

Runo Lagomarsino
The Inner Circles
27/11 2021 – 15/01 2022

1.

Fiat – let it be done – is a command with which an authority exhorts a shared belief in the value of a currency. *Fiat* currencies are those that, dissociated from their equivalent in gold and silver, which can always be converted into the value of the material from which they are made, must rely on the almost-magical illusion that a symbolic contract issued by a king, a bank or a state guarantees a comparable value in all possible exchanges. It is, therefore, a request to have faith in it, but it can only be realized through a command. Let it be done. And so it is. An exemplary exercise in performativity.

Metal coins, which are currently in the process of disappearing in most prosperous economies in Europe, still represent, in the rest of the world, a fragile certainty that one can amass the weight of a ponderable value at the bottom of a pocket or purse. Even knowing that the nickel, copper and brass found in almost every alloy used to produce coins bear no relation to the gold standard they aspire to represent, it is reassuring to feel their weight as a way of renewing our faith in *fiat*.

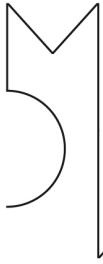
Perhaps, for this reason, the one Euro coins whose basic design the European Union has not changed since their original minting, feature a golden rim that frames the inner effigy like a ring.

What provides legitimacy to its value is not, of course, the golden rim and its allusion to gold, but the relief that represents authority on the coin's inner disk. The face of a monarch, the emblem of a country or a cultural reference that is seen to represent the national character endows the currency with the symbolic backing invested in them by a state's authority. In the complicated power balance within the European Union, the continuity of the underside's design, identical in every country, contrasts with the changing motif on the frontside. Each EU country is in charge of their cultural reference, national emblem or monarch's face to appeal to the legitimacy of *fiat*. But when it comes to encouraging confidence in currency exchange, what kind of legitimacy can –for instance– a Spanish monarch's face inspire if he is being investigated for tax evasion and illegal commissioning?

The Euro's golden rim closely evokes the halo typically found in Christian representations. A golden circle surrounding a face inevitably signals a supernatural quality. That of a saint or of monetary value. The magical effect seems to vanish when we imagine the low-relief portrait wearing off as it passes from hand to hand until it disappears, or when we encounter Runo Lagomarsino's gesture that accelerates this poetic fading with a clear blow that hammers out of their halos the assigned value of hundreds of coins. Therefore, when we see that the disks removed from their golden rings have been melted into the shape of a simple plate, with no other attribute but its weight, excessive for such an ordinary object, we call into question the entire illusory apparatus that sustains the fiction of value. And Runo does so without resorting to the iconoclastic act that wielding a hammer might suggest. We recognize lightness in the precision of the strike that removes the coins' magical link with value. We know that this is the same precise blow that once printed their value onto the metal. This perfect symmetry turns an act that could have been interpreted as pauperist vandalism into a precise poetic mechanism of "discoining".

2.

Fiat Lux – let there be light – is the inaugural act of biblical cosmogony, and it anticipates enlightenment's worldview. Michael Marder questions whether enlightenment is, after all, the paradox of fire without heat, of light without residue. Bringing light to facts in order to understand them, but without burning them or getting burned. The temporality of light emerging at daybreak to renew the news in daily newspapers. An odd idea in our present of uninterrupted newsworthiness, but one that suggests a worldview in which events themselves seemed to exist only under the light that illuminated



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them. In Runo's *A Cloud of Smoke*, every morning's newspaper collects wax dripping from a candle, making visible the irreducible trace left by light, the heat of fire, which never fully disappears no matter how hard we try to ignore it.

–Asiser Mendizabal

Runo Lagomarsino (b. 1977, Lund) lives and works between Malmö and São Paulo.

His works have been included in several institutional exhibitions such as *Gold and Magic*, Arken Museum of Modern Art, Copenhagen (2021); *No One Would Have Believed*, Netwerk Aalst, Aalst (2020); *Du signe à l'écriture*, Musée des beaux-arts de Brest (2019); *Yoko Ono. Universo Libre*, Museo de Arte de Lima (MALI), Lima (2018); *Caixa Preta*, Fundação Iberê Camargo, Porto Alegre (2018); *BRAZIL. Knife in the Flesh*, PAC, Milan (2018); *A Universal History of Infamy*, LACMA, Los Angeles (2017); *The Restless Earth*, Fondazione Trussardi, Milano (2017); *Little lower layer*, Museum Of Contemporary Art Chicago, Chicago (2017); *Really Useful Knowledge*, Museo Reina Sofia, Madrid (2015); *Under the same sun*, Guggenheim Museum, New York (2014).

Participated in *La XIII Bienal FEMSA*, Zacatecas (2018); *Prospect.4*, New Orleans (2017); *56th Biennale di Venezia*, (2015); *Gothenburg International Biennial* (2015); *12th Biennial of Cuenca* (2014); *30th São Paulo Biennial* (2012); *12th Istanbul Biennial* (2011), among others.

His solo exhibitions include *The Square between the Waves*, Konsthall Lund, Lund (2021); *Runo Lagomarsino – Friends of Moderna Museet 2019 Sculpture Prize*, Moderna Museet, Stockholm (2019); *We are each other's air*, Francesca Minini, Milan (2019); *No element, however has the final word in the construction of the future*, Mendes Wood DM, São Paulo (2018); *Concentrations 61: Runo Lagomarsino*, EntreMundos, Dallas Museum of Art (DMA), Dallas (2018); *We have been called many names*, Nils Stærk, Copenhagen (2017); *West is everywhere you look*, Francesca Minini, Milan (2016); *They Watched Us for a Very Long Time*, La Criée Center for Contemporary Art, Rennes (2015); *Against My Ruins*, Nils Stærk, Copenhagen (2014); *We have everything, but that's all we have*, Mendes Wood DM, São Paulo, (2013); *This Thing Called The State*, Oslo Kunstforening, Oslo (2013); *Even Heroes Grow Old*, Index, The Swedish Contemporary ArtFoundation, Stockholm (2012).

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