

ELLE DECORATION

**ORIGINAL
IDEAS
FOR EASY
MODERN
LIVING**

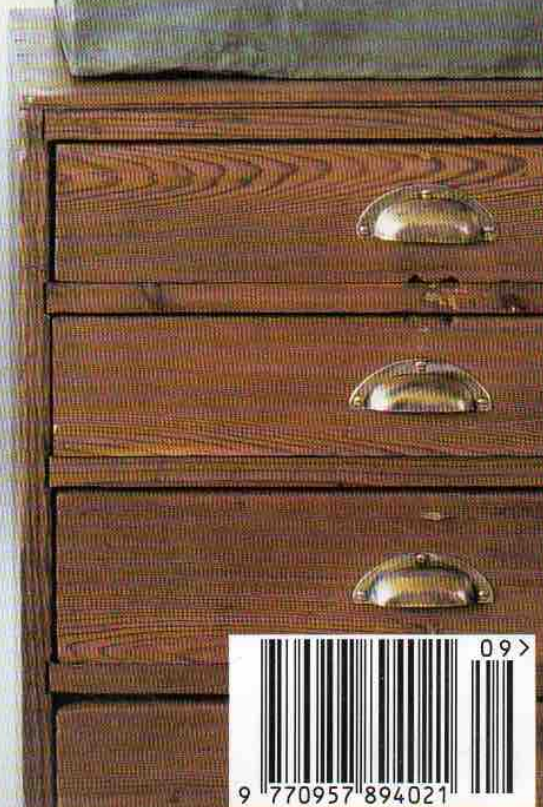
**TIMELESS PIECES
FOR A SIMPLE LIFE**

CARTOON COLOUR
IN AN ARTIST'S
HOUSE

RE-INVENT YOUR
