Skeuomorph

0x6e31 May 3rd, 2022

This is the first of three episodes in the mini-series *Skeuomorph, Isomorph, Cryptomorph*. It consists of a short essay, a video, and a collectible NFT.



Gilbert Again 0x6e31

Gilbertenberg

Edition 0x0EA3 Raised 0.15 ETH NFT

Collect NFT

EDITION PRICE
0.01 ETH
$16.21

NFTS SOLD
15/111
Edition will remain available until all NFTs have been collected.

COLLECTORS

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@GilbertAgain 0x6e31 #3	@GilbertAgain 0x6e31 #4
@GilbertAgain 0x6e31 #5	@GilbertAgain 0x6e31 #6
@GilbertAgain 0x6e31 #7	@GilbertAgain 0x6e31 #8
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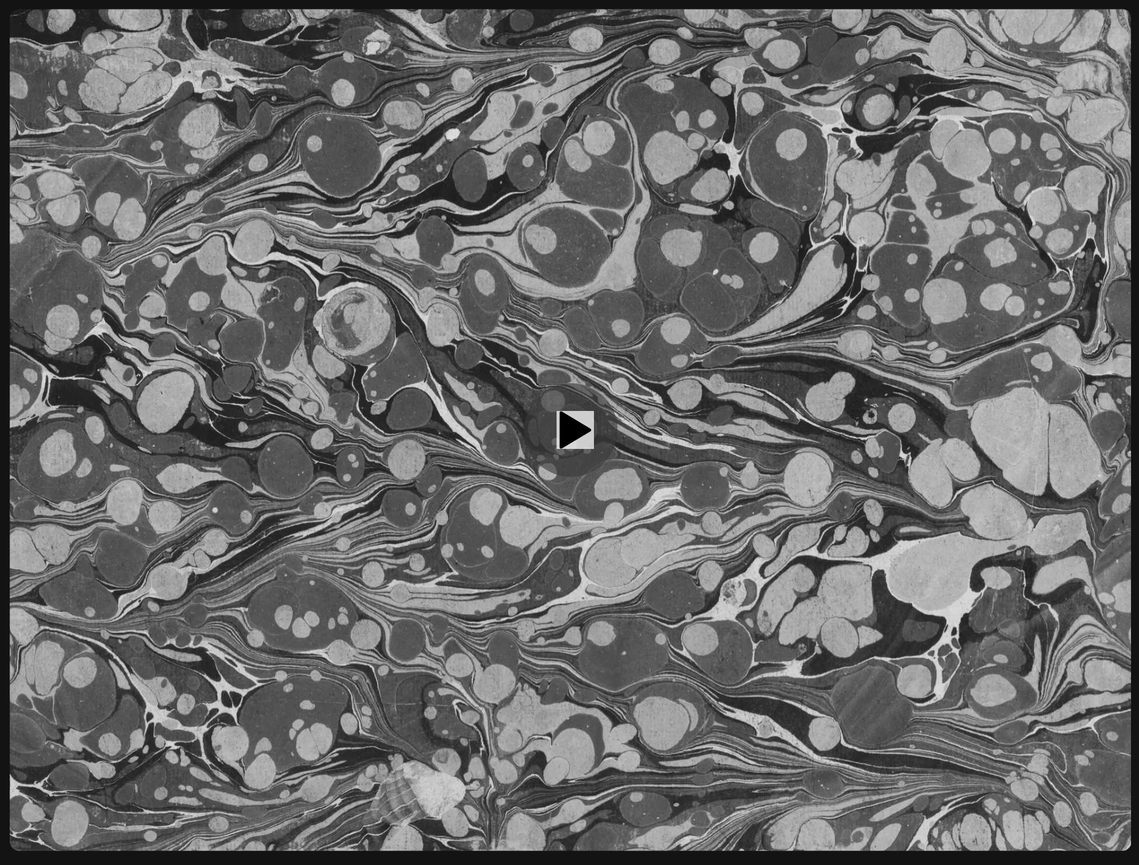
Alright, Gilbert here. In the video below, I skim-read European print culture in an

attempt to make sense of the contemporary moment in graphic design. To lend this exercise a hint of historical credibility, I dress up as Johannes Gutenberg, the inventor of printing with movable type in Europe. Yeh, that's Gilbertenberg, right above this paragraph. 😂 That look on his face, how would you describe it? Apprehensive? Embarrassed? To explain why I imagined him feeling a little … uncomfortable in 2022, let me usher you toward the starting point of my narrative, in fifteenth century Europe. Yeh, Gutenberg and God have just dropped *The Bible*, and it's hot. 🔥 At God's suggestion, this OG printed book is a *skeuomorph* — it looks almost exactly like the handwritten manuscripts that came before it. That's right, despite what you might have read, Gutenberg didn't just immediately stun late medieval Europe with a sans-serif Univers.otf mega-family and seven-colour, high-reactive H-UV LED offset print. No, he started cautiously, with conservative letterforms and familiar graphic design. Skeuomorphism was a kind of disguise that print used to sneak into the scriptorium without anyone sounding the alarm. 😉

Skeuomorphism is a macro- *and* micro-level tendency that many new media exhibit. Yes, I'm claiming here that it's the founding aesthetic proposition of European print culture, but it's also that subtle ✨ glint on the corner of a rendering of an iPhone. It might *partially* explain the enduring continuity of the concept of a 📄 page, or just conclude a Twitter beef about why Web3's NFTs are as square as Web2's Instagram posts. However, skeuomorphism is not a strictly chronological phenomenon. As we'll see, skeuomorphs appear not only in new media, but also as anachronistic appendages to old media. Nor is skeuomorphism a *unifying* aesthetic. Artefacts that exhibit skeuomorphic features often exhibit other features too. Even 🤔 *medium-specific* features. We'll get back to the term medium-specific in episode two.

So, Gilbertenberg's face. Well, before Gutenberg had a chance to drop the skeuomorphic disguise from his graphic design, print seriously took off. 📈 In no time at all, print workshops opened up across Europe. Guilds emerged to establish standards for the production and distribution of type, ink, paper, and press technologies. Skilled tradesmen unionised up to the teeth. 🗒️ Those innocent, *itty-bitty* skeuomorphs, that God thought would be a good introductory marketing campaign, were *industrialised*, as wood and metal ⚙️ hardware that would last for centuries, and would come to be expected by a whole new mainstream demographic of readers. *Gulp*. Yeh, *that's* why he's freaking out up there. Now, Gilbertenberg is a practically medieval .gif file, so he can't talk. 🤐 But if he could, I'd have him saying, *I, Johannes Gutenberg, hindered the development of graphic design during the years 1454–1985, and for that, I feel great remorse*.

OK, watch this …



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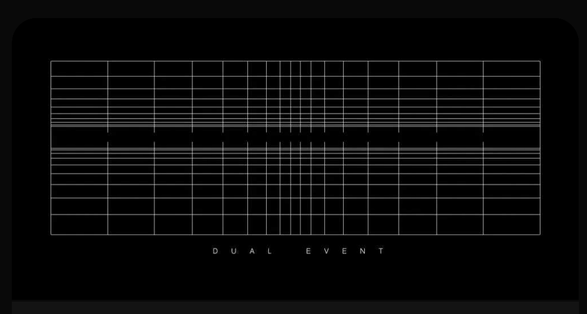
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November 3rd, 2022

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Tombs all the way down

October 12th, 2022

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September 10th, 2022

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