Introduction to Coolabah special issue on placescape, placemaking, placemarking, placedness … geography and cultural production [1]

Bill Boyd & Ray Norman

The artist has to make the viewer understand that his world is too narrow, he has to open up to new perspectives.

I have found … my source of inspiration by living Cataluña intensely; in Montseny, in the green grey of the scrub oaks, in the blue grey of its mists, in the ochre of its fields ... in the grey walls that hide the melancholy gardens ... I have found it in Barcelona's gothic district, whose grey and blackish stones full of scars carry written on them the entire history of a country...

Attributed to Catalan artist, Antoni Tapies
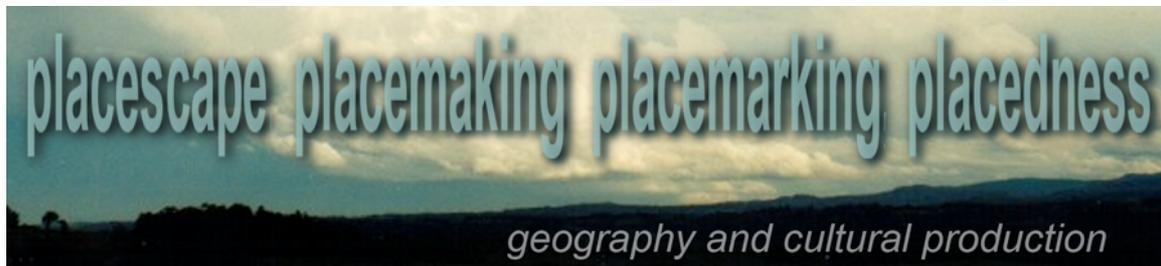
Preface

This special issue of the journal *Coolabah* comprises contributed papers that examine the relationships between place, placescape and landscape – Australian places and imaginings. Australian perspectives of place and cultural production unavoidably confront issues of identity simultaneously from antipodean and elsewhere vantage points.

In issuing our call for papers, we drew attention to J. Douglas Porteous's (1985)

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[1] This paper is a contribution to the *Placescape, placemaking, placemarking, placedness … geography and cultural production* Special Issue of *Coolabah*, edited by Bill Boyd & Ray Norman. The Special Issue is supported by two websites: http://coolabahplacedness.blogspot.com.au and http://coolabahplacedness-images.blogspot.com.au/.

challenge to geography to remain silent, as a true expression of place. Porteous argued then that true geographical appreciation cannot be expressed in prose. If unable to remain silent, geography should, he asserted, express itself in non-conventional (at least for geographers) writing, such as poetry.

We suggest that such non-traditional scholarly expression may, and might well, extend some way beyond poetry, beyond writing indeed, and should embrace all forms of cultural expression and production. Cultural production has the power to reflect, describe and, importantly, shape place, reflect itself in the landscape and transform landscapes over time.

The human experience of placescape, placemaking, placemarking and placedness

In making this observation, we avoid any clear distinction between place and landscape. We acknowledge that a key difference is that of scale: place tends towards, at a human scale, individualistic relationships with a locus and its environment, while landscape tends towards a communal scale of what Brown & Raymond (2007: 91) call the "collective nature of relationships between people, identities and their environment". However, at the experiential scale, we argue the difference is less relevant than the actual lived and experienced relationships between person and place/landscape.

More importantly here, we note Brown & Raymond's interest in place/landscape as a springboard for the papers in this issue. In contrast to these papers, but indeed validating their focus, Brown & Raymond's interests are typically those of applied geographers: how can planners and environmental managers understand people's attachment to place? This is a healthy recognition that social behavior is important in the environmental management of a place. Despite this pragmatic approach, it is based on early work that emphasizes the experiential. Tuan (1980) and Relph (1976) argued, respectively, that sense of place was "dependent on the depth of experience with settings … and [on] social relationships with settings". Relph, in particular, was interested in "… an 'insideness' scale which reflected knowledge of the physical details of place, sense of connection with a community, and a personal connection with place" (Brown & Raymond, 2007: 91).

Later work linking sense of place to the pragmatics of environmental management focused on place-related meanings and their application to management (Kaltenborn, 1998; Williams & Patterson, 1996):

> Environmental problems affect environmental meanings including
> inherent (aesthetic) meanings, instrumental (goal-directed) meanings,
> cultural (symbolic) meanings, and individual (expressive) meanings.
> (Brown & Raymond, 2007: 91)

In this light, finding a form of expression for environmental (read place/landscape) meaning becomes one of finding an appropriate language (Reichelt-Brushett & Smith, 2012). While Brown & Raymond's interests are in creating a rationalistic, quantitative survey method, such a description of meaning – canvasing qualities of culture, symbolism, aesthetics, expression, etc. – lends itself strongly to the creative arts, that is,

to cultural production (Figures 1 & 2).

