

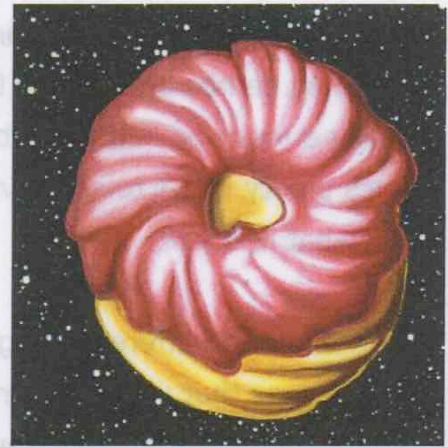
# Long Island Weekly Urban Psychedelia

By Jennifer Fauci - March 1, 2016

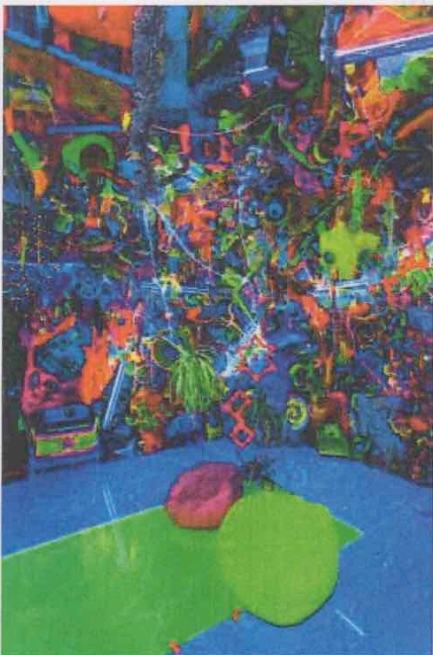
## Artist Kenny Scharf comes to Long Island with visual eye candy exhibit

Long Island is about to get an education in colorful pop art. The newest exhibition at the Nassau County Museum of Art (NCMA), Kenny Scharf, was curated by museum director Dr. Karl E. Willers and the museum's staff, and artist Kenny Scharf knows you won't be disappointed.

The exhibit showcases approximately 50 paintings and sculptures from Scharf's career, inspired by color, the work of Andy Warhol and everyday life around him. Newly re-installed in the museum's galleries is a version of the artist's psychedelic, Cosmic Cavern club-like environment, as well as a recreation of his workspace.



*Pink Frosted Cruller in Outer Space, 2010. Oil on linen. 24 x 24 inches. Private Collection. By Kenny Scharf*



*The Cosmic Cavern installation collection of the artist*

As an artist, Scharf draws upon pop icons and consumer culture. Fascinated by the topic, he enjoys doing things everyone can relate to.

"I don't particularly like esoteric art that one or two people can understand. I like to appeal to a broad audience, but I also want to send messages that can be looked at in different ways," said Scharf. "Something can appeal to a child because of the colors and someone more art educated might also see different layers in the work. You have to look further or leave it up to the individual when looking at the work."

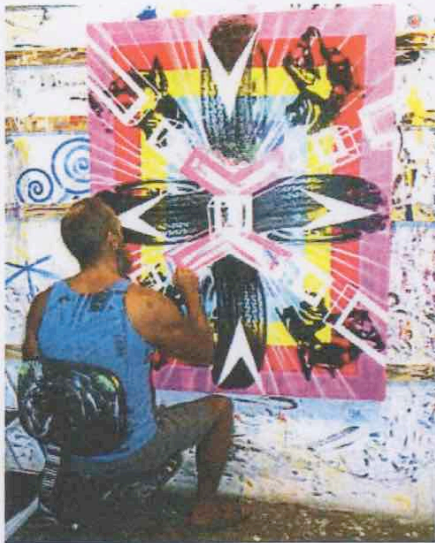
Scharf is looking forward to the exhibition and hopes others are, too.



# Long Island Weekly

## Dreaming In Cosmic Color

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It takes an open mind and a knack for creativity for one to truly embrace the arts. For the last 35 or so years, California native and artist Kenny Scharf has done just that. Born in Los Angeles, CA, Scharf received his BFA from the School of Visual Arts in New York. The American painter and sculptor considers every project he creates to be based on his past experiences. And judging from the work he turns out, they are bound to make you curious and leave you in awe.

"It is a personal challenge to produce the best work possible every time. One very important and guiding principle to my work is to reach out beyond the elitist boundaries of fine art and connect to popular culture through my art. My personal ambition has always been to live the example," said Scharf on his website.

Scharf was always interested in art and sculpture ever since he was a little kid. As for a love of graffiti, he said he was inspired by New York in the 1970s.

"I moved to New York in the late '70s and it was everywhere: the trains, buildings, it was very visually stimulating," said Scharf. "A lot of the art movement at the time in the galleries was more minimal, and that to me was boring. I felt the excitement as a young person wanting to express myself and get noticed. They weren't opening their doors at the galleries so if you want to do something, it's out in the street."

To Scharf, art is his life.

"Art is such a broad topic but it's my life and my religion...my joy. It's everything to me,"



*Elroyscape, 1998. Acrylic on canvas.  
Private Collection.*

he said.

As an artist, Scharf loves working with color.

#### Kenny Scharf Artwork



Atmosfear, 1983. Manes Collect.

"I love color because it is very exciting to me," he said. "As an artist, I am all over the place because I don't want to limit myself. I don't want to label myself as one thing or another because I like to do lots of kinds of art as well."

Much of Scharf's art is considered very playful by a lot of people.

"Play connotes fun and excitement and joy. I want to inspire people and show people that they can be uplifted," he said.

As for artists who inspire him. Scharf cited Andy Warhol, who he came to befriend, and Hieronymus Bosch, the early Dutch painter known for his fantastic imagery and landscapes.



"I was introduced to Karl and the idea of doing a show there by some collectors of mine," he said.

As the curator, it was Willers' job to select what pieces to feature in the showcase. Scharf said the cosmic cavern is something he has been doing for many years and is actually a room he had in his basement in Brooklyn. But there's plenty of art to see, even if the artist doesn't know what it is yet.

"There's a lot of different things being featured and a couple things that we're still trying to get that hasn't been seen for many years. That would be very exciting," he said, although the entirety of the show is still not confirmed. "Paintings new and old, the cosmic cavern, bronze sculptures, some good stuff. I'm excited."



*Wilmascape, 1998. Acrylic on canvas.  
Private Collection.*

For more about the gallery and Scharf's artwork, see [Dreaming In Cosmic Color](#).

To learn more about Kenny Scharf, visit [www.kennyscharf.com](http://www.kennyscharf.com).

For more information, visit [www.nassaumuseum.org](http://www.nassaumuseum.org). The Nassau County Museum of Art is located at 1 Museum Dr., Roslyn.

**Jennifer Fauci**

**Comments**