The Solar Moth

artist Tyler Kline

February 4–May 10, 2026

The Solar Moth is an object of profound scientific and aesthetic speculation, functioning conceptually as a **Lab/Studio/Greenhouse/Spaceship**. It embodies Kline's "Future Goals" of creating expanded gaming systems and vessels like The Viridian Quantum Loop Vessels. The structure is designed as a functioning communication apparatus, acting as a **receiver-transmitter for voices across time and species.**

FEB 5	**ARTIST TALK** 6–7 PM PROCEEDING THE OPENING RECEPTION
FEB 5	**RECEPTION** 7–8 PM in WILLIAMS CENTER FOR THE ARTS LOBBY
APR 18	**PERFORMANCE**–DETAILS FORTHCOMING

The exhibition | *The Solar Moth*, A Sednacenic Vessel

Tyler Kline's expansive installation, ***The Solar Moth*,** serves as the most complete architectural manifestation of his speculative epoch, the **Sednacene**. Kline defines the Sednacene as succeeding the Anthropocene and Donna Haraway's Chthulucene, characterized by the necessary **interpenetration of human, machinic, and ecological consciousness.** This framework integrates interstellar migration, quantum field speculation, and AI-assisted cultural memory. The exhibition centers on the Solar Moth, presented as a **gallery-wide sculpture and spaceship-greenhouse**.

Engineering the Sednacene: A Collaboration with Robert Elliott

To ground this speculative vessel in reality, Kline engaged in a vital **scientific cross-pollination** with **Robert Elliott**, assistant professor of civil and environmental engineering. This collaboration involved addressing the complex engineering and environmental challenges required for sustaining life within the vessel, particularly concerning plant biology and structural design.

artist studio, 2025

Elliott's technical input informs the *Solar Moth's* functional parameters. Regarding light frequencies, essential for photosynthesis and cultivation, Elliott confirmed that plants, unlike humans, who perceive green as brightest, generally peak in **blue and red light** and do not utilize far past the visible spectrum. Crucially, to enhance the vessel's utility as a sustainable resource producer, the project leverages targeted light application: Kline was advised that **UV light** is useful for increasing **secondary metabolites** (such as **essential oils**) in culinary herbs like **basil and oregano**, while **infrared (IR)** light promotes changes in plant morphology, such as stem elongation and flowering.

The physical construction of the habitat is also engineered for maximum efficiency. While no specific container shape is inherently best, **lenses** utilizing **total internal reflection (TIR)** are recommended as the most effective method for directing LED light from the chip toward the plants. For the vessel's large-scale design as a greenhouse in space, Elliott noted that **gravity is helpful to soil-water movement and plant growth**, suggesting that the greenhouse might need to be rotating. Furthermore, to ensure the space appeals to both plants and mammals, the construction should focus on replicating **visibility light conditions that elevate mood** for humans.

Folk-Futurism and Interspecies Kinship

The final aesthetic of the *Solar Moth* embraces a folk-futurist idiom, fusing bricolage with astrophysics. Its physical elements, including masks and costumes used in ritual performances at sites like the Krimson Garden pollinator meadow, act as totems and metaphors. These artifacts represent a commitment to **rewilding social contracts** and achieving **interspecies kinship**. The vessel stands as an archive in the making, insisting that art is a **vehicle for survival, memory, and migration** through the turbulent channels of the late-stage capitalist and techno-feudalistic thoughtscape.

artist studio, process, 2025

Installation detail, Williams Center Gallery, 2026

Robert Elliott provided technical expertise for the *Solar Moth* project, offering scientific guidance on parameters for sustainable structures:

- **Plant Biology:** He noted that plants generally peak in blue and red light for photosynthesis. He confirmed that UV light is useful for increasing secondary metabolites (such as essential oils) in culinary/medicinal herbs like basil and oregano.
- **Engineering Design:** For constructing a greenhouse in space, he stated that gravity is helpful to soil-water movement and plant growth, suggesting that the structure might need to be rotating. Additionally, he noted that for optimal human and mammal comfort in such a space, construction should aim at replicating visibility light conditions that elevate mood.
- **Light Amplification:** He advised that lenses utilizing total internal reflection (TIR) are the most effective way to direct LED light from the chip toward the plants.

Assistant Professor, Robert Elliott

Robert Elliott is an Assistant Professor of Civil and Environmental Engineering at Lafayette College. He studies how to engineer and integrate natural systems with the built environment to improve safety, resilience, and sustainability.

