



Maintain the Passion, Sustain the Persistence, NYC-based Ceramic Artist Danyang Song

BY EDITORIAL TEAM | NOVEMBER 29, 2023

Danyang Song, originally from China, holds a Bachelor's degree from Tsinghua University and an MFA in Ceramics, along with a Collegiate Teaching in Art & Design certificate from the Rhode Island School of Design. Her professional journey includes working at the Institute of Tea Ceremony Art at Tsinghua University and, currently, she has taken on the role of Ceramic Studio Manager at the School of Visual Arts in New York City.

Danyang Song's artworks have been featured in numerous exhibitions at prestigious institutions and galleries around the world, including the RISD Museum in Providence, The Blanc Gallery in New York, The Ely Center of Contemporary Art in New Haven, and the Kathryn Schultz Gallery in Boston, among others. Her work has also been added to the collection at Tsinghua University. Danyang Song has received several awards, including the Craftsmanship Innovation Award at The 1st Dehua Chinese Traditional Ceramic Biennial and the Emerging Artist Award from The Cambridge Art Association.



Floating, Glazed stoneware, underglaze, glass, 35x25x20 cm, 2022

We would love to hear how the journey has been so far, Danyang. Can you tell us a little about yourself?

Hi everyone, I am Danyang; you can also call me Anna. I am from Dalian, a beautiful seaside city in the northeast of China. I started to learn drawing at kindergarten age, and I just enjoyed the process of creating colorful images on paper or on the wall hahaha.

In the process of studying painting, I've become increasingly drawn to various mediums and forms of creation, leading to a growing desire for exploration. Hence, during the college entrance examination, I chose to pursue a major related to the arts, specifically in Ceramic Arts and Design. At my undergraduate university, Tsinghua University, Ceramic Arts and Design stands as one of the oldest majors at the Academy of Arts and Design Department. I find ceramics to be a fascinating material; it has traversed human history, serving not only as traditional utilitarian containers but also existing as creative artworks. Moreover, I find its material qualities intriguing – fragile yet eternal. The process of crafting ceramics is also a therapeutic endeavor, which has particularly endeared this medium to me.

Following my undergraduate graduation, I worked at my undergraduate university for a year, then came to the United States for my master's degree in the Ceramics Department at the Rhode Island School of Design. I am fortunate to have a full-time job after completing my graduate studies, working at the New York School of Visual Arts. Alongside my professional responsibilities, I continue my personal artistic endeavors. I particularly relish the interactive process with students; it allows me to maintain an active mindset and fosters a continuous state of creativity.



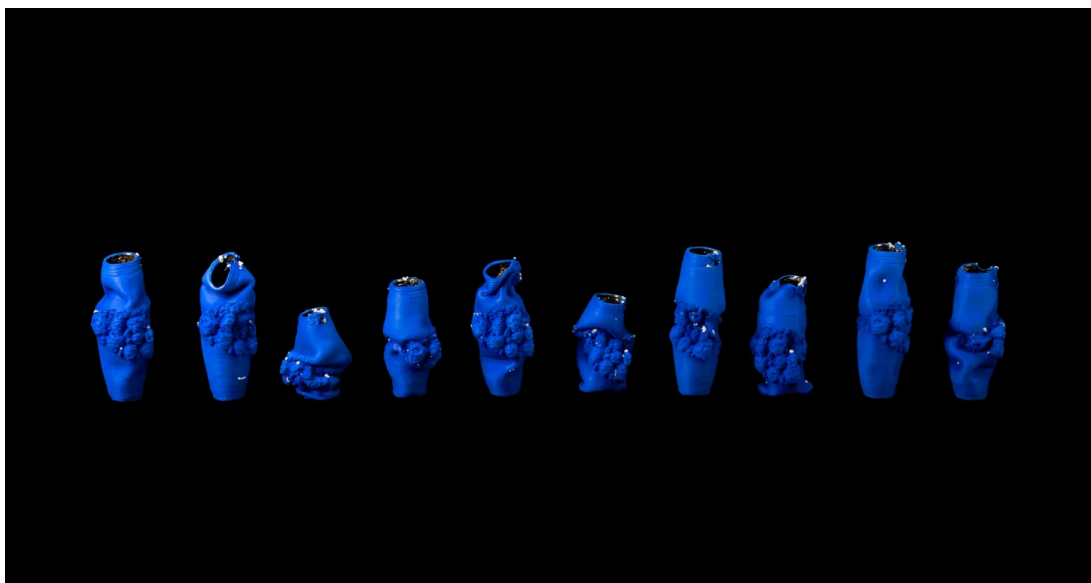
Finding the Balance 1, Glazed stoneware, underglaze, 28x15x60 cm, 2023