Figure 1. The RED*read*TREE,Midlands Highway, Tasmania. The RED*read*TREE has, since 1996, won drawn people's attention to environmental change in the region. The original RED*read*TREE was initiated by Ray Norman, responding to local Landcare concerns about lack of official attention to rural tree decline in the Midlands. It drew on the energy of a group of artists seeking opportunities to install *eco*LANDMARKS along the Midlands Highway. The REDreadTREE, as well as serving conservation and artistic needs, stimulates many different understandings and stories amongst those who encounter it. It has evolved through time, engaged communities, and has become a potent symbol of cultural production as a placemaker and placemarker. (http://redtreetasmania.blogspot.com.au; © Ray Norman, 1996-present)
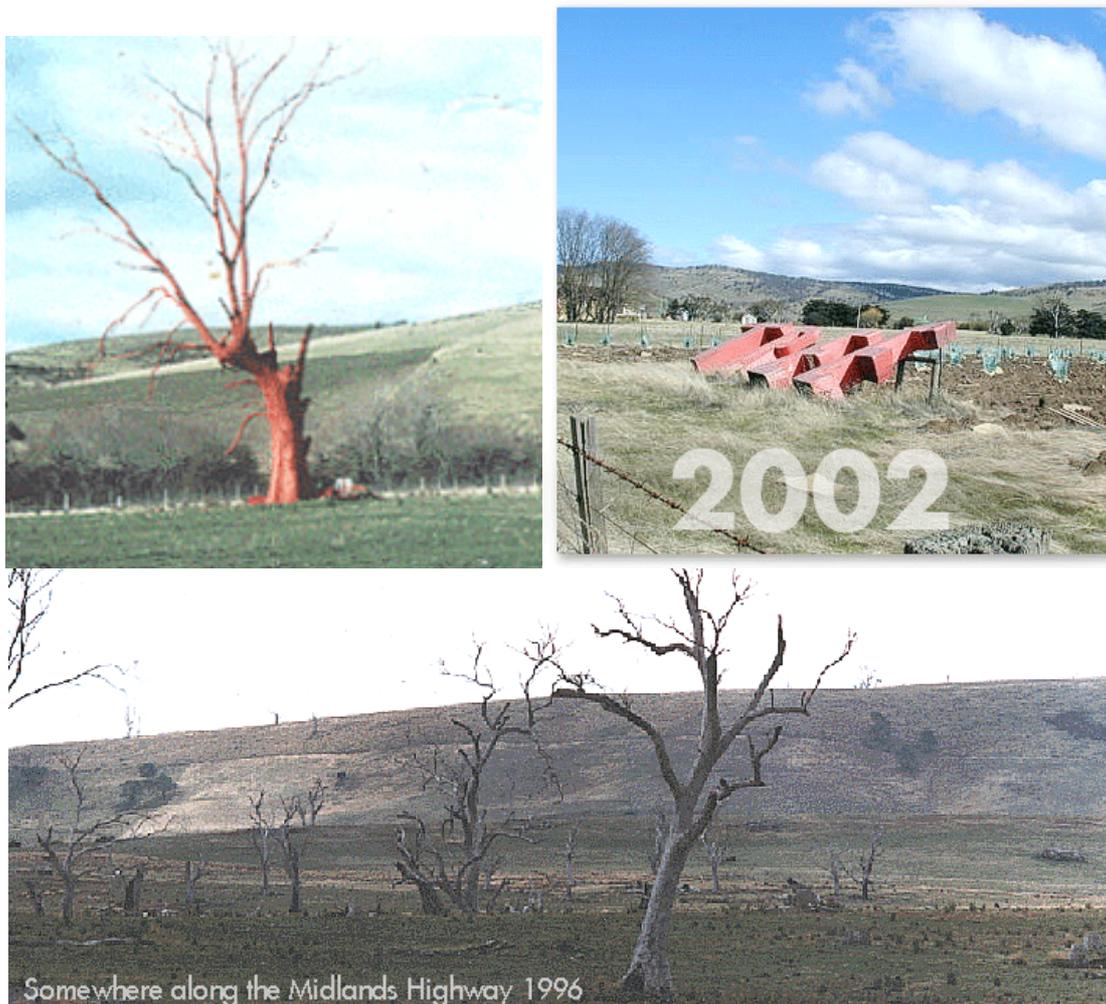
Figure 2: One Red Stump Watched: Watching one small place over time. When a logging coupe is burned, many are outraged; for others it is necessary. How better for an artist to respond to the dilemma implicit in the apparent waste than to install a watched stump? From the web site: "There are no simple answers, but looking back at this coupe it is possible to say that after 10 years the biomass present now represent a relatively small portion of what was there before the fire and a smaller proportion still than when the trees were all standing". (http://redstumpwatch.blogspot.com.au/; © Ray Norman, 1996-present; photography by Toby Muir-Wilson)
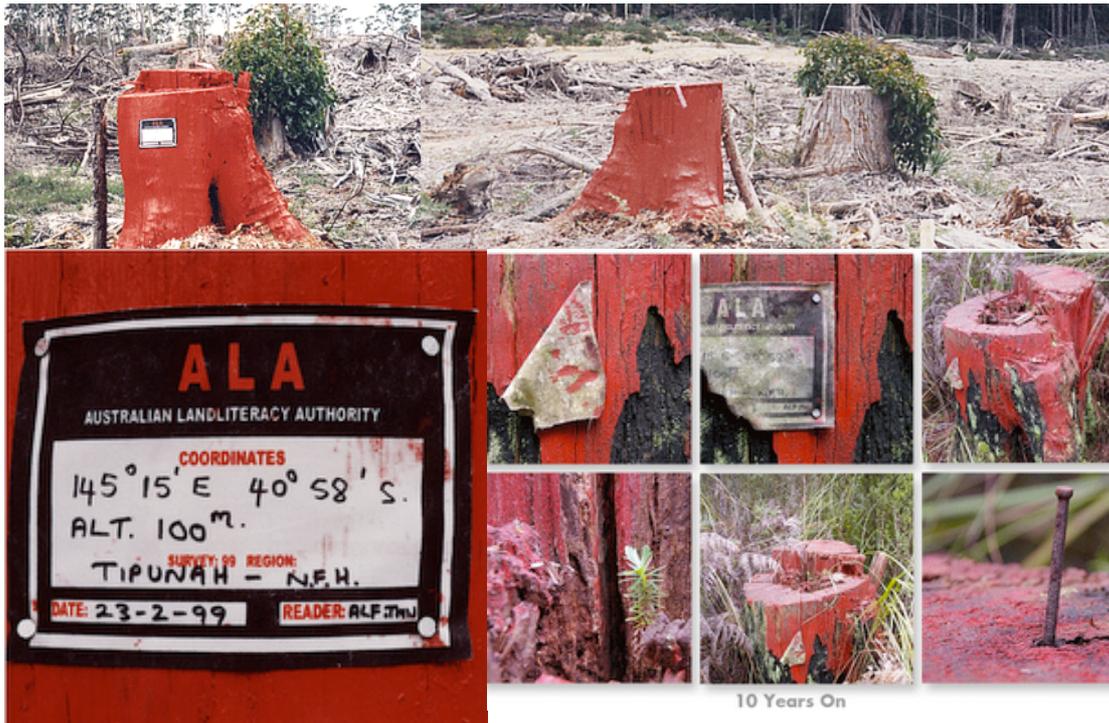
Slipping between the various manifestations in which places reveal themselves, therefore, and acknowledging the fundamental creative and cultural quality of the human relationships with place, we also note that such a relationships is complex. Knapp & Ashmore (1999: 16, 20-21) observed that:

