

## **Portraits of the Landscape**

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Abstract:

Portraits are defined in part by their aim to reveal and represent the inner ‘character’ of a person. Because landscapes are typically viewed as lacking such an ‘inner life,’ one might assume that landscapes cannot be the subject of portraiture. However, the notion of landscape character plays an important role in landscape aesthetics and preservation. In this essay, I argue that landscape artworks can thus share in portraiture’s goal of capturing character, and in doing so present us with essential tools for revealing the often ineffable character of place. I explain the implications of this view for debates about scientific cognitivism in environmental aesthetics, representing the narrative dimension of landscape character and integrity, and appeals to the character of place in historic and environmental preservation.

### **Introduction**

A defining feature of portraiture is its endeavor to reveal and represent the ‘character’ of a person (Freeland 2007, 98; West 2004, 21). Because landscapes are typically viewed as lacking an ‘inner life,’ one might assume that landscapes cannot be the subject of portraiture. However, the invocation of character as a quality used to describe landscapes is ubiquitous.<sup>1</sup> In this essay, I argue that landscape artwork can share in portraiture’s goal of capturing character, and offers essential tools for revealing the often ineffable character of place. This argument presents new resources for the understanding and expression of landscapes aesthetics that hold implications for landscape preservation and engagement.

The term ‘landscape’ is equivocal between a representation and that which it represents: landscape is a view of a landscape (Andrews 1999, 15; Malpas 2011, 5). This is not simply a terminological problem, as we will see, but for the sake of terminological clarity, I will refer to artistic

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<sup>1</sup> It has even been formalized in the Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) protocol in the United Kingdom.

representations of landscapes as ‘landscape artworks’ and to the subjects of such artworks as simply ‘landscapes.’ I will call landscape artworks that function as portraits ‘landscape portraits.’

My aim is not primarily to insist that the definition of portraiture must allow for the inclusion of landscapes as subjects, though I think this is true. Rather, I want to show how thinking of landscape artworks in relation to the distinctive work that portraits can do reveals the often overlooked role that landscape portraits can play in shaping and facilitating our relationship to place.

### **Character in Portraits and Landscapes**

According to Cynthia Freeland’s initial definition of portraiture, ‘a portrait is a representation or depiction of a living being as a unique individual possessing (1) a recognizable physical body along with (2) an inner life, i.e. some sort of character and/or psychological or mental states’ (Freeland 2010, 5). She later suggests a third condition that animals, for instance, do not meet: (3) ‘the subject consciously presents a self to be conveyed in the resulting artwork’ (Freeland 2010, 17; Cf. West 2004, 21). Landscapes, like animals, will not be able to satisfy this third condition either, at least on typical Western readings of the land.<sup>2</sup> However, what motivates this third condition seems to be Freeland’s particular reading of the first two conditions, where character is glossed in terms of capturing subjectivity and an inner mental life.<sup>3</sup> As she puts it elsewhere: ‘the painter seeks to convey the subject’s unique essence, character, thoughts and feelings, interior life, spiritual condition,

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<sup>2</sup> In contrast, consider objections to the idea of cultural landscape that deny ‘agency’ to the land, such as Plumwood (2006). She also discusses various non-Western perspectives that grant agency and subjectivity to the land.

<sup>3</sup> This is part of Freeland’s intriguing observation that the philosophical significance of portraiture lies, at least in part, in how it addresses the mind/body problem (Freeland 2007, 95).

individuality, personality, or emotional complexity...ultimately we expect a good portrait to convey the person's subjectivity' (Freeland 2007, 98). This ultimately results in Freeland's fourth condition on portraiture: '(4) Manifestation of a person's "essence" or "air"' (Freeland 2010, 49).<sup>4</sup>

However, unless we assume upfront that the subjects of portraiture must have an interior life, there is nothing about the idea of capturing a subject's particular essence or character that entails requirements of subjectivity or personhood. Indeed, the evocation of character is commonplace in discussion of both the natural and built environment, and like the character of persons and animals, is understood as a component of a landscape's distinctiveness.

