

Alfred Deakin Research Institute
and the
Cultural Heritage Centre for Asia and the Pacific
invite you to a

Public Lecture and Roundtable

“The 10,000-Mile-Long Mirror”

At this public lecture, Dr Richard Rabinowitz, President of American History Worskshop, will reflect on the experience of exploring Australia’s museum culture, a process he has found most useful in making him aware of the distinctiveness of his own approach and that of his compatriots in the US. In this paper, he will ruminate on the differences between American and Australian museum cultures, focusing in particular on differences in national attitudes and practices in public history, pedagogy, institutional politics and financing. Key themes he will be addressing include:

WHAT, PRECISELY, IS THE SUBJECT OF HISTORY? — realizing the power of museums to engage visitors as kinesthetic (embodied) and socially enmeshed learners

EXPERIENCE VS. INFORMATION — themes vs. stories; showing off what WE know

IS THERE AN AUSTRALIAN CUISINE? — the radical disengagement in the US from national narratives, and the contrast with Australia

THE REAL STUFF [collection objects, sites] AND THE “OTHER” STUFF — the interpretive toolbox as an equal focal-point of visitor attentiveness

Please join the Cultural Heritage Centre for Asia and the Pacific and the Alfred Deakin Research Institute for what should be a stimulating and informative discussion with contributions from local practitioners as well.

**Monday 5 May 2014
5.30pm – 7.00pm
Deakin University Melbourne City Centre
Level 3, 550 Burke Street**

Please RSVP to Professor Andrea Witcomb on andrea.witcomb@deakin.edu.au
Numbers are limited!

RICHARD RABINOWITZ

RICHARD RABINOWITZ is one of the leading public historians in the United States, with over 45 years of experience in creating new museums and exhibitions on every aspect of American history and culture.

As founder and president since 1980 of AMERICAN HISTORY WORKSHOP, Dr. Rabinowitz has led the creative work of scholars, curators, educators, artists, architects, designers, and institutional planners in fashioning over 500 successful and innovative history programs at sites like the New-York Historical Society, the Lower East Side Tenement Museum in New York; the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute; the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center in Cincinnati; and state heritage parks and local and regional historical societies in 33 states and the District of Columbia.

He has organized exhibitions and media presentations on immigration and ethnic community histories in Seattle, Tucson, and Wheeling; on urban and suburban development in Boston, Phoenix, Portland, Chicago, and Albany; on legal and constitutional history in Philadelphia; on the encounter of natives and newcomers in Ogallala and Spokane; and on American popular culture in Orlando and New York. In 2005-09, he curated and wrote the pathbreaking blockbuster exhibitions at N-YHS on ***Slavery in New York, New York Divided: Slavery and the Civil War, French Founding Father: Lafayette Returns to Washington's America, Grant and Lee*** (co-curator), and ***Lincoln and New York***. He has recently completed work on a major international traveling exhibition on ***Revolution! The Atlantic World Reborn***. The exhibition interprets the interrelated upheavals in the 18th-century Atlantic world that invented our modern notions of universal human rights, anti-slavery, political equality, and the independent nation-state. After its run at N-YHS in 2011-12, ***Revolution!*** is being redesigned to travel to museums in France, Great Britain, Haiti, and the United States. In addition, Dr. Rabinowitz has also recently completed the content and interpretive development of the "Slavery and Freedom" gallery at the Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History and Culture, to be built on the mall in Washington in 2015.

A scholar of American social and religious history, Dr. Rabinowitz has taught at Harvard, Skidmore, and Scripps colleges. His book, *The Spiritual Self in Everyday Life: The Transformation of Personal Religious Experience in Nineteenth-Century New England* (Northeastern University Press, 1989), has been recognized as a "subtle and thoughtful analysis of what it has meant to be religious in America." He has also written historical books and articles for children and for museum professionals. He is currently writing a book on the evolution of public history since the 1960s, to be published by the University of North Carolina Press.