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PRESS RELEASE

Phillips Southampton Announces ***COSMIC SUMMER: Works by Kenny Scharf***

A Private Selling Exhibition Featuring a Collection of Works
By Kenny Scharf on View 1-31 July



Kenny Scharf
Cometa Festa D'Halley, 1986

SOUTHAMPTON, NEW YORK – 23 JUNE 2022 – Phillips is pleased to announce *COSMIC SUMMER: Works by Kenny Scharf*, an experiential exhibition located at the Phillips Southampton Gallery at 1 Hampton Rd, Southampton NY, 11968. Beginning on 1 July and open every day through the end of the month, *COSMIC SUMMER* will feature an array of Scharf's works from his iconic, highly animated graffiti faces to the dynamic and thematic *Cometa Festa D'Halley, 1986*. The Southampton space will be transformed to embody the lively and colorful nature of Scharf as an artist with weekend events, including a cosmic bar offering refreshing alcoholic and non-alcoholic themed beverages every Saturday throughout the exhibition. A must see on those hot summer days, Phillips invites everyone to take a dive into a summer experience that will be out of this world.

Describing himself as a 'pop surrealist', Kenny Scharf is a painter and installation artist whose distinctive graffiti art and visual vocabulary of colorful, lively globular figures have won him a legion of fans around the world. Born in Los Angeles in 1958 before moving to New York to attend Manhattan's School of Visual Arts, Scharf came to be known alongside his contemporaries Keith Haring and Jean-Michel Basquiat, and his mentor Andy Warhol, associated with the art scene in 1980s downtown New York. Currently living and working in Los Angeles, Scharf successfully merges fine art with popular culture, using spray paint on a variety of surfaces, from canvas to cars to the concrete walls of Los Angeles' vast cityscape.



Kenny Scharf
Orangry, 2019

Scharf harnesses the spontaneity of spray paint with a style he describes as 'psychedelic conceptualism' with his dynamic gestures imbuing his work with a radiant vitality. The exuberant colors of his works are immediately eye-catching, the rich orange tones working in unison with the range of greens that Scharf applies to the eyes and the sharp, toothy smile. The crazed look of *Orangry* is intriguing in its enigmatic nature, captivating and amusing the viewer with its energy. In contrast, *Big V* approaches the audience with a friendlier tone both in color and expression, with the soft purples and a wide grin. Scharf's fascination with the gestural immediacy of graffiti can be seen throughout his works, with the very physical spray-painting process reflecting the artist's exuberant personality. The ecstatic visualization and dazzling colors result in striking characters derived from infinite aspects of the artist's personality, who oscillate between explosive, aggressive energy and deceptive placidity.

Scharf's involvement in the 1985 Whitney Biennial marked the launch of his international career that has spanned decades, his work featured in numerous solo and group exhibitions around the world. In 2021, Scharf was honored with a solo show, *Vaxi Nation*, at Almine Rech, Paris, following his solo exhibition, *DystopianPainting*, at the gallery's New York location in 2020. In June 2021, the documentary, *Kenny Scharf: When Worlds Collide*, was released on various online streaming platforms, dedicated to the artist's life and work, and the origins of his distinctive visual vocabulary. Signaling an important time in the artist's career, Scharf has also recently collaborated with the major fashion house Dior for their Fall 2021 collection, marrying his cartoonish forms with high fashion.



Kenny Scharf
Big V, 2019

Exhibition viewing: 1 July - 31 July

Location: 1 Hampton Road, Southampton NY, 11968

Click here for more information: <https://www.phillips.com/store/kenny-scharf>

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PRESS CONTACTS:

NEW YORK – Jaime Israni, Public Relations Director, Americas jisrani@phillips.com

PHILLIPS NEW YORK – 432 Park Avenue, New York, NY 10022

PHILLIPS LONDON – 30 Berkeley Square, London, W1J 6EX

PHILLIPS HONG KONG – 14/F St. George's Building, 2 Ice House Street, Central Hong Kong

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