



Australian  
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**Creative Practices in Heritage and Museums Network on Culture,  
Memory, and Innovation (CHAMNET):  
2025 Conference and launch  
27 June 2025**

Morning Session (9:00am–12:30pm)		
Time	Session	Details
9:00-9:30am	Welcome and Launch of the Network	
	Opening remarks	Yujie Zhu, Centre for Heritage and Museum Studies, ANU Melathi Saldin, Deakin University
	Launch of Network	Sam Bennett, Associate Dean, College of Arts and Social Sciences, ANU
	Remarks	Kate Mitchell, Director, Research School of Humanities and the Arts, ANU
9:30-11:30am	PhD Presentations – Morning Panel (4 x 30 mins)	
9:30-10:00am	<i>Refugee Cultural Heritage and Connected Rights in International Law</i>	Sherine Al Shallah, PhD Candidate (UNSW)
10:00-10:30am	<i>Methodology and Positionality in Heritage Research</i>	Bryan Levina Viray, PhD Candidate (ANU)
10:30-11:00am	<i>New Chinese Community Perspectives and Diverse Visitor Experiences in Australian Museums</i>	Zhuoting Li, PhD Candidate (ANU)
11:00-11:30am	<i>Relevance and Trust: Collecting Practices in Culture-Specific Museums</i>	Vanessa Shia, PhD Candidate (Deakin University)
11:30-12:30pm	Career Development Panel – Industry Pathways <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Mathew Trinca, ANU (15 minutes)</li><li>Anna Wong, Director, Canberra Museums and Gallery (CMAG) (15 minutes)</li><li>Open discussion (30 minutes)</li></ul>	
12:30-2:00pm	Lunch Break	
Afternoon Session (2:00pm-5:00 pm)		
2:00-3:00pm	Career Development Panel – Academic Pathways <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Lorinda Cramer, Deakin University (15 minutes)</li><li>Lucas Lixinski, UNSW (15 minutes)</li><li>Open discussion (30 minutes)</li></ul>	
3:00-4:30pm	PhD Presentations – Afternoon Panel (3 x 30 mins)	
3:00-3:30pm	<i>Designing Respectful Extended-Reality Interactions with Vietnamese Heritage: A</i>	Nhu Bui, PhD Candidate (RMIT)

	<i>Practice-Based Inquiry into the Sacred and the Mundane</i>	
<b>3:30-4:00pm</b>	<i>The Politics of Difficult Heritage in Museums: Slavery History in Ghana</i>	Huzeima Mahamadu, PhD Candidate (ANU)
<b>4:00-4:30pm</b>	<i>Moving Cultures and Searching Ethical Methods of Transmissions</i>	Natalia Antiqueira, PhD Candidate (UNSW)
<b>4:30-5:00pm</b>	Final Reflections and Closing Discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reflections from participants</li> <li>• Feedback, next steps for the network</li> <li>• Thank you and wrap-up</li> </ul>	

## Background and Purpose of CHAMNET (Creative Practices in Heritage and Museums Network on Culture, Memory, and Innovation)

The Creative Practices in Heritage and Museums Network is a cross-university initiative that supports and connects emerging researchers across Australia working in the fields of heritage, museums, cultural studies, and creative practice.

Grounded in collaboration and knowledge exchange, the network provides a platform for early-career researchers to move beyond the boundaries of individual projects. It fosters interdisciplinary dialogue, encourages methodological experimentation, and creates opportunities to engage with new theories, literatures, and perspectives.

More than just a network, this is a space for active exchange, peer support, and community building. Our annual informal conference brings together emerging scholars from diverse institutions and disciplines in a welcoming environment to share work-in-progress, explore shared challenges, and expand their research horizons through open conversation and mutual learning.

Importantly, the network also supports career development across both academic and industry pathways. Through informal conferences, workshops, and mentoring, participants gain insights into building research careers, navigating grant and publication processes, collaborating across sectors, and exploring professional opportunities in museums, cultural institutions, and the creative industries.

We aim to nurture a vibrant, inclusive, and forward-looking community of emerging scholars committed to reimagining heritage and museum practices through critical, creative, and collaborative research.

## APPENDIX

### Abstracts From PhD Candidates

**1. Sherine Al Shallah**, PhD Candidate from the University of New South Wales

**Title:** *Refugee Cultural Heritage and Connected Rights in International Law*

**Email:** [s.alshallah@unsw.edu.au](mailto:s.alshallah@unsw.edu.au)

**Abstract**

The research studies the legal regimes for the protection and safeguarding of refugee cultural heritage and the rights of refugees to their cultural heritage, assembles an integrated framework, highlights framework gaps in protection, and proposes a mechanism to attain legislated rights. International cultural heritage law scholarship engages insufficiently with refugees, whereas international refugee law scholarship does not engage with cultural heritage. The research systemically integrates international cultural heritage law, international human rights law and international refugee law as they apply at each part of the refugee journey into a holistic framework that integrates all international law applicable to refugee cultural heritage protection and refugee rights to cultural heritage.

**2. Bryan Levina Viray**, PhD Candidate from the Australian National University

**Title:** *Methodology and Positionality in Heritage Research*

**Email:** [Bryan.Viray@anu.edu.au](mailto:Bryan.Viray@anu.edu.au)

**Abstract**

Drawing from my PhD research on commemorative activities in Marinduque, Philippines, this presentation reflects on my journey uncovering the complexities beneath seemingly celebratory events. Initially, I viewed local commemorations of the Battles of Paye and Pulang Lupa as celebratory. However, as I examined how Intangible Cultural Heritage practices intersect with national narratives and local political relations, I discovered a different narrative. Certain families leveraged these commemorations to gain influence, revealing intricate social hierarchies and reinforcing existing power structures. This shift in understanding prompted me to reflect on my own positionality as a researcher and the impact of my personal connection on my research. Through this reflexivity, I highlight the importance of looking beyond surface-level narratives to grasp the socio-political context. In this presentation, I aim to show how our perspectives can shift as we uncover new insights, challenging us to think critically about how we remember and celebrate our past.

