

# Games: Invading “Art Spaces”

Gabriela Araiza

University of California, Davis

[https://www.behance.net/gabriela\\_araiza](https://www.behance.net/gabriela_araiza)

## Abstract

The appeal to playability in games often lowers the artistic value in the mind of critics. The backgrounds and screenshots of the game are not demoted of artistic value, but when play is added that art is usually cast aside. This interactivity is what makes the game less artistic in value, but the notion of art itself revolves around interaction and interpretation. Game interaction, in turn, is just another way of experiencing art.

## Interaction as Art?

The legitimization of video games as a form of art reveals two opposing side that do and do not consider them as a piece of artwork. Although some critics agree that video game graphics are a form of art of it in themselves they do not believe that the video game as a whole is a form of art. [1] The act of going through the game and playing takes away the artistic aspect of it. In a way though, art is supposed to be experienced and is supposed to be taken in through the eyes of different experiences and interpretations. [2] The argument that players are only playing for the action or gameplay, overgeneralizes the situation in it of itself. Some people do play games solely for competition, however, there is also the immersion that is created through the graphics, writing and programming.

If a person looks at something, takes a picture of it or takes an already man-made object and calls it art, is it really so? The man-made object as itself is not called art, until the artist puts it through an artistic lens and interprets it as art. It is that interpretation that makes it an art piece not, necessarily the mere existence of it. The playability and interaction is what makes moves the person through all the writing, the plot lines, and the different animation frames, the renderings and makes it into an experience, but an experience that is controlled by the player. [3] Games like *Okami*, which is inspired by Japanese brush strokes, requires the user to fully complete the entire aesthetic. [4] The game maker provides the game, but it is then the player who has to open it up and immerse themselves in it.



Fig 1. *Okami*, 2006, Clover Studio, Game, Okami Wiki. NA, February 11, 2016.

[http://okami.wikia.com/wiki/Celestial\\_Brush](http://okami.wikia.com/wiki/Celestial_Brush)

## Invading “Art Spaces”

My proposal to close this gap, is by creating an interactive game that doubles as an art piece. The game would have still have an interesting interface that attracts the player, but it will also have a social message that makes them reflect. The second component would be to place it in a museum. By invading the space of those that don’t consider games to be a “true art,” it becomes an aggressive statement in itself.

## Conclusion

Without gameplay there is no game and without a game there is no gameplay. Art is supposed to provide an experience and the fact that the user can control their experience does not take away from its legitimacy as an art form.

## References

1. Moriarty, Brian. "It's Becoming Harder to Deny Video Games 'Art' Status." *Time*. Time, 22 Sept. 2015, accessed January 20, 2016, <http://time.com/4038821/brian-moriarty-are-video-games-art/>
2. Gee, James P. "Why Game Studies Now? Video Games: A New Art Form." *Games and Culture*, Vol. 1, No. 01 (2006): 58-61.
3. Mellenos, Chris. "Video Games Are the Most Important Art Form in History." *Time*. Time, 22 Sept. 2015, accessed January 20, 2016, <http://time.com/4038820/chris-melissinos-are-video-games-art/>
4. Ochalla, Bryan. "Are Games Art? (Here We Go Again...)." *Gamasutra*. N/A, 16 Mar. 2007, accessed January 20, 2016, [http://www.gamasutra.com/view/feature/130113/are\\_games\\_art\\_here\\_we\\_go\\_.php?print=1](http://www.gamasutra.com/view/feature/130113/are_games_art_here_we_go_.php?print=1)