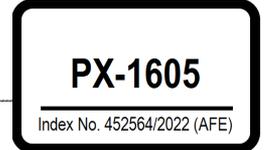


EDITORS' PICK | May 3, 2017, 10:45am EDT

Donald Trump Has Been Lying About The Size Of His Penthouse

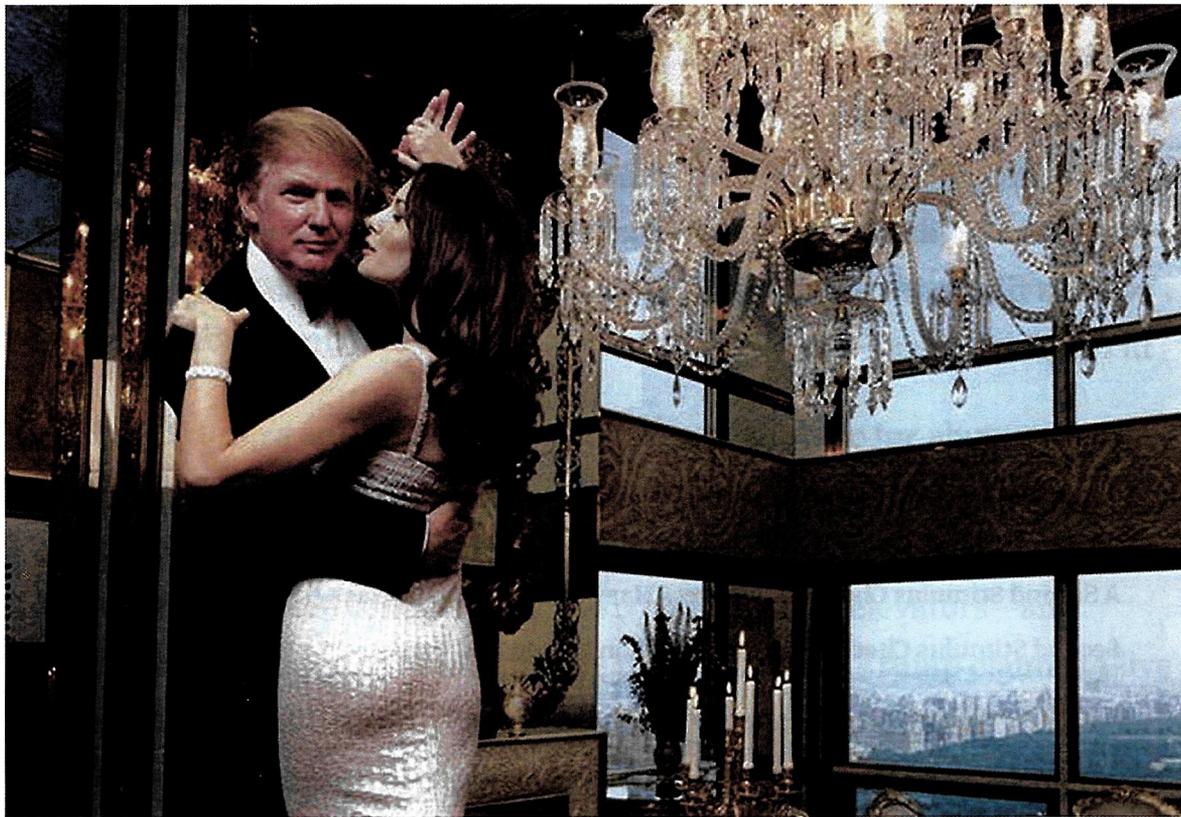


Chase Peterson-Withorn Forbes Staff
Billionaires



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This story appears in the May 16, 2017 issue of Forbes. [Subscribe](#)



Donald and Melania Trump in the dining room of their Trump Tower penthouse. THEO WESTENBERGER ARCHIVES, AUTRY MUSEUM

During the presidential race, Donald Trump left the campaign trail to give Forbes a guided tour of his three-story Trump Tower penthouse—part of his decades-long crusade for a higher spot on our billionaire rankings. Gliding

through his gilded home, he bragged that people have called his Manhattan aerie the "best apartment ever built" and emphasized its immense size (33,000 square feet) and value (at least \$200 million). "I own the top three floors—the whole floor, times three!" He admitted to having once had a neighbor, pointing to a door on the 66th floor. "I leased that little section to Michael Jackson. I knew him better than anybody."

Those comments were typical Trump: boastful and inaccurate. We recently dug up New York City records showing that he still shares those floors with a neighbor and has been exaggerating the size of his own place by a factor of three.

Records show Trump acquiring a 6,096-square-foot triplex apartment, occupying sections of floors 66 through 68, around the time Trump Tower opened in 1983. A decade later he expanded his penthouse, merging parts of two neighboring apartments into his home, according to the filings. The end result is 10,996 square feet of prime Manhattan real estate—a massive residence, no doubt, but much smaller than what Trump claims to own. No records filed with the city indicate that he has added or shed square footage in the years since.

