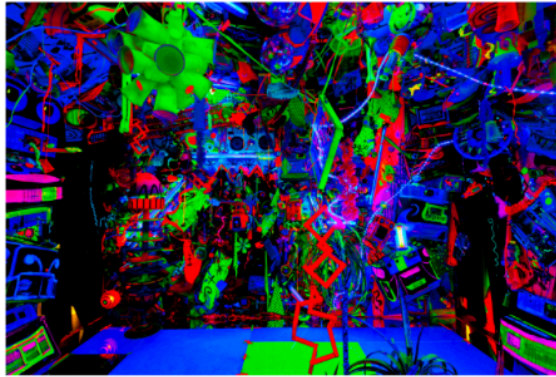


## ARTNEWS

**Kenny Scharf's Cosmology**  
**By Anne Binlot**  
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Last May, Kenny Scharf, the self-proclaimed "Pop Surrealist," was a few days away from moving out of the living and work space in Bushwick, Brooklyn, that he calls his Cosmic Cavern. Scharf had been spending most of his time in Los Angeles anyway, so he decided to throw the last in a series of parties known as Cosmic Cavern A-Go-Go. He called this last hurrah, "The Final Frontier."



On that particular evening, Glori Cohen, an art advisor and collector, happened to be in attendance. "You can't take this down," she told Scharf. "This has to be a museum."

And so the artist called the movers and told them he wasn't going anywhere. The Cosmic Cavern Museum was born. Scharf plans to open it this fall as a by-appointment art space. (And yes, he'll still be throwing parties.)

Cosmic Cavern A-Go-Go began at the height of the 2008 recession, when the artist decided to turn his flood-prone basement into one of the glow-in-the-dark environments that have been his trademark since the 1980s. Scharf's Cosmic Caverns had unexceptional beginnings—at the time they were, as he says, mere "Cosmic Closets"—in a room of the apartment near Times Square where he was living with his friend, the late artist Keith Haring. "I just started putting garbage in there and painting it fluorescent, happened upon a black light, and it just kind of started," says Scharf. He went on to install his Day-Glo environments at the 1985 Whitney Biennial and MoMA PS1.

In Bushwick, Scharf would paint on his guests' faces as they entered the space, while his friend, artist Scott Ewalt, took on DJ duties, playing everything from the B-52s to gospel to psychedelic music—anything to get the crowd moving. "I almost felt like we are filling a void [for people] to just really dance their ass off in an environment that takes them somewhere else," says Scharf.

The Cosmic Cavern Museum will go on for at least the next two years, according to Scharf. "It's not a nightclub," he says of his monument to himself. "It's not a gallery." He prefers defining it as "a whole experience," reiterating, "It's a Cosmic Cavern."