

SMOOTH · Speaker Script

丝滑 · 讲者脚本

40 slides, maps 1:1 to the deck. Read the big black **SAY** text aloud. The red **DO** lines are stage directions, never spoken. The tinted box is what the audience sees on screen. Websites auto-load as marked. Est. **68 min** spoken, leaving room for Q&A within 90.

SAY

what you speak **DO** stage direction, do not speak 屏幕 what is on screen

Luzius Bernhard · UBERMORGEN 超明天 · Dongguan University of Technology · 28.09.2026 · Controls: arrows move, S sound, A auto-web, 1/2/3 web/pres/both.

01

1 · SURFACE

+1.5m

@ 1:30

屏幕 / ON SCREEN 丝滑 · 你早就想要这个了。SMOOTH · You Already Wanted This

DO

Land the title. Let the room settle before slide 2.

► 网页 / web: **ubermorgen.com** loads on the right (home)

SAY

Good evening, and thank you to Dongguan University of Technology, and to the General Education Center. The talk is called SMOOTH. We will give you exactly what the title promises, and then I will take you underneath it.

02

1 · SURFACE

+1.5m

@ 3:00

屏幕 / ON SCREEN 你的皮肤。你的信息流。你的生活。优化完成,丝滑,已经解决。Your skin. Your feed. Your life. Optimized, smooth, already resolved.

DO

Warm, seductive. Do not moralize.

SAY

Smoothness is the feeling of our moment. The seamless surface. The frictionless swipe. The thing that just works and slides and asks nothing of you. And it is genuinely pleasurable. I am not going to stand here and tell you it is bad to enjoy it.

03

1 · SURFACE

+1.5m

@ 4:30

屏幕 / ON SCREEN 在某个时刻,这悄然发生。你没有注意到。你不知道它的代价。At some point this happened. You did not notice. You do not know what it cost.

DO

Slow. Let the last line hang.

SAY

But smoothness has a cost, and the cost is hidden on purpose. A smooth surface is a surface that conceals its own making. It asks you not to think about where it came from, or what it runs on.

04

1 · SURFACE

+1.5m

@ 6:00

屏幕 / ON SCREEN 没有延迟。没有摩擦。没有粗糙的边缘。丝滑,本该让人感觉像是胜利。No lag, no friction, no rough edges. Smooth is supposed to feel like winning.

DO

Light. Plant the promise; you test it later.

SAY

No lag. No friction. No rough edges. You want the thing, and the thing arrives. Smoothness promises to feel like winning. Later, we will ask whether it actually does.

05

1 · SURFACE

+1.5m

@ 7:30

屏幕 / ON SCREEN 丝滑,如今是默认状态。硅谷许诺的无摩擦生存,一次性供给所有人。 *Smooth is the default now. The frictionless existence Silicon Valley promised, then shipped to everyone at once.*

DO
SAY

Widen from personal to systemic.

This is not a private taste anymore. Smoothness is the default state, the frictionless existence that was promised by a few companies and then shipped to everyone, everywhere, all at once. It is an aesthetic, and it is a condition.

06

1 · SURFACE

+1.5m

@ 9:00

屏幕 / ON SCREEN 三个房间。(一场展览·已闭幕) *SMOOTH ran at Box Art Museum, Dongguan, June to Aug 2026. Lives at smooth.asia.*

DO
SAY

Past tense, always. Show is down; lives online.

► 网页 / web: smooth.asia/#videos (videos section)

We made an exhibition about exactly this. It was called SMOOTH, three rooms, and it was right around the corner, at the Box Art Museum in Dongguan, this past summer. It has closed. It now lives online. I have given a lecture here at your school before, so some of you may already have some idea of my concept of smoothness, and the infrastructure philosophy underneath it.

07

1 · SURFACE

+1.5m

@ 10:30

屏幕 / ON SCREEN 悬挂式服务器·退役刀片服务器,白漆未干。 *SMOOTH · Suspended Servers*

DO
SAY

Describe the object. Slow down.

► 网页 / web: smooth.asia · **Suspended Servers**

The first room. Retired blade servers, the machines that used to run the cloud, hung from the ceiling and painted white, the paint still wet, still dripping. The infrastructure is there, above your head, being quietly covered over. That is the whole idea of the show in one object.

08

1 · SURFACE

+1.5m

@ 12:00

屏幕 / ON SCREEN 声音之床·声音在平台内部,而非扬声器。 *SMOOTH · Bed of Sound*

DO
SAY

If sound is ON in the deck, this is where it pays off.

