

# NO SPECTATORS: THE ART OF BURNING MAN



April 26/June 7–Sept. 2  
cincinnati  art museum

# WEL- COME HOME

A city in the desert.  
A culture of possibility.  
A network of dreamers  
and doers.

Happening every August in Nevada's inhospitable Black Rock Desert, a thriving metropolis rises from the playa dust for a single week. During that time, many societal norms are put on hold as a unique community emerges based on 10 guiding principles that include Radical Self-expression, Communal Effort, and a glorious Gifting economy. Interactive art installations of all shapes and sizes are erected; some are burned to the ground and at the end of the week, the city vanishes without a trace.

*No Spectators: The Art of Burning Man* offers some of the stunning, sometimes participatory works that have emerged from this annual gathering by many of the artists and collectives who have become synonymous with the event. The exhibition also celebrates its importance to the American story as one of the most influential cultural events of our time.

Artworks are located throughout the museum's permanent collection and special exhibition galleries. Using this map, we encourage you to discover the gift of *No Spectators: The Art of Burning Man*.



Visitors may touch only the artwork featured in the *No Spectators: The Art of Burning Man* exhibition. Look for "Please Touch" signage located next to the appropriate artwork.



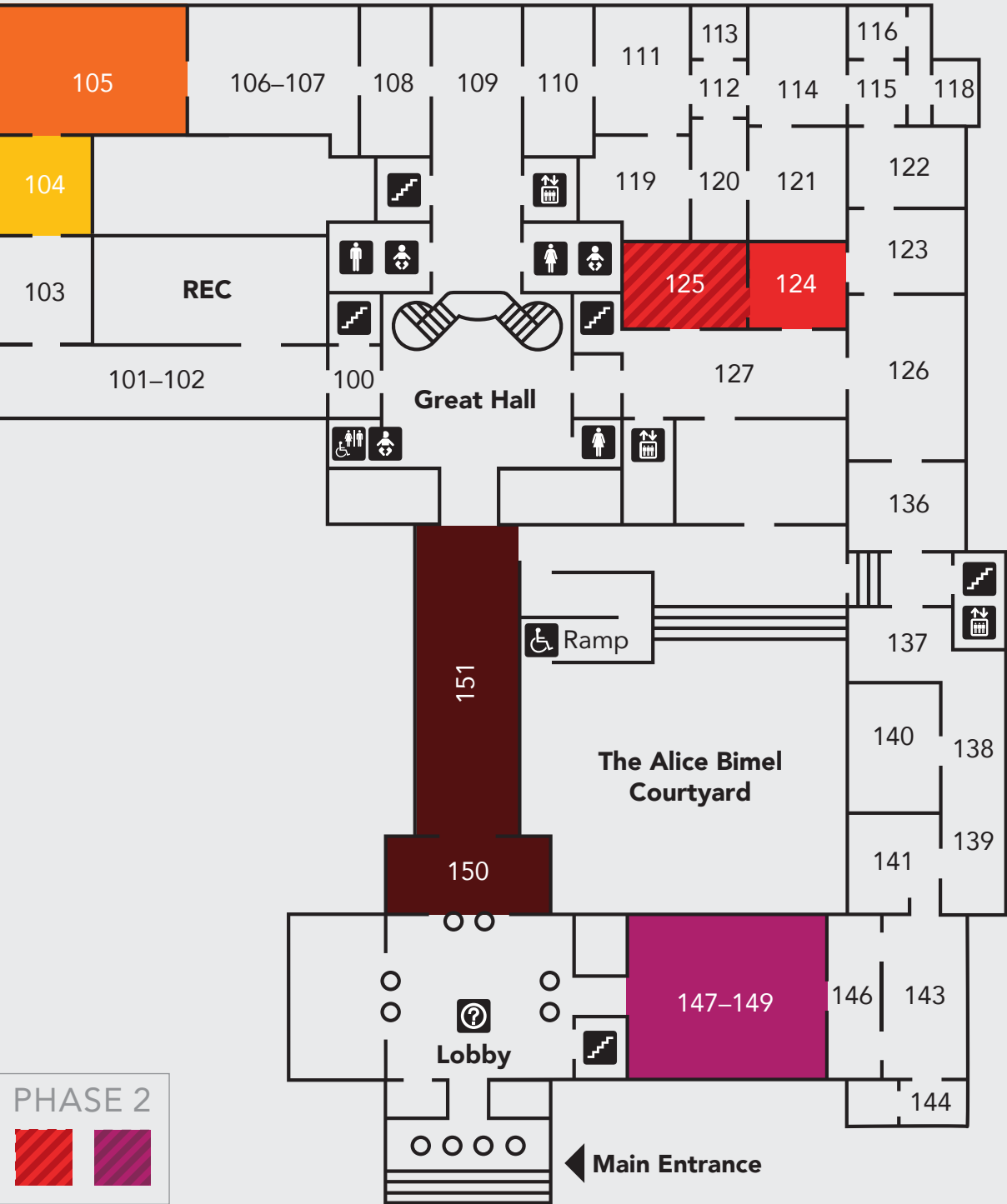
**Non Flash Photography is encouraged!** Please post your photos on social media using the hashtag #NoSpectators. Tripods and selfie sticks are not allowed. Additional museum policies may be found at [cincinnatiartmuseum.org/visit](http://cincinnatiartmuseum.org/visit).

