

Baltimore Kinetic Sculpture Race

www.KineticBaltimore.com

May 4, 2024



Map by Tom Jones 4/19

The Kinetic Sculpture Race is produced by the **American Visionary Art Museum** www.AVAM.org 410-244-1900

Schedule

It's a race! Times are approximate and anything may change as needs must.

Morning	8:00–9:30	Safety check & brake test at AVAM	Afternoon	1:00–1:30	Up Kenwood, Right on Eastern, Left on Linwood & into Patterson Park
	9:30–10:00	Opening ceremony & LeMans, start onto Key Hwy		1:15–3:15	Patterson Park Obstacle Course: Sand, Mud, & climb the hill past the Observatory
	10:03–10:20	Climb Battery Ave into Federal Hill Park		3:30–4:45	Race down Lombard, Central, Eastern, Pier 5, Pratt, Light, Key Hwy, Lawrence, Fort, Jackson, Clement, and north up Covington to the finish line at AVAM (first racers may finish ~3:30)
	10:15–11:30	Down Riverside, Fort, Lawrence, Key Hwy, around the Inner Harbor, down President, 240° around the National Katyrín Memorial, to Aliceanna & down Boston St		4:00–6:00	Post-race recovery (dinner for racers & volunteers)
	11:15–1:00	Water Entry at Canton Waterfront		6:00–7:00	Awards ceremony at AVAM



Race Day

As with any human-powered dash for glory, times overlap and are approximate! The race does not stop for rain or other sub-calamitous conditions.

8:00–9:30 Pre-Race Panic: You can see sculptures in their unsullied glory, but don't disturb the Kinetinauts—they're busy! See "Getting to AVAM".

9:30–9:59 Opening Ceremony: Performances by the Baltimore Men's Chorus and the Baltimore City College Marching Knights. Then 2023 Grand Mediocre Champion team Soda Quackers reignites the kinetic eternal flame, and Sister Euphonia O'Blivion blesses "de feet" of Kinetinauts on the steps of the AVAM plaza.

10:00 Launchgong at AVAM. KSR still has a Le Mans start years after Le Mans gave it up. Racers line up on Federal Hill, and when the gong sounds, they scamper down to their vehicles on Covington Street. With police escort they burst onto Francis Scott Key Highway.

10:03–10:20 Federal Hill Park: Battery Avenue is very steep climbing Federal Hill. Anyone can make a sculpture; this is when you'll see the challenge of the "human-powered" part. Some sculptures break down before they get this far (not kidding). After a lap around the park against the city skyline, sculptures complete the southern loop and return along Key Highway a few minutes later.

Running Late? From I-95 take exit 55 onto Key Highway north to see sculptures on Fort, Lawrence, or Key.

10:15–11:30 Through the Inner Harbor, Harbor East & Fell's Point: The sculptures pass landmarks in the Inner Harbor and Harbor East, including circling most of the way around the [National Katryn Memorial](#).

Tip: Park two hours for free in the Whole Foods garage on Eden Street if you validate by getting lunch there.

11:15–1:00 Canton Waterfront: Sculptures go down the ramp into the harbor. Watch unseaworthy sculptures sink. This is the most popular spectator site, and finding street parking gets more challenging every year. There will be food; check back for vendor updates.

1:00–1:30 Up the Hill into Patterson Park: Rested and fed racers move fast even uphill as they leave Canton as a group.

1:15–3:00 Patterson Park Sand & Mud: The mud is on a slight incline—easier for spectators, harder for racers. There's street parking around the park perimeter. Sistah Sweets and Taste Food Truck will be at the sand, and Beans & Buns and Bully Boss Burger at the Mud.

3:30–4:45 Back to AVAM for the Finish: Lombard Street descends steeply so sculptures fly through Butcher's Hill, Washington Hill, and Little Italy back to the Inner Harbor. Each team breaks through a huge finish line banner on Covington Street at AVAM

4:00–6:00 Dinner: You should eat. If you're clean check out [Rusty Scupper](#) seafood or upscale [Ammoora](#) across the street (reservations recommended). Or walk 10 minutes west to Light Street in [Federal Hill](#) with two dozen awesome local restaurants.

6:00–7:00 Awards Ceremony: You'll be exhausted just from spectating—imagine how the racers feel! Cheer on the winners in the AVAM Sculpture Barn.

(Some) Kinetic Awards

ACE: The highest race challenge is the ACE. ACE pilots can't swap or receive forward propulsion assistance at any time, and can't get out to push or pull (especially at the water exit, sand, or mud). Each ACE-seeking team has a pink license plate and a merciless ACE judge scrutinizing every move.

2024 Monuments + Masterpieces Award: The team most effectively conveying this year's race theme.

Art: Coveted award for best artistic design, reflected in color, humor, costumes, theatrical appeal, and kinetic motion.

