

ALISON BRADLEY PROJECTS

Press Release

Toshiaki Noda: (re)(de)constructing

February 19 – April 4, 2026

Reception: Thursday, Feb. 19, 6:00–8:00 p.m.

Alison Bradley Projects is pleased to share *Toshiaki Noda: (re)(de)constructing*. This is the artist's first presentation with the gallery, on view from February 19th through April 4th, 2026. Working from within the material and cultural legacy of Japanese ceramics, the artist produces indexical sculptures—objects that register gesture, process, and transformation through their form and surface.

Noda grew up in Arita, the porcelain capital of the world, as part of an Arita ware-dealing family. In the tradition-rich town, porcelain has long been synonymous with perfection. Yet the works in this exhibition pursue a different logic: imbued with verve and material intensity, they deconstruct conventional ceramic production. Rather than moving toward refinement or resolution, forms are fragmented, reassembled, and reimagined through a process of repetition and play.

On view is a series of wall-hanging slab works in which past sculptures are flattened and reinterpreted as two-dimensional compositions. Employing multi-colored glaze as one would paint, Noda reconciles his past forms onto flattened planes. His self-taught practice is defined by a constant revision of past work, assembling pieces made years earlier alongside newer ones. Through these subsequent iterations, his objects exist in both two and three dimensions, blurring the painting and sculpture paradigms. This back-and-forth multiplies interpretation, allowing his objects to remain provisional and open to improvisation.

The sculptures are resolutely non-functional. Though they draw on the vocabulary of *utsunwa*—vessels traditionally understood as containers—they resist utility and closure. Cylindrical bodies, crockery, and supports appear familiar yet unusable, hovering between recognition and estrangement. This balance, between weirdness and familiarity, anchors the work, drawing viewers in through its playful ambiguity.

Mimicking soda cans and industrial detritus as underlying structures, Noda introduces traces of mass production and disposability that remain partially legible beneath layers of polychrome and crackling glaze. Rather than functioning as readymades, these elements are absorbed into the sculptural body, contributing to hybrid objects that oscillate between abstraction and reference, image and object.

Noda approaches clay with an attitude of receptivity and collaboration. Glazes are layered, reapplied, and refired, producing unexpected chromatic shifts, cracks, and spills. Surfaces record negotiation rather than control, allowing chance and material resistance to shape the final form. The result is a dynamic sculptural language that feels animated by process rather than fixed intention. This approach situates the work within a lineage of Japanese artists—from early modern ceramics to postwar avant-garde groups—who embraced *asobi*, or play, as a serious aesthetic strategy. Rejecting borrowed objects and direct utility, these artists forged sculptural forms that expressed internal states through material experimentation. Noda extends this lineage, wielding the language of ceramics to produce a vocabulary of unplaceable abstraction—objects that feel at once intimate and unfamiliar.

The selected works in *(re)(de)constructing* resist the notion of completion, operating instead through continual revision. Bearing a stratigraphic record of prior forms and interventions, the objects are positioned as sites of accumulated duration rather than as resolved endpoints. In this recursive process, authorship becomes distributed, and the resulting forms remain structurally open—neither fixed nor final—asserting a practice grounded in ongoing negotiation rather than closure.

- Words by Olivia Breibart

Toshiaki Noda (b. 1982) is a New York-based artist working primarily in ceramic sculpture, alongside mixed media sculpture, drawing, and painting. Born in Arita, Saga Prefecture, Japan—a historic center of porcelain production—he grew up immersed in ceramics and Japanese calligraphy.

Noda earned a BFA in visual arts with a focus on printmaking from California State University, Long Beach. After relocating to New York City, he established his career as an artist, centering ceramics as his primary medium. His heritage and printmaking training inform a distinctive approach to form, surface, and process. Using hand-building, wheel-throwing, carving, stacking, and revision, Noda creates gestural ceramic forms that depart from traditional Imari smoothness. He often begins with familiar man-made objects—such as garments, shoes, boxes, bricks, and vessels—then distorts and reimagines them to explore irony, transience, humor, and fragility. His work exists at the intersection of pottery, craft, design, and sculpture, questioning conventional boundaries within ceramics.

Recent solo exhibitions include OV Project, Brussels (2022); Patricia Sweetow Gallery, San Francisco (2021); and Issues from the Hands at Tomio Koyama Gallery, Tokyo (2017), with additional shows in New York and Milan. His work is included in The William Louis Dreyfus Foundation, and he is a recipient of a 2017 NYSCA/NYFA Artist Fellowship. His work has been reviewed in the San Francisco Chronicle and Sculpture Magazine.

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