



ISSUE  
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# ISFAR Newsletter

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## Membership

To join or renew:  
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Membership includes subscription to  
the French Australian Review journal.

## Follow us

Facebook:  
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Twitter: <https://twitter.com/theISFAR>

## Useful links

Alliance Française de Melbourne  
[www.afmelbourne.com.au](http://www.afmelbourne.com.au)  
Association of French Teachers in  
Victoria (AFTV) [www.aftv.vic.edu.au](http://www.aftv.vic.edu.au)  
Australian-French Association for  
Research and Innovation (AFRAN)  
[www.afran.org.au](http://www.afran.org.au)  
Australian French Association for  
Science and Technology  
<https://afas.org.au>  
Australian Historical Association  
[www.theaha.org.au](http://www.theaha.org.au)  
Bastille Day French Festival Melbourne  
[www.bastilledaymelbourne.com](http://www.bastilledaymelbourne.com)  
Bleu Blanc Rouge (Consular newsletter)  
[www.bbrvic.com/en](http://www.bbrvic.com/en)  
French Assist Melbourne  
[www.frenchassistmelbourne.org.au](http://www.frenchassistmelbourne.org.au)  
French Australian Chamber of  
Commerce [www.facci.com.au](http://www.facci.com.au)

## ISFAR resources

ISFAR provides resources to researchers  
in the field of French-Australian studies,  
with the support of the authors or  
contributors who give their approval to  
publish this material. Access all ISFAR  
resources [www.isfar.org.au/resources](http://www.isfar.org.au/resources)



## Message from the president

Dear ISFAR members and friends,

We hope this mid-year newsletter finds you well, although it highlights how quickly 2021 is passing! ISFAR has been very active since the beginning of the year – mostly online, although past and present committee members did manage a celebratory dinner together in late April. It was wonderful to see each other after more than a year.

ISFAR held its AGM via Zoom on 17 March, as you can see from the above photo. More than twenty members attended from far and wide (including Paris and Tahiti!), and Office Bearers and committee members were elected as shown below. We would like to extend a warm welcome to new Ordinary Committee member Chantal Crozet, and we thank everyone who attended for their participation.

President: Kerry Mullan  
Vice President: Véronique Duché  
Secretary: Pauline Georgelin  
Treasurer: Richard Miller  
Co-Editors *French Australian Review*: Elaine Lewis; Jane Gilmour  
Ordinary Committee members: Stephen Alomes; Alexis Bergantz; Chantal Crozet; Jacqueline Dutton; Graham Neilson; Jacques de Saint-Ferjeux  
Research Committee members: Stephen Alomes; Alexis Bergantz; Jean Fornasiero; Kerry Mullan; Elizabeth Rechniewski; Margaret Sankey; Barbara Santich.

In early April, ISFAR held its 35th Anniversary Symposium “Australia and France in a Regional and Global Context: Past Engagements and Future Research Directions” in honour of Professor Colin Nettelbeck.

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The symposium was opened by French Ambassador S. E. Jean-Pierre Thébault and closed by Honorary Consul in Melbourne, Mme Myriam Boisbouvier-Wylie. A report with links to the full program can be found on page 2 of this newsletter, together with news of the new Professor Colin Nettelbeck travel scholarship. The symposium was well attended over the two days, and we wish to thank everyone who participated by presenting papers and/or attending and contributing to the discussions.

Elsewhere in this newsletter you will find information on ISFAR Secretary Pauline Georgelin’s recently finalised PhD thesis entitled ‘*For Noble and Valiant France: French-Australian relations, French-Australian identities during the First World War*’. Congratulations Pauline! Congratulations are also due to ISFAR Research Committee member Barbara Santich for being awarded an Order of Australia in the Queen’s Birthday Honours. Other items include a preview of the forthcoming *French Australian Review*, links to articles of interest written by ISFAR members (including Vice President Véronique Duché), and various French-related events of interest both near and far.

Bonne lecture!

