

ART AND SCIENCE

Alexander von Humboldt was an influential German scientist and explorer who believed that scientific inquiry was an important aspect of an artist's work, and that artists could visualise information about aspects of the environment that scientists could not.

- Research Humboldt and explain in your own words the significance of his work and ideas.
- Identify and discuss a work by Eugene von Guérard that you believe reflects Humboldt's ideas.

BUILDING ON THE LANDSCAPE TRADITION

Von Guérard's work can be seen as building on a tradition of landscape painting. The work of the great seventeenth-century landscape artists — including those who worked in Italy, such as Claude Lorrain (c.1604–82), Nicolas Poussin (1594–1665) and Salvator Rosa (1615–73), and artists of the Dutch school, such as Salomon van Ruysdael (c.1602–70) and Jacob van Ruisdael (1628–82) — provided strong foundations for this tradition.

- Investigate the work of these earlier landscape artists. View the work of these artists in the collection of the National Gallery of Victoria by visiting the website: <http://www.ngv.vic.gov.au/explore>
- Choose one of these artists and one of their paintings that interests you.
- Compare and contrast this painting with a painting by von Guérard, discussing similarities and differences in subject matter, composition and technique.
- Suggest reasons for the similarities and differences that you find between the two works.