

## New Exhibition at the Currier Museum Explores How Video Games Influence Art

**Manchester NH—March 2, 2020** - Video games have been part of our lives for decades and have influenced a wide range of contemporary artists. A new exhibition at the Currier Museum of Art, *Open World: Video Games and Contemporary Art*, explores the interactions between video games and art, from their visual effects to gamer culture. Some artists comment on and critique the violence and sexism of some games, while others celebrate their innovations and stunning effects.

The exhibition's title refers to open-world video games, which allow a player to roam through a virtual world, freely selecting their objectives. The title also draws attention to the rich opportunities video games offer for creative expression. Inspired by these virtual worlds, artists invent their own universes as a way to process introspective thoughts or to analyze elements of their personal identity. Many artists in the exhibition take advantage of video games' popularity to call attention to such issues as gun control, migration, and gender and racial equity – in recognition that virtual worlds and real life are linked.

"We sometimes don't appreciate how pervasive video games are and how important they are in our lives," says Alan Chong, the museum's director. "Everyone plays games of one sort or another, while our computers have been strongly influenced by the visual language of gaming. Some observers condemn the violence of youth-oriented games, but what could be more destructive than Candy Crush, with its fetishistic 'killing' of three candies in a row?"

"Like video games themselves this exhibition is both entertaining and intellectual, artful and scientific. The Currier is thrilled to bring this innovative exhibition to our city, which has many connections to the gaming industry. It was the home of Ralph Baer, who is considered the father of video games, and Manchester continues to be a center of creative technology," stated Samantha Cataldo, Curator of Contemporary Art at the Currier Museum.

*Open World* presents the work of 23 national and international artists. In addition to painting, drawing, and sculpture, the exhibition will also highlight animation, playable video games, game modifications, and immersive game-based performances and interventions. The exhibition will open at the Currier Museum on Saturday March 21 with a day full of tours and artmaking activities for the whole family. It will be on view through June 28, 2020.

*Open World: Video Games & Contemporary Art* is organized by the Akron Art Museum and supported by the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, Ohio Arts Council, The Tom and Marilyn Merryweather Fund, and National Endowment for the Arts.

The Currier Museum's presentation of *Open World: Video Games & Contemporary Art* is sponsored by Bellwether Community Credit Union.

## **About the Currier Museum of Art**

The Currier Museum is an internationally renowned art museum located in Manchester, New Hampshire. The museum features paintings, sculpture, decorative arts, and photographs, including works by Monet, Picasso, O'Keeffe, Hopper, and Wyeth. It presents exhibitions, tours, art classes, and special programs year-round. Two homes designed by Frank Lloyd Wright are part of its permanent collection.

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