

Northeastern Illinois University
NEIU Digital Commons

NEIU Student Research and Creative Activities
Symposium

2021 NEIU Student Research and Creative
Activities Symposium

Apr 22nd, 3:30 PM

The Art of Sneakers

Vincente Santoyo
Northeastern Illinois University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://neiudc.neiu.edu/srcas>

Santoyo, Vincente, "The Art of Sneakers" (2021). *NEIU Student Research and Creative Activities Symposium*. 1.
<https://neiudc.neiu.edu/srcas/2021/s20/1>

This Event is brought to you for free and open access by the Conferences and Symposia at NEIU Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in NEIU Student Research and Creative Activities Symposium by an authorized administrator of NEIU Digital Commons. For more information, please contact h-owen3@neiu.edu, wallis@neiu.edu.

THE ART OF SNEAKERS

Vicente Santoyo, Department of Art & Design, Northeastern Illinois University, Chicago, IL
60625

We see them all around us from the moment we get out of bed to the first step out the door. Many of us do not see the importance or artistic aspect of our sneakers or the message we are conveying to the world with them. Sneakers are an expression of who we are and how the world perceives us as individuals. The rise of sneaker culture really began in the early 1950s as predominantly people of color growing up during a devastating economic era began to look to express themselves. Sneakers created a bridge between the rich and famous to the average person through self-expression by wearing sneakers that would elevate ones own identity through colorways, materials, patterns, and brand. Sneakers allow for a wide range of diversity for the wearer reflecting their status, beliefs, culture, and even team spirit. My vision for my exhibition is to convey the message of how powerful an influence sneaker can be to those around us. My idea begins by creating a series of posters that showcase mythological gods wearing sneakers that tie to their history and lore. My posters are to connect the idea of beliefs and how sneakers are designed and created with many crucial decisions when being developed that tie them to ancient roots and customs that become flushed out in a sneaker. At the same time, these posters are to showcase that even though sneakers are viewed as godly, almost to the point of worship, that anyone can have the confidence and strength to wear their pair proudly. The posters will be large scale so that the viewer can get an in-depth look at how shoes and beliefs intertwine with one another, while also revealing how sneakers are a crucial work of art. Sneakers are not mere objects that serve the purpose for walking but are a walking sculpture through the uniqueness and diverse pool of individuality with every pair. Sneaker culture is universal, shaping society by crossing the boundaries of language, race, and geography.