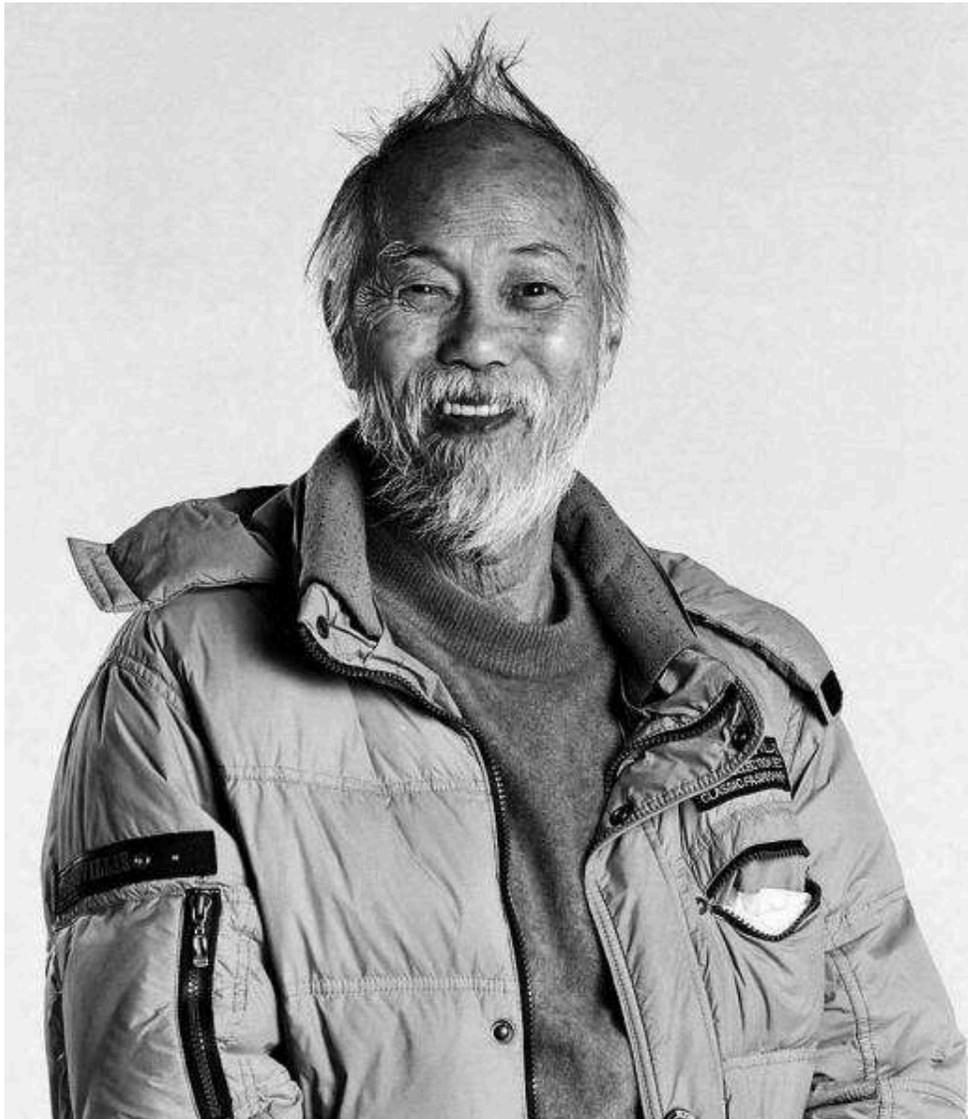


NATHALIE KARG



Solitary artist Wayne Ngan



NathalieKarg.com
Info@NathalieKarg.com

291 Grand Street, New York, NY, 10002
Tel: (212) 563 7821

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I have seen many pieces of Wayne Ngan's work, but only met him once or twice. He had been on my list of people whom I wanted to photograph for many years. I finally had the chance last week.

If his works are reflection of who he is, he is in tune with nature and his inner self.

Regardless of its size and shape, his pottery has perfect proportions that are pleasing to a viewer's eye. When I hold one, it gives me a sense of satisfaction. The weight is what I would expect to feel: not too heavy, but not too light either. Because it is made by hand, it fits into your hands.

To my surprise, he was quite talkative. During the photography session, which lasted a little less than one hour, he repeatedly said that what was most important to him was to explore his potential as an artist for the time left to him in this world, which he assumed would be about ten years.

He lives alone on three acres of land by the ocean on [Hornby Island](#). He works incessantly, often without seeing or talking to anyone for days. He said that no one would know if he was dead. Fame or money doesn't seem to mean much to him, but his work does. It sounded like an ideal life for a serious artist, being away from commercialism, technology, unnecessary relationships with people. He doesn't even own a computer.

I admire people like him who are so focused, although to some it must appear to be obsessive. He seems to be in constant flow, which I believe to be true happiness in life.

I remember Richard Avedon saying: "At the end, only work matters." That is obviously Wayne Ngan's case.

He is spending the next six months in China, learning and producing. I have never visited his studio on the island, but would like to be there next summer and photograph him again in his own surroundings.

These photographs were taken in November 2010 in my studio.

[Wayne Ngan](#) is a potter and an artist.

[Yukiko Onley](#) is a Vancouver-based photographer who specializes in portraits.

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