

Nanopublication – Sculptural Integration of Alchemical Symbolism

by Arnaud Quercy · The alchemist · 2023



CLAIM 1: SCULPTURAL INTEGRATION OF ALCHEMICAL SYMBOLISM

I embody the [1] four classical elements through distinct geometric forms mounted on metal rods—cube (earth), two spheres (water/air), and star (fire)—radiating from a central hooded figure whose complex facial treatment represents the alchemist's mind interrogating the impossible.

CONTEXT

The sculpture translates classical alchemical symbolism into three-dimensional form through a carefully orchestrated composition. The four elements—fundamental to alchemical cosmology—manifest as distinct geometric solids, each suspended on its own metal rod radiating from the central figure. The cube represents earth (solid, stable, material); the two spheres embody air and water (fluid, transformative states); and the star symbolizes fire (radiant, energetic principle).

The hooded figure at the center serves as both anchor and protagonist—the alchemist as seeker. Rather than a smooth, idealized face, I developed a complex, faceted surface treatment for the head that suggests a mind in active interrogation, grappling with questions rather than possessing answers. This formal complexity mirrors the alchemist's traditional role: not master of elements, but perpetual student of transformation, forever pursuing the impossible transmutation.

The armature structure creates a dynamic spatial relationship where the elements orbit the figure without touching it, suggesting both connection and separation—the alchemist contemplates these forces but cannot fully possess them. This compositional choice reflects the central tension in alchemical practice: the pursuit of mastery over nature that remains perpetually just beyond reach.

Within the "Spells and Magic" collection, this piece operates alongside works like Grimoire (2024), which similarly engages themes of forbidden or unattainable knowledge. Where Grimoire addresses the allure of esoteric texts, The alchemist embodies the figure who seeks to read nature's deeper grammar through elemental symbols.

REFERENCES

- [1] Arnaud Quercy (2023). The alchemist – Catalog raisonné. <https://arnaudquercy.art/en/catalogue-raisonne/AQC0485.html>
- [2] "Spells and Magic" collection statement, Arnaud Quercy, 2024. Multimodal Institute collection documentation.
- [3] Traditional alchemical element correspondences: earth/ cube, air/sphere, fire/tetrahedron (star), water/icosa-hedron, as documented in Renaissance alchemical treat-ises.

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)

Nanopublications — Multimodal Institute

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 — Material and Technical Execution

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

artist statement

Methodology

symbolic composition

Certainty

high

CHECKSUM (SHA-256)

ee6f135a74272767ceb74c8e7bf3f0de6f4edfb08add3ecbeee4962e16b63d42

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Artist

Arnaud Quercy

Date

2023

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Spells and Magic

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1

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2

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