Best Bribes: The team presenting the best gifts to encourage Kops and Judges to absolve minor infractions. (Kinetic Judges report their bribes, unlike the US Supreme Court.)

Best Pit Crew: For greatest patience, ingenuity, and quick thinking, often in the face of kinetic disaster.

Engineering: Awarded to the most ingenious technical design tackling the rigors of the race.

Golden Dinosaur: Awarded to the most memorable breakdown, or the first team to break down. An entry that *would* have been great but something went wrong. Created by Laurence J. Peter, also known for the [Peter Principle](#).

Golden Flipper: The "most interesting" entry on the water.

Grand Mediocre Champion: #1 of all awards, for being the middle of all race finishers (after time penalties).

Next-to-Last: The penultimate finisher.

People's Choice: Most popular entry, based on surveys of the crowd taken by Kinetic Chickens.

Sock Creature of the Universe: Each sculpture must have a homemade sock creature (HSC); this award goes to the best.

Speed: Fastest team, after any time penalties.

Spirit of the Glorious Founder: The team, person, or other entity embodying the mindset of Hobart Brown.

Worst Honorable Mention: Awarded to the team whose half-baked "engineering" did not deter its pilot(s) from the challenge of the race.

Kinetic Glossary

AVAM: The American Visionary Art Museum founded and produces this East Coast Championship Kinetic Race.

Barnacle: A 93+ pound human who rides on a sculpture but doesn't provide propulsion. Provides a time bonus.

Bush League: Teams completing the race *except* the water. There's one this year, and you can build one next year.

Checkpoints: To prevent unauthorized short-cuts, teams have to stop at secret checkpoints.

Hobart Brown: In 1969, the Glorious Founder in Ferndale California created the first raceable Kinetic Sculpture for his son, lost that first race to a smoke-emitting turtle, then spread Kinetics around the world. We miss his enthusiasm.

Kinetic Chickens: Volunteers who make the race possible and answer spectators' questions.

Kinetic Grand Championship: Our race is a qualifier for the Grand Championship in Humboldt County, CA: 50 miles, 3 days, Memorial Day weekend. Teams cross 2 miles of Humboldt Bay, a slimy slough, and a huge sand dune called Dead Man's Drop. More at [KineticGrandChampionship.org](#).

Kinetic Kops: "Officers" issue tickets when sculptures break rules (and sometimes when they don't). Kops are known to accept bribes to overlook all but **ACE** and safety infractions.

Kinetinauts: Fearless artist-engineer-pilots, perhaps *you*?

Volunteers: People like you who have fun making the race happen! Sign up for next year at [KineticBaltimore.com](#).

Getting to AVAM

Parking: Race day street parking is scarce. You can also pay at the Rusty Scupper or in many nearby lots and garages. Prices vary considerably—see [Parkopedia.com](https://www.parkopedia.com).

Amtrak and Penn line MARC trains: from DC, Philadelphia, and elsewhere to Baltimore Penn Station, then taxi or Circulator Purple Line (below). Bicycles are ok on MARC but MARC's earliest Saturday train from DC arrives 9:52am. See mta.Maryland.gov/marc-train and [Amtrak.com](https://www.amtrak.com).

Charm City Circulator: Free buses every 15–25 minutes 9am to midnight! Purple Route from Penn Station to Science Center near AVAM; Orange and Green Routes to Fell's Point; Banner Route from Inner Harbor past AVAM to Fort McHenry. Maps & info at transportation.baltimorecity.gov.

Light Rail: Take a train to Camden Station, a 20 minute walk to AVAM. Park free at Falls Road or Lutherville to the north near I-83; or Cromwell/Glen Burnie near I-97 to the south. See mta.Maryland.gov/light-rail.

Spectate from One Spot...

Since the sculptures navigate 15 miles through the city, the easiest way to spectate is to pick a spot and watch them pass by. Parking is available along some stretches (especially on the southern and eastern parts of the route). Watch for any last-minute route changes. However, most spectators join the crowds at AVAM, Canton Waterfront, and Patterson Park for the festive kinetic atmosphere where sculptures congregate to surmount exciting obstacles.

...Or Follow Along

If you have time and energy, following the race lets you see a lot more action. Some means of transport are:

- **Bike or roller blade:** Big human-powered sculptures aren't super-fast. If you're fit for 15 miles on city streets, you'll likely keep up. Ride carefully and watch for rough roads. Bring a bike lock. If you need repairs look for the Station North Tool Library mobile crew.
- **Rent a bike or scooter:** Rent a battery-powered orange scooter or bike with an app from [Spin](https://www.spin.com).
- **Automobile:** Parking gets more challenging every year, so you may want to avoid parking with app-hired drivers to get around. If you drive, bring credit cards and quarters for parking, lock your car, and read parking signs carefully.

