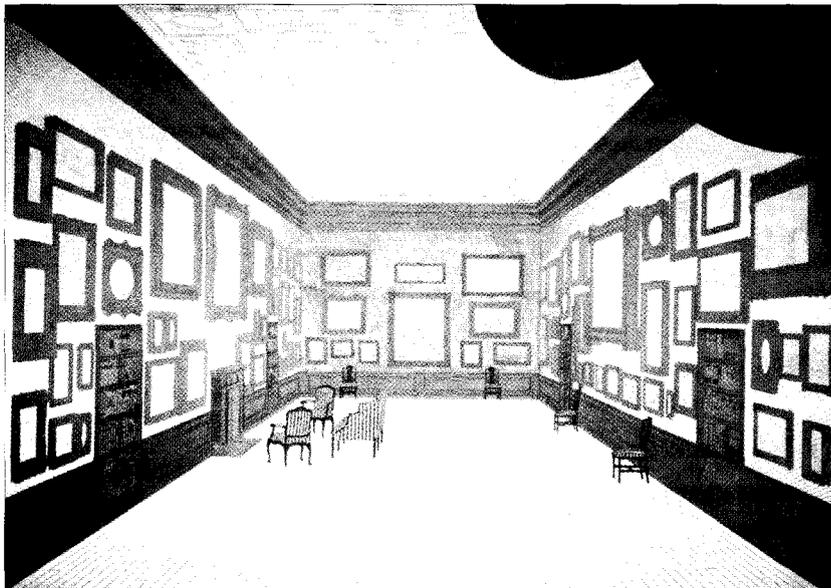


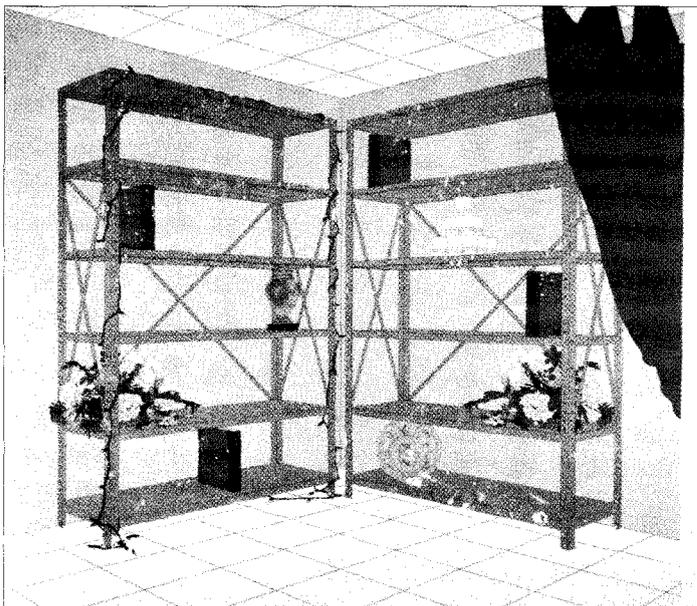
# World of Interiors

**Kevin Zucker** likes to tweak perspective in his meticulous architectural renderings

BY MEREDITH MENDELSON



Zucker uses computer software, carbon paper, and acrylic paint to create works like *Posterity*, 2004.



The floral arrangements in *C-60*, 2004, taken from a Dutch still-life painting, are mirror images of each other.

I'd definitely tell someone sitting next to me on an airplane that I'm a painter," says Kevin Zucker. "But I'm not sure that's quite right." While Zucker does make canvases that have paint on them, calling him a painter doesn't really capture the unpainterly technical process on which his work is based. His artworks—interiors and still lifes, for the most part—have the precise, delicate appearance of etchings or drawings. With their muted colors, cross-hatchings, and forms defined by thin black lines, one might presume, viewing them in reproduction, that they are small works on paper. In fact, the artist has managed, with the help of state-of-the-art technology, to create meticulous marks and a sense of fragility on canvas, and on a very large scale.

The slight-framed Zucker, 29, has a kind of bookish look that jibes with his disciplined, mathematical approach—the way he arranges space and objects according to strict linear perspective.

He begins by rendering rooms, furniture included, from scratch, using CAD, or 3-D modeling software, an architectural drafting tool. Some "paintings" depict what look like corporate meeting rooms or closets, while others, such as those in a series he produced for his 2003 show at Mary Boone Gallery in Chelsea, are modeled on 18th-century interiors.

After Zucker has a computer image of a 3-D digital model, he transfers the picture to a 2-D software program like Photoshop or Illustrator. "The way I use the 3-D software is relatively unsophisticated," he says. "The distorting and editing that come next are far more time-consuming." He spends hours tweaking the perspective and adds details such as hatch marks and architectural embellishments. For *Great Good Fortune* (2003), part of his series of Georgian interiors, Zucker elongated the

room and created six different vanishing points in order to create the subtly disorienting space.

