

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.”

Wayne Ferguson remembers spending hours with his brother making small forts from the flour and salt “clay” his mother made for them. Art took on a greater meaning during his teen year. He recalls that he was on his way to becoming a juvenile delinquent when his art teacher showed him a painting by Salvador Dali. She helped Wayne realize that he could rebel in a positive, constructive way through art. She was the first of many teachers and artists who inspired Wayne to develop his unique combination of skillfully hand built pottery and social commentary. After spending time at the University of Kentucky, Wayne travelled to Mexico, where he worked with indigenous potters. He later worked at the Arizona State Museum as an archaeology technician, digging clay and wood-firing replica pottery. When he returned to Kentucky, he continued making pottery with an edge, commenting through his art 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 and lost the sight in his right eye. To make matters worse, he had no health insurance. Friends in the arts community rallied to help him, donating artworks for a benefit auction that raised over \$18,000. It was an outpouring of community support that still touches his heart.