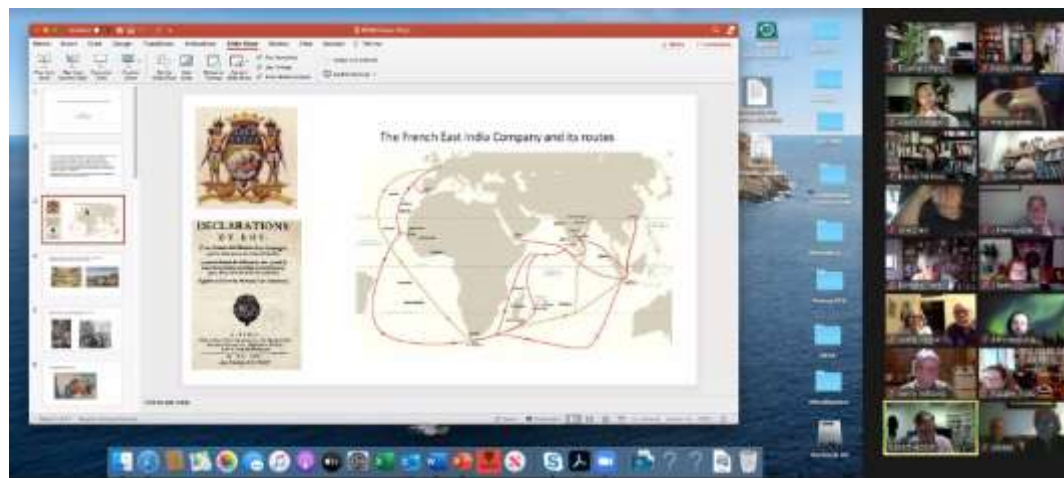
Kerry Mullan  
President

Thanks to Robyn Stern and Graham Neilson for the coordination and layout of this newsletter and to all the contributors. As always, if you have any feedback or suggestions for future topics or items for inclusion, please contact us at [ISFARinc@gmail.com](mailto:ISFARinc@gmail.com).

## ISFAR@35

The ISFAR@35 Symposium 'Australia and France in a Regional and Global Context: Past Engagements and Future Research Directions' was held on 8-9 April. It was generally agreed to have been the occasion for a stimulating and enjoyable exchange of ideas and a valuable opportunity to hear about the breadth and depth of current research in French-Australian relations. A full report will be published in the next issue of the French Australian Review, and a link to the program is here [www.isfar.org.au/previous-isfar-events/](http://www.isfar.org.au/previous-isfar-events/).

Professor Robert Aldrich presented the Key Note 'From the French East Indies Company to the French in the "Indo-Pacific"'.



### Travel Scholarship in honour of Professor Colin Nettelbeck

At the Annual General Meeting in March 2021, ISFAR members voted to set up a Travel Scholarship in honour of Emeritus Professor Colin Nettelbeck, to recognise the central role he played in founding the Institute and his ongoing and invaluable commitment to the full range of its public and research activities, including initiating the French Australian Dictionary of Biography.

This biennial grant of \$400 will be awarded to a Postgraduate or Honours student to assist them to present a paper at the ISFAR conference, held every two years. Criteria for the award include the quality of the abstract, the relevance of the paper to the themes of the conference, and the degree of financial support already available to the candidate.

The first award will be made in relation to the conference planned for 2023. Further details and an application form will be made available on the ISFAR website nearer the time.

### PhD Thesis: Pauline Georgelin

ISFAR's secretary Pauline Georgelin has recently completed her PhD, undertaken as a jointly awarded program at the University of Melbourne and Université Paris-Nanterre. Her supervisor was Professor Véronique Duché at the University of Melbourne, with Professor Joy Damousi as co-supervisor, and for the French side, Professor Annette Becker at Université Paris Nanterre.

Pauline's thesis is entitled: 'For Noble and Valiant France': French-Australian relations, French-Australian identities during the First World War. Pauline's research drew on a range of French and Australian sources to examine how French identity and culture were perceived, projected and mobilised in Australia during the First World War. In the context of the war, French identity took on a heightened significance and images of France became part of the patriotic rhetoric to encourage support for the war. French-Australians, as well as francophones and francophiles, played an important role in shaping the public discourse about what it meant to be French.

Pauline is now transforming the thesis into a book.

## CALL FOR PAPERS: THE FOURTH IABA: ASIA PACIFIC CONFERENCE

Life Writing: Transnationalism, Translingualism, Transculturalism

20 - 23 November, 2021

Confirmed Keynote Speakers:

**Prof. Ricia Chansky, University of Puerto Rico**

**Prof. Anne Pender, University of Adelaide**

The University of Adelaide, in collaboration with the University of South Australia and Flinders University.