Visit [cincinnatiartmuseum.org/burningman](http://cincinnatiartmuseum.org/burningman) for information on programs and events.

Artwork by Scott Kapeckas. Photo by Christy Parry

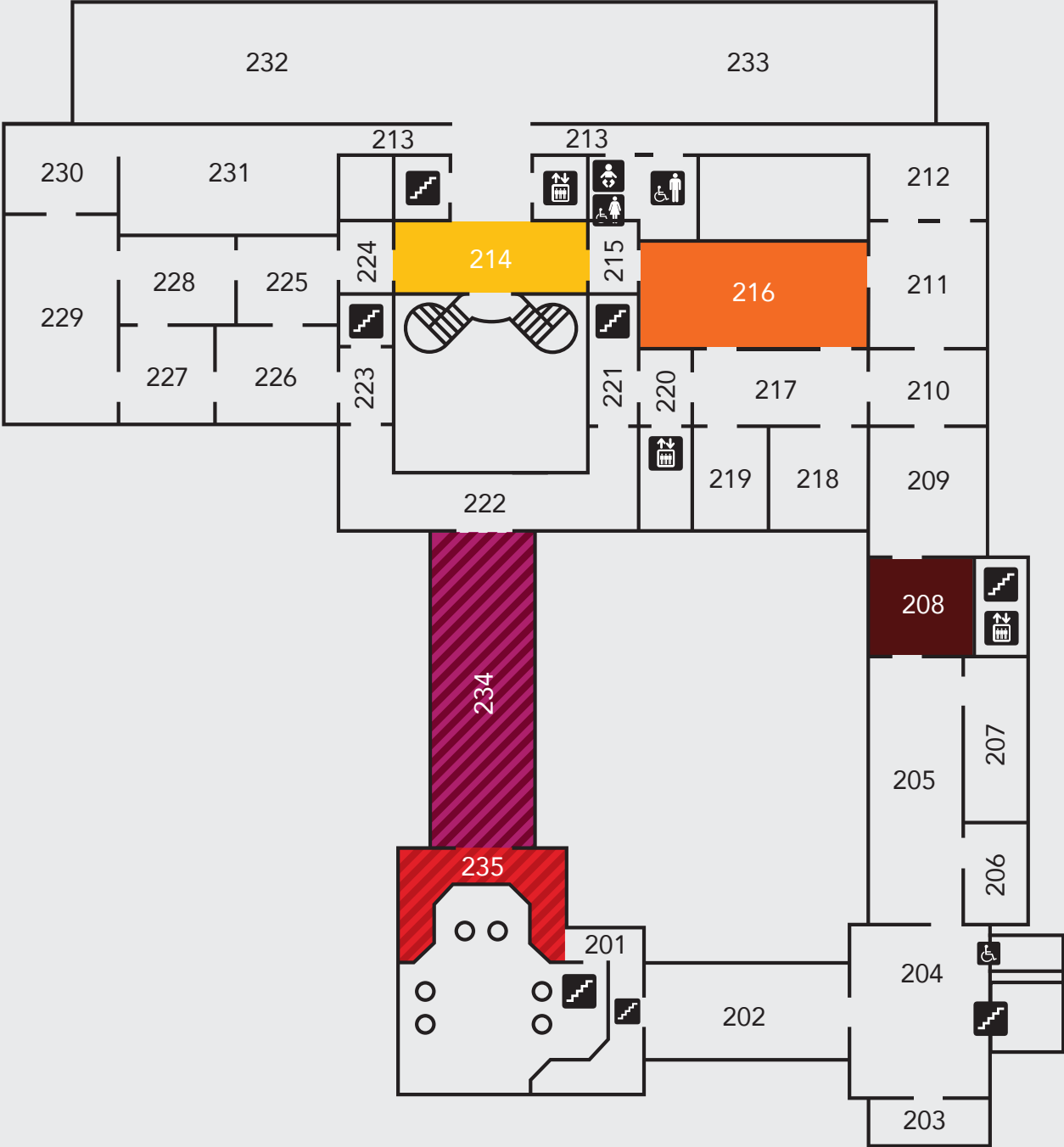


1<sup>ST</sup> FLOOR



PHASE 2

2<sup>ND</sup> FLOOR



PRIMER

The Burning Man community has developed its own distinctive lexicon over the years. Below is a glossary of a few useful, irreverent and colorful terms.

**BLACK ROCK CITY** The annual, temporary metropolis that is home to the Burning Man event.

**BURNER** One who pursues a way of life based on the values reflected in the 10 Principles of Burning Man.

**CACOPHONY SOCIETY** An influential source of many of the concepts and principles of Burning Man, the Cacophony Society was “a randomly gathered network of individuals united in the pursuit of experiences beyond the mainstream.” Many of Burning Man’s founders were members of the San Francisco group.

**DARKWAD** Anyone who walks or rides on the *playa* at night without adequate lighting on the front and back of their person or vehicle.

**DBS: DECORATIVE BULLSH\*T** A term coined by artist David Best to describe the layers of unorthodox ornamentation he and his crew apply to the *Temple*.

