ANU/Stanford Collaboration: Creating Countries

Convenors: John Carty (ANU) & Doug Bird (Stanford)

The HRC and the Stanford Humanities Centre entered into a collaboration to host workshops and facilitate scholarly exchange in 2011-2012. In 2011 Kylie Message, John Carty and Peter Veth participated in the first workshop entitled ‘Trails of Fire: Signatures of Cultural and Environmental Transformations on the American and Australian Frontiers’ – held at Stanford. In August 2012 the ANU hosted a return symposium entitled Creating Countries: Comparative Wests in Australia and the US. Creating Countries was an attempt to build a dialogue - across cultures, across disciplines, and between science and the arts – around the questions of how we ‘story’ the land we live in. How we, in Australia and the USA, create Countries out of environmental, cultural, and historical complexities.

Participants in the symposium include scholars, artists and cultural custodians from the US: Jon Christensen (Bill Lane Centre for the American West), Bill Fox (Centre for Art + Environment, Nevada Museum of Art), Ursula Heise (Environmental Humanities Project), Doug Bird, Rebecca Bliege Bird, Brian Codding, Stephen Wells (Desert Research Institute), David Zeanah, Lois Connor (North Fork Mono, basket weaver), Dyann Eckstein (Chukchansi, basket weaver), Ron Goode (North Fork Mono elder), Frank Lake (USFS), Don Hankins (Cal State Chico). Martu participants from Western Australia included Nola Taylor and Curtis Taylor. Australian and ANU-associated participants in the conference include Andrew Sayers (National Museum of Australia), Franchesca Cubillo (National Gallery of Australia/ANU), Howard Morphy, Jim Bowler (University of Melbourne), Louise Hamby, Julie Gough, Bill Gammage, Hamish Dalley, Patrick Wolfe (La Trobe/Stanford), Rohan Wilson (novelist), Greg Lehman (University of Tasmania) and John Carty.

After the symposium, the American contingent visited Martu country in Western Australia to develop their own cultural, environmental and personal exchange in Australia.