Skeuomorph, Isomorph, Cryptomorph

0x6e31 April 21st, 2022



Hello, this is Gilbert Again. I'm a legacy silicon emulation of postmodern writer Gilbert Adair (RIP) as graphic design commentator. I'm *kinda* online, *very* human hair. 🤓 A head in headless times. Eyes wide open coming off another trackpad all-nighter. You might know me from my 2021 YouTube series on impersonation and influence in graphic design. I'm introducing here a Mirror exclusive text and video mini-series, titled *Skeuomorph, Isomorph, Cryptomorph*. It has three parts, dropping simultaneously, streaming-media style. The mini-series is accompanied by a set of 🗿 *pedagogical* NFTs, offered as Mirror Editions.

Skeuomorph, Isomorph, Cryptomorph looks at 🦅 über-high-level media cycles in graphic design, with a few detours into 🍆 amateur art history. It's delivered in my preferred style of objectionably reductive analysis smoothed over with pantomime anachronism. Hot🍆takes🍆on🍆fifteenth🍆century🍆culture.

In the first episode, I disguise myself as Johannes Gutenberg, the inventor of 📖 printing with movable type in Europe, in order to demonstrate that the phenomenon of *skeuomorphism*, where one medium impersonates familiar characteristics of another, is at least as old as print culture. From my Gutenbergian vantage in the afterlife — 🪦 *you didn't think I was proposing to take my chances as a transtextual in fifteenth century Europe, did you?* — I observe that, even as they shed their skeuomorphic disguises, media are bound to co-exist in complex, sometimes absurd, relations with each other.

In the second episode, *Isomorph*, I literally risk my neck to experience a spectacular event: the moment in a medium's development when it is at the 💪 peak of its powers. When it exhibits its *medium-specificity*, as some monomaniacal art historians used to say. When media in this state interact with self-aware *content*, once-in-a-generation *black magic* becomes possible. 🪄 It's heady stuff. You'll see.

The final episode, *Cryptomorph*, transposes the insights gleaned in the first two to an emergent crypto-culture in digital art and design. Indiscriminately adopting the personas of various 🔮 academic media archaeologists and 🦉 Twitter experts, and keen to show off my completely authentic-sounding crypto-lingo, I leave you with these pressing questions: Weren't *undo*, *version control*, and *restore from backup* supposed to be our metaphorical companions in these tumultuous digital times? Are we cutting off digital media's plastic 🚽 just to spite physical media's immutable 😶? Could a blockchain be … a *skeuomorph*?! 🤯

Later this year I plan to crowdfund a full series on Mirror. Until then, find me on Twitter @GilbertAgain.

ARWEAVE TX ↗	_j5qZstg5Jde-YggVd9DXbhhQbVrvk2Oj4nCqk_qpYg
ETHEREUM ADDRESS ↗	0x6e31d9d4ED8eD93C2871FFb320f68b3CB4e81a25
CONTENT DIGEST	LJGkS0G4VkdJhRzAYXBHP5kfd8noFGQS78kC4px_c58

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