

## Matthew Boulton and the art of making money

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Matthew Boulton (1728–1809) was one of the most important industrialists of the eighteenth century and is sometimes seen as the founder of modern coinage. His enormous Soho Manufactory was home to the groundbreaking steam-powered mint, which produced the famous cartwheel penny and sent coins and minting machinery all over the world.

Celebrating the bicentenary of Boulton's death, the exhibition, curated by [Richard Clay \(/staff/profiles/historyofart/clay-richard.aspx\)](/staff/profiles/historyofart/clay-richard.aspx) and Sue Tungate, focuses on the art of making money in all its aspects: as mechanical art, fine art — and the art of making a profit. It includes more than 140 coins, medals and tokens produced by Boulton's team during his lifetime, with loans from the British Museum, Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery, and the majority from the Birmingham Assay Office - most of which have never before been on public display. Because hundreds of millions of images were coined at Soho Mint at the end of the eighteenth century, it could be argued that Birmingham became the capital of the world's art production.

