

Kevin Mancuso's Sag Harbor, New York, home, which was designed by Annabelle Selldorf of Selldorf Architects; the lounge chairs are by Alias. Facing page: In the living room, a Maureen Gallace painting and Kraft floor lamp by Andrée Putman from Ralph Pucci International. See Resources.





# IN CONTROL

HAIRSTYLIST TO THE STARS KEVIN MANCUSO AND ARCHITECT ANNABELLE SELLDORF CREATE A HOUSE THAT PROVES CAREFUL PLANNING BRINGS ABSOLUTE BLISS

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Kevin Mancuso, superstar hairstylist, is apologizing. Not for a misplaced snip of his shears, heaven forbid, but for the driveway that leads to his house. "I'm sorry it's asphalt," he says, quietly aggrieved. "The color doesn't quite go with the grays of the house."

One thing is clear: Mancuso is a perfectionist. And the construction of his Hamptons home shows it. The gray stain that was mixed for its cedar shingles captures "driftwood in sunlight," he says, and the front door's gray paint is "the blackout color of glass when light hits it." Not only are the shades of gray unbelievably precise, everything in the

house reflects its owner's respect for texture and love of beauty—and his predilection for calling the shots.

Controlling outcomes is exactly what the stylist does for a living. Mancuso's work over the past three decades has helped shape the look associated with each time period. In the 1980s, for example, he created big, sexy, tousled hair for *Cosmopolitan* cover girls pouting for photographer Francesco Scavullo. A decade later he often teamed with makeup genius Kevyn Aucoin to style supermodels Cindy Crawford, Christy Turlington, Linda Evangelista, and Naomi Campbell for



influential layouts in *Vogue*, *Allure*, *W*, and *Harper's Bazaar*. More recently he has toured the globe with Renée Zellweger and Salma Hayek, tending to the actresses' paparazzi-ready locks. Now this celebrity groomer has moved into a new phase of life: He is the creative director of Nexxus hair-care products and coifs A-listers at his Manhattan townhouse. "I've always been in charge of my own career, but now it's official," says Mancuso, who is busy working on a follow-up to his 1999 A-Z book, *The Mane Thing*.

In contrast to the insanity of a photography studio, where lights blaze and music blares, Mancuso's home is as calm as a Shinto shrine. "Crazy quiet," he happily admits; practically the only discernible sound is the faint electrical hum of a Sub-Zero refrigerator. Architect Annabelle Selldorf—the mastermind behind Ronald S. Lauder's reshaping of a Beaux Arts Vanderbilt mansion into the Neue Galerie New York museum—was responsible for creating the "emptiness of space" he craved. The television is never on, and a stereo rarely disturbs the silence. Furniture arrangements have been ruthlessly pruned to the bare essentials. Also startlingly clutter-free is the kitchen. In fact, Mancuso prepares his morning coffee in an adjacent utility room, where appliances are stored out of sight.

The neutral color scheme is as hushed as the architecture. Matching living room sofas were shipped from the Netherlands and recovered in a textured nougat-hue fabric by Rogers & Goffigon. A layer of concrete and vinyl tops the pale floors, giving them a low sheen and a hint of pliancy. The Simon Pearce glassware, white Rosenthal china, and snowy dish towels are proof that "I'm into a kind of a colorless thing," Mancuso says. The rooms are so blached that anything out of chromatic sync—which one recent day included yellow grapefruit and a blue shopping bag—wails like a police siren.

Those cool tones extend to the outside of the house too. Mancuso was inspired by Rudolph M. Schindler's home in Los Angeles, a 1922





A Kohler ProMaster faucet, Miele cook-  
top and oven, Corian countertop, and  
Alias Paludis stools; the kitchen is by  
Selldorf Architects (Mancuso designed  
the vent hood). Facing page, clockwise  
from top: Mancuso at home. China and  
glassware on the kitchen shelves; the  
floor is surfaced with Ardex and con-  
crete. In the dining area, a perforated-  
brass light fixture found in Stockholm  
and a sleek oak table. See Resources.



modernist masterpiece known for its integration of interior and exterior spaces. "The way it works is exactly what I wanted—easy access and simple living inside and out," says Mancuso, though he approaches nature a good deal more gingerly than Schindler. Here a bluestone-gravel terrace spans an area where a lawn might be: "I'm allergic to grass, trees, mold, everything," he says. The gray cement floors flow outdoors to form continuous platforms, and large glass doors open every room to the surrounding woods. Mancuso rescued the boulders and pine trees on the property from an overzealous bulldozer operator he had hired to clear around the house. And allergic rhinitis or not, he often hikes into a neighboring nature preserve.

Understated art complements the house's restrained personality. Mancuso explains that it's more his style to be attracted to subtlety; he would rather own a Dutch Old Master canvas than a bold contemporary work of art. That being said, all of the small paintings are by Maureen Gallace, an artist whose hypnotic oils he has been collecting for 23 years. Even the lighting selections bear witness to Mancuso's cultivation of serenity after a lifetime spent in the glare of brightly lit studios. Silver-cap bulbs create a light-box effect on the ceilings, softly washing them in an elegant glow, and a low-tech pulley adjusts the height of a floor lamp by one of the sofas. Over the dining table hangs a multishade brass ceiling fixture found in Stockholm when Mancuso was on a Britney Spears shoot for *Glamour*. It may not look like much to the untutored eye, but its new owner admires the decorative perforations that "let a little bit of illumination through" as well as the golden warmth of the presently unfashionable metal. "People are so antibrass they've forgotten how soft and beautiful it is."

With all this careful planning and made-to-order atmosphere, small wonder that Mancuso's dove-gray house is where the stylist prefers to be when he's not on call. "It's perfect; it really is perfect," he says—forgetting that driveway, for just a moment. ■



The bath's divider and floor tiles are black slate, and the tub is by Wet-style. Facing page, clockwise from top left: In the bedroom, an antique Korean tea chest and Ana Sova Luxury Organics bed linens. The shower features marble tiles and Rohl showerheads. An acrylic-painted staircase and Selldorf Architects light fixtures in the entrance hall. See Resources.