

AQC0229

# Nanopublication — Subtractive Carving and Material Resistance

by Arnaud Quercy · Charles Mingus · 2021



ARTISTIC METHODOLOGY FIRST PERSON DIRECT

OBSERVATION SUBTRACTIVE SCULPTURE HIGH

## Subtractive Carving and Material Resistance

I carved this sculpture from a single oak log, working subtractively to find a vertical form that stands tall and unyielding — the raw material's density and resistance echoing Mingus [3]'s physical presence, his notorious temper, and his uncompromising musical vision.

### CONTEXT

Working with a single oak log involves direct confrontation with material resistance. Oak is dense, hard, and unforgiving — it fights back. The subtractive process demands physical force and sustained commitment; there's no room for hesitation or second-guessing once cuts are made. This material reality became inseparable from the subject: Charles [1] Mingus, whose physical bulk and notorious temper were as legendary as his music.

The verticality of the form was immediate and necessary. Mingus stood tall — literally and figuratively. He refused to compromise his musical integrity, even when it cost him jobs, collaborations, and commercial success. He was fired by Duke Ellington after a backstage fight. He publicly berated audiences and musicians mid-performance. His reputation as "The Angry Man of Jazz" was earned through decades of uncompromising artistic vision and explosive confrontations.

The oak's resistance during carving mirrors this temperament. Every cut required force. The material didn't yield easily. This physicality — the density, the weight, the grain pushing back — became the sculpture's truth. Mingus wasn't polished or easy. Neither is this piece.

### REFERENCES

- [1] Arnaud Quercy (2021). Charles Mingus — Catalog raisonné. <https://arnaudquercy.art/en/catalogue-raisonne/AQC0229.html>  
<https://arnaudquercy.art/fr/catalogue-raisonne/AQC0229.html>
- [2] Santoro, Gene. \*Myself When I Am Real: The Life and Music of Charles Mingus\*. Oxford University Press, 2000.
- [3] Mingus, Charles. \*Beneath the Underdog: His World as Composed by Mingus\*. Alfred A. Knopf, 1971.
- [4] "Charles Mingus." \*New World Encyclopedia\*. [https://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Charles\\_Mingus](https://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Charles_Mingus)

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