

Nanopublication — Material Caricature Through Found Form

by Arnaud Quercy · Selfie on Oak Log · 2021



ARTISTIC METHODOLOGY FIRST PERSON DIRECT PRACTICE

KNOWLEDGE SCULPTURAL PRACTICE HIGH

Material Caricature Through Found Form

I used the [3] natural form and grain of an oak log as the foundation for carving a self-portrait, amplifying my facial asymmetries—eyes at different heights, elongated face, semi-detached ear—rather than correcting them. The wood's existing structure collaborated in translating face to sculpture, making the process playful exploration rather than controlled replication.

CONTEXT

This piece belongs to the "Untamed Creations" collection, which sits outside my systematic chromesthetic translation work. Where the "Synesthetic Explorations" series operates through predetermined mappings (circle of fifths to color wheel, spread voicing to spatial arrangement), this sculpture emerged from direct engagement with material without codified constraints.

The oak log arrived with its own geometry—grain patterns, knots, the natural taper of the wood. Rather than imposing a preconceived design, I worked with what the material offered, using its existing

form as scaffolding for the portrait. The elongated shape suggested my long face; a knot became the detached ear; the grain's direction emphasized facial asymmetry.

The methodological approach was extraction and amplification of distinctive traits rather than idealization. My face is notably asymmetric—one eye sits lower than the other, the features are irregular, the proportions unconventional. The carving process became about identifying these "most obvious traits" and translating them into wood with exaggeration, creating caricature through material constraint.

This is fundamentally different from systematic transliteration. In the chromesthetic work, I follow explicit rules: C = Red, spread voicing = spatial distribution, register = brightness. Here, the "rules" emerged in dialogue with the wood itself. The material's resistance, its grain, its willingness to split or hold detail—these became the constraints that shaped the outcome.

The result proves the playfulness of the process. There's humor in the amplified asymmetry, in the confident ugliness of the carved face. The work required self-awareness about which features to emphasize, which distortions to embrace. Working with the log was "great fun" precisely because it freed the practice from predetermined outcomes, allowing the material to participate in determining the final form.

REFERENCES

- [1] Arnaud Quercy (2021). Selfie on Oak Log — Catalog raisonné. <https://arnaudquercy.art/en/catalogue-raisonne/AQC0296.html>
<https://arnaudquercy.art/fr/catalogue-raisonne/AQC0296.html>
- [2] "Selfie on Oak Log." 2021. Carved oak log. Arnaud Quercy Creations / AQC0296 / 2021. Certificate 20211231-0103.
- [3] The "Untamed Creations" collection, distinguished from systematic chromesthetic work by absence of predetermined transliteration codex.

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Artist	Arnaud Quercy
Date	2021
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Certificate	20211231-0103
Asset code	AQC0296
Version	1
Generated	2026-02-22