
The book will be launched by Professor Emerita Desley Deacon at The ANU Co-op Bookshop on Thursday, 6th October at 5pm for a 5:30pm start.

RSVP is essential for attendance by Tuesday, 4th October to anu@coop-bookshop.com.au or on (02) 6249 6244.

Refreshments will be served.
Race and the Modern Exotic:
Three ‘Australian’ Women on Global Display.

by Angela Woollacott

Annette Kellerman, Rose Quong and Merle Oberon were internationally successful ‘Australian’ performers of the first half of the twentieth century. Kellerman was a swimmer, diver, lecturer, and silent-film star, Quong an actor, lecturer and writer who forged a career in London and New York, and Oberon one of the most celebrated film stars of the 1930s and 1940s, first in London and then Hollywood. These three women performers created newly modern, racially ambiguous Australian femininities. Racial thinking was at the core of White Australian culture: far from being oblivious to racial hierarchies and constructions, Australians engaged with them on an everyday basis. Around the world, ‘Australian’ stars represented a white-settler nation, a culture in which white privilege was entrenched, during a period replete with legal forms of discrimination based on race. The complex meanings attached to three successful ‘Australian’ performers in this period of highly articulated racism thus become a popular cultural archive we can investigate to learn more about contemporary connections between race, exoticism and gender on the global stage and screen.