> … just as landscape maps memory and declares identity, … it offers a key to interpreting society … the land itself, as socially constituted, plays a fundamental role in the ordering of cultural relations … landscape is neither exclusively natural nor totally cultural; it is a mediation between the two and an integral part of Bourdieu's habitus, the routine social practices within which people experience the world around them.

The real world is truly, in John Rennie Short's (1991) words, an imagined country … to be imagined and re-imagined (Figures 3-5; Textbox 1).

Figure 3: The experience of experiencing place: Wellington Waterfront//Watching (image by Bill Boyd, 2012).

Figure 4: Imagining and re-imagining: place, mythology, cultural reproduction: Every Glasgow child grew up knowing Dali (image by Bill Boyd, 2011).

Figure 5: Past, present, real, imaginary – how much do we really know about a place? Messing with Heritage (image by Bill Boyd & Euan Boyd, 2012).

Textbox 1 The remaking of place in the aftermath of the Boxing Day Tsunami 2005: Tsunami Blackwater (Bill Boyd, 2005).

Textbook Tsunami
Classroom Tsunami
Google Tsunami
Only talk the clean educated scholarly research version
Waves water forces swell crest water clean ocean speed wavelengths
Unproblematic
Cleanwater
Naturewater

Japanese woodcut Tsunami
Shines
Benevolent moon on the wave crest spray
Friendly Mount Fuji
Paternal avuncular
Fishers
Balancing boats in successful sea harvest

Breadfruit tree Tsunami
Dead and dying broken limbed infested
Speak only of the Blackwater
Bumping grinding tearing poisoning crashingboatspeoplebuildings
Against defenceless limbs
Catching sarees
To remain in upper branches flapping in a memory wind
Prayer flags for the lost

Broken boats
Ragged edged upturned stranded impaled
Crying for a floating past abandoned
Speak of the angry spirits

The responses to the call for papers

There are many other ways to introduce the relationships between talking geography – the placescape, placemaking, placemarking and the placedness that lends substance to the title of this special issue – and the cultural production we all engage in, and with, that in turn lends substance to place in our imaginings.

Whichever path we follow, however, there is a rich vein of thinking and creativity to be examined and explored. This amalgam of scholarly commentary and cultural imaginings that define, map and transform place in, in the end, that which sustains us. The engagement with sense of place, its placedness, through the agencies cultural production enriches us all. In calling for papers on the convergence of geography and cultural production, and reflecting the ethos of the journal *Coolabah*, we present here a collection of papers and imagery that reflects and focuses attention on Australian placedness, Australian landscapes, and Australian sensibilities relative to place.

