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Arlene Shechet Offers Color Therapy and Comradery in “Together”

**By Pearl Fontaine
East Hampton
August 24, 2020**

Pace Gallery’s temporary East Hampton location is showing Arlene Shechet’s “Together,” now through August 30. The show includes a series of 12 ceramic sculptures made during her time in quarantine, representing a search for joy in a time of uneasiness.

Instead of mirroring her current, darkened psyche during the global pandemic, Shechet turned to color therapy to make light of her mood—something she thought might benefit her viewers, too. Shechet’s saturated creations, made at her home and studio in Woodstock, NY, take on abstracted forms with no front or back, imagined in jewel tones like orange, green, and red. The works have been titled for the hours of the day, marking time in reference of the Medieval *Book of Hours*, simultaneously reminiscent of classical sculpted portrait busts,

“There is a mushiness in our lives right now that makes us slip through the day, not knowing where we are, what day it is, what time it is,” said Shechet in a video for the gallery. “Time seemed like the perfect title for these things because time is both very concrete and very elusive.”

Imagined on a more personal scale than many of her past pieces, the forms that make up the series morph from geometric to organic, suggesting the fluidity of time with iridescent, velvety surfaces made from the artist's unique glazing techniques. Every element in "Together" has been carefully considered down to the structural supports and platforms on which each work rests—some of which have also been painted and powder-coated in bright hues. Of note is an emerald sculpture that reminded us of melting cinder blocks; *3 a.m.*, with its tubular protrusions that look like the arteries and ventricles of a heart; and the neon orange-glazed *7 a.m.*, which marks the start of the series.

"Together" follows Shechet's recent exhibition at Pace Gallery entitled "Skirts" and coincides with the artist's work on view in the Whitney Museum's "Making Knowing: Craft in Art."

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