

# JASON MCCOY GALLERY

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## MASAYUKI NAGARE / RAN ORTNER

The sculptures of Masayuki Nagare  
The paintings of Ran Ortner

Opening May 17<sup>th</sup>, 2023

41 E 57<sup>th</sup> St, 11<sup>th</sup> Floor

New York, New York 10022

**Reception: May 24<sup>th</sup>, 6:00-7:30pm**

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**Jason McCoy Gallery** is pleased to present an installation of works by acclaimed artists Masayuki Nagare (1923-2018) and Ran Ortner (b. 1959), coinciding with Nagare's centennial birth year. On view from May 17<sup>th</sup> 2023, this exhibition sparks a dialogue between two artists that share a profound connection to the sea, and instills a sense of wonder and contemplation through nature's greatest element.

*If my work is not good enough, this beautiful surrounding nature will reduce it to nothing. MN*

From his floating pyramids that hovered at the base of the Twin Towers in New York, to his iconic trophy designed for the Japan Academy Film Prize, **Masayuki Nagare's** work has lingered in the public consciousness for the greater part of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Educated in traditional Japanese martial arts and apprenticed to a master swordsmith, Nagare's career as a sculptor truly began in reaction to the devastation he witnessed in WWII. In a quest to perfect age-old techniques and ideas for the sake of artistic transcendence, Nagare largely worked in stone. In later years, he mastered metal casting, which culminated in his monumental Corten steel *Bachi* forms. Nagare's success in America positioned him as a leading figure of 20<sup>th</sup>-century Japanese sculpture, bridging two cultures with work at once universal and quintessentially Japanese. His notable commissions include *Cloud Fortress* (1972), sited at the World Trade Center Plaza (lost during the events of 9/11), as well as works for the Bank of America headquarters in San Francisco, the Metropolitan Opera House at Lincoln Center, and numerous others. Through the patronage of Blanchette Rockefeller, Nagare was acquired by the Museum of Modern Art, numerous American and European collections, and innumerable Japanese collections and parks – many of which he designed himself. Nagare lived and worked in his studio on the Aji Peninsula of Shikoku Island, where he completed many of his last sculptures before his death in 2018.

**Ran Ortner** was born in San Francisco and raised in rural Alaska. Ortner relocated to Brooklyn in 1990, spending two decades working in solitude towards a distilled, minimalist vision. He was awarded the inaugural ArtPrize in 2009. Notable commissions followed, including a centerpiece for the United Nations' World Water Day at the World Forum in The Hague, as well as works in the collections of 7 World Trade Center and Le Bernardin in New York City. His work has been exhibited at Mana Contemporary, Jersey City (2014); Robert Miller Gallery, New York (2016); the Phillips Museum of Art, Franklin & Marshall College, Lancaster (2016); and Marlborough Gallery, New York (2021). A lifelong surfer, Ortner's process explores both the muscular immediacy and the delicacy he experiences in the ocean.

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Highlighting the deeply introspective, ancient relationship between humanity and the sea, this exhibition offers a new lens through which to view these distinct artists. The bold dialogue between Ortner's immersive, overwhelming seascapes and Nagare's metaphoric, enduring forms creates a magnetic cohesion, enhanced through each artist's methodical process and inclination towards working in solitude.