KITCHEN

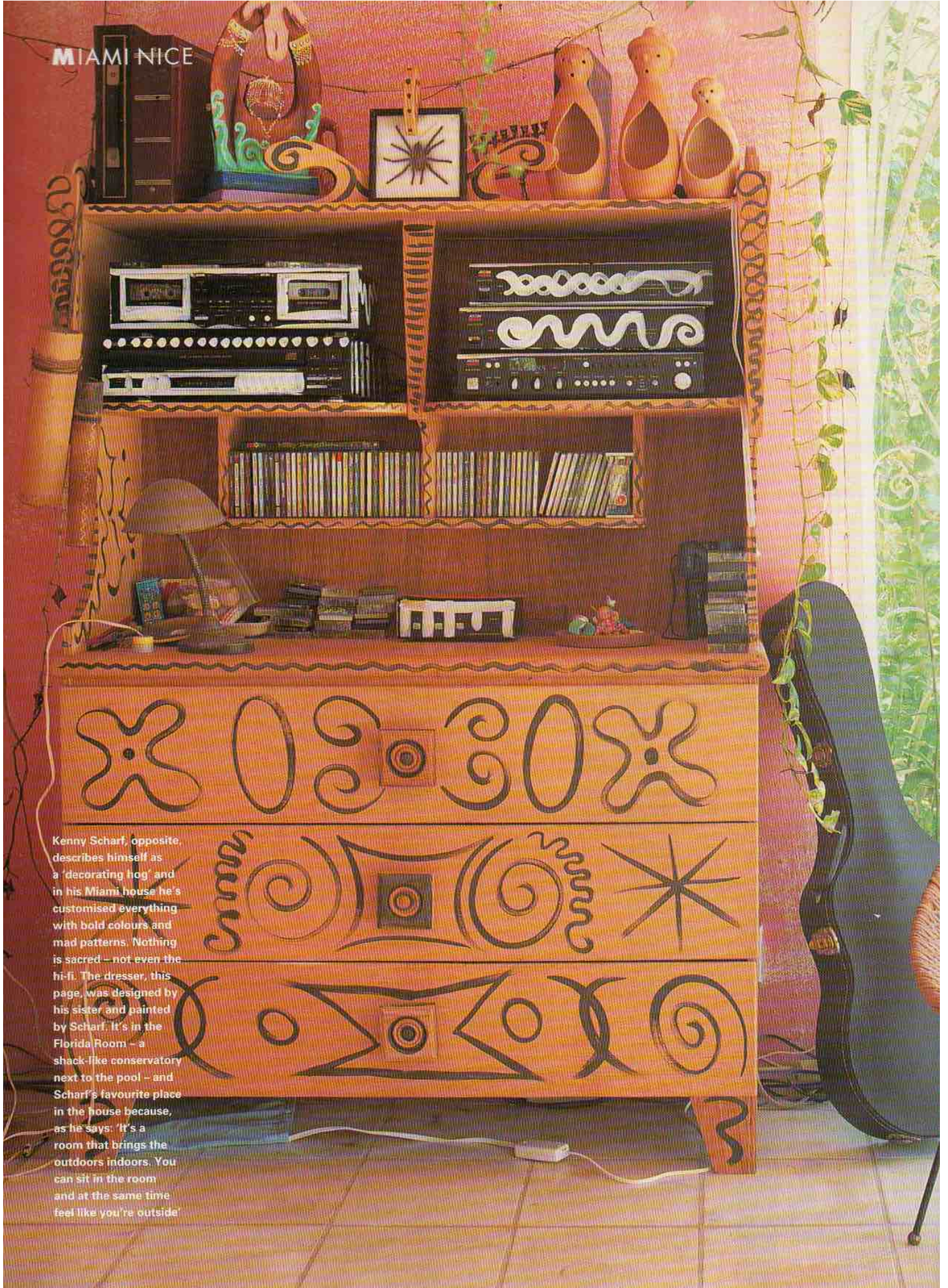
BRIGHT NEW
FUNKY PLASTICS

BEST BUYS
TOP 10 SAUCEPANS
HOME OFFICE KIT
KASBAH STYLE

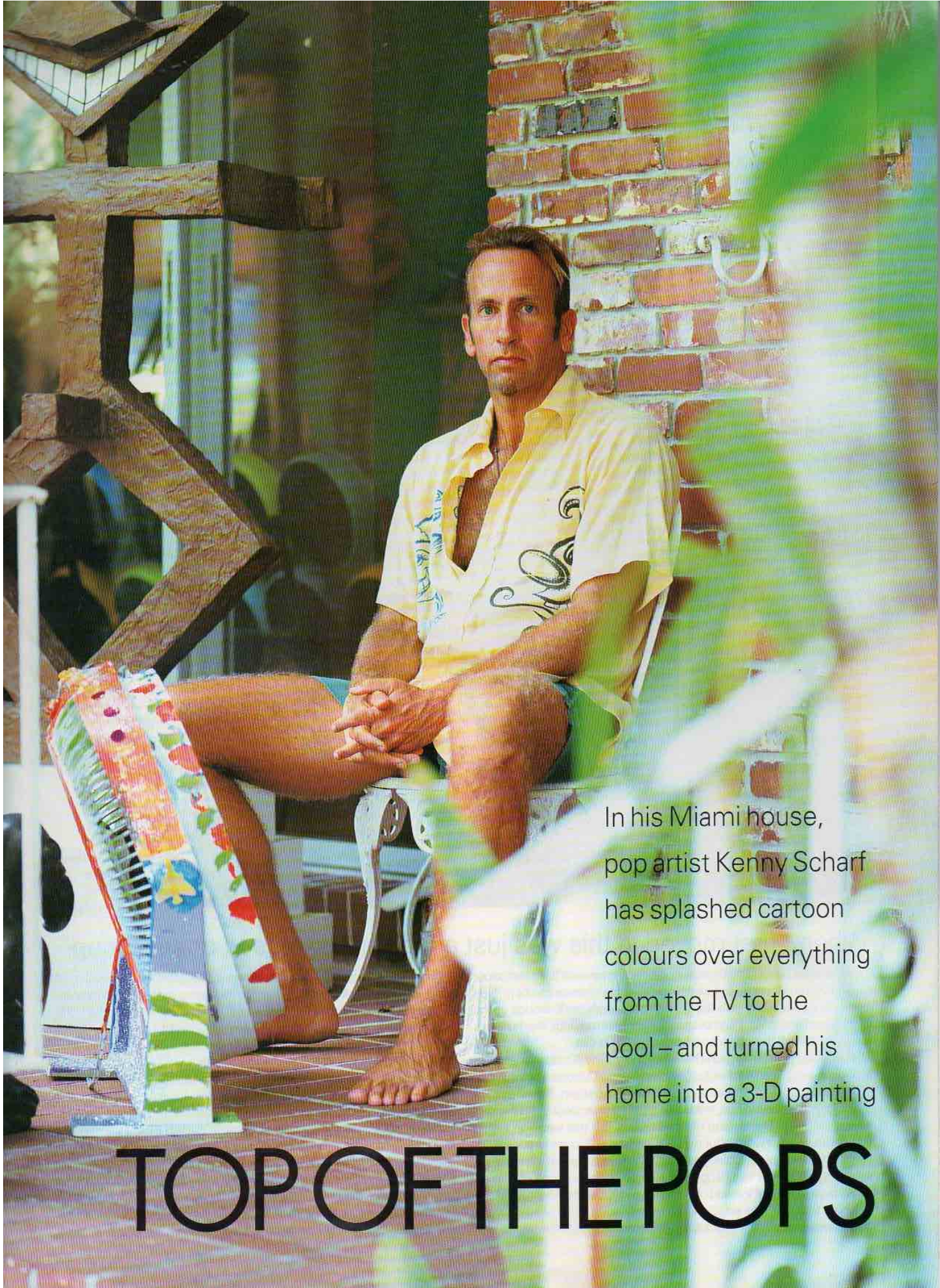


get sorted!



