

TOTAH

TOTAH presents **PAINT B Q**, a collaboration with legendary LES artist Kenny Scharf

On June 15 and 16, American painter and street icon Kenny Scharf will create **PAINT B Q**, a custom mural on the Stanton Street façade of TOTAH's new LES space.

PAINT B Q welcomes Scharf back to his early downtown dregs and initiates TOTAH in the hallowed Lower East Side rite of muraled storefront security gates. Born in Hollywood, CA, Scharf escaped east in the late 70s, leaving Los Angeles for the restless energy of NYC, where he joined Andy Warhol, Jean Michel Basquiat and Keith Haring in redefining New York nightlife and culture, from Club 54 to the Palladium.

Scharf's paintings, jam packed with playful aliens and cosmic-pop-art Americana, gained him explosive notoriety and fame in New York City's downtown art scene. Scharf has also gained widespread recognition for his black light installations, known as "Cosmic Caverns", environments created of found objects and appliances, customized with Day-Glo paint and often serving as venues for all night fun, i.e. dance parties. The Whitney Museum of American Art was an early institution to commission a "Cosmic Cavern" for its 1985 Whitney Biennial.

Today, Scharf has returned to live in Los Angeles, where his colorful blob-like forms and impish totems dot the automobile-desert terrain. For *PAINT B Q*, Scharf will pilgrim east once again, conceiving and improvising a folk-pop vista in situ. Located just around the corner from one of Scharf's early murals, *PAINT B Q* revisits Kenny's old, historic digs, the now newly-tamed wilderness of the LES, while also coming full cycle to pay homage to Edward Totah, David Totah's late uncle, a pioneering dealer who championed and showed Scharf's work in the early 90s in London.

PAINT B Q will culminate June 16, at 6:30 pm, with a public party catered by neighborhood eatery Balvanera and hosted by TOTAH in the space in front of and adjacent to the gallery.

Kenny Scharf's work has been the subject of solo exhibitions and commissions at the Hammer Museum in Los Angeles, MARCO Monterrey, Mexico, the Queens Museum of Art, MOCA Los Angeles, the Venice Biennale and Museum of Modern Art, P.S.1, among others, and is currently on view at the Nassau County Museum of Art through July 10.