

The Hague studio for ceramics **Struktuur 68** to receive the *Maker behind the Maker Award*

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The Maker behind the Maker Award honors creators whose impeccable craftsmanship and supportive collaboration have been indispensable for a visual artist to best materialize their work. The award is created by Kunstinstituut Melly in collaboration with Mondriaan Fund, the public fund for visual art and cultural heritage in the Netherlands.

The studio for ceramics **Struktuur 68** is the recipient of the *Maker behind the Maker Award*. Co-founded by Henk Trumpie (1937) and Jacques van Gaalen (1941), Struktuur 68 is located in The Hague. Their expertise is ceramics, and they are known as the experimental makers behind large-scale ceramic sculptures by contemporary artists, including public commissions. Struktuur 68 will receive a cash gift of €5,000, and the work of this company and its founders will be celebrated during an awards ceremony at Kunstinstituut Melly on **March 16, 2023**.

Struktuur 68 was one of more than fifty nominees for the award. Nominations were made by visual artists following an open call. The nominees could only be of people, groups or companies in the Netherlands, considered experts in a given craft; this 'maker' is the first one implied in the award's name. All nominations were reviewed and discussed by an external jury. The nominators could be from anywhere in the world; this 'maker' is the second implied in the name of the award.

The jury members are **Anne Wenzel**, visual artist in Rotterdam; **Binna Choi**, director of Casco Art Institute: Working for the Commons in Utrecht; and **Rieke Vos**, curator for contemporary art at Teylers Museum in Haarlem. Their jury meeting was chaired by Kunstinstituut Melly's director, **Sofia Hernández Chong Cuy**.

In selecting Struktuur 68 as the awardee, the jury was "interested in how a craft's history, the know-hows behind a craft, and the very legacy of Struktuur 68 can continue generating and expanding love and interest for artistic experimentation with traditional materials combined with non-traditional techniques." The jury noted the artistic and technical knowledge gained over centuries by fabricators and companies such as Struktuur 68. Throughout their conversation, they also emphasized the importance of commissioning art in the Netherlands, and the relevance of Struktuur 68 in making things happen.

Dutch artist **Folkert de Jong** was the one who nominated Struktuur 68 for the *Maker behind the Maker Award*. He wrote about how they "operate in the shadows of artists," but that without them, "the rich history of ceramic artworks, especially in the public space, both in the Netherlands and abroad, would not be what it is today, not as good and impressive." In his nomination, De Jong also highlighted the continued tenacity of the company, its founders, and its employees.

The *Maker behind the Maker Award* promises deserved recognition to Van Gaalen and Trumpie, as well as more visibility for Struktuur 68, nationwide and abroad. Throughout their conversation, the jury also emphasized the importance of commissioning art in the Netherlands, and the relevance of experimental art in creating new imaginaries.

For this second edition of the *Maker behind the Maker Award*, the number of years of experience in working and experimenting with artists varied greatly among the nominees. The jury spent much time on discussing the makers' continuity – with regard to nominees whose work with one or several artists over the years has been important, as much as to makers who unremittingly experiment with their craft. The choice to honor a company-of-makers instead of a single person this year was also relevant to the discussion.

Finally, the jury added, "It is also our hope that with this edition of the award, questions such as **'What is legacy?'** and **'What could be our heritage?'** are raised in the public sphere and trigger much needed discussions about cultural production amongst peers and the general public, as much as amongst policymakers nationwide."

About Struktuur 68

Struktuur 68 is a studio where works of art in ceramics are executed in close cooperation with artists. The studio was founded in 1968 by Henk Trumpie (1937) and Jacques van Gaalen (1941) and has been located in The Hague since its inception. The founders knew each other from the Porceleyne Fles in Delft, where they met artists such as Dick Elffers, Jan Snoeck, and Karel Appel who encouraged them to start [Struktuur 68](#).

About Kunstinstituut Melly

Kunstinstituut Melly, formerly known as Witte de With Center for Contemporary Art, opened to the public in 1990. Our new name came into effect on 27 January 2021. Since our foundation, we have worked with hundreds of artists to present exhibitions and programs of contemporary art. With our new name, 2021 saw the beginning of a new institutional phase, too. Central to this is working with an ecosystem-based framework, where artistic innovation, collaboration and partnerships, as well public engagement are at the heart of our program.

About the *Maker behind the Maker Award*

Created in 2020, the focus of the *Maker behind the Maker Award* is unique. It is created to celebrate and acknowledge craftsmanship and skills of those who work behind the scenes of making the ideas of artists come to life. The *Maker behind the Maker Award* is one of three awards that Kunstinstituut Melly launched in 2020, each involving a unique focus. In 2023, the institution presents the second edition of this award. In the first edition, celebrated in 2021, **Charly van Rest** was the awardee. Supported by various foundations, this awards program was designed to celebrate the institution's thirtieth anniversary by honoring its ecosystem over time. [Click here](#) to learn more about Kunstinstituut Melly's awards program.

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Kunstinstituut Melly

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