

## New State Library of NSW website gives bird's-eye view of 1M+ digital images

01/07/2020

For the first time, visitors to the State Library of NSW's website can explore more than 1.2 million digitised items from the Library's collections in one go, with the launch today [Wednesday, 1 July 2020] of a new ground-breaking experimental website called *Aereo*.

According to State Librarian John Vallance: "The sheer size of the State Library's digital collection can be overwhelming unless you know exactly what you are looking for. With *Aereo*, our online visitors can help us test a new way of exploring the Library's online materials."

"It's a unique experience. You start with a bird's-eye view of a vast mosaic of images and see the collection as a whole, before zooming down to earth," says Dr Vallance.

There are many different categories to explore including manuscripts, journals, paintings and architectural drawings. Each can be organised in a way that makes exploration easier.

*Aereo* was devised by internationally respected designer and developer Mauricio Giraldo, who won the State Library's 2019 DX Lab Fellowship. Mr Giraldo has previously worked on projects for the New York Public Library and the Digital Public Library of America.

"Historically, libraries have used text-based cataloguing to describe their materials, which relies on those doing the searching to know what the material looks like before they have seen it. *Aereo* uses computer-generated metadata which is a bit like letting the collection describe itself," said Mr Giraldo.

*Aereo* is designed to test the limits of emerging web technologies and explore ways to improve collection accessibility and searchability.

"This research project is really about seeing what is possible. Its potential is very exciting and will help us to understand how search based on these principles might work in the future. Hopefully a more fun and interesting way to explore the collection will come from it," said Mr Giraldo.

Mauricio Giraldo will discuss the making of *Aereo* at a live online event, hosted by the State Library of NSW on Thursday 2 July.

Explore *Aereo* online here: [dxlab.sl.nsw.gov.au/aereo](http://dxlab.sl.nsw.gov.au/aereo)  
To get the best experience on *Aereo*, the DX Lab recommends using a desktop computer.

The DX Lab Fellowship is supported through a gift to the State Library of NSW Foundation — an organisation which supports key Library fellowships, and innovative exhibitions and landmark acquisitions.

**For more information, interviews and images, please contact:**  
Golda Mitchell, Media & Communications, State Library of NSW  
e: [golda.mitchell@sl.nsw.gov.au](mailto:golda.mitchell@sl.nsw.gov.au) p: 0410 215 992