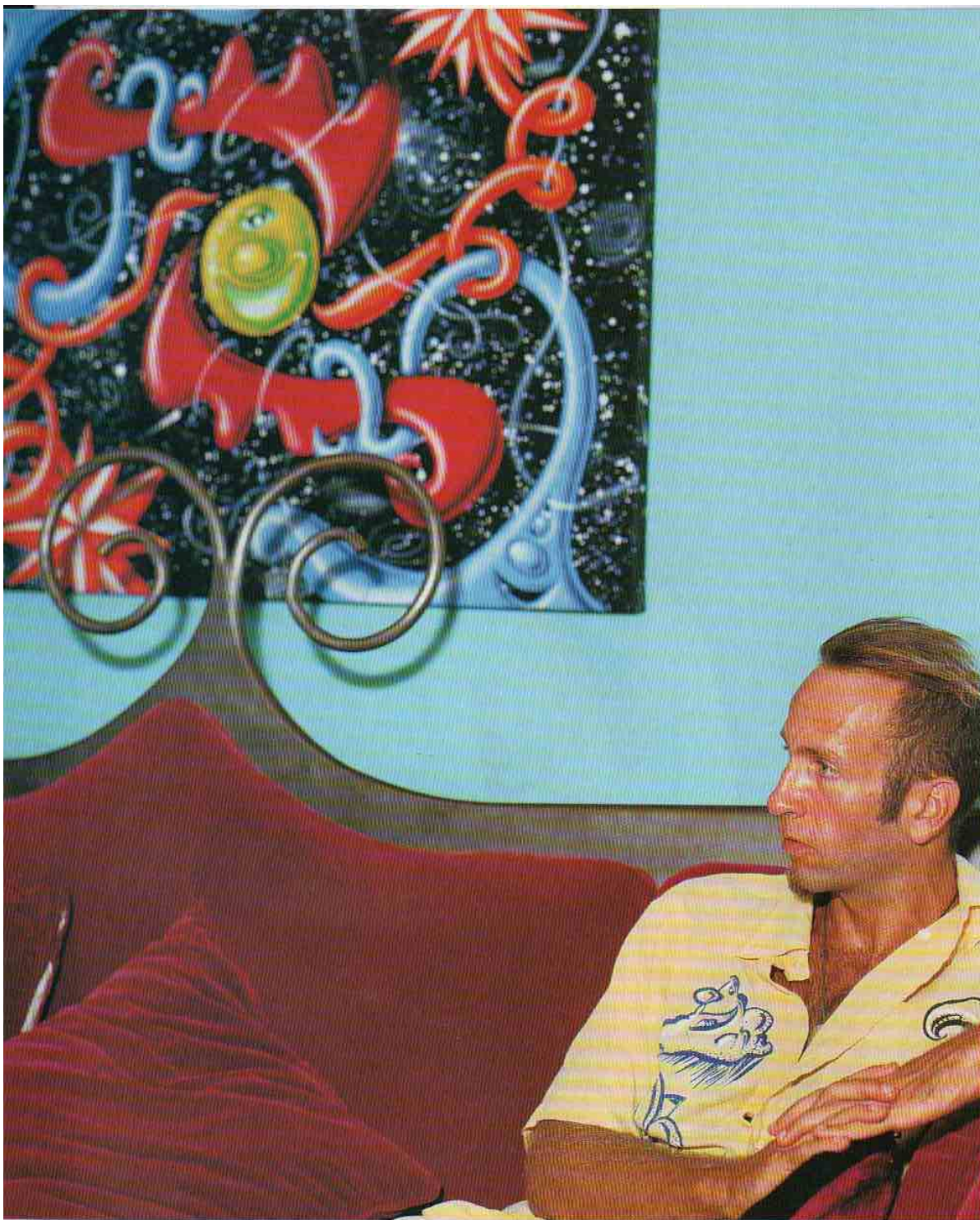


Kenny Scharf, opposite describes himself as a 'decorating hog' and in his Miami house he's customised everything with bold colours and mad patterns. Nothing is sacred – not even the hi-fi. The dresser, this page, was designed by his sister and painted by Scharf. It's in the Florida Room – a shack-like conservatory next to the pool – and Scharf's favourite place in the house because, as he says: 'It's a room that brings the outdoors indoors. You can sit in the room and at the same time feel like you're outside'



In his Miami house, pop artist Kenny Scharf has splashed cartoon colours over everything from the TV to the pool – and turned his home into a 3-D painting

TOP OF THE POPS



'I couldn't afford any of the furniture I wanted, so I decided to design my own,' says Scharf. As a result, the house is stuffed with his swirly sofas and chairs, Starring the Star cushions – covered with his signature one-eyed creatures – and a huge Swatch watch, opposite. He adds a few pieces by others to the mix, including Panton chairs, pictures by his daughters and a fake rock shrine, which belongs to his Brazilian wife Teresa. He finished the painting, this page, earlier this year, for an exhibition in Belgium

'When I first moved in this was just a regular house, so I opened it up'

American artist Kenny Scharf creates psychedelic zones of form and colour inspired by a childhood spent watching TV. His canvasses combine Yves Tanguy-like surrealism with the futuristic and prehistoric worlds of the Jetsons and Flintstones. He populates his work with amoeba-like monsters that grin and lurch through colour fields of pure Da-Glo.

Scharf's work first emerged in New York in the early 80s alongside artists like Keith Haring, Jean-Michel Basquiat and Ronnie Cutrone. Their spiritual father was Andy Warhol; their source material, the street. Scharf's painting was nurtured on hip-hop, wild-style graffiti, comic books and the saccharine visions of Disney and Hanna-Barbera. But this was Pop with a difference: 'Pop art was about making symbols and icons of pop as art. It was a distance away, looking at it very coolly, not really involved,' says Scharf. 'What I think has happened 20 years later is a kind of pop resurgence, except that instead of being far away, it's from the inside.'

