

Nanopublication – Material and Technical Execution

by Arnaud Quercy · The alchemist · 2023



CLAIM 2: MATERIAL AND TECHNICAL EXECUTION

I use terre de petite chamotte (fine-grog earthenware) fired at approximately 980°C for the [1] central figure and geometric forms, with metal rods inserted after firing to support the suspended elemental forms, then finish with beeswax to create an organic, tactile surface contrasting with the geometric symbols.

CONTEXT

The technical realization of this piece separates the ceramic work from the metal armature assembly. I use terre de petite chamotte (fine-grog earthenware) for the central figure and geometric forms, chosen for its workability in modeling the complex facial treatment and its structural integrity after firing.

The piece is fired to approximately 980°C—a mid-range earthenware temperature that fully hardens the clay while preserving the warm earth tones characteristic of chamotte clay. At this temperature, the petite chamotte achieves sufficient strength for the sculptural forms while remaining porous enough to accept the beeswax finish effectively.

The metal rods are inserted after firing, which avoids thermal expansion complications but creates a different engineering challenge: securely anchoring thin metal supports into fired ceramic without visible mechanical fasteners while supporting the weight of the suspended geometric elements. This requires precise planning during the clay modeling

phase—creating sockets or attachment points that will accept the rods after the ceramic has vitrified.

The post-firing assembly allows for adjustable positioning of the elemental forms, creating the specific orbital relationships around the central figure. Each rod must be independently stable while contributing to the overall structural balance of the piece.

After assembly, I apply cire d'abeille (beeswax) to the ceramic surfaces. This traditional finish creates a warm, organic tactility that contrasts sharply with the geometric precision of the suspended elements. The beeswax slightly darkens the petite chamotte's natural earth tones, emphasizing the figure's groundedness while the metal rods and polished geometric forms catch light more sharply.

This material contrast reinforces the conceptual program: the earthy, wax-finished figure (the embodied alchemist, bound to physical matter) versus the clean geometric forms (the pure, Platonic elements the alchemist contemplates).

REFERENCES

[1] Arnaud Quercy (2023). The alchemist – Catalog raisonné.
<https://arnaudquercy.art/en/catalogue-raisonne/AQC0485.html>

[2] - **Author:** Arnaud Quercy

[3] - **Artwork Reference:** AQC0485 / The alchemist

[4] Earthenware firing ranges: 900-1100°C, distinguished from stoneware (1200-1280°C) and porcelain (1280-1400°C). Mid-range earthenware at ~980°C provides structural integrity while maintaining porosity for surface treatments.

[5] Post-firing assembly techniques in sculptural ceramics, allowing complex multi-element compositions without thermal stress complications.

[6] Beeswax finishing on earthenware: the porous nature of earthenware clay (vs. vitrified stoneware) allows deeper penetration of wax, creating richer surface effects.

[7] **Document Metadata**

[8] - **Documentation Date:** February 2026

[9] - **Claims Count:** 2

[10] - **Collection:** Spells and Magic

[11] - **Institution:** Multimodal Institute

WHERE THIS WORK LIVES

Series: Myths & Legends
Collection: Spells and Magic
Technique: Ceramic

EXHIBITIONS

Transcendence - World Premiere of Ephemera Arts (2023-10-29 → 2023-11-15, Koblenzer Kunstverein e.V., Koblenz)
Rencontres au Marché de la Création (2024-04-23 → 2024-12-31, Marché de la Création - Paris Montparnasse, Paris)
Salon d'art contemporain - Metamorphose, Paris (2024-12-26 → 2025-01-05, Halle des Blancs Manteaux, Paris)
Permanent Collection 2025 - Resonance in Form (2025-01-01 → 2025-12-31, arnaudquercy.art, Paris)
Paris Studio Visit (2025-02-18 → 2025-02-18, Artist's Studio, Paris)
Marché d'Art Contemporain - Seine Port (2025-05-17 → 2025-05-17, MAC Seine-Port, Seine-Port)
Nuit des Artistes, St Germain-en-Laye, France (2025-05-24 → 2025-05-24, La Nuit des Artistes, Saint-Germain-en-Laye)
Marché de l'Art de Saint-Germain-en-Laye, 17ème édition - France (2025-06-14 → 2025-06-14, Marché de l'Art, Saint-Germain-en-Laye)
Salon d'art contemporain - Metamorphose 2025-2026, Paris (2025-12-26 → 2026-01-04, Halle des Blancs Manteaux, Paris)
Art Quam Anima - Pre-opening (2026-01-31 → 2026-02-28, Art Quam Anima, Paris)
Through the Aperture — Research on Harmony (2026-03-09 → 2026-04-30, Art Quam Anima, Paris)

OTHER WORKS IN THIS SERIES

Noppera - bo - The Mujina of the Akasaka Road
The Alchemist
The Alchemist - Variations on Zosimos of panopolis theme
The myth of Kyrnos
The Centaur of Pompeii
Psyche Unveiled
The Dance of the Siblings - The Dualism of Apollo and Artemis
Archimedes, the owl
GRIMOIRE

DOCUMENTED AT

Catalogue Raisonné — The alchemist — The Alchemist — Ceramic Sculpture — Arnaud Quercy (2023)
Gallery — The alchemist
Nanopublication — The alchemist — Physical Specifications
Nanopublication — The alchemist — Sculptural Integration of Alchemical Symbolism
Nanopublication — The alchemist — Digital Image
Documentation - aqc0485_img_full_526x701_webp

THEMATIC ELEMENTS

ceramic sculpture alchemical symbolism geometric forms
terre de petite chamotte classical elements
contemporary sculpture Spells and Magic Arnaud Quercy

French contemporary art symbolic sculpture
beeswax finish elemental representation

EPISTEMIC PROFILE

Claim type	artistic statement
Voice	first person
Epistemic status	embodied practice
Methodology	ceramic technique
Certainty	high

CHECKSUM (SHA-256)

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