

AKG&



Sarah Braman: Finding Room

July 30, 2022–
March 19, 2023

Frank Lloyd Wright's
Graycliff
6472 Old Lake Shore Road
Derby, New York

BUFFALO AKG ART MUSEUM

Outside

01

Sit, 2022
Precast concrete,
steel, glass

02

Stay, 2022
Precast concrete,
steel, glass

First Floor



03

Reading, 2020
Table, glass, maple,
book paint



04

Friend, 2020
Maple, found wood,
and glass



05

Massachusetts, 2017
Found door and chair,
wood, window film,
acrylic, and fabric dye



06

Her desk, 2019
Found furniture,
anodized aluminum,
glass, and fabric dye



07

Paula, 2018
Wood, glass, and chair



08

Blue coffee, 2019
Painted aluminum
and glass



09

Cooking (For Phil), 2021
Frying pan, glass, wood

Second Floor



10

Your Room, 2017
Found table, laminated
glass, wood, acrylic
paint, dyed fabric



11

Her House, 2019
Desk parts, plywood,
and colored glass



12

8 AM, 2017
Glass, steel frames,
wood, acrylic, and
fabric dye

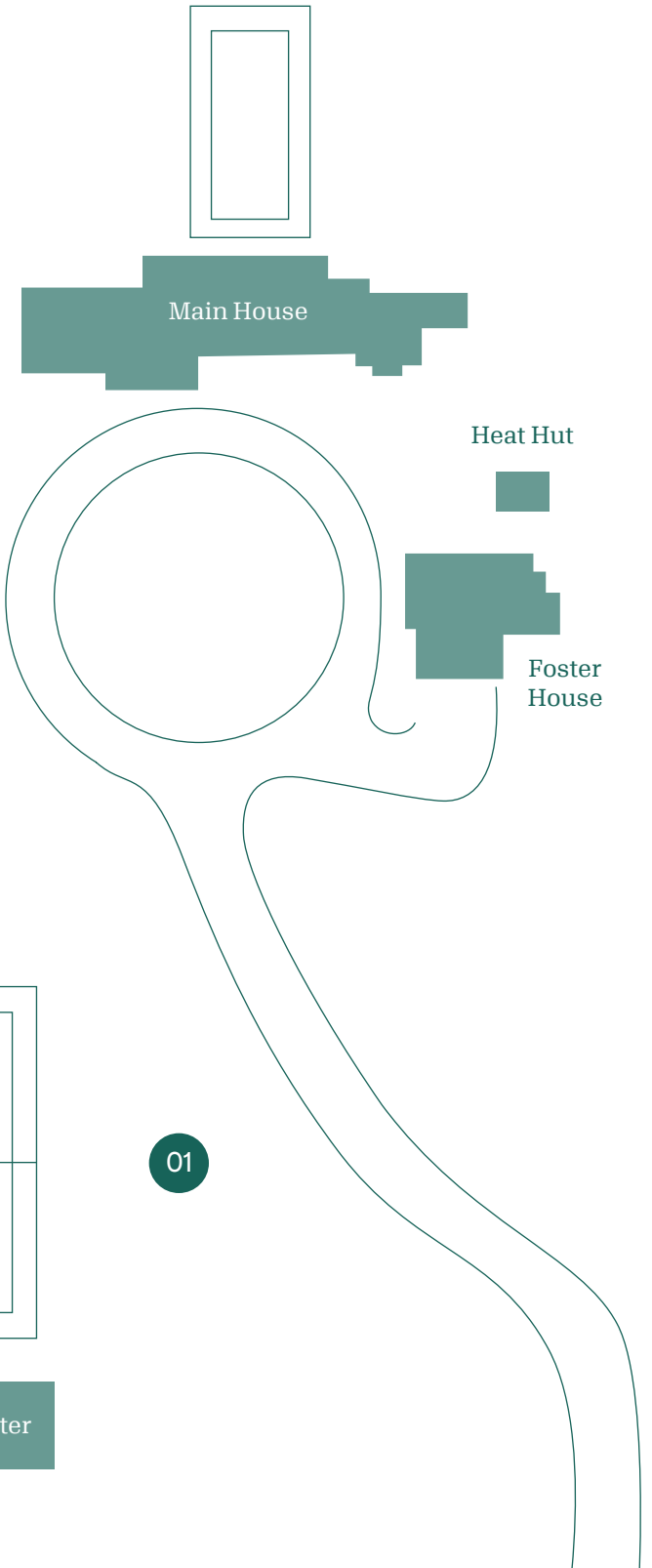


13

Tuesday Dinner, 2018
Wood, glass, and spoons

Outside

02

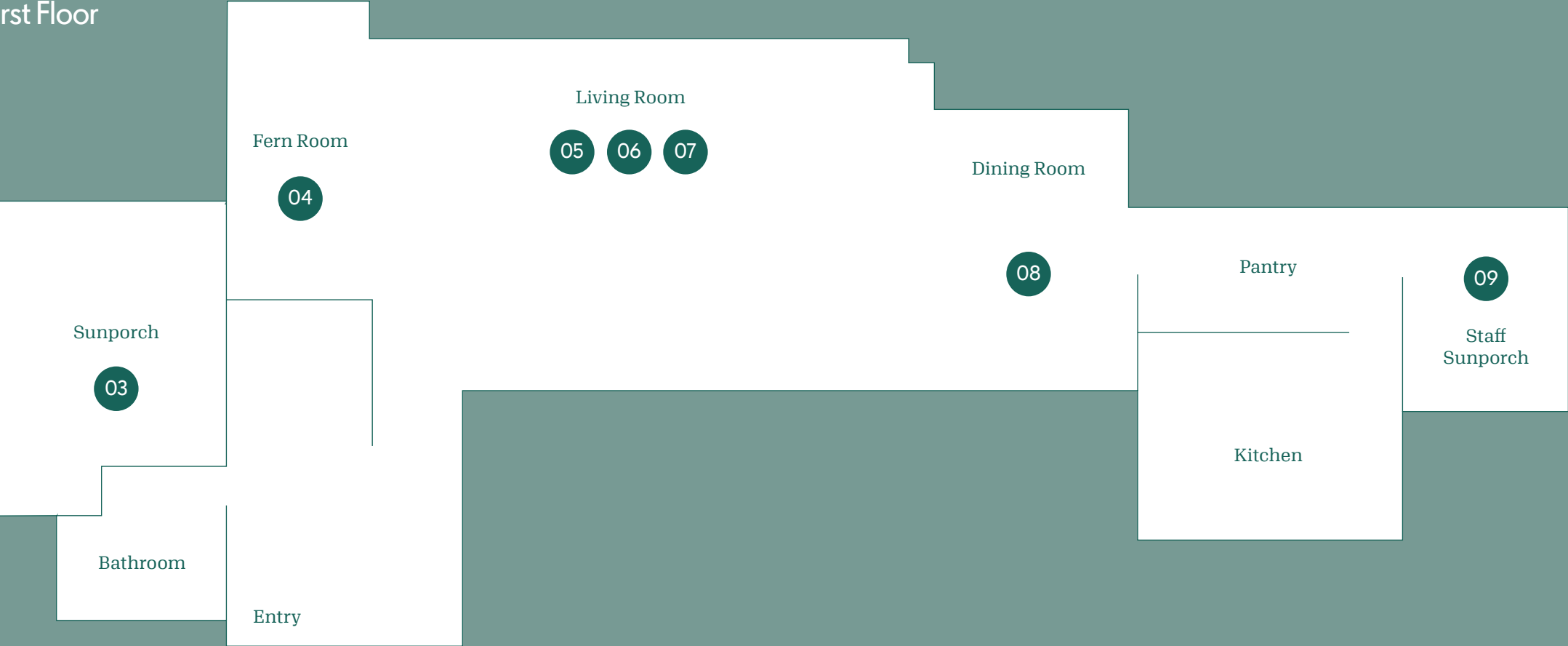


Tennis
Court

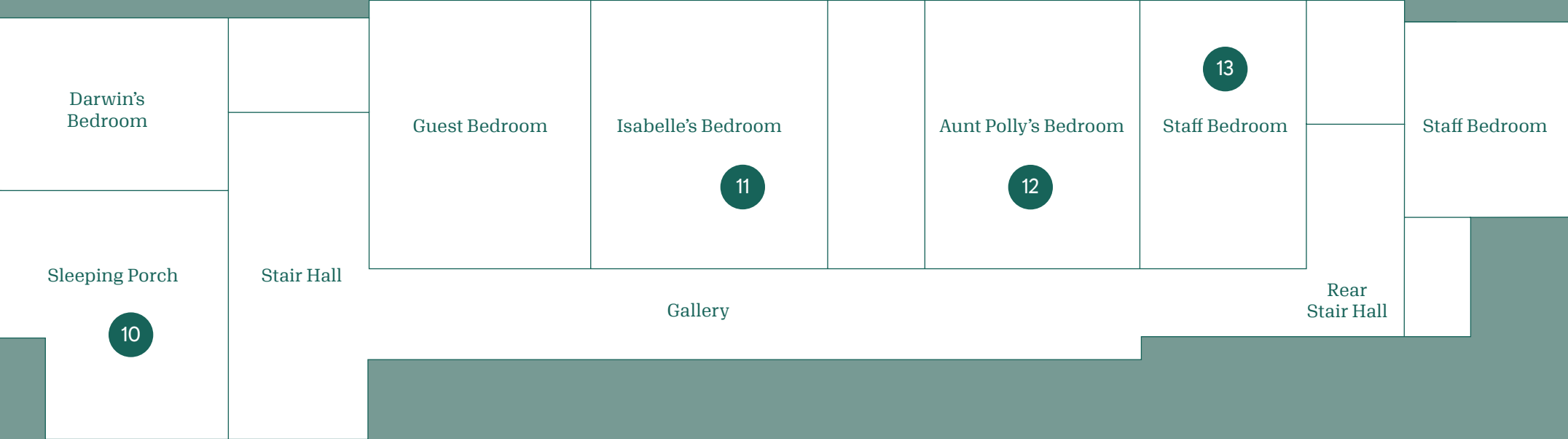
01

Visitors Center

First Floor



Second Floor



Sarah Braman: Finding Room

