

### Phillip C. Curtis (1907-2000)

Philip C. Curtis was born the son of a lawyer in Jackson, Michigan, in 1907. He was raised in a well-educated Midwestern family and attended Albion College, receiving his Bachelor of Arts degree in 1930. Curtis then enrolled in the University of Michigan Law School, but soon realized he preferred studying art, and so instead enrolled in the School of Fine Arts, at Yale University, where he graduated in 1935. Like many artists during the Great Depression, Curtis worked through the Works Progress Administration's (WPA) Federal Art Project in New York. During this time, Curtis was exposed to the important artists and styles of the day.

The WPA transferred Curtis to Phoenix where he established the Phoenix Art Center (now the Phoenix Art Museum). He later served as the director of the new museum. Following his success in Phoenix, Curtis was sent by the WPA to start an art center in Des Moines. Curtis entered the museum studies program at Harvard, but his studies were interrupted by World War II.

Curtis returned to Arizona after the war where he settled in Scottsdale in a converted stable now known as the Cattle Tracks Arts Compound. His studio windows provided a view of the desert landscape. This view strongly influenced Curtis' style and is often seen as a backdrop in his work. From the late 1940s until his death, Curtis continued to paint. His work has been celebrated through solo exhibitions, multiple awards, and a permanent exhibition at the Phoenix Art Museum in the Ulman Center Gallery.



Entrance with Light Bulb, Oil on Panel, 1964

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