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NEW YORK Day by Day

A Square Quarter

Andor Orand is a multimedia artist much preoccupied with the complexities and anachronisms of a technological culture. For instance, when the city offered the World Trade Center for the annual Avant Garde Festival, Mr. Orand — who sees the twin towers as two-in-oneness — put an Indian tepee in front of each, linked them by telephones and computer terminals and sent messages between them via Waltham, Mass., and a space satellite.

The 40-year-old Heidelberg graduate's first name is, indeed, Andor, but he invented the last part of his "artist's name" to make it a dual rejection of Kierkegaard's 19th-century concept of "Either/Or."

Now, to dramatize the dilemma of reconciling supply-side economic policy with monetarism — which commentators have likened to trying to square a circle — he has come up with a square quarter. Invoking earlier American "political numismatics," he compares it to the Hard Times Tokens of the mid-19th century.

The satirical coin, made of pure silver, is said to be the first coin designed by computer. The square format of a 25-cent piece gives a curious angularity to George Washington's head and the American eagle.

As Square Deal Productions, Mr. Orand, who works out of a Grand Street loft, sells the quarters to collectors (\$37 for the quarter-ounce size, \$47 for the half-ounce). He is considering asking President Reagan to throw a square quarter across the Potomac.

Laurie Johnston