



BITCOIN BANKNOTES

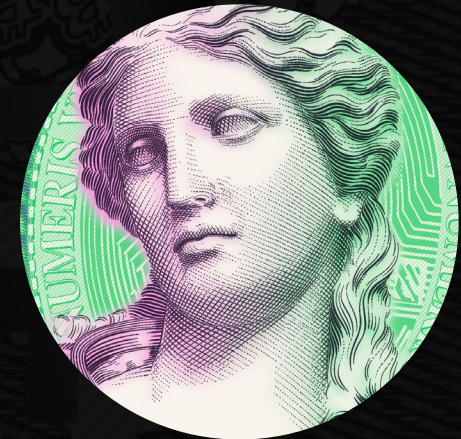
A family of banknote-like bearer instruments,
capable of holding and transmitting Bitcoin.

Client: Offline.Cash

2021-2022

#bitcoin #banknotes #banknotedesign #design #btc
#bitcoinbanknotes #cash #securityprinting #intaglio

OFFLINE





Project Outline

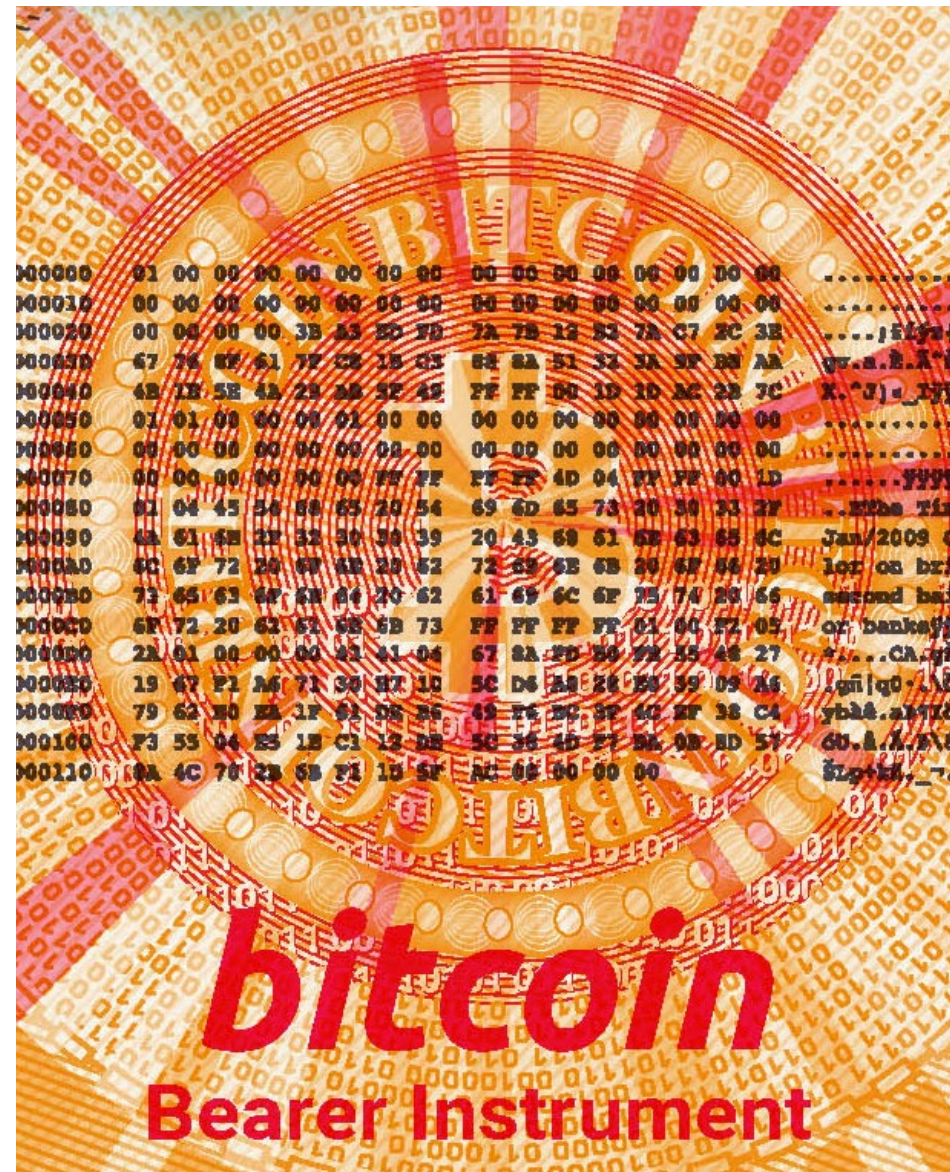
Tom Badley, artist & creative director

The 'Bitcoin banknote' is an idea that has accompanied cryptocurrency since its 2009 inception. Bitcoin is a new form of money, which must lean on existing forms of money in order to be relatable - half the word 'Bitcoin' is 'coin'; Bitcoin's early logo iterations were skeuomorphs of coins.

The 'Bitcoin Banknote' is a natural extension of cryptocurrency into the realm of cash. And although Bitcoin is more visually associated with coins, the paper wallet is Bitcoin's offline storage medium. Paper and private Bitcoin thus share a common domain.

Many paper wallets have assumed the form of 'play money,' vouchers, or simple banknotes, to embellish them with the feel of money. This has always fallen short, because the creators of these paper wallets did not use the secure printing techniques used in banknote production - until now...

For Offline.Cash, I was asked to create a family of four banknotes, that would work as private, individual wallets. Each would have a fixed Bitcoin value, because the cryptocurrency would be 'stored' on a scannable chip, allowing cryptocurrency to be reliably transacted in cash form.





