

# International House magazine



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
**SYDNEY**

—  
International  
House

Celebrating 50 years of international  
understanding and friendship

What it means to live  
at International House

A time for celebration  
and reflection

Book review: *The Search  
for a New National Identity*,  
Dr Jatinder Mann

Alumni profile:  
Dr Dominick Ng





# From the editors

## Time to celebrate!

International House is turning 50, and in this anniversary issue we look at themes of home, identity, and the experience of cultural diversity through art and music.

Gracing the front cover is the newest addition to our growing art collection. Entitled *Home*, celebrated Australian artist Bronwyn Bancroft’s latest painting is a striking emblem of what it is to be safe and secure in modern society. The public unveiling of this colourful master work will take place at our 50th Anniversary Art and History Exhibition in July.

Our first anniversary event took place back in April, and also featured a new work. Commissioned especially for our Celebration Concert, Christopher Bowen’s *There are three things that will endure in this world* was an ebullient reminder of those enduring elements that transcend cultural differences; namely, truth, hope and love.

Recent alumnus Dr James Kane gives us another insightful book review, this time of the work of alumnus Dr Jatinder Mann, whose 2016 book *The Search for a New National Identity* is in part the result of research he conducted here at the University of Sydney.

And perhaps most importantly in this year of our golden jubilee, we continue to share stories, photos and news between alumni and the House. In a world of increasing discord, the importance of nurturing and extending global friendships remains as vital an ideal as ever.

**Dr Bradley Kunda**  
**Rochelle Whatman**

Image left: Beth Li performing at iNight 2016

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Above: Sarah Choong, 50th Anniversary Celebration Concert

Front cover: Bronwyn Bancroft, *Home*, 2017. Acrylic on canvas. 1.9m x 1.9m

Photo credit (cover and inside cover): Sharon Hickey

## From the Director

# Happy 50th Anniversary



Dear residents, alumni and friends,

After much discussion and planning, the celebrations for the 50th anniversary of International House have finally commenced. We kicked off the year-long festivities with a wonderful performance of classical music from resident and guest artists at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music. Celebrations will now continue throughout the year with a range of events taking place at the House and externally.

As the House and its extended community gather for reunions around the globe, I would encourage everyone to remember and celebrate the reason why so many people from diverse nations and cultures have become life-long friends. It was the vision and mission of the founders of IH who brought us all together, and I gratefully acknowledge and thank those involved in the establishment of the House: the University's Students, Representative Council and the University administration, Rotary International, the Women's Auxiliary and Furnishing Committees, state and federal governments, private donors, and the inspirational founding Director, Graeme de Graaff. There are of course many others who were instrumental in establishing IH, and we are grateful for their support and dedication.

In these uncertain political times, one never knows where or when friendships will be tested, however IH will remain solid in its resolve to foster international understanding and friendship and welcome people from all nations and cultures. We encourage the wider global community to do the same.

Whatever the future holds for IH, what we do here at the House through our exchange of knowledge and culture will have important implications for our residents, many of whom will become future global leaders. One thing is certain; the relationship between the House and the outside world is as important now as it ever was.

Thank you to all our residents, alumni and friends of IH for your continued support. As we celebrate our golden jubilee, we can all take pride in what the House has achieved and we look forward to another 50 years of international understanding and life-long friendships.

**Jessica Carroll**  
Director, International House

# From the Chairperson of the International House Members' Association

The International House Members' Association (IHMA) is a pivotal organisation within the diverse and vibrant community of International House. We are responsible for organising a multitude of activities throughout the year, and we're always looking for ways to make each year at IH the most exciting and fun yet

The 2017 cohort of both new and returning residents has meshed incredibly well, and Orientation Week provided a marvellous opportunity for everyone to come together, have fun and get to know each other. In semester one we have already seen the highest attendances at events for many years, and we strive to continue this level of interaction throughout the year.

IHMA is excited to be expanding its programme of events in 2017, commencing with the International Food Fair which is looking bigger and bolder than ever. IH has been a symbol of cultural diversity for 50 years, and what better way to celebrate this than an evening full of amazing food from an array of different countries!

As IHMA Chairperson, I feel immensely privileged to be representing our residents during our 50th anniversary year, and I look forward to meeting many more alumni at the commemorative events in the coming months.