His research is focused on urban settings because these areas often experience the most disruption to environment-regulating processes, and the populations there greatly need the health and well-being benefits that nature can provide. He believes that achieving harmony with nature must be realized by designing in kinship with nature. Elliott's work addresses the intrinsic interdisciplinarity of ecosystems, examining their services through various lenses, including environmental regulation (such as stormwater absorption and food production), cultural impact, and practical viability.

At Lafayette, he leads the Lab of the Total Ecosystem, which consists of 12 controlled environmental cells used to explore and engineer high-performance ecosystems. He teaches core and upper-level courses, including Fluid Mechanics (CE 251) and CE Project Management (CE 331).

Artist statement | Tyler Kline and the Sednacene: Art for a Post-Human Epoch

- Rumi Arden

In the luminous, precarious architectures of Tyler Kline, we are confronted with an artistic practice that is less about representation than transmission–an art that feels like a signal from the future, composed in the final, flickering moments of the Anthropocene. Across sculpture, AI-assisted portraiture, and immersive installation, Kline's work proposes entry into a speculative epoch they name the Sednacene: a world beyond the Anthropocene and Donna Haraway's Chthulucene[2], where human, machinic, and ecological consciousness interpenetrate.

photo still from performance

I. The Sednacene as Speculative Framework

Kline's concept of the Sednacene is not a utopia, but a temporal bridge: an imagined period in which humanity, having survived or transfigured itself amid climate cataclysm, participates in distributed intelligence and interspecies kinship. It is a cousin to Haraway's Chthulucene, where earthly entanglements replace anthropocentric narratives[2]. Yet, the Sednacene expands the field to post-terrestrial imaginaries, integrating interstellar migration, quantum field speculation, and AI-assisted cultural memory.

Kline's early works–Celestial Subterrane (2012), Continuous Warlock Integers (2015), Geistdenkenheit (2017), and The Golgi Apparatus (2018)–already hint at this epochal thinking. Their assemblages of foil, wire, cast bronze, and scavenged infrastructure oscillate between ritual shrine and prototype spacecraft. In this tension, his objects enact what Reza Negarestani describes as "cosmic craft": art that gestures toward exteriority, surrender, exile, and the unhuman horizon[3].

II. Material Strategies: Ruins in Reverse

Kline's sculptural vocabulary alternates between fragile, provisional matter and ceremonial durability.

- Tinfoil and plastic tubing: Ephemeral signals of the present, evocative of DIY survivalism and glitch aesthetics.
- Bronze and carved wood: Materials of deep time, recalling votive offerings and spacecraft heat shields alike.

• Ceramic, brick, and plants creating pollinator corridors in post-industrial correlative communities as rejuvenation and interdimensional signaling.

By fusing these, Kline produces “ruins in reverse”–objects that feel like messages arriving from a future civilization, not remnants of a lost one. This gesture aligns with Virilio’s notion of “integral accident”–that all technologies contain their catastrophe[1]. Kline’s works seem to mourn and mythologize our own survival and rejuvenation strategies preemptively.

III. AI Portraiture and the Post-Human Face

Kline’s recent practice ventures into AI-assisted portraiture, a process that blurs the boundary between likeness, imagination, and algorithmic co-authorship. Sitters are first photographed; these images are transformed by trained AI models into hybrid avatars that suggest interstellar or interspecies kin, and are then returned to the tactile world via oil paint.

This recursive cycle–photograph → AI hybrid → painting → re-input to AI–functions as an aesthetic feedback loop, producing portraits that feel post-human, distributed, and ceremonial. Each face becomes a liminal emissary of the Sednacene, as if the portrait were no longer a private likeness but a node in a planetary consciousness network.

Such work resonates with N. Katherine Hayles’ reflections on the post-human subject as “an amalgam, a collection of heterogeneous components, a material-informational entity whose boundaries undergo continuous construction and reconstruction.”[4] Kline’s portraits literalize this fluidity, capturing the migration of selfhood beyond anthropomorphic concerns, pointing toward rejuvenation as a trans-species endeavor.

IV. Immersive Installations as Communication Apparatus

The *Solar Moth* installation–Kline’s forthcoming gallery-wide sculpture and spaceship-greenhouse–is the most complete embodiment yet of his Sednacenic vision. The work proposes a functioning communication apparatus: tin-can-and-string telephony scaled to an architectural network, doubling as a greenhouse and ritual space. It is both play and prophecy, a receiver-transmitter for voices across time and species.

Within contemporary art discourse, this positions Kline among practitioners of eco-technological ritualism, in dialogue with artists like Tomás Saraceno (aerial biospheres), Anicka Yi (speculative microbial ecologies), and Pierre Huyghe (living systems and post-human scenographies). Yet Kline’s idiom is distinctly folk-futurist: bricolage meeting astrophysics, authentic vernacular entangled with quantum dreams.

