**Introduction**

by Her Excellency Ms Quentin Bryce, AC
Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia

to Crossroads UQ special centenary edition

In his exploration of the truth and responsibility of intellectuals, Raimond Gaita suggests that:

*The idea of a university as an institution that requires its members to reflect on the life of the mind creates a conversational space within the university that provides a model for a similar space outside of it. It connects the vocations of an academic and that of a particular kind of public intellectual.*

*The philosopher speaks as a philosopher to the historian who responds as a historian...it is a beginning that colours the nature of the way they overcome the limits of their disciplinary insularity.*

In positing at the Crossroads their reflections on the life of the mind embedded in history, philosophy, religion and classics, contributors to this esteemed interdisciplinary journal, together with their reviewers, editors and overseers, are sustaining and occupying the very conversational space of which Gaita writes.

As each engages in these formal and rigorous exchanges with the other and the whole — a remarkable mix of thinking, dialect and perspective from across the globe — an intellectually powerful web of collaboration builds, allowing freedom of thought, mindfulness, collegialism and friendship to coexist with, but in no way dilute, vocational integrity.

Yet, at critical moments, they return to the Crossroads and are called to account, to listen and to persuade, and to reject any form of intellectualism in themselves and one another that abets academic vanity and rivalry at the expense of truthfulness and the pursuit of common wisdom.
As Socrates stood at the crossroads of life and death, knowing that death was to be his next journey, he orated its good to the Athens jury:

*I shall be able to continue my search into true and false knowledge; as in this world, so also in the next; and I shall find out who is wise, and who pretends to be wise, and is not.*

In this centenary year of one of our country’s finest universities, it gives me great assurance to know that still ablaze are the courage and will to testify to our ideas at the *Crossroads.*

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