

Mr David Stratton

The degree of Doctor of Letters (honoris causa) was conferred upon David Stratton at the Arts ceremony held at 2.00pm on 9 June 2006.



The Chancellor the Hon Justice Kim Santow with Mr Stratton at the conferring ceremony, *photo, copyright Memento Photography.*

Citation

Chancellor, I have the honour to present David Stratton for admission to the degree of Doctor of Letters, *honoris causa*.

David Stratton was born in the United Kingdom in 1939 and left school at age sixteen, and from a very early age, he was actively involved in local film societies. In 1963, he migrated to Australia and he has been contributing to the richness of our cultural and intellectual community since his arrival.

By 1966, David had already established himself as a prominent figure in the arts community in Australia and he served as the Director of the Sydney Film Festival from 1966 - 1983. During this period, many new Australian feature and short films were premiered at the Festival, and by the time David finished his tenure as Director, the Australian film industry had experienced a revival and he had been at the forefront of the renaissance, stimulating debate and challenging the Australian censors.

In 1980, David began his 23-year association with SBS broadcasting. From 1981-2004 he presented films on SBS Television for 'Movie of the Week' and 'Cinema Classics' and was, with Margaret Pomeranz, co-host of The Movie Show from 1986-2004. In July 2004, Margaret and David moved to ABC television with their show At The Movies. Many thousands of Australians have been informed and entertained about cinema culture by 'Margaret and David' and the iconic duo continue to be a dominant force in cinema culture and both continue to stimulate debate about film censorship.

In addition to his work on television, David has had a distinguished career as a writer. He has published two books on Australian cinema and was the author of the Australian section of the International Film Guide (London) for thirty years. He has been a past contributor to many internationally renowned magazines and newspapers and he is currently a film reviewer for The Australian newspaper.

David has also contributed to international film culture by serving as a Member of the International Jury at the Berlin Film Festival (1982), Venice Film Festival (1994), Montreal Film Festival (1983) and Chicago Film Festival (1977). He was President of the International Film Critics Jury at Cannes in 1996 and 2000. In 2001, he was presented with France's highest arts decoration when he was made a Commander in the Ordre des

Arts et des Lettres, the highest rank for this award, for his services to cinema, in particular French cinema, and for the role he has played in promoting cultural diversity. In the same year, he was presented with the Raymond Longford (Lifetime Achievement Award) by the Australian Film Institute.

In addition to these achievements, he has made a very special contribution to intellectual life at Sydney University, as since 1990 he has been a guest lecturer at the Centre for Continuing Education where he has taught film courses to adult education students. His History of World Cinema series is now in its seventh year (part of an epic ten year plan) and he shares his encyclopaedic knowledge about film with hundreds of grateful students each year.

Chancellor, I have great pleasure in presenting to you, for admission to the degree of Doctor of Letters, film critic, writer, educator, and patron of the Arts, David Stratton, and I invite you to confer the degree upon him.