According to Emily Brady, 'the "aesthetic character" of a landscape or environment' is its *particularity*, 'the particular aesthetic qualities that make it distinctive and distinguish it from others' (Brady 2002, 75). The idea that the character of a landscape is what makes it distinctive is echoed by Steven Semes in the context of architecture and the built environment. He writes that character 'is the culmination of the other [architectural] principles, because it coordinates them all to arrive at a specific concrete combination that distinguishes this building or place from all others' (Semes 2009, 66). While it does seem that aesthetic character plays an important role in differentiating landscapes, Semes perhaps oversells the point. While the aesthetic character of a landscape may well distinguish it from a generic landscape, or from others of a different character, this need not entail that the

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<sup>4</sup> For a critique of Freeland's account, see Maes (2015).

aesthetic character of a landscape need be *unique*.<sup>5</sup> Certain coastal landscapes, for instance, might have a common character that differentiates them from desert landscapes, but not necessarily from each other.

Following Sibley, Brady defines aesthetic character as ‘a kind of second-order aesthetic quality or property, standing in relation to first-order aesthetic qualities much as first-order ones stand to nonaesthetic properties. Aesthetic character could be said to be an emergent quality from constituent aesthetic qualities, the overall quality that gives a landscape, artwork, or person a distinctive look or feel’ (Brady 2002, 78). So, while a landscape may not have an ‘inner life,’ its character is not simply a matter of its outer form.<sup>6</sup> Brady notes: ‘We can simply see nonaesthetic properties in things, but the discrimination of aesthetic qualities usually takes careful attention’ (Brady 2002, 78). While Brady’s view of aesthetic character has an important relationship to visual properties, it is not simply a matter of how a landscape visually appears. Thus, her account of aesthetic character also has the potential to accommodate theories of environmental aesthetics that prioritize non-visual features.

For instance, following the work of Aldo Leopold, Gordon Brittan Jr. suggests that the aesthetic of an environment ‘is not primarily visual in character. What makes a natural scene beautiful is not how it “looks,” but the way in which it expresses an underlying harmony which is itself the product of a

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<sup>5</sup> Compare with Nick Riggle’s comments on how the distinguishing features of an individual’s aesthetic personality need not make their aesthetic preferences unique (Riggle 2015).

<sup>6</sup> This is in contrast with Freeland (2010, 6). See also Malpas (2011, 7).

long evolutionary history' (Brittan 2001, 172).<sup>7</sup> While we need not be committed to the kind of scientific cognitivism that Brittan Jr. gestures at here (the view that proper aesthetic appreciation of the environment requires scientific knowledge), insofar as the aesthetic features of an environment or landscape depend on nonaesthetic scientific features, these will bubble up into the resultant character of the landscape on Brady's second-order theory.

Yet this raises the following question: Is character best understood, along Brady's lines, as an 'emergent,' 'overall,' quality, or, with Brittan Jr., as an 'underlying' quality, analogous to the inner character of persons? In discussion of portraiture such as Freeland's, the 'character' 'essence' or 'air' of an individual is typically presented as an 'inner' feature that must be made manifest through the portrait. If Brady's theory of aesthetic character is correct, this may make it seem as if portraiture has no work to do in the context of landscapes. Though it requires attention to discern, because the character of a landscape is not an inner quality, it is not clear what work the landscape portrait artist would do in order to make the character of the landscape manifest in the way that a typical portrait artist endeavors to reveal the character of a person. Indeed, one might think that on this view, capturing landscape character is quite unlike portraiture, and simply amounts to accurately representing the visual appearance of the landscape.

However, this conclusion is too hasty. Rather than suggesting that portraiture is ill suited to landscape subjects, Brady's second-order theory points to a special kind of work that landscape portraiture can do. Just as portraits of persons aim to manifest visually the non-visual features of a

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<sup>7</sup> For further discussion of scientific cognitivism, see, for instance, Parsons (2002)

person upon which their character depends, landscape portraits can endeavor to manifest visually the non-visual features upon which the character of a landscape depends.

It is important to distinguish between different understandings of where the notion of the aesthetic enters the frame on various understandings of character. In portraits of persons, the ‘character’ that the portrait aims to manifest is not necessarily an *aesthetic* character, though the visual rendering of this character in the portrait itself will certainly have an aesthetic dimension: rather, the character captured is the sitter’s personality, demeanor, virtues and vices, etc. In Brady’s discussion of landscape character, in contrast, the kind of character she has in mind is an explicitly aesthetic one. Thus in the case of persons, we have a non-aesthetic character (e.g. a moral character, a personality) rendered aesthetically through portraiture, whereas in the case of landscapes, we seem to have an aesthetic character, rendered aesthetically anew in landscape artworks. Again, this can make the work of portraiture and landscape artwork seem quite different. However, I again think this appearance is misleading.