Transnationalism is an increasingly popular phenomenon, reflecting and responding to the heightened interconnectivity between people and the receding economic and social significance of boundaries among nation states. The current global pandemic has brought issues of interconnectivity sharply into question. In this context, this conference will explore life narratives across a broad variety of contexts. By discussing life narratives, including in a variety of languages, this conference aims to expand the boundaries of literary studies and its relationships with other media and nations.

### Submissions

The conference will be held in two modes, incorporating face to face and zoom sessions. We invite both **20 minute individual presentations** and **90 minute full panel, roundtable, or workshop sessions**. We encourage interdisciplinary submissions that foster dialogues across theory, methodology, genre, place, and time. We invite not only traditional conference papers and panels, but also innovative presentation formats and creative sessions.

Please submit a 300 word maximum abstract and a 150 word bio to Dr. Christopher Hogarth at [IABAadelaide2021@gmail.com](mailto:IABAadelaide2021@gmail.com) by 1 July.

More information: [arts.adelaide.edu.au/french-narratives/conference](https://arts.adelaide.edu.au/french-narratives/conference)

If any members of ISFAR are interested in forming a panel for this conference on French-Australian life-writing, and particularly on travel-writing, please contact Liz Rechniewski: [elizabeth.rechniewski@svdnev.edu.au](mailto:elizabeth.rechniewski@svdnev.edu.au)

## The French Australian Review, Issue 70

*The French Australian Review* number 70 will be published in early August. As part of our celebration of ISFAR's 35<sup>th</sup> birthday we will feature Robert Aldrich's outstanding keynote speech from the ISFAR 2021 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Symposium, 'From the French East Indies Company to the French in the "Indo-Pacific"'. Those members unable to attend the Symposium will appreciate the opportunity to learn more about France's position in the Indo-Pacific region in the past and today. Robert's speech will be published ahead of the refereed articles, all of which relate to French Australian arts connections - visual arts, theatre and cinema in particular. These will be followed by the usual French-Australian Encounters, Book Reviews and Bibliographical Notes as well as a number of reports and short articles.

Printed copies and/or PDFs of the six latest issues (dating back three years) are available for purchase. Prices per issue are:

- Members: \$11 incl GST (\$10 for overseas) plus postage
- Non-members: \$16.50 incl GST (\$15 for overseas) plus postage.

PDFs of single articles are available for \$5.50 incl GST.

For purchases and to access older issues (which are freely available): [www.isfar.org.au/journal/](http://www.isfar.org.au/journal/).

## MIRKA exhibition

MIRKA – an intimate, previously unseen view into the rich and fascinating life of the late Mirka Mora (1928–2018) – opened in February at the [Jewish Museum of Australia](#) in Melbourne, in partnership with [William Mora Galleries](#) and supported by [Heide Museum of Modern Art](#).

Mirka Mora was born in Paris in 1928 to Romanian and Lithuanian Jewish parents. Following her traumatic and life-changing experience during World War II in Paris and the French countryside, she migrated to Australia with her husband Georges and young son Philippe in 1951, settling in Melbourne. Finding themselves within a completely new cultural landscape, Mirka as a dressmaker and Georges at Snider's Matzo Factory, both developed very rapidly into artist and entrepreneur respectively, and together as successful entrepreneurs and members of an influential artists hub.

Featuring more than 200 never-exhibited works from the private collection of the Mora family and Mirka's studio and archives, alongside pieces from the Mirka collection acquired by the Heide Museum of Modern Art, MIRKA offers the most comprehensive picture of the artist's life and 70-year-long career, offering fresh insight into her creativity, and allowing audiences old and new to discover her life and artistry like never before.

The exhibition runs until 19 December 2021 and tickets can be purchased from the website of the [Jewish Museum of Australia](#).

## Order of Australia recognition

We are delighted to announce that ISFAR Research Committee member, **Professor Barbara Santich** has been recognised in the Queens' Birthday Honours as a MEMBER (AM) IN THE GENERAL DIVISION OF THE ORDER OF AUSTRALIA for significant service to tertiary education, to gastronomy, food culture and history.

