# British Museum pioneers blockchain certification for silver sculptures of Dürer’s Rhinoceros



The British Museum has taken a pioneering step by collaborating with Asprey Studio to create a modern reinterpretation of Albrecht Dürer's iconic 1515 woodcut, "Rhinoceros". The partnership has resulted in the production of 11 sterling silver sculptures, each incorporating a unique digital inscription on the Bitcoin blockchain to ensure source traceability. This innovative approach reflects a growing trend in the art world towards integrating digital technology with traditional craftsmanship, enhancing the provenance of artworks at a time when the market is increasingly shifting towards blockchain solutions.

Ali Walker, the chief creative officer at Asprey Studio, elaborated on the intricacies of the production process, noting that buyers will initially receive a digital inscription certificate. The actual sterling silver sculpture, crafted to a height of 40 centimetres, will require several months for customization. Walker remarked, “If Dürer were alive today, he would embrace modern digital rights confirmation methods in the art world.” This sentiment underscores the potential for modern artists to adapt to evolving technological landscapes, mirroring Dürer's own adaptability in interpreting a subject he had never seen—basing his renowned print solely on textual descriptions.

The British Museum's exploration into digital art is not uncharted territory; it previously launched NFTs for artists like Katsushika Hokusai and partnered with The Sandbox to develop a metaverse experience. However, the current venture with Asprey Studio distinguishes itself by not NFT-ing the original work, but creating a blockchain certificate for the new sculptures, thereby keeping the original sketch safely within the museum's collection. This approach allows the museum to engage contemporary audiences while preserving the integrity of its historical assets.

The shift to blockchain integration in art transactions comes amidst a broader cultural movement towards digitalization, particularly as public interest in cryptocurrencies rises. Art collectors are increasingly drawn to the dual benefits of tangible artworks supplemented by blockchain authentication, which promises a secure and traceable ownership history. This convergence of art and blockchain technology is likely to appeal to both traditional collectors and a new generation of digital art enthusiasts.

Furthermore, the British Museum's initiative can be contextualised within the current landscape of digital assets where major players, including Coinbase and other cryptocurrency exchanges, are grappling with legal challenges and regulations. Coinbase, for instance, recently settled a lawsuit concerning its Dogecoin sweepstakes, illustrating the complexities and evolving framework surrounding digital competitions and consumer rights.

In this environment, the museum's foray into blockchain not only reaffirms its commitment to innovation but also positions it as a crucial player in discussions about the future of art ownership and provenance verification in an increasingly digital world. By leveraging technology while retaining the cultural value of its artefacts, the British Museum showcases how heritage institutions can adapt to contemporary practices without compromising their foundational missions.

As discussions around cryptocurrency regulations and digital assets continue to unfold, this project signals a shift in how artistic value is perceived and celebrated. By merging historical artistry with cutting-edge technology, the British Museum and Asprey Studio not only celebrate the artistic legacy of figures like Dürer but also ensure that it continues to resonate powerfully in the modern art scene.

### Reference Map

1. Paragraph 1: [[1]](https://www.panewslab.com/en/sqarticledetails/0h4bqb38.html), [[2]](https://www.panewslab.com/en/sqarticledetails/0h4bqb38.html)
2. Paragraph 2: [[1]](https://www.panewslab.com/en/sqarticledetails/0h4bqb38.html), [[2]](https://www.panewslab.com/en/sqarticledetails/0h4bqb38.html)
3. Paragraph 3: [[1]](https://www.panewslab.com/en/sqarticledetails/0h4bqb38.html), [[2]](https://www.panewslab.com/en/sqarticledetails/0h4bqb38.html)
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5. Paragraph 5: [[1]](https://www.panewslab.com/en/sqarticledetails/0h4bqb38.html), [[3]](https://www.axios.com/2024/05/23/supreme-court-coinbase-dogecoin), [[4]](https://news.bloomberglaw.com/us-law-week/coinbase-loses-supreme-court-dispute-over-dogecoin-sweepstakes)
6. Paragraph 6: [[1]](https://www.panewslab.com/en/sqarticledetails/0h4bqb38.html), [[2]](https://www.panewslab.com/en/sqarticledetails/0h4bqb38.html), [[4]](https://news.bloomberglaw.com/us-law-week/coinbase-loses-supreme-court-dispute-over-dogecoin-sweepstakes)