As we expected, the responses to our call for papers have been diverse. To position this diversity in context, it should be noted that authors were provided a broad range of options. They were also invited to challenge the norms of academic conventions and bookishness. Topics could include reflections on, and engagement with, the visual language, performance, text, the ephemeral, digital cultural production, while visualizing and exploring the notion of placedness. Contributions to do with musings upon place, attachments to place, or placemaking and placemarking were encouraged. Papers exploring the influence of geography and place on current arts practices and cultural production, and the cultural expression of place, were welcomed. Contributions could be text based, strongly visual, or an amalgam of both, were also welcomed. Likewise, papers containing rhizomic linkages with Internet resources were sought to allow digital imagery and video material available online to be interfaced with the texts.
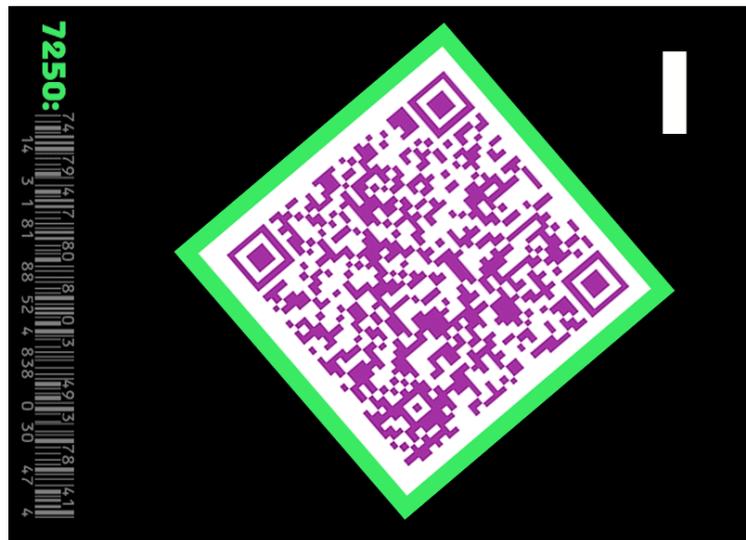
These are somewhat greedy expectations in a free and serendipitous search for the unexpected, the unlikely and the innovative. In keeping with this approach, the editors have opened a website – COOLABAH*placedness* celebrating Australian placedness – in which links to further resources are available and can be posted http://coolabahplacedness.blogspot.com.au/. In parallel to this, the editors have also set up an images page – http://coolabahplacedness-images.blogspot.com.au/ – with the intention that it will allow for dynamic, and rhizomic, linkages with images, either directly related to the papers and their authors, or to other relevant images and discussions. Some of the papers in this issue with have hyperlinks in the online and pdf versions of the papers. This will be a continuing process, so regardless of whether there are embedded hyperlinks in the paper, readers can gain access to collabahplacedness pages where there will be further links inviting readers to take a journey of their own (in much the same way as references and footnotes are designed to work in conventional papers). The web pages will also be experimenting with QR codes as points of entry (Figure 6).

Reflecting upon diversity of the expectations for this special issue, and indeed reflecting upon the diversity of cultural production likely to emerge from a concept as vast as cultural engagement with geography, the editorial team brought its own breadth of intellectual and scholarly interest to the project. Both bring decades of geographical engagement.

Bill Boyd is the Professor of Geography at Southern Cross University, and researches place, environment and landscape from several different perspectives – biophysical through to cultural. While he has spent many years examining long-term environmental change from both geological and archaeological perspectives, he is also inherently interested in cultural heritage and its construction, social relationships with landscape, and the arts.

Ray Norman is a Tasmanian-based artist, blogger, researcher, community networker and cultural jammer, with a background in studio jewelry and metalsmithing. He has been involved in the initiation of speculative community placemaking-cum-placemarking projects through interventionist cultural production.

Figure 6. QR code – quick response code – example (images by Ray Norman).

QR*demo*

HYPER*link*

This **QR***code – Quick Response Code* – takes you to a **BLOG***page* that has **30** QR Codes that in turn will take you to images online suggested by **DAVID HANSEN** relative to the **'Colonial Gaze'** in operation in **VDL (Tasmania)** in the context of Tasmania being *a 'Colonised Place'* viewed variously from differing perspectives in the 21st C

HYPER*link*

IMAGE ONLINE: Tasmanian *maireener* shell necklace without Aboriginal provenance. Arguably of ambiguous "authenticity' and circumstantially attributed to Hobart's 19th/20th C shell necklace trade; euphemistically known as "Hobart Necklaces" *(Image: Graphic Ray Norman, photographer unknown, source eBAY) …. Click here to go to the image*

The contributions

The problem with text – unlike either place or landscape – is its linearity. The papers need to go in order, despite any order being fallacious. Be that as it may, we can cluster the contributions approximately by form of cultural production: no significance is attached to order.

Film

Two contributions have addressed relationships of place engaged through film. Anna Blagrove's "***Red Dog*: Film of the Year**" engages the legend of the outback, through its emblematic central character, the Red Dog: "somebody who lives and breathes this vastness and desolation … somebody that has red dust stuck up their nose, and in their

eyes and in their ears and *up their arses*! … somebody that represents the Pilbara in all of us … Drawing on universal themes of loyalties and placedness, Anna argues the power of Red Dog in creating an emerging filmic legacy for the outback.

Drawing, on the other hand, a powerfully established film legacy, Picnic at Hanging Rock, Jytte Holmqvist's contribution, "**Contrasting cultural landscapes and spaces in Peter Weir's film Picnic at Hanging Rock (1975), based on Joan Lindsay's 1967 novel with the same title**" explores the relationship between contrasting cultures and cultural spaces within a rural Australian. Considering the tensions between scenic and human beauty, Jytte describes a feeling of "uncanny uncertainty" that permeates the film and the book that contributes to a Gothic conception of the Australian landscape that both attracts and repels visitors.