For one, even if the character of a landscape is already an aesthetic feature, it is one that can be difficult to capture or pin down, precisely because of its *gestalt* nature, including a range of multi-sensory features beyond the merely visual. The task of the landscape portrait artist is to manifest that character in a way that the viewer can see. For example, consider James McNeill Whistler’s *Nocturne, Blue and Silver: Battersea Reach*, an atmospheric painting that arguably captures not only the visual appearance of a nighttime seascape, but moreover the feel of being enveloped in one. Second, the non-aesthetic features that ultimately ground the aesthetic character of a landscape are often not

sensory at all, ranging from the facts of natural history embraced by the scientific cognivist to the aspects of social discourse and practice in a built or cultural landscape. So a task for the landscape portrait artist is to manifest visually how these features contribute to the aesthetic character of the landscape, to render visually the ‘feel’ of a particular place. Finally, as we will discuss further below, the character of a landscape is not, *pace* Brady, always an aesthetic notion, and can share in the same kind of moral character attributions that people do.

These analogies between portraits of persons and portraits of landscapes suggest that successful landscape portraiture will need to *immerse* us in the landscape, rather than presenting only a detached view, an effect that will typically mirror the artist’s own immersion in the landscape. Yet detached vistas are precisely what many landscape artworks provide, and this has been a source of criticism regarding the role that landscape has played in the maintenance of unjust power relationships, packaging and presenting landscapes, often conveniently devoid of people, for appropriation (Mitchell 2002; O’Neill 2002). This detachment is at the heart of what Malpas refers to as ‘the problem of landscape’: “To some extent, this “problem of landscape” is expressed in a common conception of landscape according to which landscape is the product of an essentially “representational” construal of our relation to the world that always involves separation and detachment. This conception takes landscape to involve the presenting of the world as an object, seen from a certain view, structured, framed, and made available to our gaze’ (Malpas 2011, 6).

This very kind of objectification and detachment is commonly viewed as a source of failure in portraiture—successful portraits press through mere appearances to capture the subjectivity of the

sitter.<sup>8</sup> So, for instance, Freeland describes how Cézanne is ‘often criticized for ‘reducing’ persons to mere objects... This attitude applies to his self-portraits just as much as to his depictions of others. It has been said, for example, that Cézanne treats his own head like a skull or an apple’ (Freeland 2007, 98). In striking contrast, however, Malpas describes Cézanne as an artist who seems to overcome the problem of landscape, an analog of the very objectification with which he is associated when it comes to human portraiture. He writes: ‘For Cézanne, the landscape that he paints is not a terrain standing apart from him, nor is his engagement with it that of the detached spectator. In his paintings of Provence, Cézanne undertakes an exploration of his own experience, his own memories, his own self’ (Malpas 2011, 13). Aside from suggesting that the revelation of landscape character may require a different kind of skill or attention from the same kind of task in the case of persons, this observation also indicates that it is precisely when landscape artworks engage with the task of portraiture that they can overcome the ‘problem of landscapes.’ While detached vistas may not fail *qua* landscape artworks, they fail *qua* landscape portraits, and the very reasons that they do so are those that embroil them in the problem of landscapes in the first place: a detached, objectification of the landscape that fails to be revelatory of landscape character.

One might worry that there are two senses of subjectivity being conflated here: the subjectivity of the sitter or portrait subject, and the subjectivity of the artist. However, although these are distinct elements, they do appear to be linked. As Freeland notes, successful portraits indicate the artist has ‘delved deep’ to capture the sitter’s character (Freeland 2007, 101), that there is a ‘process of interaction and deepening acquaintance’ through which the essence of the subject is revealed (Freeland 2007, 107). This is also true, perhaps even more so, in the case of landscape portraits. In a

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<sup>8</sup> I follow the literature in viewing detachment as inviting objectification, but it is worth considering further whether this need be so.