**Stephen Sanders**  
IHMA Chairperson



Image: IH International Food Fair 2016

# What it means to live at International House

“Moving thousands of miles away from home to start university life in a completely foreign country is daunting to say the least.”

Being born and raised in Hong Kong meant that I grew up feeling familiar and comfortable with my community and general surroundings. However, as many international students would agree, packing your whole life away into the standard 30kg baggage allowance requires serious effort and precision. This is second only to the worries of finding the right living environment - one that promotes a sense of shared values, cultures, and inclusivity. In many ways I felt an instant connection with International House and its mission: to promote international understanding and friendship through encouraging residents to actively value, nurture and contribute to a richly diverse community.

In my view, such diversity is fundamental to breaking down barriers of ignorance, and International House embodies this by bringing together residents from over 40 nations around the world. Here residents study, dine, play sport, organise events and socialise with one another,

engaging in an intercultural way that feels authentic and genuine. It is true to say that many of the best conversations stem from the dinner tables. Whether it be philosophical discussion about the ‘paradox of democracy,’ to the struggles of choosing between dangly or pearl earrings to wear to the harbour cruise, these conversations and memories stay to remind us of the good times and friendships fostered. Indeed, there is something about the experience of living with others from different backgrounds that becomes a stimulating and inspiring way to learn more about each other and ourselves.

After attending the International House 50th Anniversary Celebration Concert, it was evident how such events not only enrich the wider alumni community, but also reflect the plethora of life-long friendships that have been maintained throughout the years. Here, in observing the quiet murmurs to the excited chatter of alumni as they catch up and laugh about fond memories at IH, I am



Image: Stefanie Chan

reminded of the way in which I too am building friendships with fellow residents at the House. I'm amused to compare the reactions of alumni that may not have seen their friends since the time they lived together, to my own experiences where not seeing my friends for a span of 24-hours at IH, elicits a declaration of "I haven't seen you in forever!".

Living at IH has definitely been an amazing experience so far, and is proving to be so much more than just accommodation. I truly believe that by investing time in participating in various events and roles within the House - whether

it be the roundtable talks, or putting yourself out there for IHMA committee positions - residents will discover that IH is an ideal place to develop leadership skills and a distinctly international perspective of what it means to connect and contribute within a global community.

**Stefanie Chan**  
Bachelor of Education  
(Secondary: Humanities and Social Sciences) and Bachelor of Arts  
Resident, International House

# A time for celebration and reflection

A 50th anniversary is a time for celebration and reflection, and the Sydney University International House Alumni Association (SUIHAA) and its members are doing both in 2017.

International House is a unique achievement for the University of Sydney. It is a secular, multicultural and internationalist organisation based on strong ideals of international understanding and friendship. The IH Constitution specifies its two main purposes as providing residential facilities for both Australian and overseas students of the University, and promoting fellowship between people of different nationalities and cultures through social interaction and the exchange

of knowledge. This includes not only residents of the House, but members of the broader University community.

IH was built on these purposes, and the ideals of the many people and organisations who raised funds over the decades preceding 1967. Rotary (Districts 268 & 275), private donors, state and federal governments, and the University's Students' Representative Council were among these early and generous supporters. The

University provided the land on which the House was finally established, and our buildings were designed by award-winning architect Walter Bunning. The House embodies the vision, energy and stalwart commitment of those who brought it into being.

IH continues to be governed by an independent Council, representative of its stakeholders; the University, Rotary, residents and alumni.



### Who are our alumni?

IH is a hothouse for future leaders. The House has nurtured and sent out into the world some 6,000 people, many of whom have worked internationally and become influential in fields such as science, medicine, engineering and technology, international law, history and education. SUIHAA plans to celebrate some of these notable alumni in its future publications.

But equally important to the achievements of these leaders is the enduring significance of their experiences at IH. A survey conducted in 2015 revealed that alumni from all decades have carried forward the ideals practised during their time at the House – both in their personal lives and professional careers in countries throughout the world. Almost 90% of respondents indicated that their IH experience motivated them to explore other cultures and influenced their personal views of the world. A high proportion also indicated that living at IH influenced them to engage in internationally oriented work. Most respondents (70%) still maintain contact with their peers from IH, reflecting the characteristic strength of relationships forged in the House.

### How are we celebrating in 2017?

Our magnificent Celebration Concert was held on 8 April, featuring many wonderful musicians and the world premiere of Chris Bowen's stunningly beautiful and apposite composition about the 'three things' that matter – truth, hope and love. It was a truly joyous and celebratory night.