When we grow accustomed to our day-to-day environment, we may come to believe that the spaces we live in are unremarkable. Artists like Sarah Braman hope that we take another look. Braman encourages us to think about the ways in which function, history, aesthetics, and spirituality continually shape our immediate environment. Brought meaningfully to the forefront of our minds when we encounter Braman's sculptures on the Graycliff grounds, we are unable, at least momentarily, to remain indifferent to these spaces.

Braman makes domestically -scaled indoor and monumental outdoor sculptures that celebrate everyday life. In her indoor practice, she combines found objects like furniture, doors, and pieces of scrapyard vehicles with colorful geometric volumes. Composed by similar means, her outdoor sculptures, made from concrete culverts that lie beneath our roads and buildings, are enlivened by the addition of colored glass. This exhibition is the very first time that viewers can experience Braman's indoor and outdoor sculptures together, and it is the first opportunity for these practices to speak to one another. In the sunporch on the first floor of Graycliff, while standing beside *Reading*, 2020, viewers can look through the window to see the concrete sculpture *Stay*, 2022. Each sculpture features books selected by the artist to invite prolonged engagement. The cube of colored glass in *Reading* has an airy, voluminous quality that almost floats, in contrast to *Stay*'s heavy, opaque walls. The weight and groundedness of *Stay*, nestled as it is on the grass and among the trees, suggests it has been in this location long before any of us came along. One might imagine it to be a found object, like the cookery and furniture included in Braman's other artworks,

By Andrea Alvarez and
Zack Boehler

her intervention the enlivening addition of colored glass and books as she works with the environment. In this, she shares much with architect Frank Lloyd Wright (American, 1867–1959).

Situating *Finding Room* on and within Graycliff, designed by Wright in 1926, places Braman's work in conversation with this architectural masterpiece. In their practices, Wright and Braman explore the relationship of nature and found elements to humanmade objects, drawing attention to lived experience with deceptively simple formal gestures. As you walk through Graycliff, you will see that Wright combined glass, wood, and stone taken directly from the site to create the intricate details of the organic style of architecture that became his legacy. Braman uses similar materials to create forms that revere commonly overlooked aspects of daily life. The interaction between natural and humanmade materials and, perhaps especially, the dialogue between light and glass are springboards for both artists.

