

WHITNEY

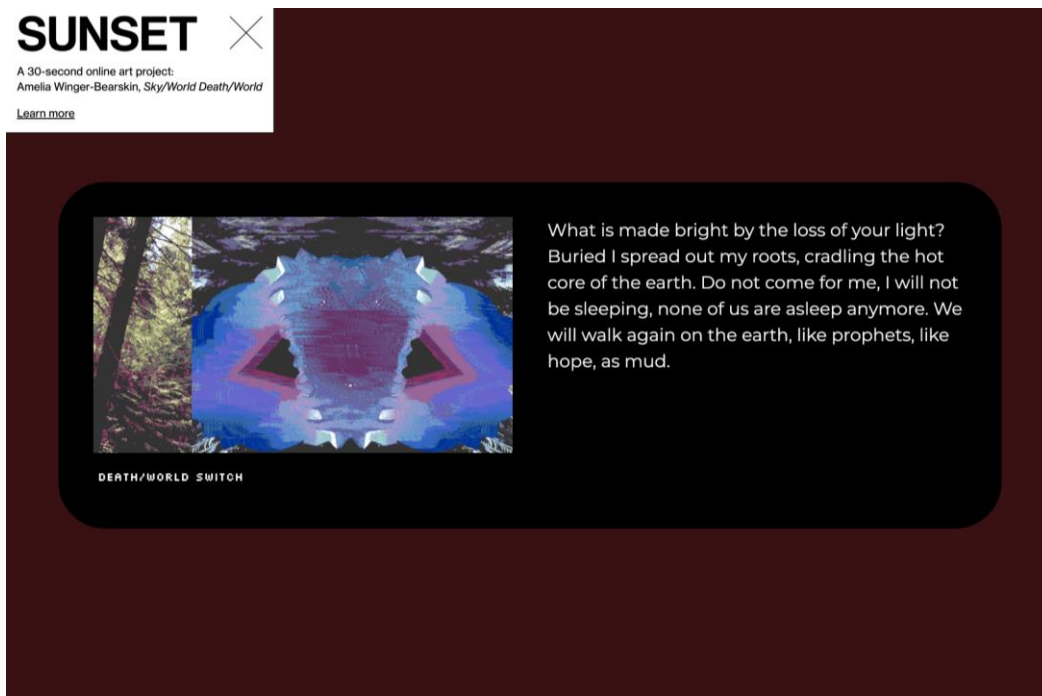
Whitney Museum
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PRESS RELEASE

NEW DIGITAL ART COMMISSION BY AMELIA WINGER-BEARSKIN LAUNCHES ON WHITNEY.ORG



Amelia Winger-Bearskin, still from *Death/World*, 2022. Commissioned by the Whitney Museum of American Art

New York, December 15, 2022— Today, the Whitney Museum of American Art launches [Sky/World Death/World](https://www.whitney.org/SkyWorldDeathWorld), a new digital art project by artist Amelia Winger-Bearskin, on [whitney.org](https://www.whitney.org). The project was commissioned as part of artport, the Museum’s resource for Internet art and an online gallery space for net art commissions. Winger-Bearskin’s work is part of the ongoing Sunrise/Sunset series that activates across the Museum’s website twice a day at sunrise and sunset in New York City.

Winger-Bearskin’s project connects the sunrise and sunset to Indigenous myths about creation and is presented in two parts: *Sky/World* at sunrise and *Death/World* at sunset. Combining abstract animation and poetic text, the work prompts viewers to consider the questions “Who benefits from your burnout?” and “What is made bright by the loss of your light?” The questions were originally written for a billboard series by For Freedoms, an artist collective of which

Winger-Bearskin is a member, and are answered by poetic text appearing next to the morphing and expanding animations. Both pieces allow viewers to click on a switch to interact and change the behavior of the animation while the text populates the screen.

“Amelia Winger-Bearskin connects the liminal spaces of dawn and dusk to questions of life and death,” says Christiane Paul, Curator of Digital Art at the Whitney. “*Sky/World Death/World* invites the viewer to reflect on the ownership, sharing, and renewal of the Earth and life.”