2025 is only a year away!

Put the next race **Saturday 3 May 2025** on your calendar!



Attractions near AVAM

1. **AVAM:** The American Visionary Art Museum hosts self-taught work by artists compelled to create, and has fun workshops. CNN said "one of the most fantastic museums anywhere in America". Currently showing "If You Build It, They Will Come." Open 10am–5pm: [AVAM.org](https://www.avam.org)
2. **Maryland Science Center:** Exhibits about dinosaurs, health, space, and physics; IMAX and planetarium, mini golf for kids. Open 10am–5pm Saturdays: [MDSci.org](https://www.mdsci.org)
3. **Institute of Marine and Environmental Technology Open House:** Once-a-year expo with hands-on science activities right next to the race route. 1–4pm, free but requires registration: [UMCES.edu](https://www.umces.edu)
4. **National Aquarium:** Sharks, rays, jellyfish, dolphins, Australian Outback, plus turtles and tiny colorful frogs. Buy advance tickets ASAP to enter 9:00am–5:00pm: [Aqua.org](https://www.aquarium.org)
5. **USS Constellation** (1797 frigate), USS Torsk (1944 submarine), LV116 Chesapeake (1930 lightship), USCGC Cutter 37 (1936 ship). Open 10am–5pm: [HistoricShips.org](https://www.historicships.org)
6. **Baltimore Museum of Industry:** Amazing machines that used to run our city and economy: 1910 pharmacy, 1886 bank, WWII flying boat bomber. 9am–4pm: [TheBmi.org](https://www.thebmi.org)
7. **Urban Pirates:** Reserve at [UrbanPirates.com](https://www.urbanpirates.com) ASAP for a "Family Adventure" or adult "Bring Your Own Grog" cruise.
8. **Fort McHenry:** Baltimore's star-shaped fort in 1814 inspired our national anthem. Two miles from AVAM down Francis Scott Key Highway and Fort Ave; free; 9am–5pm: [nps.gov/fomc](https://www.nps.gov/fomc)
9. **Flower Mart:** Baltimore's oldest festival, 11am–8pm in Mount Vernon: [MountVernonPlace.org/Flower-Mart](https://www.mountvernonplace.org/flower-mart)
10. **Maryland Sheep & Wool Festival:** Every year, fans of even-toed ungulates and their follicular output gather the same weekend as the Kinetic Race: [SheepAndWool.org](https://www.sheepandwool.org)

What to Wear

Something fabulous! Many folks wear festive garb (see below). You should too! If you dress well, find a KineticBaltimore.com photographer (we wear bright yellow shirts & feathered blue hats), and your photo may appear on this year's website or the 2025 Spectator's Guide!

Tag Photos & Videos with #Kinetic

Instagram: Follow [the_avam](https://www.theavam.com) & use [#Kinetic](https://www.instagram.com/hashtag/kinetic)

Facebook: [@theavam](https://www.facebook.com/theavam)

Kinetic Forum (it's back!): [KineticBaltimore.com/ksr/forum](https://www.kineticbaltimore.com/ksr/forum)

Also see great photos at [TheBaltimoreBanner.com](https://www.thebaltimorebanner.com)

The Sculptures (4/25)

