

THE EXPERT COMMITTEE'S STATEMENT

Bitcoin as Infrastructure, Ritual, Imagination

Bitcoin is a currency, an open protocol, and a cryptographic system all at once: a ledger kept by no bookkeeper, a watch assembled by no watchmaker, an archive that answers to no custodian. As code it is perfectly intangible, yet it exists in the world as a global network of nodes and specialized hardware, as consumed electricity, waste heat, and the drone of cooling fans. It is technical infrastructure, but it is also a social contract renewed block by block, and a radical experiment in ownership, scarcity, and institutional trust. Can Bitcoin, then, be art? Can a protocol be read as a score, consensus performed as a collective act, the blockchain worked as a medium? Is the infrastructure itself already art, or does art begin only at the moment its rules are disturbed, their self-evidence broken, and the whole system made visible in another light? What kind of work might emerge from the noise, heat, and energy flows of mining? From the drift of transaction fees, the wait for confirmation, a temporary fork, the instant when the network cannot agree on a single version of the present?

Bitcoin can be a promise of freedom or a new dependency, an escape from reality or a pure speculation, a faith without a god, a community without territory, even an institution that refuses the name. For some, Bitcoin begins with a mathematical proof. For others it begins with a family remittance sent across a border, a forgotten seed phrase, the hum of a mining rig, a price chart open at breakfast, a government ban, an internet meme, or a conversation with a true believer, or with someone who does not believe a word of it. It surfaces in expectations and conflicts, but also in fraud, disappointment, humor, propaganda, and flat refusal. It defines new elites and new forms of solidarity. Somewhere in this tangle lies an artistic moment waiting to be found and given form.

The work we are looking for need not contain code, run on a blockchain, or be digital at all. Bitcoin may enter it as raw material, as narrative, as environment, as a new rule of the game, as the worth of open systems, or as a social experiment. It may arrive as painting, object, film, sound, text, speculative fiction, choreography, public intervention, or participatory ritual. A painting might dwell on invisible ownership, a performance stage consensus or its collapse, a sculpture give body to the energy burned into a hash, a story trace an exchange between people who will never meet. What interests us is what this technology sets in motion and what it leaves off the record: human intention, labor, care, violence, the origins of value, relations of power, the consequences of every decision.

This call is not looking for the Bitcoin logo transplanted into a gallery, nor for a tech demo dressed up as art. It seeks work able to hold the space between code and faith, machine and body, private key and public value, mathematical rule and social contract. A work's relation to Bitcoin may be literal or metaphorical, technical or intuitive, intimate or systemic, admiring, skeptical, critical, or wildly speculative. Nothing here needs to be explained or celebrated. Bitcoin can be used, inhabited, watched, doubted, translated, refused, or misunderstood, and imagined into whatever it has not yet become. A chain of records in which each entry answers to the one before, it returns some very old questions to the digital world: questions of gift and debt, reciprocity and inheritance, sacrifice and kinship. The call does not ask for a single answer to what Satoshi gave us. It invites artists and publics alike to accept the gift, refuse it, repay it, redirect it, or fork its meaning into something of their own.