

# GLADSTONE

Valentina Sarmiento Cruz, "Kasper Bosmans at Gladstone Gallery," *Artforum*, February 18, 2018

## ARTFORUM



NEW YORK

### Kasper Bosmans

GLADSTONE GALLERY | WEST 24TH  
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Kasper Bosmans reinterprets selected relics to direct our attention toward the seemingly obsolete powers that conceived them. On a large wall, *Ebstorf Map (life size)* (all works 2018), is made up of three

rows of ten panels that replicate the titular document. The original thirteenth-century *mappa mundi*, with Christ's face included at the top, illustrates more than mere geographic information. Here, the distance between each parchment expands the surface that the piece occupies, suggesting the map's purpose: to promulgate European dominion.

Complementary to such a conquest were “chip logs,” wooden triangles with an arched side and a rope knotted at equal intervals attached to one face, which were meant to measure the speed of a vessel in a body of water. After tossing a log from the ship’s

stern, sailors would count the number of knots on the rope that slipped through their hands in a given period of time. In *T.O. Chip Log (Ebstorf)*, four chip logs are arranged to form a full circle, the only piece mounted on the Prussian-blue walls of the third and last room. Due to factors such as tides and currents, measuring speed with logs was never exact. Thus, control over the seacraft was always imprecise—but it was power nonetheless.

By way of wall text, Bosmans has created rebus-like legends to guide the viewer through his work. “Legend: Chip Log” is a series of eight small paintings featuring clean, color-saturated icons both retrieved from the past and borrowed from the present. Although the iconography is mostly recognizable—apples, flags, spinning pinwheels, fleur-de-lis, hourglass cursors, castles, bombs, crowns—the connections between the figures are left undeciphered. Various historical contexts add a degree of unintelligibility to the paintings and prompt the question: What contemporary objects will serve as residues of power in the future?