Brief

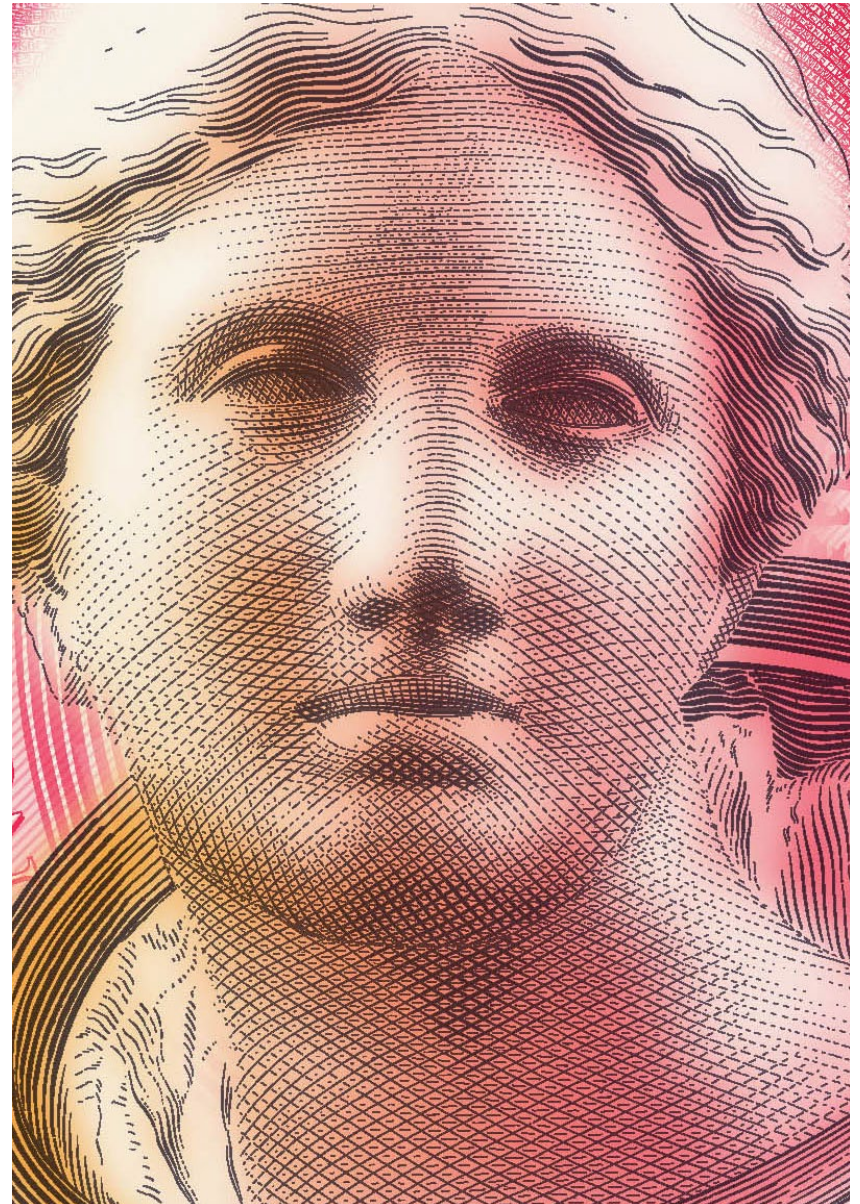
Tom Badley, artist & creative director

Offline.Cash's ambitious brief was to create Bitcoin bearer instruments that had two aims - to first delight and captivate existing cheerleaders of crypto, the 'hodlers.' The second aim was for these notes to reliably function where cash was needed but was in short supply, in line with Bitcoin's humanitarian role.

The notes would be printed on a durable plastic substrate, and would make use of security printing processes, including intaglio (the raised printing found on banknotes). This level of production would make them a 'world first' - the first mass-produced Bitcoin wallets printed to banknote standards.

So, the design brief was to create something that was paradoxically delightful, yet had the gravitas of existing cash, as well as making full use of security printing methods. There was also the requirement to capture some of the mystique of early Cassacius coins, and the essential mystery of Bitcoin's origins.

