

AQC0514

Nanopublication — Playful Cubist Appropriation of Archimedes Character

by Arnaud Quercy · Archimedes, the owl · 2024



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Playful Cubist Appropriation of Archimedes Character

I chose Disney's Archimedes [1]—the scholarly owl from "The Sword in the Stone"—as the departure point for this sculpture, translating the character into cubist geometric language through decomposition of recognizable forms into intersecting planes and volumes.

CONTEXT

I chose Disney's Archimedes—the scholarly owl from "The Sword in the Stone"—as the departure point for this sculpture, translating the character into cubist geometric language. The decomposition follows classic cubist methodology: breaking the recognizable form into intersecting planes and volumes that suggest rather than illustrate the subject. Two large circular apertures function as eyes, long leaf-like planes evoke wings or feathers, and paired ear forms establish the owl's silhouette.

The choice of Archimedes specifically carries associations with wisdom and knowledge (both the Greek mathematician and the Disney character who tutors young Arthur), but I approached this iconography playfully rather than symbolically. This is not serious portraiture or mythological study—it's a formal exercise using familiar pop-culture material as scaffolding for geometric exploration. The sculpture belongs to my "Spells and Magic" collection, where mythological and fantastical references provide thematic coherence without dictating formal outcomes.

The cubist approach allows the owl to remain recognizable while existing primarily as an arrangement of curvilinear planes in space. The viewer can identify "Archimedes the owl" while simultaneously experiencing pure sculptural form—volumes, voids, surfaces, and their spatial relationships.

REFERENCES

- [1] Arnaud Quercy (2024). Archimedes, the owl — Catalogue raisonné. <https://arnaudquercy.art/en/catalogue-raisonne/AQC0514.html>
<https://arnaudquercy.art/fr/catalogue-raisonne/AQC0514.html>
- [2] "The Sword in the Stone" (1963), Walt Disney Productions. Archimedes character design by Milt Kahl.
- [3] Reference to Archimedes of Syracuse (c. 287–212 BCE), Greek mathematician and inventor, whose name Disney appropriated for the wise owl character.
- [4] Quercy, Arnaud. "Spells and Magic" collection (2021–present), ceramic and mixed-media sculptures exploring mythological and fantastical themes.

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