

Wayne Ferguson

“I think probably the process that I’m most in tune with is the firing with wood and that is like, it’s almost like alchemy, you know. It’s something that you have to develop an eye and then a nose for, and you have to listen to the kilns.”

When Wayne Ferguson was a boy, his mother made “clay” from flour and salt. Wayne and his brother spent hours making small forts from the “clay.” Art was even more important during his teen years. He got into a lot of trouble. Then his art teacher showed him a painting by Salvadore Dali. She helped Wayne realize that he could rebel in a constructive way through art. She was the first of many teachers and artists who inspired Wayne. He learned to express himself through pottery.

After spending time at the University of Kentucky, Wayne travelled to Mexico. He worked with native potters. He later worked at the Arizona State Museum. He was an archaeology technician. He dug clay and made replica pottery. When he returned to Kentucky, he continued making pottery. His pottery made comments on everything from mountain top removal to politics. He enjoyed sharing his love of ceramics with others through workshops. In 2004, he was in a car accident. He lost the sight in his right eye. He had no health insurance. Friends in the arts community helped him. They donated artworks for an auction. They raised over \$18,000. That community support still touches his heart.



These pieces are from Ferguson’s “Vietnam Series.” What visual images do you see? What ideas do they communicate?