IH will also be holding a Public Roundtable, Open Day, Gala Luncheon, and reunions all over the world. These events are open for registration through the International House website.

### What does the future hold?

SUIHAA is committed to the IH mission of international understanding and friendship, and to the sustained development of each of the endeavours mandated in its constitution.

IH is a quiet achiever, and provides a long-standing model of diversity and inclusion in a community which increasingly values and searches for such qualities. We see the continued expansion of the IH program and its unique model as not only a means of enriching the House, but the wider University. This enrichment can be promoted

through IH modelling a strong and cohesive community based on a framework of cross-cultural understanding. To this end, SUIHAA is currently working with the IH Director and Council on developing ideas for enhancement of the program, and the strategic growth of IH within the University.

As our alumni attest, from the most recent to the first, IH provides a safe and enabling place for people from different cultures to meet, share day-to-day life, and exchange ideas of all kinds – small, large and sometimes difficult. Just one recent story: over dinner last year, at one of the round tables in the IH dining room, a group began talking about the politics of a particular country and rapidly found there were divergent views at the table. They plunged into a deep discussion and, after more than an hour, left the table as friends who had listened to and learned from each other. This is the International House we have all experienced and the House we want to see perpetuated.

**Dr Ros (Wood) Madden AM**  
President, SUIHAA

# Humans of International House

## #HumansofIH



### About 'Humans of IH'

Inspired by the renowned photo blog, 'Humans of New York', 'Humans of IH' features a member of our community via our Facebook page each week to help us learn a little more about each other.

“Just like a swing, life is full of ups and downs. To soar high above the ground, all you need is a little strength to push yourself during the lowest points on the swing.”

**Clarissa Lim, Singapore**  
#HumansofIH

“Moving to Sydney has given me a new experience of my country; moving to IH has given me a new experience of the world.”

**Sam Naylor, Australia**  
#HumansofIH



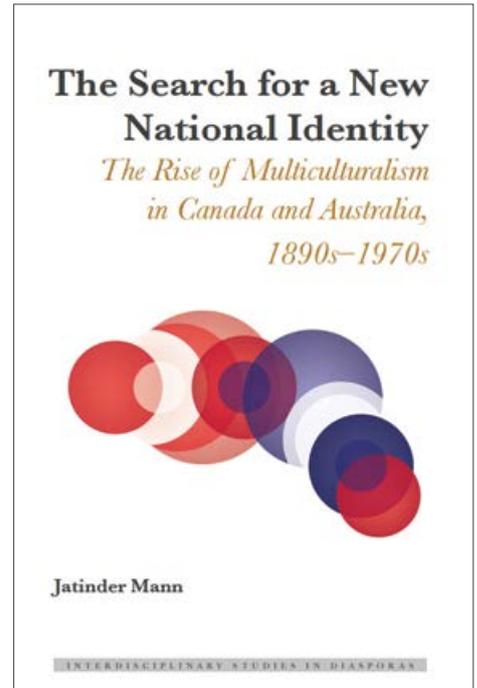
“As a Palestinian, I owe my life to education. It took my grandparents out of refugee camps and it is why I’m able to be here in front of you right now. Never underestimate its power, and when it gets hard and tedious, always remember nothing worth having is easy - its roots may be bitter, but its fruit is sweet.”

**Salwa Al Alami, Palestine**  
#HumansofIH

# Making the Maple Leaf and Advancing Australia Fair

Jatinder Mann, *The Search for a New National Identity: The Rise of Multiculturalism in Canada and Australia, 1890s–1970s* (New York: Peter Lang, 2016)\*.

\*339p. US\$96.95.



All historians know that comparative history is hard to do well. Getting it right depends fundamentally on the mutual aptness of the comparanda that the researcher chooses as the basis for his or her analysis. If they resemble each other too closely, then drawing parallels between them can be perfunctory and superficial. If they are too dissimilar, however, then making any sort of meaningful comparison becomes much more difficult. Dr Jatinder Mann's new book on the gradual emergence of multiculturalism as both an ideal and an officially endorsed policy in twentieth-century Canada and Australia employs an insightful comparative approach that successfully enables each national history under discussion to illuminate aspects of the other.