Braman's sculptures can be viewed in relationship to the formal legacies of modernism, like Color Field painting and Minimalist sculpture. Instead of the reverent quality of a white-walled gallery, Braman's preferred context is domestic, so that the sculptures are experienced as part of one's everyday life. Placing her sculptures in a house that is itself part of the modernist tradition yet also carries the intimacy of a beloved family home, underscores how Braman's work both resists and embraces modernist traditions to reconsider our lived environment. When you encounter a work like *Her House*, 2019, in Isabelle's bedroom, you witness the glow generated by light passing through the pink and yellow glass volume, while at the same time feeling the warmth of the

well-loved and sweetly decorated bedroom that belonged to the house's matron, Isabelle Martin.

Like Graycliff itself, the monumental outdoor pieces on its grounds will respond to and be changed by the seasons: over the course of the exhibition, both of these structures—these containers for life—will look out onto Lake Erie, be bathed in the heat of sunlight in the summer, witness to autumn, and be draped with snow in the winter. Changing weather and light conditions will provide varied visual and physical experiences of Braman's sculptures, inviting multiple visits and fostering an ongoing engagement with this important site. Much like Wright's designs, Braman's outdoor works rely on human interaction to invigorate the space and connect it to its surrounding environment. They invite viewers to enter their light-filled spaces and be enveloped by her chosen materials. It is from within these volumes that one can truly appreciate Braman's use of colored glass. One witnesses the additive mixing of colors that emanate from the panes, and contemplating the fullness of these spaces and their relationship to the surrounding landscape.

Shown together, Braman's indoor and outdoor works have an even greater impact than when they are seen separately. Encountering them inside the home, the viewer takes in Braman's sculptures as beautiful, external objects: one can walk around them, witnessing the changing play of color and unexpected juxtapositions with the setting. But one participates in her outdoor work: a visitor stands inside of the heavy concrete sculpture, where their own body is colored by the light, and they feel, as well as see, the weight and volume of concrete as they sit within it. Both deeply personal and visually enveloping, the experience of Braman's sculptures changes how we see the ordinary, stretching our perceptual abilities—from without and within.

Sarah Braman (she/her) makes sculptures that serve as monuments to everyday life. Interested in the interplay between sensory experience and emotional resonance, Braman combines found materials with natural objects and volumes of glass colored in her distinctive palette, suggesting themes of home, family, and nature, with joyful immersion in lived experience and emotional life.

Braman was born in 1970 in Tonawanda, New York, and currently lives and works in Amherst, Massachusetts. She commutes to New York City most weeks to work with CANADA, an artist-run gallery where she has been a managing partner for twenty-one years.

Braman earned a BFA from Maryland Institute College of Art in Baltimore and an MFA from Tyler School of Art in Philadelphia. Her solo exhibitions include *True Blue Mirror*, with Ellen Berkenblit, McEvoy Foundation for the Arts, San Francisco, California (2019); *Growth*, Mitchell-Innes & Nash, New York (2019); and *Here*, Marlborough Contemporary, London (2017). Braman has also participated in group exhibitions at Crystal Bridges, Bentonville (2019); MASS MoCA, North Adams (2017–18); and Kunsthalle Helsinki, Finland (2016). Braman currently has outdoor work installed for public view at Art Omi in Ghent, NY and University of Houston. In 2013, she was the recipient of the Maud Morgan Prize from MFA, Boston.

Cover: *Her House*, 2019. All works courtesy of the artist and Mitchell-Innes & Nash, New York, except *Paula*, courtesy of Collection Stephen King, C12, New York © Sarah Braman.

Reflections



Find the work *Friend* in the living room. Take a moment to observe the piece from different angles and look through the panes of glass. Notice how the colors blend and change depending on where you are standing. How do these color changes transform the way you see Braman's work? How do these colors reflect in the surrounding space?

There are everyday objects like a coffee mug, frying pan, desks, chairs, and other familiar items in these sculptures. What memories do these items evoke for you? Does the way Braman arranges these objects change the way you think about them?

What connections are being made between the Sarah Braman works and the rooms where they are displayed? How do the works connect to the past and the present?

How do you think the natural and human-made materials in the works relate to the rooms, buildings, and surroundings at Graycliff?

What points of connection or contrast can you make between Braman's contemporary sculpture and Frank Lloyd Wright's design?