

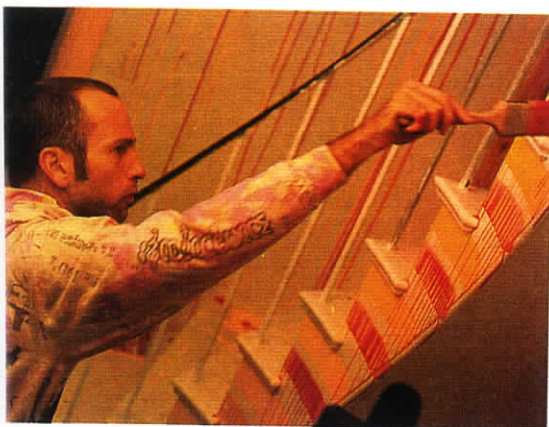
KENNY Scharf

**In a tipsy space, a sober undercurrent:
This fun-house room is really a room with a view**

HERE'S ONE memorable image of the devotion that ShowHouse 2 brought forth: In the midst of hectic preparations for a gallery opening in Soho, Kenny Scharf could be found balancing on a ladder in the tiny top-floor atrium, paint roller in hand, accompanied by the oversized box of Cracker Jack that perpetually follows him. No one needed to persuade him that this project was important. Scharf has lost "at least 10 good friends" to AIDS, including fellow-artist Keith Haring. His room is a sweet-and-sour monument to the bristling mood of our time. In the multilayered imagery of his silk-screened walls, where telephones, radios, apes and lovers tumble together, Scharf tucked in bleak headlines about ozone depletion, homelessness and AIDS. "We're living a life in which we have fun," he says. "But at the same time there are horrifying realities."

Yet while Scharf has a somber awareness of the facts, he's also determined not to let the facts have the last word. The laughs may come hard these days, but they still come. This room is a picture of our late-century circumstances, as seen by an artist who has the sensibilities of a closet moralist and the headlong inclinations of a pinwheel.

Photographs by Alex McLean



SCHARF drips the light fantastic in the hallway atrium (above). His ceiling is a celestial whirl (below). Harsh realities may spiral out of control, "yet we enjoy life—and

should," he says.

THANKS
Allied Fibers; Armstrong World Industries; Benjamin Moore/Janovic Plaza; Lightolier. SEE RESOURCES, LAST PAGE

