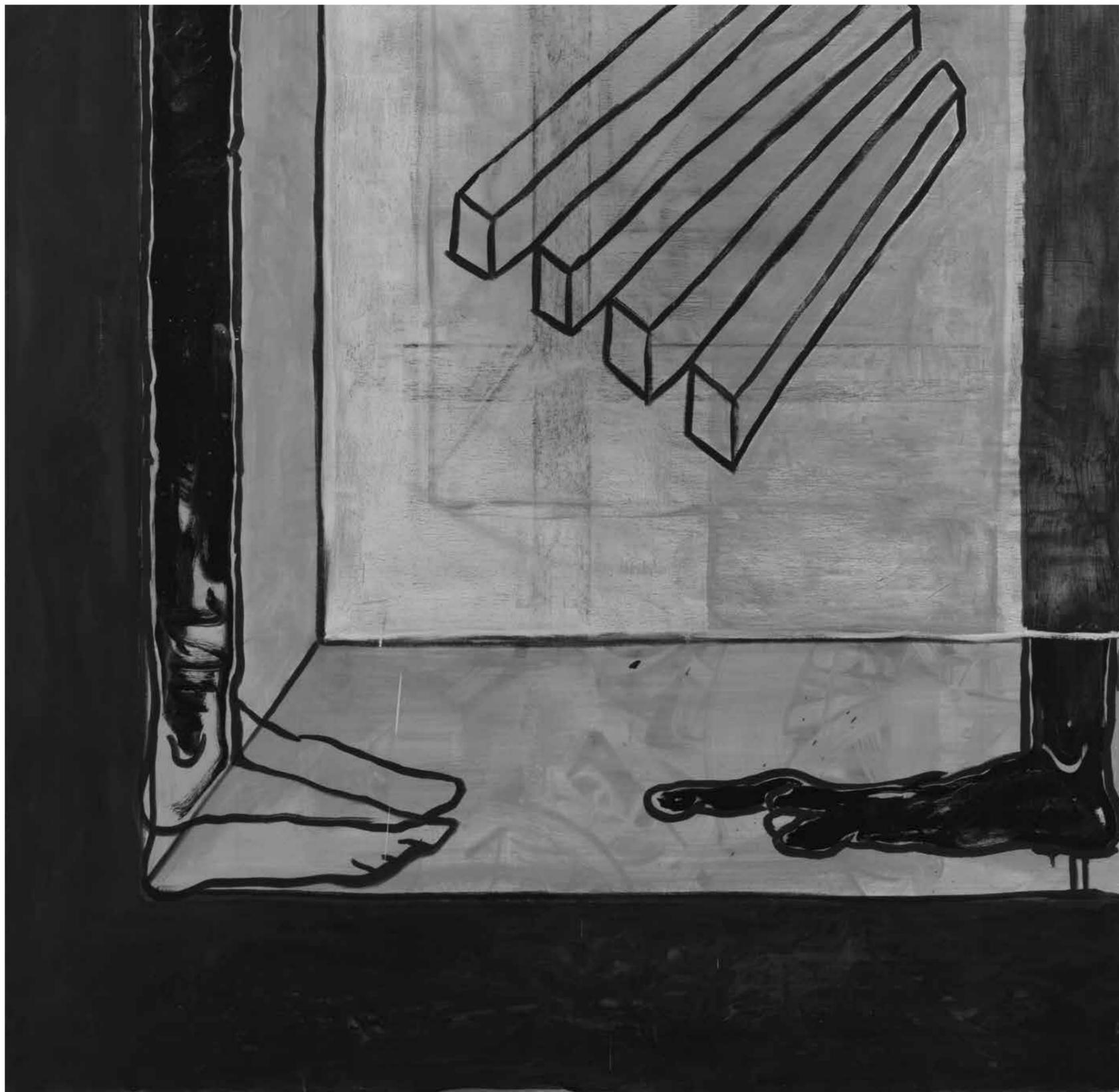


Rasmus Nilausen
Bluetooth

21.09 – 24.11 2019



CV

Rasmus Nilausen (b.1980) studied at the Faculty of Fine Arts, Barcelona, and graduated from Chelsea College of Art and Design, London, in 2011. His international exhibitions include the Institute of Contemporary Art (ICA), London, and the Chisenhale Gallery, London, as well as La Capella, Antoni Tàpies Foundation and Suñol Foundation, Barcelona. In Denmark, he has had solo shows at the exhibition venues Tranen and Christian Andersen.

