# Remapping the Anthropocene (Melbourne, 24 Nov 26)

Melbourne, University of Melbourne, Arts West Building, Nov 24, 2026

Elisabeth Ansel

International Workshop: Remapping the Anthropocene: Colonial Legacies and Global Ecologies in the Visual Arts (1800–2026).

Organisation: Elisabeth Ansel, Christin Bates and Miguel Gaete.

The international workshop is a collaboration between the University of Melbourne and the Friedrich Schiller University Jena and part of the research project "Remapping the Anthropocene: Colonial Legacies and Global Ecologies in the Visual Arts", awarded the 2025 AIAH-AAANZ Early Career Researcher Award.

"Remapping the Anthropocene" is an interdisciplinary workshop that brings together scholars and early-career researchers from literature, art history and visual culture. This workshop bridges scientific and humanistic perspectives, engaging art history, environmental humanities, decolonial theory and philosophy of science. Through ecocritical and decolonial frameworks, it responds to the pressing need to rethink human–earth relations in a time of planetary crisis.

The workshop begins from the premise that nineteenth-century visual culture and literature helped form modern ecological consciousness. Images and texts often presented nature as sublime and overwhelming, positioning humans as marginal or absent. Yet they also worked within imperial systems, using landscape to claim, survey, and control territory. Though not formally recognised as an epoch, the Anthropocene remains a potent heuristic and cultural-political term. Drawing on ecocriticism and postcolonial theory, the workshop explores how the visual and literary regimes established in the nineteenth century persist in contemporary environmental representation.

The University of Melbourne acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the unceded land on which we work, learn and live: the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung and Bunurong peoples of the Kulin Nation. We pay respect to Elders past, present and future.

PROGRAM

10:00 a.m. Wominjeka/Welcome and Tea

10:15 a.m. Introduction: Elisabeth Ansel, Christine Bates, Miguel Gaete

10:30 a.m. MIRANDA STANYON (University of Melbourne): Subterranean Vision in Alice Rohrwacher’s ‘La Chimera’ (2023): Extraction with a big E

11:10 a.m. PETER OTTO (University of Melbourne): Ecology, Ecstasy, Immersion and the Sublime in Thomas Baldwin's 'Airopaidia'

11:30 a.m. Coffee Break

12:00 p.m. MIGUEL GAETE (University of Melbourne): Smithson on the Goldfields? Eugene von Guérard and the Entropic Landscape in Victoria

12:20 p.m. THOMAS H. FORD (La Trobe University): A Tour of the Monuments of the Leasowes, West Midlands

12:40 p.m. MARGUERITE GIBSON (Curtin University and Geelong Gallery): The Australian Sublime: Macrocosms/Microcosms and the Legacy of Romanticism Era Ecological Thought in Australian Landscape Depiction

1:00 p.m. Lunch Break | University House

2:30 p.m. IVANA NINIĆ (University of Western Australia): Picturing Possession, Aestheticising Nature: Mary Morton Allport and the Colonial Picturesque

2:50 p.m. CHRISTINE BATES (Friedrich Schiller University Jena): Picturesque Extraction: Gold, Animals and Aboriginal Presence in John Skinner Prout's Environmental Imaginary

3:10 p.m. Coffee Break

3:40 p.m. ELISABETH ANSEL (Friedrich Schiller University Jena): Ludwig Leichhardt and Harden Sidney Melville: Surveying 'Race', Nature and Climate in Australia

4:00 p.m. KILLIAN QUIGLEY (Australian Catholic University): Surface Figures

4:20 p.m. Concluding Discussion

Funded by AIAH (Australian Institute of Art History) and AAANZ (The Art Association of Australia and New Zealand)

https://aaanz.info/aiah-art-history-research-grants/aiah-early-career-research-award-recipients-2025-2/

Reference:
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