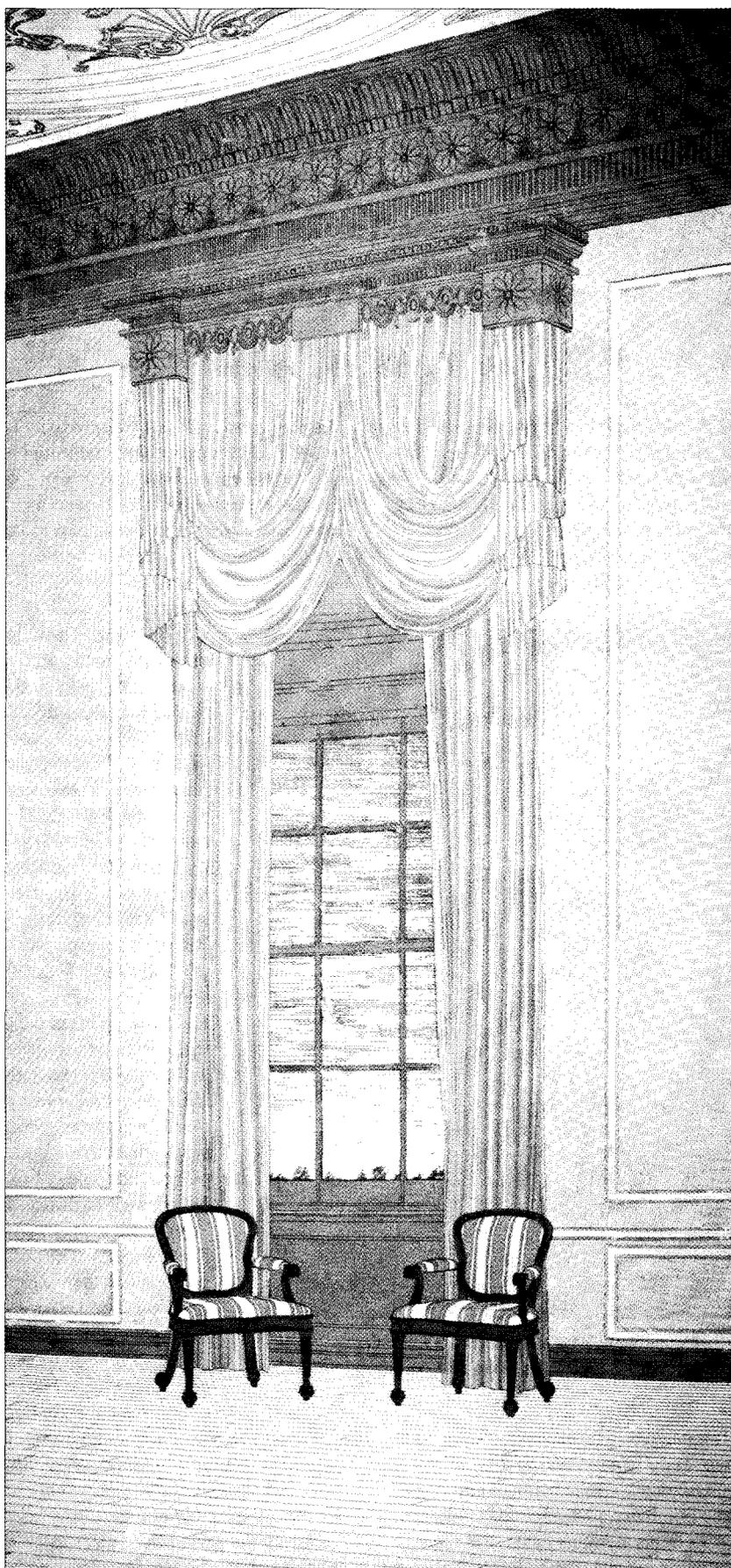
When finished with the digital portion of his process, Zucker prints the image on an engineering copier (essentially a very large copy machine). He then transfers the images on the printouts to canvas by laying the sheets of paper face down on the canvas and rubbing them. He then "draws" in lines to indicate ceiling panels, floorboards, or wallpaper, using over-size sheets of carbon paper. As a final step, he paints in color. He applies house paint for walls and acrylic for everything else, and then adds a final glaze. He produces around six paintings a year.

Zucker's procedure for selecting subject matter is just as labor-intensive as his workmanship is. For one of his floral still lifes, he searched through art-history books for floral arrangements, found one he wanted to reproduce, hired a florist to make it, and then drew it (using his digital tools) from the model. Several other still lifes depict flowers to which the Victorians attributed different negative associations.

A native New Yorker, Zucker laughs when he describes the "hypermasculine, abstract expressionist style" he started with as an undergraduate at the Rhode Island School of Design. He began experimenting with figurative painting and interiors while earning his M.F.A. at Columbia University. "I was and still am curious about how people make meaning in their lives by arranging things around themselves," he explains. "The interiors are not about space, really, but about how objects define it." For a show at Paolo Cuti in Milan last year, he produced a series of shaped canvases showing wall fixtures, such as mirrors and sconces. The position in which the canvases were hung created architectural illusions. Two strategically placed "mirrors" suggested a corner that wasn't actually there, for instance.

The artist is currently working on a new series of interiors for a solo show next spring at New York's Greenberg Van Doren Gallery, where his drawings sell for around \$5,000, and his paintings in the range of \$30,000. He already knows how and where he will hang the canvases in that space, although he has only just begun making them. In addition to painter, digital artist, and draftsman, Zucker could also be called a site-specific installation artist. ■

*Meredith Mendelsohn is an associate editor of ARTnews.*



**Great Good Fortune, 2003, has six different vanishing points.**