

'Teabowls'  
Oxford Ceramics Gallery  
9 – 24 September 2022



'When you hear the splash of the water drops that fall into the stone bowl, you will feel that all the dust of your mind is washed away.' Sen no Rikyū, 16th century teamaster

This September Oxford Ceramics Gallery presents 'Teabowls', a celebration of perhaps the most iconic and revered of all ceramic forms, the teabowl. Across centuries, the teabowl has inspired ceramic artists inside and outside Japan, producing an infinite variety of expressions.

This exhibition features examples of historic and contemporary interpretations from Japan and beyond. Work by Shinobu Kawase (born 1950), adhering to the ceramic traditions of the Song dynasty, is juxtaposed with a work by American artist Peter Voulkos (1924-2002), who reinterpreted classical forms with rare vigour and intensity.

Shoji Hamada's (1894-1978) teabowls reveal his power to merge Eastern and Western culture. Inspired by him, Takauchi Shūgō (born 1937) chose to ignore the restrictive principles of regionalism and experiment with Shino, Oribe and black ware, examples of which are included in the show.

A distinctive textural quality is unmistakable in the luscious Oribe ware of Higashida Shigemasa (born 1955), the vibrant colours of Maeda Masahiro's (born 1948) porcelain with overglaze enamels, and the striking surfaces of Gomi Kenji (born 1978). Sensuous curves characterise the work of Takeshi Yasuda (born 1943), who though born and trained in Japan, spent many years working and teaching in the UK (1973-2005) and currently lives and work in China. The folds of Yukiya Izumita (born 1966) are evocative of a dramatic tension between roughness and fragility.

A rebellious spirit threads through the show. Works by Ryoji Koie (1938-2020) include ceramic as well as glass, from his later collaboration with the artist Iida Hisao. Wada Morihiro's (1944-2008) rejection of classical Japanese aesthetics blends with his fascination with the natural world, expressed through intricate patterns. Ewen Henderson's (1934-2000) energy forcefully emerges through his work, always pushing formal and aesthetic boundaries.

'Without an infusion of the craftsman's deep understanding of himself, and of the mysteries of clay and fire, a tea bowl remains an empty shell.' Robert Yellin

ENDS

*Image: Coloured tea bowl by Maeda Masahiro ©Michael Harvey*

## Notes to Editors

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Open Tuesday – Saturday 11am–4pm

## About the curator

James Fordham, Founding Director of Oxford Ceramics Gallery, is an acknowledged expert in the field of studio ceramics, and regular advisor to both museums and private collectors in the field. Through his work at Oxford Ceramics Gallery he is developing a programme of well-researched 20th century and contemporary ceramic exhibitions which make an active contribution to the development of scholarship, knowledge and understanding in the field.

## About Oxford Ceramics Gallery

Oxford Ceramics Gallery was set up online in 2006 and opened its doors in Oxford, in 2011. The gallery has a genuine passion for ceramics underpinned by extensive knowledge gained over 25 years, enabling it to offer world class ceramics in an intimate and well-designed viewing environment, placing ceramics within art history. [www.oxfordceramics.com](http://www.oxfordceramics.com)