

In the downtown studio of Tom Tune's Upper East Side duplex apartment, director's chair surround a rubber-edge plywood table designed by Allen. The chair at left is made of silk velvet from Larsen. See Resource



A man with dark, wavy hair is sitting in a wooden chair, leaning back. He is wearing a grey, ribbed, long-sleeved sweater. He is looking towards the camera with a slight smile. To his left is a window with heavy, yellow, textured curtains. The background behind him is a dark, textured wall.

tuned in

Tommy Tune's  
Manhattan duplex penthouse  
is a real showstopper



Tune stands at the kitchen's poured-concrete counter.

Facing page, clockwise from top left:

The painted deck and patio furniture.

Calligraphy by Flavio Belli on a bathroom door.

Illuminated frosted-glass treads on the staircase.

A smattering of show-biz black-and-whites. See Resources.

“Tommy’s the ideal **client** because he loves to collaborate”

“I like to sleep around,” says Tommy Tune in a playful Texas drawl, flinging back a gold and flame-red curtain in the studio of his duplex penthouse on Manhattan’s Upper East Side. Behind it: a king-size bed with breathtaking views of the city. The legendary dancer, singer, and choreographer—he has won nine Tony Awards—is explaining how his lofty, minimalist aerie allows him to choose from a variety of exotic places to rest his head at night. When the mood strikes, for instance, he seeks repose amid the mellow golds and bamboo in his Zen-like bedroom upstairs. Or on the living room’s expansive sofa, custom-built to accommodate his prodigious 6’6½” frame.

“I’m always restless,” says Tune. “I think it’s on account of my nomadic Shawnee blood. I’ve heard that the Shawnees used to live in trees, which is probably why I’ve always wanted to live up high.” Ask him what floor he lives on, though, and he looks bewildered. “I’ve no idea,” he says, laughing. “I just get in the





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"I don't like **decoration**, and I don't like furniture, either. I hardly ever sit down

elevator and press the button that says PENTHOUSE. I'm not good with numbers. I just view them choreographically."

Nothing about the unprepossessing standard-apartment-building-beige hallway outside the entryway (which, for the record, is on the 32nd floor) prepares visitors for the shock of the industrial-chic interior, with walls and ceilings that look as if they had been rendered in crude cement. Guess what? They have. "Concrete is my favorite building material because it


was once liquid," enthuses Tune. "I love that it has so much *movement* in it."

Even the floor was concrete until it proved too treacherous. "It was beautiful, but it hurt my legs," he says. Now there is a curiously springy black rubber floor instead. In the center of the room is a rectangular section that's slightly firmer. "This used to be part of the dance floor from *Tommy Tune Tonight*," he says, referring to the famous Broadway show with which he toured the world. "Tap dancers

are always looking for the perfect floor, and this stuff is great. I had huge rolls of it, so we just cut off a few pieces." Tune is fond of trying out new steps at home. "It's like an incubator for ideas," he says. The space also doubles as a painting studio; he has recently been experimenting with poster designs for an upcoming tour.

When he bought the apartment, it had a nondescript two-bedroom, two-bath layout. "I don't like walls, so I had them ripped out," he says. In doing so, he dis-





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covered additional headroom, "so we knocked out the ceiling, too." The sight of so many exposed pipes might have daunted a more conventional soul, but Tune saw it as an opportunity for sculpture and hired Sachiko Matsuka, a Japanese artist, to emphasize their presence by wrapping them with rope.

Other adornments are few and far between. "I don't like decoration," he says. "And I don't like furniture, either. I hardly ever sit down, and when I'm working I like to clear out my living space as much as possible so I have room to dream."

He is full of praise for interior designer DD Allen, who masterminded the apartment's transformation, including the recent addition of the lower floor space, which is reached via a spiral staircase with glass steps that are illuminated at night. "Tommy's the ideal client because he loves to collaborate," says Allen, "and he knows how to get the best out of people. He's

adept at challenging you creatively, he loves hearing new ideas, and, of course, he has a flair for the dramatic." She considers him, like herself, to be a minimalist at heart. "A lot of people believe they are, but all they really want is clutter," she says with a sigh. "Tommy *really* dislikes having furniture. The few pieces he has are just out of deference to visitors."

The apartment's two kitchens, one up, one down, have unusually high counters. "I've spent most of my life bumping my head or bending over to wash dishes," says Tune, "so it's great to have a place that's built to my scale. This way I don't feel like I'm living in someone else's shoes." While Gulliver proportions are clearly perfect for him (he claims to relish menial tasks), they are somewhat of a challenge for his devoted housekeeper, Mildra, who stands at least two feet shorter. "She's a god-send," says Tune, watching with delight as Mildra gives Ophie, his much-indulged

Yorkshire terrier, a wash and blow-dry on the upstairs kitchen counter. Glancing down at the stepladder Mildra is perched on, he winces with remorse. "I kind of feel bad that she has to drag that stepladder wherever she goes around here."

Sauntering into the bedroom, where two sets of wooden cabinets that once stored legal briefs now contain his own briefs, Tune points to a porthole cut into the wall: a DD Allen innovation, it affords a spectacular perspective of the reservoir in Central Park. Opening it, Tune listens to the faint roar of the city 33 floors below. "I like the white noise of the traffic," he says. "To me, it sounds like the ocean." Gazing toward a larger window across the room, he seems captivated by the play of light at sunset as leaves buffeted by the breeze create an impromptu ballet. "I love this time of the day," he says dreamily. "It's wonderful to be able to just come in here and watch the leaves dance." ✨