**DECOMMODIFICATION** One of the 10 Principles of Burning Man. “In order to preserve the spirit of gifting, our community seeks to create social environments that are unmediated by commercial sponsorships, transactions, or advertising. We stand ready to protect our culture from such exploitation. We resist the substitution of consumption for participatory experience.”

**DEEP PLAYA** The area of *open playa* beyond the Man and past the *Temple* in all directions, particularly the outer realms near the perimeter fence.

**DEFAULT WORLD** The rest of the world that is not Black Rock City during the Burning Man event.

**FOMO** Fear of Missing Out, a harmless state of mind caused by the overwhelming scope of things to do and see in Black Rock City. May lead to sleep deprivation.

**JAVA COW** Community legend of a man-cow who appeared with hot coffee at sunrise on the morning of the burn, asking: “Do you want cream or sugar?”

**MOOP** Matter Out of Place. Litter, debris, rubbish.

**MUTANT VEHICLE** A motorized conveyance that is radically, stunningly, (usually) permanently, and safely modified. Larry Harvey likened Mutant Vehicles to “sublimely beautiful works of art floating across the *playa* like a Miro painting.”

**NO SPECTATORS** A central tenet of the Burning Man philosophy. By blurring the line between audience and performer, everybody is a superstar at Burning Man.

**OPEN PLAYA** The portion of the *playa* that is within the pentagonal event space, but is used for art installations and Mutant Vehicle cruising rather than camping space.

