

Cyberpunk is out and solarpunk is in, according to Figma's CEO

Cyberpunk design has been all the rage for several years now – this very website was once awash in neon colors and hard edges, you might recall – but Figma CEO Dylan Field says he sees glimmers of optimism taking over.

“I think that we were really futurist, really cyberpunk for a while,” the founder of the popular design tool company told the crowd at a live taping of *Decoder* at SXSW when asked to compare the Cybertruck with the just-announced Rivian R3. “A lot of neon lines, a lot of hard edges, a lot of poly or low-poly sort of metaphors. And it feels like we’re going more humanist. It feels like we’re going maybe more solarpunk.”

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Solarpunk has been around for a few years now – long enough that the conservative American Enterprise Institute wrote an entire blog post about how it’s a dangerous liberal fantasy somehow tied to AOC! – and it usually looks like *Tears of the Kingdom* fan art. Think abundant energy, organic shapes, greenery embedded into architecture. Think... Emma Watson posting about hopeful futures to her Instagram in 2021:

“Cyberpunk is dystopia – everything’s metal and concrete and low poly. It’s kind of depressing, but it’s also got that edge to it. Whereas solarpunk is more natural, the architecture is

blending with the environment,” Field said. “I think it’s still a vision of the future, but also it’s more human and it’s got a lot of curves. It’s blended into the environment more, rather than trying to stand out as a piece of technology or a piece of architecture.”

It certainly seems like cuter, friendlier designs have been capturing a lot of attention recently – the Rabbit R1 was the hit of CES, for example. But whether it all adds up to “solarpunk” or just cool retro-ish design... well, you just let us know in the comments.

<https://www.theverge.com/2024/3/18/24104890/figma-ceo-dylan-field-cyberpunk-solarpunk-trends-sxsw-2024>