Volume 2 of the new series 'Interdisciplinary Studies in Diasporas', *The Search for a New National Identity* has

been adapted from Mann's doctoral thesis, completed in the Department of History at the University of Sydney. It charts the development of immigration policies under successive Canadian and Australian governments from the 1890s to the late 1970s and analyses how shifts in such policies both reflected and stimulated broader changes in the sense of national identity within these two Commonwealth nations. The book is arranged in a tripartite structure of three separate sections ('Canada'; 'Australia'; 'Canada and Australia: Comparisons'), each of which is further subdivided into three chapters devoted respectively to policies of assimilation, integration, and finally, multiculturalism. Coupled with Mann's lucid and succinct writing, the organisation of the book allows the reader to follow the logic of the overall argument with ease.

While bringing Canada and Australia face-to-face as partial historical mirrors of one another, Mann is careful to highlight the crucial differences that separated their governments' respective responses to immigration and their changing notions of national identity in the course of the twentieth century. Canada, for example, experienced mass non-British migration much earlier than Australia. It also had to factor in its essentially bicultural and bilingual nature as a state divided between English Canada and French Canada. Australia, on the other hand, was conceived of (somewhat erroneously) for much of the twentieth century as virtually monocultural (i.e. Anglo-Celtic) and monolingual. Each nation also had to develop policies in accordance with its own local geopolitical context: Australia was forced to reckon with various upheavals on its Asian doorstep, while Canada was reacting at



Image: Dr Jatinder Mann, IH alumnus (2005-2007)

### Dr Jatinder Mann, IH alumnus (2005-2007)

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Dr Jatinder Mann is a Visiting Senior Research Fellow at King's College London and a former Banting Postdoctoral Fellow at the University of Alberta. He is currently working on a project on 'The end of the British World and the redefinition of citizenship in Australia, Canada, and New Zealand, 1950s-1970s'.

times to fears of economic and political dominance from across its southern border with the USA. Mann's sensitive handling of these peculiarities convincingly strengthens his analysis of the undeniable shared features of Canadian and Australian policy and national identity in the period under consideration.

Drawing on a host of contemporary government papers, reports, speeches, newspapers, and other relevant documents, Mann elucidates how it was that Canada and Australia, both of which glittered as jewels in the British imperial crown and pursued explicitly 'white' immigration policies at the beginning of the twentieth century, ultimately came to transform into proud and comparatively independent multicultural nations with little nominal adherence to a bygone sense of Britishness. This profound change did not happen

overnight. Rather, it was a slow and complex process conditioned by developing political ideas about assimilation, integration, citizenship, and symbols of national identity, such as flags and anthems; accelerating rates and shifting source countries of immigration; and unique responses to key events, such as the Quiet Revolution in Québec (from 1960), Britain's intervention in the Suez Crisis (1956), and its initial attempt to enter the European Economic Community (1961). The end result for both Canada and Australia — officially, at least — was a new national sense of self that eschewed traditional notions of whiteness and dutiful filial piety towards Britain in favour of a multicultural approach whose effects are still being felt and discussed to this day.

*The Search for a New National Identity* is a thoroughly researched and scholarly yet

very accessible book that sheds important light on Canadian and Australian political history. Its effective complementary analysis of these two countries and its careful mapping of the shifts in their respective immigration policies underscore the inherently artificial nature of 'national identity' and challenge us to think carefully about the symbols, terminology, and other ideological baggage bound up with it. Now that Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull has just dragged nebulous phrases like 'Australian values' and 'social cohesion' firmly back into the limelight with the announcement of impending changes to Australia's immigration and citizenship system, Mann's book seems a timely one indeed.

**Written by Dr James Kane**  
IH alumnus (2007-2009)  
SUIHAA Committee Member

# 50th Anniversary Celebration Concert



Image: Andrew Collins

Saturday 8th April, 2017 saw the fruits of many months planning of the International House Celebration Concert as part of its 50th anniversary celebrations. It was designed to be a special edition of the annual Music Soiree instituted a number of years ago and held usually in the Wool Room. This Concert took place in the Sydney Conservatorium of Music, Recital Hall East.

I write this review as a personal reminiscence from the point of view of an organising committee member, stage hand and music lover.

Treated first to some wonderful Balinese gamelan music in the atrium (courtesy of Gary Watson and the Conservatorium Gamelan Ensemble) with an almost hypnotically uplifting quality, we passed soon after to the sweet Irish strains of *Down by the salley gardens* sung by Rebecca MacCallion accompanied by her husband, Bradley Kunda on the guitar. Huai-Jin Choong's spirited performance of Grieg's *To Spring* on the piano recalled that I wish we had the chance to hear much more of this composer's solo piano music.