POWERED BY



- This Does Not Belong in a Museum** with 3 pilots is the capstone project from a new team of 4th-year Duke University mechanical engineering students. It's inspired by the masterpieces of Keith Haring and his belief "Art is for everyone." Watch for foam men flotation devices.
- The Battle at Balls Deep** is the fifth entry from the Baltimore team whose sodden pilots and Flintstones-style "drive train" won 2023 **Golden Flipper**.
- ACE Oct-Opus** Long ago in a galaxy far away, a planet suffers climate change, war, famine, and bad Star Wars jokes. Giant octopodes offer an advanced society with a rich arts scene, promising not to eat them. Follow the container ship *Evergrounded* and passenger ship *Nevergreen* to a cephalopod-sponsored undersea utopia, if they can survive. The Hampden Rats won 2019 **Judges' Fill-in-the-Blank** with *Fake Gnus*.
- Fallen Tower of Pisa** is from St. Paul's School for Boys which won 2022 **Judges' Fill-in-the-Blank** with *SP Space Cruiser*. It's 15 feet long but that's all we know.
- The Waters [sic] Art Museum** is a 2-pilot tribute to Baltimore's John Waters, the Walters Art Museum, and flamingos (made of recycled cans, tulle, slinkies, & fabric). Last year they raced *Ridin Wormy*, a giant apple atop two bananas, and in 2022 won **Best Pit Crew** for *Big Lady*.
- Pop Rock Neonderthals!** is a pop art homage to the cave paintings of Lascaux paleolithic art with the vibrant palette of Lisa Frank piloted by 4 *neonderthals*. Look for components from a gazebo and ATV. It's the first-ever entry from the Insignificant Others of Baltimore.
- ACE Scrapasaurus** is a 6-wheeled reverse trike made of reclaimed materials as its solo pilot from Catonsville seeks his sixth ACE. Their *Scrap Life* won **Best Engineering** plus 1 of only 2 **ACEs** achieved in 2023.
- Happy Trails** with 6 pilots celebrates the 60th anniversary of the Mountain Club of Maryland that maintains our state's 41 miles of the 2198-mile Appalachian Trail. They're a new team borrowing parts from prior teams.
- Overlea Fire-Rescue Dive Team** has 4 pilots commemorating their team Cap Kinetic's dramatic 2023 fire engine rolling **capsize** of *Engines & Dragons*. Chessie has joined the team to help search for their stuff that sank in the harbor. Last year Cap Kinetic won both **Next-to-Last** and **Sock Creature of the Universe**.
- Bush Fire Chief Vesuvius** is also from Cap Kinetic. After Kyle the Dragon met his end trying to rescue a sock puppet, Vesuvius races to avenge his brother and raise awareness: "Turn around, don't drown: dragons cannot swim." As a Bush League entry, it won't enter the water. Bard City composed the song *Vesuvius* just for this race.
- Long Sphinx** is 6 pilots on a train of 3 pairs of bicycles, the fourth entry from Nova Labs of Virginia whose *Time Maker* won **2022 Time Warp**. Their team song is *Dirty Little Secret*.
- I in the Pyramid** has 1 pilot from the Philadelphia Dumpster Divers who have raced 22 times starting with Baltimore's first race in 1999. They won **2023 Everyday People**.

- CONEstoga Creamers** is a 4-pilot Old West covered wagon with oversize wheels and an ice cream churn. Soda jerks and cow wranglers will deliver frosty treats. This is the 16th year for Team 1800 Lbs who won **Speed** in 2023 with *Reverse Dog Sled* and won **Best Bribes** in 2016 and 2019.
- Monotremes & Mashed Potatoes** is the magnificent **Personal Long-range All-Terrain Yacht Proven Un-Safe** with 8 pilots and 1 barnacle at the steering wheel. It's raced since 2005 and won 2023 **Best Costumes**. Their name is what it sounds like if you hold your tongue in your fingers and say "Monuments + Masterpieces".
- Statue of Lib-bear-ity** is the 6th entry from Baltimore's Park School who in 2023 raced colossal teddy bear *Working Hard, or Bearly Working?* that deployed their portable welder so they could finish, last.
- ACE Merciless Moose** is the 4-pilot entry from the Jemicy School of Owings Mills where they have a class teaching students to build and pilot KSR entries.
- ACE Subway** has 1 pilot, also from Jemicy where teams nearly always go for ACE and last year won 1 **ACE** and **Best Pit Crew**.
- ACE Street** is another 1-pilot Jemicy entry. Jemicy has raced a total of 74 entries in every race since 2004.
- Tail-or-Swiftie** is a monumental rubber duckie celebrating Taylor Swift and the Soda Quackers' tenth year entering KSR. Look for their unique propulsion at splashdown. This team from Pennsylvania and New Jersey is the reigning **2023 Grand Mediocre Champion** from their *Mr. Jon Dig-It* amphibious human-powered front-end loader.
- ACE Extra-Terrestrial** has 2 pilots, is 8 feet long, and weighs 450 pounds. It's theme is from the movie *E.T.*
- Fifi! Dot. Dot. Dot.** Fifi pays tribute to the humble DOT in art—the building block of the universe and many masterpieces. Look close to see that Fifi's made of big poofy pink dots. And what about masterpieces from George Seurat, Roy Lichtenstein, Sam "the Dot Man" McMillan, and Yayoi Kusama? The Dot is all or nothing—beginning and end—it's the starting point, the ending point! Last year, Fifi won **Golden Dinosaur** for being the first to break down, just past the starting line.
- Tick Tock the Croc** is the spectacular 35-foot long 6-pilot jubilant crocodile from *Peter Pan* thrilling spectators every race since 2014.
- Dancin' Fools** is a 6-pilot craft on the same chassis as last year's *Cut Out To Be Royal* that won **Best Art** and **People's Choice**. It's the twelfth entry from team Goes to Eleven, who have won everything from 2018 **Worst Honorable Mention** to 2008 **Grand Mediocre Champion**.
- Radiolarian Special** started in spring 2017 at the Virginia Commonwealth University Sculpture Department and commemorates the distinctive protozoan silica skeleton. Three pilots' pedal power goes through a central jackshaft into a 90° gearbox turning a driveshaft to a 1972 MGB rear axle.

