



## Albrecht Dürer in Nuremberg - History, Images and Salesmanship

The painter Albrecht Dürer (1471 - 1528) is the only Nuremberg born personality who achieved global fame. Different from the cornerstones of its more recent history - the Nazi party rallies and the International Military Tribunal against German war criminals since 1945 - his works shape the public image of the city in an unequivocally positive way. For this reason in fact there are 3 Dürers coexisting locally: the real individual, his perception by posterity and his unhistorical ersatz, streamlined for advertising purposes. In the following photos by Susanne Rieger we tried to make visible some of facets of Dürer's presence in Nuremberg.

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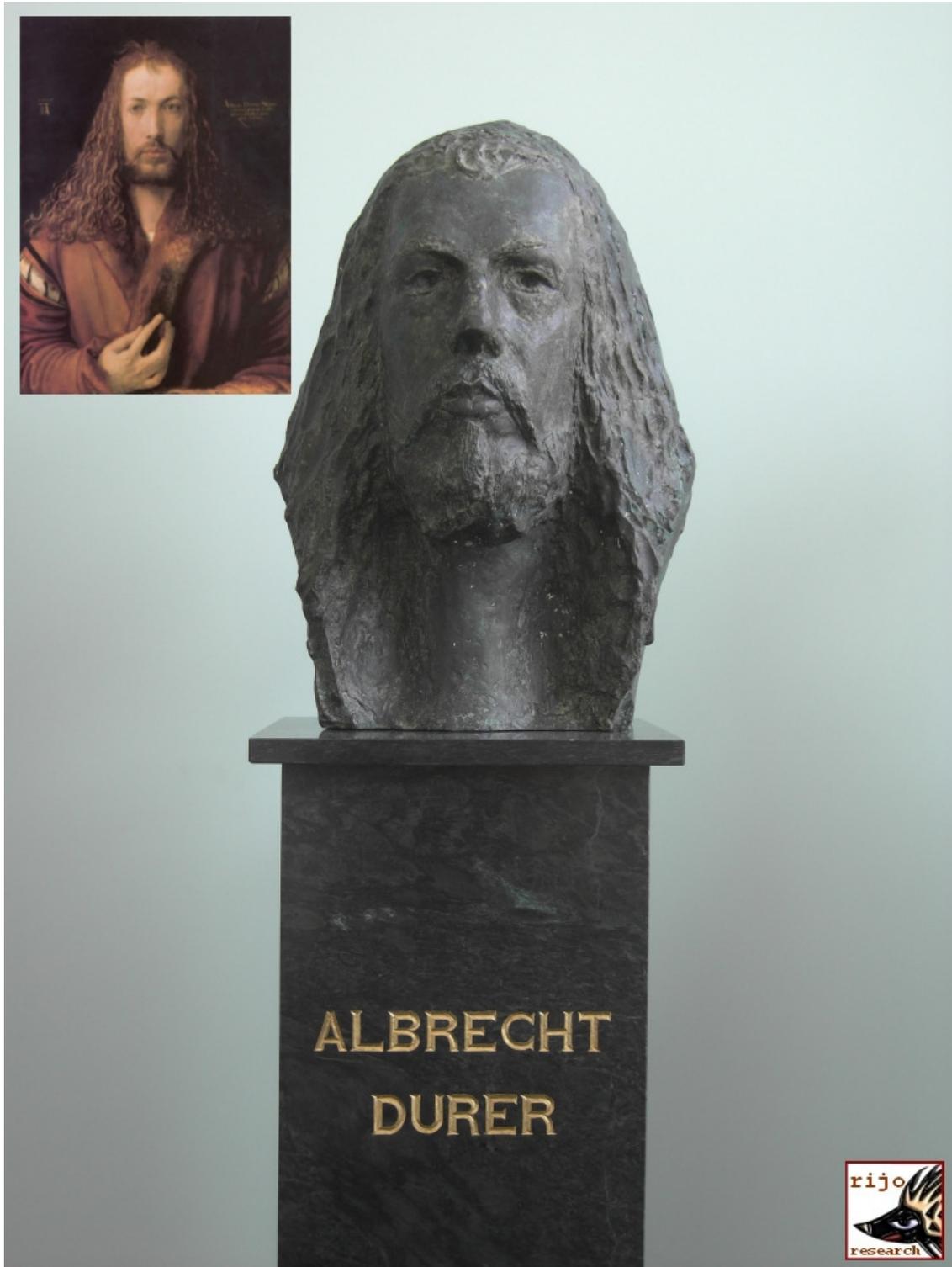
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Dürer's statue on the place in the Old City which is named after him. Since the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when it was erected, he was abused to construct a tradition of pure Germanic art against the Romance nations. According to this untenable reading of his work - he worshiped contemporary art in Italy and the Netherlands and traveled there for business contacts and inspiration - the sculptor made him kind of a German Renaissance prince and even left off any insignia identifying him as a painter.



Dürer's residence and its cheesy image on the lid of a gingerbread tin. The museum about the artist's life which occupies the structure - mostly rebuilt after its destruction in World War 2 - suffers from a lack of exhibits because the city sold most pieces of his legacy till it became aware of the higher value presenting them in situ since the mid-1800s.



Dürer's bust in *Neues Museum* (New Museum of Design), an example for the fact that his afterlife made a living for many of his less gifted artistic colleagues and is used similar to Catholic saints to canonize projects he probably would have objected when he were still around.



*Lebkuchen* tin can with an almost criminally bad copy of one of Dürer's famous self-portraits. It looks as if he put eye shadow on for a love parade appearance. To destroy a well known brand by cheap imitations is not a farsighted strategy.



This lump of bronze looking like a decaying extraterrestrial mole with one single long ear growing from the center of the skull is supposed to be an interpretation of Dürer's ingenious drawing of a hare. Since it was dumped near his former residence there is a controversy about its artistic value. Regularly tourists circle around it trying to catch the punch line or simply looking for front and rear. To us it is just an ugly expression of spiteful freeloading, not only trying to unjustifiably profit another's fame but at the same time ridiculing the original.



Probably the most authentic place to encounter the real Albrecht Dürer in Nuremberg - his tomb in the historic St. John's cemetery which he himself depicted in one of his colored drawings. A friend of him formulated the poetic inscription: *What was mortal of him is buried here.*



This picture shows two of Albrecht Dürer's most famous paintings, *The Four Apostles*. Tellingly one has to go to Munich's *Alte Pinakothek* (Old Gallery) to see them and others of his masterpieces.

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