Image: Dr Bradley Kunda

Image: Jo Bae

The next piece, *Romance* by Vi-King Lim was a delight as it recalled the time I knew him back in the House in the early 1990s, a time when he composed this delightful little work, where he and Deborah de Graaff (on clarinet) made a finely-tuned team. Following came a Piazzolla work with Andrew Collins on flute and Miguel Alvear on guitar, which made some of us want to get up and dance. Tonya Lemoh beautifully continued this Latin mode with an Argentinian dance of *Ginastera*. But before that, Miguel continued with the famous and for me, weepy, work of Tarrega *Recuerdos de la Alhambra*.

Jo Bae entertained us not just from superbly playing the harp (Salzedo's *Dixie* fantasy), but also in plying the harp into position on stage - I could not help wondering if the audience wondered why I and Dominick Ng, my fellow stage hand, did not help her out! But such were our instructions to follow.

Our final two pieces took us to Australian composers with Hindson's *Lounge* bringing Deborah and Tonya back together in what seemed quite a workout for the players, but great fun to listen to.

Then with the range of individual performers from the evening including Linxing Wei on piano and Bradley Kunda conducting, we heard the world premiere of *There are three things that will endure in this world* by Chris Bowen, specially commissioned for the evening. This proved a highlight for the concert and, I believe, helped to reassure me of the great value of modern "classical" music.

Jazz in the atrium to follow from Oli Nelson, Ned Green and Nick Henderson was a lovely way to round the evening, as we had the chance to share a glass of wine and reminisce about the House.

**Paul Reisner**  
IH alumnus (1983-1986)  
SUIHAA Committee Member

# International House events



1

- 1/ Kinji Steimetz (Intramural Basketball)
- 2/ Jordan Hanxi Kim (Food Fair)
- 3/ L: Ruchir Punjabi (IH alumnus 2005-2007) generously donated his time and expertise to residents on 11 May as part of the Global Leadership Program



2



3

- 4/ Steve Mark, Chairman, IH Council,  
Julia Krattli, IH Fellow  
(Fellows Lunch)
- 5/ Mary Waria, Ros Madden, Andrew Collin  
(Food Fair)
- 6/ Boxuan (Mary) Gong, Nga Sze (Alice)  
Lao, Rie Sato (Flag Dinner)
- 7/ Miguel Alvear, Sameer Murthy, Kasumi  
Higewake (Flag Dinner)
- 8/ Anjuli Dabydeen, Joseph Ongko,  
Jooyeon (Lauren) Choi, Ari Chinniah  
(Flag Dinner)



4



5



6



7



8

# News from Sydney University International House Alumni Association (SUIHAA)

## An extra special celebration: IH Foundation Day and Dr Nuli Lemoh



Foundation Day is especially significant this year as we celebrate 50 years since the founding of International House.

We are also recognising the extraordinary contribution of one of our most notable alumni, the much loved Dr Nuli Lemoh, with the IH Alumni Award for Achievement. The award pays tribute to Nuli's accomplishments in inspiring alumni and Rotary to support both the founding and maintenance of the Bo Children's Hospital in Sierra Leone.

Nuli is a paediatrician, an alumnus of the University of Sydney, and one of the founding residents of International House. He and his wife Margaret (also a founding resident) have lived and worked in both Sierra Leone and Australia.

Nuli recognised the need for improved child health care services in the country of his birth, and worked tirelessly over many years to establish a children's hospital in Bo, the second largest city of Sierra Leone. Along the way he inspired IH alumni as well as Rotarians around the world to collaborate with him, raising the significant funding to achieve this dream.

The Bo Children's Hospital has now been operating since 2012, over which time it has treated close to 20,000 children - a testament to Nuli's extraordinary vision.

**Dr Ros (Wood) Madden**  
SUIHAA President



# Alumni profile

Dr Dominick Ng

## IH alumnus (2007-2009) SUIHAA Committee Member

### What drew you to International House?

I moved from country NSW to Sydney to undertake a Bachelor of Information Technology degree in 2007. I had set my heart on attending USyd, but was hesitant about living in one of the more 'traditional' residential colleges on campus.