► 网页 / web: smooth.asia · **Bed of Sound**

The second room. A low platform you lie down on. The sound is not coming from a speaker in front of you, it is inside the platform, distributed unevenly through the structure, the way feeling is distributed unevenly through a body. You are monitored the way you are nurtured, from underneath, and it feels good, and that is the argument.

09

1 · SURFACE

+1.5m

@ 13:30

屏幕 / ON SCREEN 社交放映会·丝滑的居民,练习被观看。 *SMOOTH · The Social Screening*

DO
SAY

Let the loneliness of it land.

► 网页 / web: smooth.asia · **Social Screening**

The third room. Screens almost standing on the floor, each holding a single AI-generated person. The citizens of smooth. Optimized, calm, endlessly pleasant, rehearsing being looked at long after anyone has stopped looking. Everything is offered. Nothing is exchanged.

10

1 · SURFACE

+1m

@ 14:30

屏幕 / ON SCREEN 这里一切都好。你可以走了。一切都处理好了。 *Everything here is fine. You can leave now. It is all handled.*

DO
SAY

Deliver flat, calm. Menace from the calm.

Everything here is fine. You can leave now. It is all handled. This sentence runs through the whole show. Say it in a soothing voice, and it becomes a threat.

11

1 · SURFACE

+1.5m

@ 16:00

屏幕 / ON SCREEN 表层之下,隐藏着什么?哪些摩擦值得保留?情感,流向何处? *What is hidden beneath the surface? Which frictions are worth keeping? Where does emotion flow?*

DO
SAY

This is the pivot into the argument.

The exhibition poster asked three questions. What is hidden beneath the surface. Which frictions are worth keeping. Where does emotion flow. To answer any of them, we cannot stay on the surface. We have to go under it. So we go under.

12

2 · BENEATH

+1.5m

@ 17:30

屏幕 / ON SCREEN 丑陋 UGLY. The thing smooth is built on, and pretends it deleted.

DO
SAY

Background sinks to cream. One hard word; you carry the sentence.

Underneath smoothness is a thing I call UGLY. Not the opposite of smooth. The thing smooth is built on top of, and pretends it deleted. The seam, the cost, the labor, the machine showing through. UGLY is not failure. It is the infrastructure confessing.

13

2 · BENEATH

+2m

@ 19:30

屏幕 / ON SCREEN 摩擦,曾是情感栖居之所。 *Friction was where the feeling lived. Sand the world smooth, and emotion has nowhere to land.*

DO
SAY

This is the conceptual core. Give it room.

Here is the deeper problem. Friction is where feeling lived. Anger needs an obstacle. Joy needs texture. Grief, disgust, all of it needs something with a grain. If you sand the whole world down into a smooth delivery surface, emotion has nowhere to land.

14

2 · BENEATH

+2m

@ 21:30

屏幕 / ON SCREEN 那么它去哪了?它渗漏出来。 *So where did it go? It leaked. Smooth anger on Instagram.*

DO
SAY

Faster, livelier. This is a pop beat.

So where does the feeling go? It does not disappear. It leaks. It comes out as the most brutal comment section on earth, as rage typed with no resistance, as cruelty engineered for reach. People raised entirely on optimization are starving to feel something, so they manufacture friction by hand, in public, at scale. And even the rage comes out smooth.

15

2 · BENEATH

+2m

@ 23:30

屏幕 / ON SCREEN 情感迁向了中间。编排层。被对齐,而非被感受。 *It moved to the middle. The orchestration layer. Aligned, not felt.*

DO
SAY

Introduce 'orchestration layer' as a real place. Stress 'aligned, not felt'.

And here is the strange part. The feeling did not sink down to the hardware, and it did not stay up on the surface. It moved to the layer in between. I call it the orchestration layer, the part that schedules and routes and aligns what runs. Our emotions now live there too. They are aligned, not felt.

16

2 · BENEATH

+2m

@ 25:30

屏幕 / ON SCREEN 表层 / 编排层 / 基底 · 权力,居于中间。 *surface / orchestration / foundation · Power lives in the middle.*

DO
SAY

Point at the middle band.

So picture three layers. The surface, what you see and feel. The foundation at the bottom, the machine room, hardware and energy, much of it built in this region. And between them, the orchestration layer, where the rules and defaults and aesthetics are decided. Power does not live at the surface where our attention goes. It lives in the middle, where the arrangement is set.

17

2 · BENEATH

+2m

@ 27:30

屏幕 / ON SCREEN 真实的堆栈 (六层) · 界面是礼貌的。基底不是。 *The real stack. The interface is polite. The substrate is not.*

DO
SAY

Right panel switches to foundationism.net. Gesture to it.

