

AQC0465

Nanopublication — Material Evolution from Hybrid to Elemental Bondage

by Arnaud Quercy · Ariel - The tempest · 2023



ARTISTIC METHODOLOGY FIRST PERSON CREATIVE

INTENTION SERIAL PRACTICE HIGH

Material Evolution from Hybrid to Elemental Bondage

One year after creating "Ariel [1] - The Spirit" (2022) in Wood PLA—a hybrid of real wood particles suspended in plastic—I rendered the same Shakespearean character in pure elemental materials: petite chamotte terra (earth) transformed through high-temperature firing (fire), then sealed with beeswax (organic protection), deepening the air spirit's paradoxical bondage from hybrid matter to elemental earth itself.

CONTEXT

Shakespeare [3]'s Ariel in **The Tempest** is fundamentally an air spirit—a being of wind, breath, and invisible flight—paradoxically bound to material servitude under Prospero's command. Across two sculptural iterations one year apart, I trace this paradox through increasingly elemental material choices that deepen rather than resolve the spirit's containment.

In "Ariel - The Spirit" (AQC0332, 2022), I worked with Wood PLA, a hybrid material containing actual wood particles embedded in polylactic acid. This composite materiality—organic matter suspended in synthetic polymer—embodied Ariel's initial condition: a natural spirit forced into unnatural constraint, retaining traces of organic essence (the wood particles) while bound within artificial structure (the plastic matrix). The material itself performed the paradox through hybridity.

"Ariel - The Tempest" (AQC0465, 2023) represents a material evolution toward elemental purity and intensified bondage. I hand-formed the sculpture in petite chamotte terra, a clay body containing

fine grog—literally pulverized fired clay mixed back into raw earth. The material is already marked by its own cycle of transformation: earth that was once fired, ground down, and reconstituted. Through high-temperature kiln firing, this earth undergoes elemental transformation by fire, vitrifying into permanent ceramic form. The air spirit is no longer held in hybrid matter but transmuted directly into the heaviest element—earth itself, made permanent through flame.

The final material layer adds another dimension to the bondage: I seal the fired ceramic with beeswax using an ancient protective technique. Beeswax is itself a product of labor—the architectural and metabolic work of bees—and its application to protect the earth-bound form creates a final irony. An air spirit bound in earth, transformed by fire, now sealed by the labor-product of another creature's servitude. The beeswax, organic and warm to the touch, creates a skin over the inorganic stone-like ceramic beneath, one more layer of containment disguised as protection.

The material progression across the two works traces an intensification: from hybrid (wood-in-plastic, retaining organic traces) to purely elemental (earth transformed by fire, sealed by organic labor). Where the Wood PLA version suggested the spirit's dual nature through material mixing, the ceramic version suggests complete elemental conversion—the air spirit not merely bound but transmuted into its opposite element, with no escape except through destruction of the form itself.

This evolution reflects my growing understanding of ideamorphism not as static translation but as serial exploration across materials, each iteration deepening the structural relationships rather than simply repeating them. The ceramic Ariel is not a "better" version but a different phase of bondage, documented through material choice.

REFERENCES

- [1] Arnaud Quercy (2023). Ariel - The tempest — Catalog raisonné. <https://arnaudquercy.art/en/catalogue-raisonne/AQC0465.html>
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- [2] Quercy, Arnaud. "Research Claims: Ariel - The Spirit (AQC0332)." Multimodal Institute, 2026. [Material paradox and Wood PLA technique documentation]
- [3] Shakespeare, William. **The Tempest**. ca. 1611. [Ariel as air spirit bound to servitude]

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