I visited International House for a tour, and found it to be incredibly diverse in a way that other colleges are not. With over 40 nationalities in residence, it gave me the opportunity to learn much more about different histories, identities, languages, and food. It opened my eyes to many possibilities out there that I didn't know about before.

### How did your time at IH enrich you on a personal and professional level?

Living in IH was fundamental to many of my most valued personal and professional experiences.

While I lived in the House, I noticed that language proficiency often created divides (most notably in the dining hall). People would sit and eat with others whom they felt most comfortable with - often those with whom they could converse most easily. This was a motivation for my subsequent PhD work in Artificial Intelligence, where I focused on improving the way that computers understand and interpret human language. This work, combined with the social education in global relationships (and having to explain Australian political and cultural concepts to many residents) helped me win a Fulbright Scholarship, which took me to UC Berkeley (and I-House Berkeley) in 2012 - 2013.

**What are your most cherished memories of your time in the House?**

I definitely miss the casual evenings spent playing games in the foyer - particularly 500 and Euchre. It was great being able to wander around the corridors and find someone to hang out with all the time. And finally, being able to meet so many new people every six months, and learn a little bit about their lives and culture.

**Do you have continued involvement with IH as an alumnus?**

I've always stayed in touch with the House, most prominently as a SUIHAA Committee Member. I'm currently the Secretary, and have been working alongside many other dedicated alumni on the 50th Anniversary Celebrations.

**Can you tell us about your current vocation?**

Having finished my undergraduate degree without a good idea of what I wanted to do with my life, I followed it with a PhD in Computer Science, which led me to my current role as a Software Engineer at Google's Australian HQ in Sydney, where I work on the Chrome web browser. My work revolves around creating the most secure portal for users to access the internet, whilst providing developers with a rich platform for their work.

**What relevance do you think the mission of International House has in 2017?**

Today, the founding tenets of the International House movement are more important than ever. The only way to break down barriers and fight back against ignorance and hatred is to gather communities of people from all around the world, unified in the pursuit of knowledge and understanding. International House must stand firm in its beliefs of openness, trust, and friendship in a world that seems intent on building walls and isolation.



# Celebrating 50 years of International House

**50** Years International House has served as a unique, diverse and inclusive residential community

**6,000+** Students and scholars have called International House home since we opened our doors in 1967

**95+** Different countries represented by International House residents

**20+** International House and SUIHAA scholarships and bursaries awarded annually

International House has a lot to celebrate in 2017, and your gift is important in continuing our many achievements.

Your donation will provide a student, who may not otherwise have the means to afford residency, with the life-changing opportunity to be part of the International House experience. By supporting the IH program, you will help ensure the exceptional geographic, cultural, and economic diversity that is central to our mission.

Make your anniversary gift of \$50 or more to International House via mail using the gift form below, or online at:

– [sydney.edu.au/donate-ih](http://sydney.edu.au/donate-ih)

## Please support our mission of international understanding and friendship



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# Creating global friendships since 1967

Join us to celebrate 50 years of International House



**Open Day, Reunion and BBQ**  
**Sunday 2 July 2017**  
**International House**

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Catch up with old friends over a barbecue lunch and take a walk around the House to revive memories of your stay.



**Public Roundtable**  
**Monday 3 July 2017**  
**Messel Lecture Theatre, University of Sydney**

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‘Is the World Coming Together or Falling Apart?’  
Dr Simon Longstaff AO, Executive Director of The Ethics Centre, will lead a panel of high-profile thinkers in a discussion exploring the major drivers of change in the past 50 years, and what we can expect in the next 50 years.



**Art and History Exhibition**  
**7 - 21 July 2017**  
**The Wool Room**  
**International House**

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The Art and History Exhibition will feature the public unveiling of a specially commissioned work by Australian Aboriginal artist Bronwyn Bancroft, and will celebrate the artistic talents of notable artists from our alumni community.



**Gala Luncheon**  
**Saturday 2 December 2017**  
**Strangers' Function Room**  
**NSW Parliament House**

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Australia's oldest house of parliament provides an auspicious setting for this culmination of the golden jubilee celebrations.

Bookings and further information:  
[sydney.edu.au/internationalhouse/50-years](http://sydney.edu.au/internationalhouse/50-years)



Orientation Week 2016

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## For more information

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## Our community

International House brings together Australian and international students from all over the world. Our diverse and close-knit community has been home to over 6000 students and scholars since we opened our doors in 1967.