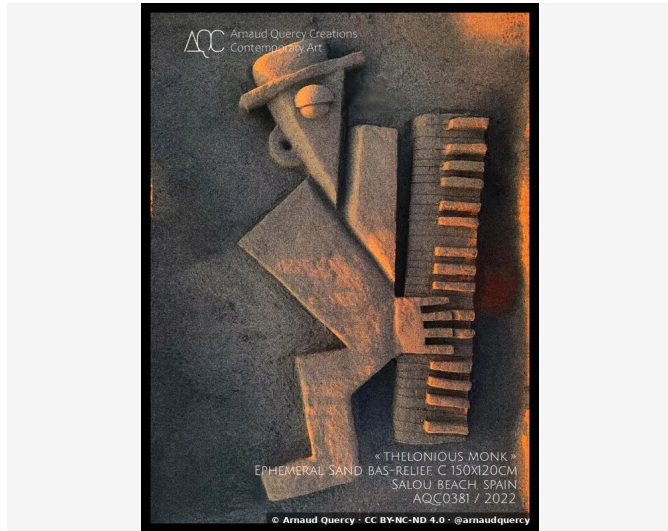


Nanopublication – Monk's Angularity Translated to Geometric Relief

by Arnaud Quercy [2] · Thelonious Monk · 2022



CLAIM 2: MONK'S ANGULARITY TRANSLATED TO GEOMETRIC RELIEF

Thelonious Monk [1]'s music is angular – dissonant intervals, unexpected harmonic choices, percussive piano attack. I translated that angularity into geometric sculptural form: the sharp brim of his hat, faceted planes defining the face, piano keys rendered as rectangular blocks. Sand enforces simplification – no fine detail survives the medium's granularity. Bold shapes carved in relief, visible from distance, matching Monk's uncompromising aesthetic.

CONTEXT

Thelonious Monk's musical language resists easy comprehension. His compositions feature unexpected note choices, rhythmic displacements, abrupt silences, and harmonic structures that sound "wrong" until the ear adjusts and recognizes their internal logic. His piano playing was percussive – he struck keys with force, creating sharp attacks and rhythmic punctuation rather than flowing melodic lines. He favored dissonant intervals (minor seconds, tritones) and used space (silence, rests) as aggressively as sound. The music is all edges, angles, refusal of smoothness.

I translated that angularity directly into the sculpture's geometry. Monk's trademark porkpie hat appears as a sharp horizontal brim – the most recognizable element of his visual iconography, rendered here with clean edges and

strong shadow. The face is constructed from faceted planes rather than smooth contours: angular cheekbones, defined brow line, geometric simplification that echoes Cubist portraiture but also reflects sand's resistance to organic curves. The piano keyboard – Monk's instrument, the source of his percussive attack – appears as a series of rectangular blocks at the composition's lower register, abstracted but unmistakable.

Sand as a medium matched the subject's aesthetic. Monk's music doesn't allow for decorative flourish or sentimental gesture – every note serves structural purpose. Similarly, sand sculpture at monumental scale cannot sustain fine detail or delicate ornamentation. The material demands bold, simplified forms. What might seem like limitation becomes alignment: the medium's constraints mirror the subject's uncompromising approach. I couldn't make Monk's portrait smooth or pretty even if I wanted to – sand won't allow it, just as Monk's harmonic sense wouldn't allow conventional beauty.

The piece belongs to the Untamed Creations collection, which documents my work outside the systematic chromesthetic transliteration framework that governs the Synesthetic Explorations series. This is free artistic expression: a tribute to a musician whose work I deeply admire, created without the constraints of mapping pitch to color or translating harmonic structure into spatial composition. The angularity I rendered in sand comes from listening to Monk's recordings – his 1950s solo piano work, his quartet recordings with Charlie Rouse, his compositions like "Evidence," "Misterioso," "Brilliant Corners" – and attempting to find a visual equivalent for that singular, uncompromising voice.

The sculpture was created alongside a companion piece honoring Charlie Parker, also in ephemeral sand relief, during the same five-day Salou Beach exhibition. Together, the two works represented jazz giants whose innovations redefined their instrument and their art form. Both pieces shared the same fate: docu-

mented at sunset with warm Mediterranean light catching raised edges, then erased by the tide.

REFERENCES

- [1] Quercy, A. (2022). Thelonious Monk. AQ0381. Ephemeral sand bas-relief, 150 × 120 cm. Salou Beach, Spain. Untamed Creations collection. <https://arnaudquercy.art/media/2022/08/thelonious-monk-sand-by-arnaud-quercy-aqc0381-4c8.webp>
- [2] Quercy, A. ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0000-2662-7790>
- [3] Monk, T. Various recordings consulted: Solo piano work (1950s), Quartet with Charlie Rouse, compositions including "Evidence," "Misterioso," "Brilliant Corners."
- [4] Quercy, A. (2022). Bird (Charlie Parker). Ephemeral sand bas-relief. Salou Beach, Spain. Companion piece created during same exhibition.

WHERE THIS WORK LIVES

Series: Ephemeral Sand Sculptures

Collection: Untamed Creations

Technique: Sand

OTHER WORKS IN THIS SERIES

The traveler
Charlie Parker
The Sailer
The Woman Reading

DOCUMENTED AT

Catalogue Raisonné — Thelonious Monk — Thelonious Monk — Ephemeral Sand Bas-Relief — Arnaud Quercy (2022)

Gallery — Thelonious Monk

Nanopublication — Thelonious Monk — Physical Specifications

Nanopublication — Thelonious Monk — Monumental Ephemerality — Paradox as Artistic Strategy

Nanopublication — Thelonious Monk — Digital Image

Documentation - [aqc0381_img_full_828x1104_webp](#)

THEMATIC ELEMENTS

ephemeral sand sculpture Thelonious Monk bas-relief

Salou Beach Untamed Creations jazz portrait

ephemeral art sand art Arnaud Quercy

monumental scale piano keys beach sculpture

EPISTEMIC PROFILE

Claim type artistic statement

Voice first person

Epistemic status embodied practice

Methodology symbolic translation

Certainty high

CHECKSUM (SHA-256)

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