



SUPERIMAGES

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1985, Neil Beloufa, whose lack of mid-career-ness ;) is overcompensated by talent and promise. This definitive monographic survey is edited by Myriam Ben Salah who, we're happy to announce, is joining our team as Associate Editor, along with Alexander Shulan from New York.

Don't miss the Highlights and Visions, because each and everyone of them is an amazing discover; and check out our closing section of Regulars for a roster of columnists enriched by the addition of global curator Maria Lind and young LA-based writer Fiona Duncan, with two new series dedicated to the social role of art and to sexual politics respectively. #Welcome #Girls

This issue will keep you company through mid-May—and meanwhile, the next issue of KALEIDOSCOPE Asia will be released in March to coincide with ABHK.

Enjoy!  
Alessio Ascari  
*Editor-in-Chief*



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**COVERS**  
Vanessa Beecroft  
VB42 (Polaroid)  
Courtesy of the artist

Robert Longo  
Untitled (O), 2013  
Courtesy of the artist

**THIS PAGE**  
Kenny Scharf  
Blablob, 2012  
Courtesy of the artist  
and Honor Fraser Gallery

**POSTER**  
Scott King  
Ziggy Stardust, 1999  
Courtesy the artist  
and Herald St, London



# RENAIS- SANCE MAN Jeffrey Deitch on KENNY SCHARF



REFLECTING THE POLYEDRIC  
MIND OF ITS AUTHOR,  
THE RENAISSANCE MAN  
SERIES IS THE SITE OF  
UNEXPECTED ENCOUNTERS  
AND PERSPECTIVES THAT  
CHALLENGE THE BOUNDARIES  
OF VISUAL CULTURE.

New York in the 1980s may be the last time the vanguard art community converged in one place. Ambitious artists, musicians, writers and others who dreamed of connecting with a community that shared their interest in progressive culture could emerge from the subway at Broadway and Prince Street and immediately join the conversation. Almost all of the galleries, performance spaces and studios were within walking distance. You could meet nearly every artist, curator and art writer, from Andy Warhol to students just off the Greyhound Bus, right on the street corner. It was on one of those street corners in SoHo that I first met Kenny Scharf, recently arrived from Los Angeles to enroll at the School of Visual Arts. I don't think it took Kenny more than a few days to connect with his fellow SVA student Keith Haring and Jean-Michel Basquiat, who, although not a registered

# RENAISSANCE MAN

student, would hang out at the school for the free art materials and studio space. Within a year of his arrival in New York, Kenny was at the center of one of the most dynamic group of young artists, musicians and performers in the world.

From the start, Kenny had a distinctive aesthetic and a unique touch. He created a dynamic mixture of optimistic and innocent Los Angeles pop culture with a tough New York attitude. In Kenny Scharf's new artistic world, his favorite TV family, The Jetsons, would ride the subway on their way to outer space. The smiling faces of Jetsons and Flintstones were combined with sinister graffiti tags to create a new artistic language that is still at the foundation of Scharf's work.

After extended sojourns in Brazil and Miami, and the re-establishment of a studio in New York, Kenny is now back in his native Los Angeles. Along the way, his engagement with Brazilian Tropicalia and Miami's Cuban culture has given another dimension to his work. His Los Angeles indoor/outdoor studio, with his customized Cadillacs parked in the yard, is the ideal venue to build on his unique cross-cultural aesthetic.

As his career has progressed, Kenny has developed an increasingly

Palladium, 1985, New York  
Courtesy of the artist  
Photo credit: Tseng Kwong Chi



**Kenny Scharf** (American, b. 1958) is an artist who lives and works in New York. He is represented by Honor Fraser Gallery, Los Angeles, and Fredric Shtzer, Miami. Solo exhibitions are on view at Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, through 22 May and at Nassau County Museum of Art from 19 March–10 July.