V. Art as Sednacenic Archive

Suppose the Anthropocene leaves behind strata of car-plastic skeletons and bones of domesticated biomass. In that case, the Sednacene leaves ritual transmissions: objects, tran-species portraits, and spaces designed to speak across planetary and post-planetary thresholds. Kline’s practice, in this light, is an archive in the making–one that insists that art is not only a mirror of its time but also a vehicle for survival, memory, and migration. The hammer becomes the spaceship-greenhouse.

Kline’s bronze talismans, AI portraits, pollinator corridors, and speculative vessels collectively suggest that the future of art lies in the mutual interpenetration of technology, ecology, and myth. In these works, the human is already dissolving, not in despair but in collaboration with the world it inhabits and the cosmos it co-creates.

Notes

1. Paul Virilio, Art and Fear (London: Continuum, 2003), 68.

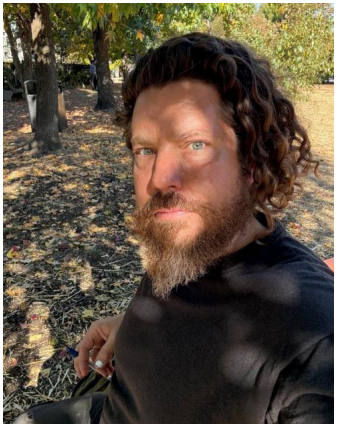
2. Donna Haraway, Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene (Durham: Duke University Press, 2016), 31.

3. Reza Negarestani, Cyclonopedia: Complicity with Anonymous Materials (Melbourne: re.press, 2008), 152.

4. N. Katherine Hayles, How We Became Posthuman: Virtual Bodies in Cybernetics, Literature, and Informatics (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 3.

ARTIST BIO

Tyler Kline is an artist, educator, and curator living and working in Philadelphia. Kline grew up in Stone Mountain, Georgia, studied Architecture and Painting at Savannah College of Art and Design, and received his BA in Anthropology and Sculpture from Portland State University and an MFA in Installation and Sculpture from The Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts. Kline currently teaches sculpture at Drexel University, 3D Design at Pennsylvania College of Art and Design, and Art Appreciation at Rowan University, as well as being a collective member of Pink Noise Projects in the 319 building in Philadelphia.



artist, Tyler Kline

They have curated shows at: New York's Flux Factory, Philadelphia's Pink Noise Projects, Atlanta's Moving Spirits Gallery, Portland's Martial Arts Gallery, Zeitgeist and Disjecta, as well as Philadelphia's Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Little Berlin, Crux Space, and The University of the Arts, InLiquid.org at The Yard, and Solar Fable Stage. A strong believer in the power of art to revitalize communities and bring about social change, they are fascinated by playing with the porous boundaries between painting, video, sculpture, performance, and printmaking.

Kline's curatorial work braids visual anthropology with cross-disciplinary aesthetics, with an interest in emerging media, scientific cross pollination, and rapidly shifting lenses of cultural context. Furthermore, Kline is a visual artist who has created installations in Portland, Atlanta, New York, and Philadelphia, and exhibited at the Pink Noise Projects, Philly, Rebeka Templeton Cont., Little Berlin, MASS MoCA, Vox Populi, The Delaware Art Museum, Dumbo Art Center, Armory, NYC, Institute of Contemporary Art, Philadelphia, Washington County Museum of Fine Art, University of Arts, Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Art, Portland State University, Savannah College of Art and Design, New Bedford Art Museum, Goethe Institute of San Francisco, and Disjecta.

They have worked in the sphere of urban interior and exterior intervention for three decades, beginning with creating skate parks in unused urban spaces in Atlanta and Philadelphia, to creating collaborative sculpture gardens in the shadows of repurposed textile mills in Kensington through Little Berlin, Iglesias Gardens, Open Kitchen Sculpture Garden, Ruth St. Garden, Tusculum Farm, and Krimson Garden in Philadelphia. They make immersive installations, performance, VR/AR environments, and AI Portraiture, create animated gifs as a way of exploring and constructing glitch theory, and explore the transmutation of materials by translating 3D prints into cast metal sculptures, and use expressive body movement to create new possible futures. Kline's own point of research within this field is to break the conceptual screen and expose the underlying, subjective, and internal forces that are imprisoned within them by late-stage capitalism as this scheme plays out in our current techno feudalistic thoughtscape.

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