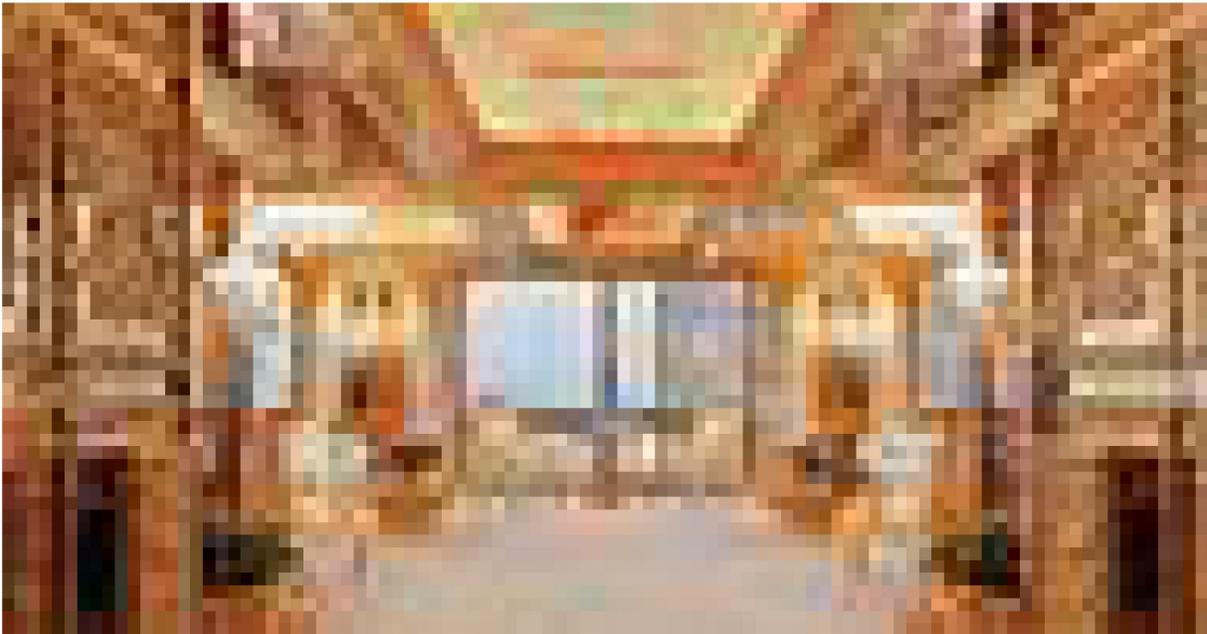
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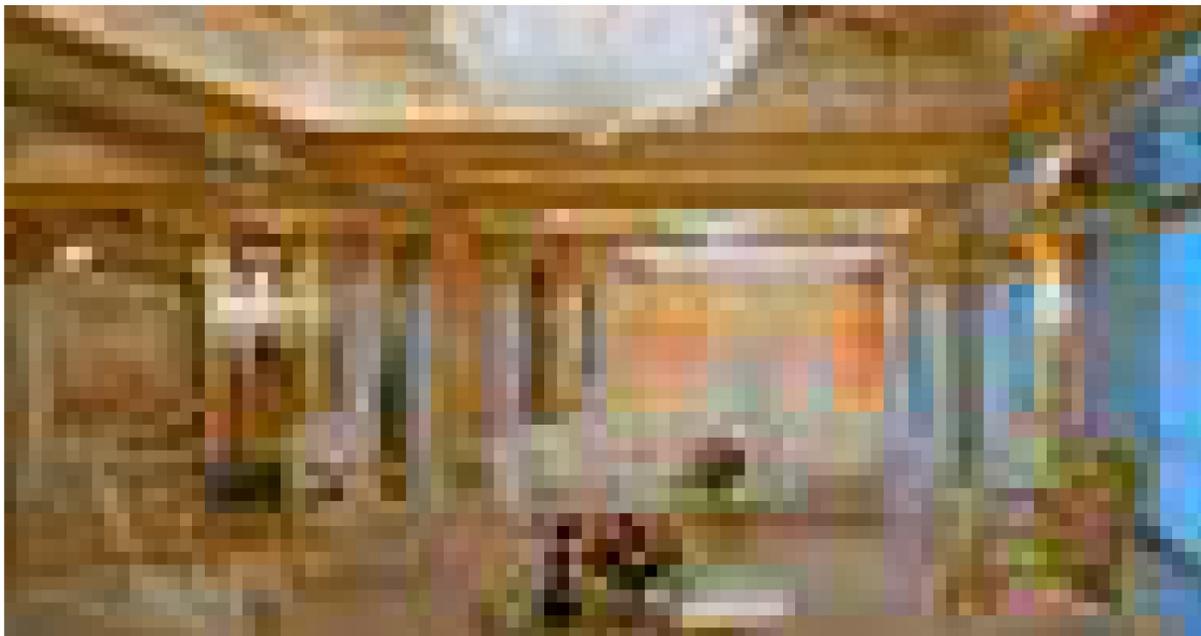
The entrance to Donald Trump's penthouse. SCOTT FRANCES/OTTO

As for that neighbor, it's Joel R. Anderson, an Alabama businessman who has owned a 3,368-square-foot apartment on two of the floors since 1996. Anderson has been identified in the past as a member of the Trump Tower condo board and he reportedly raised more than \$400,000 for a library foundation in his hometown of Florence, Ala. by hosting an event called the 2005 Donald Trump Library Benefit Dinner. (Anderson could not be reached for comment.)

Together, Trump's and Anderson's penthouses combine for about 14,000 square feet. So where does Trump's 33,000 square feet figure come from? It's hard to tell. No one else lives on those floors, according to city records. Instead "common elements"—things like hallways and elevators—and mechanical space appear to take up the rest of the area Trump claims to live in. The residents of Trump Tower likely own these areas through their condo association, their stakes divvied up based on the size of their apartments.

That includes Michael Jackson's supposed penthouse: Records indicate the area Trump pointed to during the tour has never been a residence either. It appears to be mechanical space. (Jackson reportedly lived elsewhere—on floor 63.)

No Trump spokesperson would comment on any of this, so using the correct square footage, **we estimate the president's pad is worth \$64 million**, less than a third of his number.



Donald Trump's living room. SCOTT FRANCES/OTTO

(A condensed version of this story was published in the May 16, 2017 issue of *Forbes*.)

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