

NEAR NORTH SIDE, RIVER NORTH

Architectural Artifacts Is Coming Back With Huge New Location Inside Former River North School

After 31 years in Ravenswood, founder Stuart Grannen is opening a River North location to show and sell his eye-popping collection of one-of-a-kind salvaged architectural pieces, relics, art, furniture and more.



Melody Mercado 9:00 AM CDT on Jun 16, 2022



Credit: Patty Wetli/Block Club Chicago

Stuart Grannen is auctioning off Architectural Artifacts' storehouse of treasures.

RIVER NORTH — Architectural Artifacts Inc. — a beloved wonderland of globally-sourced, one-of-a-kind salvaged architectural pieces, relics, art, furniture and more — is coming back in a big way.

After spending 31 years in Ravenswood and then auctioning off a lifetime's worth of collectibles, founder Stuart Grannen is returning with an expansive new location in River North.

Opening in mid-July, the new Architectural Artifacts is housed in the former Immaculate Conception St. Joseph School at 1065 N. Orleans St. It's being touted as "the intersection of Wander and Wonder," as customers can eat, drink and explore Grannen's eye-popping collection housed throughout the renovated building. And it's all for sale.

It's part of a partnership between Architectural Artifacts Inc. and Bedderman Hospitality to offer visitors food as well as the multitudes of items collected and sold by Architectural Artifacts Inc.

The 35,000-square-foot space will feature an all-day cafe with coffee, wine, small bites and pizza by Andrew Holladay, Lula Cafe's executive chef. There will be seating inside and outside the cafe, and customers can explore the three-level building, which is filled with unique items for sale.



Credit: Melody Mercado, Block Club Chicago

Architectural Artifacts Inc. is opening a new location in River North featuring thousands of unique pieces.

“Come together over the antiques, but also have a coffee together, have a glass of wine together, a slice of pizza ... whatever delicious things the chef is making,” said Grannen, Architectural Artifacts Inc.’s founder. “Share it throughout the whole building. ... Go wander. ... If you want to take five minutes, fine; if you want to take five hours, ... whatever, it’s your day.”

Some items will feature a QR code to scan to hear a recorded story from Grannen about its origins and where he found it.



Credit: Melody Mercado, Block Club Chicago

Everything on display at Architectural Artifacts Inc. is for sale. Including this retro Fiat that sits in the main entrance.

The building's refinished gym will also serve as a ballroom to host large weddings, corporate conferences and other events. When it's not in use, the gym — which features the original evergreen-colored ceilings — will be used as a pickleball court and be available for rental.

“We hope that people see that we are invested, not just in the dollars to build [the space], but just in our love for doing this both emotionally and with our time,” said Robert Baum, of Bedderman Hospitality.



Credit: Melody Mercado, Block Club Chicago

The Ballroom will serve as an events area as well as pickleball courts,

The building also has a speakeasy bar in the basement that won't open until the fall. It will feature a secret back-alley entrance and laidback vibes.

Almost everything customers will see at Architectural Artifacts Inc. will be for sale, from the tables and sofas in the ballroom to the benches people can sit on. Grannen said he has plenty of pieces to bring in and replace what's been sold.

"There's plenty," Grannen said. "There's warehouses full."

Photos from the building:



Credit: Melody Mercado, Block Club Chicago

Renovations and staging are still underway for the cafe portion of the Architectural Artifacts Inc.'s new building.



Credit: Melody Mercado, Block Club Chicago

The new kitchen for Architectural Artifacts Inc.'s will feature a menu crafted by Lula Cafe's executive chef, Andrew Holladay.



Credit: Melody Mercado, Block Club Chicago

Some artifacts will feature a QR code for guests to listen to the piece's origin story.



Credit: Melody Mercado, Block Club Chicago

Architectural Artifacts Inc. also features many solid, wood pieces. Pieces for sale are displayed throughout the whole building.



Credit: Melody Mercado, Block Club Chicago

The new Architectural Artifacts Inc. location can be found at 1065 N. Orleans St. in River North.