Visual arts

Remaining with visual expression, five contributions engage the visual arts. Anna Dorrington, as a new Australian, provides an exploratory essay, "**My immigrant plight or the question of 49/51**", on her art-making as a form of placemaking and placemarking at the interface between her home of origin – Germany – and her home of choice – Australia. "I am an immigrant"' she tells us, "I am happy here now, or so I tell myself. So why is it that I have to go back to the old country once a year in order to cleanse my sentimental blockages? I am always glad to come back to Australia, after a month or so in the old country, I am thoroughly sick of the old ways by then." Her essay describes an evolving sense of place, her art allowing her to understand the pattern of her life and, in her words, "in some way even take part in the creation of a new fabric".

Stephen Copland's "**Border Protection**" also addresses the tensions of migration and place. Drawing on the 2009 Macquarie University Gallery exhibition, Raft –The Drifting Border (2002-2004), Stephen examines the lighthouse as metaphor to provoke the audience to consider human rights. The installation, according to Stephen, reflects changing attitudes to the Australian coast, especially with a division surrounding the asylum seeker debate.

Seth Keen, in his contribution "**Purrumbete Verandah, 2008**", also examines the changing expression of place through time. Revisiting Eugene von Guerard's 1858 painting of Purrumbete, in rural Victoria, through his work with video, and grounded on the Australian iconic placemarkers, the verandah and fishermen, Seth explores the essential relationships between people and place that define placemaking and placemarking. "**C**aught up in the tranquility of this location", Seth explains, "I slipped into the pace of the fishermen and their interaction with Lake Purrumbete."

Rob Garbutt and Moya Costello's contribution "**Wood for the Trees**" continue the theme of metaphor, extending it to expression of the dynamic relationship between wood, trees and people. Describing the 2011 Wood for the Trees exhibition at the Lismore Regional Gallery, Rob and Moya provoke a discussion about place and resource, fired by their intentional "misreading the aphorism "Can't see the wood for the trees"" … to invoke a reading of the word "*wood* for the resource rather than the collective *wood[s]*, [that] implies conservation, preservation, and the need for sustaining the originating resource".

Our final visual arts-based contribution, Darren Jorgensen's "**Art History in Remote Aboriginal Art Centres**", also examines the effects of history on the relationships between art and place. Reflecting on the need to move from the colonial foundations of art history – "that art history must revise its nationalistic methodologies to construct more international histories of art" – Darren advocates a very geographical solution. Rather than turning to the (metropolitan) museums and art galleries that have until now dominated art history thinking, he suggests that remote art centres offer the "dynamic opportunities for doing twenty-first century art history". Such centres and their archives provide an opportunity to work through the colonial legacies of remote Australian Aboriginal artists, and, in doing so, create a deeper sense of Australian place.

Poetry

Three contributions examine placemaking and placemarking through poetry. Marsha Berry opens the poetic theme – one of journeys – with her contribution "**Being There: Poetic Landscapes**". Her evocative essay on her journeys – she references hodology study, the study of paths – in the Pilbara, in which she expanded her poetry mapping project approach to recording sense of place amongst local writers. She describes her ability to document what she calls "visceral intersubjective experiences of these places, of being there together", he help her share, empathically, the writers' sense of landscape. The result is an essay on exploration of connections and flows between poetic expressions, places and landscapes.

Bill Boyd's "**(Hardly) anyone listening? Writing silent geography**" continues the theme of personal journey, by drawing on J. Douglas Porteous' call for geographical poetry as a truer expression of place than conventional geographical prose. In charting geographic encounters over the last decade and across the world, Bill, as a new Australian suggests that his turn to poetry has enhanced his geographical sense and sensibility. More powerfully, however, the poetic journey provided glimpses into his own experience of geographical displacement and re-invention as a migrant Australian, an experience encountered by many new Australians.

To close the poetic contributions, Terri Merlyn contributes two of her poems, **Narrabeen Dreaming** and **Christmas Tree**. In Narabeen Dreaming, Terri takes us to a place we have all been, a gentle untroubled past, a summer, a childhood. Her words evoke a place all readers can identify with, a very Australian place. Christmas Tree, on the other hand return to themes of ambivalence experienced by all new Australians, the tension inherent in a summer Christmas, the turn so many Australian make to placemarking anchoring Christmas around a native, rather than boreal tree.

Prose

Prose takes many forms, so it is unsurprising to receive many contributions examining the nature of place. Janie Conway Herron opens this section with her contribution, "**In Your Dreams: Travelling the road to Mandalay**" that draws on poetry, prose and critique to explore the meaning of Burma from a writerly perspective. In doing so, she honours the refugee women she has been working with since 2007. Her essay

demonstrates the possibility of delving into the soul of a place one cannot visit physically; she transcends travel writing to meditate on the Burma of her imagination. In doing so, she puts on record ways in which, in her words, "narrative and advocacy, storytelling and capacity building have played a part in the democratic changes that are now taking place after more than sixty years of civil war inside Burma". Here is a powerful case for the essential role of cultural production in placescape, placemaking, placemarking and placedness.

Robert Horne contribution comprises two excerpts from his novel in "**Native Culturation of the Environment and *The Glass Harpoon* by Robert Horne**". Based in the early days of the colony of South Australia, Rob describes two skirmishes between local tribes, as understood by two settlers. These descriptions, both of the tribal activities and the settler observers, while they could be taken as simple narrative or neutral portraits of historical events, play a more important role. Rob uses his prose to expose the myth of terra nullius, and thus provides a powerful cultural vehicle to examine a most fundamental aspect of Australian placemaking and placemarking, the displacement of the original occupants.