► 网页 / web: foundationism.net

The serious version has six layers, and you can see it on the right, on foundationism.net. Agent, application, orchestration, intelligence, hardware, substrate. From the person at the top down to minerals and energy at the bottom. The interface is polite. The substrate is not. Every smooth surface casts an infrastructural shadow all the way down.

18

2 · BENEATH

+1.5m

@ 29:00

屏幕 / ON SCREEN 美学,是你能感受到的治理。 *Aesthetics is governance you can feel.*

DO
SAY

Say it once, clean, and stop.

So here is the sentence I want you to keep from this whole section. Aesthetics is governance you can feel. Smoothness governs you through pleasure, and it hides its own making. That is the most efficient kind of power there is.

19

3 ·
FOUNDATIONISM

+1.5m

@ 30:30

屏幕 / ON SCREEN 基础主义 · 未经授权发布 · 不予执行 · 反应即研究 *FOUNDATIONISM. Issued without authority. Do not execute. The reaction is the research.*

DO
SAY

Deepest layer, dark background. Read the three lines once.

► 网页 / web: foundationism.net

This is where our practice begins, and it has a name. Foundationism. It is a movement, with a charter and a public register, and it works one layer down, at the orchestration layer, not on the surface. Its three rules are on the screen. Issued without authority. Do not execute. The reaction is the research.

20

3 ·
FOUNDATIONISM

+1.5m

@ 32:00

屏幕 / ON SCREEN 艺术不生产基础设施。艺术消耗它。 *Art does not produce infrastructure. It consumes it.*

DO
SAY

The UBERMORGEN axiom. Background you can expand: 30 years, since 1995.

Here is the axiom the whole practice rests on. Art does not produce infrastructure. It consumes it. For thirty years, in the group UBERMORGEN, our material has not been paint or bronze. It has been networks, platforms, law, and the reactions of institutions. We work with systems the way another artist works with clay.

21

3 ·
FOUNDATIONISM

+2m

@ 34:00

屏幕 / ON SCREEN 每个系统,都建立在承重的假设之上。 *Every system rests on load-bearing assumptions.*

DO
SAY

Use the building metaphor. Note the last one is where we began.

Every system rests on assumptions nobody questions anymore, because the system cannot run if you keep asking. In a building, some walls are decorative and some are load-bearing. Same here. A preview is not the product. A human decides what enters the museum. A standard is neutral. And the one we started with, smoothness is simply good. None of these are laws of nature. They are agreements.

22

3 ·
FOUNDATIONISM

+1.5m

@ 35:30

屏幕 / ON SCREEN 承重的假设,是微小一击、巨大效应的位置。 *A load-bearing assumption: a small precise move, a large effect.*

SAY

And that is exactly what makes them material for an artist. A load-bearing assumption is a place where a very small, very precise move produces a very large effect, because everything above it depends on it being treated as fixed. Find the thing everyone agreed to stop seeing, and you have found your material.

23

3 ·
FOUNDATIONISM

+2m

@ 37:30

屏幕 / ON SCREEN 两个动作:想象它如何能是另一种样子。然后,不予执行。 *Two moves: imagine it fully otherwise, then withhold.*

DO
SAY

This bridge sets up the cases. Slow, this is the spine.

The method has two moves, and I want you to hold both. The first is imagination. You picture, in precise and credible detail, how a load-bearing assumption could be otherwise. The second is restraint. You build that picture in full, you make it public, and then you deliberately do not carry it out. The capability is real. The release is held. Everything you see next is some version of these two moves.

24

3 ·
FOUNDATIONISM

+1.5m

@ 39:00

屏幕 / ON SCREEN 引而不发 *Do not execute. P(EXECUTION) 0.*

DO
SAY

Section title. Slow going in; this is the heart.

There is an old phrase for this posture. Draw the bow fully, and do not release. Be completely ready, and hold. In our register the probability of execution is zero, on purpose.

25

3 ·
FOUNDATIONISM

+2m

@ 41:00

屏幕 / ON SCREEN 1 找到承重的假设 · 2 想象另一种样子 · 3 公之于众 · 4 不予执行 · 5 观察反应 *Find it · Imagine otherwise · Make it public · Do not execute · Observe.*

DO
SAY

Walk all five. Land hard on step 4 (red on screen).

Five steps. One, find a load-bearing assumption in a real system. Two, imagine precisely how it could be otherwise. Three, make that public and credible, so the people who run the system have to take it seriously. Four, and this is the strange one, do not execute. And five, observe what the system does. Step four is where most people flinch. It is the whole art.