The main design limitation was that the notes would be printed on the same sheet, together, using a 6 color process. This meant that the design and workflow had to be crafted in order to fully exploit the limited color combinations available.





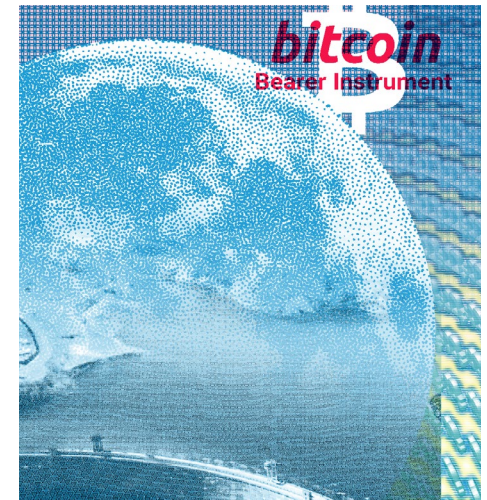
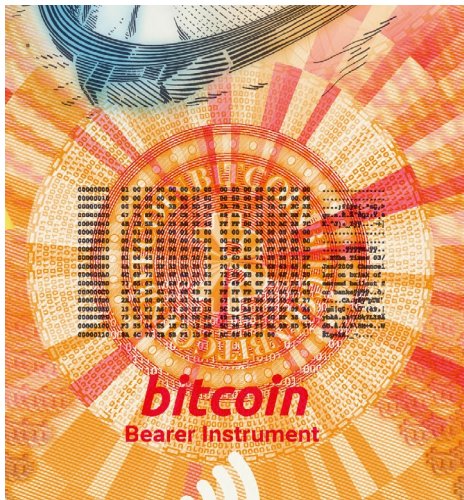
The Touchpoints of Bitcoin

Tom Badley, artist & creative director

A Bitcoin banknote design has to, at the very least, celebrate Bitcoin. Bitcoin's newness, volatility, and contrarian nature necessitates a modernist, aspirational and affirmative approach. Logos, flags, moons, the cartwheel effect of coins, the Genesis Block hash are all familiar territory in the visual lexicon of Bitcoin.

But the problem with Bitcoin is that it is faceless, and the face is the locus of trust for Humans - this is why faces feature overwhelmingly in money. Seeking timelessness, the classical heads of Hellenistic deities satisfied the need to bring gravitas to the design.

The astronaut was initially considered, since Bitcoin is 'moon money', but the astronaut has no face. As a tribute to the astronaut, each God/Goddess is wearing an astronaut's suit, the rim of the helmet collar also helps to frame the heads.





