

Kenny Scharf: *Look Both Ways*  
Ross + Kramer | Miami



Exhibition Dates: April 17 - May 24, 2025

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Ross + Kramer is pleased to present *Look Both Ways*, a survey exhibition of work by Kenny Scharf opening April 17th, at Ross + Kramer Miami. Spanning from the 1980s to present, the exhibition brings together a series of paintings and sculptures that showcase the breadth of Scharf's expansive career.

Coined as the father of street art, Kenny Scharf rose to popularity in the 1980s, during the East Village's art movement that saw the emergence of punk, Neo-Pop and Neo-Expressionist painting, and graffiti art. Working with spray paint on canvas nods to his street-art style, which he translates into a bold, vibrant candy coated visual universe. Combining elements of his urban landscapes, Scharf creates a uniquely whimsical world of characters that humorously reflects on popular culture, science fiction, environmental concerns and existential fears.

*Look Both Ways* demonstrates Scharf's surrealist, psychedelic scenes that depict cosmic landscapes filled with smiling flowers, globular creatures with cartoonish faces, and swirling forms set against splattered, textured backgrounds. In *Portalis* (2020), the cosmic blue painting transports viewers into an alternate reality populated with flowing planetary forms, luminous green orbs and a smiling purple tree that inhabit this extraterrestrial environment. The transition from painting to sculpture is visible in the smiling tree as it breaks free from its 2D confines, materializing into the sculpture *Paradis Perdu (cutout)* (2022). The orange cartoon-faced trunk with expressive eyes supports clusters of more cartoon-faced yellow blossoms, purple flowers, and green vines.

Yet, despite Scharf's playful aesthetic, an underlying anxiety permeates his work, the artist himself has noted, "If you really look at what's going on in most of these paintings... however joyous, colorful, fun and celebratory the capitalistic, consumerist American way of life may seem, there will always be this elephant in the room, which is what it's doing to the earth." This duality is particularly evident in *News Now* (1988), where vibrant colors and playful shapes are juxtaposed with words like "ozone," "dangerous chemicals," and "chlorofluorocarbon." Together, these works create an immersive journey through Scharf's distinctive universe, where spontaneity and imagination coalesce into a singular artistic vision.

Kenny Scharf (b. 1958, Los Angeles, CA) lives and works in Los Angeles. Scharf has held solo exhibitions globally since the 1980s. His work belongs in the collections of The Bass, the Guggenheim Museum, the Museum of Modern Art, the Stedelijk Museum, and the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, among others.

*Look Both Ways* will be on view April 17, through May 24th, 2025 at Ross + Kramer Miami Beach, with the opening reception being held on April 17 from 6pm to 8pm. The gallery is located at 1910 Alton Road, Miami Beach, FL, and is open Tuesday-Saturday, 11am-6pm, walk-ins and appointments are welcome. Please contact [info@rkgallery.com](mailto:info@rkgallery.com) for more information, images, or to schedule a viewing appointment.