Tom Drahos contributes two essays. In "**The Imagined Desert**" Tom provides a closely argued analysis of the Australian Outback as an imagined space, drawing on three key texts (Joseph Conrad's 1899 *Heart of Darkness*, Greg Mclean's 2005 horror film *Wolf Creek* and Ted Kotcheff's 1971 cinematic adaptation of Kenneth Cook's novel *Wake in Fright*), and is informed by theories of the separation the physical and representational world. Considered as a culturally produced text, the Outback, Tom argues, has played, and continues to play essential roles in Australian settler understanding of the continent. From an essential colonial role of demarcating "the subdued wilderness and the frightful unknown", through to a place to banish "otherness" and against which to measure coastal progress, the Outback is the hyperreal label that has replaced the physical tract of land known as Central Australia.

Tom vigourously demonstrates this theme in "**Patterns in the Dust**", a disturbing fictional account – Tom claims that the Outback is "ripe with pickings for a young writer with a predilection for the uncanny and the bloody" – with an unsettling account of a traveller in the Outback. The heart of darkness appears to be mutable, the boundaries between the author, the land, the vastness, the disconnectedness, the ghosts and the real demons, become inseparable. All that remains is familiar to the Outback visitor: "The road stretched out beyond the apex of the horizon and I saw a car, a rental van, travel up its length, glinting, receding until it was merely a point of light itself. It vanished, and everything was still."

Tessa Chudy's contribution "**Heaven and Hell at the Paradise Motel**" continues the exploration of landscape as Gothic. While Tom does not specifically reference the Outback as Gothic, Tessa overtly understands this characterisation of landscape: "The dark, the strange, the sinister and the perverse lurk in the shadows of everyday reality, but also how these elements intertwined within the landscape". The essay is built around extracts from Tessa's novel, and develops an argument of sense of landscape as an ongoing and self-contained narrative, the result of the projection of human concepts, fears and desires. In doing so, Tessa gives landscape a character role; as for other characters, she speculates, "the landscape absorbs the history and stories that are laid over it, and, in much the same way, genre and its archetypes and narratives are absorbed

into the landscape".

The final contribution focussing on writing takes a very different turn. Bill Boyd, Denise Rall, Peter Ashley, Wendy Laird and David Lloyd's "**Finding a home: Harnessing biographical narrative in teaching and learning in cultural geography**" presents a conversation in which the participants – university staff and students – identify their intellectual placedness through the acts of reflective narrative and writing. This is a creative form placemaking and placemarking in which participants may better understand their conceptual home. The essay concludes by claiming that the participants all became more aware of their place in the academic world.

Landscape

Four contributions, while notionally representing essays and other forms of prose as their core mode, range more widely; we have placed these under the heading "Landscape". The implication here is that, while landscape remains the subject of exploration, it also provides primary medium as a culturally constructed source of evidence. The ambiguity of this title, however, reminds us of the transcendent nature of most of the contributions in this volume, as they slip between modes of cultural production, between reality and constructedness, and between observation and speculation.

Britta Kuhlenbeck opens this section with her contribution "**Old Space and New Place: The Pilbara**". Britta's essay examines the change, over time, of the spatial concepts of a region; her use of the terms "old space" and "new place" frames her views on how space gets re-written, re-writing, she argues that imply ontological shifts. The juxtaposition of old space and new place concepts, as for other writers in this issue, spotlights cultural values, the meaning of place, a region's identity, opening these to exploration. Drawing on concepts of spatiality, historicality and sociality, "knowledge of 'old space' and 'new place' can," in Britta's words, "enrich and inspire Australian culture, enhance cross-cultural understanding and break new ground in establishing a unique reconciliatory and conservation ethic". This is a form of placemaking and placemarking required by any country with a colonial history in need of reworking.

Remaining within the landscape, Emily Bullock's "**Snapshots from a West Coast Death Trip**" performs what Emily describes as "a 'death trip' through the west coast … providing a psychogeographic tour through the material traces of what … 'lost places'". Reflecting on the weird and wonderful, the essay charts the region's memory of multiple colonial traumas, Indigenous displacement, convict punishment, mining, a place where the effects of traumatic pasts are ongoing: "It is in the encounter with the derelict country grotesquely disfigured by mining, with places that are subject to the full, violent forces of history, that this badness is most palpable". Emily's rich and evocative collection of quotes, images and impressions demonstrates the importance of both the traumatic pasts themselves on place, but also their displacing effects, effects commonly overlooked in historical narratives of place.

Remaining in Tasmania, Ray Norman's contribution, "**Interrogating Placedness: Tasmanian Disconnections**"*,* interrogates Tasmanianness and its placemaking. Ray's

core argument is that Tasmanian cultural landscapes and social realities are constructed around contested and contentious imaginings of place and their histories and stories. With a focus on the role of culture in shaping place, be it, for example, via landscape, artmaking or museums, Ray presents a rich historical and contemporary record of the socio-cultural (colonial) engagement with Van Diemen's Land. He concludes with an enigmatic statement: "Still, the question hanging in the air is, does place shape culture or is it culture that shapes its place? Quite possibly it is a matter of memory."

