

NEW CERAMICS

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Oliver Neu, "Pferd 2020", stoneware, porcelain, 47 x 25 x 58 cm photo: Heide Articus



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DutCHawan

TINEKE VAN GILS



EXHIBITIONS:

1 - 15 March, *Teaclub Moychay*,
 Rozengracht 92H,
 1016 NG Amsterdam, Netherlands
 Open daily 11 - 20 h www.moychay.nl

11 - 28 June, *Pop-Up on the farm of Tineke van Gils*, *Rijksstraatweg 16*
 2636 AX Schipluiden, Netherlands
 Open Thu - Sun, 13 - 17 h and by
 appointment www.tinekevangils.com

from left to right:

Her Comis, *Scintilla*, stoneware, anagama woodfired, 2024
 Tjerk van der Veen, stoneware, *kurinuki* technique
 charcoal kiln, 2025

Tineke van Gils, *The mountain, the moon and the lake*
 stoneware and porcelain, 2024 photo - Tineke van Gils

The Asian ceremonial matcha tea bowl, the chawan, was long known in the West almost exclusively to ceramists and collectors of Japanese art. But since tea drinking has experienced a remarkable revival here and green matcha powder has become popular, the chawan is slowly finding its way to a wider audience. In line with this trend, I invited thirty Dutch ceramists to each create three to five chawan-inspired artworks for an exhibition that started during the Amsterdam Tea Festival in January 2026 and continues in March at Teaclub Moychay Amsterdam and in June at our farm near Delft.

The ceremonial chawan

The bowl, a basic shape in clay, is an inexhaustible source of inspiration for many artists, a constant challenge. The Dutch poet Gerrit Kouwenaar put it this way: "Creators have a hard time; they must make something that has already been made a thousand times for the first time." Among bowls, the chawan is even more than just a bowl. It is a handcrafted and therefore narrative object of use and art, imbued with spiritual meaning. Irregularities inherent in the craftsmanship are celebrated as embodiments of wabi-sabi, the beauty of transience and imperfection. On the other hand, the chawan must also be practical, so that the matcha can be perfectly frothed with a bamboo whisk. Within the tea ceremony, which is a social and disciplined ritual, every object has a function and a symbolic meaning; the chawan represents connection.

The sky is the limit

No longer related to the tea ceremony, a matcha craze has emerged in the West in recent years. The powdered tea is now even frothed in electric milk frothers. Most people here drink matcha for its supposed health benefits, but for those who combine tea drinking with a mindful lifestyle the chawan can arise at their horizon. Stripped of its ceremonial allure the chawan itself will also change. The question then arises whether it still can be called a chawan. All these considerations motivated me to organize an exhibition about this bowl of bowls. Initially, the functional qualities of the chawan played an important role in our creative process. But when Saskia

Pfaeltzer sculpted gargoyles on the edge of a bowl, the floodgates opened. From that moment the chawan inspired us like the holy grail does, so the sky became our limit.

Pushing the boundaries

"DutCHawan" thus became an exhibition with contemporary artworks inspired by the chawan, alongside newly made chawans that build on tradition. At the moment of writing most of the artworks were still in process. Waiting for the results was exciting. How physically would Adriaan Rees handle the clay of thickly formed bowls this time? And what would Niek Hoogland draw on his chawans, now that he shifted his subjects from birds

Saskia Pfaeltzer, *Gargoyles*, stoneware, 2025

photo - Tineke van Gils



and fish to more socially engaged themes? Pepijn van den Nieuwendijk with his inimitable imagination created monstrous tea bowls. Colourful and hilarious bowls came from Sarah Michael, what side to drink from with her *Sumo Wrestler*? Marike Jacobs' bowls show an expressive, fearless approach to clay. At the other end of the spectrum, Annet Leichel decorated a bowl with tea leaves, resonating the serenity of the tea ceremony. Chawans that remain aligned to tradition came from Yves de Block, Her Comis, Job Heykamp, Tjerk van der Veen and myself. The symbolism of connection embodied by the chawan inspired rielle beekmans to bring hands of several people together to form each bowl. And for Annemarie Vogel, hands go even further: she is blind and created her bowls only by touch. Both these artists are telling a story about touch, and that's precisely the meaning of the chawan. I would like to conclude with a quote of Brancusi: "Simplicity is not a goal in art, but in spite of oneself, one arrives at simplicity as one gets close to the real meaning of things." Although the exhibition is based on the chawan, it also pushes its boundaries.

The artists:

rielle beekmans, Yves de Block, Wilma Bosland, Janneke Bruines, Hermien Buytendijk, Her Comis, Tineke van Gils, Simone Haak, Liselore Halink, Job Heykamp, Pauline Hoeboer, Niek Hoogland, Frans & Jozien Ingenhut, Marike Jacobs, Netty Janssens, Annet Leichel, Lilibo, Sarah Michael, Pepijn van den Nieuwendijk, Marlene Nobel, Leon Perlot, Saskia Pfaeltzer, Adriaan Rees, Anne Sey, Sergey Shevelev, Tjerk van der Veen, Jolanda Verdegaal, Charlotte Visser, Annemarie Vogel and Harm van der Zeeuw.

TINEKE VAN GILS is an established ceramic artist working in the Netherlands and internationally.



Pepijn van den Nieuwendijk, *Grumpy Monsters*, earthenware, 2025
photo – artist



Lilibo, stoneware, 2025 photo – artist

From left to right: Annemarie Vogel, stoneware, 2025 / rielle beekmans, 2025, stoneware photo: Tineke van Gils