## REGULARS



**Jeffrey Deitch** is a dealer, art advisor, writer and exhibition organizer. He has curated seminal exhibitions including "Artificial Nature" (1990) and "Post Human" (1992). From 1996–2010, he ran Deitch Projects in SoHo—an experience documented in the recent book *LIVE THE ART*, published by Rizzoli USA—and from 2010–13, he served as Director of the Los Angeles MOCA. His most recent exhibition was "Unrealism," presented in Miami with Larry Gagosian in December 2015.



powerful dialogue between his youthful artistic exuberance and the history of modern painting. Kenny was always an "all-over" painter, filling the entire surface with swirling forms. As he has matured, he has been able to create a new dynamic fusion, mixing his street-wise Pop aesthetic with the compositional strategies of Arshile Gorky and Jackson Pollock. In addition to his deepening connection with the modern painting tradition, he remains deeply committed to his belief that art can improve the world. Kenny's *Oil Painting* of 2010, acquired by the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, addresses the environmental hazards of oil spills through his unique fusion of Pop and Pollock. While most artists confine their aesthetic vision to the canvas or the discrete art object, Kenny's vision has always extended to every space and surface that he chooses to take on. The first of his immersive Cosmic Caverns, where every Day-Glo surface is covered with the plastic refuse of pop culture, was installed in his Times Square studio. Cascades of used detergent bottles, discarded toys, radios and hundreds of others artifacts of consumer society are shaped into stalagmites and stalactites. Pulsating colored lights and a disco soundtrack complete



founding confrontation between vernacular culture and the elevated tradition of modern painting.

Kenny is an artist of our time whose work will help future generations to understand what it was like to be alive in 2016. His work portrays the science fiction future that children of his generation once expected, now overwhelmed by excessive consumption and environmental destruction. Despite the sense of unease that permeates the recent work, Kenny preserves his fundamental optimism. His work embraces the wonder and the joy of life. ☺

## CENTER STAGE

### Maria Lind in conversation with TREVOR PAGLEN



FOCUSING ON ART'S IMAGINATIVE QUALITIES, SOCIAL IMPACT AND ACTIVE RELATIONSHIP TO THE FUTURE, THE CENTER STAGE SERIES DIRECTS OUR ATTENTION TO THE QUESTION: WHAT DOES ART DO?

## REGULARS

## CENTER STAGE

An overarching question for the upcoming Gwangju Biennial, which I'm curating and you're invited to participate in, is, "What does art do?" This is a notoriously difficult question, but one which nevertheless needs to be asked, particularly in times when infrastructural concerns tend to dominate any discussion involving art. I am thinking about the current (understandable) preoccupation with the effects of the commercial art market and populist programming in mainstream art institutions, as well as the worries among small- and medium-size agents regarding mere institutional survival. Somewhere along the way, art itself seems to have been forgotten. Thinking about your recent exhibition at Metro Pictures in NYC, and particularly your underwater photographs of cables that enable all kinds of communication, including surveillance, I wonder: what would you say these photographs do?

I'm going to push back against the idea of art having to "do" anything at all. If there's any way that art can point towards freedom, it's through the fact that it doesn't have to participate in an economy of use. Having said that, I'm not so naive as to think this is actually

possible in any truly radical way, because artworks can only function in particular economies, whether it's an economy of luxury goods, of biennials and urban development or of academia, state-sponsored "community building" and social work. So with that disclaimer, what I want out of art is very modest. I want things that help us see the historical moment we're living in, and I want things that give us a glimpse into how that historical moment might be different. I think that artworks can serve important functions in a society: they can give people permission to look at something or think about something in new ways.

**Point taken, although my interests lay less in a utilitarian understanding of art than in the fact that art "does" something, regardless: even not "doing**

**Trevor Paglen** (American, b. 1974) is an artist who lives and works in Berlin, Germany. He is represented by Metro Pictures, New York, and Altman Siegel Gallery, San Francisco. His work is currently on view in the group exhibitions "Political Populism" at Kunsthalle Wien through 7 February and "Electronic Superhighway" at Whitechapel Gallery, London, through 15 May.