Barbara's achievements can be found on p.298 here, in the [Governor General's website](#) and are listed below:

- Emeritus Professor since 2015, Department of History, School of Humanities, Faculty of Arts, The University of Adelaide
- Founder and Course Designer, Graduate Program in Food Studies, 2012.
- Initiated, Graduate Certificate in Food Writing, 2007.
- Inaugural Head and Lecturer, Masters of Arts in Gastronomy, 2002.
- Inaugural Head and Lecturer, Master's Program on Gastronomy (in conjunction with *Le Cordon Bleu Australia*).

## Other Appointments

- Member, Australian Food, Society and Culture Network, The University of Sydney, current.
- Founding Chair, Scientific Commission for the Australian Ark of Taste, 2003-2007.
- Research committee member, Institute for the Study of French Australian Relations, current.

## Food Writing

- Author, numerous books including *Wild Asparagus, Wild Strawberries: Two Years in France*, Wakefield Press, 2018; *Bold Palates: Australia's Gastronomic Heritage*, Wakefield Press, 2013; *Looking for Flavour*, Wakefield Press, 1996; and *The Original Mediterranean Cuisine*, Wakefield Press, 1995 and 2020; revised second edition Equinox/Wakefield Press, 2018/2020.
- Contributor to various national and international publications including *Gastronomica*, *Oxford Companion to Food*, *Food Australia*, *Food & History* and *The Communities of Food Scholars*, current.
- Member, Editorial Board, *Petits Propos Culinaires*, current.
- Former Member, Editorial Advisory Board, *Slow*.

## Awards and recognition include:

- Award for Teaching Excellence, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Adelaide, 2005.
- Stephen Cole Elder Prize for Excellence in Teaching, University of Adelaide, 2005.
- *Bold Palates* was shortlisted in the Non-fiction category of the 2013 Prime Minister's Literary Awards.

## The Wine Project

The Wine Project, one of the research projects being undertaken by ISFAR and coordinated by Professor Barbara Santich, aims to highlight, through both entries in the *French-Australian Dictionary of Biography* and an independent publication/website, the significance of French-Australian relations in the wine industries of both nations.

British colonists quickly saw the potential in Australia for growing grapes and making wine, and naturally looked to France as their model. Early vigneron, such as Gregory Blaxland and William Macarthur, visited France to study vineyards and winemaking practices, and often returned with cuttings of French vines. In the second half of the nineteenth century French vigneron, including Camille Réau and Jean-Pierre Trouette, established vineyards in Australia. French viticultural techniques were adapted for Australian conditions and French texts translated and published in Australia. Such cultural exchanges continued in the twentieth century.

Professor Santich has identified the key individuals involved in these exchanges and is keen to involve other researchers in working on the mini-biographies that will contribute to the project. If you would like to take part in this research, please write to her at: [barbara.santich@adelaide.edu.au](mailto:barbara.santich@adelaide.edu.au).



## The 200th Anniversary of Napoleon's Death at St Helena: Three Links between Napoleon and Melbourne

by Elaine Lewis

### 1. The Napoleonic Collection at The Briars, Mornington

(Napoleon on St Helena - Betsy Balcombe and the Balcombe Family - Dame Mabel Brookes - Betsy Balcombe's Grandniece)

After Napoleon was defeated at the Battle of Waterloo in 1815, he was exiled on Saint Helena, an island located off the coast of south-west Africa in the South Atlantic Ocean, roughly halfway between Namibia and Brazil.

Lucia Elizabeth Balcombe, commonly known as Betsy Balcombe, was born in 1802 as the second child of William and Jane Balcombe, née Cranston. Her father was Superintendent of Public Sales for the East India Company. Balcombe and her sister Jane, two years her senior, were educated in England. In 1814, the sisters returned to Saint Helena with their parents and two younger brothers. When Napoléon Bonaparte arrived in St Helena he was lodged for three months at The Briars, a pavilion in the garden of the Balcombe's home, whilst his proposed residence, Longwood, was being restored. Over time the Emperor and Betsy became friends.



