

Museums and Collections Projects Program 2021

University of Melbourne

Faculty of Engineering and Information Technology

Project Description

Documentation and Research project – *Engineer's Revue*

The Project

This project involves documenting, researching and analysing the cultural and historical significance of a small archive of materials which include programs, scripts and production details that relate to the *Engineer's Revue*. Encompassing productions that date from 1965-1973 the archive includes materials from esteemed Australian playwright and screenwriter David Williamson. This project will increase our knowledge and understanding of the archive's significance to the University and will contribute to increasing public awareness of the collection, aid in its interpretation and help inform plans for its long-term management.

Background

The [Faculty of Engineering and Information Technology cultural collections](#) comprise the Mechanical Engineering Collection (which includes the A.G.M Michell Engineering Collection); the Electrical Engineering Education Collection; Surveying and Geomatics Engineering Collection; and the Computing & Information Systems Collection. The School is currently creating a unified collection database for the distributed FEIT cultural collections.

The *Engineer's Revue*, organised by the Melbourne University Engineering Students Society, was a mainstay of the University's student revues from the late 1940s. A folder of programs, scripts and production details has recently come to light, encompassing productions from 1965 to 1973. The find is significant as esteemed Australian playwright and screenwriter David Williamson, who was then studying engineering, had started writing for the Engineering and Melbourne University revues in the early 1960s. He continued to contribute extensive pieces while completing his degree at Monash and then teaching at Swinburne. There are several skits in Williamson's hand, written on exam booklets. The archive has not previously been documented and further research is needed on the materials and productions to analyse the archive's cultural and historical significance.

Details

Working in consultation with the FEIT Curator, the project involves fully documenting the archive and undertaking research into the productions. Further research to analyse the cultural and historical significance of the materials will also be required. Research findings, written up as a report, may be used for future interpretation via exhibition, website or printed histories of the collection. This project would suit a student with an interest in the history of Australian theatre and culture. Knowledge of the correct procedures for the safe handling of objects is required, as is a methodical, prudent approach with a keen eye for detail.

Benefits

Opportunity to work closely with one of the University of Melbourne's extensive cultural collections and for professional development through experience gained in curatorial and collection management procedures and practice. This project will improve our knowledge and understanding of the collection and assist in making the University's cultural collections more accessible, facilitate their interpretation and contribute to their long-term preservation.

Supervisor

Dr Richard Gillespie, Curator - Faculty of Engineering and Information Technology