similar vein to Malpas's observations about Cézanne, Malcolm Andrews distinguishes between the idea of a 'detached' view of a landscape and a situated, 'subjective' experience of an environment, suggesting that a Monet grainstack series as a whole transitions from representing landscape to representing environment (Andrews 1999, 193-195)—in our terms, by overcoming the problem of landscape through immersion in the landscape and abandonment of the objectifying, detached perspective. It is no coincidence that this is where the character of the landscape is revealed. As Andrews puts it: "They [the grainstacks] assume an amiable and rather foolish stolidity as one looks at them from painting to painting" (Andrews 1999, 194). It is precisely when the landscape artwork presses beyond the detached vista into the realm of landscape portraiture that these thick character terms become appropriate. In her critique of science-based approaches to the aesthetic appreciation of nature, Brady argues that 'the perceptual qualities of the aesthetic object as well as the imaginative power of the percipient come together to direct aesthetic appreciation' (Brady 1998, 143). Likewise, we can see the landscape portrait as a manifestation of the artist's imaginative engagement with the land.

So while one might initially object that landscape portraiture endorses the 'pictorial appreciation' of nature from which many philosophers have tried to distance environmental aesthetics, this concern is based on an overly narrow view of landscape artwork.<sup>9</sup> The purpose of landscape portraiture is not to *reduce* our appreciation of landscape to a static, pictorial level, but to reveal the dynamic and complex character of the environment *through* visual modes of representation.<sup>10</sup> That is what makes it

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<sup>9</sup> This is in the spirit of a concern raised in Saito (1998, 102) responding to Rolston III (1995). My remarks here are confined to the visual arts, but there are also many parallel examples of the evocation of landscape character in literature.

<sup>10</sup> Compare to the distinction between 'panoramic' and 'participatory' landscapes in Berleant (1991, Chapter 3.)

a challenging and intriguing task, just as a classic portrait endeavors to capture the inner life of a person through visual representation.

Moreover, the underlying complexity of landscapes, often obscured by their surface appearance, makes this a particularly important task. As Aldo Leopold writes: ‘in country, as in people, a plain exterior often conceals hidden riches’ (Leopold 1966, 180; as cited in Saito 1998, 101). I do not think it is a coincidence that Leopold leans on the analogy between persons and landscapes here. Indeed, although Brady focuses on the specifically aesthetic character of landscapes, attributions of aesthetic character can plausibly implicate non-aesthetic notions of character as well (discussed further in the next section), as in Monet’s ‘amiable’ grainstacks, or when a town is described as ‘seedy,’ which has both aesthetic and moral dimensions. The landscape portrait will thus stand in sharp contrast with landscape artworks that endeavor only to present the scenic or picturesque (Cf. Saito 1998). As Malpas puts it: ‘Landscape... presents more than the visual alone. Landscape is a representation of place’ (Malpas 2011, 7).

But what is place? ‘Place’ is a complex concept, but we can take as a point of departure John Agnew’s classic analysis of place as locale + location + sense of place (Agnew 1987, 5). The idea of a ‘sense of place’ in particular is directly related to the notion of character, the attachment people have to what a place is like and its concomitant meaning (Cresswell 2015, 14).<sup>11</sup> Locations that lack a

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<sup>11</sup> Compare with Semes: ‘Meaning is the aim the seven principles of traditional architecture serve and the ultimate goal of the expression of character in buildings and places. Character serves and in part defines meaning but is both more concrete and more elusive. Meaning is the product of our reflection on character, supplemented by our awareness of content that may derive from sources outside the field of architecture. Because it is the product of reflection rather than

‘sense of place,’ such as corporate office parks, are also those that lack character—they are generic, missing the particularity or distinctiveness of which character is indicative. One virtue of Agnew’s tripartite analysis of place is that it allows us to see how different places can be geographically co-located: the self-same set of coordinates can be the site of multiple ‘places’ based on the different characters and meanings the site might have for different individuals or communities. Sometimes, these different places will be reflected in different place-names. For instance, we might point to ‘Devil’s Tower,’ a US National Monument and popular climbing destination, also known as ‘Bear’s Lodge,’ a sacred site for a number of Native American tribes (Brown 2003, Chapter 5).<sup>12</sup> These names arguably pick out different places in the same location, with different meanings for different communities. Consequently, the character of this particular location may well vary in turn for these different communities, sometimes, as in this case, resulting in conflict: the character of a destination for sport climbing will likely differ from the character of a sacred space.