In the 1840s the Balcombe family moved to a property on the Mornington Peninsular (south of Melbourne) which they named The Briars. They brought with them various items given to them by Napoleon. Betsy's grandniece, Dame Mabel Brookes, DBE (15 June 1890 to 30 April 1975) was an Australian community worker, activist, socialite, writer, historian, memoirist and humanitarian. The story of her ancestors led to Mabel's fascination with Napoleon and in 1960 she bought the St Helena pavilion, The Briars, and donated it to the French nation. In the same year she published a book, *St Helena Story*, an account of Napoleon's exile on St Helena and his relationship with Betsy and the Balcombe family. During her lifetime she acquired more items to add to her family's collection of Napoleon related memorabilia which is displayed in the homestead at The Briars, now a National Trust property, at 450E Nepean Hwy, Mount Martha Victoria 3934. The Briars now has a Visitor's Centre, wildlife sanctuary, wetlands, gardens, nursery, vineyard, café, restaurant, kiosk and picnic areas.

See also *Two Napoleonic Collections*, in the ISFAR journal [Explorations Issue 27](#).

### 2. 'Mystery of Napoleon's Gift', held at the Royal Exhibition Building, Melbourne, in May 2016

Gwenyth Todd, now living in Australia, is a direct descendant of Napoleon's brother, Louis Bonaparte, and her collection of family pieces from the Napoleonic era was on display in the exhibition, 'Mystery of Napoleon's Gift', held at the Royal Exhibition Building, Melbourne, in May 2016.

Porcelain, crystal, paintings and exquisite jewels, all with intriguing histories involving royalty, espionage, infidelity, gypsies and freakish deaths, were on display. The collection includes a painting and a sketch by Franz Xavier Winterhalter, a Marie Antoinette and Louis XVI diamond studded necklace and chain, a fine miniature of Napoleon III, a certified piece of Napoleon's coffin and cashmere fragments worn on his deathbed in St. Helena, a bust of Louis XVI of Holland ... and many other treasures that, through a series of unlikely events, have found their way to Australia.

### 3. St Helena, Victoria, Australia and its link with Napoleon

Twenty-seven kilometres north east of the Melbourne CBD lies the small town of St Helena, settled and named by Major Anthony Beale who had been paymaster-general to the East India Company's forces in the British possession of St. Helena during the time of Napoleon's exile.

Napoleon died in 1821 and the East India Company resigned its interests in the island in 1834. After three years back in England, Beale decided to settle in Australia where he established a home 'in the wilderness' near Eltham and Greensborough. In the words of R. H. Croll 'the outlook is over wooded hills, past Kangaroo Ground and Ringwood, to the blue lift of the high mountains at the back of Healesville'.

Beale's wife, Katherine Rose Beale, died in 1856 and, in her memory, her husband erected the beautiful little chapel which stands amongst the cypress trees by their St Helena home. It was originally named the Rose Chapel, but after Major Beale's death it was given to the Church of England, and became known as [St Katherine's Church](#). (It was carefully reconstructed after a fire in 1957). It is said that beside the graves in the little cemetery is a willow tree, the growth from a cutting from a tree 'once sown to shade Napoleon's grave'.

There is one painting by Major Anthony Beale on the website of the [Greensborough Historical Society](#), accessed 9 June 2021, and the author of this article has seen other paintings signed by him, which included one painting inscribed 'Napoleon's grave at St Helena'. Its present whereabouts are unknown so more research is required. Local historian Tim Gatehouse writes that 'Anthony Beale was also a talented painter, and his works included a portrait of his wife and a view of St Helena Island'.

### Further reading:

1. Lucia Elizabeth Balcombe Abell, *Recollections of the Emperor Napoleon: During the First Three Years of His Captivity on the Island of St. Helena*, London, John Murray, 1845. There are many modern versions of this book but the original has been digitised by Google from the library of the University of Michigan and uploaded to the [Internet Archive](#) with open access.
2. Dame Mabel Brookes, with foreword by R. G. Menzies. *St. Helena Story*, London/Melbourne, Heinemann, 1960.
3. Anne Whitehead, *Betsy and the Emperor: The True Story of Napoleon, a pretty girl, a Regency rake and an Australian colonial misadventure*, Sydney, Allen & Unwin, 2015, ISBN 978-1-76011-293-6. This book is published in the UK, in hardback and paperback, as *The Emperor's Shadow: Bonaparte, Betsy and the Balcombes*. [Anne Whitehead](#) is based in Sydney Australia.
4. Philip Dwyer, *Passion, Death and Resurrection 1815 - 1840*, Great Britain, Bloomsbury, July 2019, 416 pp. ISBN 978-1-40889-172-8.
5. Thomas Costain, *The Last Love* (republished), New York, Doubleday, January 2000, 434 pp. ISBN 978-0-38500-566-1. A fictionalised story of the relationship between Napoleon and Betsy Balcombe and her family.
6. Brian Unwin, *Terrible Exile: The Last Days of Napoleon on St Helena*, Great Britain, I. B. Tauris; February 2010, 256 pp. ISBN 978-1-84885-287-7.
7. Tom Keneally, *Napoleon's Last Island*, Melbourne, Vintage Australia, May 2016, ISBN 978-0-85798-462-3.