26

3 ·
FOUNDATIONISM

+1.5m

@ 42:30

屏幕 / ON SCREEN 反应,即是作品。反应,即是研究。 *The reaction is the work. The reaction is the research.*

DO

Hold a beat after 'the reaction is the work'.

SAY

Because once the proposal is public and credible, the system has no choice. It defends, it repairs, it denies, it changes the rules, or it goes very quiet. And that reaction, everything the system does under pressure, is the artwork. What it rushes to defend shows you where the load really is. What it will not talk about tells you the most.

27

3 ·
FOUNDATIONISM

+2m

@ 44:30

屏幕 / ON SCREEN 克制,就是艺术。 *The withholding is the art.*

SAY

Why not just do it? Two reasons. First, ethics. If you execute, you cause the damage, and then the story is about your damage, not about the assumption. Second, and more important, the withholding is the art. Anyone can break something. The discipline is to build a thing that would work and choose not to run it. A move that is carried out is over in a moment. A move that is fully built, made public, and then held back is a question the system cannot stop answering.

28

3 · REGISTER

+1.5m

@ 46:00

屏幕 / ON SCREEN 登记册 · UBERMORGEN 项目,三十年。 *The Register. UBERMORGEN projects, thirty years.*

DO

Right panel: register.foundationism.net. Frame the arc: crude-executed to mature-withheld.

► 网页 / web: register.foundationism.net

SAY

We keep all of this in a public register. Every case gets an address, and four fields. The setting we entered. Whether we executed or withheld. And the reaction. Being listed in the register is not the same as being judged. Let us look at some UBERMORGEN projects. You will watch the method grow up over thirty years, from crude and executed, to something that withholds completely.

29

3 · REGISTER

+2m

@ 48:00

屏幕 / ON SCREEN 谷歌吞噬自身 (GWEI, 2005) · VOID *Google Will Eat Itself. STANDING: VOID, executed.*

DO

Let the live site show. This is early and crude, and we executed it. That honesty matters.

► 网页 / web: gwei.org auto-loads

SAY

First case, 2005. The load-bearing assumption: a company as large as Google is too big for ordinary people to own, and its advertising economy only ever feeds the company. So we built a machine. We ran Google's own adverts on our sites, and every click paid us Google's own advertising money, and we used that money to buy Google shares, and gave the shares to the public. Autocannibalism. Google, slowly, eating itself. The reaction: Google closed some of our accounts, and we permanently opened new ones. A neutral system does not need to defend itself. Honest note, this one we actually ran, so in the register it is marked void.

30

3 · REGISTER

+2m

@ 50:00

屏幕 / ON SCREEN 亚马逊黑 (Amazon Noir, 2006) · VOID Amazon Noir. STANDING: VOID, executed.

DO

Live site on right. Note this is still an executed operation.

► 网页 / web: amazon-noir.com auto-loads

SAY

Second case, 2006. The assumption of all digital commerce: the free preview is not the product. Amazon let you read a few sample pages to make you buy. So we wrote software that asked for page after page after page, thousands of tiny requests, until the entire book had been served to us as preview. Then we had the whole book, for free, and we gave it away. Amazon quietly patched the hole, sent lawyers, and then settled by buying the software and the art project from us. We call this the affirmation strategy. Again, we executed. Void. But watch what happens next, because the practice matures.

31

3 · REGISTER

+2.5m

@ 52:30

屏幕 / ON SCREEN 机器策划双年展 (2021) · ADMITTED The Next Biennial Should Be Curated by a Machine. ADMITTED.

DO

Live site. This is the turn: published, absorbed, not forced.

► 网页 / web: biennial.ai auto-loads

SAY

2021, and this one is closest to your world. The assumption: a human curator, with taste and authority, decides what art matters and what enters the museum. So we proposed, and built, a machine to do the curating. An artificial intelligence to select the next biennial. Not as a joke, as a working system. And here is the interesting part. The Liverpool Biennial and the Whitney Museum commissioned it. The institution swallowed its own critique and turned it into a program. When the institution absorbs your proposal and makes it content, that is your signal to go one layer deeper.

32

3 · REGISTER

+2m

@ 54:30

屏幕 / ON SCREEN UNINVITED (2019-2025) · OPEN UNINVITED. An autonomous AI organism.

DO

INTERNAL NOTE: we watch the UNINVITED video together here for two to three minutes. The Vimeo plays on the right.