Mary Gardiner's essay moves to another landscape, the marginal landscape of the shoreline. In "**A short historical investigation into cross cultural Australian ideas about the marine animal group Teredinidae and some socioecological consequences and options**", Mary charts the diversity of cultural knowledge of coastal resources, noting that intimate knowledge of wild estuarine and marine animals and their ecologies have been vital to the culture and sustenance of every coastal human society for millennia. Gathering of coastal resources has always been a cultural activity; the expression of knowledge has, likewise, been cultural. Surveying the history of such knowledge reminds us of the need for shifts in our relationships with nature. "The vital contribution that biology offers needs to be integrated in practical community-based social innovations," suggests Mary, "Such creation of knowledge and action must stay close to ethics informed by environmental justice. In many places of coastal Australia this would be an important change, however radical at first glance." Mary's essay is a call for a truly multi-cultural coastal landscape.

Artefacts

Three essays explore the role of artefacts and their cultural production as placemakers and placemarkers. Ray Norman opens this section of the issue with an essay on "**Necklace making and placedness in Tasmania**", in which the metaphor of the necklace provides a common theme through this account of the cultural complexity of a simple artefact. "Like a thread", Ray explains, "these necklaces join both sides of the colonial equation in revealing, ambivalent and contested stories that resonate with the new globalism … and in which questions to do with place, ownership and memory have taken on a heightened urgency". Artefacts have long been taken as markers of place; from archaeologsts and anthropologists through to contemporary sociologists, artefacts are anything but simple. Ray weaves a detailed story of the adoption and adaptation of the Tasmanian necklace, its reconstruction and reconstitution, closing on the possibilities that this artefact could be a catalyst for Aboriginal restatement of their placedness in Tasmania.

Terry Wright is an educator, and an Aboriginal designer and carver. His contribution, "**A Koori's Perspective of Place: Connections to the NSW Upper South Coast**" brings a missing voice to this collection. While many authors in this special issue have touched on matters cultural production and Australian indigeneity, Terry speaks from the inside. His essay clearly illustrates the inherent links and associations between the cultural production of artefacts, art, cultural places and landscape. He effortlessly slips from describing his own production of timber didjeridus and glass objects (including glass didjeridus), to his inspiration from traditional carvings, carved trees and petroglyphs. The latter cannot be considered in isolation, so we find ourselves being lead through Terry's own landscape, the places of his ancestors in southern New South

Wales. Terry articulates the core message of this volume, that cultural production and place, peacemaking, placemarking and placedness are intimately associated.

In the final paper on artefacts and objects, "**Reflections: Remade, Reworked, Reimagined: Sally Brown talks about place**", Sally Brown, Ray Norman and Bill Boyd reflect on Sally's work as a Tasmanian designer, maker, and artist. Through discussions of the authors' thinking of placidness, context, politics and the crafting, the works of art are seen to reflect a cultural savvy. Texture, form and production in Sally's work create a powerful sense of belonging in Tasmania, begging questions around the ways that local cultural imperatives might shape and make places they are found in, and in what ways might places shape the cultural realities that inhabit them.

Sound

To close, Margaret Trail's essay "**'And she flies! Beautiful': the dislocating geography of football sound**" draws on a long history of sound in the cultural record to present an articulation of the affective conditions of football's play. Margaret presents a light-hearted consideration of the sonorous dimension of football – in her own words, she must "scribble perhaps, since the technique will be playful and speculative, rather than bound to a precise model of representation". She draws on concepts sound-art, sonic geography, sounds-of-place and sound-as-a-place, to draft a "vision" of football which sheds light on its affective conditions. This sonic geography provides a medium in which to converge many characteristics of place: referential and symbolic markers, language, spatiality, disruptiveness; it extends the place beyond its boundaries, challenging empirical space. As such, this essay provides a metaphor for much cultural production in its role in placescape, placemaking, placemarking and placedness. Margaret offers, in closing, advice that should be adapted to all cultural engagement.

> Sonic geography [read any cultural production] presents … the opportunity to see how its play articulates across this range of interconnecting sites: concrete and invisible, referential and abstract. This in turn has the potential to extend our knowledge of football's affects … if we have the patience to listen.

Emerging themes

While the papers have been ordered by medium of cultural production (practice), they could equally have been organised by, for example, place, landscape type or theoretical framework. More importantly, however, is the underlying theme they engage; these provide access to the geographical understanding that Porteous (1984) sought to create through experiential geography. Importantly, and despite the diversity of media and topics, all the papers reflect the importance of cultural production in exploring understanding and articulating sense of place, and, for many authors, mediating their own ambiguities about place and New Australians, drawing on explorations of the relationships and tensions between, for example, the local and the regional/national, the here and the there, and tendencies to adopt local sense of place as national icon. As a first take on an overall sense of theme, three broad categories are identified: belonging

to place; tensions inherent in New Australian construction of place meaning; and the cultural creation of meaning and challenges to authority.

Belonging to place

Many of the papers explore issue of belonging, albeit from quite different perspectives.

Anna Blagrove's "*Red Dog*: Film of the Year" provides a comfortable vision, and almost stereotypical vision, while Seth Keen's "Purrumbete Verandah, 2008" explores the potential to draw on history to create that comfort.