Colors & Style

Tom Badley, artist & creative director

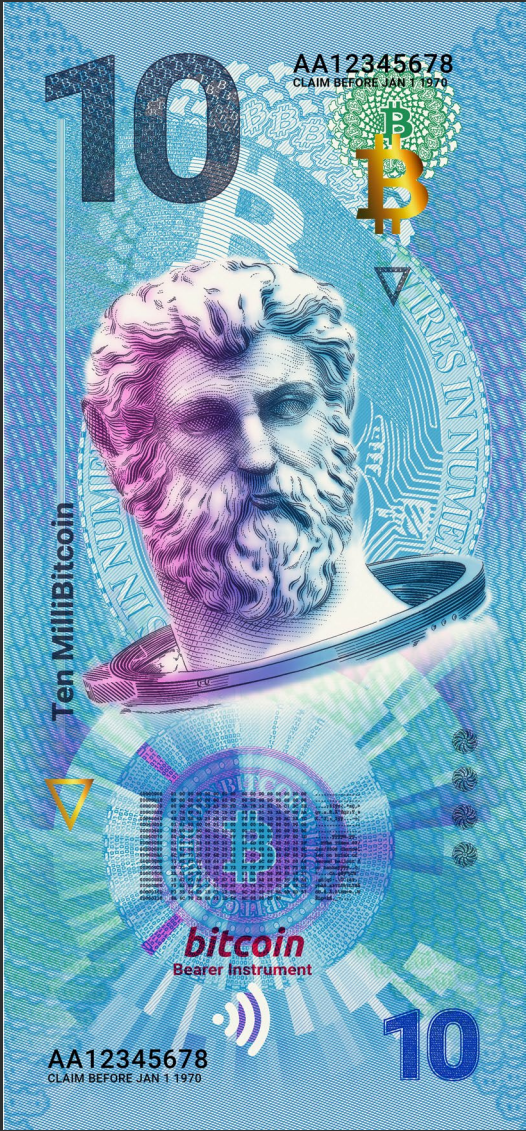
The colors are light and bright, making them visually appealing and easy to differentiate. These notes are cash, but it should be clear that they're not fiat: the colors are not anchored to the conservatism of centralized money.

This printing limitation created the need for a specific design logic. It was not possible to create any hard edges - a more impressionistic approach was needed to properly blend the colors together. They achieve the illusion of having been printed seperately.

Keen banknote observers will note the resemblance to Thai Bhat, which was a source of inspiration here. This is a nod to Bhat's symbol which is often confused with Bitcoin's. This asian flavor mixed with Classicism also gives the notes a global placelessness while still being visually rich.

Countering the visual richness are easily readable typefaces and blindmarks.





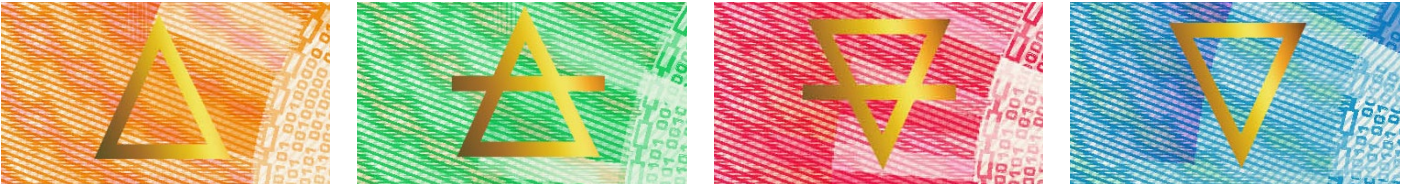
Renewable Energy

Tom Badley, artist & creative director

The theme of the notes is renewable energy, answering Bitcoin's power source dilemma. These themes are presented on the back, as solar, wind, geothermal, and hydroelectric. The heads on the front are loosely thematically related.



Apollo / Eirene / Venus / Poseidon



Fire / Air / Earth / Water



Solar / Wind / Geothermal / Hydroelectric



Feedback

Since their release, the notes have been widely praised, serving their purpose to delight. The Bitcoin banknote is a tricky animal - the idea of cash is repugnant to many users of cryptocurrency, who see it as a relic of centralization. Yet, cash continues to be trusted and attractive, and this is proven by unboxing photos from many 'hodlers' who are normally apathetic towards cash.



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@BitGrateful

Ok these are beautiful

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