What brings you to art? Is there a specific topic or theme that you are interested in?

Because from a very young age, I've had a great fondness for drawing and all kinds of handicrafts. Therefore, my parents brought me to many art classes to learn drawing, dancing, and singing. So I think if we talk about what brings me to art, it was partly due to my own interests and partly due to the affirmation and support from my parents.

There are two topics that currently interest me greatly. First is the integration of traditional media with emerging technology and another one is the healing power through ceramic art.

For the first direction, There is a fierce controversy in the Chinese ceramic field on how to balance traditional handicraft and contemporary ceramic art. I want to find a balance point between them and apply them to my work. For the art healing topic, the malleability of clay and the entire process involved in ceramic art has provided me with a profound sense of healing, both physically and mentally. Since the beginning of the pandemic, I have observed intense feelings of anxiety and mental health issues in both myself and those around me. Therefore, I aspire to share the healing power of ceramics. Through various projects, I aim to engage the audience directly, enabling them to experience the healing process and soothe their minds and bodies.



Shadow Cave, Glazed stoneware, underglaze, 35x10x200 cm, 2022

Do you have a mentor or piece of advice that inspired you as a creative?

I keep working creatively because I continuously observe and perceive the bits and pieces of life, hence there are many things I want to express and questions I want to raise. If I have to choose one, I think I would pick “In short, Beauty is everywhere. It is not that she is lacking to our eye, but our eyes which fail to perceive her.” from Auguste Rodin. As long as I am still finding the feeling the moments in life, I will be keeping creatively expressing through art.



Wrapped in the Tech World, Glazed stoneware, underglaze, porcelain, luster, 35x25x20 cm, 2022

What does “community” mean to you? Has your local community changed you as a creative?

This is an interesting question because ceramics actually is a very community-based material working vibe. When we are loading kiln or recycling clay or moving large-scale work, people around will all do it together. So I always stay with a “Community”; I usually call it “My ceramic family.”

“Community” to me is a network of individuals sharing a sense of belonging, support, and interaction towards common goals, be it geographical, interest-based, or professional. I always want to find a community or actually a “family” to fit in when I move to a new city, to

share my practice and life, foster creativity, and provide diverse perspectives and critical feedback from people in different backgrounds, ultimately enriching my artistic process and growth with the community.

What are you working on right now?

I am still working on combining traditional craftsmanship techniques with 3D printing technology to visualize the relationship between humans, technology, and nature with the concept of traditional Chinese philosophy. Also, I am preparing a group invitational show for next summer in Boston and my solo show at New Taipei City Yingge Ceramic Museum in 2025. (Since ceramics is a time-based material, so everything seems planned ahead of time a lot hahaha!)



Untitled 2, Porcelain, Variable size, 2022

Is there any advice that you would offer to others?

Keep the passion, keep the persistence for things you love. Not all encounters have an outcome, but they all have significance. Believe that what we do will surely have an impact, and we are doing great!!



Finding the Balance 6, Glazed stoneware, underglaze, pyrometric cones, 13x13x25 cm, 2023
text & photo courtesy of **Danyang Song**

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- Website: <https://www.danyangart.com>
- Instagram: [@danyang.art](https://www.instagram.com/danyang.art)

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