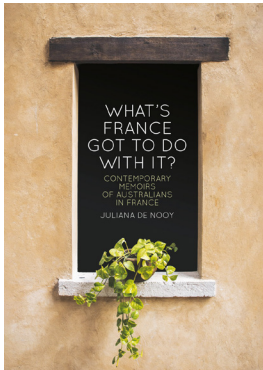


Melbourne Salon and ISFAR events 2020

Kerry Mullan

The Melbourne Salon is a joint venture between ISFAR, RMIT University and the Alliance Française de Melbourne and usually meets three times a year. This year, due to the pandemic we were unable to meet in person, but two Melbourne Salons were held online, both very well attended. As always, the topics were diverse and the virtual environment meant that we were able to welcome speakers based in Brisbane, Paris, and regional Victoria, and an audience from around Australia and beyond. That said, we are looking forward to resuming our in-person Salons at the beautiful Alliance Française de Melbourne premises in St. Kilda in 2021 when we are able.



The first Salon for 2020 was held on 14 September and was entitled *What's France got to do with it? Contemporary memoirs of Australians in France*. Author Juliana De Nooy (University of Queensland) spoke about her new book to colleague Barbara Hanna, and discussed why it is that memoirs recounting sojourns in France have gained such traction among Australian women and what is at stake in their fascination with France. Conversation flowed and many interesting aspects and theories were put forward. The Melbourne

Salon was delighted and honoured to be able to launch Juliana's book online, which can be purchased or downloaded free at <https://press.anu.edu.au/publications/whats-france-got-to-do-with-it>.

This Salon marked the ten-year anniversary almost to the day of the very first, held at the Alliance Française de Melbourne on 10 September 2010. The Melbourne Salon was modelled (with permission) on the LC (Lycée Condorcet) Salon in Sydney. In late 2009 I was invited to speak at this Salon on French and Australian interactional styles, alongside Sarah Turnbull the

author of *Almost French*, probably the most well-known memoir of this kind in recent times.¹ In another delightful coincidence, our very first Melbourne Salon in 2010 featured New Caledonian author Jean-François Vernay in conversation with Elaine Lewis (co-editor of *The French Australian Review*), herself the author of a memoir of her time in France, *Left Bank Waltz: The Australian Bookshop in Paris* (Vintage, Random House Australia, 2006).

The second Melbourne Salon of 2020 was held on 5 November and featured Professor Frédéric Thomas of the CNRS (France) and Associate Professor Beata Ujvari from Deakin University on the topic of *Unravelling the cancer puzzle from an ecological and evolutionary perspective: an Australian and French International Associated Laboratory*. The presenters gave a fascinating talk on the ecological and evolutionary consequences of cancer in ecosystems and how applying evolutionary principles to cancer revolutionises treatment strategies and approaches, and how this can have consequences for the facial tumours currently afflicting the iconic Tasmanian Devils. This collaborative laboratory project is supported by the CNRS, the University of Montpellier, the French Embassy, the Australian French Research Association (AFRAN), Deakin University and the University of Tasmania, and is a wonderful demonstration of what can be achieved when international teams of researchers come together, in this case French and Australian.

No other ISFAR events were held this year. Further details of both of these (and previous) Melbourne Salons can be found at <https://www.rmit.edu.au/about/schools-colleges/global-urban-and-social-studies/our-teaching-areas/language-studies/french/melbourne-salon>.

RMIT University

¹ A write up of this event can be found at https://www.isfar.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/47_LAURENCE-MOREUX-Discourse-at-the-LC-Salon-French-and-Australian-Conversational-Styles%E2%80%94A-Study-in-Cross-Cultural-Misunderstandings.pdf (*Explorations* no. 47 Dec. 2009) and a more detailed discussion of French and Australian interactional styles can be found at https://www.isfar.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/50_KERRY-MULLAN-Une-entente-glaciale-French-and-Australian-English-Interaction.pdf (*Explorations* no. 50, June 2011).