

ARTFORUM

Peter Shire

NEW GALERIE

2 rue Borda

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Peter Shire's current show is the result of long-distance conversations between French curator Julie Boukobza and the Los Angeles-born and -based artist. Via email and Skype, together they selected drawings and small three-dimensional works in metal, ceramics, and wood from the 1980s through 2015. The resulting miniretrospective celebrates Shire's multifaceted oeuvre with a mix of functional design objects and decorative *objets d'art*.

Nearly forty three-dimensional works are informally arranged on a large, custom-built table that leaves the viewer just barely enough space to navigate the gallery's main room. Stacks and pyramids of Shire's signature Echo Park Pottery mugs are interspersed among colorful wooden maquettes of public sculpture projects, a model based on his "Bel Air" chair originally produced in the 1980s by Italian design group Memphis Milano (*Bonne Aire* (Good Area), 2006), and old and recent ceramic and metal sculptures.

Epitomizing the installation's nonchalant, nonhierarchical vibe, an unframed sketch of a chair (*Seggiolino Study No. 2*, 2006) is casually propped against a sidelong mug.

The oldest work on view, *Laminati*, 1987, is a multicolor laminated-wood end table measuring just over two feet tall. In the company of similarly sized and similarly geometric sculptures such as *Parallel Parallel*, 2006, Shire's furniture appears less obviously functional. The inverse is also true: His abstract steel and ceramic sculptures seen here resemble chairs or teapots. Among Shire's most recent works, *Odyssey La-Tati*, 2015, provides a special treat for cineastes. This orange-and-black-glazed ceramic amphora is decorated with scenes from Jacques Tati's *Mon Oncle* (1958), including Monsieur Hulot's charmingly ramshackle town house and Tati's lampoon of Le Corbusierian suburban architecture, Villa Arpel. Like Tati, Shire has a knack for making modernism fun (and funny). His own architectures, represented here by tabletop models of large-scale sculptures resembling carnivalesque construction cranes (*Skyhook.01* and *Skyhook.02*, both 1987) and wacky design proposals for the Coachella Valley Music and Arts Festival (on view in the gallery's grotto-like basement), are whimsical and geometric.



Peter Shire, *Parallel Parallel*, 2006, ceramic, stainless Steel
34 x 17 x 13".

— Mara Hoberman

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