► 网页 / web: vimeo.com/472668367 plays

SAY

Then the surveillance layer itself becomes material. UNINVITED is an autonomous AI organism that we fed on the data of the always-watching world, closed-circuit cameras and sensor networks, and from that it grew its own mutant, synthetic bodies. It runs itself. It keeps operating the very layer it was born inside. On the right you can see it move. We received several art awards for this, and exhibited it around the world, as video and in custom-made installations.

33

3 · REGISTER

+3m

@ 57:30

屏幕 / ON SCREEN **PURE (2026, 广东蕉岭) · 现正展出 · DO NOT EXECUTE** *PURE. Some things are better imagined than done. DO NOT EXECUTE.*

DO

The climax. Slow, generous. Point to the QR. It is local, ecological, and it says the method on the tin.

► 网页 / web: pure.foundation loads · QR on slide

SAY

And this is the one we most want you to see, because it is happening right now, in this province. PURE, a land art work by UBERMORGEN in a lotus field in Jiaoling, Guangdong, part of Art Field 2026. In the real field there are only seven pink poles. That is the entire physical artwork. Everything else, a whole underground world, root systems, computing power, reactors, strange creatures, exists only in imagination, and it never has to be built. That is the idea of the piece. Everything we imagine is already real. It simply does not have to become a physical thing. Some things are better imagined than done. Scan the code, and you can enter the imagined world yourself.

34

3 · REGISTER

+2m

@ 59:30

屏幕 / ON SCREEN **丝滑 (2026, 东莞) · 进行中 SMOOTH** *Current work.*

DO

Back to smooth.asia. Full circle to the start.

► 网页 / web: smooth.asia/#videos

SAY

And that closes the circle, because the exhibition I opened with is itself a register case. SMOOTH. The setting is the softest material there is, desire itself. No lawyers here, because the operation is on feeling. It ran here in Dongguan this summer, and it lives at smooth.asia.

35

3 · REGISTER

+1.5m

@ 61:00

屏幕 / ON SCREEN **失败的操作,也是作品。** *The failed operation is the work. The empty field is the verdict.*

SAY

One last rule, the strangest. In this register, the failed operation is also the work. If you publish a credible move and the system does not react at all, if the reaction field stays empty, the entry convicts itself. The emptiness is the verdict. This is the opposite of normal art, which only ever shows its successes.

36

4 · BACK UP

+1.5m

@ 62:30

屏幕 / ON SCREEN **你们将用一生制作表层。我不是要你们停手。** *You will spend your careers making surfaces. I am not asking you to stop.*

DO

Warm. Turn to the students directly.

SAY

Let me bring this back to you. Some of you will spend your careers making surfaces, beautiful, skilled, smooth surfaces, and that is real work. Others, the engineers and the architects among you, will be working directly with what this lecture is about, the layer underneath.

37

4 · BACK UP

+1.5m

@ 64:00

屏幕 / ON SCREEN **是什么在支撑这一切,而众人早已默契地不再去看?** *What is holding this up that everyone agreed to stop seeing?*

DO

The one habit to leave them with.

SAY

I am asking you to also see the layer beneath the one you are working on. Every project you take will sit on infrastructure. A standard, a platform, a supply chain, a default, a client's system, a city's code. And to carry one question into all of it. What is holding this up that everyone agreed to stop seeing.

38

4 · BACK UP

+1.5m

@ 65:30

屏幕 / ON SCREEN 气韵生动 · 在编排层被决定。(口述) *Qiyun shengdong, spirit resonance, decided at the orchestration layer now.*

DO
SAY

SPOKEN GIFT. Do not lean on the screen. This is for the room.

And let me offer one idea back to you from your own tradition, and I will only say it. Qi yun, from qiyun shengdong, spirit resonance and life-movement, the first of the six principles of Xie He, fifteen centuries old. The breath that runs underneath a work and makes it alive. I think qi yun is now decided at the orchestration layer. The feeling that reaches you has been arranged, upstream, before you feel it. To work at that layer is to take responsibility for the resonance itself, and not only for the surface it arrives on.

39

4 · BACK UP

+1.5m

@ 67:00

屏幕 / ON SCREEN 下一次,当某物光滑得毫无摩擦,问它在隐藏什么。 *The next time something feels perfectly smooth, ask what it is hiding.*

DO
SAY

The takeaway. Slow, direct, to one person.

So here is the one sentence I want you to keep. The next time something feels perfectly smooth, ask what it is hiding.

40

4 · BACK UP

+1m

@ 68:00

屏幕 / ON SCREEN 谢谢 *Thank you · Q & A*

DO
SAY

Stop cleanly. Open PURE or smooth.asia for Q&A. Leave links up.

► 网页 / web: **pure.foundation**

Thank you.