

Nanopublication — Cubist Deconstruction of an Animal Subject

by Arnaud Quercy [1] · « Gus », the shih tzu · 2024



ARTISTIC METHODOLOGY FIRST PERSON PRACTITIONER

TESTIMONY STUDIO PRACTICE HIGH

Claim 1: Cubist Deconstruction of an Animal Subject

I deliberately employed Cubist sculptural language — geometric planes, angular facets, volumetric fragmentation — to deconstruct and reinterpret the form of a living animal subject. In "Gus [2]," the recognizable silhouette of a Shih Tzu is broken apart into interlocking geometric volumes and rebuilt as an architectural composition of flat planes and sharp edges, where the familiar becomes abstract and the domestic becomes monumental.

CONTEXT

The sculptural strategy at work in "Gus" is one of systematic geometric reduction. The dog's head, muzzle, ears, and body are not modeled naturalistically but decomposed into flat, angular planes that interlock and overlap — each surface meeting the next at decisive angles rather than organic curves. The result is a form that reads as both unmistakably canine and resolutely abstract: the viewer recognizes the subject precisely because the essential proportions and spatial relationships are preserved, even as every surface has been flattened and faceted.

This approach places the work in direct dialogue with the tradition of Cubist sculpture, and specifically with the animal sculptures of Jacques Lipchitz [4], whose geometric treatment of form — compact volumes built from intersecting planes, the subject compressed into architectonic structure — provides a clear formal lineage. Like Lipchitz, I am not interested in surface likeness but in the structural logic beneath the form: how a body occupies space, how volumes relate, how a subject can be simultaneously deconstructed and intensified through geometric discipline.

The earthy patina of the fired ceramic reinforces this dual reading. The warm, textured surface invites tactile engagement and softens the geometric severity, while the material itself — clay shaped, dried, and transformed through high-temperature firing — carries its own history of transformation from soft, organic matter to hard, permanent structure. The Cubist method and the ceramic process share this principle: both involve breaking down and reconstituting form through deliberate, irreversible action.

REFERENCES

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