he says of College Flowers.

Visiting home

A couple of weekends ago, Brown returned home to visit his parents, who still live in the same house on 38th Street, and to give his mother, Sue Brown, a present for her 70th birthday.

"He gave me an iPod," she says. "I mean an iPhone. I don't have enough smarts to figure out which one's which. He told me he was tired of me not getting text messages from him."

He gets hung up in these meetings, especially with the brides, and he wanted me to be able to get in touch with him any time I wanted. So he bought me this silly phone. Now all I have to do is figure out how to use it."

And when she does — when she figures out how to browse the Internet with it — she won't have to wait for 9 p.m. Tuesday or even be in front of her TV to watch clips of "Whose Wedding."

"I'm very proud of him, of course," Sue says. "Any mother would be. He's very outgoing. He's very outspoken. I kind of blush at some of the things he says on television, like when he was talking about the woman who made the meatloaf cake and he said it smelled like Alpo. I said, 'Oh honey, don't say a thing like that on television, please!'"

But that's just Donnie being Donnie.

"I'm kind of a cut-up," he says.

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