

Introduction

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Engagement. What does it mean? At the University of Melbourne we use this term to describe building relationships between our staff and students and the broader community. Whether placing students in internships with local businesses and industries; encouraging the public, parents and friends to attend lectures, events and conferences on campus; or by collaborating with partner universities; engagement creates a vital exchange between our research, teaching and learning and the broader society we serve.

Our cultural collections play an important part in the University of Melbourne's engagement activities, every day of the year. As well as being essential for our own teaching and research programs, the collections are used by numerous individuals and organisations outside academia. Indeed this very magazine, *University of Melbourne Collections*, is just one avenue for sharing these assets with the world. Many of the articles in this issue demonstrate the value of collections in forming partnerships and reaching out to communities.

Charmaine Ching's article explains how the Ewing and George Paton Galleries, predecessor of the Ian Potter Museum of Art, helped bring contemporary art to new audiences, as well as attract deserved

recognition for the work of women artists in the 1970s. Professor Amir Zekrgoo of the International Islamic University Malaysia recalls with affection the time he and his family spent at MacGeorge House while they collaborated with the University's Centre for Cultural Materials Conservation in researching and preserving the Baillieu Library's very precious collection of Middle Eastern manuscripts. Another international visitor, student Chloë Lund from the University of Birmingham, recounts the value of her stay in Melbourne as the recipient of the 2013 Museums and Collections Award, a two-way exchange between institutions geographically distant but with much to share, all supported by the Universitas 21 Network.

The Baillieu Library Print Collection is one of the jewels in the crown of the University of Melbourne's cultural heritage. These rich holdings are the inspiration for no less than three of the contributions to this issue of the magazine. The forthcoming Victorian regional tour of the new exhibition *Radicals, slayers and villains: Prints from the Baillieu Library, University of Melbourne*, will literally take this collection to new audiences outside the metropolis after it has been enjoyed in the new Noel Shaw Gallery in the Baillieu Library.

On the last weekend in July we will open up the collections and architectural treasures of the university's Parkville and Southbank campuses for the fourth Cultural Treasures Festival. This biennial event is timed to coincide with Melbourne Rare Book Fair—hosted in our modernist masterpiece, Wilson Hall—and Melbourne Open House, where curious visitors go behind the scenes in buildings old and new across the city. I hope all our readers will take that opportunity to explore the university's collected and built heritage.



Adrian Collette AM is vice-principal (engagement) at the University of Melbourne. Prior to joining the university in 2013, Adrian was chief executive officer of Opera Australia, a position he held for 16 years. Adrian holds a Bachelor of Arts from La Trobe University and a Master of Arts from the University of Melbourne.