

THOMAS DANE GALLERY

Sherman Sam, 'Phillip King, Thomas Dane Gallery', *Artforum*, July 11, 2014



View of "Phillip King," 2014.

While London-based sculptor Phillip King's approach investigates the way form is created through material and process, his work's appearance is not how one would imagine a process-based sculpture's—cones, pyramids, industrial forms, even the grid all appear in his visual lexicon, as does sand, fiberglass, clay, metal, and foam PVC. For King, the means of bringing a form into being commences with its armature or structure. "I call sculpture the art of the invisible," he once said, "because it's below the surface, you can't see what's going on. The sculptor is the one who has to understand the inside." Together with a small group of outdoor sculptures at Ranelagh Gardens in Chelsea, this exhibition—the artist's debut at Thomas Dane—is compact survey of the octogenarian's practice.

King's career spans several major movements, ranging from Minimalism and Pop, and in retrospect, his work possesses qualities of both modern and postmodern art. The large, four-part, painted-wood *Blue Blaze*, 1967, for example, looks like a surrealist staircase that has been strewn across the room, yet its intense blue also recalls Yves Klein's as well as the blue screens of film. Here, the low fourth element suggests a very flat plinth or canvas. These exhibitions point to the artist as less of a portentous modernist and more a playful inventor of form. In fact, the most obvious and consistent trait is predominately his bright color. Neither descriptive nor topical, color mostly suggests changes of edge or shape, or, as in *Blue Blaze*, also serves to unify separate parts. Ultimately, that is what keeps his work fresh and present.

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