EVENTS

Thursday 17 October, 6-7.30pm

ARTIST TALK: RASMUS NILAUSEN & JACOB WAMBERG:
"BLUETOOTH, SIGNS, AND CONNECTIONS"

Rasmus Nilausen's paintings in his solo exhibition *Bluetooth* are full of signs, symbols and references to everything from Harald Bluetooth, technical communication devices, and art historical connections. This evening you can meet the artist, who will join us all the way from Barcelona, where he is currently based, to take us through the exhibition *Bluetooth* and in conversation with art history professor Jacob Wamberg talk about signs and symbols in the exhibition and in painting today. Please note that the talk will be in Danish.

Image: Roberto Ruiz

This exhibition folder can be downloaded from: overgaden.org

The exhibition is supported by:

DANISH ARTS FOUNDATION  THE OBEL FAMILY FOUNDATION Grosserer L.F. Foghts Fond

Overgaden is supported by the Danish Arts Foundation

OVERGADEN.

Institute of Contemporary Art, Overgaden neden Vandet 17, 1414 Copenhagen K, Denmark, overgaden.org, +45 32577273

Design: Anni's

Bluetooth: Rasmus Nilausen

By Max Andrews

OVERVIEW

Bluetooth® is a two-way digital wireless standard that enables the exchange of information between computers, mobile phones, and other peripherals such as keyboards and headphones. For Rasmus Nilausen, painting is a technology that connects the communicative assets of drawing, writing, speaking, reading, and looking. The range of both protocols is typically less than 10 m. Could we mandate the capabilities of Nilausen-enabled devices, along with their encoding and specifications? Since around 2000, oil pigment on linen has provided Nilausen’s most widely adopted attributes and colour space. It has transmitted information and provided connectivity using the following parameters: idioms and fruits, vegetables and eyeballs, tongues and images, fingers and candles, sense and habits, non-sense and perspective, old masters and young slaves. Yet in this exhibition at Overgaden there are also new and enhanced development frameworks and use cases to be interpreted, more specifically fresco-like wall and mosaic-like floor applications, and an archway device in the form of a punctuation threshold. Nilausen does not step in the spinach.

ADOPTION

Although their default format is taller than it is wide, Nilausen’s content-rich paintings are nevertheless not usually disposed towards portraiture, but are trimmed as if the bounding box of a single typographic glyph. Without proper rendering support you may see question marks, boxes, or other symbols. When a requested font is not available, fallback mechanisms designed to ensure the display of text in any given language can fail. In the Danish language, “W” was only officially recognised as a separate letter from “V” in 1980, the year of Nilausen’s birth. With Nilausen’s interoperability, the “not defined” placeholder has the appearance of a simple rectangular box, often with a cross, or some variation of that. Interface elements such as “close”, “minimize”, or “zoom” have allowed appropriate customization and flexibility, often resizing or repositioning hidden shadows, scrolls or unused layers.

REQUIREMENTS

Dynamic symbols and brush gestures with their own unique transparency considerations help achieve a consistent look. Far from being merely decorative, Nilausen’s elevation and interpolation of meticulously painted graphic variants and static resources — as well as a repertoire of drags and swipes with generic hoghair bristle brushes — plays an essential role in onboarding and engagement during a first interaction. For example, the pilcrow (¶) is a typographic character whose shape derives from the letter “C” for *capitulum* (“little head” in

latin) with the addition of two vertical bars. Its simple, unique shape is easy to discern, even at smaller sizes. Pilcrows were once used in text to separate one train of thought from the next. Yet with the advent of the printing press, this use was overridden by the convention of a new line or indentation at the beginning of a paragraph. Today many layout programmes support the display of the “hidden characters” of formatting, and in this mode a new line is typically represented by a pilcrow.

INTEGRATION

Orthography is a set of conventions for writing a language. The Unicode computing industry standard, developed in tandem with the International Standard ISO/IEC 10646, determines the consistent encoding, representation, and handling of text in most of the world’s writing systems. At the time of writing, Unicode 12.1 contains a repertoire of 137,994 characters covering 150 modern and historic scripts, as well as a multitude of symbol sets and emoji. The pilcrow is present in Unicode as U+00B6. Guillemets (« and ») — used for quotations in a number of languages including Catalan (*Cometes franceses* pointing outwards) and Danish (*Citationstegn* pointing inwards) — are U+00AB and U+00BB. “Man Artist” was added to Emoji 4.0 in 2016. It is a combination of “Man” (U+1F468) and “Artist Palette” (U+1F3A8) which displays as a single pictogram on supported platforms.