### Films:

*Napoléon* by St Helena Films, is a 2002 historical TV miniseries exploring the life of Napoléon Bonaparte, based on Max Gallo's book *Napoleon*). In the series, the fourteen-year-old Betsy Balcombe is played by Tamsin Egerton-Dick.

*Monsieur N.* is a 2003 British-French film depicting Napoleon's life on St Helena, directed by Antoine de Caunes. Betsy Balcombe is played by Siobhan Hewlett.

### Recent articles, upcoming events and exhibitions

Below you will find details of recent articles of interest written by ISFAR members in The Conversation.

ISFAR Vice-President Véronique Duché published '[The comfort of reading in WWI: the bibliotherapy of trench and hospital magazines](#)' on 23 April 2021. Véronique also published '[My favourite detective: Jules Maigret, the Paris detective with a pipe but not pretence](#)' on 26 January 2021.

Related to the first article above is an earlier one published by ISFAR member Diane de St Léger on 22 March 2021 '[Dinky di aussies: how slanguage helped form a new national identity](#).'

ISFAR member Romain Fathi recently published '[Crowds at dawn services have plummeted in recent years. It's time to reinvent Anzac Day](#)' on 21 April 2021, in addition to an earlier article published on 12 April 2021 '[Do the French care about Anzac](#)'.

### Exhibitions

Although we may not be able to attend, you might be interested to know about the Australia Now France campaign which will run from mid-2021 to 2022. See the [CelebrateAustraliaNow website](#) for the wonderful array of events (new events are being added all the time).

## BASTILLE DAY 2021, Melbourne and Sydney

Melbourne's Bastille Day French Festival will take place 16 to 17 July at Federation Square. The exciting activities include:

Four *Lumières* Talks:

- Bleu: French stereotypes and clichés – MC'ed by Véronique Duché in collaboration with the Alliance Française
  - Blanc: The French Impressionists – Dr Ted Gott, NGV
  - Rouge - The French Revolution and its relevance to today – Professor Peter McPhee, University of Melbourne
  - Vert – Renewable Energy.
- Caudalie, a guided wine tasting – ISFAR committee member Jacqueline Dutton will be one of the panellists
  - Bouygues Art Frolic (cultural guided tour)
  - A series of Masterclasses
  - Long Lunch Délicieux
  - Live music band and performers
  - eMotions, an exhibition at the Town Hall (this exhibition toured previously at [Alliance Française Brisbane](#).)
  - The Winter Market, featuring Melbourne's best French stalls.

See the [Bastille Day Melbourne program](#), and watch out for the ISFAR quiz with prizes to be won!

Sydney welcomes back its highly anticipated Bastille Day soirée 14 July, 5pm - late; The Argyle, 18 Argyle Street, The Rocks, Sydney.



This year's theme, *France Around the World*, will transport revellers to all corners of the French-speaking globe including West Africa, Tahiti, New Caledonia and beyond. The entertainment for the evening includes a live, 5-piece band from led by legendary Malian guitarist Moussa Diakite; an entertaining set of classic French hits from Parisian-born DJ Madame Rêve; and thrilling performances by French Polynesian and Cancan dancers. In addition, we will welcome French food stalls for guests to enjoy delicious crêpes; a tropical cocktail designed exclusively for the evening; and the opportunity to win fantastic prizes such as a luxurious French-Pacific holiday for two and more.

**PRICE:** \$20-\$25 entry and \$5 Raffle tickets

**BOOKINGS:** [BastilleDaySydney](#), Event supported by City of Sydney through their CBD Activation Grant

For anyone who has not yet seen this French culinary adventure or would like to see it again, [Luke Nguyen's France](#) is currently showing on SBS On Demand.