So far, I have argued that landscape artworks can function as portraits when they endeavor to manifest the aesthetic and non-aesthetic character of place. Just as a portrait does not merely offer an aesthetic experience, but aims to provide insight into the character of the subject, landscape portraits can prompt and guide future engagement with landscapes, revealing dimensions of character that are not readily discernible. As Brady observes, the *identification* of aesthetic character in the environment is typically a ‘top down’ process in which we ‘begin by identifying the overall aesthetic impact of a place, a first impression perhaps, and then trace the particular aesthetic and nonaesthetic qualities that give it that character’ (Brady 2002, 84). As I will turn to now, landscape

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a property of the visible forms themselves, meaning is also ephemeral and changes along with our changing ideas and perceptions’ (Semmes 2009, 74).

<sup>12</sup> For further discussion of a similar case in Australia, see (Figueroa & Waitt 2010).

portraiture can thus aid in our understanding of the relationship between landscape character and the features on which it depends.

### **The Uses of Landscape Portraiture**

Landscape portraiture offers tools for addressing a number of aesthetic questions and challenges. In what follows, I briefly discuss three roles that landscape portraiture can play in facilitating our understanding of landscape aesthetics and preservation.

First, landscape portraits can offer a solution to one of the problems faced by scientific cognitivism in environmental aesthetics, the view that appropriate aesthetic appreciation of the environment requires scientific knowledge. As Saito observes in response to Holmes Rolston III's exhortations that the aesthetic appreciation of nature must be responsive to how nature operates at the systems level: 'even if we agree that there is beauty in an ecosystem...it is a highly conceptual one, experienced by most of us through verbal descriptions or a diagram. Unless we are field ecologists observing its many members and their behavior for a long period of time, such beauty is beyond our ordinary perceptual experience' (Saito 1998, 104). Saito uses this point to argue that the aesthetic appreciation of unscenic nature must be brought back down to the level of individual aesthetic objects and their sensory qualities. However, landscape portraiture offers an alternative solution to this problem. To be sure, it is a different kind of aesthetic endeavor than the first-hand appreciation of landscape itself, but a landscape portrait can bridge the gap between scientific fact and aesthetic experience by rendering the aesthetic relevance of non-perceptual features manifest through the visual expression of landscape character.

For instance, consider Rebecca Bedell's descriptions of Thomas Moran's landscape paintings of Yellowstone (Bedell 2002). She writes: "They are pictures about change, about the dynamic evolutionary character of the earth and about the transformatory powers of nature and art" (Bedell 2002, 132). Discussing Moran's painting of 'The Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone,' she writes: "His concern with the geological history of the site is evident, for example, in his chosen style, which evokes the processes of creation as much as their products. The wavering, trembling, crackling lines and the liquid brushstrokes, even the continually gradated shifts from light to dark, announce the unstable, transitory nature of the scene and the changefulness of matter," revealing Moran's "concern with the metamorphic character of the land" (Bedell 2002, 132). Thus, we can see Moran's painting function as a portrait of the canyon that captures its character in a manner that also offers a response to Saito's concerns about scientific cognitivism. The painting aims to render visually the non-visual (and non-aesthetic) scientific features that undergird the overall aesthetic character of the landscape. Moreover, although Moran's painting is presented as a "traditional picturesque...panoramic view" (pg. 132) it achieves immersion in the geological features of the landscape nevertheless. This reveals that even quite traditional landscape artworks can function as portraits in the relevant sense. Unsurprisingly, the kind of character an artist seeks to capture will be an important factor in determining aspects of artistic style—the revelation of metamorphic character (pg. 134) and the geological underpinnings of aesthetic features might well favor a panoramic view, in contrast with the aims of Monet's grainstacks series, or some of the other works discussed below.

Second, landscape portraits offer the promise of capturing the narrative dimension of landscape character, which often plays out over long timescales. Brady argues that preserving the aesthetic

character of a landscape will require maintaining its aesthetic integrity. Following the work of Alan Holland and John O'Neill, Brady understands the idea of aesthetic integrity in diachronic terms, where maintaining the aesthetic character of a landscape will not aspire to the synchronic aim of freezing it in time, but will rather favor an 'appropriate trajectory' that will be true to the narrative of the landscape (Brady 2002, 89). However, as Brady acknowledges, the narratives of a landscape are multilayered and complex (Cf. Hourdequin & Havlick 2016). In light of this, landscape portraits have a unique ability to capture the diachronic character of a place by representing the landscape in a manner that incorporates the dynamics of long timescales and complex, contested narratives. Moran's paintings of Yellowstone have already offered an example of this in a geological context, but the same phenomenon can be at play in portraits of the built or urban landscape as well.