TOOLS

If Nilausen had already been painting in 1880s Paris, it would have been noted that standards were beginning to populate the art industry. The range of pre-stretched ready-primed canvases advertised by colour-merchants to artists was already considerable: a full size range from nos. 1 to 120 in a “figure” range for portraits, as well as special formats catering for the increasing popularity of the “landscape” and “marine”, was determined by the most economical cutting of the loom-widths of the cloth. Even though universal stretchers would have been available to make non-conventional display proportions, standard-sized frames and bourgeois apartments imposed their own constraints. Nilausen’s default workflow uses black pocket-size hardcover Moleskine® Classic-collection squared notebooks and blue BIC® Cristal® Ballpoint pens to facilitate critical tasks and hone essential content. Full-colour images and texts then typically exploit Claessen’s 300 gsm universal-primed Belgian-woven linen and Old Holland’s bright, intense and powerful range of lightfast pigments based on cold-pressed linseed oil, especially E25 Cadmium Red Purple, E267 Cobalt Green Deep, and A72 Van Dyck Brown Extra

(Cassel). Nilausen ensures good ventilation of the work area when painting, preventing the colours contacting the skin and preventing ingestion through the mouth. Loose lips sink ships.

CHALLENGES

If Nilausen had been present in Scandinavia during the Viking Age of the 8th to 12th centuries, the latin alphabet letters “H” and “B” would have been seen to display as the now deprecated characters “Ð”, or Hagall (“hail”), and “ᚢ”, called Bjarkan (“birch”) in the Younger Futhark runic script. In 1999, the year before Nilausen relocated from Copenhagen to Barcelona, Unicode standardised the characters “ᚢ” (U+16E1) and “ᚦ” (U+16D2). That same year the Swedish telecommunications company Ericsson launched its first consumer Bluetooth® device, a handsfree headset bearing the trademarked Bluetooth® word mark and its logo, a “bind rune” made by superimposing Hagall and Bjarkan to form a single symbol.

FEATURES

Most pencil manufacturers outside the U.S. now use the letter “H” to indicate the hard lightness of the mark produced, and “B” to designate the blackness left by a soft lead. In around 1795, painter Nicolas-Jacque Conté had first developed the modern pencil alongside a system for mixing different ratios of graphite and clay to produce an indispensable device with a range of characteristics and applications. Today graphite pencils are typically graded from the extremely smudging and “artistic” 9B, to 9H, the hardest and lightest, more suitable to precise technical work. Both hard and black, neither too light nor too dark, the multitasking HB pencil empowers all forms of visualisation, whether writing or drawing.¹ The use of an HB pencil is often stipulated for examinations or situations in which human-marked data is optically captured from paper, such as questionnaires. It allows sufficient darkness to be legible, yet it also allows for mistakes or a change of mind as it can be easily erased without leaving residual marks. Nilausen’s Staedtler Mars® Lumograph® 100 HB pencil is used instinctively to implement a single value-oriented task: marking straight lines on a given canvas, emulating a layout grid and providing contextual hints.

DEVELOPMENT

To a Danish master craftsman of the mid-tenth-century using implements made from wrought iron, HB (then transliterated as the runes ᚦᚢ) would have been carved or inscribed in wood or stone: geometric symbols bundled as the initials of king Harald Bluetooth, the son of Gorm the Old. Bluetooth erected a royal memorial to himself and his parents at Jelling, Jutland,

in around 953 – 965. The essence of what we now know about him was inscribed on the largest of the rune stones there. Using glyphs magically and ornamentally as much as alphabetically and textually, the skilled rune-cutter communicated that HB “won all Denmark and Norway and made the Danes Christian.” Although the facts of this period are at best sketchy, other less partisan evidence concurs that Bluetooth’s statecraft indeed played a pivotal role in transforming the numerous small tribes and chiefdoms under his rule into a strong unitary kingdom with a well-defined political authority. Bluetooth’s impulse to standardise and unify was not only autocratic, but theistic: his consent to baptism by the missionary Poppo in the year 965 decreed that Christ alone should also be worshipped by all Danes.

See also
Different From Words.
Eye Dialect.
Idiolect, Not To Be Confused With Eye Dialect.
A Three Sided Coin.
Salvatore.

References

¹ There is no specific industry standard for the darkness of the mark created by an HB pencil, nor any other hardness grades, and different brands set their own internal standards. The Czech stationery brand Koh-i-Noor disputes the origins of the HB system, claiming that the H stands for its founder Joseph Hardtmuth, and the B for its manufacturing base in the city of Deská Budjovice.