Scharf took life into art. Soho gallerists found their pristine white spaces invaded with the slick styles, acidic colours and infantile icons of

a misspent youth culture – exquisitely executed in oil on canvas. His art then surfed straight back into life, his surreal protoplasmic gliding across the walls of Manhattan clubs, onto T-shirts, watch faces, and, most spectacularly, over an entire car. Appropriately Jetsonised, Scharf's Cadillac turned the Tony Shafrazi Gallery into a bizarre car showroom.

Scharf's aesthetic also draws on the late 50s – kidney-shaped tables, and vivid abstract fabrics – which he folds back into his art. He continues to blur the boundaries between the canvas and his whole environment in the exuberant interiors of his Florida home. The forms he plays with have a distinctively oceanic feel: a polypropylene chair mimics a giant star fish; the sting ray seems to have been the inspiration for a shocking pink swivel seat, and a huge domed armchair evokes an octopus consuming a lime-green hairy monster. Scharf's customized furniture floats against walls that shimmer with swimming-pool blues and greens. His home is like a three-dimensional painting, where family and friends can hang out with one-eyed scatter cushions and mutant lampshades. It's a place where art becomes life. >





Scharf describes the house as 'a work in progress,' and slaps paint on everything from storage tins to the telephone. As he explains: 'Mistakes can be altered to be highlights.' Above, left: the house is pretty open plan, with each space flowing into the next and a colour scheme of oceanic blues. Above, right: the screen prints on the kitchen wall are portraits of Scharf and his family by Andy Warhol – a rare example of work in the house not by Scharf



Scharf describes the house as 'a work in progress,' and he slaps paint o



nearly everything. As he says: 'Mistakes can be altered to be highlights'



This page: Scharf's daughters Zena and Malia splash around in the pool. Even this didn't escape his paintbrush – the bottom is completely covered in his trademark squiggles. Opposite: the bed in seven-year-old Malia's room was a gift from some friends, 'who go round the country in a bus and pick up things in garage sales. I think it's Italian,' says Scharf. The cover on the bed is one of his fabric designs

THE INTERVIEW: Kenny talks about life at the Scharf end

Who is your hero?