For example, consider Duke Riley's drawing, 'That's What She Said,' described by the Queens Museum as a 'unique portrait of New York City.' At monumental scale and juxtaposed with a WPA model of the New York watershed, the drawing tells the long story of New York City's relationship with water. Of particular interest, the drawing does not at first glance cue associations with New York City at all, paralleling cases of traditional portraiture that may not visually resemble the sitter (Maes 2015, 320). But through its use of landmarks, icons, and humor, the drawing evokes a dimension of New York City's character (both aesthetic and non-aesthetic) that might otherwise be difficult to discern, and in particular that employs diachronic features to offer a 'panoramic narrative of the aquatic power structure that sustains New York City as we know it today.'<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> <http://www.queensmuseum.org/2016/03/thats-what-she-said>

Third, landscape portraits can reveal aspects of character that are important to understanding key dimensions of environmental and historic preservation. According to Daniel Bluestone, the places that stir controversy over historic preservation ‘have in common a palpable, tangible, physical character that is valued by preservationists and devalued by their opponents’ (Bluestone 2011, 14-15). As he goes on to put it: ‘Historic preservation engages history through the palpable character of place’ (Bluestone 2011, 18).

Because the character of a landscape can be elusive, there is a danger that efforts at character preservation, such as historic preservation, will prioritize certain familiar notions of landscape character at the expense of more subtle or undesirable varieties. Akin to the problem of landscape, with its detached and objectifying perspective, historic preservation can often favor the quaint and picturesque, promoting antiseptic, museum-like spaces at the expense of more complicated lived-in landscapes (Kaufman 2009). Landscape portraiture presents opportunities for telling alternative stories about the character of place that can subvert dominant, traditional caricatures and interests, and perhaps provide a guide to more thoughtful and informed preservation efforts (Matthes 2016). These efforts can cut in at least two directions: capturing the valuable character of landscapes that are often overlooked, and revealing the insidious character of landscapes that are glossed over to present a rosier picture.

With respect to the first dimension, a wide range of artistic forms that capture a sense of place, from engaged public artworks to street photography, can show that what might be unreflectively interpreted as ‘seedy,’ ‘dank,’ or ‘uninviting’ (character terms that blend the aesthetic and the moral)

are in fact culturally rich landscapes that are ‘buzzing,’ ‘defiant,’ or ‘familiar’ (see Hayden 1995). For example, consider Jacob Lawrence’s painting *This is Harlem*, a bustling, vibrant cityscape, the very title of which seems to interject a corrective to racist stereotypes (not just a place-marker such as ‘Harlem,’ but ‘*This is Harlem*’). This is not to say that all such artworks will qualify as landscape portraits, but to indicate the new aesthetic potentials that stem from viewing them in this artistic category (Cf. Walton 1970).

With respect to the second dimension, artworks that evoke the character of a cultural landscape ‘from below’ can serve to overturn anodyne character associations that obscure histories of injustices that alter the character of a landscape. For instance, artworks that evoke the character of a plantation landscape from the perspective of enslaved persons or their descendants can counteract the rosy ‘country club’ character with which plantations can be associated, especially through the unpeopled picturesque vistas of traditional plantation landscape paintings (Mack & Hoffius 2008). Consider the work of montage artist Stephen Marc, whose series *Passage on the Underground Railroad* interweaves specific ‘stations’ on the underground railroad with plantation imagery, texts, contemporary photographs, and brutal images of enslavement. These works offer a very different portrait of plantation life, capturing landscape character, both moral and aesthetic, that is missing from many plantation depictions (Mack & Hoffius 2008, 71-75). Landscape portraits such as these could in turn guide historic preservation efforts that may have glossed over these important dimensions of landscape character.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> For instance, consider recent efforts to better capture the story of enslaved persons at Monticello: <https://www.npr.org/2017/02/20/516292305/monticello-restoration-project-puts-an-increased-focus-on-jeffersons-slaves>



## Conclusion

I have argued that one of portraiture's distinctive features, the manifestation of a subject's character, offers a powerful lens through which to view artworks that are not typically categorized as portraits, in particular those that treat the landscape as their subject. I have suggested that artworks that function as landscape portraits offer us incisive tools for better understanding the character of landscapes, and how landscape character in turn shapes our relationship to place.

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