

POMO TEA TIME

A new ceramics exhibition explores the work of Memphis member Peter Shire

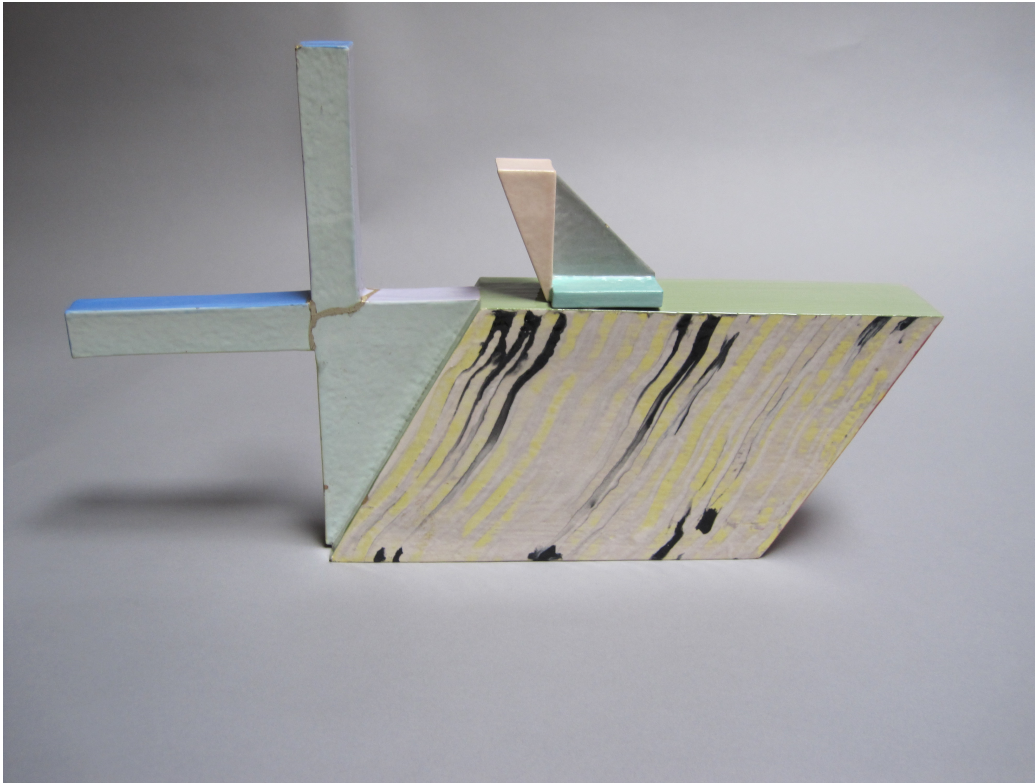
By MATTHEW MESSNER • September 7, 2016



Peter Shire, *Mexican Bauhaus Pico*, 1985. Cone 06 clay and underglazes. 11 x 12 x 12 inches. (Inv# PS_6602) (Courtesy Derek Eller Gallery)

A Survey of Ceramics: 1970s to Present will run at the Derek Eller Gallery from September 8 through October 9. The exhibition covers the life's work of Los Angeles-based artist Peter Shire, an eminent ceramicist and former member to the Milan-based design collective Memphis.

Shire's work, spanning 40 years, borrows from Futurist and Bauhaus design while being distinctly influenced by late modernism and the Googie style of Southern California. Inspired by what he called "California High Kitsch," Shire's work explores color, geometry, and function, often in playful and unexpected ways. Though his catalog includes everything from sculptures to teacups, Shire's most notable and persistent form is the teapot. His life-long engagement with the teapot has produced typical and atypical configurations for the ubiquitous household item. Shire has spent a great deal of effort exploring teapot physics and the challenge of getting every last drop of water out.



Peter Shire, *Parrallelogram Cross*, 1981. Cone 06 clay and underglazes. 9 x 15 x 2 inches. (Inv# PS_6608) (Courtesy Derek Eller Gallery)

Shire's inclusion in the influential Memphis group came after being featured in *Wet Magazine* early in his career. Personally invited to the group by Ettore Sottsass, Shire was part of Memphis from 1981 to 1988. During that time, he would help shape the world's understanding of postmodern object art and design.

Running concurrently with the exhibition at the Derek Eller Gallery, Shire's work will also be on show at The Jewish Museum, in New York. Shire's work has been collected by many of the country's preeminent museums, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, The Museum of Fine Arts in Houston, The Los Angeles County Museum of Art, and The Seattle Museum of Art.

An opening reception will be held from 6 to 8 p.m., Thursday, September 8, at Derek Eller Gallery.