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## Bibliography

* <https://www.panewslab.com/en/sqarticledetails/0h4bqb38.html> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
* <https://www.panewslab.com/en/sqarticledetails/0h4bqb38.html> - The British Museum has collaborated with Asprey Studio to reinterpret Albrecht Dürer's 1515 'Rhinoceros' woodcut into 11 sterling silver sculptures. Each sculpture will feature a digital inscription on the Bitcoin blockchain, ensuring traceability. Ali Walker, chief creative officer of Asprey Studio, mentioned that buyers will first receive a digital inscription certificate, with the sterling silver sculpture taking several months to customize. The production process is intricate, involving dividing and welding the digital model into shape. Dürer had never seen a real rhino when creating his 'Rhinoceros' print, basing it on a text description. Walker believes that if Dürer were alive today, he would embrace modern digital rights confirmation methods in the art world. The British Museum has previously issued NFTs of artists like Katsushika Hokusai and collaborated with The Sandbox to develop a metaverse experience. This digital inscription does not NFT the original work but creates a blockchain certificate for the silver sculpture. The original sketch remains in the British Museum's collection.
* <https://www.axios.com/2024/05/23/supreme-court-coinbase-dogecoin> - The U.S. Supreme Court ruled against Coinbase in a case involving the cryptocurrency exchange’s 2021 Dogecoin sweepstakes, backing a decision by the Ninth Circuit court which denied Coinbase’s motion to compel arbitration. This lawsuit marks a significant step forward in consumer protection within the business landscape. Despite the case being centered around cryptocurrency, the core issue pertains to the Federal Arbitration Act. The ruling signifies that the Supreme Court agreed on the necessity for the court to determine the existence and scope of any agreement. This decision is seen as a critical precedent for future consumer rights in the evolving field of digital currencies and sweepstakes.
* <https://news.bloomberglaw.com/us-law-week/coinbase-loses-supreme-court-dispute-over-dogecoin-sweepstakes> - The US Supreme Court ruled against Coinbase over a 2021 Dogecoin sweepstakes, dismissing the crypto exchange’s warning that a ruling against it would invite legal turmoil. In a unanimous opinion by Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson, the ruling said a court, not an arbitrator, should decide where the dispute belongs. The case relates to sweepstakes that consumers say they were duped into paying $100 to enter. The dispute over arbitration arose because the parties entered into two contracts that pointed in different directions. A general user agreement said all disputes must go to arbitration while another that was specific to the sweepstakes said disputes must be brought in a court in California. In that situation, the justice said a court should decide which contract controls.
* <https://www.olshanlaw.com/Advertising-Law-Blog/class-action-moves-ahead-over-dogecoin-sweepstakes> - The district court ruled that because the User Agreement’s arbitration provision and the sweepstakes rules’ forum selection clause conflicted, arbitration should not be compelled. The sweepstakes rules came later, and in the district court’s view, those rules superseded the earlier User Agreement. Therefore, the district court denied Coinbase’s motion to compel arbitration. The district court then turned to the alternative motion to dismiss for failure to state a claim. The plaintiffs alleged that, in order to enter the sweepstakes, they were required to trade $100 in Dogecoins, which transformed the sweepstakes into an illegal lottery. The district court called it a close case, but ruled the sweepstakes was not an illegal lottery. The sweepstakes was saved from illegality by the alternate method of entry (AMOE), the ability to enter by mailing in an index card with name and contact information. According to the ruling, the plaintiffs may not have been aware of the alternate entry method when they made a trade of Dogecoins, but awareness or not, they were not actually required to make the Dogecoin trade in order to have a chance to win.
* <https://kleinmoynihan.com/california-court-sides-with-coinbase-in-sweepstakes-amoe-action/> - Running a promotional sweepstakes is an innovative and creative way to attract and retain new customers. However, promoters and administrators must be sure to follow state and federal regulations when crafting their sweepstakes contest rules or risk legal action. One of the most important factors to consider is what is necessary to enter a given contest: would-be participants must not be required to pay any sort of fee as a condition of entry. In fact, there must be a “Sweepstakes AMOE” or an “alternative free means of entry” available to all prospective entrants. According to a recent California Court decision, it may not matter whether the participant was actually aware of the AMOE, so long as the opportunity to enter via this mechanism in fact existed.
* <https://cointelegraph.com/news/coinbase-sued-over-dogecoin-sweepstake-ad-campaign> - A Coinbase user has filed a class action lawsuit seeking $5 million in damages because of an allegedly misleading Dogecoin campaign. In the legal document, David Suski, the plaintiff, said he was deceived into trading $100 of Dogecoin (DOGE) for an entry into a $1.2 million sweepstakes offer on Coinbase. The document claims that Coinbase failed to communicate that a person could enter the sweepstakes without purchasing $100 of Dogecoin. The first day Dogecoin was available for trade on Coinbase, June 3, 2021, the company sent out an email to users about the sweepstakes stating “Trade Doge, Win Doge.” The email had details on how to enter through trading or if a person was to go to a separate “rules and details” page they would find you could also enter by sending Coinbase a 3x5-inch index card.