

Studio 4  
Game Innovation

Theresa Devine  
Associate Professor  
SHARCS

Richard Griffin  
ACO Student  
SMNS

# Whispers of the American West

## VIDEO GAME

### GAME DESCRIPTION

This is a video game about the western art collection on display at the Phoenix Art Museum. This game began as a collaboration with the education department at the museum in 2018. The expressed need was to educate the public about the often unspoken history surrounding each piece in the collection.

#### PREMISE

Art collections are a joyful celebration of humanity

#### PURPOSE

Eduentertainment multi-player online game that joyfully educates the public as to the diverse voices and contributions that formed the collection of the Phoenix Art Museum. This is a new interpretive layer for visitors; a digital layer of meaning that reveals multiple narratives and hidden meanings to works of art on view at Phoenix Art Museum.

#### THEME

Inclusion and Cultural Awareness

<https://www.studio4gameinnovation.com/>



### LEVEL 18: DESERT RAIN GOD

About the art: 54 x 72 in. (137.2 x 182.9 cm)  
Museum purchase with funds provided by Betty Van Denburgh in honor of Western Art Associates.

What the docents are currently teaching about the piece.

In 19th century, women were not part of the great enthusiasm for landscape painting, but in the twentieth and twenty-first century women reclaimed it. The artist worked outside, en plein air, directly in contact with the landscape of Northern New Mexico and had a bold, expressive style: using palette knives and masonry trowels.

Results, or what the docents can add to their lesson about this painting.

The historical and current trauma of the indigenous lives lost due to the uranium mines and the unfinished business of decontamination of the land is all ours. As we work toward a decolonized world, this piece is not just a tribute to the beauty of the land, but is also an opportunity for a renewed discussion about reversing the damage to the land of the Diné. It is important to continue the work of honoring the Treaty of 1868 to ensure the thriving of the Diné - and all indigenous people - in contemporary society.

### FUTURE WORK:

This NCUIRE project was a preparation for a National Endowment for the Humanities grant application that will be submitted in June 2021.