Sky/World displays animations created with a game engine on a light pink background similar to the colors of daybreak. The text reads, “You cannot hoard life, only share it.” This piece draws inspiration from the Haudenosaunee origin story of Sky Woman, a member of a celestial tribe before the world’s creation. Sky Woman fell through a hole created by an uprooted tree and the Earth caught her fall. With the help of the animals around her, she builds a new home formed from the oceans, soil, and mud.

Death/World intersperses abstract animations with video of the artist arranged on a dark brownish-red background evoking the colors of nightfall. This piece speaks to the renewals experienced in life of all forms and suggests the unknown, delicate layer between sleep and death. The video clips of the artist were part of a lost work that was recovered from the Internet Archive, attesting to the impermanent nature of digital work but also the possibility to recover.

Sky/World Death/World is commissioned by the Whitney Museum of American Art. The Sunrise/Sunset series is overseen by Christiane Paul, Curator of Digital Art, for artport. Unfolding over a time frame of ten to thirty seconds, each Sunrise/Sunset project disrupts, replaces, or engages with the Museum website as an information environment.

More information on *Sky/World Death/World* is available on [whitney.org](https://www.whitney.org).

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Amelia Winger-Bearskin (b. 1979) is an artist who uses artificial intelligence to make a positive impact on communities and the environment. She is the founder of the AI Climate Justice Lab and the Talk to Me About Water collective. Winger-Bearskin’s award-winning podcast *Wampum.Codes* explores an ethical framework for software development based on Indigenous values of co-creation. In 2022 she was awarded a MacArthur Foundation Award as part of the Sundance AOP Fellowship cohort for her project *CLOUD WORLD / SKYWORLD*. In 2018 she served as a delegate at the summit “Fostering Universal Ethics and Compassion through Museums” hosted by the Dalai Lama in Dharamsala, India. Winger-Bearskin is a Banks Family Preeminence Chair of Artificial Intelligence and the Arts at the Digital Worlds Institute at the University of Florida. She is Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) and an enrolled member of the Seneca-Cayuga Nation of Oklahoma, Deer Clan, on her mother’s side and Jewish/Bahá’í on her late father’s side.

ABOUT ARTPORT

artport is the Whitney Museum's portal to Internet art and an online gallery space for net art and new media art commissions. Launched in 2001, artport provides access to original commissioned artworks, documentation of net art and new media art exhibitions at the Whitney, and new media art in the Museum's collection. Recent commissions include Mimi Onuoha's *40% of Food in the US is Wasted (How the Hell is That Progress, Man?)* (2022); Rachel Rossin's *THE MAW OF* (2022); Devin Kenney's *Ongoing, Individual Adaptability or How to Quiet Quit* (2022); Paolo Cirio's *Criminal Data* (2022); *The Next Biennial Should Be Curated by a Machine* (2021), a collaboration between artists UBERMORGAN, digital humanist Leonarda Impett, and curator Joasia Krysa; and Sam Levine and Tega Brain's *New York Apartment* (2020). Access these and more projects at whitney.org/artport.

PRESS CONTACT

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ABOUT THE WHITNEY

The Whitney Museum of American Art, founded in 1930 by the artist and philanthropist Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney (1875–1942), houses the foremost collection of American art from the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Mrs. Whitney, an early and ardent supporter of modern American art, nurtured groundbreaking artists when audiences were still largely preoccupied with the Old Masters. From her vision arose the Whitney Museum of American Art, which has been championing the most innovative art of the United States for ninety years. The core of the

Whitney's mission is to collect, preserve, interpret, and exhibit American art of our time and serve a wide variety of audiences in celebration of the complexity and diversity of art and culture in the United States. Through this mission and a steadfast commitment to artists, the Whitney has long been a powerful force in support of modern and contemporary art and continues to help define what is innovative and influential in American art today.

VISITOR INFORMATION

The Whitney Museum of American Art is located at 99 Gansevoort Street between Washington and West Streets, New York City. Public hours are: Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday, 10:30 am–6 pm; Friday, 10:30 am–10 pm; and Saturday and Sunday, 10:30 am–6 pm. Closed Tuesday. Visitors eighteen years and under and Whitney members: FREE. Admission is pay-what-you-wish on Fridays, 7–10 pm. COVID-19 vaccination and face coverings are not required but strongly recommended. We encourage all visitors to wear face coverings that cover the nose and mouth throughout their visit.

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