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Playscape sculpture seating and tree base by Roberley Bell; Bell with art students from FPS; Additional sculpture seating with neon artwork; bilingual signage

Extending Fitchburg Art Museum's Brand into an Interactive PLAYscape



Jean Wilcox
Principal at Wilcox Design
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Art Place on Elm | Playscape

The new brand identity **Wilcox Design** developed for **Fitchburg Art Museum** in 2018 forefronted the museum's welcoming acronym. A key goal was to create a new visual look that reflected the museum has been doing for more than a decade to welcome every member of the Fitchburg community. The branding needed to broadcast the museum's culture of openness and sense of **FAMILY** while boldly asserting its mission to bring groundbreaking, high-quality art to its community.

Wilcox Design's most recent project with **FAM** had that same dual focus—with a particular emphasis on the museum's core value of inviting community members to explore art, interact with artists, and unlock their own creativity.

Creating a Creative Learning Space for Children

Since fall 2021, **FAM** has collaborated with the Fitchburg Public Schools (FPS) in an after-school learning program held in its adjacent studio space, The Art Place on Elm. For FAM, this program is core to its mission "as a catalyst for learning, creativity,

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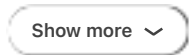
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Insights from the community

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Wilcox Design developed wayfinding and signage to support an exciting new artist-in-the-community initiative for participants in the afterschool arts program at FAM. The new signage continued the museum’s commitment to bilingual wayfinding in both English and Spanish as part of its holistic approach to welcoming and engaging the entire Fitchburg community.

Children in the FPS/FAM afterschool arts program engaged with New England sculptor Roberley Bell, providing input that shaped her design of *PLAYScape*, a new interactive sculptural installation for The Art Place on Elm. Bell’s site-specific public projects are inspired by nature and blur the lines between inside and outside with organic forms and brilliant color and patterning.



Wilcox Design consulted with FAM and Bell in the design of the *PLAYScape* sculptural seating and designed a new neon art piece for the studio window to mirror the color palette and contours of the Bell sculptures.

Bell embraced the experience of working in collaboration with children on this project: “As an artist working in the public realm, I try to engage the stakeholders... [and children] are the long term stakeholder of a project in their neighborhood.” Children provided drawings and clay models that contributed to the final piece, creating “a shared, playful space accommodating seating for everyone.”

Bringing a Space to Life

Bell’s sculpture, installed September 1, 2022, along with new landscaping and signage, transformed a quiet cul-de-sac on the FAM campus into a lively, inviting, interactive space that extends the studio and learning experience into the outdoors and provides yet another tangible moment of welcome to the museum’s community.

Project Contributors:

Sculptor: Roberley Bell

designers?

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Signage and Sculpture Fabrication: Tom Stringham, imagineFORM




Design: Jean Wilcox, Wilcox Design and Robin Ratcliff, Fyfe Design

Neon sign: NEON Williams

Installation: Eugene Finney, Viante & Associates

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