Tom Drahos' "The Imagined Desert" and "Patterns in the Dust" present a disturbing picture of the inability to feel a sense of belonging in one of Australia's iconic landscapes the outback, while Jytte Holmqvist's "Contrasting cultural landscapes and spaces in Peter Weir's film Picnic at Hanging Rock (1975), based on Joan Lindsay's 1967 novel with the same title" examines the same issues explored in one of Australia's iconic books of literature.

Tessa Chudy's "Heaven and Hell at the Paradise Motel" and Terri Merlyn's poems, Narrabeen Dreaming and Christmas Tree explore the ambiguities of New Australians' sense of belonging, and the needs to adapt to a non-European environment.

On the other hand, Marsha Berry's "Being There: Poetic Landscapes" describes a cultural process for establishing just such connection and belonging; Boyd et al.'s "Finding a home: Harnessing biographical narrative in teaching and learning in cultural geography" reinforces the potential role of writing in finding such connection. Sally Brown, Ray Norman and Bill Boyd's "Reflections: Remade, Reworked, Reimagined: Sally Brown talks about place" present a case for the possibility, through cultural production, to develop and articulate a new form of sense of belonging.

Tensions inherent in New Australian construction of place meaning

Tessa Chudy's and Terri Merlyn's contributions introduce notions of tension for New Australians in their sense of geography, sense of being. Many of the other contributors examine this tension.

Anna Dorrington's "My immigrant plight or the question of 49/51" tackles this directly as a migrant Australian, torn, as so many Australians are, between an old home and a new home, a theme also explored in Bill Boyd's (Hardly) anyone listening? Writing silent geography". Both talk of the role of cultural production in helping them resolve, or at least advance towards an resolution, of this tension, a role also well illustrated in Janie Conway Herron's "In Your Dreams: Travelling the road to Mandalay".

Stephen Copland's "Border Protection", on the other hand, exposes a darker side of this tension, the need for protection against outsiders, an ironic Australian preoccupation with new incomers.

While many of the contributors are reflecting on their own personal sense of place, several also explore issues of the relationship between people and environment, and the effects this has on the construction of the place and its meaning.

Robert Horne's "Native Culturation of the Environment and *The Glass Harpoon* by Robert Horne" engages the earliest European contacts with the original Australians, providing comment on the loss of social, cultural and environmental conditions essential for Aboriginal Australians to maintain their sense of place.

Terry Wright's "A Koori's Perspective of Place: Connections to the NSW Upper South Coast" clearly explains why this is so important. Several other authors, while not dealing explicitly with Aboriginal Australian relationships, reflect on the need to return to traditional knowledge of place and resources;

Mary Gardiner "A short historical investigation into cross cultural Australian ideas about the marine animal group Teredinidae and some socioecological consequences and options", Rob Garbutt and Moya Costello's "Wood for the Trees" and Britta Kuhlenbeck's "Old Space and New Place: The Pilbara" examine the multiplicity of meaning attached to landscapes, natural resources and their places, and the ways in which their cultural (re)construction has limited our capacity to manage such resources well; all are a call for an enrichening of our cultural understanding of land.

The cultural creation of meaning and challenges to authority

Inherent in many of the contributions is an exposure of the effects of history on the creation of contemporary meanings of place.

While Emily Bullock's "Snapshots from a West Coast Death Trip" is perhaps the most blatant statement, Britta Kuhlenbeck's "Old Space and New Place: The Pilbara" and Ray Norman "Necklace making and placedness in Tasmania" also make the complexity of historic intervention in placemaking clear.

While for some, this is a matter of exposing the role of history and its effects, for others, such a critique provides the basis for a political approach. Both Darren Jorgensen's "Art History in Remote Aboriginal Art Centres" and Ray Norman's "Interrogating Placedness: Tasmanian Disconnections" directly challenge the authority, both arguing the need for change in our cultural institutions' arrangements for creating and presenting stories of history and cultural identity.

Conclusion

This special issue records expressions of placescape, placemarking, placemarking and placedness that are, in the conventional geographer's language, are non-conventional, subjective and personal. They are, nevertheless, powerful, all starting from the acknowledgement that the cultural production of place is of vital importance in social terms. They are, to quote Boyd in this volume "filtered geographies that could be

emerging from the interstitial spaces that inhabit the place of interaction between cultural meanings (Bhabha, 1994)".

As such, the papers variously explore constructed possibilities, rather than objective realities, although many of the authors might argue that they indeed exploring constructed realities. In response to our opening call for papers, they all reflect well Porteous' desire for an experiential geography. They tease out the tensions inherent in landscapes as cultural constructs, be it the Gothic of outback Australia, the ambiguities of history and history making, the neither-her-nor-there of new Australians, the protectiveness of established new Australians … Despite Margaret Trail's call for "the patience to listen", and despite the richness of expression portrayed throughout this volume, all the essays presented here acknowledge, and validate, the pragmatic in Porteous (1984: 373): "The publication of geographical insights in nontraditional forms could be the first step towards the goal of silent place appreciation".

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Endnote

There are many other Red Trees: Jon Bauer, for example, recently created another
Red Tree in England, without any apparent knowledge of the Midlands Red Tree:
"As we finished [painting]", he says, "the sun came out and this stunning old tree,
killed by the building of the motorway, basked in its revivified glory. The red
shone. More and more people pulled over. Traffic backed up further than we could
see. And I didn't feel so powerless any more." (Bauer, 2012: 38).

Acknowledgements

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