Andy Warhol. I got to know him about four years before he died and he became a kind of father figure to me.

What is your favourite film?

The Wizard of Oz. I've loved it since I was a child because of the story, the visuals and the pure fantasy of it. I could watch it forever.

What music are you listening to now?

Esquivel (the Spanish composer of 50s easy listening), The Breeders (indie guitar rock), Veruca Salt (indie guitar rock) and Ann Magnusson (a friend of mine who is about to release her first album which is a great mix of just about every musical style, from acid-root to jazzy-psychedelic).

Favourite hang out?

My house – the Jungle House.

What do you have for breakfast?

Home-grown banana, papaya and passion fruit.

Do you like cooking?

Yes – if I cook it's usually Latin American with lots of chillies, partly because my wife is Brazilian and we lived there for a while, and also because I grew up in California where there's a strong Mexican influence. We tend to eat healthy food like beans and brown rice. I also bake bread.

What's your favourite travel destination?

Burma. I've only been there for a week in 1985, but it made a real impression on me. It's a beautiful, spiritual, intoxicating place. Plus it has lots of buddhas and pagodas and no cars! I would love to go back.

What's your favourite hotel?

The Olympia, 123 St Collins Avenue, Miami Beach. I've never stayed there, but I really like the exterior. It's a kitsch late 50s motel that's lit up at night with purple neon, which makes it look really space-agey.

Where do you buy your clothes?

Scharf Schak, (00 1 212) 925 4569. It's the new kiosk we've opened in New York which sells small, inexpensive designs like T-shirts and watches. Thrift stores.

What do you do first thing in the morning?

Swim.

What's in your fridge right now?

My wife's essential oils, fruit, spirulina (an algae which is eaten as a health food supplement).

What book are you reading?

The Private Life of Plants by David Attenborough (BBC Books, £17.99, hardback).

Favourite set of wheels?

My 1963 customized T-Bird.

What object do you love the most in your house?

My new fish tank.

What are your favourite shops?

Scharf Schop, Florida, (00 1 305) 673 9308, which sells everything from paintings to clothes and jewellery. Todd Oldham, New York, (00 1 212) 226 4668 (also stocked at A La Mode, London, (0171) 584 2133), because I like his aesthetic and the clothes he designs, and also because I've done some fabric and jewellery designs for him! Pat Fields, New York, (00 1 212) 254 1699 – her shop is always the hippest in town.

What is the worst decorating mistake you have ever made?

Mistakes can be altered to become highlights.

Do you own, or have you ever owned, a pair of electrically-operated curtains?

No.

Which is your favourite room in the house?

The Florida room which is a kind of covered-over, tacked-on porch, and a great way of bringing the outdoors indoors.

What time of day do you prefer to work?

Whenever the phone isn't ringing.

What do you do on a Sunday?

Read the paper, swim, play with my kids.

Text: Eva Madry. Photographs: Sandro Sondano.
Producer: Sarah Hollywood

GET THE LOOK

Jukebox:

Try The Beyst Jukebox Company, Mukton Bottom, Lough, Lincolnshire LN11 8NT, (01507) 480385. Prices start from £350.

Panton chairs:

Try TomTom, 42 New Compton Street, WC2, (0171) 240 7909. They always have a great selection of originals. £465 for a Cone chair.

French chandeliers:

Tulissio de Beaumont, 277 Lillie Road, SW6, (0171) 385 0156. Prices around £200.

For fabric, storage tins, Swatch wall clock and all sorts of Scharf stuff:

Contact the Scharf Schop, 435 Española Way, Miami Beach, Florida, 33139, (00 1 305) 673 9308 for details of mail order.

For blue walls:

Late Favourite (1040-B30G), £12.99 per 2.5 litres, by Dulux, (01753) 550555 for stockists, is a similar shade of ocean blue.