**PLAYA** The Spanish word for beach, also used to describe dry lake beds in the American West such as the Black Rock Desert.

**PLAYA CHICKEN** Community legend concerning a rare species of vicious, carnivorous poultry reputed to live in the Black Rock Desert. Any strange phenomenon that is not readily attributable to a known cause may be blamed on *Playa Chickens*.

**PLAYA DUST** The dried silt of Lake Lahontan, the prehistoric lakebed that is now the Black Rock Desert. Its alkaline pH makes it corrosive, and its extremely fine particles get into just about everything.

**PLAYA NAME** Originally spawned by the need for unique names on the staff’s two-way radios, *playa* names have become almost ubiquitous and are sometimes used to provide an individual with an “alternate” personality or persona. *Playa names* are traditionally given to a person, rather than taken on.

**SPARKLE PONY** Derogatory term for a participant who fails to embrace the principle of radical self-reliance, and is overly reliant on the resources of friends, campmates, and the community at large to enable their Burning Man experience. Often fashionably attired, since they packed nothing but costumes.

**TAZ** Temporary Autonomous Zone, a term coined by writer Hakim Bey. Burning Man isn’t one.

**10 PRINCIPLES OF BURNING MAN** The 10 core guiding concepts of Burning Man. These include: Radical Inclusion, Gifting, Decommodification, Radical Self-reliance, Radical Self-expression, Communal Effort, Civic Responsibility, Leaving No Trace, Participation, and Immediacy.

**THEME CAMP** A group camp designed to create an interactive experience for participants through art, architecture, and/or performance.

**WHITE-OUT** A violent dust storm producing near-zero visibility.

# 10 PRINCIPLES

In 2004, Burning Man co-founder Larry Harvey wrote the 10 Principles as guidelines for the organization's newly-formed Regional Network. They were crafted not so much as a directive, but as a reflection of the community's shared values and culture.

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**RADICAL INCLUSION** Anyone may be a part of Burning Man. We welcome and respect the stranger. No prerequisites exist for participation in our community.

**GIFTING** Burning Man is devoted to acts of gift giving. The value of a gift is unconditional. Gifting does not contemplate a return or an exchange for something of equal value.

**DECOMMODIFICATION** In order to preserve the spirit of gifting, our community seeks to create social environments that are unmediated by commercial sponsorships, transactions, or advertising. We stand ready to protect our culture from such exploitation. We resist the substitution of consumption for participatory experience.

**RADICAL SELF-RELIANCE** Burning Man encourages the individual to discover, exercise and rely on his or her inner resources.

**RADICAL SELF-EXPRESSION** Radical self-expression arises from the unique gifts of the individual. No one other than the individual or a collaborating group can determine its content. It is offered as a gift to others. In this spirit, the giver should respect the rights and liberties of the recipient.

**COMMUNAL EFFORT** Our community values creative cooperation and collaboration. We strive to produce, promote and protect social networks, public spaces, works of art, and methods of communication that support such interaction.

**CIVIC RESPONSIBILITY** We value civil society. Community members who organize events should assume responsibility for public welfare and endeavor to communicate civic responsibilities to participants. They must also assume responsibility for conducting events in accordance with local, state and federal laws.

**LEAVING NO TRACE** Our community respects the environment. We are committed to leaving no physical trace of our activities wherever we gather. We clean up after ourselves and endeavor, whenever possible, to leave such places in a better state than when we found them.

**PARTICIPATION** Our community is committed to a radically participatory ethic. We believe that transformative change, whether in the individual or in society, can occur only through the medium of deeply personal participation. We achieve being through doing. Everyone is invited to work. Everyone is invited to play. We make the world real through actions that open the heart.

**IMMEDIACY** Immediate experience is, in many ways, the most important touchstone of value in our culture. We seek to overcome barriers that stand between us and a recognition of our inner selves, the reality of those around us, participation in society, and contact with a natural world exceeding human powers. No idea can substitute for this experience.

Cover image: FoldHaus, *Shrumen Lumen* (detail), 2016. Photo by Ron Blunt