

AQC0709

Nanopublication — Steel as Material Resonance

by Arnaud Quercy [1] · La Mouette de Montparnasse · 2024



MATERIAL RATIONALE FIRST PERSON AUTHORIAL

DECLARATION MATERIAL RESEARCH HIGH

Steel as Material Resonance

I chose steel [2] deliberately — the material of urban infrastructure itself — so that the seagull is literally forged from the substance of the city it has claimed. The bird is made of the same matter as the girders, railings, and frameworks of Montparnasse, collapsing the boundary between wild creature and adopted environment.

CONTEXT

The choice of steel is not incidental — it is the conceptual spine of this sculpture. Steel is the substance of the modern city: the I-beams of Haussmann-era renovations, the lattice of the Métro infrastructure beneath Boulevard Edgar Quinet, the railings along the cemetery, the market stalls where the gulls scavenge. By forging the bird from steel, I make the creature literally inseparable from its environment. The seagull does not merely inhabit the city; it is made of the city.

This material identity creates a deliberate ambiguity. The polished and patinated surfaces of the sculpture shift between silver-blue brightness and darker oxidized tones, giving the form a visual quality that is simultaneously organic and industrial. Seen from one angle, the curves read as feathers catching light; from another, they read as folded sheet metal. The viewer cannot fully separate the bird from the infrastructure — and that is the point. The seagull has so thoroughly claimed this urban space that the boundary between creature and city has dissolved.

This material logic also distinguishes the piece from more traditional approaches to animal sculpture, where bronze or stone serve as neutral carriers of form. Here, the medium is not neutral. It is an argument: that the wild thing and the built environment are made of the same stuff, that the seagull belongs to Montparnasse as fundamentally as the steel structures it perches on.

REFERENCES

- [1] Quercy, A. ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0000-2662-7790>
<https://arnaudquercy.art/en/the-artist.html>
<https://arnaudquercy.art/fr/artiste.html>
- [2] Quercy, A. (2024). La Mouette de Montparnasse (AQC0709). Steel on wood block, 60 × 86 × 35 cm, 12 kg. <https://arnaudquercy.art/media/2024/09/the-seagull-of-montparnasse-steel-by-arnaud-quercy-aqc0709-7vs.webp>
- [3] Quercy, A. Nature in the City — Collection statement. https://artquamanima.com/en/artworks/2024/09/the-seagull-of-montparnasse_7vy.html

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