

## Art Review

By David Pagel

Home Vision: Kevin Appel's new paintings make his canvases from a year ago look sweet and old-fashioned—not quite clunky, but not nearly as taut or sophisticated as his latest computer-generated images of a dream home's interior.

This isn't to take anything away from the L.A. painter's earlier works: They still rank among the best of his generation. It's simply to suggest how much more ambitious and accomplished his impeccably painted, dazzlingly composed pictures at Angles Gallery are.

More space, more light, more precisely calibrated colors and more translucence suffuse Appel's mural-size views of an airy home he designed in cooperation with OpenOffice, a New York architectural firm. Plus, more visual energy ripples through the interlocking triangles that represent leaves of neatly trimmed trees in the painter's virtual world.

In the main gallery, Appel has hung a single painting on each of the four walls. Before he painted any of the works, he determined the composition of each by superimposing the floor plan of the house he designed over the gallery's actual floor plan.

Consequently, what you see in each painting is consistent with what is depicted in the other works. It doesn't take a great leap of the imagination to fill in the in-between spaces, completing, in your mind's eye, the home's overall plan.

Its large windows, numerous sliding glass doors and ample patios facilitate the fluid movement from interior to exterior and back again. This illusory flow spills out of Appel's paintings and into the gallery. Wherever you stand, you feel as if you're in two spaces simultaneously, with one foot firmly planted in reality and the other in that of undeniable fantasy.