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## Art

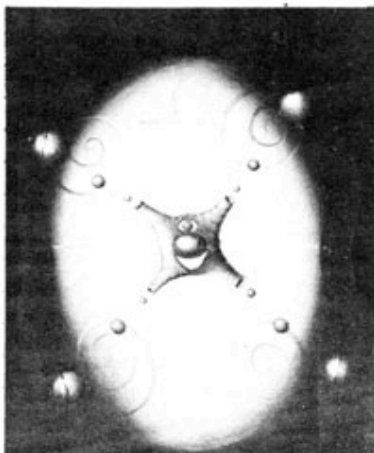
### A Toned-Down Kenny Scharf

#### ■ ART REVIEW

BY CLAUDINE ISÉ  
SPECIAL TO THE TIMES

Only a grinch could resist the buffoonish charm and giddy energy of Kenny Scharf's lush, loopy paintings, which typically depict outer space or jungle landscapes peopled by clown-nosed creatures, googly-eyed monsters, three-eyed gnomes and glowering blue meanies.

Scharf's new paintings at Kantor Gallery—his first L.A. solo show since 1986—are far less riotous than what we've come to expect



Despite their comic affability, a sense of loneliness permeates works like "Planetazul" and "Vulaza," both painted this year. Friendly worms poke their heads out from underground, as if searching for some companionship and a bit of fun. It's impossible not to think of these paintings in terms of the deaths of Scharf's close friends Andy Warhol, Jean-Michel Basquiat, Keith Haring and Tseng Kwong Chi.

Scharf appears to be struggling to find his place in a stripped-down, post-Pop world. Familiar Scharf icons like Felix the Cat, Wilma Flintstone and Elroy Jetson

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