**3. Zhuoting Li**, PhD Candidate from the Australian National University

**Title:** *New Chinese Community Perspectives and Diverse Visitor Experiences in Australian Museums*

**Email:** [Zhuoting.Li@anu.edu.au](mailto:Zhuoting.Li@anu.edu.au)

**Abstract**

This study will examine the complex interaction between Australian museums, new Chinese migrant communities, and diverse visitors within Australia's changing multicultural society. The relationship between Australian museums and new Chinese migrant communities within the context of a changing multicultural society. Since the 1970s, with Australia's focus on educational and skilled migration, the influx of new Chinese migrants has reshaped the migrant demographic and had a significant impact on Australia's socio-cultural diversity. Despite claims of inclusive practices by Australian museums, engagement with Chinese migrant communities often remains constrained by homogenising or exoticising perspectives. Through interviews with museum professionals and community members, as well as visitor responses in the Chinese heritage-related exhibitions, this study will analyse to what extent Australian museum practices effectively engage new Chinese migrant communities and explore cross-cultural interpretations of Chinese-Australian heritage. It aims to identify the issues that may either impede or facilitate engagement, and what that engagement might mean to different Chinese migrants and to the museums themselves.

**4. Vanessa Shia**, PhD Candidate from Deakin University

**Title:** *Relevance and Trust: Collecting Practices in Culture-Specific Museums*

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**Abstract**

Culture-specific museums serve many purposes. One of these is to create a space where people who identify with the cultural heritage represented by the museum can feel a sense of belonging. The question is how these museums remain relevant and trusted as the communities they represent grow more diverse and internally complex. A key aspect of this question lies in collecting practices, including the decisions about what objects and stories are preserved, displayed, and prioritised. In this talk, I reflect on this question through a case study of the Museum of Chinese Australian History (MCAH) in Melbourne. At the MCAH, such decisions directly shape how the museum builds meaningful connections with its diverse community. These choices can affirm belonging or highlight tensions around representation. This talk invites

discussion around how culture-specific museums can continue to serve as trusted, responsive spaces, anchored in history, yet open to the complexities of the present.

**5. Nhu Bui**, PhD Candidate from Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT)

**Title:** *Designing Respectful Extended-Reality Interactions with Vietnamese Heritage: A Practice-Based Inquiry into the Sacred and the Mundane*

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**Abstract**

PhD project examines how Extended Reality (XR), namely Augmented Reality (AR) and Virtual Reality (VR) – can be ethically and emotionally engaged to represent Vietnamese intangible cultural heritage. Grounded in practice-based design, autoethnography, sensory ethnography, and qualitative feedback from targeted playtesting and interviews, the research delves into the interactivity design of two case study prototypes: the profane street-vendor carts and sacred family altars. It investigates how digital rituals can either respect or disrupt culturally embedded meanings tied to ancestral memory, domestic spirituality, or street food culture and everyday public life.

Drawing on the candidate's lived experience as a Vietnamese researcher and digital media practitioner raised in Ho Chi Minh City and now based in Melbourne, the project uses autoethnographic reflection to navigate cross-cultural displacement and evolving familial rituals. Situated within postcolonial feminist theory, digital heritage studies, and contemporary design research, the research emphasises reflexivity and embraces emotion in scholarship. The outcome is twofold: (1) a provisional set of ethical design principles – a “visual map” for respectful XR heritage – and (2) an articulated “process as protocol” model driven by autoethnography. Together, these contributions offer museums, designers, and scholars a culturally sensitive framework for digitising intangible heritage along the sacred–mundane spectrum.

**6. Huzeima Mahamadu**, PhD Candidate from Australian National University

**Title:** *The Politics of Difficult Heritage in Museums: Slavery History in Ghana*

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**Abstract**

This study explores how the history of Trans-Atlantic Slavery (TAS) is interpreted and represented in Ghanaian museums, focusing specifically on the Cape Coast Castle Museum, Elmina Castle Museum, and Ussher Fort Museum. It examines how power

dynamics influence the selective remembering and forgetting of slavery's past, often reflecting contemporary socio-economic and political agendas. Employing qualitative methods, including interviews, focus groups, and document analysis, the research investigates whose memories are included or excluded in these narratives, why such choices are made, and how they are interpreted and presented to the public in museums. The study also evaluates the policy implications of engaging diverse stakeholders, such as local communities, diaspora groups, and museum officials, in fostering more inclusive, dialogic, and reconciliatory approaches to slavery heritage. By addressing existing gaps in the literature, particularly within African contexts, this research contributes valuable insights into the politics of memory and slavery representation in postcolonial museum practices.

## **7. Natalia Antiqueira, UNSW**

**Title:** *Moving Cultures and Searching Ethical Methods of Transmissions*

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### **Abstract**

Natalia Antiqueira's research lies at the intersection of applied ethics, culture and living heritage. Her study investigates whether cultural exchange can happen without appropriation, focusing on how intangible cultural heritage is preserved, transmitted, and shared in contexts of displacement, colonisation, and migration. Grounded in ethics, the project explores how cultural practices evolve without being frozen by conservation, and how transmission methods shape continuity and representation. Natalia teaches cultural heritage law and ethics at UNSW and has taught at Deakin's cultural heritage degree. She contributes to sitting at the committee member of Australia NSC-ICH, as a member of ICICH and expert member of the ISC on Water & Heritage.